



Bet Haraah בית הוראה Shaare Ezra שערי עזרא

Parshat Tetzaveh

Zmanim for New York:

Candle Lighting: 5:22pm

Shabbat ends: 6:22pm

R"T 6:53pm

Heartfelt appreciation and blessings extend to our generous donor for his unwavering and continuous support. May he and his family merit a year filled with health, success, and sweetness.

THE SILENT CONVERSATION: DISCOVERING HASHEM'S INTENTIONS THROUGH PRAYER.

WRITTEN BY RABBI SHAY TAHAN

*TO RECEIVE THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER PLEASE TEXT OUR HOTLINE 347-918-4088

HALACHA QUESTION?

WhatsApp: 347-666-3467

Website: www.askhalacha.com

Call/Text: 347-918-4088

Email: askhalacha1@gmail.com

Over 2,000 classes can be found at Rabbishaytahan.com

During times of conflict, individuals are urged to employ every means at their disposal to ensure victory. This encompasses acquiring the finest equipment, ammunition, intelligence, and other resources. However, these endeavors, termed as hishtadlut, constitute merely our earthly efforts in the grand scheme of things, but it's crucial to recognize that Hashem operates behind the scenes, orchestrating all outcomes. By engaging in hishtadlut, we fulfill our nature duties while maintaining Hashem's hidden role. It's a delicate balance: Hashem remains concealed, expecting us to uncover Him through our actions.

In addition to fulfilling our earthly duties, we are also obligated to engage in spiritual efforts, such as deepening our understanding of Torah, intensifying our prayers, and meticulously observing the commandments. Let's focus on the significance of prayer in this article, highlighting how it can genuinely aid our soldiers and nation in achieving victory during wartime.

Hashem Desires Our Prayer.

In times of peril, our sages teach us that the danger may be a catalyst for Hashem's desire for our prayers. While we often perceive prayer as a response to our needs, the cause and effect relationship can sometimes be reversed. Hashem may engineer circumstances that evoke feelings of urgency and desperation within us, prompting our prayers for deliverance.

In simpler terms, while we typically view prayer as our request to Hashem and His subsequent response, the relationship between prayer and events can often be reversed. Sometimes, Hashem engineers situations where we experience fear or desperation, prompting us to pray for salvation. Thus, prayer becomes the response to the circumstances that Hashem has orchestrated.

Hashem Wants a Relationship With Us.

אמר רבי יצחק: מפני מה היו אבותינו עקורים? מפני שהקב"ה מתאוה לתפלתן של צדיקים. (יבמות דף ס"ד)

We recognize this principle from our patriarchs and matriarch who faced infertility. Chazal explain that this difficulty was ordained by Hashem to elicit their prayers, and upon praying, they were granted children. However, one might argue that this principle applies only to individuals who have personal needs, such as desiring a child. It may not seem relevant to situations where Ha-



shem places us in grave danger, as is the case in our current times. Yet, Chazal elucidate that this principle extends to such situations as well, as we can glean from the following Midrash Raba (שמות כא, ה'): "When the nation of Israel saw that they were surrounded on three sides – the sea blocking them, the enemy in pursuit, and the beasts in the wilderness – they raised their eyes to their Father in heaven and cried out to Him, as it is stated: "The children of Israel cried out to Hashem." **Why did He do this to them? It was because Hashem desires their prayers.**

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: To what is this matter comparable? It is to a king who was traveling on the way and a princess was screaming to him: 'Please, save me from the highwaymen.' The king heard and rescued her. Sometime later, he sought to take her as a wife. He desired that she speak to him, but she did not want to do so. What did the king do? He incited the bandit against her so that she would scream and the king would hear. When the bandit beset her, she began screaming to the king.

