



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת a collection of maamarim on
תנא דבי אליהו given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Shemini 5766

In our Parsha, (Shemini 11/42) we find the *pasuk* על הולך על גחון in which the Torah forbids us to eat anything that “walks on its belly”. In Maseches Kidushin (30a), the letter vav of the word גחון is identified as the halfway point of the total letters in the Torah. *Tzadikim* explain that we are meant to learn a lesson from the location of the middle letter of the Torah in that specific *pasuk*. It teaches us that someone who was fortunate enough to learn half of the Torah, must take special care that his accomplishment doesn’t lead him to become arrogant. When he arrives at the midpoint of the Torah, the *pasuk* reminds him to minimize his stature, like a creature that “walks on its belly”.

We are in the Beis Medrash of my Grandfather zy”a who remained truly humble even after learning so much Torah. A Karliner *chasid* told me that he once saw my grandfather sitting in the Karliner Beis Medrash, as a man stood over him, screaming at him and cursing him. He sat calmly and lovingly accepted the embarrassing tirade. Some people tried to silence the antagonist, explaining that the Rebbe zy”a was a true *Tzadik* who never harmed a soul. My grandfather told them to desist, explaining that the man’s verbal assault was “*mechayeh*” him (lifegiving). “So many people”, he said, “honor me and call me Rebbe. He’s telling me the truth!”.

The *chasid* who related the story told me that ניכרים עליו דברי אמת, (words of truth can be recognized). He was actually able to sense that my grandfather truly derived *chiyus* from that verbal attack.



[1]

© כל הזכויות שמורות למכון 'המאור שבחורה' שע"י מוסדות טאלנא עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א

The editor is solely responsible for any mistakes and omissions

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or for any comments, please email us at

hamaortolna@gmail.com

During the years that the Gerrer Rebbe the *Lev Simcha* was very weak, there were periods of days and even weeks when it was impossible to go in to receive his *bracha* and *eitza*. Once, my grandfather zy”a arrived and asked the *gabaim* if it would be possible for him to go in to the Rebbe. They told him that in half an hour it may be possible for him to approach the Rebbe. Someone overheard the *gabai*’s response and the news that in half an hour it may be possible to go in to the Rebbe spread like wildfire among the *chasidim*. People ran from all over to get on line outside the Rebbe’s door.

When the time arrived, the *gabaim* stepped out to tell my grandfather that he could go in to the Rebbe, but he was no where to be found. Hours later, I met him and asked him why he had disappeared. He explained that while he was waiting, a *chasid* approached him and after stating his name and his mother’s name, asked my grandfather to *daven* for him. My Grandfather said that he feared that this may have caused a thought of *gaava* (arrogance) to pass through his mind. He became even more uncomfortable when he discovered that people were saying, “In the merit of the Tolner Rebbe, we may be able to go into the Lev Simcha!”.

Therefore, rather than meet with the Rebbe at the designated time, he went to immerse himself in a *mikvah* in order to purify himself from the *tumah* of arrogance. By the time he was done, it was no longer possible to go in to the Rebbe.

Here, in his *makom*, we must try to commit ourselves to internalizing the *midos* of *shiflus* and *anava*, as symbolized by the image of animals that הולך על גחון. If we do so, Hashem will help us follow in my grandfather’s holy footsteps אבי”ר



[2]

© כל הזכויות שמורות למכון 'המאור שבתורה' שע"י מוסדות טאלנא עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א

The editor is solely responsible for any mistakes and omissions

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or for any comments, please email us at

hamaortolna@gmail.com