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With a little wrath did I hide My countenance for a moment from you,

וּבְחֶסֶד עוֹלָם רַחֲמֶתֶיךָ

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RABBI YY JACOBSON

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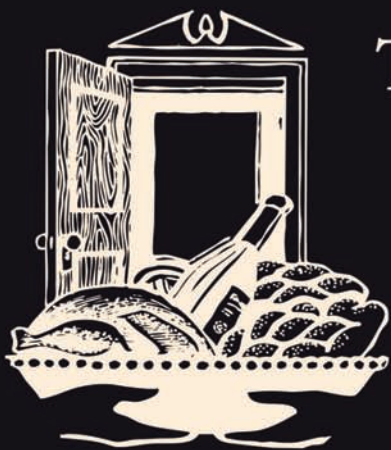
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PARASHAT KI TATZI

The Parasha speaks about a man that has two wives; one he loves and one he dislikes. Both wives gave birth to a boy and the Torah declares that he cannot act with preference towards the favorite child over the secondary child. This means he cannot give him the Bechor status in which the preferred child would receive double inheritance.

The Gra in his commentary Kol Eliyahu, points out that the pasuk starts with the loved wife and child indicating the loved child was born first and then the secondary child was born. Why can't the loved child receive his birth right if he was born first? Additionally, one is not allowed to live with a wife that he hates so what is meaning of this?

The Gra explains the incident occurred like this; Reuven married a lady, disliked her and they divorced a week after the wedding. Immediately after, he remarried a second wife who gave birth seven months later, to a boy. This is the child he loves. Another month passes and wife #1 gave birth to his child at full term of 9 months. Now there is a question as to who will be the bechor? Is it the child from the first wife that gave birth second, but conceived first? Or is it the child of the 2nd wife that gave birth first, though she conceived later?

The Torah teaches us that the Bechor goes to the child that was born 2nd because we follow conception, not birth. As the pasuk reads: "for he is his initial vigor, to him is the right of the firstborn". It is clear

according to the reading of the Gra in this verse, the bechor right follows conception.

According to Halacha however, we don't follow the opinion of the Gra that firstborn is determined by conception, rather the birth determines the bechor right. But if we would, we would clearly understand that Yaakov Avinu is the Bechor as Chazal made clear to us that he was conceived first.

In every Halachik ruling there are two or more opinions and the Halacha tells us who to follow in the various opinions. This establishes that one opinion is not incorrect, and the other correct, rather they are both correct but one opinion is 51% correct the other 49% correct. We therefore follow the more appropriate opinion though it is important to learn all the opinions because they all truth. This means that even though the Gra's opinion is not the halachic ruling, it maintains 49% of a correct view.

The Torah goes out of its way to let us know that Yaakov was holding on to the heel of Eisav to indicate that Eisav was not totally the firstborn. This means Yaakov was tied in first place which creates a doubt to whom is the actual first born bechor. The Torah makes it clear they were not identical twins that would be both conceived at once, rather fraternal twins as they looked totally different. Additionally, Yaakov was conceived first which further gives him status of the bechor. Now it is no longer a 51%-49% opinion in Eisav's favor, as Yaakov's 49% is upped by these other factors giving him the majority opinion and the rights to the bechor.

Yaakov being a man of truth insisted on making a transaction, even though it was not necessary, to eliminate any doubt Eisav could have in the future. Since sale of rights of bechor is impossible (it is something not purchasable), it was a symbolic gesture to clarify the firstborn privileges to Yaakov for eternity.

Shabat Shalom



Late Maariv Motzai Shabbos
Fifteen min, Half hour, One hour, One and Half hours,
Two hours
Rabeinu Taam

18 Main Bais Medrash

דברים	9:35	9:50	10:20	10:50	11:20
ואתחנן	9:25	9:40	10:10	10:40	11:10
עקב	9:15	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
ראה	9:05	9:20	9:50	10:20	10:50
שופטים	8:55	9:10	9:40	10:10	10:40
כי תצא	8:40	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
כי תבא	8:30	8:45	9:15	9:45	10:15

NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY

1:26, 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, 3:30, 4:00

SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLIEST KABBALAS SHABBOS	5:56PM
CANDLE LIGHTING	6:57PM
MINCHA ^{18 TENT}	7:00PM
MINCHA ^{BAIS CHABAD}	7:07PM
SHKIYA	7:15PM
SHACHRIS ^{VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR}	5:52AM
SHACHRIS ^{ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN}	8:00AM
SHACHRIS - YOUTH ^{18 UPSTAIRS}	9:30AM
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN ^{18 TENT}	9:15AM
SHACHRIS ^{20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD}	10:00AM
NEW SHACHRIS ^{18 MAIN}	NEW 10:15AM
MINCHA	1:45PM
PIRCHEI	2:00PM
MINCHA	6:00PM
PIRKEI AVOS SHIUR 1 & 2	
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	6:55PM
SHKIYA	7:13PM
MARRIV	7:53PM ^{18 TENT} , 7:58PM

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS
20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ 30 ON YOM TOV

S 6:12 M 6:13 T 6:14 W 6:15 T 6:16 F 6:17

MINCHA & MARIV
12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 5:40 M 5:39 T 5:38 W 5:36 T 5:35

MINCHA & MARIV
12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 7:00 M 6:58 T 6:56 W 6:54 T 6:53

SEPTEMBER 11- SEPTEMBER 16

NEITZ IS 6:32 - 6:37
PELAG IS 5:52 - 5:47
SHKIA IS 7:12 - 7:05
MAGEN AVRAHAM
9:07 AM - 9:08
GRA- BAAL HATANYA
9:43 AM - 9:44

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20 Forshay ↑ Birchas 30 min/needs 20 min before Neitz

18 Main Sefardi Minyan with Birchas Kohanim

6:15AM	Tent א
6:30	Tent ג
6:45	Tent ד
7:00	Tent א
7:15	Tent ב
7:30	Tent ג
7:45	Tent ד
8:00	Tent א
8:15	Tent ב
8:30	Tent ג
8:45	Tent ד
9:00	Tent א
9:15	Tent ב
9:30	Tent ג
9:45	Tent ד
10:00	Tent א
10:15	Tent ב
10:30	Tent ג
10:45	Tent ד
11:00	Tent א
11:15	Tent ב
11:30	Tent ג
11:45	Tent ד
12:00PM	Tent א

Tent א - 18 Tent
Tent ב - 20 Tent
Tent ג - 22 Tent
Tent ד - New Tent

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Rabbi Coren

PARSHAS KI TETZE - DOUBLE HAFTARAH - ELUL

My wife gave me a print out from Rav Avigdor Miller Z"l which details a special four week plan for Elul. The main objective is to do Teshuva, which Rav Miller explains is much more than just making amends with people and asking for-giveness from Hashem. Rather, Teshuva involves fully returning to Hashem. What does it mean 'to return' to Hashem and what steps can we take to accomplish this goal?

