

# Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

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פרשת פרה

פרשת כי תשא תש"פ

**The reason for the half shekel**

כִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְקֻדֵיהֶם וְנָתַנוּ אִישׁ כֶּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ לַה' בַּכֶּקֶד אֹתָם וְלֹא יִהְיֶה בְּהֶם נֶגַף בַּכֶּקֶד אֹתָם: (ל יב)

"When you take the sum [census] of the children of Israel according to their numbers, let each one give to Hashem an atonement for his soul when they are counted; then there will be no plague among them when they are counted. (30:12) The Torah is commanding Klal Yisrael to each give a half Shekel to the Mishkan as an atonement for the sin of the Eigel, the golden calf.

הַעֲשִׂיר לֹא יִרְבֶּה וְהַדֹּל לֹא יִמְעִיט מִמִּחְצֵית הַשֶּׁקֶל לְתַתּוֹ אֶת תְּרוּמַת ה' לְכַפֵּר עַל-נַפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם: *The rich shall give no more, and the poor shall give no less than half a shekel, with which to give the offering to the Lord, to atone for your souls. (30:15)*

The purpose of the Mishkan was: וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם: (כה:ח) *And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst.* Here, Hashem commands the Jewish people to make Him a Mishkan, so that He may dwell within them (25:8) The sin of the Eigel was caused by people being arrogant.

Arrogance is a bad Middah, as the Gemara Sota 5a discusses at length the consequences of being arrogant: "כל אדם שיש בו גסות הרוח, אמר הקב"ה, אין אני והוא יכולין לדור בעולם, שנאמר, (תהלים קא:ה) מְלִשְׁתֵּי כִסְתֵר רָעוּהוּ אוֹתוֹ אֲצִמִּית גְּבוּהַ עֵינָיו וּרְתַב לִבָּב אֹתוֹ לֹא אוֹבֵל: אֵל Concerning any person who has arrogance within him, Hashem said: He and I cannot dwell together in the world, as it is stated: Tehillim 10:5 "He who slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I destroy; he who is haughty of eye and proud of heart, him will I not suffer אֹתוֹ לֹא אוֹבֵל" (Psalms 101:5-6). These verses should be understood as follows: Do not read the verse as: "אֹתוֹ לֹא אוֹבֵל"; rather, read it as: אֹתוֹ לֹא אוֹבֵל, meaning, with him, I cannot bear to dwell. Shlomo Hamelech says: תוֹעֲבַת ה' כָּל גְּבוּהַ לֵב (משלי טז ה) *Everyone of haughty heart is an abomination of the Lord.*

The Posuk states: וְהִמְתַּנְּשָׂא לְכָל לְרֹאשׁ Hashem is exalted over everything as the Leader. (Divrei Hayamim I 29:11). The Gemara Bava Basra 91b explains the Posuk: Even one with the most insignificant position of authority, e.g., an appointee over irrigation, is appointed by Heaven. Thus we see the word can mean also authority. The Mussar seforim deal strongly on the Middah of arrogance: מִדַּת הַתַּנְשֵׁאוֹת. Hence, we see that the word תִּשָּׂא can refer to arrogance. Now, since the half shekel was for the Mishkan, which was built for Hashem to dwell within Klal Yisrael, there was no place for arrogance. That is why Hashem commanded that everyone give the same amount, the rich and the poor, as there is no room for arrogance at the building of the Mishkan. Also the half shekel was an atonement for the Eigel, which had in it the sin of arrogance.

**We must only rely upon Hashem.**  
כִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְקֻדֵיהֶם וְנָתַנוּ אִישׁ כֶּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ לַה': (ל יב)  
The Viznitzer Rebbe, Rav Eliezer Hager, the Damesek Eliezer,

the son of the Ahavas Yisrael of Viznitz, explains this Posuk as follows: the word כִּי תִשָּׂא means to pick up, or in other words to uplift. Dovid Hamelech pleads to Hashem: עַד אֵנָה ה' תִּשְׁכַּחְתֵּנִי How long, Hashem, will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? (Tehilim 13:2) The Viznitzer Rebbes explained this Posuk: Dovid is asking: Why does it seem that Hashem forgot about him as it seemed He was hiding from him? The answer is: עַד אֵנָה אֲשִׁית עֲצוֹת בְּנַפְשִׁי As long that I will take counsel in my soul. As long as a person feels that he has all the answers and relies upon himself, עֲצוֹת בְּנַפְשִׁי, it will feel that Hashem is hiding! A person must realize that everything is from Hashem, and pray and rely only on Hashem, then one will see that Hashem is there. The same can be explained in our Posuk: The work לִפְקֻדֵיהֶם can mean :missing: as the Torah says: וְלֹא-נִכְפַּד מִמֶּנּוּ אִישׁ and not one man was missing from us. When a person wants to uplift himself from his situation, as he feels that Hashem is missing him, the solution is וְנָתַנוּ אִישׁ כֶּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ let each one give to Hashem an atonement for his soul, לַה', everything is from Hashem, then he will find that Hashem is with him.

