

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



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תשפ"ד רב בראזיל פארשאס אכאריי מוס

### THE HOLY MUD RACE CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME

In Avos D'Rav Nosson it says that when Hashem split the waters of the Yam Suf the ground still remained in a muddy state, causing a great challenge for Yisrael to cross o the other side. Hashem therefore made a miracle and dried up the mud and it became like a clear paved road.

When we falter and go against Hashem's will we cause ourselves to become muddy and dirty in the spiritual sense. Deep down this doesn't make us feel good about ourselves. One can be wearing a tuxedo but if someone spills mud on he will feel disgusting and embarrassed. The only scenario where one won't feel that way is for instance in the new fad phenomenon called a mud race with loaded with ongoing challenging obstacles. The muddier you become the more the merrier, and your self esteem rises as you look at yourself as a macho hero. I bet you Sigmund Freud would have a hay day in the symbolism of explaining one's euphoria of allowing his clothes to get soiled without parental reprimand. Let us take a moment to analyze the physical properties of mud and its significant role that it plays in the realm of spirituality. Water itself has no form. It shapes and conforms itself to the vessel it flows into. Earth and dirt also has no form. However when one combines the dirt with water and it dries, then a form is created.

When Hashem created man Rashi says that He mixed water from an  $\text{TX}$  a vapor rising from the earth which then entered a cloud and returned back to earth again as rain. He then took this formless water and mixed it with earth like a baker mixes dough and formed the body of Adam the crown of creation. It was only then that Hashem blew within man a neshama, transforming him into a Zelem Elokim - in the image of Hashem.

If we would examine Hashem's great wisdom in the process that He made man from mud composed of water and earth, we will realize that by doing so He conveyed to Man who is called an *olam katan* a microcosm of the universe, his sacred mission and purpose in the world. For all matter has some type of physical form such as trees, insects, snowflakes etc. However in the spiritual sense they are void of "spiritual" form because they are lacking sanctity. It is the

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mission of Adam to give matter its spiritual form by using it solely to reveal the presence of Hashem in the creation which He constantly creates and sustains. Look at the amazing task that Man whose body was formed from elements that had no form and Hashem handcrafted him into a physical form and then gave the body another spiritual form that of the *neshama*. As Chazal tell us that 248 limbs correspond to the 248 mitzvos and the 365 sinews correspond to the 365 negative commandments. Even though his body became a form Hashem created Adam with another form inside the physical one. Two forms have become one form called Man who is a "uniform".

In the title אדם we see the two tiered creation of Man's meaning. The first two letters are אד derived the vapor that rose from the earth. If one adds the letter *dalet* it spells אדמה dirt. Then when these formless elements were combined together there was a physical form only. With the breathing of the *neshama* into Man these physical elements became even higher spiritual forms with a divineness to them. As Chazal say that Man's body after the entry of the *neshama* was clothed with אור כתנות clothed with an amazing spiritual light only to be transformed after they ate from the *Aitz Hadaas* into a compromised situation of עור כתנות clothes of skin.

The *sefarim* tell us that the letters of אדם represent the following: the aleph symbolizes the *neshama* which manifests wisdom as it is written אאלפך חכמה. The letters דם in אדם represents the blood which sustains the life energy and the *nefesh habehamis*. The first letter *aleph* must be the driving force in man's life to seek to understand and learn Torah and emulate Hashem's *middos*. The blood and the mud of our bodies are to be controlled and subjugated to the *neshama*. Even the letters מד of אדם is pronounced in English as the word **Mud**. After all the *gematriah* of מים עפר our two basic bodily components from Hashem add up to אמת. *Emes* is the seal of Hashem which is the *neshamah*, the seal of also the physical body. As the Baal Haturim writes that the acronym of the ending letters of the *passuk* ויפה באפיו נשמת חיים is the word חותם seal. This is the mission statement of life: that the body composed of mud with its gravitational physical lusts, cravings, and appetites must be controlled and disciplined by the force of truth in creation the *neshama*. Pure *neshama* is the

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unadulterated truth that exists in the world. Everything else is tainted for it has some רע in the mixture.

The eating of matzah on the night of the *Seder* parallels the creation of the Second Edition of Man – *Am Yisrael*. Matzah is water and flour nothing else similar to mud. The **neshama** of the matzah is Man, the Yid, the redeemed slave from Mitzrayim becoming the servant of Hashem. He **speaks** that night about the *galus* and *geulah* through his power of his neshamah דיבור which brings a loftier life energy within himself when he eats his mud matzah with a *dibbur* and praise of Hashem within it עוני לחם that we answer many questions about its unique form. Welcome world to the New Man!

*Klal Yisrael's* mission in this world is to transform our mud our bodies into holiness קדושים תהיו כי קדוש אני. The name אדם can be read **adaameh** I will emulate and be like Hashem. Our lives are also like a mud race to a finish line filled with obstacles. It is a race as *Chazal* say והמלאכה מרובה היום קצר There is a lot of work to be accomplished and yet we have very little time to do it in. It almost seems like an impossible task and our inner mud sometimes gets the best of us. This is why we have to constantly *daven* to Hashem for just like Hashem dried up the mud from the Yam Suf when they were challenged to cross the great obstacle that lay in front of them, so too Hashem will help remove the mud obstacles from one's spiritual shortcomings that he encounters every day as long as one davens for salvation.

Rav Brazil,

Gut Shabbos