

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick
 Edited and Revised By Dovid Pinchas Rose

Parshas Nitzavim 5776

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פרשת נצבים תשע"ז

We are close to the King: make the most of it!

אתם נצבים היום בלכם לפני ה' אלקיכם: (כ"ט ט')

You are all standing this day before Hashem, your G-d. (29:9) A unique event in human history took place when this posuk was delivered by Moshe: the entire membership of Klal Yisroel were assembled and mustered before the Creator. But just what did this act of "standing" entail, beyond confirming and binding them to the Covenant? The Toldos Yaakov Yosef, by way of a parable which he himself heard from the mouth of the Holy Ba'al Shem Tov, commented on a posuk from Tehillim (102:1), תפלה לעני כי יעטף ולפני ה' ישפך שיחו, *A prayer for a poor man when he enwraps himself and pours out his speech before Hashem.* A King once made a celebration and promised his subjects that they each could request one favour from him, and it would be granted. One very wise man stood out from the others; he asked that he be able to converse with the king three times a day. This astute request pleased the king so much that not only did he grant the request, but went beyond it and gave the wise man gifts which he had not even requested. So it is with the Oibershter and the Yidden: Hashem hearkens to the prayer of the humble Yid תפלה לעני כי יעטף, standing "enwrapped in his tallis", when he is standing upright before Hashem, pouring out his heartfelt needs, "three times a day" לפני ה' ישפך שיחו. These are the words of the Holy Ba'al Shem Tov. Now to our posuk: How does a Yid become נצבים upright? By having his prayers answered! This accomplishment is only לפני ה' אלקיכם when he sees himself always standing in Hashem's presence, graciously allowed to make any request. (תולדות יעקב יוסף)

May the gilgul rectify what it is supposed to

אתם נצבים היום בלכם לפני ה' אלקיכם... כל איש ישראל: (כ"ט ט')

A question arises. Once the posuk has stated that בלכם *all of you were there*, what do the words כל איש ישראל *every man of Israel* add, since no words in the Torah are superfluous? A different posuk in Devarim (10:16-17) is directly relevant, but it needs to be unraveled: ומלתם את ערלת לבבכם וערפכם לא תקשו; עוד: כי ה' אלקיכם הוא אלקי האלקים ואדני האדנים הקל הגדל הגבר: You shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart, therefore, and be no more stiffnecked. For Hashem, your G-d, is G-d of gods and the Lord of the lords, the great mighty and awesome G-d, Who will show no favor, nor will He take a bribe. What does the fact that Hashem shows no favouritism and cannot be bribed have to do with the symbolic circumcision of one's heart? We have an established, if sobering and esoteric concept of *gilgul*/soul rebirth, whereby a Yid enters This World for the purpose of rectifying what he has spoiled or left unfulfilled in a previous "incarnation". Even if he has many merits, be they generous *tzedaka*, ample *chesed*/kindness to

others, and deep Torah learning, this is all to the good, but these merits will not accomplish the rectification for which he has returned to This World. There is a practical tactic to fend off such a predicament. One should try to pinpoint the good trait or mitzvah performance which the Yetzer Hora tries to block or make burdensome for him. And that can lie at the root of his rectification mission here, and on that he should expressly focus. That is the message of *You shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart*: delve into your heart and find the spiritual blockage which the Evil Inclination is employing to trap you, and obliterate that failing. Lest the person think that he need only "rest on the laurels" of his good accomplishments, the posuk informs us severely that "Hashem will not be bribed", meaning that He will not use a person's merits to offset or deflect the purpose for which he has been "reincarnated." The "this day" of our posuk means Rosh Hashanah. "All of you" means one must perform a thorough self-scrutiny "before Hashem your G-d" in advance of the Day of Judgement, "every man of Israel" teaching that one must strive to be a fully-refined Yid in all respects, rectifying all shortcomings from his previous *gilgul*. With this determination, he will emerge worthy and acquitted from the Day of Judgement. (תפארת שלמה ראדאמסק)

Based on this insight from the Rebbe of Rodomsk we can connect this to the well-known posuk from Mishlei (19:21) רבות מחשבות בלב איש ועצת ה' היא תקום, (משלי יט כא) *There are many thoughts in a man's heart, but it is Hashem's plan that will stand.* It is all too easy to suppose that because one has many fine accomplishments, he will surely gain his "tikun/soul refinement." But Hashem's plan for him remains fully in place: he has returned to This World to rectify a shortcoming or spoilage. Let him correct that (perhaps using the Tiferes Shlomo's tactic (see above)) and only then can a true and complete "tikun haneshama" ensue. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

"Meat: glatt kosher; Money: glatt yosher"

ויילכו ויעבדו אלהים אחרים וישתחוו להם אלהים אשר לא ידעו ולא חלק ויילכו ויעבדו אלהים אחרים וישתחוו להם אלהים אשר לא ידעו ולא חלק (כ"ט כה) *For they went and served other deities, prostrating themselves to them, deities which they had not known, and which He had not apportioned to them* (29:25) Why does the Torah speak of "apportioning" -- especially since it apparently refers to false deities? Who would want a "portion" in those repulsive entities? But realize that the Torah's message is eternal and is speaking to future generations, where the idols will not be made of wood and stone. Money will be the false deity in those times. [The Holy Bais Aharon of Karlin sees Dovid HaMelech begging Hashem that money should not be an idol for him: (תהלים נא טז): *Save me from blood, O God (Tehillim 51:16)* interpreting מַדְמִים אֱלֹהִים as "an idol of money."] It happens all too often that misguided people's lust for money leads them to Shabbos desecration and even self-sacrifice for nefarious ends, inevitably rooted in money. The end point is equivalent to latter-day idolatry. In this context,

the words found in many places in chumash אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים mean "money tantamount to idolatry."

