

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

פרשת כי תצא תשע"ז פרק ב' year 8 #307 Parshas Ki Seitzei 5777

Do things righteously and Hashem will bless you

הַשֶּׁבִי תָשִׁיב לוֹ אֶת־הָעֲבוֹט כִּבּוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וְשָׁכַב בְּשִׁלְמָתוֹ וּבִרְכָּךְ וּלְךָ תִּהְיֶה
 "You shall return the security to him by sunset, so that he may lie down [to sleep] in his garment, and he will bless you, and for you it will be an act of righteousness before Hashem, your G-d." (Devarim 24:13)
 Rashi brings an interesting point from the Sifrei: וּבִרְכָּךְ: וְאָם:
 and he will bless you: And if he does not bless you, it will nevertheless "be counted for you as merit." - [Sifrei 24:144]. As we study the explanation of Rashi, it seems that Rashi is emphasizing that the blessing of the poor person is not connected to being righteous before Hashem. The Torah is rather teaching a lesson how to return the security as follows: When one returns the security to the poor person, certainly that individual will bless him, and therefore it is possible that the only reason that one would perform this act, is solely in order that the poor person bless him. For that reason, the Torah teaches us that one should not return the security for the reason mentioned; rather, he should do it only for the sake of Hashem, and he should not expect to receive a blessing from the poor person for the act. And this is the hint as to the true meaning, וּלְךָ תִּהְיֶה צְדָקָה, "and for you it will be an act of righteousness..." – you will accomplish an act of righteousness if you do it *אלקיד* "before Hashem, your G-d" – meaning that it will count for you as an act of righteousness if you do it only in order to fulfill the command of the Creator, may He be blessed, and not for the purpose of receiving a blessing from the poor person. (Kedushas Levi Barditchev)

לֹא־יִהְיֶה לָּךְ בִּבִּיתְךָ אֵיפָה וְאֵיפָה גְדוֹלָה וְקַמְנָה...אֵיפָה שְׁלֵמָה וְצָרָה
 יְדִיהֶ־לָּךְ ... כִּי תֹעֲבֹת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ כֹּל־עֲשֵׂה אֵלֶּה כֹּל עֲשֵׂה עֲוֹל: (כה יג-טז)
 You shall not have in your pocket one weight and a different weight -- a large one and a small one. ... A perfect and honest weight shall you have. ... For an abomination of Hashem, your G-d, are all who do this, all who act corruptly. (25:13-16) The Torah is a textbook of truth and honesty. Moshe Rabeinu

taught the people that Hashem abhors crookedness to such a degree that even *possessing* inaccurate weights and measures is forbidden. The passage immediately following the precept of honest weights and measures recounts the attack of Amalek on the Jewish people upon their departure from Egypt. זְכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְךָ עַמְלֵק בְּדַרְדָּר בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם:
 Remember what Amalek did to you on the way, when you left Egypt. (25:17) The question arises: Why is this event invoked again -- forty years *post facto* -- and why is the admonition juxtaposed to the laws about honesty in trade? Rav Shimon Schwab זצ"ל was once asked why there are so many kinds of suffering among the Jewish people. Rav Schwab answered on the spot: "Are we as honest as we should be in our business dealings?" The Rav connected the troubles our people suffer with the dishonest business practices some feel compelled to accept. In this light, the Torah is saying: "Keep honest weights and measures; if not, remember the attack of Amalek and see what can happen *chalila*." Rav Schwab's message was that by dealing in complete honesty one will be watched and guarded by Hashem against any trouble.

זְכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְךָ עַמְלֵק... תִּמְחָה אֶת זְכוֹר עַמְלֵק מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם לֹא
 תִּשְׁכַּח: (כ"ה י"ז י"ט) Remember what Amalek did to you on the way from Mitzrayim ... you shall obliterate the memory of Amalek from beneath the heavens. You dare not forget! (25:17,19) The Chozeh from Lublin poses a powerful question. Since the posuk begins זְכוֹר, remember, why does the posuk close out with the words לֹא תִשְׁכַּח don't forget? Why the redundancy? With a truly innovative insight, the Chozeh answers that the posuk is hinting at a favorable technique- "segulah"- for remembering one's learning. By fulfilling the זְכוֹר part of the posuk -- remembering constantly what Amalek did to us -- then you will be *zoysche* to/merit to the לֹא תִשְׁכַּח part of the posuk – you will not forget the Torah you have learned. (החוזה מלובלין) In retrospect we also find a segula for remembering Torah. When we recite Kiddush Friday night, זְכוֹר לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית, it is brought from Ari"zal that one should have in mind to remember his Torah learning.

The Baal Shem Tov and the Doctor

The 18th day of the Hebrew month of Elul -- is a most significant date on the Chassidic calendar. The founder of Chassidism, Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov, was born on this date, in 1698. It is also the day, 36 years later, on which the Baal Shem Tov began to publicly disseminate his teachings, after many years as a member of the society of "hidden tzaddikim" during which he lived disguised as a simple innkeeper and clay-digger, his greatness known only to a very small circle of fellow mystics and disciples. Once, a famous doctor met one of his patients on the street. Without a word of greeting, the doctor said, "I told you not

to walk on that leg until it heals!" "But I assure you that it is healed," said the man. "Impossible! I saw the wound in that leg. It will take months to heal!" "I went to another kind of healer, doctor. I went to a Holy Rabbi, the Baal Shem Tov." The doctor shrugged his shoulders, then simply walked away. A week later, the doctor knocked on the Baal Shem Tov's door. When the door opened, he said, "I hear you claim to be a healer!" The Baal Shem Tov looked at his visitor. "God is the healer, my friend. Please come in!" The doctor did not move. "Let

us examine each other," he said. "Whoever best diagnoses the sickness of the other will be proved the better doctor." The Baal Shem Tov smiled. "As you wish. But please do me the favor of coming in!"

