

טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

ויקם קין אל הבל – Kayin rose up to Hevel

The world jokingly tells the story of a man who wanted to catch a train. He ran with all his might to catch it, but when he was literally almost there, he heard the sound of the train whistle and the train pulled out without him. The man nodded and said, "Apparently, Heaven saved me. Maybe the train will turn over on the way or some other tragedy will happen to it on the way." The people around him looked at him and wondered why the man was so focused on the train when there were so many people on the train, men women and children, and also upstanding Jews. The man nodded and said, "If this is so, then it would be better that nothing bad should happen to the train, but I still do not understand why I missed it...?"

The Torah relates to us about Kayin and Hevel, who aside from Adam and Chava were the only two people in the world. ויבא קין מפרי האדמה מנחה לה' והבל הביא גם הוא מבכורות צאנו ומחלביהו' – 'Kayin brought an offering to Hashem of the fruit of the ground, and Hevel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and from their choicest' (4:3-4). They both brought an offering for Hashem, and what happened? Hashem accepted the gift from Hevel, 'ואל קין ואל מנחתו לא שעה' – 'but to Kayin and to his offering He did not turn' (4:5), and Kayin was very annoyed by this. ויהי בהיותם בשדה ויקם קין אל הבל אחיו – 'And it happened when they were in the field, that Kayin rose up against his brother Hevel and killed him' (4:8). We are stunned, where is the integrity? Where is the justice? We all know that Hevel was righteous since he brought satisfaction to his Maker, but Kayin sinned with his conduct. We wait to see if justice will prevail in the end, that everything will suddenly turn around, but what we see is that Hevel dies without leaving descendants. But as for Kayin, he lived a long life, and not only that, but Naama, Noach's wife descended from him, and his offspring established civilization, where is the rationale?

This is the exactly the lesson we can learn here. The world does not exist or runs according to our rationale. With our limited intellect we cannot comprehend what is good and what is bad. We have no doubt that the righteous Hevel received his reward, and that he was taken from the world after a few days without leaving descendants was for his benefit. How can this be? We will understand this when we get to the *olam ha'emes*, the true world, and from here we learn everything in life. We do not always understand why HaKadosh Baruch hu does this or that, and yet we always believe that what HaKadosh Baruch Hu does is for the best, even if it seems the opposite in our eyes!

- Tiv HaTorah - Bereishis

טיב ההשגחה

G-d made a joke of me – צחוק עשה לי אלוקים

I earn my living as a shuttle driver and sometimes I deliver packages to various addresses. I took a package from one city to another. When I arrived at the address in that city, I called the person to come get the package, but the person did not answer the phone. I tried again and again, but there was no answer, and I did not even have the exact address. I started to think how inconsiderate the person was, but I convinced myself that everything is for the best and from the Creator Yisbarach, and everything will work out fine.

Between thoughts, I tried calling. Fifteen minutes passed, which felt like forever, especially since there was no parking. The person decided to answer, and with half an apology he said, "What should I do< the phone was on silent!!!" Before I could yell at him, he hung up. Before he came down, I calmed myself and said everything is for the best. I told myself, 'Do not get angry and do not explode even if you are right, he is not worth getting angry over!!!'

Five minutes later, he calmly came down to get the package. I wanted to explode, but I held my tongue, and I did not say a thing.

I gave him the package and I started the return trip home. I had just left when I got a call for a trip close by going to the city where I lived. I gladly took the trip since instead of going back with an empty car, I had additional income from charging a decent price for the trip.

On the way, I started to laugh when I realized that the whole wait was so that I would earn more money. Had I not been held up by that customer, I would have driven for 20 minutes and it would not have paid to go back for the fare. Since his phone was on silent, and he was late coming down, this gave me the return trip which helped my earnings. In short, there is nothing to be angry about as everything is for the best and everything is calculated from Above.

.נה.

A class in cantorial singing – שיעור בחזנות

In our *yeshiva ketana*, the boys in third grade come for Selichos and I am considered among the better *chazanim* in the yeshiva, but I had never led Selichos before.

But my nature is that I will try anything, and perhaps I will do the *nusach* good enough. I prayed to Hashem to help me and save me from embarrassment. When the time for Selichos was close, an older boy came to visit the yeshiva and he was automatically asked to lead Selichos. This gave me the opportunity to listen carefully to the *nusach*, and the next day I was able to lead with confidence after a good lesson.

