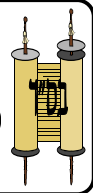




Kinder Torah

Parashas Ki Savo



Sweet Treats

"Reb Betzalel, are you planning to be in my neighborhood this Shabbos?"

"Not that I know of, Reb Moshe. Is something special happening?"

"Yes. We are making a kiddush to celebrate the birth of our baby daughter."

"Mazel tov, Reb Moshe! Let me give you a bracha right now. You and your wife should merit raising her in the path of Torah. Her life should be filled with good deeds, and you should lead her to the chuppah, where she will marry her mate - a true Ben Torah."

"Amen!"

"I am sorry that I will not be able to join you, however, I would like to ask you for a favor, Reb Moshe. Can you please bring me back something sweet from the kiddush?"

"It will be my greatest pleasure, Reb Betzalel."

"Thank you and good Shabbos."

"Good Shabbos."

Shabbos morning comes, and the simcha hall is filled with guests. They come to honor Reb Moshe's family, partake of the delicious food, and bless his new born daughter. The food is indeed delicious - steaming hot kugels, tasty herring, sweet pastries, and all types of drinks. The guests eat and drink. Then the Rav rises to give a drasha. His Divrei Torah and berachos are inspiring. Finally, the baal simcha, Reb Moshe, rises to speak. He thanks Hashem for His overwhelming kindness and inspires the guests with an insightful Devar Torah. The Kiddush finishes with everyone thoroughly enjoying themselves.

After Shabbos, Reb Moshe wraps up a few sweet pastries for his good friend, Reb Betzalel. He is delighted to see him Sunday morning in Yeshiva.

"Reb Moshe - Shavuah Tov! (Have a good week.) How was the kiddush?"

"Wonderful, Reb Betzalel. I brought you back a few sweet things."

Reb Moshe handed Reb Betzalel the package. He opened it up and saw pastries.

"Thank you so much, Reb Moshe. These pastries look really sweet."

"They are, Reb Betzalel, however, I have something even sweeter for you."

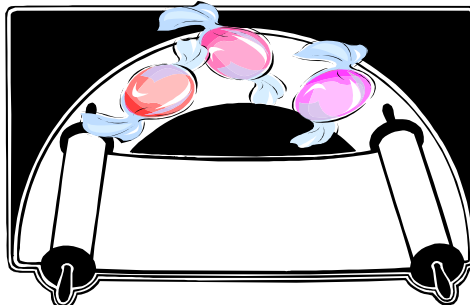
"Really? That is so nice of you."

"Take a look at this verse in the Chumash. 'You shall be happy with all the good that Hashem your G-d has given you and your household - you and the Levi and the ger who is in your midst.' (Devarim 26:11). This is the last verse of the declaration made over *bikurim* (first fruits) that were brought to the Beis HaMikdash. The entire declaration is a statement of our gratitude and appreciation to Hashem for all of the good that He has done for us. The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh explains that 'all of the good' is referring to Torah. As the Mishna states 'The only good is Torah

(Pirkei Avos 6:3). How does he describe that goodness? It is the sweetest thing in the world. If a person would realize and feel the sweetness of Torah, he would go crazy over it, and run after it. He would see that everything else in the world, including all of the silver and gold, are worthless compared to the sweet goodness of the Torah."

"That sounds wonderful; however, sometimes learning Torah is difficult."

"There are two answers to that question. Firstly, if you keep learning long enough until you gain an insight or an understanding into the subject that you are learning, you will taste the sweetness of that success. Secondly, just the work alone is satisfyingly sweet. Can you imagine someone who is working hard on the job and making a million dollars a day? Of course it is hard, but it is his greatest pleasure because he knows how much he is profiting. Learning Torah is the ultimate good - it brings the ultimate profit, and therefore, regardless of the work involved, it is the sweetest thing in the world. This is reflected in the words of Dovid HaMelech,



'They (the words of Torah) are more desirable than gold, than much fine gold, sweeter than honey, and drippings from the honeycombs' (Tehillim 19:11)."

"My good friend Reb Moshe, I see that you are a person who likes sweets and likes to share them with others. You have brought me back the sweetest thing in the world from your kiddush. You have brought me back a Devar Torah. Not just any Devar Torah, but the holy words of the Ohr HaChaim, who describes the ultimate sweetness of Divrei Torah. Thank you Reb Moshe for sweetening my day, and my life."

"My pleasure Reb Betzalel. I hope you have a steady diet of sweets."

"The ones with no calories."

"Right."

Kinderlach . . .

What is the sweetest thing in the world? Rugalech? No. Sweet breakfast cereal? Not really. Chocolate? Guess again. Sugar candies? Think sweeter. Soft drinks? Even sweeter. Ice cream! No! There is something sweeter than all of these things put together. A Devar Torah. A clear understanding of a difficult sugya (subject) in the Gemora. A chiddush (novel Torah

thought). A teretz (answer) to a difficult kasha (question). The Ohr HaChaim tells us that all of these Torah thoughts are sweeter than the sweetest foods. Hashem gave His Torah the sweetest taste in the world. If people knew how truly sweet it is, they would run after it. You now know the secret, kinderlach. Taste the sweetness of Hashem's Torah. Every other treat pales in comparison.

The War

"Men, prepare yourselves for the most difficult battle that you have ever fought."

"How tough can it be, sir? We have fought many wars and won them all."

"Men, this enemy is different. Normally, when you defeat an enemy, he surrenders and you have won the war. This enemy never gives up. You can defeat him 100 or even 1000 times, he will never give up."

"It sound like an impossible mission, sir."

"It would be impossible for our army alone. However, we have a very powerful ally who will help us in this war."

"Who is it? A member of the UN? A mercenary army?"

"No, our ally is . . . Hashem. And our enemy is the Yetzer Hora (Evil Inclination)."

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh has a beautiful long *drasha* explaining the verses that were recited when bringing the *bikurim* (first fruits). They are a description of the war against the Yetzer Hora. Verse seven states, "And we cried out to Hashem." This hints to the fact that we must pray to Hashem every day, asking Him to save us from the Yetzer Hora. The verse continues, "And Hashem heard our voices." Although He created the Yetzer Hora to test us, when we cry to Him in prayer, He will give us the strength to push him away.

Kinderlach . . .

Selichos are approaching. These prayers are a wonderful opportunity to cry out to Hashem, asking for His assistance. Realize that the Yetzer Hora has defeated you, making you err. Appeal to Hashem for help in defeating the enemy. B'ezras Hashem, kinderlach, you will receive siyata di'shmaya (Heavenly assistance) and win the war.

Parasha Questions:

- List some of the *berachos* that we will receive if we listen to Hashem's voice. (28:3-13)
- List some of the *klalos* (curses) that we will receive if we do not listen to Hashem's voice. (28:16-68)
- What reason does the Torah give for the *klalos*? (28:47)

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