

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה

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טיב התבלין

מאת הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבעוביץ שליט"א ר"י שער השמים ירושלים עה"ק

ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה. את הברכה אשר תשמעון אל מצות ה' אלקיכם (א-כו-כה) - הכנה ליום הדין

למה פרשה זו נקראת מידי שנה בתחלת ימי אלול או סמוך להם. ולא בכדי נסתבב הדבר שיחיו קוראים אותה בזה הזמן. אלא כיון שמנגיעים ימי אלול שם הכנה ליום הדין, ובהם מוטל על האדם לפשפש במעשיו ולהטיב דרכיו, לכן קוראים אנו בזאת הפרשה, אשר מיד בפתיחתה מזהיר הכתוב על ענין שכר ועונש ואומר את הברכה אם תשמעו אל מצוות ה' וגו' והקללה אם לא תשמעו וגו' כדי שעל ידם יתעורר האדם להתכוון כראוי באלו הימים לקראת יום הדין הממשמש ובא, ומכאן ולהבא יבחר ללכת בדרך הישר, ועל ידי זה יזכה לברכת ה' ולכתיבה וחתומה טובה לקראת השנה הבאה לטובה.

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גם הציווי האמור אחריו בענין נביא שקר המסית לעבודה זרה, מורה דרך הוא להאדם המקבל עליו באלו הימים לבחור בדרכי השי"ת, ותחילה נקדים את המובא בספרים הקדושים שיש ב' בחינות של יצר הרע, יש בחינה של 'פרעה' ויש בחינה של 'לבן' היצר הנקרא 'פרעה' הוא יצר המגלה את מטרתו הנלווה, ולכן נקרא 'פרעה' שהוא לשון גלוי, יצר זה בא בדרך כלל אל האדם ההמוני ומפתירו בגלוי לעבור את פי השי"ת, כי לזה האדם אשר עדיין לא נתעורר לבחור בטוב, אין שום צורך להסתיר מזימתו, רק מטעים לפניו את החטא, והלא שאין לו סיבה המעכבו מלשמוע לו יכול להתפתות אליו בנקל, אך לא כן הוא באיש הנלבב, אשר בחר בדרך הטוב, ודבוק הוא בצורו וקונו, אליו לא יבוא היצר בבחינת 'פרעה' כי יודע הוא כי לא יאבה אדם זה לשמוע אליו, הרי אדם זה גם אם יידע שיש תענוג גדול בחטא, לא ימרה את פי קונו, ולכן אינו בא אליו כי אם בבחינת 'לבן' והיינו שמלבן את החטא כאילו אינו חטא כלל, ולפעמים מהפך הוא את הדבר למצוה, ורק אחד שהאדם משוכנע שאין חטא בדבר, אז מפתה אותו לעשותה, כי רק בדרך זה יצליח להפילו ברשתו.

ולזה צריך האדם הבוחר בטוב, לדעת בתחילת דרכו שעליו להיות ערום בדעתו, ואם רואה הוא שעזר רצונו לעשות איזה פעולה, יבחון את נבכי לבבו, אם פעולה זו אכן רצויה היא לפני השי"ת, ואף אם רצונו העז הוא נובע מרצון לקיים מצוה, בכל זאת יתבונן היטב אם אכן לשם מצוה הוא מכון, כי לפעמים עצת היצר הוא שמסתיר את הרע שבדבר ואין הדבר ניכר באופן חיצוני, אבל אם יתבונן היטב מהי הנקודה האמיתית המושך אותו לזה הדבר, יהיה ביכולתו לגלותה.

