

Parashas
Tetzaveh
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י"א אדר תשפ"ו
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טיב הקהילה

English edition Purim

באנגלית

י"ח ע"י
קהילת שבתי בבית ד'
בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הרה"צ
רבי גמליאל הכהן
רבינוביץ שליט"א

טיב הפרשה

סייעתא דשמיא בזכות היגיעה בתורה

Assistance from Heaven in the merit of toiling in Torah

וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה שְׁנַיִם לַיּוֹם תָּמִיד: (בט, לח)

This is what you shall offer upon the Mizbeach, sheep within their first year, two each day, continually. (29:38)

טיב המערכת

ונפרך הוא *And it was turned about*

We are now standing at Shabbos Zachor, which is the opening to the holy days of Purim. We must understand what the avodah required of us is during these days (of course, aside from the mitzvah of joy and the other mitzvos of Purim). It is known from the holy seforim that "Amalek" has the numerical value of "safek" (doubt), for the entire purpose of Amalek was to introduce doubts in the hearts of Israel regarding emunah. This was also what the wicked Haman sought to demonstrate — that, chas v'shalom, there is no hashgacha of Hashem over His people Israel, and that he could do with them as he wished. Therefore, the entire miracle of Purim occurred measure for measure. The wicked Vashti enslaved the daughters of Israel on Shabbos — therefore her punishment came on Shabbos. The Jews wished to find favor in the eyes of Achashverosh and therefore participated in his feast — in the end he delivered them into the hand of an enemy. Mordechai HaYehudi wore sackcloth and ashes — and merited "royal garments." The wicked Haman became arrogant and desired that everyone bow to him — and he merited a chamber pot poured upon his head. He also gave the advice to kill Queen Vashti — and he himself was killed and hanged upon the tree that he had prepared for Mordechai.

Emunah in Hashem Yisbarach and in His hashgacha is what has sustained the people of Israel in the most difficult times throughout all generations. So too we sing on the night of the Seder: 'והיא שעמדה' - "And it is this that has stood for our fathers and for us," - 'לאבותינו ולנו' - "for in every generation they rise against us to annihilate us, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu saves us from their hand." For without emunah we cannot withstand all those who rise against us, particularly when we are in the depths of exile and surrounded by our enemies — the haters of Israel who rise against us — and in the eyes of flesh it appears that, chas v'shalom, they can succeed in their schemes. But Israel are believers, the children of believers, that just as Hashem helped us in those days, so will He help us in this time.

'Remember what Amalek did to you,' (Devorim 25:17) the Torah commands us. Amalek sought to wage war against emunah and to weaken it, and the war against Amalek is through strengthening emunah in Hashem. And how does one strengthen emunah? It is brought in the seforim in the name of the holy Baal Shem Tov, "I believed, for I spoke," that through words of emunah, the emunah in the heart is also strengthened. Thus, it emerges that the reading of Parashas Zachor and the remembering of the deed of Amalek and his grandson Haman the Agagi strengthen emunah. And may it be His will that through emunah in Hashem we should merit even now miracles and wonders: "He who answered Mordechai and Esther in Shushan the capital, may He answer us."

Tiv HaMoadim - Purim

It is stated in the Gemara (Menachos 29b): "A Tanna of the beis medrash of Rebbe Yishmael taught: Three matters were difficult for Moshe, until HaKadosh Baruch Hu showed him with His finger, and these are they: the Menorah, and the new moon [Rosh Chodesh], and creeping creatures. The Menorah, as it is written (Bamidbar 8:4): 'וזה מעשה המנורה' - 'And this is the workmanship of the Menorah'; Rosh Chodesh, as it is written (Shemos 12:2): 'החודש הזה לכם' - 'This month shall be for you the beginning of months'; creeping creatures, as it is written (Vayikra 11:29): 'וזה לכם הטמא' - 'And this shall be for you the impure'; and some say: also the laws of slaughtering, as it is said (Shemos 29:38): 'וזה אשר תעשה על המזבח' - 'And this is what you shall offer upon the altar.'"

