

פרשת שופטים

גליון 1

ז' אלול תשע"ט

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

"שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך בכל שעריך אשר ה' אלקיך נותן לך." *Judges and officers, shall you appoint in all your cities – which Hashem, your God, gives you.* The של"ה הקדוש writes that the פרשה of the week has a connection to the week. It's no coincidence. The פרשה and the זמן are very much connected. Meaning: if פרשת שופטים falls out on the week of ראש חודש אלול, the תורה must be telling us a message which we should try accomplishing during אלול.

The תורה is telling us here that we must establish שופטים and שוטרים for each and every city.

The question is: Why does the תורה use a לשון of "לך", *for you*, instead of "לכם", when the תורה is speaking to the entire ישראל?

The חיד"א in the name of זצ"ל answers: A person has got seven שערים, *seven gates/openings*, in his body. The תורה is hinting that a person must put שופטים and שוטרים at the entrance of all of these openings, (see ר' אליה לאפיון זצ"ל who explains באריכות the difference between a שופט and a שוטר). A person must guard the openings of one's body

– what goes in and what comes out. We will discuss the opening of the body which a person must guard speaks; the mouth. A one's mouth. The תורה is warning us, every single person in

"During these days approaching towards the ימים נוראים," writes the חפץ חיים, "a person must be extremely cautious with regards to his speech."

comes out. We will of the body which person must guard is warning us, לך "תתן לך, כלל כלל person in

every - בכל שעריך" must put שופטים and שוטרים at the entrance of his mouth.

We want to understand the continuation of the "אשר ה' אלקיך נותן לך" – פסוק, together with what we have mentioned above.

I once heard from ר' חיים קאופמאן זצ"ל that when he was a yungerman he travelled to the Rebbe of סלונים זצ"ל who told him the following. (ר' חיים זצ"ל did not know why, but for some reason the Rebbe told over the following story:) When I was a yungerman I was a מלמד to young children in school. We were learning the גמרא in א' עמוד נ"ח ברכות where

teaches that when one sees a gathering of six hundred thousand אידן, one should recite the ברכה of, "ברוך חכם הרזים" – we praise הקב"ה Who knows what is going on in the thoughts of every single person. The גמרא continues: בן זומא was standing on top of הר הבית and saw six hundred thousand people and he said, "ברוך חכם הרזים", *– blessed is the One who knows the thoughts of every person*, together with adding, *וברוך שברא* "כל אלו לשמשני". *and blessed is the One who created all these people to serve me*. The tailors, bakers and farmers are all there to serve me.

One little boy in class picked up his hand and says, "בן זומא is such a גאון!!" The Rebbe didn't give the boy a patch, but rather the Rebbe was given the ס"ד to answer the boy with the following true story that took place during those times in England. The king of England heard about a special medicine which can be produced with unique herbs which are found deep in the jungles of Africa. With creating this medicine, the king would be able to save many people in his country from a certain disease. The professor who was asked to organize the delegation, first informed the king the necessities he would require performing this task: doctors, professors, scientists, importers, etc. The king told the professor, "Don't worry the government are going to pay all the costs for success of this mission." The journey took many weeks until they reached the shores of Africa. Eventually, after making their way through the forests and jungles they reached the place where this herb grew. First, they set up their tents since they were still going to be there for a few weeks to produce the drug.

Once, during the night, one of the assistances could not fall asleep. He gets out of bed and walks around the camp. He comes across one tent and finds a candle lit. He takes a peek through the flap and sees the chief professor of this delegation extremely busy – writing, looking, writing, looking – at two a clock in the morning! בדרך ארץ obviously the assistance asked, "אדוני – the professor; at two a clock in the morning shouldn't you be in bed? What are you doing at such a late time of night?"

The professor said to him, "If I get up at nine a clock in the morning and begin my work, the work for the assistances will only be ready at two a clock in the afternoon. Do you know how long the expedition will take at that pace? Do you know how much it is costing our country every day by us being here? Every minute we are here costs

thousands of pounds. Do you understand what responsibility I have? Subsequently, I get up early in the morning so that the work should be ready immediately at nine a clock for the assistances. Like this the work gets done in much quicker time and we will ultimately not waste the countries money.”

Said the Rebbe to the little boy as follows: “Heaven forbid, בן זומא was not a בעל גאווה. בן זומא was rather saying – בשביל ישראל שנקרא ראשית נברא העולם – because of כלל ישראל the world was created. בן זומא – one of the greatest מתמידים of the דור, in order to survive with learning תורה required all these thousands of people.

Do you know how many thousands of people go in towards the work of one can of coke? Do you know how many hundreds of people worked so that your bike should have oil to make it run smoothly? You are encompassing many continents around the world!

The רבש"ע created a massive world with millions and billions of people in it. Each person is doing a different job. Because He created such a big world, "בראשית ברא אלקים" – בשביל התורה ובשביל ישראל" – what a responsibility I have! בן זומא was expressing the tremendous responsibility he has. “I can’t waste my time! הקב"ה put so much in place in order that I can sit and learn בהתמדה רבה. What a responsibility. If I don’t do what I am supposed to, *oy gevalt!* I am wasting so many resources, so much of what הקב"ה put into this world.”

