Bnos 5783 · תשפ"ג

Parshas

Shavuos

Story

A FEW CHAPTERS OF TEHILLIM

In a small town deep in Russia, there lived a great and pious rabbi. Very often he had to travel around in the district, and would then ride in his carriage, always passing through a small village where there was a Jewish inn. But he never stopped there. One fine summer day, however, he told his driver to pull up at the inn, and the Rebbe went inside. He found no one at home, except two small boys who were the sons of the innkeeper. The Rebbe went up to them and asked: “Where are your parents?” “They are out at the moment but will be back soon.” “And where is your melamed” “He has gone home for the summer holidays.” “And what does he learn with you?” “I am learning Chumash,” replied the older one. “And I can read Tehillim,” added the younger. “Well,” said the Rebbe, “I will test you. Bring me a Tehillim.” The children brought him a Tehillim, which the Rebbe opened, and he told the children to start reading. The Rebbe, too, repeated every word with them, and thus they all read several chapters together. Meanwhile the children’s mother returned home, and was most surprised to see the Rebbe’s carriage parked in front of the inn. She entered the house through the kitchen door, and from there she heard the voices of the Rebbe and her two children reciting chapters of Tehillim, coming in from the adjoining room. She did not wish to interrupt them, so she remained in the kitchen and listened. The voice of the Rebbe was, however, so sweet but yet so sad and so touching to the heart, that tears came to her eyes. Then the Rebbe closed the Tehillim and went towards the door. He stopped there for a few moments and, then suddenly changing his mind, went back to the children and said, “Come, children, let us say some more Tehillim.” And opening the same little book they all together read a few more chapters. Then the Rebbe wished them good-bye, left the house, got into his carriage, and continued his journey. The children’s mother was very moved by what had happened and waited impatiently for her husband to return home, to tell him about it. But her husband did not come home. He had gone to a neighboring village to collect certain debts, and should have been back early in the afternoon. Several hours passed, and he was still not home. Then, darkness descended without any sign of him, and his wife and children waited in great fear for his safety. Finally, at last, shortly before midnight, there was a sudden knock on the window, with an urgent request to open the door. They ran to open it and found the innkeeper lying on the doorstep in a faint. He was quickly brought in, and as soon as he recovered sufficiently, he related the following story: He had called on one of his debtors in the next village, who asked him to accompany him to his barn in the fields, so that he could show him the newly-threshed corn, and to measure out a quantity of it in payment of his debt, as was customary among the peasants. When they got inside the barn, the farmer locked the door from inside and told the Jew that he would kill him now, as this would save him having to pay back his debt. At first the Jew thought that the farmer was joking, since they had known one another for many years. But he soon found out that the farmer (a big strong fellow) was quite in earnest. So the Jew began to plead for his life, falling to the ground before him, but the farmer remained unmoved. “I have made up my mind, and that is it!” he said. At first the farmer thought that his axe was in the barn, hut after looking for it, remembered that he had left it at the farmhouse. So he took a set of reins that were lying in the barn, tied the Jew hand and foot, and marched off to his house to fetch the axe. Meanwhile, the farmer’s wife was coming in from the fields and, entering the barn, saw the Jew lying on the ground tied up. He told her what had happened and, weeping bitterly, implored her to untie the bonds with which he was tied up. But she hesitated: “My husband,” she said, “is an accomplished robber, and if he finds out that I have set you free he will kill me.” But the Jew continued to plead with her, and told her that if, after releasing him, she would go back to the

fields and only walk back to the barn when her husband would return from the house, then he would not suspect that she had been in the barn already. Gradually her mercies got the better of her, and she released the Jew, returning then to the fields after advising him to hide in one of the heaps of hay in the field till nightfall, when her husband would have to give up searching for him, otherwise he would pursue him and kill him on the way.

The Jew did as he was told, and from his hiding place in one of the stacks of hay, soon saw the farmer returning to the barn, and then rush out again in a great rage looking for him. Great fear came over the Jew, particularly when he noticed that the peasant stopped only a few feet away from his hiding place, and he expected to he discovered any moment. However, in the next moment, the farmer moved on and soon departed towards his house.

When at last it was quite dark, the Jew ventured out of the hay and proceeded home carefully, crawling most of the way and hiding behind bushes and hedges, in case the farmer was still hunting for him. At last he got home late at night, completely exhausted.

When his wife then told him of the visit of the Rebbe, they all understood the meaning of the Tehillim which the Rebbe had read with the children - for at the time - when the first few chapters were recited, he was saved from the danger in the barn, and when the latter chapters were recited he was saved from the danger in the stack of hay.

Recipe

Coulis with Cheesecake Cream

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream

1 (8 oz) container whipped cream cheese

½ cup sugar

zest of 1 lime

1 tsp pure vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

For plating:

Fruit Coulis

Mango Coulis

Fresh mint

Instructions:

1. Prepare the cheesecake cream. In the bowl of an electric mixer, whip cream until stiff. Add cream cheese, sugar, lime zest, and vanilla. Whip until combined. Add to a piping bag (you will need two piping bags) and seal in container. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve. Can be prepared up to 3 days in advance.

2. To plate, spoon some of each flavor of coulis into your bowl or plate. Pipe some coulis into the dish. Add mint or desired toppings and serve.

Middah of the Week

Power of Tehillim