



ONE SOUL BRINGS THE BLESSING *Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita*

Jewish life is filled with anomalies, it is part of the rich tapestry that the Torah presents. Let me share just one: On Shmini Atzeres we all recite the special prayer of Geshem, exalting Hashem that we be blessed with life affirming rain over the next few winter months. Strangely, (here comes the anomaly) we don't introduce the daily recitation of the request of Tal U'motor blessing in Eretz Yisroel until fifteen days later on the 7 of Cheshvan (the date this article is being written), Why the wait? After all the rain we pray for is more than just about the need for nourishment for our crops, in spiritual terms it is asking for the blessing of greater growth in ruchniyus. Chazal explain that the wait is basically a practical one. In those times traveling from Yerusholyim to the farthest reaches of Eretz Yisroel took time and was arduous, Chazal didn't want the rains to fall on the pilgrims as they wended their ways home because if so, they may well be hesitant in making the same pilgrimage the following year. This understanding was extended for those who lived in chutz l'oretz where they didn't start the daily recitation till December.

I recently heard a shmooz from the Krasner Rav Shlita from New York who clarifies this whole subject in a meaningful way.

The Blessing of rain was a powerful reminder for Klall Yisroel of our need for a connection with the Eibishter and how vital this is in all facets of life. Chazal speak of rain as a metaphor for life enhancing cleansing of our neshomahs and the tool that allows for our growth. The Torah itself is mentioned as life giving waters.

We stood at the end of the glorious Hieliga Teig and having been cleansed from the everyday humdrum of life through the days of heartfelt tefillos, we cry out to our Father in Shomayim that we be blessed with continuity of the kedushah that yom tov has bought each one of us.

בס"ד



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And yet, we hold back from these daily entreaties for blessings because it may well be that one Yiedle, probably someone living at the very edge of the holy land, may get wet and decide not to travel a year later to the Bais Hamekdosh. One Jew, one shlepper from who knows where holds up the Brocha of the whole of Klall Yisroel, just in case he becomes dissuaded from making the trip next time.

Asks the Krasna Rav, what are we meant to think in our times, when young children aren't allowed into a cheder, for whatever reason, and are left without the merit of Torah learning. Sadly he may well be left soaking in the polluted waters of our secular society because no one thought about the consequences of losing one single soul. Klall Yisroel is meant to worry about even just one neshomah being left out, yet, well somehow this is often disregarded with grave consequences.

I have written about this subject on numerous occasions, and debated this painful predicament with many worthy souls. I guess my words have not yet found resonance enough to make much of a difference, but when I hear that renown Gedolim such as the Krasna Rav speak so movingly regarding this painful subject, I take courage to continue in my quest.

Over forty years ago I had the zechus to serve as head of a small yeshiva that strived to help boys who struggled in larger Mosdos. One young talmid was especially troublesome to the point that his Rebbe's begged me to send him out of the Yeshivah. I was put in an invidious position, the staff were alarmed over his misadventures while I felt if we threw him out, he would soon be totally on the street. I went to HaRav Shlomo Friefeld Ztl of Shaar Yoshuv in Far Rockaway to ask him what I should do. Reb Shlomo was a beloved Rebbe to many young people, some of which had 'interesting' backstories. To sit with this Gadol for just a few minutes was an experience that could ignite ones neshoma into being in chinuch for a lifetime. His eyes spoke with warmth and love, and in just moments I was treated to a long shiur on how to enliven any bochurs yiddishkiet, and bring out his best. I left the Rosh Yeshivah in a daze and just typing these words bring a smile to my heart.

I then paid a visit to the Bobover Rebbe Harav Shlomo Ztl. The Rebbe was the most gracious and caring Neshoma one could ever hope to meet. His entirety was lived for Klall Yisroel, and till this day, just my memories of his humanity and love for all things Holy lift my heart to strive to be a better Yied. I asked the Rov what I should do with this boy, and shared that some of the staff wanted him to be sent home. The Rav was incredulous, "Vous? Arous shiken a Yingel? Chas Vesholom!" "What? Sending a youngster away?" The Rav then went into a heartrending shmooz of how we had survived all the horrors of the Churban, been blessed to start rebuilding in a new place, and we dare speak of throwing talmidim out of our mosdos? Impossible! The whole reason we are here is to give chizuk for just such neshomahs that need chizuk.

Well, I guess I had my path set for me, and went back to the Yeshivah with new courage. I would like to share with you that the boy worked out perfect, and ultimately became a Rosh Yeshivah, but that isn't the truth. I will share that he is married, the father of lovely family of Bnei Torah and is well respected. For me this is a win, not only for me, but for klall Yisroel, and I thank my holy mentors for teaching me all those years ago how valuable even one neshoma is to the world.

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