Many years ago, when they made the M1 there was a big debate where it should begin. In those times there was mainly one ישיבה in England, Gateshead - ישיבה. There were approximately ten options where the M1 should begin, eventually it was נמנו וגמרו to begin in Golders Green! Why? So that בחורים going from Golders Green to Gateshead can go direct by coach! Everything in this world is בשביל התורה וישראל.

The גמרא in ב' עמוד ב' teaches that when משיח comes the גוים are going to come and ask for their reward for all the bridges, cars, garages, etc, they made in order for כלל ישראל to learn תורה. Says הקב"ה, "שוטים שבעולם" – fools you are! Why are they שוטים, shouldn't they be called שקרנים, liars? Explains ר' שלמה בוימגרטן זצ"ל: It's true, they are not liars, everything they made is for כלל ישראל. But they are שוטים, because if they would have had that intention, they could have received reward! שוטים they are!

The billions of people are all there so that we can learn and be able to serve the רבש"ע properly.

The אשר פרשה begins by telling us we should put guards at the entrances of our body. "ה' אלקיך נותן לך" means: The רבש"ע gave us tremendous power, tremendous organs, tremendous vocal cords, tremendous ear drums, etc. When you delve into it, you find ממש ניסים ונפלאות. Since הקב"ה gave us such a powerful body that makes a responsibility on us to guard them and use them properly.

Let us understand a bit the power of speech. The ספר שמירת הלשון חפץ חיים writes in his שער הזכירה פרק י': The power of speech which the רבש"ע has given us to serve Him has the power to create heaven and earth! As the נפש החיים teaches that every word of תורה and תפילה impacts an enormous רושם in שמים. We can't see it, but it is happening as we speak. Every single word of תורה we speak has השפעות *gevaldiga*. We don't realize how powerful our speech is.

Why would a person want to be a president of America? באמה – what for? He works very hard the first term and after the second term the people are fed up of him? The cycle determines that by the time he goes everyone hates him, no family life, and everything he does wrong is known to the entire world.

The answer is פשוט. He wants to be president because every word he says is going to be discussed and analysed for the next week! Everyone wants to know what he says in his speeches. It's a tremendous honour to know that you have five hundred million listeners to your speech. That is the reason why a person wants to become president of America. There is no other reason.

Every איד must know that the כח הדיבור a איד has is a billion times greater than the words of the president of America!

Every word we say brings down tremendous השפעת from the עליונים. We must understand "את ה' אלקיך נותן לך" – He has given us all powerful כוחות into our body. Each דיבור we speak has tremendous powers and we must be careful to guard and not waste them.

The חובת השמירה פרק י' in חפץ חיים writes that as we approach the ימים נוראים, certainly it is very important to be cautious with regards to this כח which we have through mouth.

A person should be careful, how, when and what he speaks about especially during these days of the year. To control the speech in אלול.

May the רבש"ע help us to try and be מחזק in this topic.

מאת ר' י. צאהן שליט"א

"לא יקח שחד כי השחד יעור עיני חכמים..." (ט"ז, י"ט)

One of the many הלכות the תורה tells us in this weeks פרשה is, "לא תקח שחד", *a judge shall not take a bribe*. The תורה continues to give a reason for this: "כי השחד יעור עיני חכמים ויסלף דברי צדיקים", *for the bribe will blind (even) the eyes of the wise and make righteous words crooked*.

The איש חזון in his חיטחון וביטחון ספר asks questions about this לאו. Would a תלמיד חכם really become crooked because of a bribe? Does money affect a תלמיד חכם or a צדיק? A צדיק is not going to have a נגיעה because of a bit of money. Why is the תורה telling us that through the money the תלמידי חכמים will become crooked?

Furthermore, if this is the understanding, a תלמיד חכם cannot פסקן on his own cow if it's a טריפה or כשרה, since a big loss of money is involved. Seemingly, the loss of money will cause the תלמיד חכם to פסקן that it is כשר?

The איש חזון there gives his own explanation, but we will explain based on a story with the Brisker Rov זצ"ל. When the Brisker Rov married off his son, the person who hired the hall felt very honoured that the Rov had chosen him out of all the many other halls. Because of this, he wanted to give the hall free of charge. Nevertheless, the Rov was determined to pay. He was asked why he was so determined about the matter.

The Rov answered with a one-liner: "There is no such thing of getting something free of charge. The cheapest way is to pay with money." Meaning: "If I take this offer, I will owe to him constantly during my entire life. My entire life I will be to him a "בעל חוב". Accordingly, the cheapest way is to pay him money.

When a Rov פסקן on his own cow, the loss of money indeed will not make a difference, if he must lose the money, he will lose it. However, when receiving money from others - creates the Rov to be מכיר טוב. Those feelings are going to blind him. That is the nature of the world. It's not the money, which is the issue, rather it's the feelings of being a "בעל חוב", consequently, "לא יקח שחד".