

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Parshas Tazria Metzora 5785 Year 15, #626

פרשת תזריע מצורע תשפ"ה

Learning Torah wins the battle of the Yetzer Hara

זאת תהיה תורת המצורע: (יד ב')

"This shall be the law of the Metzorah." Reb Aharon of Karlin, author of the Bais Aharon writes: The true purpose of Torah learning is to become a Ben Torah, that the Torah becomes part of your behavior and you are able to refrain from doing Aveiros, and unfollow your bad desires. מצורע is in essence two words: מוציא רע, to extract the bad and evil from a person, which refers to sins and bad desires. This is what the Posuk means: זאת תהיה תורת, what is the true way of learning Torah, and having the Torah become part of you? When you are able to מוציא רע, refrain from sin and bad desires, after you learn the heilige Torah. The Rebbe says in Parshas Lech Lecha, how does one know if his saying of Krias Shema is with Kabalas Ohl Malchus Shamayim, (acceptance of the rule of Heaven), if afterwards he can withstand and refrain from his greatest urges that the Yetzer Harah puts before him, that is קבלת עול מלכות שמים

(בית אהרן קארלין).

Pirkei Avos 2:13 another way to win the battle of the Yetzer Hara

רבי שמעון אומר, הוי זהיר בקריאת שמע ובתפלה, אל תעש תפלתך קבע, אלא רחמים ותחנונים לפני המקום ברוך הוא, שנאמר (יואל ב) כי חנון ורחום הוא ארך אפים ורב חסד ונחם על הרעה. ואל תהי Rabbi Shimon said: Be careful with the reading of Shema and the prayer, And when you pray, do not make your prayer something automatic, but a plea for compassion before God, for it is said: "for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in kindness, and renouncing punishment" (Yoel 2:13); And be not wicked in your own esteem. There is a difficulty in this Posuk which would be suffice to say "And be not wicked", Why does the Posuk add "in your own esteem"? Also what does this Posuk have to do with the words of Rabbi Shimon regarding Krias Shema and prayer? In order to explain this we see in the Gemarra Berachos 28b ובשחלה רבי יוחנן בן זבאי נכנסו תלמידיו לבקרו אמרו לו: רבינו, ברבנו. אמר להם: יהי רצון שתהא מורא שמים עליכם כמורא בשך ודם. אמרו לו תלמידיו: עד כאן? אמר להם: ולואי, When Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai fell ill his students entered to visit him. His students said to him: Our teacher, bless us. He said to them: May it be His will that the fear of Heaven shall be upon you like the fear of flesh and blood. His students were puzzled and said: To that point and not beyond? Shouldn't one fear God more? He said to them: Would that a person achieve that level of fear. Know that

when one commits a transgression, he says to himself: I hope that no man will see me. If one is as concerned about avoiding shame before God as he is before man, he will never sin. Rabbi Yochanan is giving his students a powerful lesson how to refrain from sin when you are in seclusion and no human soul sees your doings! The answer is by knowing that Hashem is looking and sees all your actions "If one is as concerned about avoiding shame before Hashem as he is before man, he will never sin". The Navi Yirmiah 24:23 says If somebody enters a hiding place, Do I not see them?—says Hashem.

ואל תהי רשע בפני עצמך the word עצמך means when you are by yourself, and no one can see your doings. If so why do people sin? The answer is that they are not attached to Hashem. With this introduction we can enhance the meaning and the flow of the Mishna: The reason we recite Shema is as the Mishna in Berachos 3 states כדי שיקבל עליו עול מלכות שמים So that one will accept upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, the awareness of Hashem and Hashem's unity, and afterwards we pray to Hashem. The Rav Bartanura explains the words- "do not make your prayers fixed" - like a man who has a fixed debt and says: "when will I unload this debt on myself?" Alternatively, "fixed", like a man who is used to reading one chapter or one parsha. He reads it unthinking not in a humble, earnest petition manner, like one who seeks mercy.

The fix to this is with saying Shema, and accept the yoke of Hashem, bringing yourself closer to Hashem, and when you pray in an earnest sincere manner, and realize you are standing in front of Hashem הוא ארך אפים ורב חסד ונחם על הרעה Who is merciful and loves you dearly, you pour your heart to Hashem and become closer to Him. The closer you are to Hashem and the more Kavana and intentions you have in davening, the chances are greater that the prayers would be accepted.

