Pardes Yehuda

→ Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick ← + Edited and Revised By Duvid Pinchas Rose

Parshas Mishpatim 5776 [year 6] 244

שבת מברכין אדר

פרשת משפטים תשע"ו

וְאֵלֶה הַמִשׁפָּמִים אֲשׁר תָשׁים לִפְנֵיהֶם: (כא:א)

And these are the ordinances that you shall set before them (21:1) Rashi comments on the opening of our Sedrah, explaining the superficially innocuous conjunction "And" with which it begins: מקום שנאמר **אלה** פסל את הראשונים, **ואלה** מוסיף על הראשונים, מה "Wherever the Torah says "these", it draws a distinction from what has been written just previously, but when it says "and these", it supplements what has been stated previously." The 'previously' here refers to the Aseres HaDibros ("Ten Utterances") laid out in Parshas Yisro. The numerous mitzvos and halachos outlined in Parshas Mishpatim [whose elucidation occupies a very large component of the entire Gemara [DPR]] stem directly from the Ten Utterances. The Utterances, despite their supreme importance [in light of the circumstances of their revelation [DPR]] do not comprise a stand-alone bloc of Torah, as it were, but are directly linked to the mitzvos of our Sedrah which follow virtually on their heels, and the entire Torah beyond. (Two confirmations from the Gemara (Shekalim 16b (cf. Artscroll (blue) note 28)): 1.) Individual letters in the Aseres HaDibros allude to each of the 613 Commandments (Taryag Mitzvos); and 2.) According to one opinion, the entire text of Torah SheBichsav was engraved on the two Luchos! What better evidence could there be to appreciate the linkage established by the simple "vav" of אלה? To complete the picture, we turn to another Gemara (Shabbos 13b, Tosfos d.h. Rashi) to learn what a "plain" use of אלה, without the connective vay, can convey. אלה דברי הברית (דברים כח: סט) קאי אמה שכתוב למעלה These are the words of the covenant... is separate from what has just come before. And what is that? The frightful Tochacha. Remember what we said before:פסל את אלה The Torah has pity on our feelings as lowly flesh and blood and does not want us to be unduly terrified by the harsh words of the Tochacha. Yes, the Tochacha bears a vital message of reward and punishment, but it can stand emotionally, as it were, on its own. It is not linked thematically to the uplifting, encouraging words of the Covenant which follow directly on its heels -- hence אלה, and not ואלה. A simple Jew could well be saying, "Enough of theTochacha. Ninety-eight verses are all we can bear. Let's move on." אלה", and not "ואלה." [Rav Yisroel Mendel Fischman with DPR]

וֹבִי־יָרִיבִן אֲנַשִּׁים וָהָבָּה־אָישׁ אֱת־רֶעָהוֹ בְּאֲבַן אוֹ בָאֵנְרף: (כא יח)

And if men quarrel, and one strikes the other with a stone or with a fist... (21:18) Ray Yonoson Eibeschutz draws attention to the posuk's use of 'pi (indicating a near-certainty) as opposed to shabbos after unsavoury conta (a mere possibility) that men will quarrel and come to blows. The Gaon is teaching us a valuable lesson in applied ethics, that a machlokes/dispute brings all sorts of troubles in its wake, in both general and specific cases. One person can "strike" another with a physical, visible punch delivered by a fist, or, alternatively, a concealed, stealthy blow delivered by a unrestrained tongue spouting loshon hora, rechilus, or outright slander. The posuk speaks of a dispute which cannot be ironed out amicably, and will

definitely come to "blows" (hence use of נְבִייְרִיבָּן). In that case, far better be it that אוֹ בְּאָבֶן אוֹ בְּאָבֶן וֹ because there, at least, the judicial remedy of רְק שִּבְתוֹ יְהֵן וְרַפֹּא יְרַפָּא (he shall give only [payment] for his [enforced] idleness, and he shall provide for his cure) obtains, and the assailant can repent through teshuva. This is not the case with an insidious assault using loshon hora or slander, for which there is usually no direct recompense, nor is teshuva for the offence easy to accomplish. (תפארת יהונתן – אייבשיץ)

אָם לֹא יִמְצֵא הַנַנָב וְנָקְרֵב בַעַל הַבַּיִת אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים אָם לֹא שׁלַח יָדוֹ בִּמְלֶאכֶת רֵעָהוֹ: (כ״ב ז׳)