Our understanding is too limited to comprehend what Moshe found difficult in all four of these matters, and without doubt this was in the depth of the inner secret of these mitzvos, for in his profound understanding he merited to descend to the depth of the reason of every mitzvah, and when he came to these mitzvos he found difficulty in the depth of their reasoning, until HaKadosh Baruch Hu showed him and said to him "This," and revealed to him even what he was not able to attain through his own power.

It is stated in the holy Zohar (Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 69, 114a), "The extension of Moshe is in every generation," and therefore every aspect that was in Moshe exists to some degree in all the righteous. Since we see in Moshe Rabbeinu that he did not initially merit to descend to the depth of several halachos, so too there occur for every righteous person many matters that require exceedingly broad knowledge, and he is not able to attain them even with the power of the intellect that was granted to him from Heaven. However, when he toils to understand the depth of the matters, they grant him merit from Heaven, and they bring about causes to teach him and to make him wise even in these matters.

As is related about one of the righteous men of the last generation, that after he toiled greatly and studied all the laws of creeping creatures and their signs to render them pure or impure, he also wished "to derive the practical halachic conclusion." According to the seforim that were under his authority, he clarified the nature of each creeping creature according to its kind, whether it possessed signs of purity or impurity, and thus he determined for himself what the law was for each and every creeping creature. However, among all types of creeping creatures there was one creature whose true signs he was not able to determine through the works of the Geonim of the generations. Had it been a creature that could easily be found, that great one would have been able to examine it with his own eyes and to see tangibly its signs and arrive at a clear halacha. However, it concerned a certain creature that was hardly ever found, and all his knowledge about it was only from the words of the Geonim of the generations in their works, but even from their words they were not able to stand clearly upon its true nature. Nevertheless, that great one did not despair of clarifying its nature, and he increased his toil again and again in the teachings of the Rishonim and the Acharonim

in order to determine the nature of that creature, but even after reviewing their words repeatedly he was not able to find a solution to his doubts.

However, from Heaven they did not allow that great one to remain in his doubt, and after he did everything within his power, the hashgacha haelyonah brought about his salvation in the blink of an eye. Suddenly he noticed that upon the window of his house appeared some lowly creature, and from his knowledge he understood that this was that very creature. Immediately he opened the window, and the creature crawled inside and positioned itself upon the inner window ledge. Then the righteous one examined carefully the signs of that creature, and only after his understanding was completed did the creature remove itself and go away.

This is what Chazal were precise in saying (Megillah 6b): "If a person says to you, I have toiled and I did not find, do not believe him." They did not say, "I have toiled and I did not understand," for in truth every person has a certain limitation to his understanding, and when matters depend upon understanding it is very possible that even after toil he will not succeed in understanding. However, even if his capacity of understanding cannot attain it, they grant from Heaven to one who toils in Torah a "finding," and they direct his eyes to see what he needs to see in order to make him wise.

Of course, these revelations come in many kinds of garments, and not every time does one merit such an openly revealed answer,

but the common denominator in every case is that in the end they bring about some cause in order to illuminate his eyes and to make him wise.

These matters must serve as strengthening for those who do not see themselves as worthy of being Torah scholars, since they see that their understanding is limited and their knowledge very poor, for they must know that in truth the matter does not depend upon their "understanding," and even if they were not blessed with capacity of understanding, they can succeed in their learning. If they will stand stubbornly to understand what they do not understand, they will bring about from Heaven that causes and tools will be provided to them through which they will indeed merit understanding. Sometimes this will be an external cause, and sometimes it will be assistance within the realm of learning, for they will provide before him a chavrusa who will graciously explain to him and broaden his mind. All that is upon him to do is to implant his trust in Hashem, that He will bring about the causes to broaden his mind, and just as He said to Moshe, "This," so too he will merit that it will be said to him, "This."