This is what the Mishna is referring to: "Be careful with the reading of Shema and the prayer", as these two actions would bring you closer to Hashem. When you are close to Hashem and realize that He sees all your actions, it is beautiful the connection to the end of the Mishnah "ואל תהי רשע בפני עצמך when you are by yourself, and no one can see your doings: since you will be attached to Hashem you are never in seclusion as Hashem sees everything, and this would save you from doing evil, and only do the will of Hashem. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

***** *The ingenuity of a worker saved his job* *****

In the town of Pshemishl, Poland there lived a Yid who owned a large mill. He had a lot of Yiddish workers. It happened that the owner caught one of his workers stealing some flour and taking it home. He immediately fired the worker. The worker had to take care of small children, and needed the job to support them. The worker was at a loss at what to do. So he ran to the community leader of Pshemishl, Reb Shmuel, and begged him to speak to the miller and try and get him his job back.

“How can you ask this of me?” the miller asked Reb Shmuel when he asked him to take the worker back. “You expect me to keep a thief in my mill?” “Sit down,” said Reb Shmuel to the miller. “Let me tell you a story. “In the city of Brod, where the Gaon Reb Efrayim Zalman Margolies, was the Rav, a Yid had a large, reputable store. He had an assistant that helped him run the store. “One day the assistant saw an item he felt he had to have. He couldn’t control himself, and he stole it, and the boss fired him for it. “Prestigious people of the town begged the boss to have mery on his assistant. They begged the boss to take him back and reinstate him in his job, and they guaranteed that he would never steal again. After all, a person is only human, sometimes he fails. Hashem often forgives people. The boss gave in to them and reinstated him in his job. “Some time passed, and the assistant once again felt the urge for something he wanted. He came up with excuses, to steal it from the store. And once again, the boss caught him at it. This time he dismissed him forever. No excuses, or explanations, or pleas would work. The assistant was once more without a livelihood, and without bread for his children.

He was an intelligent man, and came up with an idea. He went to the gaon Reb Efrayim Zalman, and told him, “My boss, needs you.” “The Rav wondered Why would this rich man send for him? If he needed him, he would normally have come to him. But he was not concerned with his own honor, and with his own assistant went to the rich man’s house.

“When the rich man saw the Rav come to his house he sprang up with joy and welcomed him. He took the Rav in and honored him in the nicest way possible. They sat down at the table across from each other. “The rich man waited to hear what important matter brought the Rav to his house. The Rav, meanwhile, sat and waited to

hear on what important matter the rich man had called for him to come to his house. Neither one had an glimmer of what brought the two of them together!

“Finally, the rich man asked the Rav, “Few people have been found worthy of receiving such an honor. I would like to know what important cause brought the Rav here?” “What do you mean?” asked the Rav. He was bewildered. ‘Your assistant came and invited me in your name to visit your house. Even though I was surprised, I nevertheless answered your invitation and came to you. And now you ask me why I came to you?’

‘What?’ shouted the rich man. ‘Who could it be? What assistant had the nerve to come up with such a lie?’ “After a short investigation he realized that they were talking about the assistant he had fired. The rich man’s anger boiled over, and immediately had someone call the man to his house. As soon as he arrived, the rich man, in front of the Rav, began to condemn the former assistant, yelling at him ‘Liar! I sent you to call the Rav?!’

“The assistant, answered, ‘Calm down. I did not lie, and I never called the Rav to your home. My words to the Rav were: “My boss needs you.” What I meant was that if my boss is looking for such an honest worker who does only good, and never touches anyone else’s money, he won’t find an assistant like that unless he takes a Rav, who is above such things. A honest worker is one of the great qualities praised by Dovid Hamelech. That’s the kind of person he needs to have. But besides the Rav, he won’t find anyone better than me.’

“The Rav smiled at the assistant’s ingenuity, since he had no other choice. He was in severe danger, having lost his means of supporting his family. The Rav asked the boss to give the assistant back his job. “He then turned to the assistant and said, ‘I demand from you, however, that from now on you you act with all the possible honesty at work. I want people to be able to say about you that you represent the quality praised by Dovid Hamelech. The man repented, and never stole anything again.

“Let’s apply the same to you,” finished Reb Shmuel, the community leader of Pshemishl. “To find a honest worker is not easy. So let’s make the same agreement with your worker, and let him keep his job.” The boss agreed, and allowed the Yid to return to work, and became one of the most honest and loyal workers of the miller of Pshemishl.

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