

A Dvar Torah to encourage matters of Yiras Shomayim prepared to be shared and discussed with your family at the Shabbos table



פרשת בהר - בחקותי

51

FORGIVING ANOTHER

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

THE NEED TO FORGIVE

One is forbidden to refrain from doing good for another because he dislikes them. The רב"ד explains that although in the משל generally given, the first person who does not share is not mentioned as doing נקמה, because his intention was out of concern for his tool and not out of spite. If however, one does not lend something because of his hate for the other, he transgresses נקמה as well.

(פי' הראב"ד לתו"כ פ' קדושים)

לחז"ל explain the rationale of the איסור of נקמה: If while cutting, one would accidentally cut himself, would he hit his hand as a reprimand? Similarly, one should consider his friend as a part of himself, and automatically, he will not think of doing נקמה.

(ירושלמי נדרים פ"ט ה"ד)

The חיד"א relates a story which he personally heard from the אור החיים הקדוש, Reb Chaim Ben Atar: There was a wealthy man with powerful influence in the kingdom who embarrassed a Talmid Chochom. Fearing the repercussion, the אור החיים asked the Talmid Chochom to forgive the rich man. The Talmid Chochom replied that he had done so immediately afterwards, and explained, "The זוהר says, that the עבירות of the Yidden are a burden for the wings of the שכינה. Not wanting to burden Hashem, I quickly forgave him." The אור החיים was very pleased with this reply. In his seforim, the חיד"א repeats this story numerous times, "Being that it is precious to me, and it is a fundamental in עבודת ה'."

(דבש לפי מערכת ח')

Rava said: Whoever is forgiving, all his עבירות are forgiven. Rashi explains that since such a person is not so particular with others, Hashem is not so particular with him.

The של"ה הקדוש writes, that if one who is unforgiving to those who make him angry, the malochim will demand that he be repaid exactly מדה כנגד מדה.

(ראש השנה י"ז ע"א, של"ה שער אותיות ענוה)

The ספר החינוך explains: A person must know that all that happens to him, whether positive or negative, comes from Hashem. Therefore, when someone does something bad to him, he should not have thoughts of taking revenge, for it is his own עבירות that caused it.

(ס' החינוך מצוה רמ"א)

At a farbrengen (ש"פ פנחס תרפ"ז), the Friediker Rebbe spoke about the importance of bringing the understanding of Chassidus (השכלה) into עבודה, affecting the מדות of the heart. The Friediker Rebbe added that only through עבודה, can one reach the level of a 'חסיד', which implies a forgiving person.

(סה"ש תרפ"ז ע' 174)

The Rebbe writes in a letter that the appropriate way to respond to a verbal attack is by acting ignorant, as if it was not noticed.

In another letter, the Rebbe directed the person who was embarrassed by another, that he should accept upon himself extra זהירות (carefulness) in mitzvos, because through him an עבירה was brought upon his friend.

(אג"ק ח"ב ע' ס"ב, לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 598)

REPAYING WITH LOVE

The Medrash relates that although when יוסף הצדיק was placed in the pit, his brother Shimon had him stoned, nevertheless, when Shimon fell in his hands in Mitzrayim, he took care of him and had him served the best food. The זוהר writes that one should repay bad with good, just as יוסף did.

(ילקוט שמעוני וישב קמ"ב, תניא ספ"ב)

In Spain, one of the חכמים, Reb Shmuel Hanagid, had the position of second to the king, and because of his great intelligence and righteousness, the king loved him and gave him much respect. Near the king's palace was a store belonging to a goy who greatly envied Reb Shmuel. Whenever he would see Reb Shmuel passing by, he would go outside and curse him, but Reb Shmuel never paid any attention. Once, when Reb Shmuel was taking a walk with the king, the goy came out, and as he usually did, began cursing Reb Shmuel. The king became angry and ordered Rebbi Shmuel to cut off the storeowner's evil tongue.

After some investigation, Reb Shmuel found out that this goy was a pauper, so he began sending him money on a steady basis, thus positively influencing the storeowner's attitude. Some time later, when Reb Shmuel took a walk again with the king, the goy came out and began praising Reb Shmuel. The king, who had not heard what the goy had called out, asked Reb Shmuel why he had not followed his instructions to cut off the storeowner's tongue. "I did do as you commanded," answered Reb Shmuel. "I cut off his bad tongue and replaced it with a good tongue..."

(כצאת השמש בגבורתו ע' קל)

Chosen to be the Rov of Prague, the טוב יום טוב (Reb Yom Tov Lipman Heller) led the community on a path of proper behavior and set a fair system to collect the taxes which the government imposed. Previously, the rich of the community would require the general public to pay the tax and free themselves from the obligation. The Rov's new method, which required each to pay according to their means, angered the wealthy people.

