

Beshalach / בְּשַׁלַּח

Ahava and Yirah

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

It was a typical day in the frum city of Beitar Illit in Eretz Yisroel. The yeshivos and kollelim were filled with the sounds of Torah learning. The supermarkets were packed with people shopping for Shabbos. And thousands of boys and girls packed the classrooms in the many chadorim and Beis Yaakov schools.

Suddenly a massive explosion shook the entire town. Windows rattled, birds took flight from the trees, and the air itself seemed to shake. Everyone was nervous-what had happened? Had a missile been shot from Gaza? Nobody heard the sirens go off. Should they run to the bomb shelters?

In Talmud Torah Nitei Chaim, Rebbe Meltzer immediately started saying Tehillim with the boys in his fourth grade class. After a few terrifying minutes, the Menahel, Rav Bloch, came into the classroom.

"I just got off the phone with the head of the local security office," he said. "Boruch Hashem, there is nothing to worry about. There was a secret Hamas weapons facility in Hussan, the Arab village just outside of Beitar, and they were planning to launch a major attack on Yidden. But a fire started in the building and the whole place blew up, killing the hundreds of terrorist who were training there!"

The boys all stared at each other in shock. They were relieved that the explosion had not been in Beitar, they were excited that something so wild had just happened so close to them, and most of all they were thankful to Hashem for destroying the terrorist *reshaim* before they had a chance to hurt any Yidden.



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Suddenly Eli jumped out of his seat and started singing. “**Hodu laHashem ki tov...**” Quickly, the whole class joined in and started dancing and singing their thanks to Hashem. As the Menahel continued telling the rebbeim and boys in the other classrooms what had happened, the singing began to spread across the cheider. Within minutes, the boys and their rebbeim were all dancing together in the hallways. Such simcha! Such joy! It felt like Simchas Torah!

After fifteen minutes, Rav Bloch held up his hands in the middle of the crowd and asked for quiet. “I would like to talk about something very important,” he said.

“While what just happened is exciting, it is also a very serious time. Can anyone tell me why?”

A seventh grader raised his hand. “Because maybe some Yidden were accidentally in the terrorist hideout and they also died?” he asked. Some boys looked fearful as this idea was mentioned.

“No, Chaim’l,” the Menahel said. “I think we can be quite sure that there were no Yidden there. But we need to think about the lesson that Hakadosh Boruch Hu wanted us to learn from that explosion.”

“I don’t understand.” said another boy. “What does it have to do with us? It’s a Makkah on the terrorists just like the Makos in Mitzrayim or Krias Yam Suf which was to punish the Mitzrim!

“Ah,” said Rav Bloch. “But you know, even after Krias Yam Suf, after the Mitzrim were destroyed, the Torah is always mentioning the punishments of the Mitzrim. Hashem says that if we listen to the Torah, we won’t get the punishments of the Mitzrim.

“Now boys, why would Hashem threaten us with their punishments? We didn’t enslave His beloved children!

“The answer, kinderlach, is that part of being a good Yid is being afraid of Hashem. As much as we know that we’re going to be rewarded in Olam Haboh with the most tremendous, most gigantic, most exciting reward we could ever imagine, it’s always important to be afraid of Hashem too. It’s a mitzvah in the Torah “וְיִרְאַתָּה מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ”. After all, He’s so Big and Powerful and it’s important to always remember that doing anything against His Will is very, very wrong.

“But Hashem loves us so much that He prefers when we learn to be afraid of Him by seeing punishments come on other nations – that’s the best way to see Hashem’s power of punishment. And that’s why He’s always telling us to watch out for the punishments Mitzrayim got. He doesn’t like punishing and He would much rather we learn from what He did long ago.

“Hashem could have taken the Am Yisroel out of Mitzrayim without Makkos and he could have stopped Achmed, Abdul, Hamza, Ibrahim, Machmoud, and the other terrorists from attacking us without a huge explosion. But Hashem does these huge public punishments for our benefit so that we can learn from them and remember that it is never a good idea to do what’s wrong in Hashem’s eyes.”

“So yes, we definitely need to dance and sing our praises to Hashem for saving us from both the Mitzrim and the terrorists in Hussan. But we should also never forget another important lesson. Every time we see Hashem’s strength in the world – a big earthquake in Iran, a big flood in Germany or the Arabs accidentally blowing themselves up – we should remember that Hakadosh Boruch Hu wants us to be afraid of Him too.

“And now that we learned our lesson, let’s continue dancing for Hashem’s Yeshua! **Tov lehodos laHashem...**”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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