



Pinchas / פִּנְחָס

Politicians and Promises

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Thursday morning, in Yerushalayim

"Hurry, Tzvi!" Avraham called to his brother. "We're going to miss the bus!"

Avraham and Tzvi both started running towards the bus stop, along with other boys on their way to cheider. As they ran, Tzvi couldn't help notice the signs everywhere with pictures of Dudu Manor, who was running for Prime Minister in the upcoming Israeli elections.

"Wow," Tzvi said as they made it onto the bus just in time. "Dudu Manor is advertising everywhere. He must really want to be Prime Minister."

"Yeah," said Avraham. "They even tried to put a sign on the shul bulletin board yesterday, but the Rov told them there was no way he would allow it."

Tzvi laughed. "They're really silly," he said. "My friend Yanky told me that he promised the chareidim that he'll make Pesach longer if we vote for him."

"Is that really true?" Avraham asked doubtfully.

"I don't know," Tzvi said. "Yanky said his younger brother heard it from his friend. But why does it say 'חציר' on all of his signs? It's everywhere. 'Chatzeir, chatzeir, chatzeir...' What does it mean?"

"It stands for 'חַיִּים, צָרְכִּים, רְצוֹנוֹת' - life, needs, and wants," Avraham answered. "Dudu is promising that if he becomes Prime Minister he will give everyone better lives, everything that they need, and anything that they want."

"Like anytime we want free ice cream we'll just get it?" Tzvi asked.



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“Sure, why not,” answered Avraham. “Politicians will say anything just to get elected.”

Later, in cheider

Rav Raanan’s class sat enjoying the ice-cold slushy drinks their Rebbi had just given them as a prize for learning so well that week. When they all finished, Rav Raanan said “I would like us to all make a Borei Nefashos together. But first, let’s talk about the Bracha so we can understand it better. Does anyone know where Borei Nefashos is hinted to in the Torah?”

The boys thought hard. After a minute, Elazar raised his hand. “Maybe from the korbanos?” he asked hesitantly. “Because nowadays tefillos take the place of korbanos?”

“Very good!” smiled Rav Raanan. “But there is one korbon in particular that is similar to the brocha of Borei Nefashos, and that is the Korbon Tomid, that was brought twice a day in the Beis Hamikdosh.”

Just then a strong gust of wind outside interrupted Rav Raanan as a large piece of paper was blown into the window and onto his desk. Sure enough, it was none other than a “חצר” poster with Dudu Manor’s picture on it.

“Oy vey,” said Rav Raanan, shaking his head as he bent down to pick up the poster.

“Rebbi,” said Tzvi. “How can someone really think that everyone believes that he will give us life, needs, and wants? Isn’t ‘חצר’ the silliest thing ever?”

“Well,” Rav Raanan answered. “I can’t speak for the way a politician’s mind works. But I don’t think ‘חצר’ is a silly idea.”

“You mean he is really going to do everything that he promises?” asked Tzvi.

“Oh no, no,” laughed Rav Raanan. “I can guarantee that he won’t. But the concept of ‘חצר’ is actually exactly what I was starting to talk about.

“You see, the Korbon Tomid was composed of three parts: an Olah, a Mincha, and Nesachim - wine that was poured on the Mizbeiach. And these three things represent what we thank Hashem for when we make a Borei Nefashos. 1) The Olah is life, because a sheep’s **life** is sacrificed for the korbon; 2) the Mincha is flour and oil, which represents bread, which we **need** to live; and 3) the wine represents all of the extra wonderful, yummy, and delicious things that we **want** and Hashem gives us, even though we don’t need them.”

Tzvi raised his hand. “Can I try to answer what this has to do with Borei Nefashos?” he asked.

“Absolutely!” replied Rav Raanan with a smile.

“We say ‘בִּזְרָא נִפְשׁוֹת רַבּוֹת’, which means that Hashem gives **life**. ‘וְחֶסְרוֹנָן’ means the things that we are missing in order to live, the things that we **need**, like bread and water. And ‘עַל כֹּל מֵה שֶׁבְּרָאָתָ לְהַחֲיוֹת בָּהֶם’ means all of the extra things that we **want**, but Hashem gives to us just as a chessed.”

“Wow!” Rav Raanan said. “Did you figure that out on your own?”

“Well no,” Tzvi replied, grinning. “What you said about the Korbon Tomid reminded me of this explanation of Borei Nefashos that my father told me last week.”

“Well it’s still a great answer!” said Rav Raanan warmly. “And now that we understand the true meaning of ‘חצר’ and who really provides our **life**, what we **need**, and what we **want**, let’s all make a Borei Nefashos together with kavanah.”

Takeaway:

Our Lives, Needs and Wants are all provided for by Hashem. The Korbon Tomid and the Bracha of Borei Nefashos are a reminder to us to always remember to thank Hashem who provides everything for us; our lives, needs and wants!



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