

פרשת תרומה

גליון 20

שבת זכור

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מאת ר' ש. קאפלין שליט"א

Birds on a wall

There were ten birds sitting on a wall. If a man will come and shoot one of the birds, how many birds will be left on the wall?

Only one bird will remain on the wall: the dead one. All the other ones out of fear and the noise of the gun shot will fly away, leaving the dead one on the wall.

With this *בן איש חי* explained a tremendous *יסוד*: The *פרשה* begins with *הקב"ה* commanding *מרע"ה* to tell *כלל*

about |
donating towards

"GIVING IS TAKING FOREVER."

| they hear a knock
at the door.

the *משכן*, as it is stated, *"ויקחו לי תרומה"*, *They shall take to Me a portion, from every man whose heart will motivate him.* The *מפרשים* ask regarding the word *"ויקחו"* – *and they shall take to Me*, shouldn't it have said, *"ויתנו"* – *and they shall give to Me*, after all, *כלל ישראל* seemingly were not taking anything but rather they were giving!?

The answer is: What a person gives, that is what he has – that is what he takes.

Soup only lasts a day

They tell the story about a poor family in the town of Vilna which couldn't afford much food, the children would go to school with empty bags, they basically had nothing to eat. One evening, the mother managed to boil up some soup for the hungry children. That's all they got for the night – a bowl of soup.

As the children are about to eat the soup,

At the door stands a poor beggar pleading for some money.

"I'm really sorry," replies the father, "but I have no money in the house. I have nothing!"

One of the children stand up and exclaim, "I can give you my bowl of soup..."

After the poor beggar drank the soup and left the house, his mother said to her young child, "Why did you give your

soup to the beggar? I have no other food to give you!?"

The young boy in Vilna said so cleverly, "If I drink the soup – it's mine tonight, however, tomorrow morning it's long gone. However, when I give him the soup, I have that soup forever, the soup is always going to be mine, that reward of giving away the soup to an עני ואביון will remain by me forever."

What a person has is really what he gives.

Says the תורה, "ויקחו לי תרומה..." כלל – "ויקחו לי תרומה..." aren't giving, it's not giving, it's taking – כלל ישראל were taking the מצוה – taking the reward of donating to the הקמת המשכן, that's what remains – that's what כלל ישראל take with them.

This is the יסוד the בן איש חי teaches. You may look at the bird as a dead bird, however, in fact, the dead bird is the bird which remains, it stays on the wall – it doesn't go away. Often, people believe that when they give – they are giving dead money, the money is gone, however, the truth is, the "dead money" is the money which lasts – it's the money *which stays on the wall*. This is the only thing a person is left with, all the other birds fly away.

We spoke about this יסוד in length last year (see footnote below) and we mentioned a few weeks ago in פרשת בשלח about how money can make a person go crazy, "בשביל ממונם שהשאילם" – the מצריים went crazy because of their money, a person can become drunk, as ר' שלום שבדרן זצ"ל writes, because of the desire to achieve wealth.

The great challenge

I would like to speak about a different point, a different dimension to the ענין of wealth: Every person knows, understands and is aware that he is not going to be on this world forever, only a fool will think like that. Every person is also aware that when he dies, he's not taking any money or any wealth with him. Only what a person gives away is his forever, that "taking" – the "ויקחו" – remains with a person. The מצוה of צדקה will remain with a person.

If so, why do we find that people find it extremely difficult to part with their money? Wealth is a tremendous נסיון – we can't judge anybody. But what's *taka* פשט? Doesn't a person understand that what he gives away is his forever and everything else will stay behind – *fly away*? Just like the little child

understood, if he drinks the soup, he'll have it for a day or two, but if he gives it away it will last forever – for all of eternity?

A sudden change

We find another difficulty with regards to people's attitude to money. People genuinely believe, "If I will win the lottery, I will give so much צדקה.... I will support this מוסד and this מוסד..."

As it once happened when a איד came before the הפץ היים to ask for ברכה to become a גביר, promising then to support many מוסדות התורה and מוסדות ראיין.

the fellow become a tremendous עושר – וכך הוא.

