



Eternal Connections

BUILDING
OLAM HABA AWARENESS

Mitzvos are opportunities

The Tea that Wasn't Served

Reb Moshe Bulvin was a “simple” *ba'al habayis* living in pre-war Grodno, though in truth, he was not so simple at all.

Tragically, he suffered the loss of three of his children in a terrible accident. The great Rosh Yeshiva Rav Shimon Shkop came to be *menachem aveil*, offering Reb Moshe heartfelt words of *nechamah*. During their conversation, Reb Moshe asked Rav Shimon what he should do *l'iluy nishmas* his precious children.

Rav Shimon thought briefly and then responded, “Right now, unfortunately, you have three empty beds in your house. Perhaps,” he suggested, “you can welcome three yeshivah *bachurim* into your house and let them sleep in those beds. This will serve as a tremendous *zechus* for the children that you lost.”

After *shivah*, Reb Moshe indeed followed through with Rav Shkop's suggestion. He invited three *bachurim* not only to sleep in his home, but he fed them and cared for them as well. And each night, after they returned from Maariv, he greeted them with hot tea, a special treat.

When he placed the first cup down, Reb Moshe stated softly, “*Lzecher nishmas* my Dovid.” As he placed the second cup down, he said, “*Lzecher nishmas* my Avremel.” And as he placed the third cup down, he murmured, “*Lzecher nishmas* my daughter Rochel.”

The *bachurim* were moved and touched by Reb Moshe's kindness and hospitality.

There was one problem. In truth, most nights, the *bachurim* wished to stay in the *beis medrash* after Maariv to continue their learning. Yet they understood how meaningful it was for Reb Moshe to prepare this tea for them. What took precedence in this case?

Finally, they asked Reb Moshe straight out if he would be okay with them staying out later to learn.

Reb Moshe listened to them and immediately encouraged them to stay as late as they wished. Appreciating the value of their Torah learning, he chose to pass up the *zechus* of making them their tea in favor of their increased Torah study; by the time they would return, he would be sleeping.

Several weeks later, one of the *bachurim* was not feeling well and stayed in bed all day. That night, as Reb Moshe stood up from his chair to go to bed, the sick *bachur* overheard him saying, “Ribono shel Olam, once again tonight I am not preparing tea for the *bachurim*, *l'iluy nishmas* the *neshamos* of my precious children.”

(There's More to the Story by Rabbi Yechiel Spero, Artscroll Publications, page 74-76.)

There are so many ways to serve Hashem and earn *zechuyos* for our loved ones and ourselves. Sometimes holding back from serving Hashem the way we want to can be so hard, but can be a greater *zechus*.

Take This Home

As you go about your activities today, remember that you can serve Hashem best not by doing what you want, but by doing what is right. That is fulfilling the *ratzon Hashem*.

At least once today say: “I am doing [insert action] because this is what Hashem wants *l'iluy nishmas* [insert name of loved one].”

In Short

“We know that we'll have to pay up for doing *aveiros*, yet we still don't talk about it. We push aside any unpleasant thoughts about *Gehinnom*. There is a *mesechta* called *maseches Gehinnom*. Chazal wrote it for a purpose: that we should learn it!

It used to be that every child knew about *Gehinnom*. It was something that people always remembered – and it **helped** them [so that they could save themselves from *Gehinnom* by making the right choices]!”

Rav Don Segal

It Happened to Me!

My Olam Haba Moment

A family member was given a significant sum of money to be used for the purchase of a new car. I heard him discussing different options, trying to determine the best value for his needs. Several weeks later, I was surprised to see him driving around in his new vehicle – a very scaled-down version of what he had been originally considering. When I pressed him for an explanation, the story came out. Someone had apprised him of a family he knew that was in desperate financial straits. He calculated the surplus of money he would have if he would buy the most basic model car, and gave that money to the family in need. The car would be his for a finite number of years, he explained. The money he gave, on the other hand, was his forever.

T.C.

לע"נ יחזקאל שרגא בן אלישע

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