

# Kindert Torah

בס"ד

## Parashas Ki Sisa

### "And I Was Saved"

"My dear husband, Menashe, how are you this evening?"  
"Boruch Hashem, Dossi. Today I was reminded that we have so much to thank Hashem for. I heard some distressing news."

"Oy, vey. I also heard something very unpleasant. Bad news is all too common today, Menashe. Sickness, poverty, educational problems, shalom bayis troubles, political struggles, the list is endless. What can we do?"

"I can relate to you the advice that I received from my *Mashgiach* (spiritual mentor). I was in a difficult situation that worried me so much, I could not sleep. My mind was racing and I could not even concentrate on my learning. He asked me a simple question. 'Do you learn *mussar*?'"

"What did you answer him?"

"I hesitated and said that I live a *mussar* life. He asked again, 'Do you learn *mussar*?' I had to admit that I did not."

"What did he say?"

"He advised me to learn the second chapter of the sefer '*Eminah and Bitachon*' by the Chazon Ish zt"l for half an hour every day. He said that it would take a couple of years, however, I would build up my *emunah* and *bitachon* by learning *mussar*."

"What does the Chazon Ish speak about in his sefer?"

"He says that *bitachon* is the faith that there is no chance occurrence in the world. Everything that is done under the sun is declared by The Holy One Blessed Be He."

"That alone is a comforting thought. The person's difficult situation is a *nisayon* (spiritual test) tailor made for him by the Master of the World."

"Precisely. The Chazon Ish continues to say that a person is afraid when he finds himself in a dangerous situation. His spirit weakens and it becomes difficult for him to remember that chance is not his master; rather Hashem decreed this *nisayon* upon him. There is nothing stopping Him from saving him by guiding events that turn around the entire chaotic situation. How? A person must plant in his bones the obvious truth that the situation he is facing did not happen by chance! Everything is from The Blessed One, whether pleasant or unpleasant. When this *emunah* becomes rooted within him, his fear goes away, and he gets the fortitude to believe in the possibility of a salvation. Hashem can just as easily make the situation facing him turn out good as bad. This is called *bitachon*."

"What a powerful statement! Of course, we all know that Hashem is running the world in general and our lives in particular. It is no

more difficult for Him to save us than not. He decreed this situation for us. Therefore, what are we worried about?"

"Exactly. The sefer goes on to relate that one of the characteristics of *bitachon* is to stand by this *emunah*, even when the thought of suffering enters a person's mind. His heart should be aware that there is no chance occurrence in this world; rather everything is from Him, The Blessed One. Then he must do *hish-tadlus* (preparation for) *hatzalah* (salvation). The rest of the world runs around endlessly after benefactors, politicians and employs worthless strategies. The trusting one does what is necessary. However he knows that the *hatzalah* is from Hashem. Therefore, he searches his deeds and turns his heart to *teshuva*, *tefillah*, and *tsedaka* to rescind the evil decree."

"Fantastic! It is all so logical! Hashem is sending us the trouble because He wants us to turn to Him. He can save us very easily; He just wants us to realize that and act upon it."

"Yes. We have to keep in mind that Hashem's calculations are very deep. We can never know for certain why we are suffering. However, He does want us to search our deeds and correct our ways. We can pray to Him for direction is showing us our mistakes. With all of this, there are no guarantees. We may be in for difficult times. However, we must do our best. We grow much closer to Hashem because we are turning to Him."

"This all sounds like a big commitment, Menashe."

"It is Dossi. The *Mashgiach* said that it would take a couple of years, and he was right. I prayed with tears. I spent time searching my soul looking to improve my ways. I gave *tsedaka* and did as much *chesed* as I could. Slowly, I began to see progress."

"Boruch Hashem, Menashe!"

"Yes, boruch Hashem. He expects great things from us. He wants us to be the best that we can be. Mistakes take effort to correct, and good *middos* take time to cultivate and develop. However, this is what we were sent down to this world to do. . . to become close to Hashem by emulating Him. He puts us into situations where we need to turn to Him for assistance."

"How inspiring!"

"We see this happening in this week's parasha. Klal Yisrael committed a sin – the *chet ha'egel*. They were in a very serious

situation – Hashem wanted to destroy them."

"What saved them?"

"*Teshuva*, *tefillah*, and *tsedaka*. The ones who perpetrated the event, which occurred on the seventeenth of Tammuz, were killed. The rest sorely regretted their shameful deeds. Moshe Rabbeinu went up to Har Sinai for two forty day periods to plead for the salvation of the children of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. Finally, he came down with the good tidings that they were forgiven. However, the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) still did not rest among them. For that, they needed to give of their time, money, and energy to build a *Mishkan* – a place of Divine Service where the *Shechina* could dwell. When that was completed, along with its inaugural sacrifices, on the first of Nissan, the *Shechina* finally came to rest within Klal Yisrael. Over eight months of *teshuva*, *tefillah*, and *tsedaka* of an entire nation!"

"That surely is a lot of effort."

"Yes, but in the end we have to realize that the salvation is not necessarily on our merit. We cannot proudly think that we saved ourselves. As we said earlier, we cannot fathom Hashem's judgments. A *yeshua* (salvation) is a chesed from the Almighty. We can only be grateful the He decided to save us. And we can fervently pray that we will not be tested with difficult situations again."

"Amen! May all of our tests be positive ones, and may we all grow close to Hashem by enjoying His pleasant ways."



#### Kindertlach . . .

*Serving Hashem is a lifetime project. There are no short cuts. A person puts his whole heart and soul into coming close to his Creator. When he is in a *nisayon*, he puts extra effort in to be saved. *Teshuva*, *tefillah*, and *tsedaka* is a process of personal growth that takes commitment. However, it is well worth it. Your striving brings you a close relationship with the Holy One, Blessed be He. That is the most precious thing in the world. That is true salvation.*

#### Parasha Questions:

- How did the nation regret their sin? (33:4, 8,10)
- What did Hashem want to do to Moshe and the Jewish people? (32:10)
- What was the timetable of the events that led up to the *Shechina* resting on the *Mishkan*? (Rashi 33:11)