

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Parshas Vaeira 5778

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פרשת וארא תשע"ח

Hashem shows up to those who connect to him New Mitzvos

וַיֵּאָרָא אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב: (ו' ג')

[Hashem told Moshe]: I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchok, and to Yaakov (6:3) – Says Rashi: "I appeared to the fathers." Many have grappled with this Rashi. What is Rashi adding to the simple understanding of the pasuk? Has not the pasuk itself just stated that Hashem appeared to the "avos/patriarchs?"

Many earlier commentaries were of the opinion that the typesetter wanted to shorten some words and instead of spelling out the three names, he abbreviated it with the word Avos. However hundreds of seforim have insights into Rashi's meaning. The Heilige Bais Aharon answers that the word אבות can have a different aspect: it is built on the root meaning "to want" as in the pasuk (10 :27) וַיִּחְזַק ה' אֶת־לֵב פְּרֹעֶה וְלֹא אָבָה לְשַׁלְּחָם: Hashem strengthened Pharaoh's heart, and he was unwilling ["didn't want (avo)"]- to send them out. Hashem reveals himself to people who want to connect to Him. This is the message which Rashi discerns in our opening posuk: "I will appear to "The Avos", meaning "only to those who want Me." (Bais Aharon Karlin) In order to have the Divine Presence /Shechina rest upon you, one must have you have the right tools. Simcha is a tool. This is what David exhorted us saying: "Serve G-d with joy, come before Him with song" (Tehilim 100:2), and "the righteous will rejoice, they will exult before God and delight with joy" (Tehilim 68:4). And our sages said: "the Divine presence rests on a person only through his rejoicing in a mitzva" (Shabbat 30b). Happiness is the key to Shlaimos / perfection in Avodas Hashem, according to the Maharal of Prague. The Mesilas Yesharim says: And Shlomo said in a parable on wisdom: נרצה הביאני המלך חדריו גילה: משכני אחריו נרצה הביאני המלך חדריו גילה: "Draw me, we will run after You. The King has brought me into His chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in You" (Shir HaShirim 1:4). For the further a person merits to enter into the inner chambers of knowledge of His blessed greatness, the more his joy will increase and his heart will

sing within him. From this Posuk in Shir Hashirim we derive the concept of Draw me and Hashem will reciprocate.

New Mitzvos

וַאֲנִי אֶקְשֶׁה אֶת־לֵב פְּרֹעֶה וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶת־אֹתוֹתַי וְאֶת־מוֹפְתָי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and I will increase My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. (7:3). The Ramban asks the question: If there was a decree to enslave the Jews, then all those who fulfill the decree should be rewarded, and surely not punished, as the possuk implies! If a king instructs his subjects to perform a certain deed, then those who lazily foist that responsibility upon others are punished, whereas those who rise to the occasion and perform this act are rewarded. One might almost say that the Mitzriyim used their free will to fulfill the command and will of Hashem! The Ramban explains that while enslavement was decreed, torture was **not**. Their punishment was well deserved for going far beyond the call of duty. Throwing our children into the Nile was annihilation -not enslavement. For doing that which was decreed they were not punished. Perverting their free will to add agony to the lesser decree is what brought on their punishment. The same principle explains why Hashem has punished nation after nation for persecuting the Jewish people. The nations went way beyond their duty! Likewise, we apply this lesson to the Yetzer Harah. The Gemara **Sukka 54** says that ultimately, Hashem will punish the Yetzer Harah. But if Hashem commanded the Yetzer Harah to do his job, why should he be punished for doing it? The answer is as we have said. The Yetzer Harah will be punished for going beyond his call of duty. As found in words of the Kotzker Rebbe, The Yetzer Harah has a way of inventing his own new Mitzvohs and new Aveiros! Using his twisted logic, he misleads people to think that it is a Mitzvah to hate a certain fellow Jew and actually an Aveira to help a different person. We Torah-true Jews should also be busy creating new Mitzvohs, but ours will make us love someone we otherwise would not, or will compel us to do other good deeds which otherwise might remain undone. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

**** *Tosfos explained from beyond the grave* ****

הרה"ק ר' משה, Harav Hatzadik Rav Moshe Tzvi of Savran, was born in the city of Istanbul Turkey, to his holy father Rav Shimon Shlome the Maggid of Savran. Little is known about his youth, or about his parents. However Rav Moshe Tzvi told a dramatic story from his father's life. His father was kidnapped and taken in captivity to Damascus where he was sold as a slave to a

wealthy merchant who treated him very decently. Rav Shimon Shlome had no way of escaping his captivity. He constantly implored his owner to free him, but to no avail. Finally, after 15 years in captivity, Rav Shimon Shlome found mercy in the eyes of his owner who agreed to free him. It was the custom in those times to reward a loyal slave with an expensive present upon freeing him. The slaveowner

asked Rav Shimon Shlome what he would like to have. Rav Shimon Shlome responded that he would like a set of the Talmud - Shas printed in Amsterdam, which was treasured by Rabbanim. It was also very expensive. The owner agreed and sent his servant to purchase a set of the Talmud. Rav Shimon Shlome bore no hard feelings against his owner, knowing that everything that happens to a person is from Hashem. He gratefully received the present and set out on the journey to his home. Rav Shimon Shlome arrived home into the welcoming arms of his family.