Before we share some of the beautiful thoughts from Rav Miller, I will point out the Ashkenazi custom adopted this Shabbas of reciting two different Haftaros. If you recall two weeks ago when Rosh Chodesh Elul fell out on Shabbas we did not recite the Haftara of the seven weeks of Nechama. Instead, we recited the Haftara of Shabbas Rosh Chodesh. This week, after we recite the Haftara of Ki Tzetze we make up the Haftara of two weeks ago. We discussed in the past the question of why the Sefardim do not recite the Haftaros out of order. It is based on a Psikta Derav Kahana which explains that the seven weeks of consolation have a very specific order. They begin with Nachamu Nachamu Ami and end with Sos Tasis at the culmination of the seven weeks. What takes place during these weeks is the slow process of reconnecting with Hashem following a period distancing and isolation. Hence the order cannot be switched and made up at a later date. This appears to be one explanation for the Sefardi custom.

The development of a real relationship with Hashem is the key that leads up to Shabbas Shuva which literally means to return. Rav Miller explains that the first step in his Elul plan is to work on our silence. This is easier said than done. In the old days it was common to find G-d

fearing Jews who refrained from speaking during the entire Elul. After reading Rav Miller's plan I had a new appreciation of what a month of Taanis Dibbur truly accomplishes. Rav Miller bases his concept on a pasuk in Kohelet ... אל תבהל את פיך לפני האלוקים. The main point seems to be that we should learn to refrain from responding verbally to every comment we hear. However, when one looks deeper into the pasuk, we find that the main message is found in the last words uttered by Shlomo Hamelech--'in front of



Hashem.' The main point of remaining silent is to train ourselves to remember and internalize the fact that we are standing in the presence of Hashem. Rav Miller provides us with an example: If we were sitting in front of a great tzadik such as the Sadigura Rebbe or the Lubavitcher Rebbe we would recognize the greatness of the person and remain silent. We would also anticipate hearing Torah and wisdom from the great sage.

I am always shocked when I hear balai batim uttering words that they would never dream of using in front of their Rebbes or Rabbis. Indeed, we have a hard time properly living with the above message-- that Hashem is always right here with us, listening and writing down each word we say.

It's definitely a challenge. However, as Rav Miller points out, Teshuva is close to us, it isn't something distant: כי קרוב אליך. We are able to accomplish true teshuva by using our powers of both speech and silence to internalize this message into our hearts.

Let's take Elul to a new level and develop a deeper connection with our creator.

Good Shabbos



MIDDOS TREE

BY RABBI COREN

A wise man once said, "a smile is a small curve that sets a lot of things straight." In truth, Chazal in Maseches Kesuvos says it even more powerfully. טוב המלבין שיניים לחבירו מהמשקה. חלב / Better to be one who whitens his teeth (that means to smile) at someone than giving him milk." Milk is healthy food (at least naturally) that one can gift someone, but a smile can have an even stronger effect both physically and emotionally. The famed Rav Yisrael Salant Z"l wrote that one's face is a public domain and therefore we should make sure we greet others with a smile and not a frown. This is true even during the month of Elul when a more serious tone is usually felt.

The Mishna teaches us the importance of this middah by quoting Shamai who taught, "הוי מקבל את כל האדם בסבר פנים יפות" greet man with a good countenance. We will elaborate in the longer article regarding this teaching but on a simple level, Shamai is teaching us a very important lesson. The next time you are entering or exiting shul, force that smile, even if you don't feel it. You will see a great impact both on others and yourself. Good Shabbos

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Rabbi YY Jacobson

Why Children Rebel The Argument Between Moshe and G-d

Two phases

In a military class the professor asked the students, "What is the difference between an engagement and a battle?" No one in the group offered any answer. The professor was frustrated. "Didn't anyone read the material in the book?" he thundered.

Finally, one guy said that he knew the answer. "An engagement is the thing that came before marriage," he said, "while the battle is what followed it."

The fight

It is a daring Kabbalistic story, and its origin is in the foundational text of Kabbalah, the Zohar.

It tells of a moment when Moshe argued with G-d over a particular Torah law. The five books of the Torah were dictated by G-d to Moshe, who then transcribed them. Yet, says the Zohar, at a particular point, G-d dictated a law to Moshe, and Moshe refused to transcribe it into the Torah.

It was the profoundly painful law recorded in this week's Torah portion. It was the law of the rebellious son which ends with the parents dragging him to Bais Din and ultimately with the child's death.

"G-d says to Moshe," the Zohar recounts, "'write!' To which Moshe responds: 'Master of the universe! Leave this out. Will there ever be a father who would do this to his son?!'"

"G-d tells Moshe, 'I understand your view, yet you should still write it and you will be rewarded. You know [much], but I know [much] more.' Moshe would still not budge. He cannot accept this seemingly senseless and horrible law.

Only after G-d shows Moshe the deeper mystical interpretation of this Torah law, as it describes the dramatic history of the Jewish people, does Moshe acquiesce. He transcribes the law into the biblical text. Only after learning that this law was attempting to convey mystical, rather than literal, truths does Moshe find comfort with this mandate.

Impossible conditions

Interestingly, these sentiments of Moshe are echoed centuries later by the Talmudic sages living in the second century CE. The harshness of the law led these sages to conclude that "there never was nor ever will be a stubborn and rebellious son," i.e. this Torah law was a matter of theory rather than practice. In fact, the rabbis derive from the biblical text so many conditions that were required for this law to be enacted, that its practical application was an impossibility.

To cite just a few examples: Both parents must consent to have their son declared as a "stubborn and rebellious son" and receive the death penalty.

The boy must be within three months of his bar mitzvah in order to receive this penalty, not a day younger or older (younger than that, he was still a minor; older, he was not a child). He must have stolen money from his parents, used it to buy a tremendous amount of meat and Italian wine, eaten and drunk it in one go, in a place other than his parents' house, and so on.

This is not enough. For the law to be applied, the Talmud states, both parents need to have identical voices, a similar appearance and profess equal height. Since it is virtually impossible to have all of these conditions in place (unless the father and mother were twin siblings, which would prohibit them from marrying each other anyhow), this particular Torah law could never be applied in the real world.

Why then was it written? The sages answer, "So that we should expound the law and receive reward." What the Talmud seems to be suggesting is that expounding this law in depth will be rewarding for parents; it would enrich parenting and educational skills.

Indeed, when we focus on these verses, we can deduce extensive psychological, emotional and practical guidance on the goals and methods of a moral education. Today, I wish to focus on one aspect.

How many voices in your home?

As usual in biblical study, a discrepancy in the text intimates deeper meanings. This text too, contains such a discrepancy.

