



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

### *Melave Malka Parshas Vayechi 5771*

Yaakov Avinu gives Yehuda the *bracha*:

לא יסור שִׁבְט מִיְהוּדָה וּמַחֲקֶק מִבֵּין רִגְלָיו עַד כִּי יָבֹא שִׁלְחָה [שִׁילּוֹ] וְלוֹ יִקְהֶת עַמִּים.  
(בראשית מ"ט: י)

Unkelus translates the first phrase of the *pasuk* as:

Rulership will never disappear from the house of Yehuda. Surprisingly, Chazal tell us in *Maseches Yoma* (נ"ג:) that the Kohen Gadol includes this Aramaic phrase in his *tefilla* on Yom Kippur when he enters the *Kodesh Hakadashim*.

The Maharal asks, "Why did the Kohen Gadol make this request in Aramaic rather than in *Lashon Hakodesh*? This is particularly difficult in light of R. Yochanan's statement (סוטה ל"ב.) that if someone asks for his needs in Aramaic, *Malachei Ha'shareis* don't assist him, because they don't recognize the Aramaic language.

*Sefer Pardes Yosef* (ויקרא ט"ז: י"ז) quotes *Sefer Chasdei Avos* that says in the name of the Vilna Gaon that the Kohen Gadol makes that particular request in Aramaic, because if he would utilize *Lashon Hakodesh*, he would be quoting a *pasuk*. This would be problematic because Chazal state in *Maseches Gitin* (ס:) -דברים שבכתב אי אתה רשאי לומר בעל פה - You are not allowed to recite that which is written in the Torah by heart.

This question is discussed at length in the *Acharonim* - especially because the Rambam presents the text of the Kohen Gadol's *tefilla* in *Lashon Hakodesh* rather than in Aramaic.



[1]

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It is told that in his old age, Rav Yaakov Loberbaum zt"l, the Rav of Lisa and author of *Nesivos HaMishpat*, met the *Gaon* Rav Yehoshua of Kutna, who was only a child at the time. The Rav asked the young boy why the Kohen Gadol had to recite his *tefilla* by heart. Couldn't he have brought a small *Chumash* with him, and read that portion from the *Chumash*?

The boy instantly responded that the Kohen Gadol couldn't possibly have carried a *Chumash* because when he entered the *Kodesh Hakadashim*, he held the *Kaf* containing the *Ketores* in one hand, and the *Machta* containing the coals in his other hand. He also couldn't carry the *Chumash* by placing it in between layers of his clothes for that would be a *chatzitza*. Therefore, the Kohen Gadol would have been forced to recite the *pasuk* by heart.

Clearly, the young Rav Yehoshua was only able to respond so quickly and accurately because he utilized his power of imagination and actually "saw" the Kohen Gadol standing before the entrance of the *Kodesh Hakadashim* holding the *Kaf* in one hand, and the *Machta* in the other.

I often emphasize how necessary it is to learn by visualizing what you are learning. We must remind ourselves again and again that the only way to learn Torah with vitality and excitement, is by utilizing our imagination and visualizing every case, question, and argument as if it was taking place before our eyes.

For example, if someone is learning about the laws of lenders and borrowers, or landlords and tenants, he must see them before his eyes. He should hear their arguments as if he was sitting in the *Beis Din Hagadol* in Yerushalayim.

This type of learning is alive and exciting. One who learns in this way will naturally ask the questions of the *Rishonim* and *Acharonim* and will even be able to answer those questions by himself. He will be able to achieve this because he will be so involved in the *sugya* that he will invest all of



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his strength in the search for the true resolution of the situation according to the Torah.

Let's look at a more specific example. While learning about disagreements between a lender and a borrower, if he doesn't visualize the two parties, he won't really care whether the lender or the borrower is justified. He will hear and understand what is said in the *Gemara* to the best of his ability, but no more than that.

Instead, the *lomeid* must put himself in the shoes of the poor borrower, who risked all he has by taking this loan. He should then visualize the spoiled, wealthy lender who is oppressing the borrower. On the other hand, he should also put himself in the place of the lender who views himself as a fine upstanding Jew. He could have profited by investing his hard-earned money. Instead, He lent those funds to a needy Jew. Now, when the agreed-upon time for repayment has come, and he simply asks the borrower to return his money, but doesn't get his money back. Now the *lomeid* feels the injustice suffered by the lender.

When learning with imagination, even someone who doesn't have the sharpest intellect can come up with wonderful *sevaros* that support both the borrower's and the lender's positions.

This is the aspect of learning Torah described in the *pasuk* טַעֲמוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי טוֹב ה' (תהילים ל"ד:ט). Taste and see that Hashem is good.

Rav Avraham ben Harambam encourages this type of visualization in his *Hamaspik l'ovdei Hashem* (פרק ד):

"A person must visualize in his mind that which can bring him to desire matters of Judaism and happiness in fulfillment of the Torah. For example, visualizing the Beis Hamikdash and its vessels can help him prepare for the time that he will enter its gates when it is rebuilt, and to feel the pain of the *Churban* and separation that resulted from our *aveiros*.



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He can also visualize the way Am Yisrael camped in the *midbar*, and the pillars of cloud and fire that went before them. He can visualize the stories written in the *Sifrei Neviim*. In order to accomplish this, he must apply his imagination to the extent that he sees the events unfold before his eyes.

It is known that when learning about the impact of living according to the Torah, hearing cannot compare to seeing. The power of *dimyon* - imagination bridges the gap between hearing and seeing. Therefore, a person must also visualize the gatherings of the *chachamim* and *tzadikim* when he lives far from them.

On the other hand, he must control his imagination and refrain from visualizations that are damaging to Judaism and can lead him to *aveiros*. This is what the Torah refers to in the *pasuk* וְלֹא תִתְּיוּ אַחֲרֵי לְבַבְכֶּם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם (במדבר ט"ו: ל"ט) - Do not follow after your hearts and your eyes. And Chazal said, הרהורי עבירה קשין מעבירה (יומא כ"ט.) - fantasies of *aveira* are more difficult than *aveira*."

Therefore, we are obligated to strengthen ourselves and try to learn Hashem's Torah by visualizing what we learn. While this is true when we learn by ourselves, it is especially important when learning with children. Only by learning in this way will the words of Torah be engraved in the walls of their hearts forever אכי"ר



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