

“והריקותי לכם ברכה עד בלי די.”

At its simple level, “without enough” means without limit, without measure, without end. Hashem opens the windows of heaven and pours blessing upon a person until his vessels cannot contain it. Chazal give the picture: “until your lips wear out from saying: enough.” The blessing comes from every side, and the person cries, “Enough, enough!” Yet the flow does not stop. He says enough, and more blessing comes. He says enough again, and more goodness is poured upon him.

But a simple question arises. Does wealth really make a person say “enough”? Chazal say, “One who has one hundred wants two hundred; one who has two hundred wants four hundred.” The more a person receives, the more he wants. The first hundred does not satisfy him; it becomes only the beginning of the road toward two hundred. And when he reaches two hundred, that too becomes the capital for the next four hundred. If so, how can the prophet say that an abundance of blessing will bring a person to “enough”?

The Imrei Emes explains a wondrous point. Wealth that comes through maaser and tzedakah does not harm. Ordinary wealth can damage a person, because together with the money it widens the hunger. But wealth that comes through tzedakah is a different kind of wealth. It comes together with the power to say: enough.

This means that the money itself receives a different form. Two people can have the same assets, the same income, even the same bank account, and still one is hungry while the other is satisfied. The first sees everything he has only as preparation for what he still lacks. Every profit immediately becomes the base for the next profit. But the second is able to feel that the good he received already stands on its own. Ordinary wealth gives a person one hundred and awakens in him the desire for two hundred. Wealth that comes through tzedakah gives him one hundred, and together with it gives him a heart that can say: I gained, I received, I have enough.

There are really two kinds of “enough.” One person says “enough” because the abundance has become too heavy for him: I cannot receive more; my vessels cannot hold it. But there is a quieter and deeper “enough”: I do not need more in order to live. This is an “enough” of calm, of rest, of satisfaction. The person settles into what he has received and says: Baruch Hashem, I have. It is enough for me.

The Cheshek Shlomo explains that “די” means absolute sufficiency: when nothing is lacking anymore, it is called “די.” “והמלאכה היתה דים מחסורו,” “אכול דין,” — the need has been filled; the lack is no longer there. He adds that this is also connected to the Name “Shaddai”: Hashem, so to speak, has complete



sufficiency and lacks nothing. In the absolute sense, this belongs only to the Creator. A created being, by his nature, always lacks something.

This sheds light on the whole matter. A person cannot create complete “enough” by himself. By nature, he always sees another possibility, another need, another danger, another step upward. True satisfaction is not merely a human

achievement. It is a blessing that Hashem places into the heart. A person can open a small door by recognizing the good he has already received. But the deep rest, the ability to feel that his life does not depend on what he still lacks, is a gift from Heaven.

This is the depth of “Who is wealthy? One who is happy with his portion.” People often understand this as consolation for someone who cannot get more. Since he has no choice, let him at least be happy with what he has. According to that view, being happy with one’s portion is only a substitute for real wealth.

But Chazal say the opposite. The truly wealthy person is not the one who has no possibility of more. He may know the way to two hundred. He may be able to continue working and succeeding. But his life does not depend on it. He can say: the one hundred I already received is also life. There is a world here too. I do not need to swallow the next thing in order to feel that I exist.

This is a different kind of life. The ordinary person lives from what he lacks. The next profit wakes him in the morning, gives him hope, and makes him feel that soon he will begin to live. Therefore, when he is told to say “enough,” he does not hear an invitation to rest. He hears a kind of death sentence. He fears that if he becomes happy with his portion, he will lose all desire, all ambition, all taste in life. He is afraid not only of losing money, but of losing hunger. Hunger is the only source of life he knows.

But this is a mistake. A person can build from satisfaction, work from gratitude, and earn without his whole worth depending on the next profit. Satisfaction does not destroy life; it changes the source of life. Until now, he lived from what he did not have. From now on, he can live also from what he already has.