If the thief is not found, the homeowner shall approach the judges, [to swear] that he has not laid his hand upon his neighbor's property (22:7) Reb Meir Premishlaner homiletically wove a moral teaching in, around, and through this posuk: If a Yid wants to draw close to the Eternal One, but sees that he is not succeeding, let him examine his dealings to be 100% sure that he has not improperly acquired money belonging to someone else. How can a person approach nearer to Hashem? וְנְקְרֵב בַּעֵל־הָבֵּיִת homiletically inserting an "אֵל". Read "Should someone want to come nearer "to" the Baal HaBayis (i,e, Hashem, everyone's 'boss'), but is not successful, the advice is let him be sure he is not holding אַם־לֹא שָׁלָה יָדוֹ בַּמְלֵאכָת רֵעָהוּ money to which he is not entitled. Chazal teach: אֵין חָמוּר מְכַּל איסורין שבתורה מעונש הגול The Torah has no punishment more stringent than that for theft Theft is such a grievous sin because the thief is demonstrating that he takes issue with Hashem's distribution of property in This World. He thinks he can do it better, and rectify an improper doling out of property -- how? by misappropriating something he has not received from Shomayim, and keeping it. This is a serious -- and punishable -- lack in Emunah, supplanted by bogus faith that one cannot get what he needs from Hashem except by way of sinning. Trampling on the Creator's wishes and decisions avails one absolutely nothing.

In a similar vein, the Sefer Tiferes Bonim (of YZK's uncle Rav Bunim Yoel Taussig, Mattersdorf Rebbe ינצ"ל) tells of a wealthy Yerushalayim currency trader whose fortunes plunged inexplicably. He turned hopefully to the famed Tzaddik Reb Shloim'ke of Zvehill for help with his livelihood. The tzaddik spoke these words of reproof: "You are a currency speculator and money-changer by trade. Values of currency are constantly changing, and taking advantage of the fluctuations is what yields your profit. I am aware that on your way to the Kosel Hamaaravi on Shabbos afternoons, you pass through the Arab Shuk and have unsavoury contacts there that let you in on currency fluctuations about which your competitors cannot know, since it is Shabbos. You profit from this illicit knowledge after Shabbos, but you are doing forbidden labour on Shabbos. It is not surprising that your fortunes have fallen. Resolve to take a different route to the Kosel from now on and accept with perfect faith that Hashem can and does help you with parnossa without violating any Torah prohibition ח"ו. The chastened trader followed Reb Shloim'ke's advice to the letter and soon found himself

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick and translated by Duvid Pinchas Rose)

*** Reb Meir'l Premishlaner's prophetic vision unchains an agunah ****

People used to flock to Reb Meir Premishlaner אינייא with urgent requests for salvation from their life's problems, but not always did he turn an attentive ear to them, particularly when he detected that they were placing their trust in him personally, as a Rebbe, while forgetting the ultimate source of blessing and salvation, the Creator of the World. He had little patience with such souls and made them aware of it by expelling them from his presence. There was once exactly such a case when a young woman entered, wailing and shrieking that her husband had disappeared, and beseeching the Rebbe, with his far-seeing eyes, to reveal the fugitive's location. The Rebbe rebuked her: "Leave my room immediately! Am I in place of the Eibershter, whom you have apparently forgotten?"

