

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

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פרשת נשא תשע"ח פרקי אבות א

Going to the root of the sin

והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו והשיב את אשמו בראשו: (ה-ז)

And they shall confess to the sin which they committed and he shall make full restitution for his sin (5:7). The Torah's wording is והשיב את אשמו בראשו, which can be translated homiletically as *And he shall rectify his sin* "at its inception". What is the meaning of inception? The answer can be explained with the example of a doctor examining a patient. In order to cure an illness, a good doctor looks at the root cause of the ailment, and removes it, instead of merely treating the symptom. This is what the Possuk means here: In order to rectify a sin, one needs to identify the root of that sin, and extirpate it. The Gemara Berachot 5:a discusses that suffering that results from one's transgressions. The Gemara then shifts the focus and discusses suffering that does not result from one's transgressions and the suffering of the righteous. Rava, and some say Rav Chisda, said: If a person sees that suffering has befallen him, he should examine his actions. Generally, suffering comes about as punishment for one's transgressions, as it is stated: *נחפשה דרבינו ונחקרה* "We will search and examine our ways, and return to God" (Eicha 3:40) The Kohen has the task of digging into the root of the Sin and that will be the right path of Teshuva. (בית יעקב איוביא)

Lending money to a friend without witnesses is a sin.

והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו והשיב את אשמו בראשו: (ה-ז)

And they shall confess to the sin which they performed" (5:7). This Possuk poses a question. Up until this "And they shall confess to the sin which they performed" (5:7). This Possuk poses a question. Up until this point, the Torah has been using the singular form "and he" shall return", "and he" shall give", then why here does the Possuk switch to the plural והתודו And "they" shall confess"? It should say "he shall confess? Hagaon Rav Moshe Chafetz, a Rabbinic scholar and teacher in Venice, Italy (1663 1711) in his sefer Melech Machashevet, answers this question as follows: In Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat 70 it's brought down a Halacha that one must not loan or deposit an item without a witness even to a Talmid Chacham. By depositing or lending money to his friend without witnesses, he transgresses an Aveirah in Parshas Kedoshim 19:12 of ולפני עור לא תתן מכשל *Do not place a stumbling block before a blind man*." For had he loaned or deposited the object in the presence of two witnesses, as Chazal indicate one should, the lender would not have been able to swear falsely. Therefore, the Borrower is also guilty of having sinned no less than the lender. This explains why the Torah

uses the plural tense in connection with sin of confession, one with regard to the depositor and the other with regard to the one who receives the deposit for safe keeping. (מלאכת מחשבת להר"ר משה חפץ)

Transporting the Luchos: not a job for wagon-drivers

ולבני קהת לא נתן כיר עבדת הקדש עליהם בכרתף ישאוו: (ז ט)

But to the sons of Kohath he did not give, for incumbent upon them was the work involving the holy [objects], which they were to carry on their shoulders. (7:9) Moshe did not apportion wagons to the Kohathites for the reason stated. Two wagons with four oxen were issued to the Gershonites, with the Merari-ites receiving four wagons and eight oxen to perform their Mishkan-related work. Not so the Kehathites, who physically carried the Aron with its priceless cargo of the original Luchos on their shoulders. The Luchos from Sinai embodied the actual Torah. Their bearers were the outstanding Torah scholars, and thereby the most exalted spiritual leaders. Physically transporting the Luchos could not be relegated to wagon drivers, however distinguished and prestigious. (אהל ברוך להגה"צ ר' ברוך גרינפעלד תלמיד ערוגת הכושם)

Pledging Tzedakah in public is beneficial

זה הדיבר אשר צוה ה' לאמר: (ל"ה ד')

"This is the word that Hashem commanded, saying." The Rashba (From the Rishonim) in his responsa 582, derives from this Posuk, the source that by an appeal for Tzedaka we should announce in Public the names of the donors and the amount they pledged. Even though we find in chazal that Tzedaka shall be Matan Besaser, very low key. However when giving in public we should announce it. This is what the Posuk means when it says, "This is the word", when giving Tzedaka, Hashem commanded. לאמר we should say (announce) it in public to. This can bring about that others will learn from it and follow suit so the mitzvah that one does will be the גורם / the catalyst for other people's Tzedaka. This alludes to the gemarra Baba Basra 9a א"ר אלעזר גדול המעשה יותר מן העושה שנאמר (ישעיהו לב, יז) והיזה מעשה הצדקה: *Rabbi Elazar says: One who causes others to perform [me'aseh] a meritorious act is greater than one who performs that act himself, as it is stated: "And the causing [me'aseh] of righteousness shall be peace, and the work of righteousness, quietness, and assurance forever"* (Isaiah 32:17) This is another reason to announce pledges in public as it will cause other people to give and the Navi Yeshaya promises "peace to you" for this great deed, and this work of tzedakah is the work of righteousness.