"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey the voice of his father and the voice of his mother," is how the case is introduced in the Bible. His parents are described as having two distinct voices: "the voice of his father and the voice of his mother." Yet later on, when the parents bring their son to court to mete out the penalty, we encounter a slight, but meaningful, variance: "They shall say to the elders, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He does not obey our voice.'" No more "the voice of his father and the voice of his mother." Now it has become "our voice." Their distinct voices merged into one.

What is the meaning behind this subtle textual change?

The message, it has been suggested, is critical in education. The phrase "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey the voice of his father and the voice of his mother," hints to one possible reason for this son becoming stubborn and rebellious. In his home there was not one voice, but two distinct and dichotomized voices. The voice of the father was not the voice of the mother. Each of them went his or her own way. The parents never managed to merge their distinct "voices" to create a unified and integrated vision for themselves and their children. Each of the parents was pulling the home in a different direction, and the poor children were left stuck in the middle, torn by the discord of people they love so dearly.

And if this were indeed the case, this child is not

rebellious and stubborn at all. He is a victim of his parents' stubborn refusal to work on their emotions and discover peace in their fragmented home. The child need not suffer the consequences for his parent's reluctance to confront their own egos and demons, and build an ambiance of mutual respect and harmony. They may or may not have good reasons for their strife, but the child ought not to be blamed for responding to their wars with stubbornness and rebelliousness. What else do you expect of him?

Of course, even if you did not grow up in an idyllic and loving home, you are accountable for your actions. A human being could overcome his or her past. Yet you can't call this child "stubborn and rebellious."

If we are going to punish this child, we must be sure that his disposition is indeed corrupt from within. Thus, in the continuation of the incident, the Torah states, "They shall say to the elders, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He does not obey our voice.'" To determine that this child has embarked on an irrevocable path to disaster (which is, according to the sages, the reason the Torah imposes such a horrific punishment on him), we must ensure that the parents spoke in one voice, that the home was filled with serenity and human dignity. If not, if two voices resided in the home filled with divisiveness and resentment, the blame ought to be placed on the parents, not on the child. Since his distortion is due to his parent's discord, the path of healing is open to the boy.

Mutual respect

This may be the deeper meaning behind the Talmud's statement that for this law to be applied, the parents must share identical voices, a similar height and a close resemblance to each other. Only if the voices in this child's life have been integrated by parents who shared an identical value system in life; only when this child observed a father and mother whose spiritual heights were similar; only a child who saw both of his parents projecting a similar vision of themselves, only in such a case may we perhaps conclude that this child, who has demonstrated terrible and destructive inclinations, is turning into a monster. His future may be hopeless.

Since these conditions are virtually impossible, for no parents can be perfect, the Talmud is suggesting that we never have the right to proclaim any child as "stubborn and rebellious," even if we observe in him destructive patterns. The child may be responding, consciously or subconsciously, to the stress and turmoil in his parents' lives.

Parents are not, nor do they need to be, perfect. Yet, as long as we work toward transforming our distinct voices into a single voice, as long as we learn to truly respect the otherness of our spouse and create together a loving ambiance in our homes, we are likely to raise children who will lovingly embrace the morals and values their parents hold dear.



GAN

HATORAH

Rabbi Yakov Yosef Schechter



Rabbi Reisman

PARSHAS KI SAITZAI SPIRITUAL FENCE

כי יקרא קן צפור לפניך בדרך...לא תקח האם על בנים" מעקה לגגך" 22:8

However, a son can only have one father. תחית המתים can only work on one who is a son. The Ribbono Shel Olam is called a "Kohen". The Ribbono Shel Olam Kevayachol can only go to the graves of those who are His children to bring them back to life. For those who are only Avodim, the Ribbono Shel Olam is not allowed to be Metameh Himself. Kesubos 68a - One who averts his eyes from giving Tzedakah; it is as if he worshipped Avodah Zara. Bava Basra 10a - The poor person is similar to a servant. The king got angry at the servant and commanded that he not be given anything to eat or drink. If one were to give that servant to eat or drink, the king would be angry at that person for going against his command. However the truth is that the poor person is really like the son of the king. If one gives the son of the king to eat or drink, even if the king had decreed that he not be fed, the king would give that person gifts for taking care of his precious child. One who averts his eyes and does not give Tzedakah, considers that we are עבדים and that is why he does not give the poor person Tzedakah. כי תבנה בית - חדש - One who wants to build his new house for the World to Come and wants to be Zoche to תחית המתים, the Torah is letting him know how to accomplish that. גג - ועשית מעקה לגגך - is a Loshon of arrogance. One should make a fence and guidelines for himself to make certain that he does not become haughty. ולא תשים - One should make certain that he does not leave over דמים - money, in his house, meaning that he should contribute his money to Tzedakah. If one does these two things he will build himself a beautiful place for when he is Zoche to תחית המתים. (נועם מגדים)

Just as one needs to build a fence on his roof, so too one must build a fence around his רוחניות. Mishlei 25:28 עיר פרוצה אין חומה איש אשר אין מעצורו - "לרוחו" - A breached city without a wall, so is a man without constraints to his spirit. (רבינו אפרים)

The Torah is telling us how to attain a long life on this world and be Zoche to Techiyas Hameisim. We must realize and see ourselves as children of the Ribbono Shel Olam. The Mitzvah of Shiluach Hakan can bring us closer to the final redemption. Even as one sends away the mother bird to take the children, the mother bird will hover over her children and wait for an opportunity to be reunited with her children. The Ribbono Shel Olam is waiting and yearning for us to be reunited with Him. If we see ourselves as children of the Ribbono Shel Olam, we will do all we can to follow His will and to teach the Torah and Mitzvos of Hakodosh Boruch Hu to others. In order to build a proper house לבא לעתיד - we must remain humble and give Tzedakah. We must also build a fence around our רוחניות to keep the Yetzer Hara away. In the Zechus that we recognize that we truly are children of the Ribbono Shel Olam, we should be Zoche to the Geulah Shlaima בימינו אמן!

INTERESTING HALACHOS FOR THIS SHABBOS

I would like to begin by pointing out a couple of halachic issues that are relevant for this Shabbos, and one would do well to be aware of them before the Shabbos comes. One has to do with the reading of the haftorah this week. What is special about the reading of the haftorah this week? What is different this year?

The answer is that this year is different. In middle of the שבוע דנחמתא - the seven haftoros that are post תשעה באב - came a Shabbos which was Rosh Chodesh. פרשת ראה this year was "Shabbos Rosh Chodesh" and we followed the ruling of the Rm'a (או"ח סימן תכה סעיף א) and read השמיים עניה which is the haftorah of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh instead of ערה which is ordinarily read on פרשת ראה.