**SHORT STORY OF THE WEEK**  
\*\*\*\*\* *The Tzedaka came too easy* \*\*\*\*\*

One morning, in a town in Poland, people were busy going about their business. Two armed Polish policemen appeared marching two Yidden down the middle of the town's main thoroughfare. "Where are you taking them", a townsman inquired. "To be killed tomorrow at noon", one policeman rudely answered. The Rov approached to plead for their lives, only to hear that the captors demanded an unusually large ransom for their freedom. Determined to save them the Rov started his drive to collect "Pidyon shevuyim" Ransom money for their freedom. First he and his gabbai approached a successful merchant who sold carpets. "We need at least 50 rubles from a man like you", begged the Rov. "50 Rubles?," The merchant retorted, "At that rate you will never get what you need in time. I will give you 150 rubles. That is triple what you asked." He smiled as he handed over the money he had hidden under the counter. Next they approached the Fabric salesman. He two was asked for a large sum of money. "That is not enough to fill your needs. You won't save anyone at that rate. I'll give double." The third stop was no less successful with the prospective donor giving more than what he was asked. The Rov stopped on a bench to rest for a few moments and to prepare for the pressure of the task that still lay before him. Suddenly he asked his gabbai to take him to the local Yeshivah. Once there he asked the Rosh Yeshivah if he could have 20 of his biggest and strongest students for an hour. When the Head of School agreed he commanded the boys to go to

where the captives were being held and to beat not only the captors and the captives as well. The yeshiva boys were strong and determined, and after a few moments the captives and captors were cowering in fear begging the yeshiva boys to stop their onslaught. At the Rov's command they continued the beating. Then – to their surprise- the beards of the captives started to fall off! It was then that everyone realized that the whole thing was just a plot to extort money from caring Jews. The word spread and the Rov was held in awe and praised as

one with the Holy spirit – Ruach HaKodesh! “No – it is not true”, explained the wise man. “I don't have any special powers. I saw that the people were giving easily and more than what we asked. I know that when it comes to charity – the Satan fights extra hard to stop one from doing the mitzvah. When I thought for a moment I understood that there could not possibly be such a great mitzvah at hand and so little resistance from the Evil Inclination.” When a Mitzvah comes by with hardship, it's reward is huge.

### **STORY OF THE WEEK** (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

\*\*\*\*\* ***In Zehus of the officer helping Yidden, his son regained his speech***\*\*\*\*\*

Reb Hershel Sternberger was the Shochet of Beled. He was present at the following story and repeated it. He was once in Kerestir in the room of Reb Shayala, when a high ranking officer of the army entered the Rebbe's home with a young boy, wanting to see the Rebbe immediately. The Gabayim asked the Rebbe if they could come in now to see the Rebbe, or wait? The Rebbe answered: “They can come right in!” The Rebbe, even though he spoke Hungarian well, didn't want to speak it if he didn't have to. Therefore the Rebbe asked Reb Hershel to be his interpreter. The Rebbe asked “What does the officer want?” The officer answered “I brought along my son, who became frightened by a dog, which caused him to lose his ability to talk. All the biggest doctors can't help him and having heard that the Rebbe is a Wonder Rabbiner, I would like that the Rebbe help my son talk again.”

The Rebbe stared at both for a few minutes and then fell into a deep trance. When the Rebbe awoke, he told Reb Hershel to ask the officer what his position was in the army?” The officer answered: “I am in charge of evaluating the enlistees to see if they are fit to serve in the army.”

The Rebbe told Reb Hershel to tell the officer, “If you promise to help all the Yidden that come to you, and give them a discharge, then the Rebbe will pray to Hashem to heal your son.” The officer raised his right arm and placed his left arm over his heart. When the Rebbe saw this, he asked Reb Hershel why is the officer doing this? He answered, “This is how they swear in the Army.” The Rebbe understood that the official has agreed to his request and had sworn to help the Yidden. The Rebbe then closed his eyes and looked up and said “Hashem you have many creatures who bark, what will bother you if another one barks. It will also come out of this good things for Yidden!”

All of a sudden the boy called out to his father “Why are we here so long?” The officer fainted from great emotion. When the officer was revived, he told Reb Hershel “I know what I promised and I will keep my word.” The officer thanked the Rebbe and left a very happy person.

The officer went back to work in his office. When a Yid came to him, he received a discharge, stating that he was weak and unfit to serve in the army. Slowly but steady, word spread like

wildfire that at this officer, all Yidden receive a discharge. The Yidden made sure to wait only on the line to meet this officer. This went on for five years. However, enemies of Klal Yisrael became jealous of the Yidden. It was reported to the government that he was taking bribes from the Yidden, and that is why he is discharging them. The officer was arrested and ordered to be held in jail until the court case. The officer however had many connections with higher ups in the government, and was able to work out a deal to be freed on bail. The officer traveled to Kerestir to meet Reb Shayala again, so that he may help him. The officer came to Reb Shayala and poured out his heart. He told the Rebbe that he did his part and helped all the Yidden who came to him. Now he faces a long time in jail and a heavy fine for doing so. The Rebbe smiled and said “Don't worry, Hashem will help you be acquitted from all wrongdoing.” The officer was thankful and relieved as he believed in what the Rabbi said.

Meanwhile the prosecution had a plan. They pulled out two names for each month that the officer gave a discharge. These people were summoned to come to the court date. The people all came and were ordered to wait in a room. The day of the court case arrived and the officer was full of hope and confident in the words of the Rebbe. The prosecution presented the accusations against the officer. Then the defense proceeded with their side of the story. The Judge asked the officer if he ever took any bribes from the Yidden for discharging them? The officer denied ever taking any bribes. All the boys that were discharged were weak and unfit to serve in the Army! The judge then said: “We will now bring in a handful of Yidden who were discharged from the Army, and we shall see if the officer is telling the truth! Lo and behold, Hashem saw to it, that all the people who were summoned, were either sick or very weak people, who were unfit to serve in the Army.

The judge saw this and said to the officer: “I see that you are a loyal officer. You are acquitted of all wrongdoing. In addition the judge ordered that since the officer had the right judgement in his selections, he will now be appointed to a higher ranking job. In this position the officer was on his own and was able to discharge Yidden with much more ease as no one was overlooking him.

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