This outlook I merited to see with the gaon, my father and teacher zt"l. It was on one of the long nights of Teves. I came to visit him and saw him sitting alone, writing his well-known work "Maadanei HaShulchan" on Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah. My father and teacher expressed before me his feelings at that moment as he sat seemingly alone clarifying and deciding the halachos, and

thus he said to me out of his exceedingly great humility: When I learn or write, even though I sit alone, I feel that the Creator sits opposite me and, כביכול, learns with me (see Avot 3:6). Every matter that is not well understood to me, I lay it out before Him, and I feel that the Creator hears me, and when there arises in my mind a way to resolve the matter, I feel that HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself answered me, and as long as I do not merit understanding, I feel that the Creator has not yet answered me.

From my father's words I understood his outlook regarding engagement in Torah. He, z"l, indeed merited to be crowned with the crown of Torah from his youth, and already then he merited authorization to render halachic rulings. However, in order to compose the work "Maadanei HaShulchan" and to serve as a posek and final halachic authority, broad shoulders are required. Even so, he saw fit to compose his work, although he knew that the matter depended upon much toil. Yet it was not from a decision of "I am able." In his view he still required the aspect of "This," that they should show him from Heaven how to decide. Even so, he undertook this task, מתוך trust that HaKadosh Baruch Hu would indeed answer him from Heaven, for when a person desires to do matters for the sake of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, HaKadosh Baruch Hu is his help. Even if he does not know how HaKadosh Baruch Hu will bring about His assistance, he can already begin his task, and in the course of days he will realize what were the causes that HaKadosh Baruch Hu established to support him.

‘לכל עלון יש כתובת’

‘For every parsha sheet there is an address’

Every week I receive a package of twenty-five copies of a very sought-after parsha sheet. It is so sought-after that I am forced to distribute them one by one in order that the regular attendees receive it. On Friday afternoon, the man who brings the sheets to the shul called me and said that due to his son's wedding he did not manage to travel to collect the sheets. I tried to think from where I could obtain at least a few copies for those who might be very disappointed without the sheet...

I called a friend from a distant neighborhood who brings the sheet to his shul and asked him whether he could donate a few copies to me. He replied in astonishment and said, "I can give you more than a few copies!!!" When I asked how many copies he could give me, he counted and informed me that he had twenty-five copies for me. I was stunned that this was exactly the number that I receive every week... It turned out that the mispalilim of his shul had traveled away for a Shabbos retreat and the sheets remained in the city...

When I arrived to collect the sheets, I thanked him warmly, but he did not understand what I was thanking him for, because he was so happy that the sheets did not remain orphaned... א.א.

‘ונתבשר בשורות טובות’

And we be’

‘informed of good tidings’

The maggid shiur, Rabbi Eisenbach, related about his grandfather, Rabbi Yosef Dushinsky, who owned a butcher shop on Rechov HaTapuach in Jerusalem.

One day, toward the end of the day, a shipment of meat arrived, and an elderly woman came and asked to buy a cut of meat. He explained that he had already closed the shop and that he was hurrying to a shiur. But the woman insisted that in the morning she absolutely had to cook, and she insisted on purchasing a cut of meat. He understood that he had no choice, so he sold her a cut and ran to the shiur. At night, a messenger from the Beis Din came to him and informed him that the meat was not glatt and it was forbidden to sell the meat. The grandfather sat down with Tehillim, and the entire night he recited Tehillim that the woman should not stumble chalilah, with forbidden meat. In the morning, when he opened the shop, that same woman was already waiting for him. She asked to buy another cut. When he asked her what happened with the meat that she had purchased the previous day, she answered that she had placed the meat into the pot and went to bring salt. By the time she returned, she caught sight of a fat cat running away with the entire chunk in its mouth!!! א.א.

טיב המעשיות

The Eternal Battle and Its Erasure

זְכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְךָ עַמְלֵק כֹּן, אֲשֶׁר קָרַד בְּדַרְדָּר וַיִּזְנֶב
בְּךָ כָּל הַנְּחָשִׁים אַחֲרֶיךָ כֹּן, תִּמְחָה אֶת זְכַר עַמְלֵק מִתַּחַת
הַשָּׁמַיִם לֹא תִשְׁכַּח (דברים כה, יז-יט).

