

# Kinder Torah®



*For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table – Parshas Beshallah*

Dedicated in Loving Memory of Devora Bas Aharon ♦ Mrs. Doris Weiner

Whose Warmth and Dedication Inspired Us All

From Her Children, Grandchildren, and Great-Grandchildren



## *Topple the Mighty Cedars*

**T**he Children of Israel cried out to Hashem (Shemos 14:10).” The Medrash Tanchuma quotes a verse in Yishaya (41:14), “Fear not, O worm of Yaakov.” Why are the Jewish people compared to a worm? A worm only has one weapon – his mouth. Yet, with this mouth he can topple the mighty cedar tree. A cedar tree is so strong that even the largest animals cannot knock it down. Along comes the little worm, and eats the bark of the tree. Around and around he eats, until a ring of bark is gone. The mighty cedar tree is dead. It is only a matter of time until it rots and falls. The nations of the world are compared to the cedar. When they overpower the Jewish people, we do *tshuva* (repentance) and cry out to Hashem. He hears our prayers, as the verse states, “From there you will seek Hashem, your G-d, and you will find Him” (Devarim 4:29).

**T**he Chofetz Chaim zt”l writes that we are not saved from many of the troubles that befall us. Why? Because we do not cry out to Hashem. We do not increase our prayers to Him. If we would only beseech Him with prayers, our requests would not go unanswered.

### *Kinderlach . . .*

*We know that this is a time of danger for the Jewish people. However, we can be very optimistic. Because we have the secret weapon. It is more powerful than all of the planes, tanks, missiles, and bombs put together. We have the words of tefillah (prayer). They go straight to Hashem’s ears. Put extra kavannah (concentration) into your daily prayers. Make special requests in the places that they are permitted. Say Tehillim whenever you can. You can help to save us. You are our secret weapon.*

## *Always in the Sea*

**“A**nd the Children of Israel came through the sea on dry land” (Shemos 14:22). Contrast this with the verse, “And the Children of Israel went on dry land through the sea” (Shemos 14:29). Why did the two verses

switch the words “dry land” and “sea”? The Noam Elimelech answers this question as follows. When the Jewish people were going through the sea they saw and felt the awesome miracles that Hashem had done for them. They were able to walk through the sea like a man who is walking on the ground. Contemplation of these wonders brought them to an even higher *madrayga* (spiritual level). They realized that all of nature is as much of a miracle as the splitting of the sea. This is the level of “dry land through the sea”. When you are on dry land, in your ordinary daily life, you see yourself as if you were in the sea. The miracles of nature are as apparent to you as the miracle of the splitting of the sea.

**O**ur sages mention three things that are as difficult (so to speak) for Hashem as Kriyas Yam Suf. Providing a person’s food, finding a person’s marital partner, and keeping a person’s body functioning properly. Imagine all of the might and power that it took to split the sea. The precision to blaze twelve tunnels through the water, tile them with marble floors, supply them with fruit trees and beautiful aromas. Then the drowning of the Mitzrim in the sea. This was a technological feat unparalleled in history! Or was it? Our sages tell us that these other feats are equally amazing. We just have to work a little harder to see the hidden miracles in these events.

### *Kinderlach . . .*

*Just imagine that you were there at the Yam Suf. The situation looked hopeless. Then you plunged into the sea. The water was cold, up to your nose. Suddenly the sea split, in all of its glory and beauty. You were saved and the Mitzrim were drowned. Imagine how you would sing Shira with all of your heart. That is how you should say it every day. Did you eat a delicious lunch today? Providing that food is as big a miracle as the Yam Suf. Are you healthy? Another miracle. What about Imma and Abba? How did they find each other to be married? Yet another miracle. Think of all these miracles and put all of your heart into thanking Hashem for them and all of His kindness.*

## *Strengthen Yourself*

**T**hree days in the desert without water. The situation was desperate. Then Amalek came and made war with Israel. The Noam Elimelech writes that the water is a parable to Torah learning. A person should not go more than three days without learning Torah. His *Yetzer Hara* (Evil Inclination) will gain the power to battle him. Therefore, a person should strengthen himself by learning as much Torah as he can.

**A**malek attacked in a place called Refidim. The Gemora Sanhedrin (106a) comments that Refidim is a combination of the words *rofu yadayim* (their hands weakened). Their study of Torah, represented by their hands, weakened. That allowed Amalek to come.

### *Kinderlach . . .*

*Our Torah learning keeps us spiritually strong. Then the Yetzer Hara cannot harm us. Our enemies cannot harm us either. Our weakness is what gives them strength. Let us all bolster our defenses by strengthening our Torah learning. When the voice of Yaakov is heard, the hands of Eisav cannot harm us.*

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