

# CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

by Rabbi Yitzchok Rubin

"Now class, today's subject is the flu." Wait, I can see you are looking around thinking you have the wrong page. Rubin writes about *Tehillim*, not health problems, right? No, actually wrong. Rubin tries to write about life and how *Tehillim* can help it. If there is anything that needs help it is someone with the flu. Believe me I know, I have had a case of the stuff on and off for weeks. It is a creeping debilitating condition, it takes up residents in your body and nothing else seems to have any room. Everything hurts, and joints you never thought about ache and throb. The head cries out, the chest feels filled with gelatine, you can't find a place, your on fire one minute, and shivering the next. You call the doctor and he consoles you with, "It's going around," which really does not help you much. After sometime, they do tests, blood by the gallon, pictures of your lungs, all comes back with one result, you have the flu, and there is nothing to do for it, but time. No pills, no magic, just you and your thoughts.

It does not take much to start to wonder about what *Hashem* wants from you, where you have gone wrong, and what you can do better. It is like instant *teshuvah* time, only with a racking cough as background music. You feel a bit depressed, you cannot get past this bug, and time slips away. You want to get back into the stream of life. There are meetings to go to, places to be, yet, the bug stays, and nothing gets better. This little episode has seen family Rubin cancel two trips already, and the meter is still running. Yes class, I can tell you a thing or two about the flu, as I wander from one room to the next, trying to find a restful perch for my aching body.

Then, *Hashem* sent me a get well card, a gleam of hope, something to cherish. I opened up my *Tehillim*'le to this *kapitel* hoping to find something to inspire my aching head, and there it was! It has been there all along, but like most medicine I never saw it until I needed it.

The *Midrash Shocher Tov* tells us that this *Psalm* is a hymn of gratitude which *Hashem* recited to *Avraham Avinu*. *Hashem* speaks to *Avraham* and calls him, "My Master!" The Midrash explains that *Rabbi Reuven* said, "The nations were in a slumber that prevented them from coming under the wing of *Hashem*'s presence. Who aroused them to come? *Avraham*! ... The concept of kindness was also asleep, and *Avraham* aroused it, for he opened an inn and invited passers-by to share his table."

This is a life enhancing concept! *Hashem* was indebted to *Avraham* because before his arrival the entire reason for the creation of this world was being frustrated. *Hashem* created everything so that Mankind could see its beauty and perceive His Goodness. Tragically, this was not happening until *Avraham* turned to the heavens and taught the world the truth.

There is one thing that *Hashem* with His infinite power could not fashion; He could not force man to see the truth of His Oneness. By giving man the choice of choosing good or evil, *Hashem* had to allow for mankind's folly. Then came *Avraham*, and he changed everything.

The word that opens this *kapitel* is "Master." *Hashem* calls *Avraham* the master because he gave this one gift that *Hashem* could never fashion Himself. *Avraham* opened the gates to mankind's awareness of *Hashem*, and the keys to that awareness are in the hands of all who follow *Avraham's* path. We are his children, and with the *Torah* we have inherited those cherished keys. Notice though, that those keys were dipped in kindnesses, that *Avraham's* goodness toward his fellow man was part and parcel of his understanding of *Hashem*.

We too are therefore able to present *Hashem* with a gift that is only in the province of humans, and when we do, we fulfill the purpose for the entire world's creation. Now for this one human's feverish brow, this concept is astounding and uplifting! We are not just *shleppers* here on the planet, we can do more than just sulk about our ills. We can give *Hashem* a gift by extolling His role in all we see about us. With kindnesses we can initiate Holiness in the material world that surrounds us, thus using the keys that *Avraham Avinu* first fashioned.

With this heightened awareness everything slips into place. You are not well, but with illness comes an opportunity to turn to *Hashem* even when you are vulnerable. You seek a way of finding merit, and just by appreciating *Hashem's* love, you become part of the "master" family.

*LeDavid Mizmor* ... "Of David - a song, the words of *Hashem*, to My master, wait at My right; until I make your enemies a stool for your feet."

*Hashem* tells us that as *Avraham's* children we need never lose heart. The time will come when all this misery will become a footstool for our true pleasure. If we stay to *Hashem's* right, the place of *Torah* light, then the burdens will become as a pillow for our redemption.

*Matei Uzcha* ... "The staff of your strength will *Hashem* dispatch from *Zion*. Rule amid your enemies."

The *Midrash* tells us that the staff used by *Moshe Rabbeinu* during the Exodus originally was used by *Yaakov*. This staff has been part of our very history, being used by *David Hamelech* and all his line. At the time of the destruction of the Temple, this staff was hidden and it will reappear in the hands of the *Moshiach*.

We *Yidden* have so much capability. We have waited throughout this long *galus* with no more than an acceptance that the staff of *Hashem's* awesome power awaits and will one day come out of hiding. *Hashem's* essence seems turned away sometimes, but we gather together and raise new generations with these same ideals.

*Amcha Nedavos* ... "Your nation volunteered on the day of your campaign, because of your majestic sanctity from the womb, from emergence; you possess youthful innocence like fresh dew."

In the times of *Avraham*, his holiness was so charismatic that he brought thousands towards the realization of *Hashem's* Kingship. Even when faced with battles, everyone volunteered to serve with this holy figure. This holiness was apparent to all; it was as if he was covered with a sheen of life giving dew. Our own commitment to *Hashem* must be the same. Fresh, sweet tasting, and like *Avraham Avinu*, centered on kindness.

I was recently *schmoozing* with a *Rav* from *Yerushalayim*. We shared anecdotes about past sages who we had the merit of seeing. One thing came out of each story; every one of these tzaddikim was sweet and caring. They had different mannerisms, but underneath it all was the beauty of their kindness. This is the soft dew of *Avraham Avinu*, and it is what we should aspire to.

Well, there you have it, a sweet pill to be swallowed with a lot of kindness; hopefully it will drive the chill away, and give continuous strength to all who take it.

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