**Remember what Amalek did to you on the way...
that they encountered you on the way and struck
you, all the weakened stragglers etc. Erase the
memory of Amalek from under the heavens; do
not forget. (Devarim 25:17–19)**

A well-known question stands at the root of the mitzvah of remembering: we are commanded with a positive injunction to remember eternally, and with a prohibition—do not forget—the deeds of Amalek. Yet this seems to contradict the mitzvah to erase him entirely, to obliterate his name until no trace remains. For that which is erased from the world will, by nature, fade from the mind. How can these opposing commands coexist—erasing utterly on one side, and remembering forever on the other?

However, the pasuk states, Remember what Amalek did to you (זָכֹר) in the singular—teaching that beyond the general war that Amalek waged against Bnei Yisrael, each individual faces a personal adversary, a private “Amalek” that clings to him specifically. The Torah therefore commands every person: Remember what he did to you, personally, for you must continually erase him within yourself.

So writes the holy maggid, Rav Levi of Anipoli (z”l) in Avodas Yisrael (Shabbos Zachor):

“Remember what Amalek did to you—to you, for he implanted within you the trait of toil, sorcery, and rebellion, for the essence of Amalek is the evil inclination that besets every man in every generation and every hour, as it states (Shemos 17:16) מִלְחָמָה לְהָ בַעַמְלֵק מִדֹּר - A war for Hashem against Amalek from generation to generation.”

And as cited in the holy sefarim, עַמְלֵק has the same numerical value (240) as רָם, for he infuses pride and haughtiness into the heart of man, as it states (Devarim 8:14) וְרָם לִבְבְּךָ וַיִּשְׁכַּח אֶת ה', אֲלֵיכֶיךָ - your heart will become haughty and you will forget Hashem your God.

Pride is the root of all evil traits, sprouting from the husk of arrogance. Therefore, even after Amalek has been erased from the physical world and the pasuk, erase the memory of Amalek has been fulfilled, the inner husk of pride still persists in the world. As long as this internal Amalek still nests within the heart of man and fights against Hashem, his husk has not been uprooted completely. Therefore, one must remember his enmity always—until the Name is whole and the Throne is whole, speedily in our days, Amen.

In Shivchei Baal Shem Tov (p. 90) we find the following account:

I heard from Rav Aharon of Mezhibzh: Once the Baal Shem Tov zy”a traveled to the holy community of Brod and lodged nearby. During the night, he trembled violently, his limbs shaking against one another until Rav Tzvi the Sofer awoke from his sleep from the loud knocking.

The Sofer asked him: “Why are you trembling?” The Baal Shem Tov replied: “The prophet Achiyah Hashiloni appeared to me and asked, Who is greater—you or Avraham Avinu a”h?”

I asked, “What is the meaning of this question?” He said to me, “You will enter Brod and they will heap much honor upon you. If you do not brace

yourself, you will forfeit everything you attained until now.” And I trembled with apprehension.

When he entered Brod, the wealthy leaders came to greet him dressed in honorable garb. He began to play with the horses, smoothing them and striking them with his hands as is the custom of those who play around with horses. Now see how far the fear of sin permeated the heart of the Baal Shem Tov!”

It is told of the renowned kabbalist elder, Rav Chaim Shaul Dwek HaKohen zt”l, among the greatest mekubalim of Yerushalayim, that once the Satmar Rebbe zy”a, author of Vayoel Moshe, came to visit him during one of his journeys to Eretz Yisrael.

This was toward the end of the kabbalist’s life, when he was unable to see and hospitalized in Shaarei Tzedek Medical Center due to his fragile health.

