

דרוש רבי



BIURIM OF THE REBBE ON MASECHTA SOTAH



משנה

The Mishna introduces a unique situation. We have a whole husband, a whole wife, and a legal marriage, including all the Dinim that apply to them, but yet they can no longer have an actual intimate connection. The reason for this is because they are missing the Chayus, energy and feeling within them. They are like a body without a Neshama. Chayus represents thought, which deems something Tamei. When Kavana or thought is lacking, there can not be intimacy. This also represents death, as they can not produce children. This is a descent, which is considered death as well.

In conclusion; lack of Chayus represents death, a body without a soul.

[ערב חג השבועות תשל"ה סוס"א. אור לערב חג השבועות תשל"ט סל"ז]

"הרואה סוטה בקלודה"

There is the known teaching of The Ba'al Shem Tov who says that a person is a mirror. If someone sees something not good in somebody else, it means that he has that same idea within himself, otherwise he wouldn't see it in another. So too here, the mere fact that one sees a Sota in her disgrace ought to make him to realize that there is something not right within himself, therefore he must immediately do something to fix it, i.e. become a Nazir and refrain from drinking wine.

When one separates themselves from wine, it's not that he elevates and refines the wine, but rather that he wins the entire war. He fought with the negative and was able to separate himself from them and emerge victorious.

[פרשת נשא תשל"ו ס"ז' התוועדויות תשנ"א ח"ג ע' 440]

"בת קול יוצאת ואומרת בת פלוני לפלוני"

Seemingly the Gemara should have said "בת פלונית לפלוני", in Loshon Nekeiva. Why is it written in Loshon Zochor? The Bas Kol is not emphasizing who she is, but rather who her family is - בת פלוני - the *daughter* of so-and-so. The reason for this is because one is supposed to look into the family of his future wife and see what environment she comes from.

On a deeper level; בת פלוני is not referring to her immediate family, but rather stressing the fact that she is a daughter of *Hashem*, for that is the most essential quality of a woman - "אשה יראת ה' היא תתהלל" -

[התוועדיות תשמי"ג ח"ד ע' 1871]



"אין אדם עובר עבירה אא"כ נכנס בו רוח שטות"

It doesn't make sense for someone to do an Aveira since doing an Aveira literally destroys the person. No sane person would do something that kills him. If for just a moment he would think about how distant his Ta'avos are from his common sense, even the common sense of his Nefesh HaB'hamis, and how distant the Seichel of his Nefesh HaB'hamis is from the Seichel from his Nefesh HaTivis and how distant the Seichel of his Nefesh HaTivis is from the Seichel of his Nefesh HaSichlis (etc. etc.) he will realize that even his common sense has no place among the high levels of his Neshama, how much more so his Ta'avos have no place within him.

Therefore the only reason why a human being would do something against Torah is because a רוח שטות came into him.

For this reason, the size of a Mikva has to be an Amah by an Amah and 3 Amos tall (40 Se'ah). The reason is, that this is the average size of a person's body - not including his head. The reason we don't include his head into the calculation is that the person goes to Mikvah if he did an Aveirah, which happens when someone doesn't use their brain and lets the רוח שטות take him over.

This is also brought out in the Hagadah. Chassidus explains that the Chacham is asking: Mitzvos like Mishpatim, since they have a reason, should not be done with the same Kabolas Ol like Chukim, which don't have a reason. Since Hashem allowed us to have reason for Mishpatim, we should do it because of the reason.

But we answer him, No! If you are constantly stuck on your Seichel and common sense, you could fall. Because when it comes to an Aveira, no sane person would ever go against Hashem, since it can cause the worst things to happen to him. If so, why do people do Aveiros? Because a רוח שטות goes into him. We see that relying on Seichel itself won't save you.

That's why we answer the Chacham "We don't eat anything after the Afikomen". The reason is that we want a person to have the taste of Korban Pesach in his mouth so he won't forget about it.

Seemingly, we don't need the taste in our mouth to remember the Korban Pesach and that Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim, He saved our lives! You don't need a taste to remember that. In truth, it's possible we *would* forget, because no matter how logical it may be for us to remember that Hashem saved our lives, but the רוח שטות can interfere, and logic and Seichel won't help in such a case.

That's how we explain to the Chocham that just relying on Seichel doesn't work.

[פי וישלח תשי"ד ס"ז. ליל ב' דחה"פ תשכ"ד ס"א. כי מנחם אב תשכ"ד [לה"ק] ס"ב. ויט כסלו תשכ"ח ס"ד. פי קרח תשל"א ס"א.]

"זקנא את אשתו": פלוגתת ר' יהושע זר' עקיבא אם רשות או חובה

According to R' Yehoshua the Torah is given under the ownership of the Yid, therefore in certain Mitzvos, a Yid has a choice if he wants to do them or not (for example warn his wife). However according to R' Akiva, the Torah is given to the Yid exactly the same way it is by Hashem, therefore the Yid has no ownership over it and doesn't have a choice if he wants to do it or not, rather it is a 'Choivah'.

[אור לערב חג השבועות תשל"ט ס"ז]



"לעולם ילמד אדם מדעת קונו...השורה שכינתו על הר סיני"

Seemingly, the fact that someone shouldn't be humble isn't just a nice suggestion that we learn from the Hashem's actions, rather it is a Mitzvah in the Torah! The Torah tells us that Hashem cannot be in the presence of someone who is haughty! In truth, the Gemara is not talking about the haughtiness of Kelipah, which is obviously not allowed, rather the Gemara is talking about pride and worthiness in Kedusha, which can usually be used for good.

But when it comes to Matan Torah, the only way to receive the Torah is through being totally בטל. (This is also why Rav Yosef was called "Sinai". Even though he had all the greatest Ma'alos, nevertheless he was completely בטל. He was similar to Har Sinai, which although had the מעלה of being a mountain, nevertheless is a small mountain).

[לקו"ש ח"א ע' 280]

"אין אני והוא יכולין לדור בכפיפה אחת"

The Gemara is telling us that Ga'avah and haughtiness will not only prevent one from receiving Eloikus but rather it separates a person from any Eloikus or Shechina that was with him before, since Hashem cannot be in a place of haughtiness. On the other hand Anavah - humility, does not only prevent one from drawing down Eloikus, but rather it *itself* brings down Eloikus and makes the person a Keili to receive Hashem's Shechina.

This is like the saying mentioned in the Gemara "When we were small, people called us big, and now that we are big, people call us small". When somebody makes themselves small and humble, Torah considers him to be big and great. However if someone considers himself to be big, the Torah says that in truth he is very small.

This also connects to the general idea of Masechta Sotah. The Yidden and Hashem are compared to a husband and wife. When the husband tells his wife not to talk with another man, and she goes and secludes herself in a place hidden from her husband, then many Dinim that now apply to this couple. This is similar to Hashem telling each one of us "Don't serve other gods", and someone goes and 'hides' from Hashem by doing an Aveira.

How could one 'hide' from Hashem? There is nowhere that is void of Hashem! The Gemara teaches us that by a person being haughty can כביכול 'hide' from Hashem since Hashem cannot be in the same place as him.

However, since in truth Hashem is in *all* places *at all* times, there was never really a moment when a person was 'hidden' from Hashem - the separation was only because Hashem despises haughtiness, so Hashem can completely forgive us.

Chassidus explains that a בעל גאווה is not someone who runs around claiming to be the greatest, rather a בעל גאווה is someone who is too confident in his opinion. He cannot handle someone thinking he is equal to him and saying something against his opinion.

[י"ט כסלו תשט"ו ס"ו. י"ב תמוז תשי"ז [לה"ק] ס"ח. כי חשון תשל"ה ס"ה.]