This can be seen in a simple example. A craftsman builds a cabinet. As long as the work is unfinished, he is tense. A board is missing, a shelf is missing, the screw is not tight, the door is not straight. But when he places the final screw, he puts down his tools, steps back, and breathes. Not because there are no more cabinets in the world to build, but because this cabinet is finished. It has reached “enough.” Completion brings rest.

So too with money. A person must know not only how to begin and how to continue, but also how to finish. He must be able to say: this profit is already a profit; this success is already a success; this



one hundred is not merely half of two hundred, but something I have received. One who cannot finish anything will never be satisfied. Everything that enters him is swallowed immediately into the next calculation.

As long as a person is busy swallowing, he cannot give. His whole mind is occupied with bringing in more: more profit, more security, more property, more success. There is no room in his soul to release anything. This is not only stinginess. It is the state of a person who still feels that he is in the middle of eating. Every coin given to another feels as if it is being taken out of his mouth.

Sometimes a person succeeds. A good deal comes in, an old debt is paid, he earns more than he expected. Suddenly he says: Baruch Hashem, I am satisfied; let me give some tzedakah. What changed? The poor person was poor yesterday too. Perhaps he could have given yesterday as well. But for one moment, his heart changed. The profit had not yet become capital for the next chase. It was experienced as blessing. He felt: today I received. And once he finished swallowing a little, he became able to give.

This brings us to Parshas Re'eh. The Torah says: "Do not harden your heart and do not close your hand from your poor brother." The Torah begins with the heart before the hand. Rashi explains that there is a person who is pained over whether to give or not to give; therefore the Torah says, "Do not harden your heart." Then there is a person who stretches out his hand and closes it again; therefore it says, "Do not close your hand."

Here stands the great question: how can the Torah command the heart? One can force the hand to open, but how can one command a person not to feel pain? If he truly feels that all his money is needed for his own future, then the pain is real. His heart tells him that by giving, he is giving away part of his life.

The answer is that the Torah does not ask a person to ignore his own life. The halachah is: "Your life comes first." A person's own livelihood and the needs of his household come first, and Chazal also set limits so that one should not give so much that he himself becomes poor. The Torah does not ask him to starve himself in order to feed another.

But the test begins exactly there. True, your life comes first. But when is your life already established? When does that "first" end? If every new profit immediately becomes the foundation for the next profit, the other person's turn will never arrive. First he needs one hundred in order to live. Then life means two hundred. Then life means four hundred. In this way, "your life comes first" can become an excuse to swallow the whole world.

The Torah therefore commands a small act that belongs to the world of satisfaction: separate a portion. Give maaser. Give tzedakah. Do not swallow everything. By doing so, a person says to his own soul: I have more than what I must hold in my hand. Not everything has to remain with me. This act itself begins to teach the heart the language of "enough."

This is the depth of "Test Me, please, in this." Hashem tells a Jew: give tzedakah and believe in the blessing of "enough." Believe that after giving, you will not remain without life. You will receive not only more money, but a new source of life. You began with a little "enough," and I will pour upon you "until there is no more enough."

The Torah promises: "You shall surely give him, and your heart shall not be pained when you give him, for because of this matter Hashem your G-d will bless you in all your deeds and in all that your hand undertakes." In the simple meaning, Hashem will bless

his business and his work, and what he gave will return to him in blessing. But there is another blessing as well: not only that more money should enter his pocket, but that "enough" should enter his heart.

This is the chidush of the Imrei Emes: wealth that comes through maaser does not harm. It does not pull a person from one hundred to two hundred, and from two hundred to four hundred, without one living moment in between. It gives him wealth with "enough." He can continue working, but he does not have to save his very existence every day through the next profit.

Many sefarim explain that "ד" means boundary and measure, while "בלי ד" means abundance beyond measure. But here another point is revealed. In the soul, accepting the outer boundary opens an inner abundance without measure. As long as a person seeks endlessness outside himself, he feels endless lack inside himself. But when he can say about what is outside him, "This is my portion, and I rejoice in it," a vast inner world opens.

