



זכרון יחזקאל

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פרשת וישב - הפטרה: על שלשה פשעי ישראל (עמוס ב'ו-ג'ח) ליל א' דחנוכה: ליל חמישי
דף יומי: יומא ט"ו מצות עשה: ס מצות לא תעשה: ס משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם

Torah Thoughts

... וישב ראובן אל הבור והנה אין יוסף בבור

And ראובן returned to the pit and behold! יוסף was not in the pit!
... (B'reishis 37:29)

The מדרש asks, "and where was ויהיך הנה" — asks, (בראשית רבה פ"ד: י"ט) מדרש "Without any explanation, the פסוק simply informs us that ראובן returned. From where did he return? The מדרש explains, in the name of ר' אליעזר, that ראובן was returning from performing his תשובה. From the moment he realized that he had acted impulsively by moving his father's bed from בלהה's tent after רחל's פטירה, on a regular basis, by fasting and wearing sackcloth. Although ראובן had no personal ulterior motive and was concerned solely about his mother's feelings, on his מדרגה he had taken a misguided step. It was improper for a son to second guess the plans of his holy father, יעקב.

The מדרש then continues with a beautiful but seemingly puzzling statement: אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא מעולם לא חטא אדם לפני ועשה תשובה ואתה פתחת בתשובה תחלה, תמיד שבו בך עומד ופותר בתשובה תחלה ואיזה זה, זה הושע *informed him*, "There never existed anyone before you who sinned and did תשובה (repented) and you started תשובה first! I swear (literally, by your life), your future grandchild, הושע, will be the first of the נביאים who will try to lead back to repent, as the פסוק says, 'Return, יעקב, to ...'"

R' Pam points out a difficulty with this מדרש. What does this

mean, that ראובן was the first to do תשובה? He certainly was not the first person to do תשובה. From the beginning of the creation of the world, we find that both אדם and קין sinned and did תשובה. The מדרש (רבי' ג'ה) tells us that after אדם sinned by eating from the tree, he did תשובה and entered שבת after repenting his sin, and after קין killed הבל and די reprimanded him, קין exclaimed, "דול עוני", (בראשית ד': י"ד) — *Is my sin too great to bear?* After that strong statement, קין was saved from half of his punishment because he had demonstrated that he was remorseful and did תשובה.

R' Pam explains that ראובן was the first one to do תשובה on an outright sin. Both realized, as they committed the sin, that it was wrong. Their תשובה is understandable and commendable. ראובן's concern was only about his mother's feelings. In his haste to act, however, he thought he was being more considerate than יעקב. He should have realized that his holy father's actions should not be judged.

ראובן was the first to do תשובה for something which, at the time that he did it, he thought was a מצנה. This was the תשובה that stood out and deserved special reward. It is difficult and takes strength of character to admit being wrong in any situation; but admitting that a so-called 'מצנה' was a wrongdoing and openly doing תשובה — that is true וקדושה!

Adapted from a שיעור given by R' Avrohom Yaakov Hakohen Pam זצ"ל



Yahrzeits of Gedolim

כ' כסלו
5667 - 5741
1906 - 1980

ר' יצחק הוטנר זצ"ל, ראש ושיבת בנינו חיים בערלין, born to and תנה ר' יואל Warsaw, Poland, learned under the at age 15 and quickly became known as דער ווארשא'עלער. In 1925, R' Hutner joined the תברון branch, where he remained until after the 1929 massacre. In 1932, he published תורת הנזיר on תורת הנזיר and ספרו on פרוש' רבינו הלל on פרוש. In 1933, he married Masha Lipshitz and moved to ישרא'ל. His other publications include a דברי תורה בעניני הלכות דעות וחובות הלכות and ספרו on פרוש' רבינו הלל on פרוש. An original thinker, R' Hutner combined the thoughts of the מהר"ל and many others. His seven-volume פתח יצחק is a collection of his מאמרים on שבת יום טוב. His fatherly connection to his תלמידים was legendary.

Gedolim Glimpses

R' Yitzchok Hutner זצ"ל was sitting with his family and some of his תלמידים at his majestic סדר table. A תלמיד was given the honor of lifting up his רבי' and placing it in his hand for קדושה. The understandably nervous תלמיד shook the כוס and, to his horror, spilled red wine on R' Hutner's pristine white קיטל. Without missing a beat, רבי gave his תלמיד his trademark smile and said, "Wine stains on a קיטל on יום פפור מחזור are like the tear-stains on a פסח!"