We are therefore missing one of the הפטורה of שבוע דנחמתא - the seven haftoros that are post תשעה באב - came a Shabbos which was Rosh Chodesh. פרשת ראה this year was "Shabbos Rosh Chodesh" and we followed the ruling of the Rm'a (או"ח סימן תכה סעיף א) and read השמיים עניה which is the haftorah of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh instead of ערה which is ordinarily read on פרשת ראה. We are therefore missing one of the הפטורה of שבוע דנחמתא - the seven haftoros that are post תשעה באב - came a Shabbos which was Rosh Chodesh. פרשת ראה this year was "Shabbos Rosh Chodesh" and we followed the ruling of the Rm'a (או"ח סימן תכה סעיף א) and read השמיים עניה which is the haftorah of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh instead of ערה which is ordinarily read on פרשת ראה.

All shuls of בני אשכנז which are aware of this will know to read both הפטורות, but I would suggest that you discuss this with your קורא or your Rav since it doesn't come up that often it is easily forgotten.

The רני עקרה לא is in פרשת נח the הפטורה of ערה together with ערה. Therefore a Rav can technically get up in shul and announce that this week we will be reading the הפטורה of פרשת נח, but it will raise a number of eyebrows. He can more correctly state that we will be reading the הפטורה of פרשת כי תצא followed by the הפטורה of פרשת ראה.

2. A second point is special for this year and comes up every 2-3 years. זכירת מעשה עמלק of פרשה כי תצא This week we read פרשת כי תצא. If someone missed hearing פרשת זכור, such an individual should certainly have in mind to be יוצא his obligation by hearing it in this week's קריאה. It is for this reason that we tell the בעל קורא that he have in mind to be מוציא such a person.

There is another point brought up by the Chasam Sofer concerning a שנת העיבור - a leap year. We read פרשת זכור once a year so that twelve months shouldn't go by without mentioning the מצוה of עמלק. This year, 12 months will pass by between the reading of פרשת זכור that took place in תשע"ה and the reading of זכור that will אי"ה take place in תשע"ו. Actually, thirteen months on the Hebrew calendar will pass by between the two readings. Since more than 12 months will pass between the two readings, the Chasam Sofer brings a "מנהג טוב" to have in mind this Shabbos, during the reading of the פרשה of עמלק, to be יוצא the מצוה of עמלק and זכירת עמלק. These are actually זכירות two: One is mentioning what עמלק did and the other is mentioning the מצוה of wiping them out, as רש"י and the רמב"ן discuss.

Since one needs to have it in mind at the time of the reading, a person should be aware of it beforehand. If the Rav chooses to do so, you can make an announcement that everyone should have in mind to be יוצא - as a חומרא - to be מוקיים of מצוה זכור with today's laining.

These shiurim have been transcribed from an actual drasha. As speed is of the essence, spelling and grammar may be compromised

STORIES FOR SHABBOS

A MOTHER'S TEFILOS (PRAYERS)

One of the students in Yeshiva Mir, Poland, became gravely ill, with hopes for his recovery becoming slimmer by the moment. The doctors who were treating him despaired of his living more than a few more days. His mother made the trip from her home in Baranovitch to Mir to be by his side and to advocate for some treatment that would save his life. One of her relatives knew a doctor who was not among the well-known physicians in the community. He was brilliant, however, & had successfully treated patients upon whom others had given up. He was unconventional in his approach to medicine. His track record was impressive. They really had nothing to lose. The doctor came & examined the patient. "I can help him," the doctor said. "The pill that I will give him might not work. If it does not work, it will hasten his passing under very painful circumstances." The mother was confronted with a decision to make. Was it worth gambling on a treatment for which the results could either be life-saving or devastating? She conferred with rabbanim who came to the consensus that they should take a chance at saving her son. The day that treatment was commenced, the Mashgiach, Horav Yechezkel Levenstein, zl, walked into the bais hamedrash & spoke of the unsurpassed importance of efficacy of tefillah. He concluded by exhorting the students to join together in storming the Heavens on behalf of their friend and colleague. Suddenly, the doors of the bais hamedrash were opened as the mother of the student entered the room, walked up to the ahron ha'kodesh, opened its doors, and cried out to Hashem, "Ribono shel olam! You blessed me with a number of sons, of which I consecrated this one to a life of Torah. Why specifically do You want to take him from me?" She then broke into bitter weeping, in which she was soon joined by the others who were witnessing this heart wrenching scene. They all prayed together until they soon heard the good news that her son had taken a turn for the better. The Mashgiach spoke to the student body following the successful outcome of the student's therapy. His mother's tefillos had made the difference. Her pleading with Hashem emanated from the depths of her heart, her tefillos reflected absolute sincerity. Her sincere prayers had "turned the tide." Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum's Peninim on the Torah.

REB MOSHE THE MATHEMATICIAN

When the Communists took over White Russia, Jewish children were required to attend public schools where the teachers tried to indoctrinate them with the "religion" of the state - atheism. One female secondary school teacher in Luban became infuriated when the children under her charge countered her virulent attacks on religion by quoting their "Rabbiner," their rabbi who eventually became the renowned Gadol Hador, HaGaon R' Moshe Feinstein zt"l. The teacher began to denigrate R' Moshe, poking fun at the ignorant "Rabbiner" who couldn't even do simple mathematics like a proper Soviet citizen. In order to cast doubt



on R' Moshe's reputation for brilliance, the teacher sent him a calculus problem that she had obtained from her university professor, a problem deemed far too difficult for someone who had studied elementary mathematics. When the young children presented R' Moshe with the calculus problem, he asked one of the youngsters for his textbook. The Tzaddik sat down for a few minutes and read through the textbook. Then, he wrote a solution to the question posed. The teacher was astounded and sent a second problem which R' Moshe solved within minutes, asking the students to return it immediately so that the teacher would know he had not sought help from anyone else. The teacher insisted on meeting the rabbi and soon became his protector. As the laws against the rabbinate became more and more severe, she would tell the local Communist officials that these laws did not apply to this Rabbiner, who was a great scholar in mathematics and not a "useless parasite." The Torah tells us that through its diligent study and observance, it will serve as "proof" of our wisdom and discernment to other nations, who will say, "Surely, that great Nation is a wise and discerning people!" Rabbi Dovid Hoffman's Torah Tavlin.