The "enough" outside gives birth to "without enough" inside. A hungry person can possess much and feel that he has nothing. A satisfied person can hold his portion and feel that he has a whole world.

At the beginning, we saw a person upon whom abundance is poured until he cries out: enough, enough. That is an "enough" born from the great flow of blessing. But now we have found a quieter "enough." He does not cry. He sits calmly and says: Baruch Hashem, I have.

First, the person says "enough" to the money, and then Hashem gives him "without enough" in the soul. He receives the strength of boundary, he no longer needs to swallow everything, and a life-force without boundary opens within him. He gives to another and discovers that he did not become lacking. He became truly wealthy.

"Who is wealthy? One who is happy with his portion." Not one who has no choice, but one who has possibilities and is not enslaved to them. Not one who lost his desire for life, but one who received life from a deeper place. Not a life that waits forever for the next two hundred, but a life that can feel the one hundred already given.

This is "Do not harden your heart." The Torah does not only seek to open the closed hand. It seeks to heal the hungry heart. It says to a person: you have finished swallowing a little; now you can give. Give, and you will see that you did not lose life. Give, and Hashem will bless you not only with more money, but with the greatest gift: that you should know that you have.

"He Who said to His world: enough" is also the One Who gives man the blessing of enough. A person cannot complete his own satisfaction. He separates maaser and opens a small door, and Hashem says to the hunger inside him: enough.

Then wealth can come without harm, because it does not spread into endless hunger. It enters a heart that has boundary, rest, and joy in its portion.

"For because of this matter Hashem your G-d will bless you in all your deeds and in all that your hand undertakes" — He will bless you with success, He will bless you with abundance, and He will bless you with the ability to feel the blessing.

Until you can say:

Enough.

And from that enough, a whole world opens before you of—
Without enough.

The First Cup

When he was a small child, drinking *l'chaim* was part of the atmosphere of the beis midrash. On Shabbos morning, after davening, bottles and small cups stood on the table. The adults made Kiddush, drank wine and whiskey, shook hands, and wished one another *l'chaim* and good blessings. Sometimes he too received a little from the cup at a bris, and as he grew older he drank a small cup at Kiddush. Everything was in a good place, among Yidden, zemiros, and divrei Torah. It never occurred to him that inside that familiar taste there was, for him, a stronger pull than for others.

In his yeshivah years he already knew how to distinguish between simple wine and good wine. After his wedding he also began to understand whiskey. He was not a drunkard, and he did not think of himself as a person with a problem. By now he was a forty-year-old chassidishe yungerman, a father of children, dressed properly and organized, with a good business in Boro Park. People knew that he understood liquor, and sometimes they asked him which bottle was worth buying. He enjoyed the taste, the knowledge of it, and the warmth that came after the first cup.

Little by little, something changed. At first, one cup at Kiddush was enough. Later, when he came home, he felt that the simchah had been interrupted and that he needed to complete it with one more cup. During a stressful period in business, he discovered that the drink calmed him. After an argument at home he drank to settle down; after a successful day he drank to celebrate; and on a night when he could not fall asleep, he drank to close his head. Every cup had a good explanation. Only the simplest thing disappeared from him: the number of cups was growing.

Then he began to drink in secret. One bottle stood openly in the cabinet, and another was hidden behind it. He poured a little into a cup, filled the bottle with water so no one would notice, and threw empty bottles into a garbage can far from the house. When his wife asked whether he had drunk, he answered that he had hardly drunk anything. He himself half-

Stories

The First Cup

believed the answer. After all, he was not lying in the street, he had not missed Shabbos, and he had not stopped davening. But deep inside, he already knew that he was no

longer drinking only because he wanted to. Many times he wanted not to drink, and still he drank.