"תלמידי חכמים צריך שיהא בו שמינית שבשמינית...אמר רנב"י לא מינה ולא מקצתה"

In truth they are not arguing, they are each talking about different stages in one's Avoda.

A person's Yetzer Hara can come to him and say "Why do you have to do a Mitzvah? Do you think it makes a difference to Hashem if you do some random physical action? When the Torah says that Hashem enjoys Yidden's Mitzvos, it's talking about the

Mitzvos of *Tzadikim*, who have no connection to the physical whatsoever. But you? Your actions don't affect anything!" Therefore the Gemara tells us that we have to have a little bit of haughtiness to tell the Yetzer Hara 'No! Hashem does enjoy when I do a Mitzvah'. But *after* we do the Mitzvah we have to be completely humble - like Rav Nachman Bar Yitzchak says "לא מינה ולא מקצתה".

However, the Ba'al Shem Tov teaches that Anava can sometimes cause major destruction. If someone thinks low of himself, he won't believe the affect his Mitzvos have on the world [Like R' Zecharya in the story of Kamtza U'Bar Kamtza - who's humility caused the Beis Hamikdash to be destroyed].

We mentioned earlier that one must have pride only *before* doing a Mitzvah, however here the Ba'al Shem Tov teaches that you must have pride at all times. There are different levels of pride. There is a level of elevation which is called 'התנשאות מלכות על העם' - 'raised above a nation', meaning one is elevated because he is higher than something else. The second level is 'התנשאות עצמית' - 'essential elevation', nothing to do with anyone else.

When we explained that one must only have pride *before* doing a Mitzvah we were talking about the first level - 'התנשאות מלכות על העם'. The Ba'al Shem Tov however, is talking about 'התנשאות עצמית' which doesn't conflict with having complete humility.

In התנשאות עצמית, you can have both opposites, התנשאות, and ביטול together!

This is how we bring back the Beis Hamikdash, since the Beis Hamikdash also represents this idea of combining opposites (e.g. the Aron *occupied* space and did *not* occupy space at the same time).

The Friediker Rebbe explains that there are two ways one can attempt to fulfill this רז"ל מאמר. Either to begin by being a Talmid Chacham and only afterward to apply the concept of שמינית שבשמינית, or to start with haughtiness and only afterward try to become a Talmid Chacham. Obviously the latter is incorrect.

The Alter Rebbe explains that Torah is compared to water which flows to the lowest point. To be a receptacle for Torah, a person must make himself low and small. Nevertheless one must also raise his heart in the ways of Hashem. How is one able to raise his heart if in his mind he is small? He has to leave a part of his mind empty to give space for his heart. There are 32 paths of Chochma and 32 of Binah, if he leaves those empty it equals to 64 (an eighth of an eighth is a 64th).

The Rebbe also notes that the Gemara is specifically referring to pride in Kedusha.

Only someone who is completely sure that he is a Talmid Chacham can have שמינית of גאווה. So long as one is not certain that he is a Talmid Chacham, he has no right to have שמינית שבשמינית and must have only humility.

These two opinions in the Gemara are also the basis for the choice of wording of the Alter Rebbe and the Rambam. The Rambam says “one may not have even a little bit of גאווה (- ‘אפילו מקצתה’)”. The Alter Rebbe uses the words “to be totally removed from גאווה (- ‘עד קצה האחרון’)”. The Rambam is advising a level that is more removed from גאווה than the level the Alter Rebbe is talking about. The Alter Rebbe is referring to a level where sometimes a person may need a little bit of גאווה, as the Gemara says is the case regarding a Talmid Chacham.

This is hinted to in the eighth Posuk of the eighth Parsha of the Torah (וישלח) [שמינית שבשמינית] with the words “קטנתי מכל החסדים”. Yaakov Avinu says “I am humbled from all the kindness Hashem has done for me”.

“קטנתי” is a level where one feels humble but not totally nullified, his מציאות is still there. We see from the fact that Yaakov was able to use Malachim to help him with his needs, implying that he is still a מציאות even though he is humble. This is the idea the Gemara is bringing out, even though one must be humble, nevertheless a Talmid Chacham must also have a little bit of גאווה.

[בי דחג השבועות תשי"א ס"ו. פי בשלח תשי"ב ס"ג. פי וישב תשי"ב ס"ו. י"ט כסלו תשי"ג ס"ח. פי בהר ובחוקתי תשל"א ס"ב. תורת מנחם התוועדות תשמ"ב ח"ב ע' 659, ח"ג ע' 1511, תשמ"ט ח"א 429.]



”במדה שאדם מודד בו מודדין לו”

The Gemara says a person is acts in the manner he is punished. However, when one does a Mitzvah, (for example, Tzedaka), not only does Hashem repay him more than he gave, but Hashem rewards him beyond any measure - למעלה ממדידה והגבלה!

[כי אב תשמ"א סמ"ב.]



"זה משה...שלא שלטו שונאיהם במעשיהם"

The Gemara states that the Mishkan sunk into the ground and is hidden, but when Moshiach comes and the third Beis Hamikdash descends from heaven, the Mishkan will be revealed.

Once we already have the Beis Hamikdash why would we need the Mishkan?

Our Chachamim teach us that a person would rather a smaller possession that he earned, rather than a larger possession that came from someone else's effort.

The Mishkan was built entirely by *all* the Yidden. Every single yid, young and old alike, contributed to the building of the Mishkan. The third Beis Hamikdash however, will be built primarily by Hashem in heaven. The Mishkan has an advantage over the third Beis Hamikdash, and therefore, even when Moshiach comes and the third Beis Hamikdash is built, the Mishkan will be revealed to bring out the amazing advantage it possesses.

[The Mishkan also has an advantage over the first and second Batei Mikdosshos, since they too were not built by every Yid, but mainly by Dovid & Shlomo, etc.].

Seemingly it would suffice to have a *spiritual* significance of the Mishkan, we don't need it to be revealed *physically*. However, when one hears about a spiritual idea, it may sound nice and beautiful, but it does not affect him the way something physical does. Therefore, to bring out this idea that one's own effort is greater than work done by someone else, it must be brought out in a physical form, especially when Moshiach comes, when all will see the advantage of the physical over the spiritual.

[פי' צו תש"מ סכ"ד]



"דאתי מהאי גיסא ירידה ודאתי מהאי גיסא עליה"

A Yid's Avoda in Torah and Mitzvos is compared to a mountain ("מי יעלה בהר ה'"). When climbing a mountain, one cannot just stop in the middle, for if he stops for a moment, he will automatically fall. [Similar to walking up a descending escalator]. So too in one's Avoda, if a Yid doesn't constantly strive to grow in his Torah and Mitzvos, he will inevitably fall lower and lower. This idea is reflected by the kindling of the

Menorah; if one doesn't add a candle to the amount he lit the night before, although he is lighting the same amount he lit yesterday, since he is not adding, he is not doing the Mitzvah to the fullest and is lacking the Hidur he had the night before.

This is the reason why Rashi chose to use specifically this explanation in his Pirush on the Torah and not the other two Pirushim brought in the Gemara. Just like to reach Timnasa you can either be going up or going down, so too a Yid's Avodah is either rising to new levels or falling down, there is no in-between.

[לקוטי שיחות ח"י ע' 122.]

The Rebbe also points out that the Gemara says "כגון ורדוניה ובי בארי ושוקא דנרש" even though there is no need for the Gemara to say that, the Gemara adds it because having a city on the side of a mountain may seem odd. When building a city on top of a mountain you have the advantage of height in the case of war, and when building a city at ground level, it is easy to build, but having a city on the side of the mountain lacks both of these מעלות. Therefore the Gemara says that the explanation that Timnasa is on the side of a mountain is not a radical explanation, as we see there are many other cities like it.