וזהו ענין של מסית ומדיח המובא בפרשתן, זה המסית בא לפתות על ענין עבודה זרה, אך אין הוא מסית את האדם בגלוי לעבירה, יודע הוא שהיא עון השקול ככל התורה כולה, וממילא יודע הוא שהאדם לא ישמע לו, אלא מביא לו את זמון, ובוה מנסה הוא לפתותו שהיא רצון השי"ת, ועל זה מזהיר הכתוב ואומר (יג. ד) לא תשמע אל דברי הנביא ההוא וגו' כי מנסה ה' אלקיכם אתכם, לדעת הישכם אוהבים את ה' אלקיכם בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם, כי האוהב את בוראו בכל נפשו ולבבו, ודאי ירדגש בלבו כי יש איזה צד שאין צד שאין רוח המקום נוחה מזה הדבר, וממילא יתבונן לדעת שורש הדבר, ואז יזוכה בהכוונה האמיתית שבו.

נמשל: Sin taints the air, and a person whose heart is not whole and pure is easily influenced by an atmosphere of sin that renders people coarse. How much more is this true of places where a sin has been committed! It is written in **Sefer HaChassidim** that if someone is about to purchase a house or

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Selected Halachos of Shmittah (9)
Shmittas Kesafim: Lending Money. The *Torah* says in *Parshas Re'eh* (י): "השמר לך פן יהיה דבר עם לבבך בלעיל לאמר קרבה: (י) ויהי בך חטא" שנת השבע שנת השמיטה ורעה באיחך האביון ולא תתן לו ... והיה בך חטא" There are two negative commandments (השמר...כף) for one who refuses to lend money because the end of the *Shmittah* year is coming soon, and he might lose the money he loaned. Even when *Shmittas Kesafim* is only Rabbinic (מדרבנן), like nowadays as explained last week, the one who refuses to lend because of it, transgresses these commandments **on a Torah (מדאורייתא) level** (ז). If one does lend and doesn't worry about *Shmitta*, the *Torah* rewards him saying: "כי בגלל הדבר הזה יסבך ה' א-לקיך בכל מעשך: (שכר מצוה בראי יסבך) This means that even though the normal rule is that the reward for *mitzvos* is not in this world (שכר מצוה בראי יסבך), here there is an exception as the *posuk* clearly states one "will be blessed in all his deeds and all his actions." **When to Lend.** If a borrower would otherwise not borrow the money, and is just borrowing near the end of *Shmittah* to take advantage in order to get his debt cancelled, *Sefer Shmittas Kesafim Kehilchoso*, quoted by **R' Chaim Kanievsky Shlit'a** (ג) says that these commandments do not apply and one does not have to lend him. Likewise, if it is clear that he will not be able to pay back before the end of *Shmittah*, one does not have to lend.

Pruzbul. The great *Hillel Hazaken*, in his generation, saw that

הוא היה אומר...

R' Simcha Zissel Ziv ZT"l (Alter from Kelm) would say:

The *Torah* says that we should have no mercy on one who tries to persuade others to serve idolatry, and we should kill him. Even if after the conviction someone wants to bring proof for his acquittal, we don't accept it, even though by other capital punishment trials we redo the case if one brings evidence to acquit him. (Rashi) The reason we are more severe is, "*He sought to make you stray from Hashem your G-d*" - even if he just sought to persuade you but didn't succeed, have no mercy on him. This is if someone 'sought' to make another sin - he gets such a punishment. How much more so by doing good which is treated five hundred times greater than bad. We see how much reward one will get for just wanting to come closer to *Hashem* even if he didn't actualize his desire."

Sanzer Rebbe, R' Chaim Halberstam ZT"l would say:

"If you are a person who does not pay his bills on time, at the grocer or the vegetable merchant, you should not come to ask me for a blessing for your children. From the fact that you don't pay your bills on time, the merchant you took items from is obligated to finance your purchases with his own money. It is considered as if your children were eating stolen food! In that case, how can you possibly think that you will succeed in educating your children?"

A Wise Man would say:

"You cannot help people permanently by doing for them, what they could and should do for themselves."

