

Then, what is *taka* פשט that he thought of doing one thing, yet he was “distracted” and was drawn to the בית המדרש before he could reach the place where he originally decided to go to? Why did his feet take him to the place he seemingly did not want to go to?

Lastly, we must try to understand and appreciate how exactly this מדרש has a connection toward the beginning of, "פרשת בחוקתי - "אם בחוקתי תלכו..."

The סופר teaches a יסוד toward the battle against the יצר הרע: If a thought enters a person's heart to do a מצוה, "לא יאמר ולא יוציא מפיו", don't say anything – don't speak about it. Don't say the מצוה you intend doing (even with saying נדר).

Why is this so?

"שהשטן עושה תחבולות שלא לעזבו לעשותו", the שטן will come with many "תחבולות" to prevent a person from performing the מצוה.

We've experienced this scenario many-a-time, we tell ourselves, “I'm going to learn now... I'm going to do so and so מצוה...” it's then when the שטן comes and does all he can to prevent the person from learning – to prevent the person from doing the מצוה.

In fact, this is a clear רש"י in סנהדרין כ"ו: "מחשבה שאדם מחשב, 'כך וכך אעשה... כך וכך תעלה, סנהדרין כ"ו: 'רש"י in *When a person thinks, 'this and that I will do..., ' this "thought" causes what he wants not to be accomplished!* "אפילו לדבר תורה", *Even regarding תורה*, "כגון", *for example*, "עד יום פלוני אסיים כך וכך מסכתות", *by a certain date I will finish a certain amount of מסכתות....*”

His thoughts will not be fulfilled – they will not be accomplished. It's extremely risky for a person to declare that he will do something good – something רוחני לדבר.

The שטן will hear the person say it and ultimately try to stop and prevent the person from achieving his original thoughts.

The משנה in (א, ט"ו) states, "שמאי אומר", *says שמאי*, "עשה תורתך קבע ואמור מעט ועשה הרבה", *Make your תורה study a fixed practice, say little and do much.*

We look at such a משנה and immediately ask: What's the connection between עשה "עשה תורתך קבע" – to study a fixed practice, and "אמר מעט ועשה הרבה" – saying a little?! How do these two details join together and end up in the same משנה?

The ספרים teach, "עשה תורתך קבע!" – Do you want to know how to make your תורה קבע? "אמור מעט ועשה הרבה" – say a little. If you want your תורה to remain - if you want to

learn תורה before being stopped by the הרע, "אמור מעט" – say little. Don't say a lot. Don't talk too much about your plans! "אמור מעט" – don't speak about learning תורה. And if a person is "אמור מעט", then "תורתך קבע", the study is a fixed practice.

אמור מעט – don't speak about the good things you are going to do.

If you speak about it, it will not happen.

Similarly, the משנה in אבות teaches, ("אל תאמר לכשאפנה אשנה, שמא לא תפנה" (ב', ד'), *Do not say, 'when I have time I will learn,' for perhaps that time may never come.*'

The לעתים explains: Don't say, "When I have time I will learn," because when the שטן hears this, he will make sure – שמא לא תפנה, he will make sure you will not find time. All our צדיקים always spoke very little – אמור מעט, and with that they accomplished a tremendous amount of good deeds in their life – "ועשה הרבה". If they would say a lot, they would not succeed! If they would say a lot they wouldn't be able to do a lot.

דוד המלך says, "אמרתי אחכמה והיא רחוקה ממני", *I thought I will be clever, however, it was far away from me.* The ספרים הקדושים explain: "אמרתי" – because I said so – because I spoke about my plans, "רחוקה ממני" – it became difficult for me to understand.

The נפש החיים (ליקוטים) brings from the גאון that not only can the שטן hear a person speak, he can also know about an "הסכמת בלב" – a fixed and clear thought in a person's heart.

מסכת שבת (י"ב) in תוספות writes that מלאכים can understand the מחשבות of a person!

ר' עקיבא איגר (גליון הש"ס) there explains: When a person thinks subtle thoughts the מלאכים will not grasp them, however, when a person creates strong thoughts in his heart, the מלאכים – the שטן – will clutch onto them!

Of course, we have to tell people sometimes what our plans are – what we are going to do. It makes us responsible.

