



אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאוצרו של
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

Parshas Tazriah-Metzorah - Pain and Gain

After dealing with the main affliction of tzoraas on a person's i's body in Parshas Tazriah, the Torah discusses other variants of tzoraas in Parshas Metzorah.

The passuk says, (14:34) "When you enter the land of Canaan that I give you as a possession, and I inflict a plague upon a house in the land you possess..." Rashi explains, "Because the Amorites concealed treasures of gold in the walls of their houses ... in order that the Jews might not possess them when they conquered Israel, and in consequence of the plague, they would pull down the house and discover them."

Was there no other way for Hashem to deliver these treasures to the Jews, other than by ripping apart their houses and an affliction of tzoraas? Why make them go through the pain?

Approximately two months ago, I went to bake matzoh together with my cousin, a nephew of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l, Rav Nosson Speigel, a prominent rabbi in Monsey. We were talking about the importance of properly preparing for a mitzvah and spending what can sometimes be hours, and even days of preparation, until finally you arrive at the actual performance of the mitzvah.

He related to me the following story. There was a boy from a religious family, but his parents were not overly enthusiastic that their children concentrate on their Torah study and mitzvah observance. This boy was particularly drawn to Rabbi Spiegel. He would spend time in his shul learning and davening. Over several years, he became very serious about his Torah learning, and eventually went to a top yeshiva, where he blossomed into a true ben Torah.

He explained to Rabbi Spiegel what spurred his growth in Torah. "Once I came to the Rav on a Friday afternoon to speak to you," he began. "I saw a house in a flurry of activity. Everyone was preparing for Shabbos. The Rebbetzin was cooking, the teenagers were mopping, and a little girl was sweeping the floor while singing a song in Yiddish with the words, "Shabbos is coming! Let us prepare!" The table was set with beautiful silver candlesticks and a majestic white tablecloth. Everything looked beautiful, and you got the feeling that something special was about to happen." "Contrast that to what went on in my house. My father would come home from work a few minutes before Shabbos and would quickly get dressed and go to shul. When he came home, my mother set the table and served rewarmed Shabbos takeout. That was it."

"I knew that I wanted to experience the Shabbos of the Rav, but I knew that it took an investment. Besides the investment every week of hours of preparation and work, I knew that I had to work for years to be able to appreciate the bracha of Shabbos! With the Shabbos experience, came my journey of growth in Torah."

My grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l explains. The Torah is teaching us a lesson here. Sometimes the most valuable things in life are worth pain. According to how much grief, anguish and work you put in, is the vastness of the rewards you will reap. Yes, there may be pain and hard work along the road. But after you knock down those walls, you will receive the treasure.

Good Shabbos!

Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky is the Director of Advancement at Yeshiva of South Shore - ישיבה תורת חיים - בית בנימן. He is currently compiling the vast storehouse of all the Torah thoughts from his grandfather. If you have any stories to share from his grandfather, you can email him at skamenetzky@yoss.org.