[לקוטי שיחות ח"י ע' 126 הערה 22.]

"וַיִּטַע אֱשֶׁל בְּבֵּאֵר שֶׁבַע... חָדָא אַמְרַא פְּרַדְסָא וְחָדָא אַמְרַא פּוֹנְדָק"

[Some Girsas have this Machloikes being between Rav and Shmuel.]

A general rule in their arguments is that Rav always translates the word literally, even though it may conflict with the context of the nearby Pesukim, and Shmuel explains the Posuk based on the idea the Pesukim are talking about. So too here, Rav says that the translation of 'וַיִּטַע אֱשֶׁל' is 'He planted an orchard'. Shmuel, on the other hand, says: if you read the surrounding Pesukim you will see that Avraham had stayed there for a while, therefore it makes more sense that we are talking about a hotel where he can invite guests, offer them food and get them to bless Hashem.

[לקוטי שיחות חט"ז ע' 6.]

יא.

"שְׁלֹשָׁה הָיוּ בְּאוֹתָהּ עֲצָה בְלִעָם וְאִיּוֹב וִיתְרוֹ"

The Gemara relates how Bila'am, who advised Paroh to throw the Jewish babies into the Nile, was killed for what he had said.

Seemingly, Bila'am was only doing his job to advise Paroh what was best for Mitzrayim. Paroh was worried that the Jews may grow so large they will drive them out of the

land, he therefore asked his advisors what to do, Bila'am was only giving honest advise in the best interest of Mitzrayim. How could Hashem punish him for doing his job?

The Gemara then goes on to say that Iyov, who remained silent, was punished with much suffering.

Why was the fact that Iyov remained silent, considered his sin? Seemingly, there is a much larger claim against him. Paroh had asked three people what to do, meaning that he was going to listen to the majority opinion of the advisors. If so, the problem with Iyov's response should be that he didn't concur with the opinion that Yisro would soon give i.e. that Jews should not be killed, and thereby Iyov would have saved the Jewish nation from mass extermination! The Gemara's problem with Iyov should be that "He didn't say something good" to sway the vote, since that is the real problem here, not that "He was silent". Even so, why such a harsh punishment?

The third advisor was Yisro, who ran away and was therefore rewarded heavily. The Mifarshim explain that the reason he ran away was because he had praised the Yidden and advised Paroh not to start up with them. Paroh then wanted to kill him for his words of praise of the Yidden. He therefore had to run for his life.

Seemingly, it was irresponsible for Yisro to say such a thing. Yisro knew that either way Paroh will not follow his advice, since Paroh hated the Yidden and Yisro was already a minority opinion. Yisro could have just been quiet and that way been able to keep his job as royal advisor. Keeping his job, could have helped the Yidden in many other ways, for example providing kosher food and proper Jewish education to the girls who were not included in the decree of Paroh! Yisro ended up harming the Yidden by saying what he said. Why was he rewarded?

The Torah tell us there was never a Nasi by the Yidden like Moshe. The Mefarshim explain that only by the *Yidden*, there was never a Nasi like Moshe, however by the Goyim there was Bila'am. Bila'am knew who the Yidden really were and how powerful they are. He knew that starting up with the Yidden is the worst thing one can do and one will be severely punished for such a thing.

By Bila'am advising Paroh to kill the Jewish boys, he wasn't really giving Paroh good advise, in truth he was giving him the worst advise possible. So bad was his advise, that Paroh eventually had his entire military and country destroyed!

If this was an average person giving advise to Paroh, then it's understandable that he told Paroh to kill the Jewish babies, since seemingly that will save the country. However

this is Bila'am we are talking about. He knew what would happen and he nevertheless told Paroh to kill the Jewish boys because he knew that is what Paroh wanted to hear. He wanted Paroh to appreciate his words, he therefore advised something that Paroh liked, and convinced Paroh that this is actually good for Egypt. For that he deserved to die.

The real problem with Iyov is that he wanted to play both sides. He didn't have the courage to stand up and say what his opinion is, instead he kept his mouth shut so he wouldn't be going against anyone. The next day he could go over to Bila'am and say, "Hey were good friends, because I also didn't say anything good about the Yidden". He could then go to Moshe and say "Hey we could be friends, I didn't say anything bad about the Yidden!". Being fake and trying to play both sides is much worse than the sin of merely 'not saying something good'. For that, Iyov deserved to be punished.

The Torah tell us that we are never allowed to approve the killing of Yidden. Yisro knew that he can't start making calculations about keeping his position as advisor and possibly saving Yidden, while at the same time approving the mass murder of Jewish boys.

The lesson we can learn from this, is that when somebody is in a position of power (e.g. a community council) he can give his opinion in one of three ways:

1. Either he can say something that is against Torah just to find favor in others' eyes, while at the same time he may be destroying the very thing he is working to enhance.
2. Or he may try to play both sides and be everyone's friend.
3. The third way a person may act, is that he decides that we will forsake one part of Torah and Mitzvos in order to enhance another part and he will claim that in truth he is doing good for the Yidden! The Gemara tells us that all these options are completely wrong. One must stick to the Torah completely.

[פורים תשל"א ס"ח]

"את פיתום ואת רעמסס רב ושמואל... שראשון ראשון מתרוסס... פי תהום בולעו"

The Yidden in Egypt were forced to work day and night building cities and storehouses. During that time, there were two ways one can go about his work; either he can work the way Paroh wants him to, or the way Moshe wants him to.

Paroh wants him to build and build, make another dollar and another dollar.

On the other hand Moshe instituted Shabbos for the Yidden. Shabbos is the purpose of the entire week's work, just as it was when the world was created. Hashem for six days Hashem was creating the entire world in order that Hashem could rest on the

seventh. Moshe wants the Yidden to continue working, but constantly look forward to being able to do another Mitzvah, learn another few words of Torah, to have 'Shabbos' even for just a moment or two. The purpose of the work shouldn't be for the business or the money, rather all in order to be able to have 'Shabbos'.

Listening to Paroh can cause destruction, because when the only purpose of one's work is the physical, it has no foundation and therefore collapses, as the Gemara says about פיתום ורעמסס that they collapsed.

[ב"י דחג השבועות תשכ"ה סמ"ג - תורת מנחם חלק מג]



"בשכר נשים צדקניות שהיו באותו הדור נגאלו ישראל"

The Geulah of Moshiach is compared to the Geulah from Mitzrayim, and the generation of Moshiach are reincarnations of the people that left Mitzrayim. Therefore, since Moshiach too will come because of the righteous woman of our time, these women are reincarnations of the very same women from the times of Mitzrayim.

[תורת מנחם התוועדות תשנ"ב ח"ב ע' 184]

"הם הכירוהו תחלה"

The Gemara uses the word 'recognize' because it was these children who saw Hashem as babies. These babies who were born in the fields (at the time of the Gezeira when Moshe was born) were around eighty years old at the time of Kriyas Yam Suf. Why does the Gemara still call them 'children'?

In truth, it wasn't only children who saw Hashem first, it was also those who were born in the fields and saw the essence of Hashem. The Gemara however, calls them children because the reason why they recognized Hashem was because they had seen Him as babies.

We can learn an important lesson from here about being very careful what we show children and how we behave in front of them. Because even the smallest thing they see can effect them years down the line, even when they are eighty years old!

The fact that the children were the first ones to recognize Hashem at Krias Yam Suf is all credit to the righteous women of that generation who gave their children proper Jewish education and brought them up in a way of Torah and Mitzvos.