Someone who thinks that actions prohibited by the Torah point the only way to having money is actually ensnared by *avoda zara*. To this the Torah says pointedly, וְלֹא הֵלֵק לָהֶם wealth like that is not apportioned to him by Hashem. The Oibershter takes pleasure,

kaviyochol, only in "glatt kosher" money, earned in a kosher way. [Rav Shimon Schwab ZTZ'L was famous for demanding that meat be "glatt kosher", and money "glatt yosher." [DPR]] Whatever is destined ("bashert") for a person to have with permanence will come in a permissible and easy way.
(תפארת אבות - ר' בנימין פרידמאן מישקאלין)

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

*** **Literally shaken up by Reb Hershel'e Rimanov -- but to his very core!** ***

A band of chassidim set out to travel for Shabbos to HaRav HaKodosh Reb Hershel'e miRimanov, the successor to his holy Rebbe, Reb Mendel ben Yosef miRimanov. [He was known as the 'Meshores', since he was the servant to Reb Mendel] [Many have the segulah of lighting a daily candle in Reb Mendel's memory, and have seen yeshuous in so doing. [DPR]] Their *ba'al agola*/wagon driver was a simple, unlearned, rough-hewn Jew, who alas wanted no connection to his spiritual roots. The agreement was that they would return home on the next Monday, right after Shacharis. Upon arrival, the wagoner made a beeline for the part of town furthest away from the chassidim and their circles.

Come that Monday, he pulled up in front of Reb Hershel's shul, horses fed and rested, expecting his passengers to hustle and clamber into his wagon. But there was a hitch, and not one having to do with his wagon. Reb Hershel's davening was one of protracted *dveikus*, and that took time. The teamster was short on patience, and burst into the shul in search of his passengers. But he overheard the chassidim discussing their Rebbe's exalted conduct, and his curiosity was piqued. He stayed in shul only to be caught up in an amazing, whirlwind scenario.

While visiting the Upper Realms in his devotions, the Rebbe walked with vigorous motion here below, striding from one corner of the shul to the other, letting nothing stand in his way. The chasidim knew to stay out of the Rebbe's path, for they were sure to be knocked over if the Rebbe encountered them. Even shul furniture knew no mercy and was knocked aside. The chasidim saw that the Rebbe was headed for the wagon driver and gestured to him to clear the path. Unfortunately for him, he failed to grasp their message. The Rebbe reached him and grabbed him, lifting him from the ground as if he were a twig. Now this wagoner was neither a lightweight nor a weakling, but he could not free himself from the Rebbe's grip, try as he might. With other-worldly strength, the Rebbe shook him for a long time, this way and that, carrying him to and fro, until he decided to release him. The *ba'al agola*, white-faced, huddled in fear on the ground, but seething in embarrassment at what he had just endured. He ran outside to seek refuge in his wagon.

But his mood soon changed to a burning anger at the Rebbe and his followers. He had half a mind to depart without the passengers, but realized that the money that awaited him might salve his feelings, so he waited. The passengers

realized that the hour was late and hurried out to the wagon, apologizing for their tardiness, and offering a substantial tip for the driver to compensate him. What met them was a stream of invective, brimming with indignant rage at the Rebbe. "Who does that so-called rabbi think he is? I am tougher than him and I intend to teach him a lesson he won't soon forget," were his fiery words, which turned his listeners' ears bright red with shame at associating with such a low-life.

The men managed with all their might to suppress a proper retort to their brutish driver, thinking it best to keep silent if they were to reach their home without further fussing. But, wonder of wonders, a discernible change came over the renegade driver. He became ever more restrained and pensive, until he burst into hot and copious tears, which he could not wipe away. Halfway through the journey, he turned to his riders with a broken voice: "My brothers, I have firmly decided to repent and embrace Yiddishkeit and become an *ehrlicher Yid*. I am telling you now: your Rebbe lit a fire within in me when he shook me from side to side! I am heading straight back to Rimanov, so that the Rebbe can teach me the proper path in life. But don't worry. I know another wagon driver who lives just down the road, and he will transport you the rest of the way home."

The riders were overcome with *ahavas yisroel* towards their wayward brother, asked his forgiveness for the ordeal, and continued their journey with the new driver. Back in Rimanov, the Rebbe received him with love and warmth and arranged tutors for him. In a short time, he was able to learn and daven, and became very close to the Rebbe Reb Hershel'e. Eventually he attained a high spiritual level and became one of the *bnei aliyah*/exalted Yidden in Rimanov -- all rooted in his first stormy "wrestling match" with the tzaddik. (ספר כהן גדול מושרת) זי"ע א.

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