The problem was no longer only how much he drank. The problem was that he had lost the ability to decide whether he would drink. He still chose which bottle, which cup, and what time, so it seemed to him that he was in control. But the main decision was no longer in his hands. When the moment came, he had to find a reason to drink. If no reason was found, he created one: someone had hurt him, the day had been hard, tomorrow would be difficult, or he deserved a little rest. The drink became the *baal habos*, and he became its explainer.

Everything Began to Fall

The business also began to fall. From the outside, no single great disaster happened. There were many small, poor decisions. He came late to a meeting, forgot to return a phone call, trusted someone who should not have been trusted, and bought merchandise without checking properly. In the morning he was tired and confused, and by afternoon he was angry at the workers. Instead of admitting that his head was not clear, he decided that everyone around him was at fault: the partner

was not loyal, the workers were lazy, the customers were ungrateful, and the home did not give him peace.

At home it became hard to speak with him. The children learned to examine his face when he walked in: Is Tatty calm? Is he short-tempered? Is it better not to ask for anything now? His wife tried to speak gently, then firmly, then with silence. He heard every sentence as an attack. Sometimes he promised that from tomorrow he would stop completely, and the next day he said he had never promised such a thing. Sometimes he was ashamed of what he had said the night before, but instead of asking forgiveness, he opened with a new



accusation. The shame itself pushed him back to the cup.

A good friend once caught him after Maariv. They sat at the side of the beis midrash with a cup of tea. The friend did not demand and did not preach. He said quietly, "I see that you are suffering. I also see that your home is suffering." He got angry, stood up, and left. But the words remained. A few weeks later another friend spoke with him, and then a family member. Each one saw a different part, and all of them said almost the same thing: You are not a bad person, but you cannot continue like this.

One day he made a bad business decision and lost an amount he could not afford to lose. That evening he drank more than usual, fell at home, and was shaken by the look in his son's eyes. The child did not scream. He only looked. In that look, the father saw everything he had tried not to see. The next day he called the first friend and said, "I need help." The friend did not ask questions. Within days they arranged a place for him in rehab in Florida, where addiction is treated throughout the day.

On the way to the airport he still thought about turning back. He told himself that perhaps one week of rest would be enough, perhaps a private doctor would be enough, perhaps everything could be arranged without anyone knowing. But this time he accepted upon himself one thing: to obey. Not because everyone in that place was wiser than he was, but because his own mind had served the drink for years. It knew how to explain everything and justify every cup. If he wanted to get out, he had to stop being the only *posek* for himself.

The Trip to Florida

He came to Florida not for a vacation, but to begin saying the truth. Distance alone does not heal. A person can run to the edge of the world and bring the entire old self along in the suitcase. But the distance gave him one thing: a break from the street, the friends, the habits, and the respectable image in which he had been hiding.

The first days were detox, medical withdrawal from alcohol. His body trembled, his sleep broke, sweat came in waves, and thoughts raced. The staff checked him and made sure the withdrawal would be safe. He, who was used to arranging a business, a home, and a family, suddenly had to ask permission even to go out to the courtyard. It humiliated him, but inside the humiliation there was relief. For the first time in years, he did not have to hide a bottle, calculate how much remained, or invent a story.

Afterward, the daily schedule began: davening, a meal, group, a private conversation, a lesson about addiction, walking, and then group again. They spoke there about the Twelve Steps. At first the language bothered him. There were people there from every background, and the words did not sound like his beis midrash. But when he listened carefully, he began to hear foundations he recognized: admitting that a person cannot pull himself out alone, believing in a power greater than himself, cheshbon hanefesh, teshuvah for yesterday, asking forgiveness, tefillah, and using one's *nisayon* to help another Yid.

He learned that the first step was not a declaration that he had no value. Just the opposite: it was the first time he respected his neshamah enough to stop lying to it. To say "I am not in control of the drink" was not the end of choice; it was the place where choice returned. As long as he said, "I can stop whenever I want," he did nothing. The moment he said, "When I start, I do not know how to stop," he could choose not to take the first cup.