Addressing a class of school boys, The Rebbe said, that since the children of Geulas

Mitzrayim listened to their teachers and followed what their parents told them, their eyes were enlightened (ליכטיקע אויגן) and they were able to see Hashem everywhere they turned and in everything they did.

[אחרון של פסח תשל"ג סי"ג. אחרון של פסח תש"מ סל"ב. י"א שבט תשי"ב]



"נתמלא הבית כולו אור"

When an average person passes away, one can see all the accomplishments he achieved during his lifetime, however when he is born, one cannot know how the child will turn out or how he will chose to live his life.

The opposite is true about Moshe. When he was born the entire house was filled with light - and light refers to Torah (אורה זו תורה). From the very moment he was born, one was able to see that this is a person through which light and Torah will come into the world.

From the simple reading of the Chumash one would understand that when Moshe was born they saw that he was good. The Gemara however, learns that not only was he lit up, but "נתמלא הבית כולו אור" he illuminated his entire environment.

This is the reason why Rashi says elsewhere: "כדאי הוא יום הלידה שיכפר על יום המיתה" "His birthday atones for the day of his death", because from the moment he was born, his life accomplishments could be seen.

Because the house was filled with light when Moshe was born, it caused that the Yidden should have a victory in the month of Adar - "ליהודים היתה אורה" - during the times of Purim.

The Neshama of a fetus may be a very special Neshama, but it cannot have an effect on the world until it is born. Birth is the idea of becoming independent, doing something on your own, and being able to change the world around you.

Before Moshe was born, when the Neshama and fetus were in his mother's womb, his house was dark. The moment Moshe was born, the house filled with light, because only when one is born can he bring light into the world.

This is one of the reasons why The Rebbe emphasized the milestone of a birthday.

[פורים תשי"ט ס"ו. פי חוקת-בלק תשכ"ב ס"ה. ז' אדר שני תשל"ז ס"ב]

"לפי שאין פושטין ידיהן בגזל"

The Gemara tells us that "Tzadikim don't extend their hands in theft". Why does the Gemara use the words? A more simple wording would be "Tzadikim don't steal".

In some cases, taking something that doesn't belong to you is not considered theft according to the Torah. For example if the item was already stolen by somebody else and was just left in the streets, or if the item is less than a 'שוה פרוטה'. In such a case, the act of theft was done by someone else, and one is technically allowed to take the item without falling under the category of a 'thief'. A Tzadik however will not even 'extend his hand' for theft.

They therefore treat their own money with extreme care, in order to train themselves to act the same way to another's property.

[כי אב תשכ"ד ס"ב]



"שני ארונות הללו אחד של מת ואחד של שכינה מהלכין זה עם זה"

The Torah says that they placed Yosef Hatzadik's bones into a coffin in Mitzrayim. The word for bones - עצמות - can also mean 'essence' (עצם). The Torah is telling us that the essence of the Yidden, who are often referred to as Yosef, were in a box, meaning they were contained and unaffected by their surroundings, even while in Mitzrayim.

When The Yidden went into the desert, the coffin of Yosef was always near the Aron Hakodesh, showing the strong connection between the two, especially since inside the Aron were the Luchos which were *engraved* with the word of Hashem. Something that is engraved becomes one with the word that is engraved upon it. The object is not a separate entity from the words, rather it becomes the 'body' of the words itself.

This brings out the important point, that a Yid, no matter where he is, has the Torah engraved within him, he is not a separate entity, which is separate from Torah, rather his own essence is the Torah.

[תורת מנחם התוועדות תשנ"א ח"ב ע' 114]



"מפני מה מת יוסף קודם לאחיו"

Even though here in Masechta Sotah the Gemara says that Yosef's life was shortened, in other places it is explained that Yosef lived a long and complete life.

Both of these ideas are true about Yosef, however they are each emphasizing different perspectives. The basis for their opinions come from the Posukim regarding Yosef's death.

The Torah says two almost identical Posukim about the death of Yosef: First it states "ויחי יוסף מאה ועשר שנים" "Yosef lived 110 years", and only a few Posukim later the Torah says: "וימת יוסף בן מאה ועשר שנים" "Yosef died at the age of 110".

The first Posuk uses the word "lived" because it is focusing on Yosef's long life and how he was able to see his great, great grandchildren (as the following Posukim go on to say).

Yosef in truth should have lived much longer, as it says, that whatever happened to Ya'akov happened to Yosef, and Ya'akov lived 37 years longer than Yosef.

The Torah therefore tells us "וימת יוסף בן מאה ועשר שנים", that "Yosef died at the age of 110", since his life was shortened due to his actions.

[תורת מנחם התוועדות תשי"ג ח"ד ע' 13]

"שהקב"ה משלים שנותיהם של צדיקים"

The Gemara states that Hashem completes the days of a Tzadik's life, like Moshe who passed away on his birthday.

What is the greatness of passing away on one's birthday? A Tzadik's life is a spiritual one. Therefore the ultimate life of a Tzadik, is when it is complete spiritually. This is something that seemingly has no connection to the physical days of his life.

Why is a Tzadik only complete when his physical days are complete? As we see, most Tzadikim don't pass away on their birthday and nevertheless their lives are complete, since their lives are spiritual and not physical.

The purpose of one's Torah and Mitzvos in this world is to impact his body and the world around him. A true wholesome spiritual life is when it affects even the physical days of his life.

From the fact that the Gemara doesn't give any conditions for this statement that "Hashem completes the days of a Tzadik's life", proves that by every Tzadik Hashem

completes it at least in a spiritual manner. There are some Tzadikim however, who's spiritual life causes their physical life to be complete as well.

[תורת מנחם התוועדויות תשנ"ב ח"א ע' 339]

"אותה שבת של דיו זוגי היתה"

The Gemara teaches us that the Shabbos that Moshe passed away was called "The Shabbos of the pair" (i.e. Moshe and Yehoshua). The entire Shabbos was designated and belonged to both of them, not that a part of the day was Moshe's and a part was Yehoshua's.

Why is this? Moshe passed away at midday, meaning that Moshe was the leader of the Jewish people for only half the day, while Yehoshua became the leader at the second half of the day. The day should be split into two; part for Moshe and part for Yehoshua.

The Halacha though is that part of a day is considered to be an entire day. Even though Moshe only led the Yidden for half the day, the *entire* day is attributed to him and the same is true regarding Yehoshua.

[פי ויקרא תשמ"א סמ"ח]



"למעלה נרמה להם למטה נרמה להם למעלה"

In Masechta Rosh Hashana it states: "Fifty gates of understanding were created, but only forty nine of them were given to human beings".

Even though a person was entrusted with only forty nine, through immense effort one can reach the fiftieth level. Moshe Rabeinu attained this fiftieth level right before he passed away, as the Torah tells us that before his death, Moshe went up to "הר נבו", the word נבו is a combination of the words 'נ' 'בו' 'the fiftieth in him'.

This extremely high level is the level of Keser, (and in Keser itself; the level that is beyond division) which transcends the idea of space. As the Gemara says: "When they were above, they saw Moshe's grave at the foot of the mountain and when they were below, they saw his grave above". Moshe's was neither above, nor below.

[תורת מנחם התוועדויות תשמ"ט ח"ב ע' 398]

"להלך אחר מדותיו"

The Gemara states that one should imitate the Middos of Hashem. This means, doing favors for others is connected to Hashem's Middos - attributes.

Torah is connected to Hashem's Chochma, His wisdom. When learning Torah, one binds himself with Hashem's wisdom.