The איד moved to Moscow – the city where rich people would live.

The הפץ היים travelled all the way to Moscow – a long journey from ראיין, to meet with this עושר to collect the funds for his ישיבה.

"Rebbe!" the עושר replied, "I know why you have come, and I know what I said... but I'm sorry I just can't part with my money ...I can give you a small amount... but more than that I just can't give..."

Before a person has, he wants to give, but once a person has money he can't

give. How does it change? As another story is told about a איד who came before his Rov asking for a ברכה to win the lottery, promising that he will then give a great percentage of his money to צדקה. The Rov replied, "Sorry... no... I'm not giving you such a ברכה."

The איד went next to the גלח asking for a ברכה to win the lottery.

The גלח give him the blessing, and lo and behold, the איד became tremendously rich.

When he met his Rov next he told the Rov, "Aha! You see! The גלח managed to give me the ברכה..."

"And nu..." asked the Rov, "what happened with all the צדקות?!"

"Ah..." replied the איד, "that's coming slowly in instalments... I still need to invest the money... complete a few more business deals..."

"Now you see why I didn't give you the ברכה," exclaimed the Rov.

What's פשט in this? It's very easy to say, "If I have, I will give...", but once a person has it's extremely difficult to give.

Endangering one's life

Furthermore, we see that a normal person won't put his life in danger to

acquire wealth. On the other hand, a normal person will put his life in danger in order not to lose his wealth, (as we find in *סנהדרין* by the *הבא סוגיא* of "...במחזרת"). What's *פשט*? Why is a person ready to put himself in real danger to save his money, whereas to acquire wealth, a person is not prepared to put himself into danger?

Another limb

The answer is: Before a person's acquires any object or any money, he doesn't look at it as being a part of himself. Whereas, when a person acquires something it becomes coordinated into the conception of himself, it becomes part of a person.

Very often, we own an object, and we feel a tremendous connection with the object – it's attached to us, it becomes part of ourselves. A person will fight someone trying to take something away from him, as if the person is coming to chop off one of his limbs. A person goes wild when he feels somebody is trying to take something away from him, because once a person has acquired something, he feels that this is himself – it's another one of his 248 limbs, it's a *חלק* of his body, it's part of the person.

This therefore makes the struggle with money extremely challenging. Money is not just a desirable commodity like food, it's much more: it's part of a person, he can't detach himself from it. A person looks at his wealth and his assets as being an extension of his very self, it becomes part of our identity, our very self.

It becomes a quality

Emotionally, we don't look at a wealthy person as a person who possess wealth. We tend to look at a rich fellow with the wrong frame of mind, something which we much work on and change. Just like we look at a person who is intelligent as being an intelligent person, and as we look at a person who does kindness as being a kind person or an easy person, we also look at a person with wealth, not as a person who possess wealth, but rather we look at him as a wealthy person, it becomes his personal quality, that's how we view it.

This human tendency – to look at wealth in such a way, frames our relationship with money. This is why we have such a crazy relationship with money, because we look at money in such a way, in a way which we think that money makes a

person into a different and better person. This therefore creates a tremendous craving towards money, just like we crave to have the kind and good מידות of another person. Just like everyone wants to change their very self and make it part of themselves to be kind and to be easy going, so too, they want to make money become part of their very selves.

When a person hasn't got, he's convinced he will give, because he doesn't realize that once he gets it will become part of himself, and when something is part of oneself, one simply can't part with it, a person can't chop off one of his limbs, it simply doesn't happen.

A person can hear many דרשות and see many מאמרי חז"ל that giving is taking forever, but it's extremely difficult to give away oneself – his own body. A person is not prepared to put his life into danger to acquire, however, when you try to take something away from somebody, he fights for it – he fights for his own self, sometimes, even endangering his own life, because you're taking something away from his very self – you're chopping off his finger. He

goes wild, he can't let go, it's too precious.

What's the עצה?

How do we change this frame of mind? How do we change this concept which is so prevalent in our society? We look at a wealthy fellow with having a characteristic special personal quality. How do we change such an attitude?