The idea of a Higher Power did not have to be taught to him from the beginning. He had believed in Hashem Yisbarach all his life. The difficulty was to let emunah enter the place where he felt shame. For years he had davened while keeping a hidden bottle. Now he learned to say simply: Ribbono shel Olam, I want to drink. I cannot get through this moment alone. Give me strength for ten minutes, and send me someone I can speak to. This was not a lofty spiritual attainment. It was emunah becoming action.

The Power Above Him

In that place he looked for a person he could speak to in his own language. Not a famous person whom it is hard to approach, but an ehrliche Yid who understood the struggles of life, a chassidishe heart before whom one could say the truth without acting. That Yid was not frightened by the falls, and he did not caress the lie. He told him, "If you hide your addiction, it will run your life." A person sometimes needs the eyes of another, because inside himself he knows how to bend every mirror.

He began to make a cheshbon hanefesh. A simple clarification: At whom am I angry? Of whom am I afraid? To whom did I lie? Whom did I harm? And what story am I telling in order to remain right? Every evening he wrote a little. Yesterday cannot be erased, but one must answer for it. Without teshuvah, a person has no room to move even one thing today. Sometimes teshuvah was a phone call,

returning money, an admission, or silence instead of an excuse.

He discovered that addiction is not only love of liquor. It is an entire way of running away from pain, loneliness, anger, fear, and inner unrest. If the bottle is removed but all the escape routes remain, the person will find another bottle: eating, shopping, gambling, work without limits, a phone, anger, or the need to control everyone. His story was alcohol, and that had to be treated directly. But the foundation touches every addiction: an external thing becomes the person's fixed way not to feel his life.

Here, the matter of *daas* became clear to him. Knowledge alone does not change a person. For years he knew that drinking was harmful. *Daas* is knowledge that is absorbed into the limbs, like a craftsman who feels in his hands what is right to do. Each time he spoke in group, and each evening that passed without a cup, the knowledge became a little more alive. Day after day, the heart and body began to know what the mind had known long ago.

The sponsor, the person who guided him on the road of recovery, told him not to solve his entire life in one morning. "Today, do not drink. Tomorrow we will talk about tomorrow." At first it sounded too small. He wanted a guarantee that he would never fall. Later he understood that this was a small opening to a great building. One phone call, one admission, one short tefillah, and one decision for one day gave him a connection to a life he could not reach all at once.

Why He Did Not Remain at Home

After a few weeks, he asked himself a painful question: Why did I have to come all the way to Florida? I had a chassidishe home, a beis midrash, tefillah, sefarim of Chassidus, and good friends. All the foundations they teach here are found by us.

The answer was not that something was missing at home. The lack was that he knew how to speak all the words without bringing them into himself. At home, he could hide inside his respectable form. Here, they removed from him the possibility of running away from the point.

Hashem Yisbarach is found everywhere, but sometimes a person must leave the familiar noise and street in order to see what the street is doing to him. He needed a strong outer structure until he could build an inner structure. He needed people who asked every day whether he had drunk, groups where his image made no impression, and moments where he was forced to say aloud the thing he had hidden. Afterward, he could return home and

discover that the strengths he received there truly belonged in his own home.

After the closed period, he moved to sober living, a structured residence clean of liquor. During the day he went out to treatment and light work, but at night he returned to a house with rules, testing, and friends in the same struggle. This was a step between total protection and ordinary life. He learned to buy in a store without passing the shelf, to participate in a simchah without tasting, to receive hard news without escaping, and to return to his room and to himself when things were hard.

At first, the main thing was not to drink. Afterward, he had to repair the relationships at home. He began to listen to his wife without immediately explaining why she was wrong. He heard how much fear he had brought into the house, and how many times the children did not know which father would walk through the door. He could not demand that they trust him immediately. Trust is not a speech; it accumulates from small actions: a phone call on time, a promise kept, an evening in which he is truly present, and another day in which he does not hide.

He also returned to tefillah. In the past he had sometimes looked for a great feeling, and when he did not feel it, he said that the davening was not going. Now he began from simplicity: to stand, say the words, and ask for help for this day. Slowly, tefillah became the place where he did not have to prove anything, only to be a needy Yid before Hashem Yisbarach.