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יהודה לייב ע"ה, נפ' ב' אלול
תשצ"ה

(1) דברים ט"ז: (2) בכור שור הובא בשו"ת מנחת שלמה
מ"א: (3) דרך אמונה שמיטה ט"קעא: (4) משנת הגרי"ש דף
קס"ו (5) דרך אמונה ט"קכו

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

נתן תתן לו ולא ידע לכבד בתתך לו כי בגלל הדבר הזה יברכך ה' אלקיך בכל מעשר ובכל משלה ירך וגו' (זו-י)

For many years until his death in 1969, the **Ponevezher Rav, R' Yosef Shlomo Kaheneman ZT”L**, used to visit Miami Beach, Florida, annually in order to raise funds for his *yeshivah*. He would come in late November and often remain in the warm sunshine of South Florida until February or March. **Rabbi Berel Wein Shlit’a**, who was a congregational rabbi in Miami during that period, developed a close personal relationship with the *Ponovezher Rav*, and on numerous occasions, he would drive him around to the homes of wealthy members of his congregation to collect money. The *Ponovezher Rav* had a magnetic personality and his love for every single Jew was clear and apparent at all times. As a result, these wealthy individuals enjoyed the time spent in their homes with the *Rav* and looked forward to his visits - often two or three times in the course of a few months, while the *Rav* was in town.

Rabbi Wein recalls that there was one man in his congregation, a widower with no children, who had retired years earlier and moved down to Miami from New York city. This man had been a successful attorney until a number of medical issues cropped up. First, he had a heart attack when he was in his fifties and not long after that, he was diagnosed with a malignant tumor. The doctors were not very optimistic and gave him only a few short years to live. The man became despondent and decided to retire and move to Miami to live out his remaining time in comfort. He purchased an annuity (a financial product that pays out income, a reliable means of securing a steady cash flow for an individual during his retirement years and to alleviate fears of outliving one’s assets) that would last until the age of ninety, bought a palatial home and awaited the inevitable. Fortunately for him, the inevitable was long in coming and at the age of eighty-eight, he was still energetic, spry and sharp as a whip. He was also an outstanding member and donor to the Miami community.

The *Ponovezher Rav* developed an attachment to this gentleman and the two would engage in hours of conversation. Rabbi Wein would drive the *Rav* to the man’s beautiful home at least two or three times each winter and the wealthy retiree would always conclude their meetings with a check of no less than \$5000 each and every time.

Rabbi Wein became aware of a change in the man when he turned ninety and his annuity ran out. Now, he had no more income and aside from his home, he had few assets. Rabbi Wein wasn’t even sure if the man had any cash available for necessary staples. So, when the *Ponovezher Rav* came to town and asked him one morning if they can go visit his elderly friend, Rabbi Wein was uncharacteristically hesitant. He explained to the *Rav* that the man’s situation had changed and he barely had enough money to live. He didn’t feel it was appropriate to visit him at this time and expect a donation.

But R’ Kahaneman wouldn’t hear of it. “Of course, we must go visit him. Now, especially, he would want us to come!” Well, as anyone who had ever met the *Ponovezher Rav* would know, when he put his mind to something, there was no stopping him. The two got in the car and drove out to the nonagenarian’s home. They rang the bell and the man himself came to the door. When he saw who was standing there, his face immediately fell and turned white. He began to stammer that perhaps it was not a good time, but the *Ponovezher Rav* just smiled, shook his hand warmly and kissed him on the cheek. They all sat down in the parlor and the man began telling the *Rav* how his income had dried up and he was sadly unable to write out even a small check to the *yeshivah*. R’ Kahaneman stopped him in mid-sentence and said, “My dear friend, you need not worry. For so many years, you took care of the *Ponovezher Yeshivah*. Now, the *Ponovezher Yeshivah* is happy to take care of you!” The *Rav* asked how much the annuity had paid him for all the years and then assured the elderly man that as long as he lived, the *yeshivah* would continue making payments in that exact amount!

