

טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בני ד'

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טיב המערכת

'When he avenged my vengeance' – 'בקנאו את קנאתי'

Many have explained, 'What is vengeance'? When is it called vengeance for the sake of Heaven and when is it not? The main question is, how do we know that the fiery vengeance burning within us is for the sake of Heaven or *chas v'shalom* a bad desire like all the other desires that stem from the advice of the *yetzer*?!

Pinchas ben Elazar took vengeance for his G-d and did a very brave thing – he killed a Nasi of a tribe of Israel. Even though today, we know that his intent was for the sake of Heaven, but then, when he acted and things were not yet clear, HaKadosh Baruch Hu testifies for him (25:11): 'פנחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן השיב את חמתי מעל בני ישראל: 'Pinchas ben Elazar ben Aharon HaCohen turned back my wrath from upon the Children of Israel, when he zealously avenged My vengeance among them'. Rashi quotes the famous words of Chazal, 'Because the tribes were humiliating him by saying, "Did you see this son of Puti whose mother's father fattened calves for idolatry, yet he killed the prince of a tribe of Israel!" This is why the Torah comes and traces his ancestry to Aharon.' Were it not that HaKadosh Baruch Hu protected him and testified about him that his intent was for the sake of Heaven, the matter would not have been clear at all. Now we go back to our question, how do we know when vengeance is aroused with in us if it is a vengeance of Hashem or a burning desire in the heart of the person which causes him to do things as it were, in the name of the Torah?

The Gemara states (Sanhedrin 82b), 'Pinchas came and laid down the bodies of Zimri and Cozbi before the Omnipresent, and said before Him, "*Ribono shel olam*, is it on account of these two twenty-four thousand from Israel should die?!" For it is stated (25:9) 'ויעמד פנחס – and Pinchas rose and prayed'. R' Elazar said, "It is not stated *vayispalel*, rather, *vayipalel*. This teaches that, as it were, Pinchas conducted a quarrel with his Creator. The ministering angels sought to push Pinchas away, but Hashem said to them, "Leave him be! He is a zealot, the son of a zealot. He is a deflector of wrath, the son of a deflector of wrath." Based on the Gemara, we realize that Pinchas acted completely against his nature, but he subdued his nature because of his love for Israel, and out of his love for Hashem and he avenged Hashem, as we see that the result of his action was a great success for *Klal Yisrael*.

It is told of the Satmar Rav who was of the great avengers, when there was a war in Israel, he spent many hours reciting Tehillim in his Tefillos, even though their way of life was distant from his, for true vengeance comes from love of the Creator and love of Israel.

- Tiv HaTorah - Pinchas

טיב ההשגחה

'Pours his prayer before Hashem' – 'לפני ה' ישפוך שיחו'

I am a teacher in a school for special children. Every morning, I have a break when I sit alone and contemplate. Behind the school there is a hill with a solitary rock designated for me where I sit and speak with Hashem.

One day, while I was sitting and praying to Father in Heaven, my key ring fell out of my hand and went under the rock that I was sitting on. I thought to myself that first I would finish speaking with Hashem and then I would get the keyring. But what we do not do right away we forget about; I went back in without the keys. Right after *shivur* I went back to the rock, but the keys were gone. I checked the area, but they were not there. I went back and forth to class twice, I sat and said: "*Ribono shel olam*, on this keyring is my only car key. I request of You to let me find the keys. I did my part and searched, and I still have not found them, and if You decide that I should not find them, I accept it with love."

I felt a true feeling of *bitachon* in Hashem, that I would accept with love whatever Hashem decided. All this was a minute-and-a-half. Just then an Arab came to me and asked what I was looking for? I told him, my car key. He said, "Come with me." He took me to a construction site and shouted for someone to bring the keys, they were mine, which I thought I would never see again. צ.פ.

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On Chol HaMoed we went out with the family to pick flowers. There were other families there picking flowers *l'kavod Yom Tov*. I saw our friends walking back and forth between the rows of flowers looking for something. They said, they lost the car key, and they had no way to start the car and what if this was their only key? My children and I began to search among the flowers for the lone key. There was a large tract of flowers, still we tried to look for it, despite the sun was already starting to set. To my disappointment, we left with no luck. Two weeks later I met a friend who was also there, and he is a relative of that family. I asked him what happened in the end? Did they find the key or not?

He said they found the key, but not before they took upon themselves to set aside ten minutes every day to talk with the Creator of the World. Amazingly, the moment he took this upon himself, they found the keys against all odds. ה.ס.

כן בנות צלפחד דברת נתן לתן להם אחזת נחלה בתוך אחי אביהם
והעברת את נחלת אביהן להן: (כז:)

The daughters of Tzelophchod speak properly. You shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among the brothers of their father, and you shall cause the inheritance of their father to pass over to them. (27:7)

Rashi explains: The daughters of Tzelophchod speak properly – as the Targum, properly. “Thus is this parsha written before Me on High.” This tells us that their eye saw that which the eye of Moshe did not see. They claimed correctly. Fortunate is the person whose words HaKadosh Baruch Hu confirms.

