

תורת אביגדור

הגאון ר' אביגדור מיללער זצ"ל

Rav Avigdor Miller on the Parsha
Adapted from his Tapes, Sforim and Writings of Talmidim

מטות מסעי

Mishpachat Levy
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Rav Avigdor Miller ztz"l on

פרשת מטות-מסעי

THE REVENGE OF MOSHE RABEINU

In this week's *parsha* Hakodosh Boruch informs Moshe Rabeinu of his impending death: וידבר השם אל משה לאמר... תאסף - אל עמך "And Hashem spoke to Moshe saying...You will be gathered into your people" (Mattos 31:3). The successful life of Moshe is now drawing to a close and his last days on this earth were his final opportunity to achieve even more success and perfection. And what is the last opportunity that we find Hashem presenting Moshe with? - נקום נקמת בני ישראל מאת המדינים : "Take vengeance for the Bnei Yisroel from the *Midianim*, אחר תאסף אל - עמך - *and only afterward* shall you be gathered into your peoples" (ibid.) The function of taking revenge from Midian was so eminently necessary that Hashem declared Moshe's career as still incomplete without it.

Now for us, this should be a big question. We have been brought up with the idea that revenge is a contemptible attribute; it's an undesirable *middah*. The Torah tells us, don't seek vengeance. ולא תקום ולא תיטור - "Don't try to get even; and don't even bear a grudge against someone" (Vayikra 19:18). Children,

from the youngest age, are trained to be repelled by the word *nekama*, to see it as a trait of those who lack self-control. And yet, we read here that Moshe was *commanded to take revenge* against his enemies, *and that it would be his final achievement of perfection in this world!* It's a question! How are we to understand this anomaly, that the vengeance that is so belittled by the Torah could be the final act of perfection in Moshe's life?

THE SATMERER AND THE LUBAVITCHER REBBES TAKE A WALK

To better understand this, we'll listen to a *gemara* in *Mesichta Brachos* (33a). The *gemara* there explains how great is *dei'ah*. *Dei'ah* means knowledge, clarity of understanding of the great truths of the world. And the *gemara* brings an illustration of how great *dei'ah* is. גְּדוּלַּהּ דַּעַה, the *gemara* says. "How great is *dei'ah*!" How great is it when one makes clear to himself the presence of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, the awareness of His imminence. And the *gemara* says that we know this because the word *dei'ah* is נִיתְנָה בֵּין שְׁתֵּי אוֹתִיּוֹת, it's found between the two names of Hashem. כִּי א-ל דַּעַת הַשֵּׁם it says. So on one side you have the word א-ל, on the other side you have the word הַשֵּׁם, and in the middle you have the word *dei'os*.

As was explained once - if you see three people walking down 13th Avenue in Boro Park; on one side is the *Satmerer Rav* and on the other side is, let's say, the *Lubavitcher Rebbe*. And in the middle is an unknown fellow. So we understand that he is somebody. If he's in the middle of these two great people, then he must be a somebody. Probably he's *moshiach*! And so, if we see a word positioned between א-ל and הַשֵּׁם, so that word signifies something very important. If you want to be close to א-ל, if you want to be close to הַשֵּׁם, then be sure to acquire *dei'ah*, a real feeling of Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

REVENGE IS GREAT?!

So the *gemara* asks a *kasha*. If that was a criteria of greatness then *nekama* must also be great, because there's another *possuk* that

says: א-ל לנקמות השם. On this side you have א-ל, and on the other side is השם, and in the middle you have the word נקמה, revenge. Is that possible?! Isn't revenge a contemptible attribute? How could we say גדולה נקמה, that *revenge is great*?

So the *gemara* says אין, Yes! במילתיה, in its place, in the right place, revenge is very great. How great is it? Revenge is as great as *dei'ah*! Because revenge is a very important form of seeing the Presence of Hashem. It's right between the two names of Hashem because revenge is how you get close to Hashem!

And so we see that it's not only that Moshe was commanded here to take revenger. It's actually a *yesod* for our *emunah* in Hakodosh Boruch Hu. And so, it's something we're going to have to study.

THE BITTER PILL OF LAWLESSNESS

So we'll begin like this. The principle of vengeance is essential for man's understanding of Hashem. If the wicked remain unpunished, if the criminal act is not avenged, so men see injustice in the world and are therefore prone to think that the world is a chaotic and accidental place. Subconsciously, the sight of the wicked criminal walking free, cements in your mind that this world is a world of injustice.

