

When It Takes Eight Years

Lessons from Boruch Shneur

RABBI MENDEL ITZINGER

If you learned in London in the last 28 years, it is likely that you will fondly recall Boruch Shneur Gordon, son of our esteemed *mashpia*, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gordon.

Boruch Shneur is a special *neshamah*, and in addition to him being a good friend to all, greeting everyone with his unique warmth and kindness, he similarly has a very sincere *bein adam laMakom*.

Things don't always come easily to him, but he perseveres, encouraged by his parents, siblings, and friends.

And when he turned 20, and mastered the skill of reading, Boruch Shneur began saying *Tehillim* on Shabbos Mevorchim.

Slowly, laboriously, connecting each letter to the next, he sat at the table every Shabbos Mevorchim for a very long time, and managed one *kapitel* or more.

Every Shabbos Mevorchim for eight years (!) he picked up from where he had left off the month before.

Until this past Shabbos Mevorchim Tishrei, Boruch Shneur completed the entire *Tehillim*!

If there was ever a good reason to hold a *siyum*, this was it.

Indeed, last Shabbos in shul, Boruch Shneur sponsored the *kiddush*. *Bachurim* and *balebatim* came together in joy to celebrate his immense achievement.

“Sssshhhhh...”



Boruch Shneur saying the daily *Chumash* portion of *Chitas*.

“Boruch Shneur will now say a few words. No one prepared a speech for him. He will speak his feelings, from the heart.”

We all grew quiet as the *baal simchah* stood up to address the celebration.

Beaming, he began:

“You think it’s easy to say a *kapitel Tehillim*? It’s really hard!

“You have to keep your finger on the place, and at the same time figure out each letter with the *nekudos* and then figure out the next letter with the *nekudos* and then say both letters together so it’s a word.

“But *baruch Hashem*, I did it!”

As we cheered him on, his message hit home.

Here we were at the start of a new *zman*, and this holy

HAYOM YOM OF 25 SHVAT כ"ה שבט ה'תש"ג

Studying a passage of *Chumash* every day with the commentary of *Rashi* (reading the first *aliyah* of the coming Shabbos on Sunday, the second on Monday, and so on), reciting [the daily chapters of] *Tehillim* every day, reciting the entire Book of *Tehillim* on Shabbos Mevarchim—these things must be carefully observed. Doing so impacts the individual, his children, and his grandchildren.

HAYOM YOM OF 29 CHESHVAN כ"ט חשוון ה'תש"ד

Bless Rosh Chodesh Kislev. Say the entire *Tehillim* in the early morning. Hold a *farbrengen* on this day.

We cannot adequately describe the great merit of those who participate in the sacred *avodah* of saying *Tehillim* with a *minyan*, and the great pleasure this *avodah* causes On High, as discussed in sacred texts...

How fortunate are you Israel, and for this may you all be blessed with proper health and with super-abundant livelihood—you, your wives, your sons and your daughters (may G-d grant them eternal life). In your merit may all the congregation of Israel in your communities be helped (among all our Jewish brethren) in all they need, materially and spiritually.



Boruch Shneur Gordon

neshamah highlighted the most valuable *hadrachah* for a successful winter.

It reminded me of something I heard from the *Mazkir* Rabbi Yudel Krinsky.

He told me that the Rebbe once handed him a *maaneh* and asked him to type it up and deliver it to the intended individual.

Rabbi Krinsky took one look at the paper and swallowed hard. The Rebbe had written on every inch of the paper, and he couldn't figure out what the Rebbe was writing.

Reading his thoughts, the Rebbe gave him *hadrachah*: "Start with the first letter. Type it up letter by letter, one letter, one word at a time, and you will get through it."

Rabbi Krinsky told me this guided him for life.

At times, the task ahead seems daunting.

Impossible, perhaps.

Don't focus on the complete task.

Instead, just focus on the action you need to take now. When you finish that, focus on the next one.

Step by step, task by task.

It is the start of a new *zman*, winter *zman* of an *iber yahr*.

For many it may seem daunting.

It's hard to plan for six months.

If that is the case, if you feel overwhelmed, don't think about the whole *zman*.

Just plan tomorrow. What do you want to achieve tomorrow?

Tomorrow night, before *Krias Shema al Hamitah*, plan the next day.

That's all.

Take one day at a time.

Do that, and at the end of the *zman* you will suddenly discover how letter by letter, *nekudah* by *nekudah*, word by word... you finished the entire *Tehillim*. ❄️

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