The king said to her: 'This is what I desired, to hear your voice.' So Israel, when they were in Egypt

THE SILENT CONVERSATION: DISCOVERING HASHEM'S INTENTIONS THROUGH PRAYER.

and the Egyptians were forcing them to work, they began screaming and raising their eyes to the Hashem, as it is stated: "It was during those many days...they cried out" (שמות ב, כג). Immediately, "Hashem saw the children of Israel" (שמות ב, כה). Hashem began taking them out from there with a powerful hand and an outstretched arm. He sought to hear their voice another time, but they did not wish to cry out. What did He do? He incited Pharaoh to pursue them, as it is stated: "Pharaoh drew near." Immediately, "the children of Israel cried out to the Hashem." At that moment He said: 'That is what I wanted – to hear your voice.' As it is stated: "My dove in the cleft of the rock [...sound me your voice] (שיר השירים ב, יד)." (שיר השירים ב, יד).

But why does Hashem care whether we pray to Him, and why does He desire our prayer? Additionally, how do we explain the notion that Hashem didn't give our patriarchs children so they would pray? Didn't they pray beforehand? It seems evident from the Midrash Raba that, just like a king desires a close relationship with his princess, so too does Hashem desire a binding relationship with us. In fact, this is what the commentators explain about the meaning of prayer (Tfila) - a binding attachment relationship. We derive this concept from the reason Rachel named her son Naftali. She said it's because the word "נפתולי" is a variant of the word "פתיל" as in "צמיד פתיל", meaning a tightly fitted lid (במדבר יט, טד). Rachel meant that her bond with her husband contained spiritual and religious dimensions, making their connection immeasurably stronger. (Rashi, Rabenu Bechayey)

Accordingly, we can understand that since Tfila comes from the word "patil," which means attached, the attachment to Hashem has various levels, just like any attachment can range from loose to tight to very tight. Thus, when Hashem desired the Tfila of our patriarchs, although they obviously prayed before, there is always room to strengthen the attachment with Hashem. You can only reach your full potential when Hashem tests the person.

Why Do We Pray?

א"ר יצחק: למה נמשלה תפילתן של צדיקים מעתה? מה עתר זה מהפך התבואה ממקום למקום, כך תפילתן של צדיקים מהפכת מידותיו של הקב"ה ממידת רגזנות למידת רחמנות. (יבמות סד, א)

There is a question about prayer that is very challenging. Since we believe that Hashem does whatever is best for us and puts us in the best possible scenario at all times, why would I pray to change my circumstances? Moreover, why would Hashem change it if that is the best for me?

Or we can present this the way Rabbi Yosef Albo asked (ספר העיקרים מאמר ד' פרק יח): Either Hashem has determined that a given person shall receive a given benefit, or He has not so determined. If He has determined, there is no need of prayer; and if He has not determined, how can prayer avail to change Hashem's will that He should now determine to benefit the person, when He had not so determined before? For Hashem does not change from a state of willing to a state of not willing, or vice versa. For this reason, they say that right conduct is of no avail for receiving good from Hashem. And similarly, they say that prayer does not avail to enable one to receive a benefit or to be saved from an

evil which has been decreed against him".

The answer is that indeed the conditions I'm in at any given moment are the best for me for that moment, but many times they are painful and hard to tolerate. Therefore, we ask Hashem in our prayer to elevate us to a new level, to a place that is very different from where I am right now. In that scenario, I'm in a new place and that will require new challenges which are easier or more comfortable to tolerate.

This principle is explained in the Gemara (יבמות סד, א) that prayer has the power to change the status of a person and thus change the heavenly decree. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Why are the prayers of the righteous likened to a pitchfork? Just as a pitchfork turns the grain from one place to another, so too the prayers of the righteous turn the heavenly attributes from the attribute of anger to the attribute of mercy.

Rabbi Albo elaborates on this concept, explaining that when a benefit is determined in favor of anyone, it is conditional upon a certain degree of right conduct. This principle applies generally to the promises in the Bible. Similarly, when a certain evil is determined upon someone, it is also conditional upon his being wicked to a certain degree or being predisposed to it. If the degree of wickedness or predisposition changes, the pre-determined event or fate necessarily changes for the better or worse accordingly.

Utilizing the Potential.