If an African American hoodlum can stab Yankel Rosenbaum to death for no reason at all, and then be found not guilty because of the color of his skin - and that's exactly what happened - then men will see this world as one of chaos, accident, and lawlessness. No matter how much you say you believe in Hashem, it's a bitter pill for the *neshama* to swallow when it sees wickedness prevail.

THE DUMB IRISH JUDGE

And every time we read of a crime that is committed and a liberal judge who doesn't inflict proper penalties, it's like a dagger in our hearts. We become ruined in our souls; our souls become

depressed more and more. Like that dumb judge, that dumb Irish judge, I told you about once. A boy, a yeshiva man, took out a bunch of boys for a *חמשה עשר בשבט* outing. They were young yeshiva students walking on the sidewalk and a group of Irish Catholic boys were ridiculing them. So this yeshiva man made a very great error and he answered them back. So you know what they did? They attacked him. And one of them took out a hammer from his car and smashed the head of this Jewish boy. He killed him. So what did the Catholic Irish judge say? "The courtroom is no place for revenge," and he gave him five years probation. That means for five years he has to come to the police station once a month, stick his head in the door, and say, "Hi Officer Jerry." And the officer checks off that he came in. That's the punishment for this *sheigitz*?!

And when we hear that the wicked governor, *y'mach sh'mo v'zichro*, the previous one, and the present one as well, that they vetoed the death penalty, a cold clammy depression settles upon Mankind. Humanity demands justice! It's not merely a question of deterrent; certainly it's a deterrent! Don't believe the false statistics of the New York Times and the other liberals. They're all liars! There's no question that when criminals know that the electric chair is waiting for them, they're going to think, not twice, they'll think fifty times, before they do the crime. No question about it.

DEPRESSION OF THE SOUL

But more important than the deterrent is that we're depressed, we're depressed by the injustice. How can we have *emunah* in Hashem who runs the world, when the wicked are running roughshod over everything we believe in? It sees like there's no *shofeit*, no one who is imposing righteousness in the world. And we stand by and feel helpless. We can't do anything about it.

Here you have Hitler, *y'mach sh'mo*. A *rasha m'rusha* if there ever was one. In history of the world there was no bigger *rotzei'ach*

than him. And then at the end, when his plans began to fall apart, how did he leave this world? He left on his own terms. He took a perfumed poison and left this world *b'shalom*. Is that justice?! Is that *yashrus*? And so our *neshamos* are confused and depressed. לית דיין ולית דיין. There's no judge and there's no justice being meted out.

EXALTING HASHEM THE TORAH WAY

And that's why Dovid Hamelech says: הנשא שופט הארץ - "Be exalted O' Judge of the world" (Tehillim 94:2). How is Hashem exalted? So we think we know how to exalt Him. I know what I would say. I would say that we exalt Hashem by viewing all of His mighty deeds, all of the miracles in nature, in our lives, and in our history. You'd have to be a moron to not see the greatness of Hakodosh Boruch Hu in nature. And the evolutionists and the academicians, those who reject the idea of a *Borei*, are morons! Look around and you see Hashem; and the more you look, the more Hashem is exalted.

That's what we would say, הנשא שופט הארץ, how do we exalt the *shofet ha'aretz*, שאו מרום עיניכם וראו מי ברא אלה, lift your eyes up high, look around, and contemplate, Who made all of this?! But no, says Dovid. That's not the way to uplift the glory of Hashem. Now, listen well to his words: הנשא שופט הארץ - When is Hashem exalted over the world? When does one acquire the most tangible feeling of the Presence of Hashem? השב גמול על גאים - "When He brings recompense on the arrogant sinners." When you witness with your own two eyes that the wicked are getting what they deserve, you are acquiring *da'as Hashem*. When the Hand of Hashem come down on the wicked, that makes the *emunah* enter into your bones. He's reacting - yes, He's reacting - to the *ma'asim* of man.

EMUNAH IN THE BONES

Because no matter how much you see of Hashem, if you don't see Him as the *shofet ha'aretz*, then you don't see Him as

clearly as you should. You need to see the strong hand of Hashem, the punishment upon the wicked, in order to be a real *ma'amin*. And you won't see that in the trees, the apples, the squirrels, and in all the rest of the *niflaos haborei*. It's only when a person sees the *hasheiv g'mul al ge'im*, the recompense upon the wicked - that's when he knows that Hashem is here.