The highest level is Davening. The word 'תפלה' comes from the word 'תופל', meaning to connect. Davening makes a much deeper connection. It connects the person 'אליו', to a higher level of Hashem, not to His Middos or wisdom, but rather to His essence.

[תורת מנחם התוועדות תש"ג ח"ד ע' 255]

"שיתקיימו כולן על ידי"

The Gemara relates that Moshe Rabeinu said: "I want to enter Eretz Yisroel so that all the Mitzvos (some which can only be done in Eretz Yisroel) will be fulfilled through me".

The obvious question is; why does the Gemara use the words "All the Mitzvos will be fulfilled through me"? A more simple wording would be "I will fulfill all the Mitzvos".

Moshe Rabeinu represents the level of 'Yichuda Ila'ah', which is expressed in the heavenly Mann received by the Yidden while under Moshe's leadership. Mann is bread which comes from heaven without any prior work by the people, which represents a level, so lofty, that it cannot be reached through Avoda and therefore is not dependent on the actions of the people.

The Mitzvos of Eretz Yisroel represent the level of 'Yichuda Tata'ah', a level achieved through man's Avoda. This is expressed in the fact that only once the Yidden entered Eretz Yisroel did they have to work to sustain themselves, unlike in the desert where everything was given to them.

This Avoda level has an advantage over the level gifted from heaven. Bread that one toils for, has the power to properly satiate him, proving that the G-dly spark within it stems from a higher level than the person eating it and therefore is able to satisfy him. This divine spark in bread of toil, stems from a place that is even higher than the level of the Mann.

Each of these levels are special, Moshe Rabeinu therefore wished to combine both of them, so the Mitzvos in Eretz Yisroel (i.e. Yichuda Tata'ah) will also have the special advantage of Moshe (i.e. Yichuda Ila'ah).

The word for fulfill is "שיתקיימו" which also means 'to be upheld'. Moshe wished that all Mitzvos, including the ones that are only observed in Eretz Yisroel be eternally applicable.

By Moshe entering Eretz Yisroel and creating the unification of 'Yichuda Ila'ah' and 'Yichuda Tata'ah, Moshiach would come immediately and the Yidden would never leave Eretz Yisroel. This would make all Mitzvos eternally applicable.

For this reason, Moshe Rabeinu was very upset that some of the Yidden did not wish to enter Eretz Yisroel and rather dwell on the other side of the Yarden. Moshe was trying very hard to enter Eretz Yisroel with all the Yidden and automatically bring Moshiach and banish the idea of Galus.

[פי' עקב תשמ"א ס"מ. תורת מנחם התוועדויות תשמ"ו ח"א ע' 942, ח"ג ע' 803, תשמ"ח ח"ד ע' 44]



"איש ואשה זכו שכינה ביניהן"

The Gemara teaches that a man - איש - and a woman - אשה - each have one letter of the two letter name of Hashem (י - ה). If they are worthy, those letters unite and Hashem's Shechina dwells upon them.

What if the husband and wife are in different places and cannot see or be with each other? How is it that the letter Yud from the husband and the letter Hei from the wife unite?

The rule by a Yid is, that his physical place is not what determines where he truly is. A Yid is found where his mind is, whatever he is thinking about, is where he, in essence, is. When one thinks about their significant other, Torah considers them to be together.

The same is true in regards to Hashem and the Yidden, who are compared to a husband and wife. Even when the Yidden and Hashem are (כאיילו) not together, like in the time of Galus, where we don't see Hashem's connection to us in a revealed way, Hashem constantly thinks about us.

The whole purpose of Galus and Hashem's concealment is only in order to bring about the greatest revelation, therefore while being separated, Hashem's only concern is the Yidden, and how the Galus will lead to the ultimate Geulah.

This is why during the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash the Keruvim were found facing and embracing each other, which usually only happens when the Yidden are doing Hashem's will. This is because at the time of the destruction, Hashem's whole intention was for the purpose of bringing about a greater connection with the ultimate redemption.

[פי' דברים תשמ"א ס' ט"ו]

"בשכר שאמר אברהם אבינו ואנכי עפר ואפר זכו בניו לב' מצות אפר פרה ועפר סוטה"

The Gemara states; in reward for Avraham saying "I am dust and ashes", his children merited to receive the two Mitzvos of Parah Aduma and the Sotah procedure which are performed with dust and ashes.

Besides for the connection of the 'ashes and dirt', there must also be a connection between Avraham himself and these Mitzvos.

Avraham Avinu is someone who was absolute kindness. So much so, that the attribute of kindness complained that Avraham took his job. On the other hand Parah Aduma represent the attribute of severity - גבורה. Red, the color of the cow, is the color of severity and harshness. Many other details of the Parah Aduma also represent גבורה, as is explained in detail in Kaballah.

How could something representing Gevurah stem from someone who is the ultimate embodiment of kindness?

To preface, there are two types of kindnesses: One is a kindness that is a result of a person recognizing his capabilities. He knows how much he has and he is aware of his capability to help others, therefore he provides and tends to the needs of others.

This level can be a bit risky, for it can lead a person to haughtiness and to flaunting his talents. This level will never cause a person to give away everything he has for someone else, because it is based on the fact that he is primary, and others are secondary.

A greater level of kindness is when one believes he is low and small and therefore must help everyone else since they are greater than him. When one is at this level, he will give away everything when doing a favor, because to him, the other person is simply more significant.

Avraham was the greater level of kindness, he looked at himself as someone who is very low ("ואנכי עפר ואפר") and he believed everybody else in the world was greater than him. He therefore would sacrifice everything he had in order to do another a favor.

This is seen in the stories of Avraham Avinu, in both his physical and spiritual nature. Avraham risked his life and started a war, just in order to rescue his nephew. Avraham had even reached the high spiritual level of having Hashem reveal himself to him, but he nevertheless left Hashem's presence to go welcome a few guests. This especially emphasizes his kindness, for Avraham had thought that these were idolaters from the deepest levels of Kelipah and even so, he left Hashem's presence in order to tend to

their needs. He prioritized the physical needs of others, even over his own remarkable divine experience.

This level of kindness, which Avraham possessed, is the entire idea of the Parah Aduma and Sotah waters.

A Kohen is meant to constantly be pure and not let himself come in contact with any entity that will defile him. The Halacha is, that the Kohen who performs the Parah Aduma service become impure. This means that the Torah calls for a Kohen to become impure, solely for the purpose of purifying a Yid who had become contaminated by a dead body. Chassidus explains that a person only becomes impure if he is on a low level spiritually, nevertheless, the Torah expects the Kohen to subject himself to this level, so long as he can help a Yid obtain his purity.

The same is true in regards to the Sotah Waters: Hashem permits the erasing of His name, which is the greatest degradation to His honor, solely for the purpose of making peace between a husband and wife. Even though this is a woman who was warned and nevertheless acted in an improper and lowly manner, Hashem will forsake the greatest levels of his honor, to help such a woman.

Such an idea can only come about from the one who embodied such a deep love for others.

Avraham would also use the attribute of Gevurah - judgment - as a way to express his kindness. He would judge and calculate (Gevurah) exactly how much money he needs for himself and the rest he would give to Tzedaka. Avraham was completely humble and therefore his kindness permeated his entire being to the extent that even the opposing attribute of Gevurah would join to carry out an act of kindness, causing it to be transformed to kindness.

The Parah Aduma and the Sotah waters both represent this special quality of Avraham, to transform severity into kindness, even when it requires leaving the highest levels of Kedusha. This is evident by the *burning* of the Parah Aduma, i.e. nullification of the attribute of Gevurah.

