

# THE QUINTESSENTIAL TROUBLE MAKER

RABBI NACHMUN SELTZER-EREV ROSH CHODESH SHEVAT 5777 01/26/3017 ;28<sup>TH</sup> OF TEVET

The question Rabbi Seltzer asked is why did Hashem allow Dason and Aveiram-2 trouble makers to survive the plague of darkness? 4/5<sup>th</sup> of the nation perished in this plague. Dason and Aveiram only gave Moshe trouble in Mitzraim. It was because of them that he felt he had to run away. They had total confidence in themselves and they felt it was their duty to criticize Moshe Rabbeinu. By keeping them alive, they were able to bother Moshe constantly in the desert, disagreed with all his decisions, tried to get the nation against Moshe Rabbeinu-so the question stands, why were they not killed?

We see that when the nation left Mitzraim and they go to the Yam Suf, it was evening and they camped there. The Egyptians had followed them and were shooting arrows at them all night. Hashem made a fierce, gusty wind blow at the nation the whole night. The morning came, Nochosn ben Aminodov jumped into the Sea and the Sea split. But for those who wanted to believe that the sea split because of the high winds, they were able to believe such.

Rabbi Seltzer heard a firsthand story from a rosh Yeshiva which explains the concept he is trying to bring out. This rosh Yeshiva runs a yeshiva for children at risk. A few weeks ago, a father brings his 18 year old son, Akiva to this yeshiva. They have tried many other yeshivas, nothing worked out and this is their last hope. He is accepted into the yeshiva and after a few days, the Rosh Yeshiva invited him into his office to get to know him a little bit.

"Why did you come to this yeshiva?"

"My father brought me here"

And they talk and the Rosh Yeshiva asks him, "okay, tell me what is bothering you? What happened in your life that messed you up-a teacher, a certain school you want to?"

And the boy answers, 'no, none of the above, just I have been seeing the same davening 3 times a day and it is getting a little boring already. The tefilos just don't talk to me.'

The Rosh Yeshiva believes in waiting a few days to answer these type of questions. He likes to wait for the right opportunity to arise to answer these hashkofic questions. So he dismissed the boy, waiting for the opportunity to present itself.

And sure enough, it did a few days later. Israel's soccer team got into the World Series . Israelis are huge soccer fans, and Akiva was one of those. He knew all the statistics, all the players names, he watched every second of every game of the playoffs. The morning, after a crucial game, the Rosh Yeshiva comes into the Bais Medrash in the morning and he sees Akiva speaking excitedly about the previous night's game;'and he kicked the ball this way, he made a fantastic save...you should have seen the moves etc.' After lunch, at 2<sup>nd</sup> Seder the Rosh Yeshiva enters the Bais Medrash and lo and behold, Akiva is surrounded by a group of boys, going on and on about the game. At night seder, same scenario, Akiva speaking

enthusiastically and excitedly to his friends about all the different moves, plays of the previous night's soccer game.

The Rosh Yeshiva calls Akiva and over and says to him, "Akiva, I don't get it. Okay, in the morning you were excited and spoke about the game, but then again in the afternoon and now at night. It is the same game, aren't you getting bored saying the story over 3 times in 1 day. How much is there to talk about?"

And Akiva answers him, "No, Rebbe, you don't understand, I love the game, I am passionate about it, I can talk about it all day and all night."

And then the Rosh Yeshiva says to Akiva, "Akiva, this is the answer to what you told me in my office. This is what Hashem wants. He wants us to be passionate about our religion, about our davening, he wants us to speak to him again and again and again."

And this the answer to our riddle. Hashem doesn't want us to do the mitzvos out of rote, he wants us to do them 'passionately'. That is what 'emuna' is all about it. Of course, we all believe in Hashem, that is not even a question. But it has to be more than that. Do you believe that Chazal explain the Torah the right way? Do you believe when they tell you the halochos-it is Torah m'Sinai?

And how does Hashem test us to make sure that we are 'passionate' about his Torah and not just doing it out of rote? By sending the fierce wind to blow all night, by having people like Dason and Avirom around us, who question Hashem's Torah and Hashem's leaders.

Hashem gave us bechira-free choice. He puts obstacles in our way-to ensure that if we are going to be 'baalei maminim' we have to use our minds, we have to think about it.

Rabbi Seltzer told the story of Rabbi Uri Zohar and how he became frum. He came in questioning the Rav and the Torah, but after spending 3 full days discussing, arguing, he came away a changed person.

So this is the reason that Dason and Aveirom were get alive. This is the reason why there was a snake in Gan Eden. Because there has to be a counter-point. Hashem wants thinking people believing in him, so he puts obstacles in our way. He wants to see if can be passionate about being a Yid. What is our counter-point today? Technology. Hashem always leaves the door open-whoever wants to leave can do so. For those who stay in the daled amos of Torah, Hashem wants us to stay after having thought about it and chosen to be G-d fearing Jews.

In this way, we are true baalei-maminim. And in this zchus may we merit to see the final geula b'mahara b'yomeinu, amen