We say every day in *davening* - more than once - that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is a **א-ל חי וקיים**, He's a living G-d. Now what does that mean, "He's a living G-d?" That He's breathing like you and me?! No; alive means He's a personal G-d; He's watching, He's reacting. And He's rewarding and punishing Mankind. All of this *sheker*, all of this falsehood, of the *hatzlachas ha'reshaim* that appears so prevalent in the world, is really just that - *sheker v'chazav*. Because everything is under the direct control of the *Keil Chai V'kayam*. There are no accidents!

THE CASE OF THE MISSING WORD

Anyone who knows a little bit about Tehillim, realizes that the dominant theme is praising the greatness of Hashem; the kindness, the power of Hashem, and so on. He is praising Hashem throughout the entire Tehillim. Take a look there, it's all praises. But you'll notice a remarkable phenomenon. As you turn page after page, you see that one word is missing. It's a word that everybody knows and we think it belongs in many places, in most of the *kepitilech*. The word **הללויה** is missing. Nowhere to be found. It doesn't appear until the end of *kepitel* 104. That's the first time you will find the word **הללויה**.

And to sharpen this question even more, I'm going to show you how glaring this omission is. At the end of *kepitel kuf-daled*, 104, it says **הללויה את השם** - "My soul should bless Hashem, *Halleluyah!*" And at the end of the *kepitel* right before that we read **ברכי נפשי את השם** - "My soul should bless Hashem," but the word **הללויה** is missing. It's the same identical *possuk*, but without the word **הללויה**. And at the end of 104, **ברכי נפשי את השם**,

it's the same phrase again, but this time with the word הללויה at the end - and it's the first time in Tehillim.

And the gemara noticed that. Listen to what the *gemara* says (Brachos 9b): ולא אמר דוד הללויה - "Dovid didn't say *halleluyah*, עד שראה במפלתן של רשעים - until he foresaw the downfall of the wicked." When Dovid viewed the downfall of the wicked; when he saw Hashem taking revenge, *that's* when he said הללויה. He said יתמו חטאים מן הארץ - "The sinners will come to an end from the world, ורשעים עוד אינם - there will be no more evil men in the world, ברכי נפשי את השם - "My soul should praise Hashem." And now , for the first time, he cried out with great excitement, הללויה!

WILD OVER HASHEM

You have to understand now, what the word *hallel* means. It says אמרתי להוללים אל תהולו - "I said to the wild ones, don't be wild, don't be too excited" (Tehillim 75:5). The word *hallel* doesn't mean "praise"; it means to go wild with excitement! That's what *hallel* means, wild. And *hallelu-yah* means to go wild with excitement *about Hashem*; to be excited about the true greatness of Hashem.

When you see a *rasha* getting what's coming to him, that's when you feel a rush of excitement. You see with your own eyes that there really is א-ל חי וקיים. You see Hashem, you feel His Presence. He's not just a distant G-d; He's right here in front of you punishing the wicked. That's when man can go wild with happiness. And that's why when Dovid saw the downfall of the wicked he went wild and sang הללויה.

And that's why Dovid gives us the following advice. He tells us רק בעיניך תביט - If you would only be sure to *look* with your eyes, ושלומת רשעים תראה - then you'll see the retribution that comes upon the wicked. But you have to *look* for it, to look בעיניך, with your *own* eyes. If you're looking for the *shofeit ha'aretz*, if you

want to see the *keil chai v'kayam*, you'll see the שלומת רשעים, the payback on the wicked, all around you.

AVROM HERSH GOLDBOGEN'S YARTZEIT

I'll give you one example. I like to tell the story of a man named Mike Todd. That wasn't his real name. Goldbogen was his name. Avrom Hersh Goldbogen. He was a Jew from Chicago, or someplace like that. And he changed his name. Avrom Hersh became Mike Todd. Now he was a rich man, a big shot in the movie industry. He even married a famous actress, Elizabeth Taylor, a *shiktzah*. So Mike Todd was married to one of the most beautiful women, and he was filled with money and glory and success - and he was young yet. He was on top of the world! And then suddenly we read in the newspapers that Mike Todd was flying his private plane - he had a private plane, so you understand how rich he was - so we read that Mike Todd fell out of his plane. That's all it said. He fell out of his plane!