STORY AND YAHRZEIT OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

**** *The Poritz obeys the Karliner Rebbe's demand -- just to save his own skin* ****

Rav Aharon Perlow זצוק"ל author of the Bais Aharon, was born to his heilige father Harav Rav Asher from Stoliner, in turn the son of Rav Aharon Hagadol from Karlin זצוק"ל. The Rebbes moved back and forth between the towns of Karlin and Stoliner in Russia, and were therefore known at times as Karliner Rebbe - Rav Aharon Hagadol and his grandson were in Karlin- and at times Stoliner Rebbe -Both Rav Asher's were Rebbes in Stoliner-. The Bais Aharon was born on Rosh Chodesh Sivan 1802 and lived 70 years and 17 days. יארצייט מ"ב סיון תרל"ב.

Harav Aharon had a chosid who conducted a very successful lumber business. He was a clever businessman and his business model was to lease a forest from a Poritz and then sell the different grades of wood yielded by the trees for heating and for building. One year he heard of a very large forest available for lease. The chosid saw a good deal and borrowed money to lease the forest, confident that with Hashem's help he would be able to manage the assets, repay the debt and realize a nice profit. However, the Hashgacha Elyona / Divine Providence arranged for the price of wood to suddenly go down through the floor. The chosid quickly made some hard calculations and concluded that if he were to go through with the deal he would go bankrupt and not be able to repay his debts.

He braced himself and went to the Poritz, not known for easygoing ways, saying he wanted to back out of the deal and to have his money back. The Poritz answered: "Nothing doing, my dear Jew! A deal is a deal and I'm not returning your money." The noble chosid maintained his mastery over the situation, knowing that he had an avenue of salvation: he hurried straight to the Bais Aharon to pour out his heart. The Rebbe calmed him down and counseled him to return to the Poritz with the message, "The Stoliner Rebbe demands that you return my money." Even if the Poritz gets angry, don't be afraid because he cannot harm you. The chosid had strong Emunah in his Rebbe and he went to the Poritz.

When he came to the Poritz he noticed that the Poritz was deep into a business meeting with some older Poritz from the neighbouring *gubernia*. He waited patiently until they were finished. That meeting turned out to be the key to his salvation.

After the meeting, the Poritz noticed the chosid. He asked him "What do you want now?" The chosid remained focused and said "The Stoliner Rebbe demands that you return my money." This enraged the Poritz and he yelled "Who is the Stoliner Rebbe? I never heard of him! You think I'm going to listen to some Rebbe?!" The older Poritz overheard this exchange and decided to do his younger colleague a big favor. "If the Stoliner Rebbe demands that you return his money you had better do so, my friend. You don't want to start up with this Rebbe or the story will have a bitter ending!"

The older Poritz continued: "I don't know where he gets his powers from, but let me tell you about the rough encounter I once had with him. Some Yid once rented an inn from me and wasn't able to pay the rent. I waited and waited until I lost my patience, and one blustery, snowy winter night, I threw the Yid and his whole family out into the snow. To me, it was just a businesslike thing to do and I went home to my warm house and lay down to rest. As I was lying in bed, I saw a distinguished-looking man standing in front of me who admonished me in strong and stern words: "I am the Stoliner Rebbe; how dare you throw my chosid and his family out into the snow! Go find them now and let them back into their warm inn.' I thought it was a dream and I turned over on to the other side but minutes later, exactly the same apparition reappeared. Only this time, there was an explicit threat: 'Let them back in or else you will suffer greatly.'" I apologized to the man and I got dressed and found the poor family, half-frozen to death. I took them to the warm inn and warmed them up.

I didn't hear again from the Rebbe. Now, (continued the old Poritz) I advise you not to start up with the Stoliner Rebbe. If he demands you return the money you had better do so, if you know what's good for you!" The young Poritz hung on the older Poritz's every word and returned the Yid's money in an eyeblink.

When Harav Hatzadik Reb Aharon of Chernobel heard this story he commented: There is not another Tzaddik who would be able to do what Rav Aharon of Karlin did to save his chassidim.

My great uncle Rav Nissan Pilchick Z"l, the legendary Stoliner chosid, frequently told this story with great enthusiasm to show the Emunah in the Rebbe which the Alter Chassidim had. He heard this story איש מפי איש

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