



המאכלים לשמיני עצרת

treats for the shabbos table

Shemini Atzeres-Simchas Torah

שמיני עצרת ושמחת תורה

The 'chicken' test

THE Dubna *maggid* explains our relationship with Hashem with the following *moshol*– There was a farmer who lived on the outskirts of a little village. One day his young son left the farm but forgot to close the gate behind him. Although it wasn't long before one of the workers noticed the open gate and shut it, it had been open long enough for the farmer's chicken to hop out into the open street.

The chicken was valuable to the farmer as it had snow-white feathers and a fine form. When he found out what had happened he was very upset at his loss. The farmer dropped everything and started to search for the chicken. He looked right and left but here was no

lost article to its owner! Thank you so much!" But the neighbour was embarrassed that he'd been caught red handed with his neighbour's chicken. It was obvious if he'd intended to return it he would have already done so, so he must have intended to keep it.

The neighbour said "I'm very sorry, but I don't know what your talking about, this chicken is mine!"

The farmer replied "I recognise my chicken and it recognises me!" but the neighbour still insisted it was his. The farmer knew he'd have to prove it because after all the chicken was in his neighbour's house, so he said "Untie the chicken from the table leg and bring it outside into the street. You'll see it instinctively returns to my courtyard!"



sign of the white bird.

Maybe one of the neighbours had seen where it had gone? He knocked on the neighbour's door and entered his house and immediately noticed his prize chicken tied by a string to the table leg!

He exclaimed with glee "Blessed is he who returns a

This is what we say to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* "You know that we really want to do Your will but it's the 'expanding barley' in the dough that prevents us! The *yetzer horah* and the pressure we have from the *goyim* is what prevents us serving You properly. If You would only remove the shackles of the *yetzer horah* and remove

the yoke of the *golus* from our necks, You'd see how we return to You!

THE Torah is our life-blood and the source of all our success in this world. It is also our only antidote to the *yetzer horah*. Ideally we should be immersed in *limud HaTorah* all day, but even when this isn't possible it's essential to learn Torah whenever we have the chance, as the Chofetz Chaim explained:

In the yeshivah in Radin, there was a *bochur* gifted with an exceptional mind. He was also extremely diligent, never wasting a second from his studies. All day he was immersed in learning and was able to find *chiddushim* and *sevoros* that would impress the greatest *talmidey chachomim*.

A wealthy man, who loved the Torah and Its scholars, took him as a son-in-law and gave him a generous dowry so he could support himself and continue his studies for years to come. Indeed the *avrech* grew in his learning but his family also grew in size. In order to provide for his large family, the *avrech* was forced to leave the *beis hamedrash* full time and enter into the business world. As time rolled by, he found himself entirely engrossed in business and he spent no time at all in the *beis hamedrash*!

One day he met his former *rebbe* the Chofetz Chaim who asked him about his learning. The former *avrech* sighed quoting the *gemoroh* (*eruvin* 55) and said "You will not find the Torah amongst the business men!"

The Chofetz Chaim replied in a sorrowful voice "But have you set aside fixed times for Torah learning?"

The *avrech* replied "What can I tell you *rebbe*, I'm jealous of the *ba'aley batim* who go to the *beis hamedrash* to hear a *gemoroh shiur*. They hear a superficial explanation and they're satisfied with it. I however, am used to delving deeply into the *sugya* finding apparent contradictions and problems and then finding the answers. When I hear a superficial explanation I immediately get up and leave. I only find satisfaction in the deepest form of Torah learning so I have no time to learn!

The Chofetz Chaim responded to him with a *moshol* "There was a man who worked hard and lived a simple life. Each week he looked forward to the one pleasure he had in life and that was visiting the sauna. He'd first enter the sweltering hot steam room and perspire freely until he couldn't take it anymore. Then he'd immerse himself

in the pool of cold water. This entire process gave him immense pleasure and it was all he looked forward to.

One day this man felt ill and visited the doctor. The doctor asked him about all aspects of his life and after extensive tests the doctor knew exactly what was wrong. He warned him to stay away from the steam room as this could be potentially fatal!

The man was shocked at the doctor's report and accepted he'd have to forgo his favourite pleasure. He could control himself for two weeks but he just felt there

was no point in living if he couldn't visit the sauna at least once a week!

On the third week he convinced himself that just one visit couldn't do him any harm. He entered the steam room and once again inhaled the boiling steam. But just as he was enjoying the tremendous rush of pleasure suddenly he felt quite ill. In just a few seconds he became weak and dizzy and couldn't stand up.

He then collapsed to the floor gasping for breath. The heat was too much for him and he was hyperventilating. If he

didn't immerse himself quickly in the cool bath then he knew he'd die!

He was crawling on his knees towards what he thought was the door to the cool bath but he didn't know there was no cool bath that week. When he opened the door and saw the pool was empty he simply passed out.

Another man saw what was happening and realised he was in real danger. He quickly found a jug of cold water and tried to pour it on the man's face. The man had regained consciousness but when he saw the jug of cold water about to be pored over him he shouted "Take that away from me, how can that help me when there's no cool bath!"

What a fool he is! It's true there's no cool bath to immerse his *entire* body, but the only chance to save his life is to pour cool water on his face. Even if it isn't ideal it'll at least save his life!

The *nimshol* is you've been accustomed to immerse yourself entirely in the purifying waters of the Torah where you found pearls of wisdom and amazing treasures. However, now this pool has been taken from you, because your worldly problems have prevented you from toiling in the holy Torah. But is that really a reason why you shouldn't hear at least one *shiur* every day?"

Adapted by Rabbi Daniel Hool



After you have finished reading this leaflet please put it in a genizah designated for the disposal of divrei Torah.

The weekly publication, Matamim for the Shabbos table reaches the most remote communities in Israel. We seek to accomplish the same thing for Jewish communities in many countries throughout the world. Help us to provide spiritual food for the many Jewish souls that are lacking this nourishment. With one phone call 1-866-796-4938 -- you can join us in this worthwhile project.

e.mail: otzarot@actcom.co.il • www.otzarot.com • Printed in Israel.

You can have Matamim for your Shabbos table every week by calling 1-866-796-4938

אורחות • רח"ה רובין • בני ברק 51526 • טל. 052-7660222 • פקס. 03-6197222 • חשבון בנק הדואר: 4176112 • ניתן להזמין בשפות: עברית, אנגלית, צרפתית, רוסית וספרדית, וגם לחילול יו"ל לעיתים רחוקות ורובן בן רחמים י"ל ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.