POPINSANITY AND THE POWER OF "H" BY RABBI DAVID SUTTON

Mr. Yaakov Goldenthal started his career as a musician in Monsey, New York. To increase his livelihood, he decided to open a cafe there. After all the preparation, time, effort, and investment, the cafe was abruptly shut down. He took a big loss and tried to recoup some of his investment by selling off as much of the equipment as possible. Ultimately, he was left with a \$300 popcorn machine that sat collecting dust in his basement. Sometime later, when he and his wife were throwing a party for their daughter, he rented a cotton candy machine and brought up the popcorn machine as well. His wife, tired of seeing it in the house, said that after the party it would have to be placed on the curb. At the party, one of the girls requested sweet popcorn. Yaakov decided to experiment and mixed some of the cotton candy ingredients with his popcorn. The guests all loved it! After the party,

he got a phone call from the girl's parents, asking if they could buy more of the sweet popcorn. Word spread and he, with his friend and partner Aaron Zutler, started selling the flavored popcorn. Slowly, the popcorn company grew, but there were plenty of bumps in the road. Then, suddenly, in November 2018, came his big break: Media personality Oprah Winfrey listed the popcorn, called Popinsanity, on her annual list of "Oprah's favorite gifts." Suddenly business quadrupled! The company's staff started putting in 16-hour days. They were selling 10,000 pounds of popcorn per week — at \$18 per bag! "Artisanal Popcorn," they called it. The media said it was propelled by the "power of O," but Yaakov says it was the Power of H —the Power of Hashem. People pay well for advice on how to reach Oprah with their products, but his "lucky break" came due to a "chance" encounter with an Oprah staffer at a trade show. Could anyone have planned this? "Hmmm, let's take this kosher popcorn from Monsey and get some of it over to Oprah to taste. Get it on her list. It'll be great! We'll sell it for \$18 a bag." No. No one could plan that out. Yaakov Goldenthal's unlikely success story illustrates that while we have to work and try to earn a living, whether our efforts are crowned with success is entirely in the realm of hashgachah pratit. He could have pursued Oprah's endorsement relentlessly and come up empty-handed. Instead, he made himself available for blessing and it rained down upon him. When we try to analyze the story, it really is insanity. A business gone bad and a leftover popcorn machine became a large, successful business. Rabbi Moshe Malka z"l, head of Mosdos Ohel Moshe in Bnei Brak and Elad, once said that Hashem has a special spray called "Charm Spray." When He sprays it on a product, it flies off the shelves. We must realize that our success in business and in life does not rely on the middlemen: the executives, the promoters, the buyers, the bosses, the neighbors, etc. We have to "make the popcorn," but only Hashem can turn it into a shower of blessing. With belief in Hashem's control of our success, we need not be afraid to take a reasonable risk on a venture that seems promising. All we need is Charm Spray! Excerpted from the ArtScroll book "A Daily Dose of Bitachon" by Rabbi David Sutton



LIFELONG MITZVAH

The Maharsha in Chidushei Aggados in Meseches Brachos 47a writes an amazing chiddush. The Gemara teaches us in several places that when one answers Amen Yehei Shmei Rabba with all his "kochos" (power) or all his "kavana," (proper thoughts) he will live a long life. The lashon that is used is "marichin lo- yamav u'shnosav." The Gemara in Brachos says that one who answers amen "yoser midai," (too much) is making a mistake. The Maharsha explains this by analyzing the person's thought process. The person may be thinking that he will say amen a lot and therefore, will live an extra-long life. This is a mistake because living too long of a life may not be beneficial; as the passuk says, "Yagiyu shanim- asher tomar- ein li ba'hem -cheifetz." (A time will arrive when the person says I don't want any more years.)

This concept is brought down in the Yalkut Shimoni in Parshas Eikev, remez 871. An elderly woman came before Reb Yosi ben Chalafta and said, "Rebbe, I am too old. Everything I eat is tasteless; everything I drink tastes the same. I would like to die!" Reb Yosi responded to her, "What mitzvah do you do every day?" She answered, "When I awake in the morning, even if I have something I love, I put it down and first go to Shul to daven." Reb Yosi said to her, "Just stop going to Shul for three days and your problems will be solved." She followed Reb Yosi's advice and after three days became sick and died.

In his introduction to Yoreh Deah, the Shailos U'tshuvos Chasam Sofer quotes the Rambam who says, "Praised is the person who finishes his days quickly." In other words, if the person completes his "tafkid" (mission) in this world and moves on to the world to come in Gan Eden, he is praiseworthy. The Chasam Sofer mentions a line of reasoning one may have that would be incorrect. It will seem from this Rambam that if we see tzaddikim living a long life, one can be mistaken and say they have not fulfilled their "tafkid" and are not complete tzaddikim. The Chasam Sofer responds to this by saying that Hashem arranges for some tzaddikim to live longer to be mechanech children or the community. This idea is expressed in the passuk in Parshas Ki Savo; "Ve'hosircha Hashem- letovah bifri- vitnecha" (Hashem will let you survive for the good of your children.)

Know that life is precious. Every minute counts. Make sure you help others so you can live a long and productive life.

PARSHAS KI SEITZEI It's all Good.....

"ויהפוך ה' אלוקיך לך את הקללה לברכה" (דברים כ"ג, ו')

"And the L-rd your G-d will transform a curse into an open blessing for you"

We often get upset by events that happen but later realize that they are for our benefit.

Sometimes however, destiny moves like lightning, creating a new reality so radically different from what we expected that we sense a flash of the divine, redirecting and realigning our lives.

Let's listen to a true story that took place around 30 years ago, illustrating this point.

R' Reuven Karlenstein, a Maggid from Yerushalayim was forced to move across the ocean and settle in Boro Park. His kidneys were failing and dialysis was not an option for much longer. He put his name on a list at the advice of medical askonim and waited. Six months turned into a year and before long two years had passed, apart from his family. He needed to be close to a potential donor in order to receive the kidney as soon as possible. If he missed the call the organ would go to the next person on the list.

And so it was that after two years the consensus was that he should sign up at the largest Donor Center in the west coast, located in San Francisco. The experts told him that his chances were much better there.

Alas R' Reuven did not want to go.. " I am barely surviving here- in a Heimish environment. I do not speak English.. I cannot leave Boro Park."

R' Yitzchok, a dedicated Askon spoke up.. " I am volunteering to come with you to San Francisco. We will be matzliach there Bez"H!"

The askon asked his wife if he could go to San Francisco.. the trip may be a long one.

She agreed, on one condition..the minute they get to California they should call her- the NY hospital had a list with only 3 hours til the kidney goes to the next person.. The trip is 6 hours. You must call when you get there.. You never

know- a kidney could suddenly be found. You might have to turn right around.

The two men arrived in the middle of the night. It was before the days of cellphones and R' Yitzchok had forgotten to call.. He awoke with a start an hour later.. But where would he find a phone!.. At 6.30 in the morning, there was loud knocking on the door and two policeman came in.. " We received an emergency call from your wife in NY you must call her now- we tracked you down from a list of many hotels."

By the time they reached NY it was too late.. The kidneys had been given away!!

Hard pressed to tell the frail R' Reuven, R' Yitzchok tried to hold it in, but his face gave it away..