The same is true regarding the Sotah waters; the *bitter* waters turn into waters that produce the greatest blessings for the innocent woman.

[לקוטי שיחות חלק כ"ה ע' 79]



"אמן מאיש זה אמן מאיש אחר"

The Mishnah explains the reason why the woman says "אמן" twice. One אמן is the woman promising she did not do an Aveira with the man that she was warned about and a second אמן promising she did not do an Aveira with any other man.

This ruling of the Gemara is also a spiritual lesson of how one should serve Hashem.

The Gemara in Nazir says that although a person should grab the opportunity to be the one making the Bracha, nevertheless, the one who answers 'Amen' is greater. 'Amen' is likened to the soldiers who bring the victory. First weaker soldiers wage battle, and then the mighty soldiers come and bring the victory. In the Avodah of the spiritual battle, one needs to succeed with both the soul and the body.

Regarding the soul, it's obvious that it prevails, since the Neshama never gets influenced by the body or evil surrounding it, since it is always above Golus.

Regarding the body, the goal is not to prevail over the "other side" by eliminating the 'opponent', the inclination of the body, but by achieving victory also with his body by transforming it to Kedusha.

A person is not meant to break his physical body, rather the purpose of Torah and Mitzvos is to refine his body that it too shall perceive G-dliness like his Neshama does. The Mishnah uses the word "אחר", meaning 'another', referring to the opposite of Kedusha. One must transform the 'אחר' - the unholy, into a 'בן' - Kedusha. This means to transform the inclination of his body, so that it has the same agenda as his Neshama.

[תורת מנחם התוועדויות תשמ"ב ח"ב ע' 1015]



"כל המלמד בתו תורה לומדה תפלות"

The Mishnah states that one may not teach his daughter Torah, for it is as if he is teaching her immoral conduct. This rule is no longer applicable, due to the fact that a girl staying at home and learning from one's mother or grandmother is not an option in our times. Not only have Gedolei Yisroel permitted Jewish girls to learn Torah, but

they required the establishment of girls schools and urged them to attend and have a proper education in Torah SheBichsav and Torah SheBa'al Peh. This is especially true in subjects where the concern that “it is considered to be teaching them immorality” would not apply, like learning the reasons behind Mitzvos. Such learning naturally causes the person to want to learn more and thereby inspiring her to use her talents in Torah learning instead of matters that are contrary to Torah.

The Rebbeim therefore made sure Jewish girls have a proper Jewish education and set times to study Torah every day.

[חי"י אלול תשל"ז סל"ב. תורת מנחם התוועדויות תשי"ג ח"ג ע' 173]



"הא אינה מצווה ועושה היא"

The Gemara states that since women do not have a Mitzvah of learning Torah, their reward for studying Torah is not as great as men's.

The Alter Rebbe states in Shulchan Aruch that women are required to recite the Brocha “אשר קדשנו במצותיו וציונו על דברי תורה”, meaning Hashem has commanded *women* to learn Torah. Why do they recite this Brocha? The Gemara clearly states that women are *not* commanded!

One of the jobs in the Beis Hamikdash was for the Kohen to carry the blood to the Mizbe'ach in order to sprinkle it. The Halacha is, if the Kohen did not have proper intentions while walking towards the Mizbe'ach, the Avoda is Posul. Walking towards the Mizbe'ach is only a means to reach the Mizbe'ach and not an actual Avoda itself. Why would his ill intention ruin the Avoda? Certain actions that are done for the purpose of fulfilling the Mitzvah, become their own entity, and becomes like an Avoda. So too in regards to women learning Torah.

Women have Mitzvos that they must keep, therefore they are required to learn the Halachos that pertain to these Mitzvos, in order to know how to properly fulfill them. Because learning Torah is now a requirement for them, it becomes its own entity and like their own Mitzvah. They therefore are required to say the Brocha “על דברי תורה”. Once learning Torah becomes its own entity it remains that way. Therefore, even a woman who is fluent in the Halachos which she is required to know, may still continue to learn Torah and make the Brocha.

The requirement for men to learn Torah is because Torah learning itself is a Mitzvah.

Women on the other hand, are not commanded to learn Torah, rather they are required to learn Torah only *in order* to fulfill the Mitzvos they are commanded to do. For this reason, the Gemara states: “A woman does not receive the same amount of reward for her Torah study as man does”, however, women still make the Brocha “על דברי תורה” because their Torah study assumes its own entity, therefore a Brocha can be recited.

Further the Amud, the Gemara adds: “A woman can receive equal reward as men by helping their husbands and teaching their children to learn Torah. The reason is that since she enables her husband and children to learn Torah, the *actual* Torah learning is considered like it was directly done by her.

Chassidus explains, that this idea is also in regards to Hashem and the Yidden (who are referred to as a husband and wife).

The purpose of this world is to conquer it, which is done by drawing down Eloikus from a place beyond the world, as Hashem told Adam “Fill the world and conquer it”. The power to change the world is not given to humans, only Hashem has that ability for He is its creator.

Torah, which is greater than the world, has the power to change the world. When a Yid studies Torah, he partners with Hashem and (כביכול) enables Hashem to change the world.

[לקוטי שיחות ח"ד ע' 37]

”מצוה אינה מגינה אלא לפי שעה”

The Gemara states that a Mitzvah protects its performer only temporarily, however, Torah study protects him eternally.

Chassidus explains that Mitzvos are the will of Hashem but has a connection to the person, for he actually performs it. Torah on the other hand, is completely one with Hashem, and remains that way even down here in this world, therefore it transcends time and space.

For this reason, Mitzvos only protect one for a limited amount of time, because it relates to people and the universe i.e. time and space. Torah protects one forever since it has no connection to the world and is infinitely greater than it.

[תורת מנחם התוועדיות תשמ"ט ח"ב ע' 208]

”דמקריז ומתניין בנייהו”

The Gemara tells us that when women help their husband and their children learn Torah, they receive reward just as men do.

This does not only mean that the mothers bring their children to school and enable them to learn, but rather when their children come home from school, they engage

in conversation about what they learned in Yeshiva. The mothers ask questions and explain to them the Chumash, Mishna and Gemara that they studied. Same too is regarding their husbands; when their husbands come home from Kolel or Yeshiva, they engage in discussion about what was learned that day and give their view and opinion.

This same piece of Gemara is also taught in Masechta Brochos, however in the Rashi on that piece, he adds “וּנְתִיבוּ לָהֶם רְשׁוּת” “The wives give permission for the husbands to study out of town”. The reason is because the Gemara in Masechta Brochos is speaking about how a woman’s reward is *greater* than a man’s. In that case, Rashi adds that the wives give permission and inspire their husbands, propelling them to go learn. Since they are the one’s that caused their husbands to learn, they therefore receive greater reward than their husbands. Here, in Masechta Sotah however, the Gemara is saying that a woman’s reward is equal to a man’s, therefore Rashi omits these words.

[תורת מנחם התוועדויות תש"נ ח"ג ע' 226]

נב.

”שמורין הלכה מתוך משנתו”

The Mishna states that one who gives judgment based on the Mishna alone without learning the reason behind it (i.e. the Gemara), destroys the world.

Rashi notes two different explanations of this Mishna: 1. Being that he does not know the reason behind the ruling, he may get confused with something similar and thereby rule incorrectly. 2. There are Mishnayos which are individual minority opinions, therefore the Halacha does not follow them.

These two explanations are the basis for an argument between the Rambam and the Chachomim of France (Rashi, Tosfos and the Rosh).

The French Chachomim hold that one must always learn the reason of Mitzvos, thereby enabling him to properly understand the Halachos. The Rosh had even written in a letter, that one is not allowed to rule Halachos from the Rambam’s Sefer Hayad, because the reasons behind the Halachos are not brought in the Sefer.

