

# (GD) המערכת

### 'However you will see its edge' – 'אפס קצהו תראה'

When Balak wanted to convince Balaam to curse Israel, he told him (23:13), לך נא אתי אל מקום אחר אשר תראנו משם אפס ' Go now with me to – קצהו תראה וכולו לא תראה וקבנו לי משם' a different place from where you will see them; however, you will see its edge but all of it you will not see and curse it for me from there.' That is, he took him to a place where he could only see part of Am Yisrael but not all of it, and there he hoped that he would be able to curse them.

Perhaps by way of a hint we can learn from here that when can a person stoop to such a low level like this of cursing a Jew? When he only sees part of his actions and he does not see the whole thing. He saw that he transgressed a sin, but he does not see what happened before it or after it. But if he thinks about a little more and he sees the whole picture, that is, all of his actions, then he will see that he also does good deeds.

And so it is written in 'Likutei Moharan', 'Know that you must judge everyone favorably, even one who is completely wicked, you must seek and find even the tiniest bit of goodness so that he is not entirely wicked. By finding even the minutest amount of goodness in him and judging him favorably, you are truly elevating him and one is able to bring him back to do Teshuva. This is categorized as (Tehillim 37:10) ועוד מעט ואין רשע' 'Just a little longer and there will be no wicked one; you will contemplate his place and he will not be there'. The *posuk* is warning us to judge everyone favorably, and even though you see that he is completely wicked, even so you must search, seek, and find the least bit of good where there is no wickedness.'

Aside from the obligation to 'judge everyone favorably' (Avos 1:6) the Tanna teaches us to 'not judge your fellow until you have reached his place' (Avos 2:5), and when the Sfas Emes reached this Mishna, he said, "He has not reached his place". Who truly knows everything that happened to a person from the time he was born and is still happening to him today, except for HaKadosh Baruch Hu? Therefore, He is the only One Who can judge everyone. Then if you see a flaw in a fellow and it is hard for you to judge him favorably, you should know that it is only because your vision is limited, 'you will only see its edge', you do not see the whole picture, but if you make an effort and look well, you will find a dot of merit in every Jew.

AGADA. יב ההשגחה

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#### 'For forgiveness is with You...' – '...סליחה...' 'כי עמך הסליחה

Mazel Tov, we gave birth to our sixth son and our joy was great. Right before we were to be discharged from the hospital, the baby began to spasm. After a thorough examination, it was revealed that the baby had internal convulsions even though there were no external signs. The doctors began to treat with medication that really did not work.

I saw that the doctors were greatly embarrassed, and they did not know how to help the baby. I went to Rabbanim for berachos until I came to one Tzaddik who told me that all the problems were because someone had a grudge against me. I tried to think who I might have harmed as this is not my nature to do something like that. I began to call friends past and present, but no one remembered my doing anything to them.

I was completely broken. On the one hand I was exhausted from running to the hospital and taking care of the rest of the family. On the other hand, I was trying to find the person I had harmed. I went to another Tzaddik to ask for a yeshua. As I approached the Tzaddik's home, someone signaled me to lower my window. I opened the window and he asked me how to get to the Tzaddik's house. I starting explaining, but he said, "Is this you?! I do not want anything from you!!!" and he left angry.

I recognized him. He used to learn with me many years ago, but I did not remember what I had done to him. I parked the car on the side of the road, ran after him to appease him, but he ran and would not hear a word. I saw there was no reason to chase him since he also wanted to see the Tzaddik. I decided to wait for him in the waiting room to try to appease him.

My wife was in the car and saw all that happened and prayed that I would be able to appease him. In the courtyard, I went to him as he sat calmly. I approached him with tears and beseeching, but he started shouting for me to leave him alone. Despite his screams, I tearfully begged him to have mercy on me and my family, but it was no use. Ultimately, my wife approached crying, and begging him for her sake and the sake of the baby, that it was definitely his grudge that was causing this distress, and it has been many years and what can he gain, when he can save a Jewish baby?

He relented and agreed to forgive. We took his phone number, and it was my turn to go into the Tzaddik and I brought the petek. He smiled and said, "I see everything has been settled." Two days later, the man called me to apologize for embarrassing me, and of course we forgave him, and we were glad we found him. On Sunday, the baby was scheduled for surgery. But instead the doctors decided to try to stop all medication. Within two weeks all seizures stopped, and the situation changed. With thanks and prayers for

Tiv HaTorah - Balak



## ההתבדלות מן האומות בכח סממני היהדות Segregation from the nations with the power of the signs of Judaism

כי מראש צרים אראנו ומגבעות אשורנו הן עם לבדד ישכן ובגוים לא יתחשב: (כג:ט)

#### For from its origin, I see it rock-like, and from hills do I view it. Behold! it is a nation that will dwell in solitude and not be reckoned among the nations. (23:9)

Rashi explains: Behold! it is a nation that will dwell in solitude – that is what its ancestors earned for it, to dwell in solitude, as Targum writes. And not be reckoned among the nations – as Targum renders it, they will not be annihilated with the other nations... Alternatively, when they are rejoicing, no nation rejoices with them, as it says Devorim 32:12) 'a' 'Hashem will guide them in solitude.' But when the nations are in a good state, Israel eats with each one of them and it is not entered in their account, and this is what is meant by 'and not be reckoned among the nations'.

The simple intent of Rashi is that Israel's benefit is in the 'World to Come', and the essence of these words is that our forefathers gave us the merit to dwell alone in the World to Come, without giving the nations a portion for their good deeds there.