Another approach is that the good destined for a person is already prepared for him, but it can only be utilized if he prays for it; then Hashem brings it down for him. Otherwise, it remains waiting for him unused. This is the explanation of Rabbi Yosef Albo: For the influences from above come down upon the recipient when he is in a certain degree and state of preparation to receive them. And if a person does not prepare himself, he withholds the good from himself. For example, if it has been determined from on high that a given person's crops shall prosper in a given year, and he neglects to plow or sow his land that year, then God may bring the most abundant rain upon the land, but his crops will not prosper, seeing that he has not plowed or sowed. He withheld the good from himself because he did not prepare himself to receive it.

This principle is exemplified in the creation of the world, as the verse states (בראשית ב, ה) that although Hashem had created plants and trees, they weren't fruitful yet because there was no man to pray for them to bring forth. This teaches us that many times the potential is there, but it awaits prayer to bring it forth. Coming back to recent events, we should all understand that Hashem wants something from us, as a catastrophe doesn't occur in the world without a spiritual reason. Therefore, it's crucial to try to discern what Hashem desires from us. In previous generations, we would turn to our great rabbis, who could guide us in understanding Hashem's will. However, in a generation like ours, where guidance may be elusive, we need to return to the fundamental roots. The most basic principle is that we need a relationship with Hashem, and we foster that relationship through intimate prayer.

BRAVE HEARTS: SOLDIERS STANDING STRONG AGAINST FEAR

Being Jewish, it's natural to feel a sense of fear when considering our small numbers among a vast quantity of enemies. The large demonstrations we've witnessed recently against the Jewish people abroad demonstrated significant power. The thought of where things are heading, especially as our enemies continue to multiply consistently and rapidly, sends chills down our spines.

The Torah provides guidance on how to overcome the fear instilled by many enemies, advising us not to fear their large numbers.

“וְרָאִיתָ סוֹס וָרֶכֶב עִם רַב מִמֶּךָ לֹא תִירָא מֵהֶם” meaning: “When you see a nation much larger than yours, do not fear.” The reason behind this instruction is that they are considered insignificant in the eyes of Hashem, who does not get impressed by large numbers, and since He leads our war-

fare, we need not worry.

The Torah reiterates the idea that we should not fear a large quantity of enemies, emphasizing that Hashem is infinitely greater than them, stating:

כִּי תֹאמַר בְּלִבְבְּךָ רַבִּים הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה מִמֶּנִּי אֵיכָה אוּכַל לְהוֹרִישָׁם:

Should you say to yourselves, “These nations are more numerous than we; how can we dispossess them?”

לֹא תִירָא מֵהֶם זָכֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפָרְעֹה וּלְכָל מִצְרָיִם:

You need have no fear of them. You have but to bear in mind what Hashem did to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians:

לֹא תִעָרֵץ מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי־ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּקִרְבְּךָ קֹל גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא:

Do not stand in dread of them, for your Hashem is in your midst, a great and awesome God.

The Torah also instructs us not to fear their great and fortified

cities, which may seem impossible for us to conquer. Sometimes, the people inhabiting those cities may appear great and lofty. However, the same idea applies: in Hashem's eyes, they are worthless.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲתָה עֹבֵר הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לְבֹא לְרִשֶׁת גּוֹיִם גְּדֹלִים וְעֲצֻמִּים מִמֶּךָ עָרִים גְּדֹלֹת וּבְצֻרֹת בְּשָׁמַיִם:

Hear, O Israel! You are about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and more populous than you: great cities with walls sky-high;

עַם־גָּדוֹל וָרָם בְּנֵי עֲנָקִים אֲשֶׁר אֲתָה יֹדְעָה וְאֲתָה שֹׁמֵעָתָ מִי וְיִצְבֹּא לִפְנֵי בְנֵי עֲנָק:

a people great and tall, the Anakites, of whom you have knowledge; for you have heard it said, “Who can stand up to the children of

Anak?”