Because the elder kabbalist did not know Yiddish, they spoke in lashon hakodesh—Hebrew, the tongue of sacred flame. The kabbalist spoke in Sephardic pronunciation, and the Satmar Rebbe in chassidic Ashkenazi pronunciation. At times they would not understand each other precisely, but they lovingly clarified their intentions until they understood each other, with mutual respect. Such is the way of Torah sages who increase peace in the world (Berachos 64a).

Thus did the tzaddikim become engrossed in words of Torah—in halachah and in aggadah, as well as a discussion of other important matters, until all their words shone bright and joyful—like a precious garment of light.

When the visit concluded, the Satmar Rebbe asked the kabbalist for a berachah, but Rav Chaim Shaul thought the Rebbe wished to bless him. He immediately bowed his head with extreme humility, so that the tzaddik could place his holy hands upon his head to confer blessing, as is their custom.

The Rebbe shuddered and said, “Chas veshalom! I meant the opposite—that tzaddik should bless me!”

Rav Chaim Shaul responded simply: “If so, let the master bow his head!”

He placed both holy hands upon the head of the Rebbe and blessed him with great emotion. It

made no difference to him whether he was blessing or being blessed.

When he departed, the Satmar Rebbe praised the immense humility of the kabbalist who made no distinction between blessing or receiving blessing—absolute equanimity, complete hishtavus.

This is the meaning of the pasuk in Megillas Esther (Esther 6:11) כָּבֵד יְעֹשֶׂה, - לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקָרוֹ - Thus shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor. This is not personal honor at all. All honor is the honor of the King—Hakadosh Baruch Hu. The honor of the tzaddikim is His honor. And this hints to the pasuk, the King desires his honor—

He alone desires it, and He alone is the honor. The Name is whole and the Throne is whole, Amen.

Once they told the gaon Rav Yisrael Salanter zt”l, father of the Mussar movement, that a man had died of hunger from sheer destitution and poverty.

Rav Yisrael answered and said: “This man did not die from hunger, but from pride. For in his haughtiness it did not ‘befit’ him to ask for help from his fellow Jews—merciful children of merciful fathers—who give with willing heart and generous spirit. Had he subdued his pride and asked for a morsel of compassion and bread, they surely would have given him. You must therefore conclude: he died not of hunger, but of pride.”

Conversely, I shall tell you a story of the very opposite trait:

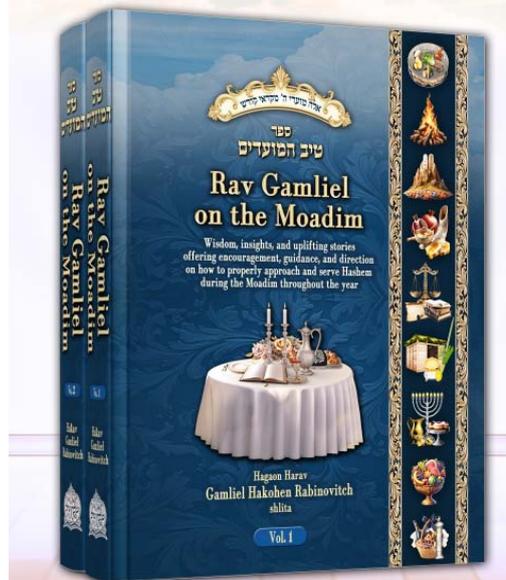
“I know a wealthy Jew who often comes to me for blessing and counsel concerning all his affairs. This man merited a rare siyatta diShmaya, and in every business and trade to which he sets his hand, it flourishes and yields vast fortunes, so much so that he has become one of the titans of wealth in the world.

“Once I asked him myself: What is the secret of your success? For we see that many of the wealthy of the world, though they profit greatly, also suffer sharp declines—how is it that you ascend and gain almost everywhere?”

“He replied to me, ‘There is neither magic here, nor wonder. The matter is simple. From my earliest days I never relied solely on myself or my own judgment. Before investing anywhere, I seek and probe the view of experts. I am not ashamed to ask and investigate again and again, from anyone who may assist. Thus I greatly reduce the chances of loss and draw nearer to profit than to failure.’

