

פרשת בחוקת'י

חלק ג' – גליון 35

כ"ז אייר תשפ"ב

מאת ר' ש. קאפל'ין שליט"א

דוד המלך

The opening words of the מדרש רבה רבה רבה (ל"ה, א') in פרשת בחוקת'י begins with the following: "אם בחוקת'י תלכו", *If you will go in my statutes; this is referring to the "חשבתי דרכי ואשיבה, פסוק (תהלים קי"ט) "I considered my ways, and returned my feet to Your testimonies. "אמר דוד", דוד המלך, "רבש"ע! בכל יום ויום הייתי מחשב ואומר*

למקום פלוני ולבית
דירה פלונית אני
הולך,
Every
!רבש"ע

*Reb Shach זצ"ל answered "When I was a
and the בחורים used to speak about what
they should learn with... I sat and*

single morning I thought and I said I am going to visit a particular place, or I am going to visit different people, "והיו רגלי מביאות אותי לבתי כנסיות ולבתי מדרשות, however, my feet took me to the בתי כתי "הדא הוא דכתיב, 'בתי כנסיות and מדרשות "this is as it is

written, 'and returned my feet to your testimonies.'

דוד says to the רבש"ע, "Every day I think and I say, I'm going here and there... but in the end, "אשיבה רגלי אל עדותיך,

Why is this מדרש brought here at the beginning of פרשת בחוקת'י? And what is the פשט in such a מדרש? What was this conversation all about?¹

The ר' ינותן, משנה (אבות ד', י"א)

אומר, כל המקיים את
התורה מעוני סופו
לקיימה מעשר, וכל
המבטל את התורה

Whoever fulfils the תורה despite poverty, will ultimately fulfil it in wealth, but whoever neglects the תורה because of wealth will ultimately neglect it in poverty.

The משנה is telling us, if a person doesn't learn תורה because he has riches, he will

¹ See 31 פרשת בחוקת'י תש"פ גליון 31 where we explained a different פשט in this מדרש with a חתם סופר of the פשט.

become poor, סופו לבטלה מעוני, However, we see it's not true! Some people don't learn תורה when they are rich and nevertheless, they do not become poor! They stay with their riches!

One can also be לשון מדויק of the משנה, "וכל המבטל תורה מעושר", what's the "מעושר", why doesn't it say "בעושר"?

Always finding excuses

יסוד ר' חיים מוואלאז'ין זצ"ל explains with a חסד which everyone must take and apply to their own situation. The משנה is teaching us a message, "כל המבטל תורה מעושר" means: "מחמת עושר", a person has extensive assets in many countries and many places, because of this, a person says to himself, "I haven't got time to learn תורה, I must keep my time to look after all my assets, I must control them, enhance them, I haven't got time to learn תורה, I have an excuse, I'm simply too busy with my business."

Says the משנה to such a person, "סופו" "לבטלה מעוני" – the person must know that if he would be an עני he will also be מבטל תורה! Then the excuse will be a different excuse, "I have to build up my assets, I need more פרנסה..."

The משנה is teaching us a lesson and a message, when a person looks for

excuses not to learn תורה רבה, he shouldn't talk himself into saying, "if the הקב"ה would sort out these problems I will learn תורה," because the moment the problems will be sorted, he will find different problems, it's the mindset, not the excuses.

כל המבטל תורה מעושר – if one is being מבטל תורה because of riches, such a person, סופו לבטלה מעוני, even if he will have nothing he will also find excuses and be מבטל תורה himself from תורה.

The משנה is teaching us, to try and recognise that all excuses are הרע, we must remove all excuses, because when we have excuses, they will always stay, because in every situation one can find more תירוצים.

There are no such things as excuses when it comes to learning תורה, the משנה is not just telling us, "סופו לבטלה מעוני", the משנה is telling us that whatever the case you are a type of person who has excuses.

"בכל יום ויום הייתי, דוד המלך exclaimed, *Every single day I thought and I said,* למקום פלוני ולבית דירה פלונית "אני הולך", he's a מלך, he has so many things to see to, "I must go to visit this minister, I have to to visit the finance

The right הלימוד דרך

minister, I have to see this place and that place... I have so many things to do!... every day I find that I have so many things to do, however..." "והיו רגלי "I know if I have to see to all these things I will never be finished... the list doesn't end, I'll never end up learning in the בית המדרש..."

tells the רבש"ע, "I understand where these thoughts of mine are coming from, they are the excuses of the יצר הרע, I'm going to run away from such thoughts and sit in the בית המדרש..." This could explain why this מדרש comes at the beginning of בחוקתי רש"י. בחוקתי רש"י brings from the Torah is teaching us, "שתהיו עמלים בתורה" – *that you should be laboring in the תורה*.

The מדרש is teaching us how דוד המלך in his own words was able to be such a מתמיד, "Do you want to know how to have תורה ואשיבה? עמילות בתורה" תירוצים – רגלי אל עדותיך" – leave out all the תירוצים, you can't be an עמל בתורה with excuses, because even if you sort out all of those excuses, you will find new excuses, they won't end, you won't get to any עמל with excuses, you have to just put them all aside and sit and learn."