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לעיני יחזקאל בן לייב ע"ה

לעיני ה' ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבולחטי"א יצחק צבי נ"י

Living with the Torah

Pleading for Privacy

... ותאמר הקר נא למי החתמת והפתילים והמטה האלה...

...And she said, "Identify, if you please, whose are this seal, this cloth wrap, and this staff." (B'reishis 38:25).

תמר knew prophetically that she was destined to bring the family of דוד, and ultimately משיח, into this world. Yet, the righteous תמר was prepared to be burned to death rather than to embarrass יהודה publicly. She reasoned: "If, upon recognizing his seal, cloth wrap and staff, he will admit voluntarily, that would be well and good; if not, let them burn me, but let me not publicly disgrace him."

It is from this incident that our Sages derive the dictum, "נוח לו לאדם שיפיל עצמו לכבשן האש ואל ילבין פני חברו ברבים — It is preferable for a person to allow himself to be thrown into a fiery furnace and not to make his friend's face [turn] pale in public" (סוטה י:). רבינו יונה learns from here that embarrassing someone, to the point that his face changes color, is also יגורו ואל יגבורו; we must give up our life rather than embarrass someone.

*

R' Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor זצ"ל's renown as a genius in תורה was surpassed only by his reputation as a person who was unusually kind and sensitive to his fellow Jews and their needs and concerns. It was a common daily occurrence that there was a constant stream of people at his door, all of them coming for different and personal reasons. He not only listened to and counseled them, he also went around on a routine basis, soliciting help for troubled and needy individuals.

Once, R' Yitzchok Elchonon undertook the cause of a man who suffered dreadfully from financial difficulties. The man was assumed to be a successful and wealthy individual and had initially hesitated to share his financial difficulties and reveal his personal problems. R' Yitzchok Elchonon reassured him that his troubles would never be publicized, and took on the man's cause.

R' Yitzchok Elchonon approached several of the town's wealthier individuals and pleaded for help on the man's behalf. Most did contribute generously. In fact, one potential donor offered him 25 rubles, but only on condition that he be allowed to know the details of the man's difficulties. R' Yitzchok Elchonon thanked the potential benefactor for his generous offer, but apologetically declined to reveal the private information. He explained that while it is sometimes appropriate to reveal the nature of the person's problems, in this particular case the situation was under control and there was no הטר.

The man said he would increase his donation to fifty rubles, quite a hefty sum in those days, but R' Yitzchok Elchonon refused, insisting that maintaining the individual's privacy was non-negotiable. Not one to give up easily, he offered 100 rubles, with a commitment to assist in gathering the remaining portion of funds that were needed, but he had to know from which problems the person was suffering.

"I appreciate your offer, but I have to tell you that even if you were to promise to give me the entire contents of your home, and even the home itself, I still would not be able to accept. I apologize, but I am protecting the honor and respect of another Jew, and that is worth far more than all the money in the world."

Amazed, the potential donor said to R' Yitzchok Elchonon, "Do you mean to tell me that there is nothing in the world that I could give you to make you tell me what problems this man has? Then, רבי, I would like to speak to you privately."

He then began to pour out his heart.

"I've needed for so long to share my problems but I never found someone I could trust. Now I have found that person."

He looked up with tears in his eyes. "רבי, now I know that I can trust you."

Adapted from: Touched by a Story 2 (with kind permission from ArtScroll)

Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"י"ח הלכות לשון הרע כלל אי סעף ט"ו

Chaim invited Shimon and Yehuda to come over to his house after camp to ride their bikes along a scenic bicycle path in his neighborhood. To pass the time as they rode their bicycles, the boys took turns telling funny stories they remembered from when they were all together in תשיב in third grade. Shimon reminded Chaim about the time that he and Yehuda found a half-eaten custard doughnut and spread the leftover cream on their unsuspecting רבי's chair.

Is Shimon's story if he included himself in the story?

*Stories adapted from Guard Your Tongue, A Daily Companion, A Lesson a Day and various real life situations.

Answer: As the time stresses, even though Shimon included himself when he related the incident about himself and Yehuda doing something improper together, nevertheless, he has still transgressed the יסור, prohibition, of relating improper together, he has לא.

Questions of the week

1. How did אשתו squelch the slanderous libel spread by אשתו against פוטיפר?
2. We learn from the words of the last פסוק that the תלמידים "forgot" יוסף twice. When were these 2 "forgetful" occasions?