Let me tell you something. He didn't fall out of his plane - Hashem threw him out of his plane. If we had *real* Torah newspapers it would be big headlines. Front page headlines: "Hakodosh Boruch Hu Throws Mike Todd Out Of His Airplane." You know, I never experienced it, but I don't think it's so *geshmak* falling out of an airplane! And when he smashed into the ground, it wasn't a pleasant ending. And we'd read all the details again and again. Not one time; again and again we should be reading the story. רק בעיניך תביט. And you should never forget that story.

HOW FRUM ARE THE FRUM NEWSPAPERS?

Of course, the newspapers won't tell you that. They'll tell you about engine trouble, maybe. Could be they won't tell you anything at all. But whatever it is, they're not looking at Mike Todd's fall to the ground through the eyes of Dovid: רק בעיניך תביט ושלומת רשעים תראה.

You have to disregard the propaganda of the newspapers, and ignore the foolish ranting of people, and instead, pay attention to what you see and hear - with your own eyes and your own ears. Then you're going to see the punishment that Hashem brings upon wicked. But you have to look! You won't be able to take even the tiniest step forward if you're looking through the eyes of the the New York Times or the New York Post. Even the frum newspapers aren't going to help you when it comes to seeing the ways of Hashem in this world. You're going to have to do the work with your own eyes, בעיניך תביט.

I do it myself. You know, I make it my business, year after year, to “keep the *yartzeit*” of Mike Todd. I tell everybody about the news. Maybe you don't want to hear about Hashem showing His ways in the world, but I'm not going to forget. I'm going to look at the שלומת רשעים and grow in *da'as Hashem*.

HIP HOP KING SHOT DEAD

Again and again we see things happening, only that most people are blind to what Hashem is doing. I'll give you an example. Headlines!. I don't buy the paper but just last week I saw it protruding from a garbage can on the corner. Headlines! “Hip Hop King Shot Dead!” It was a gang war, or maybe a competitor, something like that. The rest of the details were hidden in the garbage can, I couldn't see.

Now, a “Hip Hop King” we understand, that's what's fitting for him, that he should be shot down! What else is Hakodosh Boruch Hu going to do with him? Of course, after he was shot down, so if you would stand in East Flatbush where the rappers live, so you'd see a big funeral hearse; it's open in the back and it's loaded with flowers. And many people are there, all of his relatives, including the fellow who shot him - it's a cousin of his. Who else shoots him? It's a cousin. They shoot each other, those cousins. And they all come to the funeral, and he has for himself a big ornate casket, carved oak wood, and they're dropping flowers

on it. A lot it's going to help him now. There are no sweet smelling flowers in the place where he is now...

SEEING THINGS IN THE SKY

And John Lennon, another *tzadik yesod olam*. He made a pile of money. He was on top of the world; only good times he lived. A bum if there ever was one. Hundreds of thousands of children, boys and girls, were ruined because of him. He sang songs about LSD and seeing people in the sky with diamonds - that's what LSD does by the way, it makes you see things in the sky. Only that this *rasha* made an art, a culture, out of it - and his "*talmidim*" followed in his ways. They took to dope, and very many of them walked out of windows and are six feet under; long before they reached even middle age. All because of him.

And then finally, the day of *nekama* came and he was shot down by a bullet. He was walking into his home and somebody came and chopped him down with a bullet. So what happened? In the city council they stood up for a moment of silence in honor of "his blessed memory." *Meshuga'im!* It's *שלומת רשעים תראה*, Hashem is taking His revenge, and they're standing up for this *rasha*. And it affects us! A person has to learn how to look. רק בעיניך תביט.

Now, we have to think about this. Because how many *roshei yeshivos* have been cut down by bullets outside their home like this? It doesn't happen. They should all live *ימים טובים*! *לאורך ימים טובים*! And when was the last time you heard of a *rosh yeshiva* who fell out of an airplane?

MURDER IN WHITE LAKE

And they don't get shot in their cars either! Here you have an organizer of a union, a *kashrus* union, and he ridiculed the *rabbonim* who wanted to make a real *hashgacha*, a real *kashrus*. I remember when he ridiculed us and said, "I'll never let the *rabbonim* do anything here. They should go back to the

synagogues where they belong.” And he was rich and powerful. This was many years ago, when people didn't have air conditioned cars - only gangsters had that. And they found him one day, sitting in his expense air conditioned car, in White Lake. And he was riddled with bullets.