The Rambam holds that our Mishna itself is an individual opinion and therefore not followed. [The Rambam is actually using Rashi’s second explanation!] One is allowed to rule solely with the knowledge of how to do the Mitzvos. One does not need to

know the reasons behind them. Therefore in the introduction to his Sefer Hayad, he writes that it is enough for one to learn Torah Shebiksav and his Sefer, and one does not need anything else.

This argument is relevant to one's everyday schedule, as the Gemara says: "One must divide his day into three; one third Chumash, one third Mishna and one third Gemara". The Rambam explains Gemara to mean that one should study how one Halacha is derived from another and using the different rules of how the Torah is expounded. We see that learning the reasons behind the Mitzvos is not required.

One the other hand, the Alter Rebbe (who holds like the Chachamim of France) says that the 'third of the day' designated for Gemara, refers to the study of the reasons of the Mitzvos and Halochos which are taught in Mishnayos.

[בי דחג השבועות תשל"ז סי"מ]



תוס' ד"ה ורבי יוחנן: מחלוקת אם דיברה תורה כלשון בני"א

Tosfos mentions that Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Yochonan argue whether or not Torah is written in the way people speak. Rabbi Yehoshua says that the Torah *does*, while Rabbi Akiva argues that the Torah *does not*.

The Rebbe explains that they each hold their respective opinions in this case because of their view of how Torah is categorized.

Rabbi Yehoshua views Torah to be defined human terms, meaning that since Torah is given to man, it becomes 'his' and is therefore defined by his terms. For this reason the Mishna says that "a Talmid Chacham may forgo his honor", because the Torah he learned became his own, and he therefore has the right to forgo the honor he attained through learning. Rabbi Akiva however holds that Torah is one with Hashem and therefore only speaks on Hashem's terms.

There are many arguments between R' Akiva and R' Yehoshua that are based on these conflicting opinions, here we will mention one:

R' Yehoshua says that at Har Sinai the Yidden saw that which was usually seen, and heard that which is usually heard. R' Akiva holds that something supernatural happened and that which was normally seen was heard, and that which is normally heard was seen.

R' Yehoshua holds this way, since his opinion is that the Torah is defined by the person, therefore at Har Sinai, they saw what people usually see and heard what people usually hear. On the other hand R' Akiva holds, that Torah is on Hashem's terms, and on that level sight and sound are one and there is no difference between them. Therefore at the giving of the Torah, that which was usually seen could be heard, and that which is usually heard could be seen.

[Their difference of opinion on the definition of Torah, is the basis for many of their arguments in Shas, including the Machloikes of 'Reshus and Choivah' on ג. ד. (see the Rebbe's explanation brought above on page 4)].

[[ני"א ניסן תשל"ב - [הובא בהגדה של פסח עם לקוטי טעמים (הוצאה יג) ע' 2078]]

נהו

"בעל שמחל על קינויו קינויו מחול"

The Gemara rules that the husband can retract his warning, as long as the woman has not been secluded with another man. In Talmud Yerushalmi the rule is slightly different; the Gemara says: "A husband can retract his warning as long as the Megillah has not been erased".

The Rogachover explains that these seemingly different opinions are in fact not contradicting, but in sync with one another.

The Gemara in Bavli is referring to the typical warning a husband would make. Once the woman has been secluded, it is not only the husband's warning that makes the seclusion be considered a wrong behavior; she has done something that is considered inappropriate, irregardless of the warning, therefore it is too late to retract.

The Gemara in Talmud Yerushalmi is ruling in regards to an unusual warning; for example if the husband warned his wife not to be secluded with her father or not to be with one hundred people. Meaning that the only reason why she became a Sotah is because of her husband's warning, she hadn't actually done anything wrong. Therefore, since her seclusion is only innapropriate because of the warning, and not a sin for itself, the husband has the power to retract for he is the main reason it is considered a fault. However in the case of the Talmud Bavli, after the husband warned her, the wife went and actually did something wrong. It is not only the husband's words that cause

it to be a sin, therefore he can not retract it, because there is another factor in effect aside from his warning.

Chassidus explains that this same idea is reflected by Hashem and the Yidden. Hashem's commandment to not serve other gods is compared to the husband warning his wife. If a Yid feels haughty, he is considered to be 'hiding' from Hashem (see page 5), for Hashem cannot dwell in the same place as a haughty person. Since in truth we are not actually hidden from Hashem, it is just His will that nobody should be haughty, Hashem can always forgive us, just like the husband can retract his warning and forgive his wife.

This is only so, as long as "the Megillah hasn't been erased". Only ink can be erased because it is not attached to the paper it was written on, however something that is engraved can never be erased.

If a person has Torah engraved within him, so that he and the Torah are one, then even if he acts in a haughty way and he is so-called 'hiding' from Hashem, it is only in an external manner, and Hashem is guaranteed to forgive him. However, if somebody lives his life in a way that his Torah and Mitzvos are additional to him, like ink on a paper, then his haughtiness requires him to follow the Dinim of a Sotah and must bring a 'Sotah's Korban'. The Sotah's Korban is taken from animal food, meaning the person must cause an effect on himself to become 'lacking in logic' i.e. to not base his actions on his own logic, but to act with Kabbalas Ol. Meaning that even Mitzvos which have a reason, should be done because Hashem said so and not only because it is rational. This is also why the Gemara in Krisus says that the Korban Sotah causes the person to never go astray again.

When a person acts with such humility, not only does he become completely pure, but he attains a much higher level than he was at originally, because he is transforming his Aveiros into Mitzvos.

As the Gemara says: "If in the past, she gave birth to girls, she will have boys". Chassidus explains that a woman is an emotional being and can easily change her mind, on the other hand, a man is more firm with his decisions. In Avoda this means, that once a person does Teshuva he has the strength to stay strong in his Torah and Mitzvos and continue to grow everyday without getting side tracked, hence the Gemara's reference of change from 'girls' to 'boys'.

[תורת מנחם התוועדיות י"ב תמוז תשי"ז סי"ט]



"שאם היתה עקרה נפקדת"

R' Akiva says that a woman who drink the Sotah waters and is found to be innocent, if she was barren, she will start giving birth. R' Yishmaël questions this explanation, because if that were the case, any barren woman should be secluded and will then be able to give birth! Rather he explains, that when she is found innocent, if in the past she gave birth in pain, she will now give birth with ease.

In Rashi's explanation on the Torah, he quotes the opinion of R' Yishmaël and not the opinion of R' Akiva, seemingly because of the powerful challenge by R' Yishmaël. However, R' Yishamaël's question is not so strong, because: 1. It is not so easy for a woman to become a Sotah. It requires a warning with two witnesses, and seclusion with another man while witnesses are watching. 2. Why would we be bothered by the fact that an innocent woman who happens to be barren, be allowed to experience a miracle and now give birth? What is the problem? 3. The same question applies to R' Yishmaël's explanation! Any woman who gives birth in pain will become a Sotah and now be able to give birth with ease.

It must be, the reason Rashi quotes the opinion of R' Yishmaël is because Rashi is trying to answer a question that one may be bothered with.

Before the Sotah drinks the bitter waters, she agrees to a list of things consequences if she is found guilty and agrees to the list of positive things that will occur if she is innocent, however, the blessing that she will have children is not found anywhere in her agreement! Why then is she rewarded with being able to have children? Rashi is explaining that the special Brachah of giving birth is not a reward to the woman for being innocent, rather it is simply an outcome from the bitter waters (in Rashi's words "ונקתה - ממים המאררים ולא עוד אלא ונזרעה זרע"). Meaning, not only do the bitter waters not have a painful effect on her, but rather they have the *opposite* effect on her and cause blessings. If she was guilty she would not only die, but would go through alot of pain, so too when she is proven innocent she not only lives, but is blessed.