"Don't fret even a minute!" R Reuven said with a smile that lit his whole face.. this is definitely the hand of G-d. He is saving me from something terrible! Two years I waited for a kidney and the day I went away, one becomes available.. With certainty I can state that it would not be a good kidney, that is why Hashem orchestrated me to fly far away- so I would not take this kidney..The Rav called his family in Eretz Yisroel and with whatever strength he could summon, he danced in happiness telling them the "good news".

R' Yitzchok (and all of us reading this story) are about to learn a big lesson.

In less than a month a new kidney was found for R' Reuven.

Back in NY, the askon decided to see what had become of the kidneys they had "missed." Unfortunately, the two patients who had received the donor kidneys died very soon afterwards-the kidneys were infected with a rare disease that had eluded the surgeons.

As a happy postscript.. Harav Karlenstein moved back to Eretz Yisroel where he lived another 30 years, passing away a few months ago!

Deep in our Neshama is a Heavenly accounting and a divine plan. There are no mistakes,

or forgetting, that does not bear the stamp of our Creator.

Good Shabbos!

Translated by Rabbi Reich

PARSHAS KI SETZEI

Can you figure out what each picture has to do with the parsha?

*E



Rabbi Dani Staum

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Parshas Ki Setzei – Parsha Pix Key

Remember - The parsha concludes with the Biblically mandated mitzvah to remember how and when Amalek attacked us in the desert – 25:17

Bird with eggs in nest – The mitzvah of *shiluach hakan* carries with it a promise of longevity for one who fulfills it. If one finds eggs of a kosher bird, he must shoo away the mother and take the eggs – 22:6

Soldier digging – When Jewish soldiers went out to war, they had to carry a shovel (along with their weapons). When a soldier needed to take care of his bodily functions, he was obligated to dig a hole to cover his waste. *This obligation symbolizes the extreme sensitivity and dignity a Jew must always have. Even when at war, he must maintain basic dignity and respect for others* – 23:14

Sheep next to linen – The prohibition of *sha'atnez* is to mix linen and wool to produce clothing – 22:11

No interest – The Torah states that it is prohibited for a Jew to charge another Jew interest – 23:20

Farmer reaping grain – The Torah states that when a farmer is reaping and he forgets a bundle in the field, he must leave it for the poor - 24:19

When the scales are rigged – The Torah warns that our scales, weights and measures must always be honest and accurate so that we don't cheat others – 25:13 (*Rashi writes that dishonesty with weights and measures causes enemies to attack us, such as Amalek.*)

Fence – When one builds a house, he is obligated to build a fence for his roof – 22:8 (*This applies to any potentially dangerous area, such as a swimming pool or staircase – Rambam, Rotzeiach 11:1-5*)

Soldier running off to war – The parsha begins by detailing what happens when a soldier goes out to war and encounters a beautiful woman and wants to marry her – 21:10-14

A Mother's Tefilos (Prayers)

One of the students in Yeshivas Mir, Poland, became gravely ill, with hopes for his recovery becoming slimmer by the moment. The doctors who were treating him despaired of his living more than a few more days. His mother made the trip from her home in Baranovitch to Mir to be by his side and to advocate for some treatment that would save his life. One of her relatives knew a doctor who was not among the well-known physicians in the community. He was brilliant, however, & had successfully treated patients upon whom others had given up. He was unconventional in his approach to medicine. His track record was impressive. They really had nothing to lose. The doctor came & examined the patient. "I can help him," the doctor said. "The pill that I will give him might not work. If it does not work, it will hasten his passing under very painful circumstances." The mother was confronted with a decision to make. Was it worth gambling on a treatment for which the results could either be life-saving or devastating? She conferred with rabbanim who came to the consensus that they should take a chance at saving her son. The day that treatment was commenced, the Mashgiach, Horav Yechezkel Levenstein, zl, walked into the bais hamedrash & spoke of the unsurpassed importance of efficacy of tefillah. He concluded by exhorting the students to join together in storming the Heavens on behalf of their friend and colleague. Suddenly, the doors of the bais hamedrash were opened as the mother of the student entered the room, walked up to the ahron ha'kodesh, opened its doors, and cried out to Hashem, "Ribono shel olam! You blessed me with a number of sons, of which I consecrated this one to a life of Torah. Why specifically do You want to take him from me?" She then broke into bitter weeping, in which she was soon joined by the others who were witnessing this heart wrenching scene. They all prayed together until they soon heard the good news that her son had taken a turn for the better. The Mashgiach spoke to the student body following the successful outcome of the student's therapy. His mother's tefillos had made the difference. Her pleading with Hashem emanated from the depths of her heart, her tefillos reflected absolute sincerity. Her sincere prayers had "turned the tide." *Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum's Peninim on the Torah.*





Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

THEY CAN KNOCK, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET THEM IN

A chassid was once plagued by negative thoughts relentlessly intruding upon him. He was sidetracked by temptations and fantasy, he was distracted by worry and anxiety. One particularly difficult evening he couldn't stop having negative and inappropriate thoughts. He couldn't take it anymore so he went to his Rebbe's house to get advice. He knocked on the front door, but nobody answered. He knocked harder, but still no response. Brazenly, he walked around to the side and looked through the window. He saw the Rebbe sitting at the dining room table learning and so he knocked on the window. Sure enough, the Rebbe didn't look up and his efforts to get the Rebbe's attention continued to fail. Disappointed and frustrated, the chassid went home.

The next morning after shul, he waited patiently until it was his turn, and he finally had the attention of the Rebbe. Somewhat exasperated, he said, "Rebbe! I desperately needed you last night." The Rebbe replied, "I know. I know what you wanted to ask, and I already gave you an answer." Bewildered, the chassid said, "What do you mean? I knocked and knocked but you never answered, and I didn't even get a chance to ask my question." The Rebbe looked at him and explained. "Last night you came over to my house. You knocked on the front door, and then you knocked even harder. You came around and knocked on my window. You kept knocking, but the choice was mine whether or not to let you in. These thoughts, these questions, doubts, temptations, worries, they can knock all day on the door of your mind, but never forget, the choice remains yours whether or not to let them in."

I love this story because it is so much more than a story; it is a strategy, it is a solution. Thinking about our thoughts and mind in this way has helped me personally and countless others I have shared it with. Like the chassid, so many of us are plagued by unwanted and unwelcome thoughts. They could be of temptation, of doubt, of our unworthiness or simply of being overwhelmed. We can't control what knocks, but never concede that we have control over what we let in.



Last week's Parsha begins:
 שְׁפֹטִים וְשֹׁטְרִים תִּתֶּן-לָךְ בְּכָל-שַׁעַר אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 נָתַן לְךָ לְשֹׁבְטֶיךָ וְשֹׁפְטֵי אֶת-הָעָם מִשְׁפַּט־צִדִּיק;
 Place judges and policemen at all your gates.