Answers:
 1. In order to divert attention from יוסף as a topic of conversation, the רב had his dream...
 2. On that day [when the תלמידים were reinstated to his former position] יוסף forgot twice. When were these 2 "forgetful" occasions?

Halacha Corner

הלכות ענייני דאומא
 חזקה

- In shul, on מוצאי שבת תעלה, the תעלה lights are kindled after שמע ישראל [but before הברכה is recited].
- There are conflicting opinions and customs as to the sequence to be followed at home. Some say הברכה first and then kindle the lights, while others reverse the procedure. Both views have validity.

Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,
Do you have a picture in your mind of what many famous תלמידי חכמים looked like when they were young children? After you have finished reading the stories of our גדולים they often just seem to be perfect people.

Let me share with you some excerpts of a letter (#128) that R' Hutner זצ"ל wrote to a תלמיד about the makings of a great person.

"...When we observe the greatness and perfection of our תלמידי חכמים, we focus on the highest level of their spiritual attainments. We discuss how they are complete in many areas of שְׁלֵמוֹת (spiritual perfection) while failing to mention the inner struggles that they encountered to attain them. A listener gets the impression that these people came out of the hands of their Creator perfect.

"Everyone is awed by the purity of speech of the חפץ חיים...but who knows of the battles, struggles and obstacles, the slumps and regressions that the חפץ חיים encountered in his war with the יצר הרע.

"...However, I promise you that after losing campaigns, you will emerge from the war with the laurels of victory upon your head. Lose the battles, but win the war.

"... When you feel the turmoil of the יצר הרע within yourself, know this feeling enables you to resemble great men... In the particular areas where you feel yourself falling most frequently, you have the greatest potential of serving הקב"ה."

My תלמיד, now you know a hidden secret. גדולים are not born perfect – nobody is born perfect. Most גדולים did not win every battle with their יצר הרע, but neither did they give up on themselves because they failed. Who knows if they did not become even better people because they were not always successful. They tried and tried again and persevered. Until their last day, they never gave up striving to reach their שְׁלֵמוֹת. "Never giving up," says R' Hutner, "is the secret behind the success of all of our גדולים!"

רבי בני Your, בנדידות

Adapted from a thought שליטיא מרגנשטן R' Chaim A. Morgenstern

Sage Sayings

R' Yitzchok Hutner, זצ"ל, once wrote an 'unwritten' rebuke in a letter to a תלמיד. "איד וויל אייך אויסמוסקרן אין דער בריוו". תלמיד, "אבער איד קען עס נישט שרייבן ווייל א בריוו איז פאר אייביק – I would like to rebuke you in this letter, but I am unable to write it, – because a letter lasts forever and I do not want the rebuke to remain forever!"

Source: Chinuch in Turbulent Times (ArtScroll)

Understanding Davening

ועל הנסים... בימים ההם בזמן הזה

[We thank You... for the miracles... that You performed for our forefathers] ... in those days during this time.

The words **ההם**, in those days, seem superfluous. The miracles that **די** performed were obviously **ההם**, in those days. The **חכמים** decided to make the **יום טוב** the following year. Why did they wait? **נסים**, miracles, happen constantly to **ישראל** throughout the year, but they are not usually tied to any specific time. There are special times of the calendar year that are auspicious for **נסים**. Those times are made into **טובים**. When **ה'ניל** saw that the next year was a time for **נסים**, they established **התנה**. The words **ההם** are together with **הזמן הזה** – those **נסים** were tied to this time of the year!

לע"נ ר' משה צבי בן הר"ר טוביה הלוי זצ"ל

This Week in History

24 פסלו / 3409 / 358 B.C.E. – After the story of **מגילת אסתר**, in the 2nd year of the reign of **דרניג** (son of **אחשורוש** and **אסתר**), the construction of the 2nd **בית המקדש** began on this day. This was the 2nd time that construction of the **בית המקדש** was initiated. In the 1st year of the rule of **כורש**, the King of **פרס** (Persia/Iran), Jews were given permission to rebuild the **בית המקדש** together with a group of **יְרוּשָׁלַיִם** and began building the **בית המקדש**. However, the **כוּתִים** falsely accused them of plotting a rebellion against **מלך כורש** and the king immediately froze the construction. His successor, **אחשורוש**, was suspicious of the Jews building the 2nd **בית המקדש** and also forbade its reconstruction.