When by herself, the woman, now much subdued, realized that the Rebbe had been right on target. She knew that sincere teshuva, especially at a tzaddik's behest, was always in order. The next day, she returned to the Rebbe's chamber and spoke like a different person. She affirmed that only Hashem was capable of helping her, and begged the Rebbe to be no more than a loyal, "well-connected" shaliach, a messenger, to locate her husband. This time, Reb Meir'l (he is usually referred to by this affectionate diminutive) perceived that the woman was sincere in her anguish, with her eyes and heart turned toward Shomayim, and he bid her reveal what was weighing down her heart. She replied simply that her husband absconded, without a trace, and she hadn't the slightest clue as to his whereabouts. Reb Meir'l stood by the window, scanning the horizon left and right repeatedly until his gaze became fixed in one direction. He then pronounced thus amazingly clear course of action: "Travel to Zlotschov right away and head for the largest kretschma (country inn) in town. You will see an assemblage of wagons and drivers parked in the courtyard of the inn. Stand in the gate and count out dafka the twentieth wagon from the right. Hire the driver to bring you back here to Premishlan, to my house, and that after I see you back here, you will pay him handsomely." The woman believed with all her might that the tzaddik's words were the pure truth, but she failed to see any connection to her errant husband. Nevertheless, Reb Meir'l told her to hurry to Zlotschov and not let the golden opportunity slip by. This she did and found the situation exactly as the Rebbe had seen with his holy eyes. There were the wagons, each with its coarse and uncouth Polish teamster. What's more, as soon as she stood by the gate to catch her breath, the gate opened and the group of wagons began exiting, one after the other. The timing was exquisitely precise! Another five minutes, and she would have missed the entire caravan! She knew what to do: when the twentieth wagon passed through the gate, she engaged the driver to drive her to Premishlan. It was not an easy sell, since the driver had other plans for the day, but the promise of a generous payment convinced him to take the job. When they rolled into town, the driver asked for directions. The woman guided him straight past the Rebbe's house, and told him to wait for her

while she went inside for a brief time. The driver was annoyed by the delay, and of course was in no way privy to the events unfolding, but agreed to give her five minutes to alight and then resume travel to her destination. She reconfirmed the juicy fare that awaited him at journey's end. The woman told the gabbai inside the house to tell the Rebbe that she and her wagon had arrived. The Rebbe in turn instructed the gabbai to call the driver into his room for a chat. This angered the man to no end. He bristled arrogantly and exclaimed: "Baloney! What do I have to do with this so-called Rebbe? I'm not the type of man who's afraid of Jewish rebbes, and I surely don't have to do what he says. Let's finish up with this nuisance ride already. I have to hit the road." Meanwhile, Reb Meir'l had been standing at his window the whole time, eyeing the proceedings at his doorstep. When he saw the recalcitrant driver's defiance, he opened the window and called out the driver's proper Yiddish name! The man began to tremble uncontrollably from terror, knowing that he had been unmasked. The Rebbe summoned him inside and told him that only if he obeyed would the shaking depart from him. He fell at the Rebbe's feet and asked what the Rebbe demanded of him. "Look here, you rogue. I know full well that when all is said and done, you are a Yid and always have been!" "Rabbi, understand that I had many trials and tribulations. They sorely tested my faith. I fell lower and lower until I left Yiddishkeit and went to the "cloister." (רה"ל). That's where I'm staying. But please, Rabbi, make me stop trembling, I beg you." Reb Meir'l rebuffed him, saying, "I see that you're set in your evil ways and have no thoughts of repentance or return to the right path. But why should your poor wife suffer because of you? She is an agunah and cannot marry because you cruelly abandoned her, you scoundrel!" The man softened. "All right, Rabbi, let's talk. Where is the woman now?" "Standing right behind you, in this room, by the door." "That's impossible. But then ... wait a minute." He approached the wife, stared at her and a glimmer of recognition spread across his face, although utterly without joy. The same happened with the woman. "I don't see how the two of us rode in a wagon for a long trip, with neither recognizing the other. We had been so-called married, after all." The Rebbe explained: "The entire encounter orchestrated in Shomayim, with no mutual recognition, so that you would show up here in my presence unimpeded. And now, if there is a drop of decency left in you, go with my gabbai and your wife to the Beis Din and write a kosher get, so that she can resume a normal Yiddish life." And that is what happened. The man freed the wife from the chains of being an agunah. She remembered to pay him for the wagon ride, and the Rebbe supplemented the fare in light of the renegade's cooperation. Man and woman parted and went their separate ways. Their score had been settled by Reb Meir Premishlaner's supernatural perspicacity זיע"א.

ברכת מזל טוב לנכדי היקר מרדכי נ"י בן חתני ר' חיים מאיר קעססלער נ"י לנישואיו יום ד' ר"ח אד"א אולם וויזניץ מאנסי נו"י בשעה טובה ומוצלחת

A publication of Seforim World. 1000's of seforim: new and old; Our editor and translator, Mr. Rose מו (תשואת הן הן לו) גייי ווער הוא אין אין ווער הוא אין ווער הוא אין אין ווער הוא הוא אין ווער הוא אין ו