Excuses can also include, speaking about how we learn, where we're going to learn, when we're going to learn, etc. ר' שך זצ"ל was once in the בית המדרש when the בחורים were discussing about having a הלימוד דרך, this one was saying to have this דרך, the next one was saying to have another דרך, it was a big discussion and debate.

A בחור went over to ר' שך זצ"ל and told him, "We're discussing which הלימוד דרך we should have so that we can become a תלמיד חכם like ר' שך, what's *taka* the way to become ר' שך?"

ר' שך זצ"ל answered them very curtly and shortly, "When I was a בחור and the בחורים used to speak about what דרך they should learn with... I sat and learnt..."

That's how he became ר' שך זצ"ל, he sat and he learnt, everything else stopping you from sitting and learning is the יצר הרע, don't get too involved with side tracking with the discussions and debates around you, just make sure you sit and learn if you want to become an עמל בתורה.

The גאון writes, just like there is ביטול in time, there is also ביטול

איכות in תורה, when the mind is busy with סוגיא one can't be מעיין into a the way he should be, a person must free his mind from any 'tumul' and discussion which is going on.

in his explanation to ר' יהזקאל סרנא זצ"ל (פרק ב') writes, the יצר הרע works harder to be מבטל תורה באיכות to get a person to worry and be distracted with outside thoughts which stops a person from going deep in a סוגיא, as opposed to trying to stop a person from learning תורה in the כמות.

Candles and two beds

ר' קנאי of the past generation, he was from the ראש הקנאים, and he hacked against everyone and everything.

Reb Shaya Goldshmidt told me the following story, ר' צבי פסח פראנק זצ"ל, a great ראש ישיבה in ירושלים was someone who you would have expected ר' עמרם to speak against because of many ענינים which he was עוסק in. However, ר' עמרם never ever said a word against him.

There was a person who built up the courage and asked ר' עמרם, "Nu! What's פשט you don't criticise ר' צבי פסח פראנק?!"

He answered with the following, "I once passed his דירה in the evening and I'll be honest I couldn't avoid it, but I heard him speaking to his wife and telling her, "I only have one candle left... I try to learn most of the night, however, we have no more money in the house to buy more candles... I need candles to learn תורה by night... I don't see anything which we can sell... we've sold everything we already have!

His wife replied we have two beds in the flat – one for you and one for me, why do we need two beds? We will sell one bed, for half the night you will sleep in the bed and for the second half of the night I will sleep in the bed... why do we need two beds?!"

ר' עמרם בלוי, "What happened after that conversation, I don't know, but that is what I heard when I passed his house..."

ר' עמרם בלוי, "I only criticise people humans, I don't criticise מלאכים, I'm scared to start with ר' צבי פסח פראנק." We hear a story about an אדם גדול, he could have had the greatest תירוץ not to learn by night, the טירדות and צרות he lived with, not a penny to his name, he couldn't even afford candles, and yet he

learnt and learnt, excuses aside, nothing was an excuse to stop his עמלות בתורה.

This is the חיים מוואלאז'ין which יסוד is teaching us, כל המבטל את התורה, if we don't learn because of תירוצים, we will always have תירוצים.

We must think about this: Am I letting things disturb my learning? Is my איכות being disturbed? Every day is precious, every day with excuses is a day lost, every day is important.

The א"ל תאמר in משנה teaches, 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 Kotzker זצ"ל would explain, "Don't say when I have time I will learn, for perhaps you are a "לא תפנה" person – you are a person who always has no time, you're busy busy busy, don't say when you'll have time I will learn because you are a person who will never have time."

So learn even when it seems you don't have time!!

This is the understanding in the מדרש, חשבתי דרכי – there's so much to do, yet nevertheless, ואשיבה רגלי אל עדותיך, I must go and learn תורה because if not, I will never get around to my learning,

there are always so many excuses whatever the situation.

The default of a person

פשט ר' ירוחם זצ"ל explains with a different מדרש: When one wakes up in the morning he doesn't think about getting dressed, a person doesn't think about eating breakfast, these are all things which happen naturally without any thought given. Things which are part of the default of the human being happen automatically without any thought.

When does one think to himself, "Should I do this should I not do this?!" When things are not part of the person, it's not the default of the human being, it's not part of his עצם מציאות.

דוד המלך would say, "חשבתי דרכי", "I think about going here and I think about going there..." this was all in his מחשבה, however, his default was, "ואשיבה רגלי". Even when we have to think about different things whatever the מחשבות may be, that should all be מבחון, the default should be learning in the בית איכות and כמות with עמלות with the מדרש without allowing ourselves being disturbed.

Of course, we must see to different things and make decisions in our lives,

but we must be able to know what's part
of the essence of the person, and what's

supposed to be the default of a person
always.



[Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)