The true frame of mind a person must have, must be internalised and be constantly thought about. The right way to view everything we and everyone else owns, is by understanding that הקב"ה does not give us money, but rather he entrusts us with money.

This is one of the most emotional shifts which we must make in our life, changing the mindset of our brain.

In fact, this view toward money is often harder than ביטחון. ביטחון can often make things easier for life when we feel we are missing or lacking something, then, ביטחון can be an escape route leaving us to rely on הקב"ה. הקב"ה can put a person into a comfortable mood, calm and relaxed, (as the חובת הלבבות puts it down, *"יש לו מנוחת, ביטחון, הגפשו ומשחרר מדאגות"* *he's calm, he has no stress, nothings stressful.*)

It's easier to enter into a "ביטחון mode" than looking at possessions in this world as **הקב"ה** entrusting His people with those possessions.

There's an attitude out there which is complete **כפירה**, as people often exclaim, "It's my money... it's my hard earnings... nobody can tell me what to do with my money, it's mine... I earned it!"

We must understand that every penny has its purpose, **הקב"ה** has put each penny by each person for a specific purpose, it's there for a reason. Every little item we have – every material of wealth has been placed by each person for a purpose.

We therefore shouldn't look at wealth as a characteristic quality on a person, that's not what wealth is all about. It shouldn't make us look at the person as being a better person. We should rather simply look at wealth as money being entrusted by a person from **הקב"ה**.

Every penny counts

יעקב אבינו was very wealthy and still careful even regarding the **פחים קטנים** – the small jugs, because **יעקב אבינו** looked at everything as having a purpose. Even small jugs, **הקב"ה** gave it to me for a

purpose, there's no such things as throwing it away by leaving it behind.

Every penny has got value. This applies to every little thing we own, never to be **מזלזל** with anything, because everything I have has a **תכלית**, there is a purpose why I have it.

Open 24/7

There was a **איד** known in London, Stamford hill, as a tremendous **בעל צדקה** by the name of **ר' בנימין וואלף זצ"ל**. **R' Mordche Bamberger** – the **ראש הכולל** of **Glashow** called **ר' בנימין** up to ask which night is a good night which he can come in to collect funds for his **כולל**.

ר' בנימין told him that any night is a good night to come in.

"And what time is a good time to come in?" asked **ר' מרדכי**.

"Any time," replied **ר' בנימין**, "I'm home from 5 0' clock..."

"You don't have times?!" asked **ר' מרדכי**.

"No... no... no times..." he replied.

When **ר' מרדכי** came he asked, "What's **פשוט**? Anyone can just knock on the door and come in! Why don't you have special times for collecting?"

ר' בנימין replied with the following, "If a person has money, he may want to invest his money into a bank. But what bank

should he choose – there's' so many out there?!

So you go look out for a bank which has the longest openings time. A bank which is only open for an hour a week, what can they do with your money? They are closed the whole week! They haven't got too much time to invest with your money.

Rather, you have to look out for a bank which is open 24/7 – they must be working around the clock with your money! Such a bank is the place to invest your money.”

Continued ר' בנימין “I'm only a bank... every penny I have got is from the רבש"ע. הקב"ה has entrusted His money by me. I'm a bank, if I'm going to be open for only a short time every day, הקב"ה will go find a different bank, why does He need me to be his banker if I'm only open for two hours a week?!?”

This is how ר' בנימין lived his life with such an השקפה, acknowledging that we are only the bank.

This concept is something we can internalise and change: the way we view wealth, it's not the person, it's not a personal quality, הקב"ה has entrusted the person with wealth, that's all.

We must therefore work on ourselves to never look at a wealthy person as having a special personal quality. He's only the bank. We must look at our own possessions, understanding that everything we have is from הקב"ה which has been entrusted by us for a purpose, and then we should look at a person who has been blessed with wealth as הקב"ה entrusting the person with His money. If we look at life in such a way, this will take away our crave and desire toward money and wealth.

A holy day - תפילה

The truth is, this has much connection to the פורים of יום טוב. Giving is one of the greatest ענינים of פורים, it revolves around most of the day, that's what we do all day, give and give, and give and give.