וְיָדַעְתָּ הַיּוֹם כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא־הָעֹבֵר לִפְנֵיךָ אֵשׁ אֲכָלָה הוּא יִשְׁמִידֵם וְהוּא יִכְנִיעֵם לִפְנֵיךָ וְהוֹרִשְׁתָּם וְהִאֲבַדְתָּם מִהָרָבָא שֶׁר דָּבָר ה' לָךְ:

Know then this day that none other than Hashem is crossing at your head, a devouring fire; it is [Hashem] who will wipe them out—subduing them before you, that you may quickly dispossess and destroy them, as Hashem promised you.

Chazal (תנחומא תולדות ה') also address this fear, comparing our nation to a sheep among 70 wolves. Adrianus said to Rabbi Yehoshua, "How great is the sheep that stands among seventy wolves!" He replied to him, "Great is the shepherd who rescues her, guards her, and breaks them before her. Be confident, for no vessel formed against you shall succeed."

PURCHASING A TALLIT AND TEFILLIN FOR SOLDIERS FROM MAASER MONEY.

In light of the challenging situation prevailing in our country and worldwide, many have been stirred to fulfill the commandments of wearing a Tallit and Tefillin, including soldiers who have not had the opportunity to acquire these items for themselves. Consequently, many have stepped forward to assist in purchasing these important commandments for them. Let's clarify whether it is permissible to use one's Maaser money (tithe) for this purpose.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אגרות משה יו"ד ח"ב סימן קמא) wrote: "The essence of the commandment of charity can only be performed in matters of sustenance, food, drink, and clothing, and not in the acquisition of items necessary for the performance of a mitzvah... Giving money to the poor to buy Tefillin, Mezuzot, or Tzitzit is not a matter of charity, but still it is a great thing to do, as it enables the poor person to fulfill the commandments of Hashem."

From his words, it can be inferred that even though it is indeed a noble deed, it is not permissible to purchase Tzitzit and Tefillin for soldiers from Maaser money. This seems to be in accordance with the ruling of the Rema (י"ד סימן רמט ס"א) citing the Maharil, who

states that one should not use their Maaser money for mitzvot, such as candles for the shul or other religious items, but rather they should be given to the poor.

There is no distinction between charity and Maaser, as maaser represent the amount of charity a person is obligated to give, as stated in the Shulchan Aruch (יו"ד סימן רמט ס"א): "The amount of giving (for the mitzvah of charity) is as much as one's hand can reach, according to the needs of the poor. And if one's hand cannot reach so much, one should give up to a fifth of one's assets, a mitzvah of the highest order. And one tenth is considered a medium measure, less than this is an evil eye."

However, some have allowed the purchase of mitzvah items with tithed money for the benefit of others. The Taz and the Shach (commenting on the above-mentioned Rema) permit using tithed money to merit others, such as becoming a Sandak or enabling a Chatten and Kalla to marry, and also to buy sefarim for lending them to others for study.

But it should be understood that this permission is only for mitzvot that one is not obligated to fulfill themselves. On this matter

PURCHASING A TALLIT AND TEFILLIN FOR SOLDIERS FROM MAASER MONEY.

the principle was stated, "An obligation item comes only from secular matters," meaning that commandments that one is obligated to fulfill, such as Mezuzah or Tefillin for oneself, cannot be purchased with Maaser money, but only with one's own money.

According to these principles, it has become customary to permit the purchase of mitzvah items for others who are unable to acquire them for themselves. This was ruled by the Chafetz Chaim (אהבת חסד פרק יט סק"ב).

Tefillin Trade-off: Quantity or Quality?

At times, a person may have enough money to donate a nice mehudar pair of tefillin, but they face a dilemma: whether to purchase one mehudar pair or buy two pairs of tefillin of lesser quality for two individuals.

We encounter a similar question in the laws of Chanukah, where the mitzvah of lighting more than one candle is considered a hiddur (enhancement). What should one do if they have enough to light every night with the extra candles for the hiddur, but they discover that someone else cannot afford to buy even one candle for the basic mitzvah? (when one can't afford buying more candles).