Well, the man lived until the ripe old age of ninety-six, and for the final six years of his life, he indeed received a check every quarter in the amount he was used to. Rabbi Wein later learned that the bulk of the money came from R’ Kahaneman’s personal bank account and allowed the man to live out his years in luxury and dignity. The *Rav* would smile and tell the young rabbi from Miami that in the end, it was all worth it, for when the man finally passed, he left his palatial home to the *Ponovezher Yeshivah*!

משל למת הדבר דומה

אבר תאבדון את כל המקומות אשר עבדו שם הגוים אשר אתם ירשים אתם את אלהיהם וכו' (יב-ג)

משל: The story is told of a man who ventured out of the city alone, and was attacked by bandits who wanted to kill him. Beseeking them to spare his life on account of his wife and children proved unless, and even the money that he offered to give them did not succeed in changing their minds. They were determined to kill him, for the desire to murder burned within them, and they yearned to spill blood.

When the poor victim realized there was no way out, he asked for one final request: “Please do not kill me in this spot; rather, do the terrible deed someplace else.”

The bandits agreed to this, and moved to another place. Yet once they moved, their hostility, which had burned strong within them, began to dissipate; soon it was completely gone! In fact their change of heart was so complete that they even let him go! The secret to this mysterious change was that they had initially been in a place where a murder had been committed. The area was filled with impurity, the venom of murder dripping there. It was only after they went elsewhere that the connection was broken. They abandoned their plans, for the power of evil had greatly diminished in them.

מחשבת הלב

עשר תעשר את כל תבואת ורעך
היצא השדה שנה שנה וגו' (ד-כב)

The *Medrash Tanchuma* writes: “עשר בשביל שתתעשר” - *“Give Maaser (tithe) in order that you become wealthy.”* This is a guarantee, say the commentators, for one who gives charity. However, we see that many people give *tzedaka* and do not become affluent. Well, my thought on this is as follows: it could be that wealth is not just the amount of money one has in the bank, but the richness and satisfaction of being able to use his wealth to help other people. Likewise, on the *posuk* “נתן תתן” - *“Give, you shall give,”* Rashi says, *“Even one hundred times.”* The **Rambam** issued a halachic ruling that if one has a hundred dollars to give away to the poor, he should give one dollar to a hundred different paupers rather than give the entire sum to one poor man. This will train him to love giving *tzedaka* and will be a positive improvement in his character.

Someone came to the **Chofetz Chaim** with a *shaila*. He was offered a choice of jobs: either as a bank teller accepting deposits only, or a teller who cashes checks only. The Chofetz Chaim advised him to take the latter position so that he will become a giver instead of a taker. In truth, a giver is really a taker, as the *posuk* says, “**וַיִּקְחוּ** לִי תְרוּמָה” and not “**וַיִּתְּנוּ** לִי תְרוּמָה”.

“Give, you shall give, and don’t let your heart feel bad ... for you will be blessed because of this.” Chazal say that one who gives *tzedaka* to an עני receives six *berachos*, but one who comforts an עני with words, receives an additional eleven *berachos*, seventeen *berachos* in total. “בגלל הדבר הזה (17) יברכך” - you do not get rewarded for just giving *tzedaka*; you get rewarded also for the smile and warm manner in which you give the *tzedaka*. In *Koheles* (ד-ט) it says: ישר להם שכר - “*Two are better than one, since they have good reward for their toil.*” When you give *tzedaka*, it’s better to give “שכר טוב” - money plus comfort. This way, you’ll get “שכר טוב” - seventeen *berachos*. May our *zechus* of *tzedaka* bring the *geula*.