It's also about giving of ourselves to others, to find people who we could revive and give them a boost. Show them we thought and cared about them, give and share with them the שמחה and love. פורים is a day to give with others, to be מרבה שלום ורעות.

As coming toward a פורים of יום טוב, a day which תז"ל tell us will remain a יום טוב even when משיח comes, it's a day which the זוהר הקדוש teaches that it is

greater than the day of יום הכיפורים – the day which is only *like* פורים – it's a day of an עליה and elevation for our נשמה and רוחניות; it's therefore worthwhile to hear the words of the דברי יחזקאל, "בפורים כל, אשר יבקשו ישראל מהשי"ת תקובל תפלתם" *Whatever a person asks from ה"ה on פורים, he will be answered.* פורים is a *moridiker* זמן of תפילה, it's a time when one can have *gevaldiga* הצלחה with his תפילות.

The פורים הוא זמן חידושי הרי"ם writes: רצון לכל, שעת רעוא דרעוין, וכל אחד יכול לפעול אצל השי"ת שימלא כל משאלות לבו "on פורים a person can ask for all his personal desires to be answered. We all have רצונות and constantly feel for פורים; עבודת השם in our סייעתא דשמיא extra is the time to ask for all of this.

The "מקובל" סגולת ישראל (סימן ס"ו) writes: "לפני גדולי עולם, It is accepted by the גדולי עולם, להשכים בבוקר ולהרבות, עולם בתפילה ובבקשה לפני השי"ת על כל דבר, הן בני, חיי, ומזוני והן על שאר דברים, ועל כל קרוביו ועל כל עם ישראל, וכעין יום כיפור שהוא יום *the secret is, to wake up early and daven and plead before ה"ה for everything, whether children, life, substance – on*

everything, on relatives and on the entire תפילה of ישראל... כלל ישראל.

The ספרים הקדושים explain: כלל ישראל on "כל הפושט יד הנהגה of פורים act with an " *whoever outstretches his hand, we gives him,* as the גמרא in בבא "אין מדקדקין במעות (ע"ה:)" writes, "פורים – we don't scrutinize people who collect on פורים, we give.

פורים, when we give on פורים, מדה כנגד מדה, ה"ה הקב"ה says, "I'll give you as well." The entire year, ה"ה הקב"ה scrutinise us to see if we deserve what we're asking for. However, on פורים the רבש"ע is not רבש"ע the – כל אשר יבקשו מפיד, מדקדק, answers our תפילות more on פורים than all the other days of the year. If we give without asking questions, ה"ה הקב"ה will then give us on this day without asking questions. And as mentioned above, it's not only giving money, it's also giving over of ourselves to others, thinking about others, doing חסד to others; a person can acquire so much by being מרבה שלום ורעות. We must do our outmost to give of ourselves to others on פורים, which we can then tap into the מדה מדה of ה"ה הקב"ה כנגד מדה.

is a day to take seriously, a time for תפילה in our עבודה, accomplishing a true שבילב. ¹

"ואיש את קדשיו לו יהיו, איש אשר יתן לכהן לו ¹ (במדבר ה', י) A man's holies shall be his, and what a man gives to the כהן, it shall be his. A person's קדשיו – it shall be his (the giver), of that which he gives to the כהן, it shall be his (the giver). How do we understand this פסוק? Usually, things you give away are not yours? Why is it לו" כהן – once you have given over to the כהן shouldn't it belong to the כהן?

The חפץ חיים explains with a משל: A person had three friends, שמעון, ראובן, and לוי. ראובן is a close friend, the two speak regularly, they discuss close matters – they do things together.

He has a friend called שמעון who's not such a close friend as ראובן. They greet each other pleasantly, say a warm 'good morning,' and sometimes schmooze together.

Lastly, he has another friend, (well, if we can call him a friend) called לוי. They might say a 'גוט שבת' once in a while, perhaps after returning from holidays he might receive a "שלום עליכם" and when he makes a שמחה he will wish "מזל טוב". However, they never schmooze together, they are not seen together, and they have very little connection together.

