



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim
given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Tzav 5782

In *Parshas Tzav* we find the *mitzva* of *terumas hadeshen* - The removal of ashes from the *mizbeach*. This was the first *avoda* performed each day in the *Beis Hamikdash*. *Sifrei Mekubalim* reveal some of the secret aspects of this *avoda*. By means of the *terumas hadeshen* the judgement of *neshamos* that have been “scorched” and distanced can be “sweetened”, elevating them and enabling them to reconnect to their heavenly source.

Even though we aren't involved in *nistaros* - the hidden aspects of the Torah, we can certainly derive instruction from the basic message of the *Sifrei Mekubalim*. We learn how vital it is that we honor and cherish the *neshama* of each Jew, even one who seems to be so distant from *Yiddishkeit*. No matter how thick the cloak of ashes may be, the glowing coal of a Jewish *neshama* can always be found. This is the *pintele Yid*, the eternal spark referred to by the words *Magen Avraham*.

I remember a story that I heard many years ago from my friend *Harav Hagaon Menachem Mendel Mendelzon zt"l* who served as *Rav* of *Moshav Kommemiyus* after his father *Hagaon Hachasid Rav Binyamin Mendelzon zt"l*. He told me about a devout Jew who lived in an Israeli city that had very few *frum* residents. This man kept the laws of *shemita* meticulously. Therefore, he placed the peels and other unused portions of *shemita* fruit in a special receptacle, a *pach shemita*.

At the appropriate time, he would remove the bag from the *Pach* and put it out next to the garbage can, (he didn't place it in the can because of



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the need to treat the fruits of *shemita* with respect). Since most of his neighbors were very distant from *Torah* and *mitzvos*, he was apprehensive about how they would react to this practice. Therefore, he waited until late at night to quietly place the bag from the *pach shemita* next to the garbage.

One night, an elderly woman who lived in his building noticed him, and as he passed her door, she asked him what he was doing at this late hour. He had no choice other than to explain the *mitzva* of *shemita* to his neighbor. She was a *tinokes shenishbeta* - as ignorant of *Torah* and *mitzvos* as an infant who had been kidnapped and raised by non Jews. Her father had already abandoned *Torah* observance back in Russia. Surprisingly, she was fascinated by his explanation of *shemita*, and began to visit his home day after day in order to learn more about *Torah* and *mitzvos*.

As time went on, she began to keep *Shabbos* and other *mitzvos*. One day, her grandson, who was a very rough character, came to visit and was shocked by his grandmother's *mitzva* observance. When he heard that it was a result of the *Torah* she learned from her neighbor, he immediately pounded on the neighbor's door and began to scream at him and threaten him. The neighbor, who followed the guidance of the *Rav* of *Kommemiyus*, suggested to the grandson that they go to his *Rav* and discuss the matter.

Surprisingly the grandson agreed, and they travelled together to *Kommemiyus*. The *Rav* spoke very gently with the grandson for a long time. The young man found the conversation so pleasant that it eventually led to his *chazara B'teshuva*. Eventually the entire family returned to its roots and that elderly grandmother merited to see grandchildren learning *Torah* and keeping *mitzvos*.

This story helps us realize the astounding power of one *mitzva* to awaken smoldering coals that seem to have been extinguished long ago. This



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should inspire us to cherish and care for every Jewish *neshama*, no matter how distant from *Yiddishkeit* they may seem.

This is the inner aspect of *terumas hadeshen*, which elevates even those coals that appear to have been extinguished. We too must perform *terumas hadeshen* in our own way, with so many *neshamos* that surround us. As I often say, *kiruv rechokim* should be designated to those who are truly qualified to do so without harming others or themselves. However, *kiruv kerovim* - uplifting and strengthening those in our own families and communities is incumbent on everyone. This can only be accomplished by recognizing and appreciating the great good that exists in each of them, and by cherishing them and drawing them close with true *ahavas Yisrael*.

ובזה נזכה להמשיך עלינו משמים אהבה רבה, וימהר יחיש לגואלנו ויבנה בית מקדשנו
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