The Magen Avraham suggests that it's preferable to help the other person fulfill the mitzvah rather than lighting all the hiddur candles while the other person doesn't fulfill the mitzvah at all.

Accordingly, we can learn from here that it's better to have two people performing the basic level mitzvah of tefillin than one person having a mehudar one and leaving another without a pair of tefillin.

Balancing Mitzvot: Tefillin, Maaser, and Financial Struggle.

May a person who has decided to purchase a higher-quality pair of tefillin or a more mehudar mezuzah use maaser money for that purpose? The Levush (סימן רמט ס"א) and Nachalat Shiva (סימן ח') wrote that one may not use maaser for things he is obligated to do, such as having a pair of tefillin or a mezuzah. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה מועדים פרק יא ה"א) wrote that even if one is struggling financially, he is still not permitted to use

maaser funds for these items; rather, he should borrow a pair of tefillin from others. However, in the event that one doesn't have anyone to borrow from and he truly cannot afford to purchase them, he is allowed to use maaser funds.

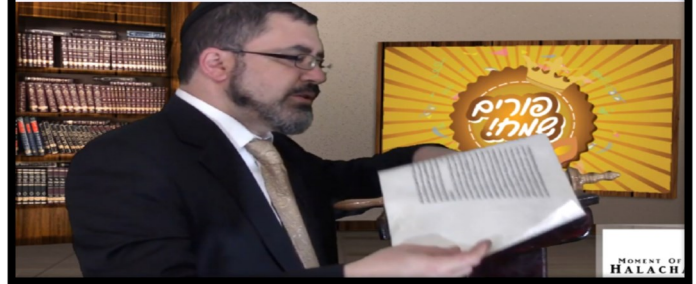
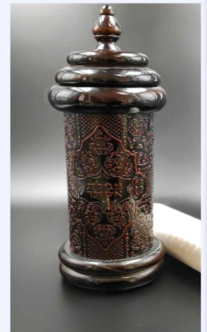
When considering purchasing a pair of tefillin or mezuzah, it's established that one may not use maaser funds for the initial purchase. However, can maaser be utilized to upgrade them to a more mehudar quality by adding that maaser money to acquire a better pair than the one initially intended to buy?

This debate among the rabbis presents differing views. Meshiv Davar (ח"ב סימן עה) and Rav Elyashiv (מובא באורח צדקה עמוד קנב) didn't allow such usage, but Rav Aurbach (הליכות שלמה מועדים פרק יא ה"א) proposed that if one is determined not to spend the extra amount, they may use maaser funds to purchase a better pair.



MEHUDAR MEGILOT FOR
SALE!

RABBI SHAY TAHAN
347-666-3467



Shaare Ezra is a one of a kind, multi-faceted organization that's there for the community. Under the leadership of HaRav Shay Tahan שליט"א. Shaare Ezra feels that proper Halachic guidance should be accessible to everyone, therefore we offer the community the opportunity to call, text, WhatsApp, or e-mail any halachic questions they may have, through the Bet Horaah, where qualified, trained and ordained Rabbis are available to answer your questions in English, Hebrew and Russian. Shaare Ezra is from the community—for the community.

LILUI NISHMAT
HANUKA BEN YOSEF YOSOFOV
DAVID BEN ZOHOF
TUNE' BAT BAHIE.
מייק מאיר בן מרטה

Dedications from our Partners

REFUAH SHELEMA
ESTHER BAT MAZAL
RACHAMIM BEN MIRIAM
מלכיאל בן שריה

REFUAH SHELEMA
CHAIM YISROEL BEN TOVA
RIVKA
LAYA BAT BRACHA

MAY HASHEM SEND SPECIAL STRENGTH IN TORAH AND ALL THE BERACHOT TO DAVID AKIVA AND RACHEL LEON.

Lev Mavashev from Alpha Realty Hatzlacha and Parnasa Tova.
Hatzlacha to Moshe and Saritt Samechov