So if you use your eyes, you're going to see again and again what happens to the wicked *in this world*. I like to tell these stories because people forget them right away. I have clippings at home from the papers and I study them from time to time, so that I won't forget them. You have to remember these stories, because the propaganda of this world is not going to let your eyes remain on them too long.

RAV MILLER VS. THE REFORM LAMDAN

Today, if you look in the newspapers, nothing at all is mentioned about the very great retribution being visited upon the world. A tremendous plague, a *makkah min hashamayim*. Hakodosh Boruch Hu is “rewarding” the homosexuals by bringing upon them an incurable sickness. In New York City alone, eleven thousand deaths have been reported from AIDS. Eleven thousand deaths in New York City alone! And there are many thousands more that weren't reported; they're ashamed. At least six hundred thousand suffering from AIDS in this country. In a few years it will be a million, at least. The hospitals will be crowded - even today the hospitals are jammed with beds of AIDS patients. Billions of dollars - that's *our* money, our hard earned money - going just for that.

Here's a man, a rabbi he calls himself, and he writes an article in the Jewish Week. That's a newspaper for the people who are interested in a *long stay* in *Gehenim*. So he writes that Miller - he was speaking about me - Miller is an ignoramus for saying that AIDS is a punishment that G-d is bringing down upon the gays. “But it's well known to the medical community that AIDS is a certain virus that is spreading through certain forms of contact

and that it has nothing to do with Miller's G-d." A *lamdan* this fellow is! Miller doesn't know about viruses! And this *lamdan*, *alav ha'shnebel*, died a few months later – of AIDS!

Of course, nothing is said about this. Nobody wants to say the simple truth that it's a retribution. They don't believe in Hashem, so they "know" it has nothing to do with Him. They're looking for ways and means of finding a cure, but they're missing the whole point. No question about it, just like Pharaoh when the *makkos* came, so he called the *chartumim*. "Come, get rid of the *makkos*," he told them. "You know how to get rid of *makkos*. You're smart men, you can find a cure." So the government is looking for scientists and hospitals and laboratories, to do research, and to get rid of AIDS. Meanwhile they're not getting rid of AIDS, but Hakodosh Boruch Hu is getting rid of the *mishkav zacharniks*. No question about it, they're dying like flies. And it's up to us to look. ושלומת רשעים תראה, רק בעיניך תביט, we have to look with our eyes, and we have to see the punishment of the wicked on all sides. It's very important to see. It's for our benefit and that's His plan. He *wants* us to see it!

STUDYING THE NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

I could tell you stories, true stories, all night long. But the point is that you have to look. רק בעיניך תביט, You should look with your eyes and ignore the propaganda of the world, ושלומת רשעים תראה, and you should look and see what happens to the *reshaim*.—We have to understand the principle that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is *Chai*. He is alive; He's watching over everything and He's reacting.

Sooner or later, the wicked get what's coming their way. And that's what Dovid Hamelech points out to us. Listen to his words (Tehillim 73:12). He's talking about when he sees *reshaim* who seem to be successful. - הנה אלה רשעים שלוי עולם השגו חיל - "Look at these *reshaim*," Dovid says." They seem to be forever in tranquility and they've acquired strength and wealth." So I might

think," says Dovid, **אך ריק זיכיתי לבבי** - "Maybe I have purified my heart for nothing." What's it all worth? If I see that the *reshaim* are succeeding, then I feel like all my *avodah* was a waste. The success of the *reshaim* is a dagger in the heart of the *ma'amin*.

So Dovid continues: **עד אבוא אל מקדשי א-ל** - "Until I come to the sanctuaries of Hashem." When I came to the *mikdash* of Hashem where the *kohanim* are teaching the truth of the Torah, and they told me, **אבינה לאחריתם** - "Take your time. Don't rush to conclusions. Let us think into the end of these *reshaim*." Right now they seem successful, but **אבינה לאחריתם**, let us ponder about what *will be*.

ABBIE DIES DOING A MITZVAH

Here's Abbie Hoffman, a waste of a Jewish soul. He was raising the sky with his tumult. Demonstrating against all the imaginary ills of society; he was getting a lot of publicity. Millions of dollars of publicity for his causes. He was demonstrating everywhere. All over the TV; he was everywhere! He was on top of the world! Ahh! That's a successful *rasha*.