We have mentioned the words of the Zohar HaKadosh (Cheilek 3 149b) many times which speaks about the stories written in the Torah. ‘One who says that a story written in the Torah is coming to just tell that story is missing the point.’ The Torah is only coming to teach the person his obligation in the world, that is, the 613 express mitzvos. Similarly, the stories teach the one to whom the Torah is a light upon his feet how is supposed conduct himself properly. Therefore, it is incumbent on us to understand the nature of every story in the Torah and its teaching.

The incident of the daughters of Tzelophchod teaches us that we are not allowed to negate the view of someone who is smaller than him in stature and wisdom. Sometimes, the smaller person is more attuned to the truth of the matter than the greater person who does not grasp the situation. For who is greater for us than Moshe Rabeinu of whom the Torah testifies (Devorim 34:10) *לא קם נביא עוד בישראל כמשה אשר ידעו* – ‘Never again has there risen in Israel a prophet like Moshe, whom Hashem had known face to face’. Even so, the daughters of Tzelophchod were able to attain that which Moshe could not attain. And HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself testified that they spoke the truth and their claim was proper.

We see the same thing by Amram the father of Moshe as related in the Gemara (Sotah 12a), ‘A man went from the house of Levi and he took a daughter of Levi. Where did he go? Rav Yehuda bar Zevina said, he went according to the advice of his daughter. It was taught: Amram was the leader of the generation, once he saw that the wicked Pharaoh said, “Every son that will be born, you shall throw him into the river.” (Shemos 1:22) Amram said, “We are laboring for nothing! He divorced his wife, then all the Jewish men proceeded to divorce their wives. His daughter said to him, “Father, your decree is harsher than Pharaoh’s, because Pharaoh decreed only against the males, but you have decreed against the males and the females! Pharaoh only decreed against life in this world, but you decreed against life in this world and in the World to Come!” The wicked Pharaoh, there is a possibility that his decree will be observed and a possibility it will not be observed. You are a righteous man, certainly your decree will be observed! As it says (Iyov 22:28) *‘ותגזר אומר ויקם לך’* – ‘You would utter a decree and it would be done!’ He went and remarried his wife, and all the men proceeded to remarry their wives.’

Even here we see how the smaller person can sometimes understand that which a greater person cannot, and how Amram, the father of Moshe, teaches us that it is incumbent on the greater person to bow his head and not be ashamed to acknowledge the view of the lesser person. We will explain these words so we can get to the depth of the matter. Pharaoh decreed a harsh decree against the Nation of Israel with the intent to finish them off. The sons would be killed resulting in the daughters marrying Egyptians, and there would no longer be a Nation of Israel, *Rachmana litzlan*.

One does not have to be a genius to understand the conspiracy of that wicked individual. Because of this, the *Bnei Yisrael* came to the quick and easy decision that ‘We are laboring for nothing!’ Perhaps it is not appropriate that we are involved in having children? Perhaps there is even a sin when we are involved in this, since we are causing the killing of the sons that are born? True, they were aware that they were taking on a great responsibility with this decision, the future of the Nation of Israel was hanging in the balance. Therefore, they brought their question to the ‘*Gadol HaDor*’, the greatest among them, Amram, who advised them what to do.

True Amram’s view was correct. Still, in order to decide what they should do, he weighed the two sides very carefully, and only then did he decide, ‘There is no point in having children now, the matter will cause a prohibition!’ He was convinced and his mind was made up to the point that he proceeded to divorce his wife! All the other men of his generation followed the lead of Amram and proceeded to divorce their wives.

After these things when they were still all of one mindset which they reached with much deliberation on the part of the leader of the nation. However, although Amram knew he was the leader of the nation and his thinking was clear and correct, still he felt he should consider the thinking of others! Who were the others? His four-year-old daughter! The *Gadol HaDor* of all *Bnei Yisrael* who was able to rule on the severest of matters was not ashamed to hear the view of a little girl who was only four years old. He listened to her and re-evaluated the situation.

Because of the humility of that righteous man, you also learn of his greatness. Once he realized that there was substance to her words, and they were mistaken in their ruling, the ‘adult’ was not ashamed and he cried out to the people, ‘I was wrong! My little daughter is more righteous than me! Based on her words we must remarry our wives and have children!’

After this amazing incident, we must explain the message that is hidden here, for they all admitted and said, “If a man as great and righteous as Amram was able to deflect his carefully weighed out opinion, and change his mind based on the argument of a little girl since, ‘No one else disagreed with me.’

The painful reality is quite different. No one else can do this in a situation like this. Once a person makes up his mind and others want to disagree with him, he will not listen to them. He is so sure of his decision, and no one else’s opinion matters! Where does he get this from? This only comes from his arrogance; he thinks he is better than everyone.

Our words are very appropriate to this person: If you are really smart, then it is fitting for you to learn from Amram, the ‘*Gadol HaDor*’, for he listened to his four-year-old daughter and he even realized that there was substance to her words. The same applies to you, the smart one, that even if the ones questioning your decision are lower in stature than you are, still, it is possible that they know the truth and it would be appropriate to at least hear them out, perhaps this will lead you to a better decision, even if it changes your view of things.

You must realize that it was not for nothing that our earlier Rabbis taught us (see introduction to Rambam’s explanation of the Mishna) ‘Accept the truth from the one who says it’, their words apply to everybody, they inform us that even the greatest wise man can still learn from others, it is possible that he has not attained the truth.