



Purim

A Coin of Fire

Leilui Neshmas Meira Chaya Nechama Bracha A"H

Bat David Mordechai V'Zelda Shaindel Sheychu

The man passing before the Rebbe looked just like anyone else standing on line. He had a bottle of wine and some cake to give to the Rebbe as a Mishloach Manos, together with kvetel, a note with his name on it, and a NIS 100 bill.

NIS 100 was a large sum of money at the time. However, the Lelover Rebbe, Rabbi Moshe Mordechai, told the man: "such a small sum?" The man was stunned. The Rebbe said again: "you can do better. You need to give more."

The man took out his wallet and gave the Rebbe more money. The Rebbe's palmed remained open, asking for more. The man continued giving.

Anyone who knew the Rebbe was astounded. The Rebbe had a complete disregard for money. Now, it seemed he had become very demanding.

We knew, however, that we had not fully understood the situation.

In parshas Ki Sisah we read: "This they shall give, everyone who goes through the counting: half a shekel according to the holy shekel...The rich shall give no more, and the poor shall give no less than half a shekel, with which to give the offering to the Lord, to atone for your souls."

Rashi commentates: "G-d showed Moshe a sort of coin of fire weighing half a Shekel, and He said to him, 'Like this one they shall give'."

Why did Moshe have a hard time understanding the size of the coin to the extent that G-d- had to show it to him?

Commentators explain that Moshe had a hard time understanding how a material object such as a coin could serve as a form of atonement, how a coin could become so important.

Therefore, G-d showed him a "coin of fire," teaching him that even a simple coin given passionately becomes a coin of fire which can atone for one's soul.

The Chasam Sofer teaches that when someone gives charity he is giving nothing of his own, as all possessions are ultimately owned by G-d. However, a charitable person is giving kindness, and this is his real contribution.

Therefore, one who donates unwillingly is essentially doing nothing. A heartfelt contribution is what is desired.

One of the four essential Mitzvos of Purim is gifts to the needy. Anyone who asks for charity receives, and those who give the charity are blessed from Heaven with the ability to give more and more.

Of course, the essential component is the heart – when one gives willingly, he is repaid by the Creator.

The next day after Purim was a Friday. The Rebbe's Gabai entered his room to prepare it for Shabbos.

"Did I offend anyone yesterday?" the Rebbe asked the Gabai. The Gabai was stunned; he was not expecting such a question. He thought for a moment and then remembered the unusual request for more money. He mentioned it to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe responded sharply: "Do you think a few more hundred shekels will make me rich?"

"That man is poor and has no bread for his home. I wanted him to receive abundance, so I told him to give more so he could receive more," the Rebbe explained.

That was the lesson – he who gives to a righteous person is blessed from the Heavens.