But now, the newspapers reported that at the age of fifty two he committed suicide. Ahh! **אבינה לאחריתם**. We had to bide our time. Abbie Hoffman, a poor fellow, alone and depressed, killed himself in Chicago. It was probably the first *mitzvah* he did in his life! **שלו עולם השגו ובערת הרע בקרבך**. That was the end of his **חיל**.

You could take a look at the New York Times obituary page. It's the only page in that paper that is worth anything! Here's a man, a big activist for the gays. And now I read in the obituaries that he died - at the young age of forty-two. Another one, his partner, at age forty-one; he was gone. So if you open your eyes, you'll see on all sides that you have to be patient. While they're marching, waving banners, winning in the courts, proud of who they are, we just bide the time. So what if they're sitting on

top of the world now?! **אבינה לאחריתם** - We'll see what's going to be the end of them.

THE EDGEWATER BEACH HOTEL MEETING

That's a very important question you have to think about always - what's going to be the end of them? I want to read to you a little example that will elucidate the subject. In 1923 a very important meeting was held at the Edgewater Beach Hotel. Attending this meeting were ten of the world's most successful financiers. The president of the largest independent steel company, that's one. The president of the National City Bank, that's two. The president of the largest utility company in the United States, three. The president of the largest gas company, that's four. The most successful wheat speculator, five. The president of the New York Stock Exchange, six. A member of the President's cabinet. The greatest bear on Wall Street. The head of the world's greatest monopoly. That's seven, eight, nine. And the tenth, the president of The Bank of International Settlements. Now, these were ten successful people. At that time they were sitting on top of the world *mamish*. The wealthiest, most successful financiers.

But here we listen to the advice of Dovid Hamelech: **אבינה לאחריתם**. Let's understand the end. Twenty five years later, let's see where these men were. The president of the largest independent steel company, Charles M. Schwab, died bankrupt, and he lived on borrowed money for the last five years before his death. The president of the greatest utility company Samuel Insul, died a fugitive from justice and penniless in a foreign land. The president of the largest gas company, Howard Hopson, is now insane. The greatest wheat speculator, Arthur Cutton, died abroad, insolvent. That means he ran away because he couldn't pay his debts and he died without any property at all. The president of the New York Stock Exchange, Richard Whitney, was recently released from Sing-Sing Penitentiary. The member of the

President's cabinet, Albert Hall, was pardoned from prison so that he could die at home. The greatest bear on Wall Street, Jesse Livermore, died of suicide, after his Thanksgiving dinner. The head of the world's greatest monopoly, Ivan Krueger, died of suicide. He shot himself in the head. The president of the Bank of International Settlements, Leon Fraser, died of suicide as well. That's ten. *Azah chaburah*, it was!

Now at the time, when they were sitting on top of the world, everybody would have liked to be at that meeting with them. Ahh, that would be the best company in the world. But someone who comes to the *מקדשי א-ל*, he comes to a real *talmid chochom* who teaches him true Torah attitudes, he knows that what matters is the end, *אבינה לאחריתם*.

THE END OF THE STORY!

Now, in this world of darkness, the *שילומת רשעים* and their *אחריתם* is not something that you will *always* see so readily. The truth is that if you look, if you want to see the truth then *you will see a lot*. But even so, *the true settling of accounts waits for the Next World*. The *reshaim* would be lucky if this world was the end for them. And so, our discussion of Hashem's justice wouldn't be complete without understanding the *acharisom* of the *reshaim* in the Next World.

Last year, the Supreme Court in Israel, set free Ivan Demjanjuk, *y'mach sh'mo*. It was an *avlah*, a terrible injustice, a wickedness. That's what the Supreme Court does, you know, it promotes wickedness in *Eretz Yisroel*. Here you have a Ukrainian *rasha* who was involved in the sadistic slaughter of thousands of the *Am Yisroel*. Not thousands - tens of thousands! And so, when we hear that such a person is a free man, walking the streets as if nothing ever happened, it's a terrible blow to our *neshamos*. It depresses the soul; it makes a crack, a very big crack, in the *yesod* that is the foundation of our lives, the attitude that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is in full control.