Refael, a very wealthy community member, was the Rov's strongest opponent, and he constantly schemed of ways to remove Reb Yom Tov from his position. He remembered that many of the king's officers owed him money, so he offered to reduce their debt to him on condition that they help him remove the Rov from his position. He then went to two למדנים who were strongly opposed the Rov, and asked them to use parts of the Rov's sefer, 'מעדני מלך', to prove that the Rov is harmful to the kingdom. Their libel was successful and brought about stronger consequences than they had imagined. The Rov was arrested and sentenced to be killed, and a decree was enacted that all the Yidden leave the city.

Hashem had already prepared the cure for this terrible calamity. During that time, the Rov's son, Reb Shmuel, who was learning in Yeshiva in Metz, saved the French ambassador's wife and son from death. As gratitude, he promised to try releasing his father. He succeeded and the תוס' יו"ט was freed, though he was forced to pay a fine, which made him go into heavy debt. Although the Rov fully forgave the ones who had made the libel, Hashem punished them, causing them and their children to die.

At this time, Refael fell ill and realized that his turn for punishment has come. The תוס' יו"ט debated with himself whether to visit the wealthy man or not, for perhaps Refael would think that he had come to celebrate his downfall. Just then, Refael's servant came and requested that the Rov to come quickly, for Refael has something important to tell him. Upon the Rov's arrival, Refael apologized profusely and said that he had not intended for the outcome of his libel to go so far. Bursting into tears, he begged the Rov for forgiveness and asked that he daven for him. The Rov told him that he forgave him wholeheartedly and davened for him.

(מגילת איבה לבעל התוס' יו"ט)

THE REWARD FOR INSULT

Our חכמים say: It is written regarding those who receive insults, yet are not offended, they hear their denigration and do not reply, they act with love and rejoice in their own suffering, that they will merit the revelation of the שכירה.

(שבת פ"ח ע"ב)

The רמ"ק would say that suffering from insult is the most effective כפרה, more than all other types of תשובה. If people would realize this, they would ask others to insult and embarrass them.

(קול בוכים לר"א גאלאנטי)

The Tanna Rabbi Elozor, was a פרנס צדקה, who would always have guests visiting his home. Once, after returning from the Beis Medrash, he asked his family what had occurred while he was out. They told him that they had served a group of people who had come, and that he, Reb Elozar, had received much praise from them. Hearing this, did not satisfy Rabbi Elozor. On another occasion, he was told that a group of guests, after being

served food and drink, had denigrated him. Hearing this, cheered him, and he said, "Now, we've received a good reward!"

(ירושלמי פאה פ"ח ה"ו)

Rav Nachman Bar Yitzchok hired a number of workers to flatten a mound of dirt in his vineyard. As they were digging the earth, a man suddenly jumped out from the ground and asked if the time for תחיית המתים had arrived! The workers hurried to call Rav Nachman. When he saw the man, he asked him who he was. "I am a dead person," the man replied, "and I am asking if it is perhaps the time for תחיית המתים." Rav Nachman questioned him further, "What are you doing in this mound?" Annoyed, the man reiterated that he is dead and explained that this is the place of his קבר. "Don't dead people have decomposed skin?" Rav Nachman wondered. The dead man replied, "I see that you have not learned ספר משלי in your youth, where המלך writes, 'the bones of those who are jealous will rot'. I was always forgiving and I never felt any jealousy towards another, never spoke דברי חולין (mundane talk) in shul or Beis Medrash, and gave all my attention to the words of torah. Therefore, I have remained complete, the way I have been when I have passed away." Rav Nachman asked the man if he wanted a special אוהל to be built for him, but he refused the offer and asked that he be reburied in his previous location. In accordance with his desire, the workers put back the earth they had dug up.

(ראשית חכמה שער הענוה פ"ג מס' חופת אליהו, וכע"ז מסכת שבת קנב ע"ב)

On Kol Nidrei night, Reb Yaakov the shamosh, led the tefillos in the shul of Yanova, and davened עשרה שמונה for a lengthy period of time. Annoyed and impatient, the wealthy ראש הקהל went over and slapped his cheek. Reb Yakov did not respond, finished עשרה שמונה calmly, and continued davening as if nothing had occurred.

After Yom Kippur, one of the wealthy members of the community approached Reb Yakov and offered to buy his portion of עולם הבא that he had merited by quietly accepting the public embarrassment put on him. Reb Yaakov said, "I have nothing to sell, for I had forgiven the ראש הקהל before taking three steps back when finishing עשרה שמונה. If I would have still had a grudge against him, I would not have continued as still on Yom Kippur, and after all, he was right, for it is inappropriate for the ראש הקהל to have to wait for a shamash." The simplicity and righteousness of Reb Yaakov aroused a tumult in שמים, and they decided to give him the zechus of having a son, Reb Aharon from Karlin, one of the great talmidim of the Mezritcher Maggid.

(כצאת השמש בגבורתו)

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