One day, the person gets summoned to appear before the king in the royal

palace. He is terrified, 'what would the king want? What crime have I committed?'

Immediately, he asks his best friend ראובן, "Please come with me! Please accompany me whilst I stand before the king!"

"No..." says ראובן, "I have things to do... I'm busy, I'm afraid I can't go with you."

He can't believe it, his good friend ראובן leaves him to go alone just like that!

He then goes to his friend שמעון, hoping that he will have some רחמנות and accompany him to the king.

שמעון replies, "I'm busy, I don't really have time... but for a good friend of mine I will accompany you and give you חיזוק until the palace gates, however, further than that I am afraid I cannot comply."

He can't believe it! With his last hopes he goes to לוי – his friend he hardly speaks to and pleads, "Please come with me to the king!"

"Of course," replies לוי, "I will come with you, speak up for you before the king and I will help you succeed."

לוי accompanies him all the way until they stand before the king, לוי helped him and ב"ה he never got into any trouble.

– In life a person acquires three "friends", his money, family and תורה ומצוות.

A person looks at their money as a very close friend, he watches over it, he counts it often and feels it's his security. Money is a person's best friend, and too often, a person's money will come before his own family. Family is a person's secondary friend.

A person relies on his money and is very much connected with his money. Money is a person's priority, and we must continuously remember the אבות in משנה "בשעת פטירתו של אדם אין מלווין לו לאדם, פרק ו' לא לכסף ולא זהב ולא אבנים טובות ומרגליות, אלא תורה ומעשים טובים," *At the time of the departure of a person [from this world] they do not accompany that person, neither silver nor gold nor precious stones and pearls.* What a person became so close to, what a person relied so much on and spent his entire life revolving around, stays in its place. He doesn't take that with him, that all stays down here. When a person dies his money doesn't budge, it doesn't accompany him anywhere.

Or, as דוד המלך teaches, "אל תירא כי יעשיר איש כי ירבה כבוד ביתו, כי לא במותו יקח הכל לא ירד אחריו כבודו" (תהלים מ"ט, י"ז - י"ח) *Fear not when a man becomes wealthy, when he increases the glory of his house. For nothing upon his death will he take at all, descend not after him will his glory.*

דוד המלך is telling us: Don't be impressed when a person becomes rich, because when he dies he's taking nothing with him,

"לא ירד אחריו כבודו" – his glory and his wealth doesn't go with him.

We live in a world where so much is revolved around money. Everyone is looking for money. That's the general thoughts in a person's mind, he's thinking about his money.

The money is like ראובן the closest friend. When he dies "this friend" doesn't help him at all in his eternal life.

A person's family and friends are like שמעון, they will take him to his grave. They accompany him until his grave, however, further than that they do not go. He goes to the King on his own without his family and friends.

However, his תורה and מעשים טובים are like his friend לוי – they never leave go; they stay forever. A person doesn't realize what "friends" he is creating when he learns a piece of גמרא! When a person completes a מצוה he doesn't realize what he's created! These are going to accompany a person all the way until he reaches the King Himself! A person's תורה and מצוות accompanies the person until the כסא הכבוד.

As the משנה in אבות concludes, "בשעת פטירתו של אדם אין מלווין לו לאדם לא לכסף ולא זהב ולא אבנים טובות ומרגליות, אלא תורה ומעשים טובים." *At the time of the departure of a person [from this world] they do not accompany that person, neither silver nor gold nor precious stones and pearls, but*

rather study and good deeds only, "בהתהלך תנחה אתך", "as it is stated", "שנאמר", "When you walk it shall guide you, when you lie down it shall guide you, and when you awake it shall speak on your behalf." "בהתהלך תנחה אתך", "in this world", "בעולם הזה", "when you lie down it shall guard you", "בקבר" – "in the grave", "and when you awake it shall speak on behalf of you", "בעולם הבא" – "in the world to come."

Not only will your תורה guide you throughout life it will also take you to your grave, and not only will the תורה take you until your grave, it will accompany you and speak on your behalf!