However, we're discussing when a person intends to go and learn. His regular סדר! Don't make a big deal about it. Don't speak about it. He shouldn't make a fuss or issue out of it or say "I'm going to learn..." because when the שטן hears, he will come and stop him.

The תורה which דוד המלך learnt was tremendously חשוב in the eyes of הקב"ה, "כי טוב יום, הקב"ה", "טוב לי יום אחד שאתה יושב ועוסק בתורה, מאלף עולות שעתיד, דוד המלך to הקב"ה, בחצירך" *It is preferable to me one day* (שבת דף ל', מכות דף י').

when you sit and learn תורה, as opposed to one thousand עולות which your son שלמה will offer up on the מזבח!

הקב"ה appreciated one day of learning of דוד המלך more than one thousand עולות!!

דוד המלך knew how חשוב his תורה was in front of the רבש"ע and he knew very well that the שטן will do all he can to prevent this תורה from being learnt.

דוד המלך therefore came up with the following "תחבולה". Every morning he woke up and pretended "I'm going here... I'm going there... I'm going to this place and I'm going to that place..." Every single day he woke up, thought and said this!

When the שטן heard this, he was very happy and left דוד המלך alone.

However, this was where it all began: Subtly in the back of דוד המלך's mind he knew exactly where he was heading to! He was going to the בית המדרש! He knew very well what he wanted to do and where he wanted to be, "ואשיבה רגלי אל עדותיך".

He tricked the יצר הרע, explains the סופר התם.

It's no coincidence that this מדרש is brought regarding the פסוק "אם בחוקתי תלכו", – which ל interpret, "שתהיו עמלים בתורה". The מדרש is giving us a guideline – a lesson for life before being עמל בתורה. If you want to be עמל בתורה you must be one step ahead of the שטן. Don't speak about your תורה too much. Don't think too much, but rather just do it straight away. Like this, the שטן will not be able to stop you from learning תורה.

Perhaps, with this in mind, we can now understand why the תורה doesn't explicitly write, "שתהיו עמלים בתורה". The תורה is being מרמז to the 'trick' we should use when we learn תורה. The תורה is teaching us: our עמילות בתורה should be hidden, the שטן shouldn't hear about our עמילות בתורה. Our intentions for עמל בתורה should be hidden. One shouldn't advertise "I'm going to learn."

The priority of the שטן is to stop a person from learning תורה.

They say a *verrtel*: The מלאך fought with יעקב. He didn't fight with אברהם and nor did he fight with יצחק. The reason is because, אברהם symbolized חסד, יצחק symbolized עבודה, whereas יעקב symbolised the תורה הקדושה! The שטן's main and most important job is to disturb and fight against those people who want to learn and learn תורה! This is the biggest area where the שטן attacks a person.

The גמרא in (ל"ג) שבת tells us about the תנא רבי שמעון בר יוחי who hid in the cave with his son for twelve years learning תורה.

When it came the time he could leave the cave, אליהו הנביא came outside the cave and announced, "Who is going to tell בר יוחי that the קיסר has died and his decrees have been abolished?"

Asks the בן איש חי: Why couldn't אליהו tell רשב"י to leave the cave in a normal way. Why couldn't he go into the cave to tell them clearly? Why did he stand outside and ask his question – "who will tell בר יוחי that the קיסר has died" – and thereby implying that רשב"י could leave the cave? Tell them clearly, "רבותי! You're safe – you can leave the cave?"

I saw in the תורה בהתמדה גדולה a gevaldiga פשט: ר' שמעון בר יוחי was learning תורה – they weren't מבטל even one second! אליהו הנביא knew that if he enters into the cave or he tells them clearly from outside the good news, they will have to thank him from bringing the good news! אליהו הנביא didn't want to stop their תורה for even one second! If he would address them clearly, they would have to stop and listen and show respect, ultimately causing a ביטול תורה.

Therefore, he stood outside the cave and just announced abstractly, "Who will tell בר יוחי that the קיסר has died and his decrees have been abolished?"

He didn't want to stop one second of his learning.

הז"ל tell us that when רשב"י and his son learnt in the cave, they dug a hole and covered their entire body until their neck with sand. (They couldn't wear the same clothes for twelve years.) Because they sat in the sand all day, הז"ל teach that they endured terrible skin rashes.