The Torah is not just talking to us as a people, a nation, or a community. The Torah is telling us that we can have judges and policemen at the gates, the entrances into our soul, our eyes, our ears, our mouth. We can and must be judicious with what we let it in and when we do so, and we must police and regulate the gateways into our being to ensure we aren't overloaded, distracted, or sabotaged from success.

Stop saying that you cannot control your mind from racing. You don't have to persevere, marinate, stew in a thought, fear, concern, or regret. Of course, I am obviously not talking about diagnosed, serious illnesses or challenges that need therapy and at times medication. I am referring to everyone else. You are the judge, and you are the policeman of the gates into your mind. Decide what to let in, what to think about, what to focus on, what is productive, healthy, and positive and what you are going to lock out, what is a distraction, destructive, negative, and unwelcome.

Our minds run wild on overdrive all day long in ways that sabotage our own success. Some are constantly thinking about every possible problem that could arise, every reason they won't succeed, everything that could go wrong. For others, the mind is filled with the noise of trying to juggle a million things, emails to return, phone calls to make, people to visit, tasks to get done, people to make happy. For yet others, the mind is overloaded with

keeping up with the news cycle, with social media, pop culture, work, home and more. The common denominator is a cluttered mind, a distracted existence. We cannot control what knocks, but we absolutely can control what and when we let them in and that too is a powerful message of our Parsha.

The stakes are high. We cannot be our best selves if we let any thought, image or idea storm our gates and take up precious real estate in our mind. Shoftim v'shotrim, let them come, let them try to knock, but make the conscious choice, the powerful decision not to let them in. If and when the thought comes, pivot, redirect, go to a different thought, a positive one, or train yourself not to think at all. Spend a few minutes each day with your technology off, working out your mindfulness muscles. Practice hisbodedus, meditation, sitting silently and grow comfortable not only in your own skin but managing your own mind. David Allen, the great architect and author of an amazing book and system called Getting Things Done, says, "Your mind is for having ideas, not holding them." Let them go, put them down, control them, don't let them control you.

Relationships, human and with Hashem, need nurturing. They are fed with a diet of time, communication and attention. Our relationship with Hashem needs all three.

Are we mevakshim, are we dorshim, are we searching Hashem by learning about Him, talking to Him, listening to Him. In these next 40 days, set aside time to learn daily, challenge yourself to listen and think, talk to Hashem in davening in a way you haven't in a long time. Draw your new love maps, reignite the energy and don't let your relationship be stale.

UFARATZTA


EVEN TESHUVA MUST BE WITH JOY

... It is necessary to "serve Hashem with joy". According to the Shulchan Aruch, it includes every aspect of the daily life, as is written, "B'chal D'rachecha Do'eyhu -- Know Him in all your

ways". This means that even the matter of Teshuva... must be with joy... There is good reason to be filled with joy, inasmuch, Hashem has been kind enough to illuminate one's mind and heart, to see the need of doing Teshuva, and G-d has promised

that TESHUVA IS EFFECTIVE.

==== Excerpt of Rebbe's letter (1965). Chabad.org





YEFAS TOAR: THE EXCEPTION PROVES THE RULE

ARTIST GETS NOTICED

An artist asked the gallery owner if there had been any interest in his paintings on display at that time. "I have good news and bad news," the owner replied. "The good news is that a gentleman enquired about your work and wondered if it would appreciate in value after your death. When I told him it would, he bought all 15 of your paintings." "That's wonderful!" the artist exclaimed. "What's the bad news?" "The guy was your doctor...."

DRUNK TEST

A police officer pulls over this guy who's been weaving in and out of the lanes. He goes up to the guy's window and says, "Sir, I need you to blow into this breathalyzer tube." The man says, "Sorry, officer, I can't do that. I am an asthmatic. If I do that, I'll have a really bad asthma attack." "Okay, fine. I need you to come down to the station to give a blood sample." "I can't do that either. I am a hemophiliac. If I do that, I'll bleed to death." "Well, then, we need a saliva sample." "I'm sorry, officer, I can't do that either. I am also a diabetic. If I do that, I'll get really low blood sugar." "All right, then I need you to come out here and walk this white line." "I can't do that, officer." "Why not?" "Because I'm drunk."

JUSTICE PREVAILED

A junior partner in a law firm was sent to represent a long-term client. After days of trial, the case was won, the client acquitted and released. Excited about his success, the attorney emailed the firm: "Justice prevailed." The senior partner replied in haste, "Appeal immediately!"

CORRUPTION

At the height of a political corruption trial, the prosecuting attorney attacked a witness. "Isn't it true," he bellowed, "that you accepted five thousand dollars to compromise this case?" The witness stared out the window, as

though he hadn't heard the question. "Isn't it true that you accepted five thousand dollars to compromise this case?" the lawyer repeated. The witness still did not respond. Finally, the judge leaned over and said, "Sir, please answer the question." "Oh," the startled witness said, "I thought he was talking to you."

THE BURGLAR

A burglar broke into a house one night. He shone his flashlight around, looking for valuables when a voice in the dark said, 'Mrs. Goldberg knows you're here.' He nearly jumped out of his skin, clicked his flashlight off, and froze. When he heard nothing more, after a bit, he shook his head and continued. Just as he pulled the laptop out so he could disconnect the wires, clear as a bell he heard 'Mrs. Goldberg is watching you.' Freaked out, he shined his light around frantically, looking for the source of the voice. Finally, in the corner of the room, his flashlight beam came to rest on a parrot. 'Did you say that?' he hissed at the parrot. 'Yep', the parrot confessed, then squawked, 'I'm just trying to warn you that she is watching you.' The burglar relaxed. 'Warn me, huh? Who in the world are you?' 'Moishe,' replied the bird. 'Moishe?' the burglar laughed. 'What kind of people would name a bird Moishe?' 'The kind of people that would name a Rottweiler Mrs. Goldberg.'

INSURANCE AGENT'S WIFE

An insurance agent's wife was learning to drive when the brakes failed. "What should I do?" she cried. "Brace yourself, and try to hit something cheap."

TRUE OR FALSE...

A little kid's in school, taking a true-false test and he's flipping a coin. At the end of the test he's flipping the coin again. The teacher says, "What are you doing?" He says, "Checking my answers."

Parshas Ki Seitzei begins with a Torah law that is one of the most difficult to understand: the "beautiful woman" (yefas toar). The Torah says that when we go out to war, we will be victorious and take the spoils of war, including the captives. "And you will see a beautiful woman and you will lust for her and you will take her for yourself as a wife." [Devarim 21:11].