Explains the חפץ חיים: "ואיש את קדשיו **לו יהיו**" – "Yes, when a person gives his קדשיו "לו יהיו" because that is what remains and that is what he retains! He has it forever. This מצוה will accompany the giver forever. "איש אשר" תרומות – "When a person gives his" – "לו יהיה" – "that's what is his, this is what remains forever with a person."

When a person gives, he is taking, because that is what remains.

A person once came before the חפץ חיים declaring, "I have forty thousand rubles... what should I do after I die? Should I leave it for my children? Should I give to my friends?"

The חפץ חיים asked, "How much do you want to keep for yourself?"

Assuming the חפץ חיים misunderstood his question, he repeated his question again, "What should I do with my money? I can't keep the money once I die, I want to give to someone else. Can the חפץ חיים please advise me who I should I give it to?!"

Again, the חפץ חיים replied, "How much do you want to keep for yourself?"

The חפץ חיים was trying to tell the איד, "I know you don't want to keep it for yourself, but I want to know '**how much do you want to keep for yourself**', meaning: how much of your money do you want to spend לדבר so that it will remain for yourself forever even in the world to come when you stand before the הכבוד."

A person keeps what he gives away. Giving is taking forever.

What we do for others stays and remains forever.

The ילקוט לקח טוב brings from his father the following interpretation of the פסוקים (ל"ד, א'-ג'), "והיה נכון לבקר": פרשת כי תשא (ל"ד, א'-ג'), *Be ready for the morning*, a person should be ready for the morning, as חז"ל teach us, "עולם הזה דומה ללילה" – "this world is compared to the night, however, "עולם הבא דומה ליום" – "the coming world is compared to the day, therefore a person must prepare himself for The morning, "ועלית בבקר אל הר סיני" – "and then when you reach the "morning" after 120, "ונצבת לי שם"

– and stand by Me with the רבש"ע in judgement, "ואיש לא יעלה עמך" – no one accompanies you there, not your family and neither your friends, וגם איש אל ירא בכל " – you will have no support from the people you relied on down here, וגם הצאן " – the צאן ובקר – a person's possessions and his money will not accompany him! בבקר A person's belongings, his family and his money cannot come anywhere near the mountain. You come on your own.

ר' זלמן סורוצקין זצ"ל brings a story about ministers who were jealous regarding a Jewish advisor of the king and they reported to the king that he stole money from the king's treasury.

The king called him in and asked him what he's worth.

The advisor told the king that he is worth only a small amount.

The king decreed to throw him into prison and confiscated all his assets, since the king knew he was worth much more.

Later at his trial, the king asked the advisor, "We all know your worth much more! Why did you say you're only worth a very little?"

The advisor explained, "The figure I told you was a tenth of my possessions. I give away a tenth of all my possessions, and that tenth (the מעשר) of my money is how much I am truly and eternally worth, and you see this from the fact you confiscated all my other assets!"

We see it's true – what a person has is only what he gives away.

The במא בתרא (דף י"א.) in גמרא speaks about מונדב המלך – a very special king who gave away all his אוצרות of wealth which he inherited from his father, grandfather, great-grandfather and so on.

His family came to complain, "Why are you giving away all the wealth of our fathers and our forefathers?"

The king replied, "*Do you really think I'm just giving it away?* אבותי גנזו במקום שהיד שולטת בו, ואני גנזתי במקום שאין היד שולטת בו, My forefathers accumulated in wealth in which can be taken away by others, however, I am accumulating wealth which nobody can steal from me.

"Your fathers collected, assembled and gathered in this world, however, I am gathering, collecting and investing for the future."

"אבותי גנזו אוצרות ממון, ואני גנזתי אוצרות נפשות" – My forefathers gathered and stored warehouses of money, whereas I gathered warehouses of souls. אבותי גנזתי לאחרים ואני גנזתי לעצמי, my forefathers accumulated wealth to give to his children, however, I accumulated wealth for myself, because by giving it away it became mine!" אבותי – גנזתי לעולם הזה, ואני גנזתי לעולם הבא – my forefathers invested for this world but I invested for the coming world.

פרשת נשא תש"פ גליון 34 – (QUOTED FROM גליון)



Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.