DRUSH V’CHIDDUSH

לא תעשה כן לה' אלקיך כי כל תועבת ה' אשר שנה וכו' (יב-לא)

A *Baal Teshuva* couple, in celebration of their newfound observance, decided to do something to enhance the religious observance in their community. They donated a beautiful *Aron Kodesh* to their *shul*. Much time and effort was invested into the construction, and when it was finally brought to the *shul*, the congregants could not help but marvel at its beauty. Before the *Aron Kodesh* was completely installed, the *gabbai* casually asked where the ornate artifact had been crafted, and the couple told him the name of a certain furniture factory. As it happened, that furniture factory was located on a *kibbutz* that was run by a dangerous group of missionaries that had caused many Jews to abandon Judaism. This caused an uproar in the *shul*, and the congregants came to ask **R’ Yitzchok Zilberstein Shlit’a** what to do. He looked into the matter and ruled that halachically, the *Aron Kodesh* was not “נעבד” (worshipped as

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDAH OF ...
חשבון הנפש

דרגת יתירה

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV
FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

לא תבנה אתנן זונה ומזיך כלב בית ה' - *“You shall not bring a harlot’s fee or the price of a dog, to the House of the Lord, your G-d.”* However, the *Gemara* (תמורה ל) states that if these forbidden objects undergo a transformation, they are permitted. Accordingly, said R’ Wosner, the *Aron Kodesh* could undergo a transformation, such as dismantling its roof and replacing it with a beautiful crown made by a G-d-fearing Jew. Once that was done, there would be no problem with using the *Aron Kodesh*. **R’ Shmuel Wosner ZT”L** heard the problem and offered a brilliant suggestion that would prevent the huge loss of money that had been invested into the construction of the *Aron Kodesh*. There are two things that may not be brought into *Hashem’s* sanctuary: “לא תבנה אתנן זונה ומזיך כלב בית ה'” - *“You shall not bring a harlot’s fee or the price of a dog, to the House of the Lord, your G-d.”* However, the *Gemara* (תמורה ל) states that if these forbidden objects undergo a transformation, they are permitted. Accordingly, said R’ Wosner, the *Aron Kodesh* could undergo a transformation, such as dismantling its roof and replacing it with a beautiful crown made by a G-d-fearing Jew. Once that was done, there would be no problem with using the *Aron Kodesh*.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה וגו' (א-כו)

With *Parshas Re’eh*, we enter a time of year which begs for introspection. We are meant to spend the month of *Elul* examining our actions, reassessing our goals, and promoting within ourselves the various steps of *Teshuvah*.

The **Kotzker Rebbe ZT”L** makes a fascinating point. He says that the weekly *Parsha* gives us an insight into what we are meant to accomplish that week. Thus, the week when we auger in the month of *Elul* is meant for us to “ראה” - *“Look.”* Each Jew must stop and look inside him or herself and see what needs improvement. This is how we know where to start. Once we “see” what needs to be done, we can then set up “שופטים ושוטרים” - *“Judges and officers”* to enforce these areas which require improvement. One must choose a strategy (i.e. not speaking *Lashon Hara* for 2 hours a day, or counting to 10 before bursting out in anger) and forcefully implement it into one’s lifestyle. This way, it can actually work!

At this point in *Elul*, one is now ready to do battle. “כי תצא למלחמה על איבך” - Go out and wage war against the *Yetzer Hara* and bad *middos*. You’ve “seen” the problems and began “enforcing” the strategies - so now put them into action! Don’t be lazy and don’t procrastinate. Remember, this is real war and if you let up, the enemy will get the upper hand!

But the goal is not just to fight. “כי תבוא” - Go forth and enter into spiritual pursuits. Grab every opportunity to do *mitzvos* and good deeds with all your might. Then, and only then, can the Day of Judgment arrive and we can all be *zoche* to fulfilling “אתם נצבים היום כלכם לפני ה' אלקיכם” - we will all stand humbly before *Hashem* knowing that we’ve come prepared.

On behalf of thousands of Shomer Shabbos Jews - www.chickensforshabbos.com - the charity that simply feeds & clothes Shomer Shabbos Jews in Pretz, Israel with zero overhead