Nevertheless, they learnt בהתמדה רבה even in difficult circumstances, until the extent that אליהו הנביא didn't want to stop one second of their learning!

The גמרא in (מ"ה) סוכה teaches, "אמר ר' ירמיה משום רשב"י "יכול אני לפטור כל העולם מן הדין", רשב"י said, "I can exempt the entire world from דין – from punishments."

The ספר חסידים (סי' תתרנ"ב) explains: Because רשב"י learnt תורה with tremendous צער and nevertheless accepted it all with אהבה, this צער he received took away all other צרות and פורעניות in the entire world!

When a person learns תורה בצער – when a person learns תורה under difficult circumstances, the צער he experiences, removes other צרות from the world.

This is why חז"ל teach us that תלמידי חכמים are מרבים שלום בעולם – they increase peace in the world. When they argue in learning and experience a "מלחמתו של תורה", this removes other מלחמות in the world.

If we learn תורה with a מלחמה – with a fight – with a battle, it ultimately removes other מלחמות. Likewise, when we learn תורה with צער – with difficulty, it takes away other problems and צרות in the world.

Today, it has become difficult to learn, it's become harder than usual. All these difficulties come into the consideration to remove other hardships in the world.

We see here this נקודה: אליהו הנביא didn't want to stop them learning for a second.

In ראדין ישיבה – not everyone had their personal watch, so the חפץ חיים therefore appointed a שמש who would bang out "מנחה" on the בימה just before they began davening מנחה.

It once happened when the שמש by mistake announced "מנחה", five minutes before the correct time.

The חפץ חיים was very upset about this and many years later once the שמש died, the חפץ חיים once said, "Oy, oy, oy... who knows what the שמש is going to do in מעלה של בית דין when they ask him about those five minutes of ביטול תורה... oy gevalt!... who is going to help him in the next world!?"

There was a איד in London who once went to the Steipler זצ"ל. The Steipler asked for his name.

The איד told the Steipler his name.

"Do you have a brother living in בני ברק?" asked the Steipler.

"Yes, I do," replied the איד.

"Well please tell him to come to me, I must speak to your brother" said the Steipler.

His brother was surprised why the Steipler wanted to speak to him, so he came immediately without any delay.

"Did you learn on Friday afternoon in a certain בית המדרש as a בחור?" asked the Steipler.

"Yes," the איד replied.

“And do you remember the שמש who cleaned up the בית המדרש every Friday afternoon? Do you remember him telling you to move to the other side of the בית המדרש when he was cleaning the side where you were sitting?” asked the Steipler.

“Yes – I actually remember him telling me to move when he washed the floor,” replied the איד.

Said the Steipler to the איד, “The שמש came to me in a dream and he told me he hasn’t got proper מנוחה הנפש in the next world because of the ביטול תורה he caused on that Friday afternoon. Even though he was doing his job, it was taken into consideration! He told me to locate you and tell you to go to his קבר to give a complete מחילה.”

This happened not too long ago to a brother of a איד in London who lived in בני ברק.

Every second of לימוד התורה has got tremendous חשיבות.

This is where the שטן tries his best to harm us. He wants to stop our לימוד התורה. He wants to prevent our connection to הקב"ה which comes through the תורה.

שפע continues to tell us that with עמל בתורה we can bring down tremendous שפע of פרנסה to the world, and "ונתתי שלום בארץ" – it brings peace in the world! תורה fights all the difficulties in the world.

That’s the system – that’s the way it works. All the סגולת החיים come through לימוד התורה and עמילות בתורה. When a person learns he connects with the רבש"ע.

This is what the שטן wants to prevent happening. Therefore, a person must be extremely careful not to tell the שטן any of his plans.

When a person has decided to do something good, do it straight away without speaking or thinking too much! Just don’t let the שטן hear your wonderful plans because otherwise he will do all he can to stop it.

The שטן has tremendous power, and we must daven and do every השתדלות to trick the שטן. "חשבתי דרכי ואשיבה רגלי אל עדותיך", שטן.

This is the פרשה to be מחזק in our "שתהוי עמלים בתורה" – עמילות בתורה. And let us remember, all our extra צער we contribute towards our עמילות בתורה brings down to the world a tremendous הצלחה and a רפואה to remove other צרות and problems.