

Inside and Outside

There is a major difference between physical desires and desire for honor. Physical desires have a saturation point (though sometimes only temporarily), while desire for honor can never be satisfied.

When honor seekers are missing the approval of just one person, all the honor and respect they already have seems worthless.

A classic example of such an individual is Haman. All the inhabitants of the 127 nations ruled by Ahashverosh bowed down to Haman. But when Mordechai refused to bow, all that Haman had – wealth, position, family – was nothing in his eyes. This desire for honor eventually caused his downfall.

Many people mistakenly think that receiving honor and respect of others would automatically make them happy. Not true! Happiness depends on what goes on in your mind, not what is happening “out there.”

Spend a moment today considering any one of the talents with which Hashem has blessed you. Realize that it is yours and that its value is not reduced or increased by someone else’s recognition of your personal gift.

The more you look inside and the less you look outside, the more content you will be and the less dependent on others for approval and self-satisfaction. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Evolvement

“Everything in the world is moving. If we look at our world, we see billions of human beings, all of whom are in movement. Each one started out as a tiny seed inside the father and that seed moved to fertilize an egg inside of the mother. The fertilized egg immediately began to change, moving and growing. This process of movement continued until a human being appeared.”

Everyday Hashem renews creation. As human beings, we are constantly in a movement stage. The Torah and its teachings educate us on the correct path of Evolvement towards a fulfilled life.” (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

Funny Money

A well-to-do merchant once consulted with Rabbi Yechezkel Landau. The merchant related that several months earlier he had put away a large sum of cash in a hiding place in the cellar, and that it had been stolen. One of his tenants was a person of meager means who had recently begun to live a luxurious life, claiming that a rich uncle had left him an inheritance. The merchant suspected that this tenant had found the money, but he had no evidence to confront him. Could the Rabbi help him?

Rabbi Landau stationed witnesses to listen behind the door and then sent for the tenant. He congratulated him on the news that he had inherited a small fortune.

“I must tell you why I sent for you,” he said. “It is for your own welfare. You see, when you began spending money, the local police became suspicious and made an investigation. The money you inherited is counterfeit. Spending counterfeit money may result in your facing very serious charges.”

“Rabbi!” the man said. “I am not a counterfeiter! It is the merchant, my landlord – the money is his. He is the counterfeiter. I am innocent!”

Confronted with his admission, the man had no option but to make restitution. (Smiling Each Day)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT MISHPATIM ☆ אֶשְׁרֵי שְׁבֻט

SHABBAT SHEKALIM

שְׁבֻט שְׁקָלִים

Haftarah: Melachim II 11:17 - 12:17

FEBRUARY 12-13, 2021 1 ADAR 5781

Friday Minhah: **5:10 pm**

Shir Hashirim (midrash): **5:00 pm**

Minhah (midrash): **5:10 pm**

Candlelighting: **5:10 pm**

Evening Shema after: **6:08 pm**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Shaharit: **5:53, 7:00, 8:00, 8:15, 9:00 am**

Morning Shema by: **8:53 am**

Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 4:50 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **6:09 pm (R)"T 6:41 pm)**

Sunday Minhah: **5 :15 pm**

Rosh Hodesh Adar will be celebrated on Friday & Shabbat, Feb. 12 & 13.

Condolences to Raquel Telio on the passing of her mother.

A Message from our Rabbi

“You shall surely help along with him.” (Shemot 23:5) עֲזֹב תְּעֹזֵב עִמּוֹ”

In *Parashat Mishpatim* the Torah teaches us what someone should do when he sees the donkey of a person whom he hates, buckling under its heavy burden. The *pasuk* states, “You should certainly help him.” Why does the Torah use the word “*azov*” for help? The more common word for help is “*azor*,” from the word *ezrah*.

Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro explains that the *Sefer Brit Olam* states that the word *azov* comes from the word *azivah*, which means “to leave.” He now explains the *pasuk* in an entirely new light. *Azov* – if we can leave behind the issues that we have with that person, then “*ta'azov imo*” – Hashem will respond in kind and leave behind His issues with us.

The Torah is teaching us that when we see a person whom we “hate” going through a difficult time, our natural inclination might be to turn away from him and be apathetic about his situation. However, teaches the *Brit Olam*, A Jew must train himself to respond “*azov*” - we must leave behind the disputes, and the negative feelings we have toward that person, and let go of the gripes and problems we have with him.

What can a person do to achieve this level of negating ill feelings? Let us learn how to tap into becoming people of *azov* – people who abandon negativity and criticism.

There is a *pasuk* that says (*Shemot* 22:40) that meat that is a *terefah*, torn apart by, let's say, a wolf, you shall not eat it but rather "to the dogs you shall throw it." The *Da'at Zekenim* gives a new explanation which is simply incredible. It says, since the dog sacrifices its safety to protect sheep from the attacking wolves, the owner shows his appreciation to the dog by rewarding it with this *terefah*.

The question, however, seems obvious. In this instance, the dog did not do its job properly. It allowed the wolf to tear apart the sheep, which is precisely how the sheep became a *terefah*. Why then would we want to reward the dog, when clearly, it was remiss in doing its job?

The *Da'at Zekenim* explains, that you are not rewarding the dog for the mistake that it made this time. The reward is for all the countless times that it did watch the sheep, and performed its job in an exemplary fashion, and for all the times that it will continue to do its job in the future.