Once inside, the doctor began his examination of the Baal Shem Tov. The doctor poked him, pinched him, gazed in his ears etc. After an hour, the doctor said, "You have no sickness that I can find." "I am not surprised that you could not find it," said the Baal Shem Tov. "I so desire the presence of God, that my heart cries out in pain when I can not feel it. נפשי חולת אֶהְבֶּהָ. *My sickness is this constant yearning for God.*" The Baal Shem Tov looked at the doctor a long while. "Let me now examine you." The Baal Shem

Tov took the doctor's hands and gazed into his eyes. At last the rabbi said, "Have you ever lost something very valuable?" "As a matter of fact," said the doctor, "I once had a large jewel, but it was stolen from me." "Ah! That is your sickness!" said the Baal Shem Tov. "What? Missing my diamond?" "No. My sickness is yearning after God. Your sickness is that you have forgotten that you ever had that desire." The doctor took a deep breath. In a moment, a tear flowed down his cheek. One tear turned to many. Still holding the hands of the Baal Shem Tov, he began to sob. "Please," he said. "Teach me how to yearn!" "With Hashem's help," said the Baal Shem Tov, "your healing has already begun." The doctor returned to his Yiddishe roots.

Yahrtzeit of Rav Yehuda Loew, The Maharal of Prague 18th of Elul

Rav Yehuda ben Bezalel Loew was born around the year 5285 (1525), probably in Posen. He became famous as a great Talmudic scholar at an early age. In his late twenties, he was invited to become the Rav in Nikolsburg, Moravia, a position which he held for about twenty years. His greatest fame, however, came to him as the spiritual head of the Jewish community in Prague, then the main center of central European Jewry. In Prague, the Maharal established the great Talmudic Academy known as the Klaus. (The ancient building of the Klaus burned down about eighty years after

his petira and was subsequently rebuilt and named the Klaus Synagogue.) Among his famous talmidim were Rav Yom Tov Lipmann Heller and Rav Dovid Ganz, who were among the most famous Talmudists of their age. The Maharal won the admiration of his great contemporaries: Rav Shlomo Luria (Maharshal), Rav Meir (Maharam) of Lublin and others, who called him affectionately "the iron pillar supporting Yisrael", "our breath of life" and "the marvel of the age".

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

The Young Rav Yehuda Loew plays Child Judge Before the City Ruler

In the market place in Prague, in side-by-side stores with adjoining wall were stores owned by a crooked fragrance dealer and an honest oil merchant. The Jewish oil merchant had a good reputation and his business thrived, while the crooked fragrance dealer struggled to bring customers into his store. One night, after the market was closed, the fragrance dealer drilled a small hole in the adjoining wall. He spent the next several days observing the oil merchant. He noticed that each night the oil merchant would count his daily revenue and place it into a red pouch that he would hide. This gave him an idea. The next day he ran into the street screaming that his money that he kept in a red pouch was stolen and that he suspected the oil merchant took the money since he was the only one who knew that he placed his money in a red pouch. Sure enough, the police found the red pouch in the store of the oil merchant. Because of their respective reputations, the police believed the fragrance merchant told a good story and a trial was set to take place. The talk of town was the big trial and the streets were full of debate as to who was the thief. Even the children talked openly about the upcoming trial. The ruler was in a conundrum and didn't know who to believe. One night before the trial, the city ruler walked the streets and overheard some Jewish children playing "court". One child

presided, while arguments were made by other children pretending to be the two claimants. The ruler amusedly stood by listening to the proceedings. After hearing both sides, the young judge asked them to bring a bowl of water. "We will put the coins in the water. If oil spots come floating to the top then we know the coins were handled by the oil dealer and he is innocent. If nothing floats to the top we will know that the rightful owner is the fragrance dealer and the oil merchant is a thief." The very next day during the real trial before a packed courtroom, after hearing both sides, the ruler asked for a bowl of water... The oil merchant was proven innocent after oil spots came floating to the top and the plot was discovered. When all the townspeople praised the ruler for his incredible wisdom, he said, "Do not praise me but the little boy who gave me the idea." That little boy whose name was Rav Yehuda Loew, said the Brisker Rav, is better known today as the Maharal MiPrague.

Addendum: Two weeks ago we brought the amazing story from Reb Shimon Shkopp who advised a Yid to look into the letters of the Sefer Torah and had a yeshuah after a neighbor threatened to demolish his house. A reader Y.A. called in that he had a major problem with his eyes that swelled up and the doctor felt he would need surgery. He also knew of the segulah of looking in the Torah and the next day he got a aliyah and gazed in the words on the Torah. Lo and behold the swelling subsided and he recuperated without surgery.

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