The Talmud discusses the sequence of the permitted relationship in terms of whether it precedes or follows conversion, but at least according to some opinions, the Torah did permit a Jewish person to cohabit with a non Jewish woman (at least one time) prior to her conversion. This leniency is mind-boggling and seems to fly in the face of everything we know about the Torah's requirements for sexual morality. This is even more mind boggling when we consider it in the context of the Rabbinic teaching at the end of last week's parsha. There the pasuk says, "Who is the man who is fearful and soft of heart? Let him go and return (from the battle front) to his house" [Devorim 20:8]. Our Sages say that this refers to people who were afraid that their sins might stand in the way of their success in battle. If all who were the least bit afraid that their sins might be the cause of their downfall were entitled to a draft deferment, the remaining soldiers must have been extremely pious. How can it be, given such a righteous army, that the Torah needs a law such as Yefas Toar? War is an environment the likes of which we should never know. It is a dehumanizing experience, which does crazy things to people. One has only to read the paper and listen to the news about abuses that have taken place in recent times, in and around situations of war and conflict. War has a pernicious and corrosive effect, even on people who are spiritually elevated. That is how such a thing can happen, as "you will see her in captivity and lust for her".

Rashi, quoting the Talmud [Kidushin 21b], uses the expression "The Torah is speaking here only as a concession to the evil inclination. Would the Torah not allow the relationship to go forward in a permissible fashion, the soldier would take her in a forbidden fashion."

I saw a very interesting observation from Rav Chatzkel Abramsky, zt"l. The Talmudic expression is "Lo Dibra Torah ela K'NEGED yetzer harah" (literally, the Torah only spoke OPPOSITE the evil inclination). If the intent is that the Torah here was making a concession to the evil inclination, should it not be phrased as "Lo Dibra Torah ela B'AD (for the benefit of the) yetzer harah"? Rav Abramsky answers that this law is really AGAINST the yetzer harah. Sometimes in life, we are faced with situations which present us with extreme temptation to succumb to our evil inclination. There is a little voice that goes off in the back of our head that says, "Listen, this is impossible. No man can withstand the temptation you are confronting. Do it, because it is just too hard to resist." The little voice tries to convince us that G-d understands that it is too hard to resist such a temptation and He will therefore overlook our shortcomings.

This parsha confronts that little voice and speaks OPPOSITE it. This parsha tells us that there is ONE situation and ONLY

ONE situation in life that presents a temptation that is so hard to resist that the Almighty recognizes that impossibility and therefore tolerates and even condones behavior that would normally be forbidden. Only in the situation of “Yefas Toar” in the time of war does the Torah recognize that there may be a need to “bend the rules” so to speak and allow for surrender to the evil inclination. G-d Himself, envisioning every single scenario that could possibly befall a human being, tells us that this is it. Yefas Torah is the ONLY exception to the rule.

When Jews came to America in the 1920s and 1930s they were faced with the challenge that “You either work on Saturday or don’t bother showing up on Monday.” These were the days before food stamps, HUD, and welfare. If they would not work, would literally not be any food to put on the table. If they were not able to pay their rent, the landlord could evict them onto the street. The Yetzer Harah came to so many people and told them “It is impossible. You cannot let your family starve.”

We can imagine situations where people are confronted by spiritual challenges that seem beyond their human capability to withstand. The Yetzer Harah comes to us and tells us “This situation is different. Here you ARE allowed to violate the law. It is too hard to comply.”

It is for such situations that the Talmud explains that the case of Yefas Tohar speaks AGAINST the argument of the evil inclination. The Torah is speaking against the evil inclination in all these other scenarios. Only by Yefas Tohar it is too hard. This argument cannot be used anywhere else.

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RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

ROSH KOLLEL

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF A HEFSEK IN THE MIDDLE OF TEKIOS

As we hear the daily shofar blowing, it would be appropriate to start preparing for the mitzvah of tekias shofar performed on Rosh Hashanah, and try to get a better understanding of the various aspects of this beloved mitzvah.

STORY THAT OCCURRED IN THE CITY OF MAGENTZA

There is a story that occurred in the city of Magentza, almost 900 years ago. In the middle of the third set of tekiah-shevarim-teruah-tekiah, instead of blowing correctly the shevarim-teruah, the baal tokeah blew only two sounds of the shevarim and then started the teruah. He was immediately stopped and told to start again from the beginning of that set of tekiah-shevarim-teruah-tekiah. This ruling was because each set (tshr"t, tsh"t, and tr"t) must have either a shevarim-teruah, shevarim, or teruah, sandwiched between two tekios, respectively. Therefore, if there was another sound blown, the sandwich may be ruined and one would be required to start that row again.

The Rosh quotes the Rav of that shul, Rav Elyakim, who was upset at this ruling, deeming it unnecessary and a chilul yom tov to blow when there is no mitzvah involved. The Rosh quotes others who suggest that only in this case it was not a hefsek, since both the shevarim and the teruah were incomplete and meaningless, and not considered a break between the two tekios. However, if he did complete the teruah before they stopped him, it would be necessary to start over that set of tshr"t, since the teruah does constitute a hefsek. The Rosh, however, disagrees and asserts that even in such a scenario it is not a hefsek and one does need to blow over that row. He explains that since they were supposed to be blowing a shevarim-teruah, a teruah by itself is halachically meaningless and would not constitute a break between the two tekios.

The Rosh continues that the only time we find the concept of hefsek, is in the Gemara of Rav Avahu, who instituted that we blow the variations of tshr"t, tsh"t, and tr"t, in order to ensure that we are blowing the correct sound of a teruah. The Gemara there explains that it is not sufficient to blow just a tshr"t, which has both sounds (teruah and shevarim), because if one is supposed to be blowing only one of the sounds (teruah or shevarim), the other sound is a hefsek. Seemingly, the same should apply here, and a teruah should constitute a hefsek.

However, the Rosh rules that in our story it is not a hefsek. Here we are discussing one who is trying to blow a shevarim-teruah, to fulfill the teruah of the Torah.

That being the case, a teruah alone is meaningless and is not a hefsek. This is similar to one who got stuck in the middle of the shevarim or teruah itself, which does not pose a problem.

IN SUMMARY

Each set (tshr"t, tsh"t, and tr"t) must have either a shevarim-teruah, shevarim, or teruah, sandwiched between two tekios, respectively, and if there was another sound blown, the sandwich may be ruined and one would be required to start that row again.

If they blew a teruah when they were supposed to be blowing a shevarim-teruah, the Rosh, rules that it is not a hefsek and one does need to blow over that row. Since they were supposed to blow a shevarim-teruah, a teruah by itself is halachically meaningless and would not constitute a break between the two tekios.

There is a kuntres of shiurim on the topic of tekias shofar available. If you would like a copy of any of these shiurim, or for any comments and questions, please send an email to: RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com, or call 845 372 6618.

To receive updates of upcoming shiurim, to receive a link to current shiurim, or to access archived shiurim, please send a request to: Secretary@18forshay.com, or follow the prompts on our website 18Forshay.com.

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