The lesson for us, we must not focus on the one time that something was not done properly. Instead, we must be sure to display our appreciation for the countless times an action was done correctly.

There is a sign that reads, "When I do something right, no one remembers. When I do something wrong, no one forgets." Perhaps we should create a new refrain to live by. "When someone does something wrong, we should not remember. When someone does something right, we should not forget."

May we indeed merit to become the person of *azov* and we will merit "*ta'azov imo*," that Hashem will leave behind our faults and allow us to enjoy His bountiful blessings. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Serving G-d With Haughtiness

A *pasuk* in this week's *perashah* teaches that a person is not allowed to be a false (bribed) witness. The *Talmud* describes that we frighten the witnesses so that they will be encouraged to tell the truth. One opinion suggests that we tell them (based on a verse in Proverbs) that false testimony causes drought, which ultimately causes famine. A second opinion counters that this will not scare the witnesses because they can rationalize that they are not farmers, so they are not directly affected by drought. Another opinion suggests that we tell them (based on another *pasuk* in Proverbs) that false testimony causes a plague, which leads to illness and death. The *Talmud* responds that this too might not scare them because they may have the fatalistic attitude that "everyone dies when his time is up." Finally the *Gemara* concludes that we tell them, "You will appear to the people who hired you as despicable people of infinitesimal moral value." We tell them that selling their integrity for money will make them appear to be miserable, worthless people in the eyes of those who hired them. This, the *Gemara* concludes, will frighten them into telling the truth.

This appears to be a very strange *Gemara*. How is it that their love of money might blind them to the threat of drought and plague, yet not blind them to the threat of appearing to be miserable people?

Rav Henoch Leibowitz says that we learn an interesting insight into the personality traits of people from this *Gemara*. A person's sense of self and personal pride in who he is may be more important to him than even his money or his very life. People cannot exist without a sense that they are people of worth and value. A person needs to feel that he has scruples and morals – and that other people recognize that fact.

He says that we see the same principle from another teaching of our Sages, found in the *Midrash Rabbah* on this week's *perashah*. The *pasuk* says, "If you will lend My nation money..." The *Midrash* comments that the most difficult type of suffering that

one can ever experience is poverty. The *Midrash* says that G-d gave Iyob the choice of suffering physically or becoming destitute. Iyob responded that he would rather suffer any punishment in the world other than poverty. He would rather experience anything other than the humiliation of going to the marketplace and not having any money to buy the basic needs of life.

Why was this so? It was not because Iyob loved money. It was because the humiliation of being penniless and destitute destroys a person's sense of self. That sense of self was more precious to him than his physical well-being.

Rabenu Yonah writes in *Sha'ar HaAbodah* [the Gate of Service] that a person must realize his self-worth and that of his ancestry. He needs to feel that he is a 'somebody' and that he has importance. *Rabenu Yonah* writes that when a person is confronted with the temptation to do something that is inappropriate, his sense of worth and his sense of aristocracy will stop him from sinning. He will be embarrassed to do such a thing because of his own self-worth and he will be embarrassed because of his parents.

A person can appeal to a healthy self-image to protect him from moral shortcomings. However if a person sees himself as a worthless low-life, he has nothing to which he can appeal. Dr. Abraham J. Twerski z"l (who passed away last week) always mentions that the way his father, of blessed memory, would chastise his children was by telling them "this is unbecoming of you." If we do not have a father around to tell us this, we sometimes need to tell this to ourselves. "This is unworthy of me. I am bigger than this. This is beneath me."

Rabenu Yonah writes that this is "approved haughtiness," and is a primary entranceway to proper service of G-d. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Close Up

”כִּי־תִרְאֶה חֲמוֹר שֵׁנְאָדָּה רֵיבִךָ תַּחַת מְשָׁאוֹ וְהִדְלַתְּ מֵעֹב לוֹ עֹב תַּעֲזֹב עִמּוֹ”
“If you see the donkey of someone you hate crouching under its burden, would you refrain from helping him? — You shall help repeatedly with him!” (*Shemot* 23:5)

Commentaries ask: About whom is this verse speaking? Is a Jew permitted to hate another Jew? They explain that it refers to a Jew who you witnessed committing a sin and who you are therefore permitted to hate.

Even so, writes the *Ramak* (Rav Moshe Cordovero z"l), it is preferable not to hate such a person. We are taught to emulate Hashem, and one of His Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is "*lo he'chezik la'ad apo*" / "He does not hold on to His anger forever." Even when a person continues to sin, Hashem withholds His anger and is not quick to punish; rather, he awaits the sinner's repentance.

Likewise, R' Cordevero writes, even when we have the right to harshly rebuke another person or our children, we should subdue our anger. Though we are permitted to hate a sinner, the Torah teaches us to help him with his struggling animal in order to draw him close, for maybe that is what will cause him to repent. (*Tomer Devorah*)

R' Mordechai Scheinberger asks: If we're allowed to hate a sinner because he disobeyed Hashem and we are standing up for Hashem's honor, then why should we not hate him? Indeed, what right do we have not to hate someone who has betrayed Hashem?

The answer lies in the last phrase of *Ramak's* statement: "Help him with his struggling animal in order to draw him close, *for maybe that is what will cause him to repent." We don't draw him close because it's a humane thing to do or because we love all people, but specifically in the hope that he will change his ways. (Rabbi Shlomo Katz)