However, we can also explain his words even on the essence of Israel in this world, since our holy forefathers gave us the merit through 'signs' that separate us from the nations, and with this they gave us the merit to dwell alone and not to chase after the follies of the nations. The result of this is that we are not considered by the other nations. That is, the nations do not treat us like a regular nation among the nations, and this gives us a double merit, that even the nations distance themselves from us, and their pollution does not impress us.

Let us begin by examining the language of Rashi when he says: 'When they are rejoicing, no nation rejoices with them. But when the nations are in a good state, Israel eats with each one of them.' When he speaks of the goodness of Israel he says, 'no nation rejoices with them', but when he speaks about the good of the nations he says, 'Israel eats with each one of them', and he does not say like he did earlier that Israel rejoices with each of them.

Perhaps aside from the simple meaning which talks about the benefit of good, Rashi intended to also speak about Israel naturally separating from the nations, for the joy in Israel is unlike the joy of the nations. When Israel is joyous, the nations are not joyous with them. The only joy the nations have is the abundance of pleasures in this world and the shiny clothes they wear specifically when they are joyous. When they see the essence of the joy of Judaism, they see no reason to be joyous, since holy Israel is used to making do with minimal amounts, and they are careful regarding the modesty of the clothing. Even when Hashem gives them joy in their tents, their joy is only for the merit of increasing mitzvos by building houses faithful to Hashem and His Torah. It is self-understood that the nations cannot fathom any reason for this joy.

Similarly, when the nations are in a good state, it is not considered joy in the eyes of Israel. Therefore, even Rashi does not define it as joy, and he does not say 'when the nations are in joy'. True, HaKadosh Baruch Hu worked it out that when the nations are in a good state that even Israel eats, but this is not defined as joy for them, for Israel's main joy is in the Torah and good deeds, and this is like pleasurable eating, that is the benefit that their needs are taken care of, and nothing more.

Based on these words, we can even explain the beginning language of Rashi: 'That is what its ancestors earned for it, to dwell in solitude', meaning that this nation whose forefathers merited for them and gave them signs of Torah and Judaism through which they can dwell in solitude and not to chase after the nations. The result is that their views are not alike, and this one cannot understand the approaches of the other. The end of Rashi's words are only a continuation of his beginning words.

This is what Chazal told us (Eichah Rabbah Parasha 2) 'If a person tells you that there is wisdom in the nations, believe him, as it states (Ovadyah 1:8) וי – 'והאבדתי חכמים מאדום ותבונה מהר עשו' (Will wipe out wise men from Edom and understanding from the Mountain of Eisav'. However, if he says that there is Torah among the nations, do not believe him, as it states (Eichah 2:9) 'מלכה ושריה בגוים אין תורה' - 'Her king and her officers are among the nations, there is no Torah." Even among the nations that are wise men who understand quite well all the matters of 'this world'. They are also able to give advice as to how to cope with all the difficulties of this world. All who hear them are impressed how their understanding can get to the depths of matters and give sound counsel for all sorts of topics. But all their advice is counter to the advice of the Torah, since 'do not believe the Torah of the nations'. It is not possible for them to attain the knowledge of Torah and how we have to cope with all the difficulties according to its outlook. However, Bnei Yisrael expound in the knowledge of Torah, and the result of this is that the nations are weak and cannot reach the level of understanding.

The different point of views between Israel and the nations are mainly in the spiritual realm, but the power that draws one to it is the external factor. Among the things that allowed Israel to leave Egypt as enumerated by Chazal were external factors, 'that they did not change their names, their clothing, and their language. When Bnei Yisrael saw fit to be pure in these matters, they were still quite distant from the internal avodah as they were wallowing at the forty-ninth level of tumah. Their nature was literally close to that of the Egyptians, and as we see at the splitting of the Yam Suf the celestial guiding officer of the Egyptians accused Israel by saying, "What is the difference between them, and why should these be lost instead of these, they are really just like the Egyptians?" However, even so, they saw fit to hold onto their external factors knowing that this is the utensil to arouse the internal factors. Even though they had no meritorious actions, this merit stood for them, for HaKadosh Baruch Hu knew that even if they had no good deeds, they would in the future from the power of keeping the external factors.

As we see in the previous parasha (21:1) - אונגב... וילחם בישראל 'וישמע הכנעני מלך ערד יושב 'The Canaanite, king of Arad, who dwelled in the south... and he warred against Israel'. Rashi says, 'Who dwells in the south – this is Amalek, as it says (13:29) - 'עמלק יושב בארץ הנגב' 'Amalek dwells in the land of the south'. He changed his name to speak the language of the Canaanites so that Israel would pray to HaKadosh Baruch Hu to give them Canaan, but they were not Canaan. Israel saw that their clothing was that of Amalek and their language was that of Canaan. They said (21:2), 'We will pray unspecified' as it says 'בידי' - 'If You will deliver this people into my hand'.'

The Chidushei HaRim asks on these words of Rashi, 'Why didn't Amalek change their clothes to that of the Canaanites as well, then they would not have aroused suspicion, and Israel would have prayed to vanquish Canaan, and then their ruse would have been successful *chas v'shalom.*' He answers that if Amalek dressed as Canaan, they would have actually turned into Canaan, and then Israel's prayer would have been effective against them. The nature of a person follows his clothing and speech.

Therefore, every person must be very careful to heed the tradition of his ancestors, and not denigrate the external clothing, language, and name since these are the utensils of the internal factors.