The Shas that was purchased had previously belonged to the Gaon Rav Chuna, the Rav of Sharigrad, Poland, who was a Mechutan of the Pnei Yehoshua. Rav Shimon Shlome settled down and began learning from his precious Shas. He noticed that Rav Chuna had written many insights and notes in the volumes of the Shas. One comment caught the eye of Rav Shimon Shlome. It said: "*this explanation is from the person who was killed*" *"זוה הפירוש הוא מהנהרג"*. Rav Shimon Shlome was eager to find out the story behind that cryptic notation. He investigated and discovered the following: In Sharigrad there were two butchers who, right after Yom Kippur, had to travel to the market to purchase beef for Succos. They left even before they broke their fast and traveled through a forest and a desert to get to their destination. These two butchers had always been strict about not eating bread without washing their hands; without water they would not eat. A young scholar traveling with them told them that in a life-threatening situation — *פיקוח נפש* — one may just cover one's hands and eat. One of the butchers did so, but the other was strict and refused to do it. In the meantime, they noticed a shepherd in the distance, and the strict butcher decided to ask him for some water. The other butcher advised against this for fear the shepherd might be a murderer. He answered "I have no choice, because either way I die." The others stayed back and he approached the shepherd. The worst happened. The wicked shepherd lost no time in murdering the butcher, while the terrified companions fled.

The butcher who was killed arrived before the Eternal Court to decide his fate and face his judgment. There was a stormy debate between the judges whether the butcher was allowed to be so strict in a case of a life-threatening apb juehp situation. The judges weren't able to come to a verdict and the judges said that only Hashem can give the verdict. They presented the case to Hashem, Who answered that since the butcher is from the city of Sharigrad and my beloved Rav Chuna is the Rav there, let him be the judge and render the verdict. The butcher was permitted to come back to this

world. The first day of Succos, before Rav Chuna davened shacharis, he was learning and was immersed in a difficult Tosfos. The butcher appeared to him and uttered Yom Tov greetings, but the Rav, not knowing that the butcher had died, responded by upbraiding him for disturbing his learning! The butcher wept and pleaded for the Rav's help until Rav Chuna had mercy and sceptically listened to the butcher's story. The Rav said, "I was just learning a very difficult Tosfos. If you can explain it to me, I will help you." The butcher wasn't a learned man and pleaded with the Rav, who wouldn't budge, so the butcher saw he had no alternative but to hold up his part of the agreement. He promised he'd be back soon with an explanation of the challenging Tosfos. The butcher returned to the Eternal World and located the Sages who authored the Tosfos, begging them to have mercy on him. They willingly resolved the difficulties Rav Chuna discerned in the Tosfos. The butcher took his leave and returned to Rav Chuna with the explanation of the Tosfos in hand. Rav Chuna was overjoyed and, now convinced that the butcher had been telling the truth all along, arranged a Tikkun for his soul. After Yom Tov, Rav Chuna annotated the Gemara to indicate that the explanation on our Tosfos was from the martyred Jew. The Shas remained in Savran until the war. Many people came to see the note for themselves and walked away with strengthened Emunah as a result.

There is a different versions to this story: The first Bobover Rebbe Reb Shlome זצוק"ל, told over this story many times that it happened with Reb Abish from Frankfurt author of the Sefer Birkas Avraham on Pesachim. He also was a Chaver of the Pnei Yehoshua.

A businessman approached Rav Moshe Tzvi and asked for the Rebbe to bless his business. The Rebbe didn't answer. The businessman kept noodging the Rebbe. Finally the Rebbe rebuked him sharply by stating "I see your business bothers you immensely, yet the fact that we weren't able to sacrifice the Karbon Tamid today doesn't bother you." Harav Hatzadik Rav Mottel Slonimer relates a story of a young boy who was born blind. The boy approached Rav Moshe Tzvi and begged him for a brocha that will enable him to see, because without learning Torah, his life is useless. Rav Moshe Tzvi blessed him that he be able to look into a sefer. The boy was able to see his whole life only what was written in a sefer. Otherwise he was blind! He grew up in Tzfas to be a great Talmid Chacham. Rav Mottel knew him personally *טבת תקצ"ח* is the yearzeit of Rav Moshe Tzvi. He is buried in Tchichelnik. זי"ע נא.

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