25 פסלו / 2450 / 1312 B.C.E. – This was the day that the work for the **כלים** and the structure of the **משכן** was completed. On this day **משה** blessed the people (**שמות ל"ט:מ"ג**) with the words, **יהי רצון שתשרה שכונה במעשה ידכם** – *May the Shechinah rest in the work of your hands*, and added, **ויהי נעם די רבנו** – *May the pleasantness of ה'...* this is one of the 11 pieces of **תהלים** written by **משה** (רבינו). However, the **משכן** was folded up and only assembled 3 months later, on **אדר** of that year. It was erected and taken down daily for the **ימי המלוואים**, the 7-day "training" period, until the **משכן**'s dedication on **חשוון**. **חז"ל** tell us that the month of **כסלו** was "compensated" when the **בית המקדש** rededicated in 3622.



AT A LARGE GATHERING IN THE HOME OF THE KSAV SOFER, RAV AVROHOM SHMUEL BINYOMIN SOFER ZT"l, THE RAV OF PRESSBURG, MANY GREAT RABBANIM OF THE GENERATION WERE PRESENT. IN HIS DESIRE TO HONOR HIS GUESTS, THE KSAV SOFER SHOWED THEM AN ANTIQUE COIN.



RABBOSAI! THIS COIN IS A REAL MACHATZIS HASHEKEL COIN FROM THE TIME OF THE BEIS HAMIKDASH. IT IS OVER TWO THOUSAND YEARS OLD!

IT WAS PASSED FROM HAND TO HAND, AND AT SOME POINT, THE COIN DISAPPEARED!



RABBOSAI, WHO HAS THE COIN?



RABBOSAI, EVERYONE SHOULD CHECK THEIR POCKETS.

...SEARCH POCKETS?...WE ARE ALL RABBANIM!

AFTER A HALF HOUR OF FRANTIC SEARCHING, THE COIN WAS STILL MISSING.



LET US SEARCH EACH OTHER'S POCKETS SO AS TO LEAVE NO ROOM FOR SUSPICION.

NO!...THIS ENTAILS AN ELEMENT OF INSULT TO KAVOD HATORAH. PLEASE, WAIT ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES...

THIS REQUEST WAS REPEATED A FEW TIMES...



MAZEL TOV!! I FOUND THE COIN!... I SEARCHED THE GARBAGE AND FOUND IT STUCK ON A DISH!

RABBOSAI, I NOW HAVE SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU...

THE RAV WHO HAD PLEADED NOT TO SEARCH TOOK A MACHATZIS HASHEKEL COIN FROM HIS POCKET...



I, TOO, WAS PLANNING TO SHOW THE OLAM MY MACHATZIS HASHEKEL. HOWEVER, WHEN THE KSAV SOFER SHOWED HIS MACHATZIS HASHEKEL, I KEPT QUIET IN HIS HONOR.



RABBOSAI! DO YOU KNOW WHY WE ARE REALLY ASSEMBLED HERE TODAY? JUST IMAGINE IF WE WOULD HAVE SEARCHED EACH OTHER AND FOUND THE COIN IN THE RAV'S POCKET. WE HAVE COME TO LEARN TODAY THE LEVEL REQUIRED OF בְּדַק תְּשׁוּט עִמִּיתְךָ, JUDGE YOUR FRIEND FAVORABLY!

ILLUSTRATED BY: YISHAYA SUVAL 718 395 9794

ר' אברהם שמואל בנימין סופר זצ"ל, A.K.A THE Ksav Sofer, WAS BORN AND DIED IN PRESSBURG, HUNGARY. HE WAS THE OLDEST SON OF THE חתם סופר AND A GRANDSON OF R' AKIVA EIGER זצ"ל ON HIS MOTHER'S SIDE. HE WAS AMONG THE LEADING רבנים OF HUNGARIAN JEWRY AND OF PRESSBURG. AT 18, HE MARRIED חוה לאה, DAUGHTER OF R' WEISS OF GORLITZ. AS THE חתם סופר LAY ON HIS DEATHBED, HE BLESSED HIS SON WITH AN EXTREMELY LONG ברכה IN WHICH HE USED EVERY ברכה FOUND IN תנ"ך. ON כ"ה תשרי, 5600 (1839), THE חתם סופר DIED, AND AT THE YOUNG AGE OF 24, THE כתב סופר WAS TAKEN AS רב OF PRESSBURG. HE SERVED FOR 33 YEARS, AS HAD HIS FATHER. HE AUTHORED THE ספר חתם סופר ON גיטין AND חומש, AND חתם סופר ON שו"ת. HE WAS A FAMOUS תלמיד מובהק OF THE כתב סופר. שנתן ערוך ר' יוסף חיים.