“And from him we must learn how to approach avodas Hashem. Just as material success depends on breaking pride, so too spiritual success rests on humbling oneself. One must never be ashamed to ask for guidance and counsel in all matters, as Chazal said (Avos 2:5), וְלֹא הַבִּישׁוֹן לְמִדָּה - “He who is ashamed does not learn.” If one did not understand his teacher at first, he should not hesitate to ask again and again until he attains the truth. And then his path will surely prosper.”

Enrich your special times of year
with the wisdom, insights, and uplifting stories
of Rav Gamliel Hakohen Rabinovitch, shlita
His words offer encouragement and guidance
on approaching the Moadim
with the proper mindset and devotion,
helping us serve Hashem in the best way possible



I heard from my distinguished relative, the renowned and righteous Rav Chaim Uri Freund, a member of the Eidah Hachareidis beis din here in the Holy City, a wondrous account filled with profound moral insight.

The holy gaon Rav Akiva Eiger zt"l once needed to embark on a distant journey. At dawn on the eve of the holy Shabbos, his travels brought him unexpectedly to the great city of Nikolsburg—an illustrious metropolis filled with Torah and reverence—where his close friend and beloved companion, the famed gaon Rav Mordechai Benet, then served as the local rav and head of the state-wide kollel for the entire region of Moravia and its surrounding lands.

In his exceptional humility, Rav Akiva Eiger deliberated deeply: if he were to enter the city rav's home, etiquette would surely compel the rav to invite him as a guest for Shabbos, and perhaps the household was not prepared. He further feared that the rav might feel obligated to honor him throughout the Shabbos, which could interfere with the rav's lofty avodah on the holy day together with his community.

For this reason, Rav Akiva Eiger sought out a small, quiet, and out-of-the-way lodging. Eventually, he found a modest and hidden inn on the edge of the city, a place suited to his desire to spend the Shabbos in solitude, immersed in uninterrupted Torah study with the diligence and devotion that defined his holy path.

Upon entering the inn, he was greeted warmly and with sincere respect. When asked by the innkeeper to identify himself, he replied that he was a simple Torah teacher from Poznań, wishing to lodge there for Shabbos, and that after Shabbos he would continue on his way.

After settling his belongings in his room, Rav Akiva Eiger requested to know the identity of the shochet who had slaughtered the meat for Shabbos. The innkeeper responded, "I am the shochet here."

"May I please examine your knife?" Rav Akiva Eiger asked.

The man obliged—and handed him the bread knife. Rav Akiva Eiger was seized with shock. How could one rely on a shochet who did not even possess a kosher slaughtering blade? Was such a person feeding Jews forbidden meat?

At that moment, he realized that the entire city might be stumbling into a grievous halachic failure. In such a circumstance, he had no choice but to enter the home of the city rav to warn him of the grave obstacle that had emerged within his domain.

When the holy gaon arrived at the rav's home, he was received with extraordinary honor. The city rav went out to greet him, and the two towering talmidei chachamim entered the house together with great affection. A deep Torah discussion unfolded between them, as is the way of great Torah scholars. Rav Akiva Eiger then asked that everyone present leave the room. Once they exited, he asked the rav how it was possible to appoint such a shochet in a city so exalted and full of chachamim, if indeed he was feeding Jews forbidden meat.

The rav trembled and was alarmed to the

depths of his soul. "I know this man," the rav said. "He is God-fearing, wholesome, and upright—but he has never served as a shochet."

The rav immediately instructed that the innkeeper be summoned. Within a short time, the man arrived, smiling. The rav confronted him: "Tell the truth! Who slaughtered your poultry for Shabbos?" "The local shochet," the man replied, "the very one the rav appointed for the entire city."

"You told our honored guest that you were the shochet," the rav pressed him.

The man laughed and said, "If he is a 'teacher from Poznań, then I am a shochet from Nikolsburg...'"

