

PARSHAS BEREISHIS

BY HARAV YAAKOV FEITMAN, KEHILLAS BAIS YEHUDAH TZVI

EVEN THE DARKNESS SHEDS ITS OWN LIGHT

Although we are accustomed to lauding and learning Parshas Bereishis at this time of year, there is a major question about the purpose of this endeavor. Indeed, Chazal taught that young children should begin learning Vayikra since “pure ones should learn about purity.” The problem is that all of Parshas Bereishis is full of profound secrets. Many Yeshivos and girl’s high schools return to Parshas Bereishis in 12th grade when a person can begin to appreciate the depth of these arcane matters. So why learn them at all until we are ready? Actually, the Kli Yakar (1:6) raises this issue when discussing the posuk which states that Hashem made the sky. Chazal (Chagigah 12a) tell us that “when Hashem made the world...it rapidly expanded until He stopped it. The Gemara explains that this is the midah – trait – called *Shakai* which means “He Who says to the world *Dai*, meaning stop; it is enough.” The Kli Yakar’s question is, “why do we have to know this? What was, was and it is over. One answer to this important question is that Hashem created the world in such a way that man’s desires, proclivities and even abilities seem to be limitless. Yet, the ultimate test of mankind is, will they be able to control their inclinations, limit their actions and set boundaries? Hashem showed us the way in His creation by creating something endless and seemingly infinite, only to reign it in with fences, borders and barriers. This is the story of mankind and the essence of the Torah and Rabbinic enactments.

Furthermore, Rav Tzadok Hakohein of Lublin (Tzidkas Hatzadik 11) writes that the world was created in darkness, with night preceding day, because that, too, is the story of Man. We begin life in ignorance and must learn who we are and what our purpose is. For Klal Yisrael, especially, the Halachic day begins at night (Berachos 2a) to teach that we go from bleak to light, from seeming hopelessness to blazing sunlight and often from pain and suffering into salvation. That is the story especially of tzadikim (Bereishis Rabbah 86) who begin their lives in suffering, poverty and often pain, but in the end achieve tranquility. Rav Tzadok continues (Pri Tzadik, Shemos) to explain that “all suffering is the prelude to the great reward and serenity which arrives later.” This is mirrored in the very beginning of creation which begins with *tohu*, the ultimate nothingness and proceeds to the glories and splendor of Gan Eden and Olam Haba’ah.

Rav Aryeh Tzvi Fromer zt”l HYD (Eretz Tzvi, Breishis, page 74) also teaches that the early suffering only increases the later joy of the righteous, just as the pauper who suddenly becomes rich enjoys his wealth infinitely more than the person who grew up wealthy and never experienced poverty. Thus, the darkness is always in service of the light. All of this is just the tiniest glimpse of the powerful role the actual process of creation plays in our daily lives. We can now somewhat appreciate why young children must encounter the incomprehensible saga of creation very early so that its eternal truths sear themselves into our subconscious when we can’t distort its power or resist its eternal truth. Finally, the story of Adam and Chava’s sin, expulsion from Gan Eden and teshuvah set up the story for every one of us, as we seek to restore ourselves and our nation back to the glory of Adam before the sin. May we prove always worthy of the effort and of our creation.

A GUTTEN SHABBOS BEREISHIS

HALACHA OF THE WEEK 5779

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KEHILLAS BAIS YEHUDAH TZVI

Since Daf Yomi recently learned the sugya of Tzitzis in Menachos, this week we will discuss some of its Halachos

Question: Is there a special way to hold the tzitzis during Krias Shma?

Answer: Yes. The Shulchan Aruch (24:2) rules that we should hold the tzitzis in our left hand near the heart since the Torah says “on your heart.” The Mishnah Berurah adds that until the Parshah of Tzitzis we should hold them in our left hand between the middle finger and the fourth (ring finger). Once beginning the Parshah of Tzitzis, one should also hold them with the right hand and look at them. Rav Moshe Feinstein zt”l (Igros Moshe 1:3:1) holds that these rules are d’oreisa (Biblical) since the Rama earlier (17:3) uses them as criteria for when to train a child in the Halachos of tzitzis. He suggests that the rabbis would have used these criteria unless they were from the Torah.

Question: Does one make a Shehechyanu on a new talis and if so when?

Answer: We do make a Shehechyanu upon wearing the Talis for the first time. First we make the *lehisateif batzitzis bracha* and then Shehechyanu (Mishnah Berurah 22:3; Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l, quoted in Mishnah Berurah Dirshu ibid., no. 3).

Question: What should one do with an old talis or pair of tzitzis which are no longer wearable?

Answer: The Shulchan Aruch (21:1) writes that one may throw out the tzitzis themselves after they have been removed from the talis or garment (Arba Kanfos) but not while they are attached. This is based upon the distinction made in the Gemara (Megillah 26b) between tashmishei kedushah – items which have Hashem’s name such as a Sefer Torah tefillin and Mezuzah – and tashmishei Mitzvah – items which do not such as a succah, lulav, shofar and tzitzis. However, the Rama rules that it is preferable (*tavo alav bracha*) if they are buried like tashmishei kedushah. The Mishnah Berurah cites the Maharil who states that one may “recycle” tzitzis by using them as bookmarks for seforim. It is interesting to note that there is a disagreement between contemporary Poskim whether or not one may clean his glasses with the cloth of a talis katan. Rav Elyashiv zt”l (Kobetz Teshuvos 1:3) says yes and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l (Halichos Shlomo, Tefilah 3:11:19) says no.

Question: If one is changing his clothing at night to go to a wedding etc. must he put his tzitzis back on?

Answer: Rav Moshe Feinstein zt”l (Igros Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:137) rules that he should not put his tzitzis back on so that it should not look as if he holds that night is also the time to wear tzitzis (based upon Mishnah Berurah 18:4). It seems therefore that if one is not changing completely one should not remove his tzitzis.

Question: I was once sitting next to a Rov who was constantly separating the strings on his tzitzis. Is this OCD or is there some Halachic reason to do this?

Answer: Actually, that Rov was fulfilling the words of the Ari z”l that the word tzitzis stands for

-- a righteous person should *always* separate the strands of his tzitzis (quoted by the

Mishnah Berurah 7:18).

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