And someone asked me about it. He asked why Hashem would do such a thing? Now, that's a big order; he's asking me to tell him what Hashem was thinking! But just like an ant that is looking up at a skyscraper and trying to guess what's on top, so I'll give my silly opinion.

You know, it's the same question with Hitler. Even Hitler got away with it. What did he do at the end? He saw that he was going to lose the war, so he took a perfumed flavored poison and he painlessly left the world. Now, that's not the way Hitler should be leaving this world. I have other ideas how to send him off. And if I do, then Hakodosh Boruch Hu has much better ideas than me. So what does it mean when Hitler and Demjanjuk, and other *reshaim* too, don't get their just desserts?

THE FUN BEGINS

It means, what it's showing us, that it's the beginning of a very big career in the Next World for them. The "fun" for Hitler and Demjanjuk begins over there. And so, Hakodosh Boruch Hu lets the *reshaim* get away with it, in order that we should know there's a Next World!

Look, do you think that there could have been any true *nekama* for these *reshaim* in this world, anyhow? Whatever the Supreme Court would have done to Demjanjuk, or whatever we would have done to Hitler; if they had hung him, if they had put him in the electric chair, even if they would have cut him up into little pieces, what would it mean anyway?! Is that a *nekama* for a man who spilled so much Jewish blood?! It's nothing at all! And so Hashem says to us: "I'm going to let this *rasha* go free" - it was Hashem after all - "I'm going to set him free in order that you should train yourself to think about the real *nekama*, the *nekama gedolah* of *Gehenim*." אבינה לאחריתם - You have to understand the end, the real end, of the *reshaim*. He's not a free man at all.

And therefore, when we see a *rasha* like Hitler go out of this world painlessly, or a murderer like Demjanjuk be acquitted

and go back to his normal life in Cleveland, we are reminded that there is waiting for them *another world*. Hakodosh Boruch Hu is reminding us that He's waiting for these fellows in the Next World. They'll get there, and they'll get what's coming to them!

THE PLACE WHERE IT'S VERY HOT AND CROWDED

It's of utmost importance to know that there's a *Gehenim*. And not in the superficial way that most people do. To actually feel in your bones that the *reshaim* are suffering in *Gehenim* right now. And in *Gehenim*, that's where nobody gets away with anything! There's Israeli Supreme Court in *Gehenim* to acquit the *reshaim*.

You have to imagine in your mind what Hitler is undergoing right now in *Gehenim*. He killed millions, millions of the *Am Hashem*. And so he's in *Gehenim* right now and he's putting on a performance every day. Every day they revive him. They make him alive again with his flesh. And his nerves. And every day they scrape the skin off him and they hang him up and they cut off pieces and pieces of him. And he screams and screams. He screams all the time!

And he's not the only one. It's very crowded there. Very crowded! And very hot. All the *reshaim* are in *Gehenim* right now! Pay attention. You hear that noise?! They're getting it in *Gehenim*. There is a terrible outcry in *Gehenim* right now.

PLEASURE FOR THE TZADDIKIM

And the *tzadikim* are watching the show. One of the secret pleasures of *Gan Eden* is watching the suffering of these *reshaim*. The *tzadikim* are given "front row seats" in *Gan Eden* and they're enjoying the sights. Now when we say the wicked in *Gehenim*, we're not talking about Jews who made some errors, they made mistakes, they sinned a little bit, and they're in *Gehenim* temporarily. We're not happy about our fellow Jews' suffering. We're waiting for them to get out, we pray for them. They're going

to get out eventually and they're going to sit together with all the tzadikim. We're talking about the permanent residents of *Gehenim*, the real citizens of *Gehenim* who will be there forever and ever. And the fact that they are being terribly punished for what they did, and the sight of justice being served, that's a great happiness in the World to Come. And the tzadikim are finally able to see the revenge, and they look on with happiness!

"The righteous man shall rejoice when he sees vengeance; He bathes his feet in the blood of the wicked" (Tehillim 58:11). Now, I know that for you Americans this sounds harsh. But this is Dovid Hamelech speaking! And he goes on and tells us *why* this sight brings rejoicing: וַיֹּאמֶר אָדָם אֶךְ פֶּרִי לְצַדִּיק - "And then men will say: 'Truly, there is reward for the righteous'; אֶךְ יֵשׁ אֱלֹהִים שׁוֹפְטִים בָּאָרֶץ - "Truly, there is a G-d that judges the world" (Tehillim 58: 11-12). Because now, they see that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is righteous! Everything makes sense and all accounts are being settled.

