



THE TUNE OF HOPE

Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

They are there, nestled between the pages of seforim often learnt and cherished. I speak of Torah gems just waiting to send fresh sparks into the readers heart, brimming with hope and fresh understanding. A few weeks ago, I was gifted with just such an explosive spiritual gift and I want to share it with you my dear readers. Truth be said, I have learnt it before, but just like most such gifts, it takes just the right circumstances for its potency to explode onto one's total consciousness. I have attempted sharing its holiness in an article for at least three weeks, yet the totality of its impact has defied any gifts of the written word I may possess. This morning I decided, enough! I have to set this spiritual jewel on its way so others can also savour its meaningful lessons. I have spoken of its potent truths at a number of occasions but the written form is sometimes a bit arid and I have been afraid I won't be blessed in conveying the power that these words bestow. However, after numerous false starts, and time ticking by in its relentless march, I have decided, I must face the white blank page and do my best, hoping my attempt will find favour in your eyes, and be some merit to the origins of its truth.

The time was 1942, the place Warsaw Poland, the Tzadik, the Peasetzna Rebbe ZTL was sitting with his Chassidim, huddled in the ruins of so many lives, so many hopes. The Rebbe had lost his entire family, the few who sat with him were no strangers to the horror that stalked their every day. Yet they somehow came to the Tzadik, seeking his light, and soaking up his comfort. The Rebbe clears his throat and looks around, the Yidden want to hear his thoughts and his every word is measured.

The Rebbe speaks about spiritual growth despite the shadows that surround his olam. He explains that even in such dire circumstances we each must aspire to a closer connection

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with the Eibishter. He pleads that his flock not allow despair to defeat their close connection to Hashem, rather they should seek within their hearts ways to turn their depression into aspirations of clarity and hope. The Eibishter loves us, The Rebbe cries, and He wants us to connect with that love.

The Rebbe then shares a powerful example with his holy chevra. There is a gemorah that speaks of the different utensils in the Bais Hamikdosh. Amongst these was a special rake that was used at the end of each day to clean away the ashes left on the mizbeach after all the korbonos had been burnt. The gemorah tells us that this rake had one thousand teeth, and that each tooth had a unique tone. As it ran through the ashes, the many teeth combined to play a heavenly tune that could never be replicated yet was unique in its uplifting holiness.

The Rebbe went on to explain what this was all about: The ashes were what was left of the korbonos. Each of those sacrifices were burnt, the smoke and aroma going up to the heavenly abode. The ashes, well they were the charred remnants of those bits that didn't quite reach the heights of the heavenly realm. They represented the broken bits that were very much part of our service in offering sacrifices so as to gain closeness and atonement from Hashem. Yet here they lay, this grey dust of remaining brokenness. But wait, because Hashem loves us beyond all measure, He sends us this rake, this gatherer of the holy dust of our brokenness and with those very embers is born a unique music, a tune for the soul, that could never be otherwise replicated.

The Yidden in Warsaw huddled together and heard the Tzadik's words. They act as those ashes and enter their darkened shadows and bring hope. The neshomah hears a music beyond mere human experience. The connection with the Eibishter is strengthened, the strength of the Yiddisha bond renewed.

These words stirred my heart and wherever I spoke I shared this powerful Torah thought, gevalt, that rake going thru the grit of our shattered hearts, the music, creeping into our bewildered world. The promise of the love of Hashem, so much and yes, even more.

My position brings many a shattered dream to my door, our golus drags us down with cold despair. The Rebbe has left us a divine healing balm of hope, sweet thoughts of what we could be. Spoken in a dark world yet bringing light.

I have no idea if my words are reaching the spot that rests in every Yiddisha neshoma, I have tried my best and hope I have succeeded. Be gebentched sweet Yidden, listen and hear.