In order to stress this point, Rashi interprets "She will have children" to mean that she is blessed with the opposite of suffering and pain i.e. giving birth with ease (however R' Akiva's explanation does not express this idea).

As explained many times before, the story of a Sotah also refers to Hashem and the

Yidden. When a Yid becomes a 'Sotah' by doing Aveiros, he can always return by doing Teshuva, and when he does, he reaches a level greater than he ever was. When one does Teshuva, he transforms his Aveiros into Mitzvos. The high level that he achieved is a result of the Aveiros themselves.

Chassidus explains that this is also why the Brocha that the woman will have children is not mentioned in the agreement that she makes. It is specifically mentioned only at the end of the Parsha, because this special level that one reaches is not able to be revealed before one does Teshuva. Only once Teshuva is done and she is proven innocent, can she attain such a lofty ascent. [Like the Mishna says "One who does an Aveirah with the intention to do Teshuva, his Teshuva is not accepted" because the high levels reached through Teshuva cannot be revealed while one is still engaged in the Aveirah].

As the Rambam rules, once Teshuva is done, Moshiach will arrive - similar to the Sotah, may the 'pains of Moshiach (חבלי משיח) be painless and with ease.

[לקוטי שיחות חכ"ח ע"י 34]



"זרע אברהם אוהבי"

The Gemara asks, how do we know that Avraham served Hashem entirely out of love, and even his fear of Hashem stemmed from love? The Gemara answers, the Torah says "זרע אברהם אוהבי" "The children of Avraham who loved me".

The Friedlike Rebbe relates, when the Mitteler Rebbe was a young boy he explained why the Gemara learns the proof specifically from this Posuk and not any of the other Posukim which describe the love of Avraham. Any person will naturally serve Hashem out of love if Hashem reveals himself and communicates with him on a regular basis! However, there is no proof that his love of Hashem is so dominating, to the extent that even his fear of Hashem stems from that love?

When he passes on this trait to his children it shows the love was authentic and consumed him. When a Yid serves Hashem completely out of love, it proves that this is the way it was by his ancestor Avraham.

The Ba'al ShemTov teaches, after 120 years when a person passes away, in heaven they ask him "what do you think the judgment for so-and-so should be?" His response is the rule that is used to judge him too, because a person sometimes will say something

about another, but in fact he is ruling that very same thing about himself.

Therefore by the Friediker Rebbe relating this story, it certainly applies to him also. Meaning, how can one see that a certain trait or Ma'alah is completely one with the Rebbe? When his children i.e. his students are acting in the very same way.

When we serve Hashem with the three types of love - Ahavas Yisroel, Ahavas Hashem and Ahavas HaTorah, we reveal that these types of love are completely one with the Rebbe too. This causes us to become connected to the Rebbe, as we it says in Gemara: "מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא בחיים" through us being 'alive' it causes the Rebbe to be alive also.

[יו"ד שבט תשי"ט ס"א]

לד.

"וגמירי דטעונא דמדלי איניש לכתפיה תילתא דטעוניה הוי"

The Gemara relates that we have a tradition that a person can lift 1/3rd of the weight that can be lifted when somebody is helping him.

The Rebbe stressed many times that a person alone has the ability to conquer a city and completely change it for the good. Sometimes all that is lacking is one's will, however, the capability is for sure there. This Gemara teaches us that this is especially true when somebody is helping you. The Gemara is speaking about a physical object, how much more so in regards to a spiritual idea.

This is because a person is compared to a letter, and every letter has it's own meaning, only when you combine letters, you can create a word which has an entirely new and greater meaning.

[שמחת בית השאובה תשכ"א ס"ח. פ' במדבר תשל"ט ס"ו]

לד:

"ואנו לא עלתה בידינו אלא אחד סתור בן מיכאל"

R' Yitzchak said "There is a tradition given to us from our ancestors, that the the spies were named after their actions, however, we only know one of the explanations. We only know the meaning behind the name of מיכאל. He is called so, because he hid (סתור) Hashem's actions, and he made as if Hashem is weak (מר)".

R' Yochonan says: "There is also the explanation on the name of בן ופסי; he hid

(החביא) the words of Hashem, and he stomped (פיסע) on Hashem's actions”.

The other names of the spies are expounded in the Midrash, why does the Gemara say that we only know one of the explanations?

The reason the spies gave bad reports about Eretz Yisroel was because their learning Torah was lacking. They thought that Torah is the main thing, and Mitzvos are just an aspect in Torah learning. Therefore they wished to stay in the desert where Torah was their entire occupation. However, in truth, Torah learning is meant to become one with a person in an internal sense, in which case, the Torah learning *leads* a person to do Mitzvos. The reason Torah is meant to lead a person to do Mitzvos, is because the purpose of a person is to change this *physical* world, which is primarily done with *physical* actions.

When R' Yitzchak said that “We only know one of the explanations” he doesn't mean that we only know how to expound on one of the names, rather he means that only one of the explanations is ‘in our hands’ (“עלתה בידינו”). The explanations of all the other names are not relevant to *us*, and only applied to our ancestors.

Our ancestors needed to know the mistakes of the spies, learning them from each of their names, in order to perfect their Avodas Hashem.

[This is like the many Nevi'im that prophesized throughout history; many of their prophecies are not recorded in the Torah, even though they were speaking the word of Hashem. This is because, only prophecies which are a lesson for future generations are recorded, however certain prophecies were meant only for it's specific time and place.]

This is the meaning of “All of the names of the spies were expounded upon, but we only have one of them”. Only one of the lessons that can be learned, applies to *all* Yidden in *all* generations. Mitzvos are the main thing and learning Torah is meant to lead a person to action.

This idea can be seen in the name of סתור, he was called so because he hid Hashem's doings. Hashem created this world to be transformed in to a dwelling place for Him, which is done through physical Mitzvos. By the spies thinking that the main service of Hashem is Torah, they were covering up Hashem's actions, which is the entire purpose of creation.

How is it possible that a limited human being can cover over the actions of Hashem!?! This is because, it is “בן מיכאל”, a result of Hashem making himself seem weak by the

fact that he gave people free choice. Since Hashem wants people to have a choice to either do bad or good, he is even willing to risk that his own will and actions be disregarded.

One might think that the only lesson from the spies that applies to us, is that Mitzvos, physical actions, are the main Avodah. R' Yitzchok therefore tells us that there is also the lesson from נחבי בן ופסי which applies specifically to our generation.

Everything in the world has the word of Hashem inside of it which is constantly giving it life. We learn from the name נחבי that we should not 'hide' the words of Hashem, we must make sure that in every action we do, it can be recognized that Hashem is giving it life.

This refers to the feeling of love for Hashem in the Mitzvos that we do.

What causes a person to act in a way that he does not feel the life of Hashem in his actions? It is an outcome (בן) from a person overlooking (ופסי) the important factors of feeling (אהבה ויראה) when doing a Mitzvah.

This applies mainly to us, because the Yidden in the desert served Hashem predominantly with feeling, and didn't focus on the action. We however, focus on the action, therefore we must remember to also have feeling.

As R' Yitzchak says "מסורת בידינו מאבותינו" it is a tradition of ours from our ancestors, even though our Avodah of focusing on the physical actions is very important, we can make our Avodah complete, by understanding how our ancestors served Hashem.

[לקוטי שיחות ח"י ע' 150]