GAINING DAAS AND FRONT SEATS

And you must think about this *nekama* as much as possible because that knowledge, when engraved into your soul, will give you more *da'as Hashem*; more awareness of His perfect justice. And the more awareness you achieve in this *avodah of emunah that there is a Just G-d and that no one gets away with anything*, the more prepared you are for your reward in *Olam Habah*. And therefore, it's a very important *avodah* to make yourself aware of Hashem's justice, in this world and the next.

And it won't come by itself. You have to think about it. Take a minute during the day to think about the great truth that right now, all accounts are being settled in the Next World. The *reshaim* are actually in *Gehenim* today. And they're screaming. They're screaming in pain.

And then, you too will have "front seats" and you'll see Hitler being given all that he did to his victims, again and again. And it's going to be an enjoyment without end! Not merely a

sadistic joy, the immature and materialistic *nekama* of the fools. But it will be a great *nechama*, that *nekama*, because it will be the ultimate vision of seeing Hashem in full control, the true שופט הארץ.

COMMISERATING WITH THE WICKED

We don't commiserate with the wicked who are being punished. Not like some say, that at the *Seder* we sing to Hashem for his righteousness, but at the same time we commiserate with the Egyptians who were drowning, gargling, in the *Yam Suf*. That's not true. It may be all right to say that if, let's say, you're giving a speech about *Pesach* to the Sisterhood of *Ahavas Chesed* on Long Island just before the Bingo session. But when you're saying *da'as Torah* you can't hide the truth. Here we speak *da'as Torah* and the truth is that our job in life is to learn more about Hashem, and to realize His ways in this world. And His ways are ways of righteousness and justice, a process of calculated reward and punishment.

Hakodosh Boruch Hu is bringing revenge upon the wicked and there is no reason to commiserate with them. Seeing Hashem's *mishpat*, to know in one's bones that the wicked are getting their recompense is most vital for a person's perfection of character. And therefore Moshe Rabeinu couldn't leave this world without seeing the punishment upon the *Midianim* with his own eyes. And so too, whatever *you* achieve in the important *avodah* of מעין עולם הבא is only a preparation for *Olam Habah*. Enjoy that spectacle of Mike Todd falling out of his plane, of the *resha'im* dying of AIDS, of Abbie Hoffman killing himself, *because you're seeing the mishpat of Hakodosh Boruch Hu*.

Now I'm not talking *just* about the fun of it. I don't begrudge them their fun - Jews are allowed to have enjoyment in this world from their enemies downfall, why not? But that's nothing compared to achievement of *da'as*, the perfection of

knowledge and attitudes that a person acquires when he sees the strong Hand of Hashem taking retribution. And the more he studies it, the more *dei'ah* he achieves. And that's why we came to this world, to learn from the phenomena that we see and that we hear about, to add on more and more *da'as Hashem*. And one of the important lessons that we are suppose to learn while still in this world, is that the falsehood and the wickedness of the *reshaim* is always being avenged, and that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is in full control. And it is that *dei'ah* that will equip us to enjoy the splendor of the *Sh'chinah* in the World to Come forever and ever.

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Q&A With Rav Avigdor Miller Ztz"l

Q:

The Rav told us tonight that the Jewish communities in the times of the Beis Ha'mikdash were communities of *kedusha*. You said that there were many *tzadikim* who counted every word that came out of their mouths. Were the women of ancient Yerushalayim really better than the women of today? Did they really speak less than the *frum* women of today?

A:

Absolutely. No question about it. What do you think?! If there is a society in which people are striving for perfection, a society in which the men are counting their words, do you think that only the men are counting their words?! Their wives counted their words. Their daughters counted their words. Their mothers counted their words.

Everybody became better. You should know that, in general, when men are good, the women are also good. There's no such thing as men having *shleimus* without their wives. *Shleimus* is contagious. All good *midos* are contagious.

So you be sure to do your part in making your home a beis ha'mikdash and be sure to lead yourself *bi'derech ha'torah* and *bi'derech ha'kedusha* and it will be contagious. And therefore, you must know, that whatever good things *chazal* tell us about the men, you can be sure that the women and girls in the Jewish homes shared in all the good qualities of ancient times.

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