Shabbos Without Whiskey

The first Shabbos without whiskey was harder than he had imagined. Every movement reminded him of the cup: Kiddush, the Kiddush in the beis midrash, the conversation with friends, the seudah, and the time after noon. He feared that everyone was looking at him. In truth, most people were busy with themselves. One friend came over, poured him seltzer, and said *l'chaim*. In that moment he understood that drinking *l'chaim* had never been about the kedushah of the drink itself. The main thing was the closeness of hearts, the blessing, and the living word.

He did not look negatively at those who drank. Others could take a cup. He could not. That recognition obligated him to guard the life that Hashem had given him. When he said *l'chaim* over a cup of seltzer, shook a Yid's hand, and blessed him sincerely, he felt that he had not lost the point, but had found it. He had stopped sanctifying the external thing, the whiskey, and had begun to

protect the inner point that the external thing was supposed to serve.

Over time, people asked him to speak with another yungerman who had gotten into trouble. He was afraid: Who am I to help? In practice, he did not give long speeches. He simply told him what he himself had gone through, how he had hidden a bottle, how he had blamed everyone, and how he made the first phone call. The yungerman heard someone who was not frightened by him. And all the pain he had gone through became a vessel of chesed to help others. What had been a place of shame became a place from which he could save lives.

After some time, he opened, together with others, an orderly Jewish rehab. A chareidi rehab: kosher food, Shabbos, times for tefillah, and an understanding of a chareidi home and family. With chassidishe foundations: the neshamah is greater than the fall; knowledge must descend into the heart; teshuvah opens a new day; connection to a trustworthy person saves; and tefillah is the place where understanding becomes action.

When a new person arrived, he did not first ask how much he knew, or which community he belonged to. He looked to see whether a small opening of desire remained in him. Sometimes it was only the sentence, "I am sick of this." Sometimes it was a tear, or the fact that he had come even though he did not want to. He knew that a great building begins with a small opening. A person does not have to feel all the light already; it is enough that today he agrees not to lock the door.

One More Night

Years later, one night, a yungerman called him and said that he was standing near a liquor store. At home they were waiting for him, but his head was screaming that only one cup would calm him. He did not tell him to think about all the years ahead. He asked him to stay on the line, to move ten steps away from the door, and to say a few words to Hashem Yisbarach. Then he sent a friend to him.

Ten minutes became half an hour, and half an hour became an entire night without liquor.

In the morning the yungerman called and said, "You saved me." He answered, "I did not save you. You opened a small door, and the Eibershter led you further." He knew that this was not a saying. His entire new life had been built that way: one phone call, one truth, one tefillah, one apology, and one more day. Nothing looked great at the time, but together the things became a new person.

He still did not say that he had won once and for all. Every morning he knew that the illness does not disappear because years have passed. But he also did not live in fear. He had Hashem Yisbarach, family, friends, structure, tefillah, and life experience absorbed into his limbs. He knew what to do when the heart closed: not to remain alone, not to argue with the desire for an entire hour, and not to wait until it was too late. Open a door immediately.

Once he thought that freedom meant he would be able to drink like everyone else. Today he knew that freedom means he does not have to drink. Once he thought that strength means hiding weakness. Today he knew that strength means saying the truth on time. Once he searched in the cup for warmth, rest, and connection. Now he found them in conversation with his wife, in learning, in tefillah, in speaking with a friend, and in helping another Yid. The drink promised him life and took life away from him; recovery asked him to give up one cup and returned to him an entire world.

And when people asked him how it is done, he gave a simple answer: A person does not get out alone, but no one else can get out in his place either. He must open a small door, hand himself over to Hashem Yisbarach, say the truth to a trusted friend, and do the right action today. Tomorrow begins again.

That is how one lives: one more truth, one more tefillah, one more kindness for a Yid, and one more day.

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