

With the Two Tablets of the Testimony in his hand, Tablets inscribed on both sides; they were inscribed on one side and the other. (32:15)

The *Midrash to Megillas Esther* (8:4) relates that when Mordechai heard of the terrible decree issued against the Jewish People, he rent his garments, dressed in sackcloth as a sign of mourning and wept bitterly throughout the city. When Esther was informed of Mordechai's public expression of grief, she said, "Never in the history of the Jewish People has there been such a decree leveled at us. Perhaps it is because they denied *Zeh Keili v'anveihu*, "This is my G-d and I will build Him a Sanctuary" (*Shemos* 15:2), or they disbelieved in the *Luchos*, Tablets, about which is written, "They were inscribed on one side and the other."

Esther points toward two areas of our relationship with Hashem, which could have become deficient, and as a result we deserve to be destroyed. Why did she focus on these? Why not on *Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad*? Perhaps the Jewish People no longer believed in the unity of G-d? For Hashem to have the Jewish People destroyed, Heaven-forbid, it would require an egregious transgression heretofore unprecedented and unparalleled. The two areas of deficiency alluded to by Esther do not seem to not seem to constitute such an infraction.

Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, explains that indeed there are a number of levels in the relationship a Jew maintains with Hashem. There is a basic, simple but critical level, and there are more profound levels which demand greater intensity. The simple level of *emunah*, faith, in Hashem was manifest by the Jewish People when they experienced the Splitting of the Red Sea. This is the level of *Zeh Keili v'anveihu*. The Jews were privy to a revelation that was unquestionable. Everyone saw, everyone experienced – everyone believed. There were no subtleties. It was clear, unambiguous and manifest to everyone. G-d was real. They pointed with their finger and said, "Zeh! This! is Keili, My G-d!"

Rav Shimshon asks, "What is the "simplest" level of Divine relationship? That of, *Banim atem l'Hashem Elokeichem*, to be able to say to Hashem, "Abba sheli, my Father; *Taiere Tatta*, Dearest Father in Heaven." This is the meaning of *Zeh Keili v'anveihu*.

To abrogate a Heavenly decree requires tremendous *zechusim*, merit. Heartfelt prayer, broken-hearted weeping, fasting, charity, are all endeavors which, when performed with sincerity and proper intensity may catalyze Divine forgiveness, and thus effect a revocation of the decree. There is, however, a (for lack of better term) last-ditch attempt, or back door endeavor, whereby one cries out, "Tatta! Please help me!" This, explains *Rav Shimshon*, is the meaning of *v'anveihu – ani v'Hu*, I and Him. Esther asked Mordechai, "Did the Jews break that last frontier of a relationship – the simplest, but quite possibly most profound and probably most effective relationship of *Zeh Keili v'anveihu*? Do they still act as Hashem's children? If the answer is in the affirmative, then there is hope for annulling the decree. Otherwise, all is lost."

Esther presented a second question: “Perhaps they no longer maintain their allegiance to the Two Tablets which were inscribed on one side and the other?” Rav Shimshon explains that Esther was alluding to life’s various opposing moments – the high points and low points – when the sun is shining brilliantly and life seems to be moving in the right direction, versus those moments when darkness reigns and we cannot seem to find our way, when we are beset with troubles, strife and ambiguity, and just do not know to whom or where to turn. While there are various moments in life, there is one constant. A Jew who lives with *emunah*, faith in Hashem, always sees *Anochi Hashem Elokecha*, the first of the Ten Commandments, whereby Hashem introduces Himself and enjoins us to maintain our fidelity to Him. In whatever *matzav*, situation, a Jew finds himself, he is never without G-d. The “*Anochi*” in his is *mizeh u’ mizeh*, from “this side or the other,” whatever the situation, regardless of the challenge, the believing, faithful Jew sees Hashem.

There are two lessons to be derived from Esther *HaMalkah*’s dialogue with Mordechai. A Jew must maintain, reinforce, and never slack off in his commitment to these two concepts: *Zeh Keili v’anveihu* and *Anochi Hashem Elokecha*. Regardless of the situation in life with which we are confronted – no matter what comes our way – it all comes from Hashem, Our Father, Who is behind it and with us. Also, when we realize that Hashem is our G-d, we know that we lack for nothing. We must never forget the Source of our circumstances and believe that if it comes from Hashem, He will be with us.