



NEVER TO FORGET

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So many rules, so much to remember, this Covid pandemic has spawned a whole raft of dos and don'ts. Sweat inducing masks are shifted around your itchy face, whilst hand sanitisers dry our hands to a crisp. Yes, Covid has a lot to answer for, and future generations will look back at ours with quizzical wonder. As we tip toe towards what is being called "Freedom Day", our hopes rise for a better tomorrow. Over the last year and a half, we have had to close shuls, open them again, only to close them some more. Place had to be found for distancing, and I for one ended up davening in shul yet not being able to join the others. Shailos spewed forth, whole new seforim were produced covering almost every area of our Torah lives. Covid this, Covid that, every "normal" action had strings attached that would hopefully keep us out of danger. As the dust settles and we try to catch our breath, we each gaze over destroyed plans and wounded connections that all experienced, fearful of the future yet feeling strengthened with fresh hope.

If you stop and think a moment, you will look over the past few months and wonder how we all coped. We have all lived through difficult times, learning a whole new sense of awareness, fearful of a galaxy of dangers never known of before. Gingerly, as we take our foot off the gas, we should gaze over all this and focus on lessons every Yied must absorb.

The Torah tells us that we must be constantly aware of our connection with the Eibishter. Every



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action, every step must be in accordance with His rotzon. We often allow this primary connection to become blurred. In the hurly burly of everyday life, it seems that even the best of us can lose this vital focus.

Interestingly, in Golus Covid we rarely forgot what we were meant to concentrate on, in fact if we did, we would soon be reminded by 'concerned' friends and family. Even those who didn't believe that all the Covid regulations were truly necessary, were always conscious of what they were.

Everything that happens in the world is a message from the Eibishter. Covid is not an exception, if anything it proved this with great clarity. When we think we can't keep focused on Hashem's totality in our lives, just remind yourself how much we had to learn during Covid.

Parshas Mattos begins:

'Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of Bnei Yisroel saying, "This is the matter that Hashem has commanded..."

The Tiferes Shmuel of Alexander ZTL explains that whenever a Yied does something, he must ask himself, 'Is this the Will of Hashem? Will it bring Nachas to the Eibishter?'

Our lives flow with opportunities to create Kiddush Hashem and bring ourselves closer to Hashem. This, says the Rebbe, is the deeper meaning of our passage. Moshe Rabbeinu called together the heads of the Tribes and taught them that with each step a Yied takes in life one must examine if it is the true rotzon of Hashem.

There is so much we must learn from the ordeal that Covid presented. In time we will hopefully be given the daas to understand what Hashem's message is for each of us, and how we must make changes accordingly. One thing we all can integrate into our daily lives now, and that is our ability to be mindful of where we are and what we are meant to do. It isn't only Covid that is a challenge, for a Yied it is our drawing closer to Hashem, that calls out to us first and always.