It then became clear that the innkeeper recognized the identity of Rav Akiva Eiger but had wished to respect his desire to remain hidden. Yet he could not bear the thought that the city rav and the community would be deprived of the merit of hosting the gaon for Shabbos. So he devised this stratagem—presenting himself as the "shochet," handing over the bread knife—knowing that this would compel Rav Akiva Eiger to reveal himself to the rav, thus making his arrival known.

At the conclusion of the visit, Rav Mordechai Benet insisted that Rav Akiva Eiger remain as his guest for Shabbos, taking upon himself all Shabbos expenses. At first, Rav Akiva Eiger attempted to decline, not wishing to burden them or disrupt the Shabbos schedule. But the rav urged him strongly: "On the contrary—it is our honor and the honor of Torah, and it elevates the glory of Shabbos for the entire community." Seeing this, Rav Akiva Eiger agreed and remained as his guest.

The news spread rapidly across the city. Throughout the Shabbos, Jews gathered to take part in the tefillos of the two ge'onim and to receive blessing from the gaon-guest.

The highlight was the great derashah. From early Friday, sources for his discourse were published so the Torah scholars could prepare. On Shabbos afternoon, the great study hall overflowed with listeners. The gaon ascended to the bimah, kissed the paroches, offered a silent prayer, then delivered

a masterful Torah discourse with power and clarity, linking sugyos in his famed analytical brilliance. At one point, the Rav Benet interrupted and posed a strong challenge to his reasoning.

Rav Akiva Eiger appeared briefly uncertain and said, "Indeed, this is a powerful question and requires great reflection."

He then concluded the discourse with words of ggadah and strengthening of Torah life.

After Kaddish de'Rabbanan, the entire congregation davened Minchah, followed by seudah shelishis, attended by a large crowd with the participation of the righteous ge'onim.

As he sat at the head of the table, together with his companion—the local mara d'asra—while they conversed quietly and with calm, Rav Akiva Eiger said to the rav softly and serenely, with unhurried composure: "Regarding the matter that you raised in the derashah—your question has a simple answer, for the resolution is plain." And immediately, on the spot, he set forth the entire answer, resolving the difficulty thoroughly and with great precision.

Rav Mordechai Benet asked: "If the gaon had such a clear answer, why did he leave my question unresolved during the derashah?"

Rav Akiva Eiger answered gently: "I am here but a passing guest for one Shabbos. If they think I have no answer, I lose nothing. But you are the rav of the city, the mara d'asra. It is essential that your honor and greatness be firmly rooted in their hearts, so they accept your guidance. Therefore, I chose to elevate your honor in their eyes, that they should say, 'Even Rav Akiva Eiger left our rav's question unanswered'—so that your esteem, not mine, would rise in the hearts of your community."

After this Shabbos, his mark remained for weeks, but even more than his Torah greatness, they learned his humility, gentleness, and concern for the honor of another more than himself.

The gaon Rav Moshe Mordechai Shulsinger zt"l, recounted that he once entered the presence of the Steipler Gaon, author of Kehillos Yaakov, together with his three-year-old son, for whom he had arranged a chalachah (haircut ceremony for a boy turning three). He asked that a small measure of hair be cut from the child's head, as is the Jewish custom to request that a tzaddik shape the child's peyos.

The Steipler, in his well-known sharpness toward anything from which even a trace of honor might emanate, responded in Yiddish: "Ich bin nisht kein sherer!" [I am not a barber!]" Yet after many entreaties, he consented to cut only two hairs.

Sometime later, when another child was born to Rav Moshe Mordechai, he entered again to convey the news to the Steipler and receive a mazal tov blessing. The Steipler said to him: "I am glad you have come! I sought you for some time, for I wish to ask your forgiveness. When you came here previously for the chalachah of your son, I did not initially agree to cut the hair. Upon reflection, I reached the conclusion that this was nothing but obstinacy and harshness on my part!"

Such a towering figure, a giant among giants, was not ashamed to retract and say, "I erred," to search out the person and beg forgiveness of him — even describing his own conduct in such stern terms. Heaven itself bears witness — to what extent the attribute of humility can reach!