



IMPORTANCE OF

The Gemara (Taanis 25a) states that R' Elazar b. Pedas was very poor. Once, after having his blood let, he had nothing to eat except a garlic clove which caused him to faint. Some colleagues came to visit him and saw that he was both crying and laughing in his sleep and that a ray of light shone from his forehead. When he awoke, they asked him to explain his actions and he said that in a dream, he was sitting and asking Hashem how much longer he would suffer in poverty. Hashem asked him if he would prefer that his world be restarted - perhaps then he would be born at a moment whose Mazel is propitious for wealth. R' Elazar replied: Such an upheaval and still, only "perhaps" my Mazel would change ? R' Elazar then determined that he had already lived most of his years and as such, declined to have his life restarted. Hashem rewarded him for turning down the offer and flicked R' Elazar on the forehead. The MaHarsha notes that one's Mazel is determined at the moment of birth, as the Gemara (Moed Katan 28a) states that health, children and prosperity, whether and to what degree one will enjoy them, all depend on the Mazel of that moment. Still, the Gemara (Shabbos 156a) describes how several people managed to "change" their Mazel and Tosafos states that such a change can only take place via a זכות גדול - a great merit, which then subtracts from one's future S'char. The Gemara (Berachos 60a) states that Dina b. Leah was to have been born a boy but Leah davened for Rochel's benefit and changed him to a girl. Why was Leah's Tefilah so effective to make this change when Rivka's Tefilah for a child was not effective, as both of them were righteous, but the daughters of a Rasha ? The נני המים explains that to change Mazel and go from no-child to a child requires a זכות גדול which the daughter of a Rasha would not have. To change from boy to girl does not require such a great Zechus and Leah was thus able to effect it.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

What is the exception to the rule that if one snatches away a mitzvah opportunity from someone, he must pay 10 gold coins ?

ANSWER TO LAST WEEK:

(Where is it Mutar to say something in the name of one who didn't say it ?) The Birkei Yosef (י"ד 242:24) quotes the Teshuvos HaGeonim (324) that if one knows a certain statement is the Halacha but fears that no one will accept it from him, he is permitted to say it in the name of his Rebbe to gain acceptance.

DIN'S CORNER:

If one is unsure if he ate a meal or not, he need not say Birchas HaMazon. If he knew that he ate but was unsure if he ate bread, or, he is unsure if he already said Birchas HaMazon after eating, he must say Birchas HaMazon again, as it is a חיוב from the Torah, and such doubts must be resolved strictly. It is recommended in this case, that one wash again, eat a K'Zayis of bread and then bentsch. (MB 184:15 and Be'er Hetev 184:6)

DID YOU KNOW THAT

The Gemara (Yevamos 106a) states that if a prison escapee reaches the river and offers to overpay the ferryman a Dinar to take him across, he need not pay the ferryman after crossing any more than the regular price. The Gemara concludes from here that the escapee may say: משטה אני בך - I was fooling with you. Tosafos notes that this is true only because a Dinar was an exorbitant fee for such a service. Similarly where, as the Gemara (Bava Kamma 116b) describes, a man is sent to deliver cabbage and quinces to help a sick person and discovers when he arrives that the sick person is recovered or dead, he receives only the fee for his labor. However, where a large fee is sometimes paid, Tosafos concludes that one may not say משטה אני בך, but must pay the agreed-upon fee. R' Akiva Eiger points to the כתנות אור who questions Tosafos in light of the Gemara's words which say that the cabbage deliverer collects שכרו משלם - the full fee, which would seem to be more than his labor. Why would משטה אני בך not be said here, particularly since the cabbage and quince accomplished nothing ? The answer is that the delivery man receives the full (inflated) fee where he gave up a lucrative other job to do this. But where he loses nothing, he may only claim the standard fee. Yaakov was aware that the Bechorah was "worth" far more than a pot of lentils and feared that later, Eisav might seek to void the transaction by claiming משטה אני בך. Therefore, Yaakov asked him (מכרה כיום) for an official sale, to obligate Eisav to go through with it. When Eisav said "I am about to die", referring to the "dangers" of doing the Avodah, he indicated that to him, the Bechorah was not worth more than lentils. Yaakov then requested לי השבעה - that Eisav swear to him, since (as per the Ketzos 264:4) once someone swears to an obligation, he can no longer claim משטה אני בך.

A Lesson Can Be Learned From:

A Talmid Chochom once attended a Bar Mitzvah Seudah and watched as the Bar Mitzvah boy stood up to say his Drasha. Within 10 seconds, all the boy's friends began to sing, interrupting the young man's Devar Torah. The Talmid Chochom urged the Bar Mitzvah boy to continue his Drasha and again, the friends interrupted with a song. It took several songs and several urgings until the Bar Mitzvah boy finally finished his Drasha. Later, when the Talmid Chochom was asked to speak, he began to explain what he had done. "Everyone thinks that the reason for the minhag to sing and interrupt the Drasha of a Bar Mitzvah boy or a Chasan is שלא לבייש את מי שאין לו - so as not to embarrass those who are unable to say a Drasha. However, I believe the real reason is to teach someone embarking upon a new road in life, that there will be obstacles and interruptions. Even your first Drasha will suffer. You must still persevere, keep trying and eventually, you will succeed !"

P.S. A Hartzlich Mazel Tov to the Tyberg family upon the Aufruf of their son Yonatan. Sholosh Seudos sponsored by the Alexander family.