.נע.

ויאמר ה' אל קין אי הבל אחיך ויאמר לא ידעתי השמר אחי אנכי: (ד:ט)
Hashem said to Kayin, "Where is Hevel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" (4:9)

Rashi explains: Where is Hevel your brother? – Hashem entered in a conversation with him with words of calm, perhaps he would repent and say, "I killed him and sinned against You." I do not know – he acted like one who steals the Supreme Knowledge (as if he could fool Hashem).

This *posuk* raises the question, did HaKadosh Baruch Hu have to ask Kayin the whereabouts of Hevel?! Everything is revealed and known before Him! It is for this that Rashi comes to explain that this was to 'enter in a conversation with words of calm', and the purpose of these words was to soften his heart and bring him near 'perhaps he would repent and say, "I killed him and sinned against You."

Once Rashi explains the intent of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, we can also learn a lesson in reproach, and to know how a person should conduct himself when he determines that someone has sinned and transgressed one of the mitzvos of Hashem. Similar to this situation where a person becomes jealous and you want to rebuke the sinner with harsh words, since you think this is appropriate at this moment. But Rashi informs us that even though you are right, however not all circumstances are the same. Therefore, it is incumbent on you to wait and first determine the nature of the sinner.

This is incumbent on the rebuker to know that there are instances where the sinner will not admit to the severity of his actions at all. Then it is prohibited to scold him and beat him so long as he does not know the severity of his actions. Even if we are speaking about a sinner who is aware of his actions, it is better to judge him favorably, for in general, the sinner does not stumble with his sin from evil in his heart, rather there must be other reasons that caused him to do this. Even if his facial expression does not show this, this is not a proof that in his soul he has thrown off his obligation. A person's facial expression is not always a true indicator of his inner soul, as it states (Shmuel I 16:7) 'כי האדם יראה לעינים וה' יראה ללבב' – 'man sees what his eyes behold, but Hashem sees into the heart.'

Additionally, even if you have something to rely on that he is sinning wholeheartedly, check back later when you see that his heart is shattered to pieces because he could not overcome his *yetzer* and stand firm, and now he is filled with regret.

Even though these words are not reason to exempt him completely from rebuke, still, it is enough of a reason to not rebuke him with harsh words, rather with soft words, in a way to encourage him so he does not return to his foolishness.

This we must know, that even after the sinner realizes his sin, and he wants to correct himself, especially in regard to sins that are very difficult challenges, there is an opening for him to correct himself once he firmly decides to withstand the temptation that the *yetzer* is challenging him with. Now, if after someone has lost the battle with the *yetzer* and his heart is broken, and the rebuke comes to him and speaks harshly to him. The words can cause great animosity, for it is not enough that his *yetzer hara* has provoked him and he has no comfort, the rebuker comes and adds salt to his wound. This might cause him to give up in the battle with the *yetzer* and sour him to correct himself. It is self-explanatory that the result will be that he will remain in his low situation, and he will not want to do Teshuva. Who knows if the other person is the cause of this *Rachmana litzlan*?

However, on the other hand, we said there are circumstances where the sinner is an empty one of Israel, and it is easy for him to sin. This type of person needs to be spoken to harshly. In order to understand his situation, it is incumbent on the rebuker to enter in conversation

with the sinner with words of calm. In this way he will succeed in determining his situation and he will see why he acted so severely. Then it will become clear why he sinned, and if his heart hurts because he stumbled. If he determines and finds that he sinned with 'a broken heart', then he can encourage him to do Teshuva from now on, and there will be no need to scold him. But if he determines that the heart of the sinner is 'a heart of stone', and he acted this way from the outset with an evil heart, then it is appropriate to rebuke him harshly, perhaps he will succeed to soften his heart with these words and he will do Teshuva.

This is how HaKadosh Baruch Hu conducted Himself with Kayin. He did not scold him for killing Hevel his brother, He just asked him, "Where is Hevel your brother?" For even though Kayin knew quite well the severity of his actions, we might think that at the moment he was not able to hold himself back. But after the act, he regretted what he did. Therefore, HaKadosh Baruch Hu did not want to rebuke him with harsh words, and He wanted Kayin to describe his pain and admit his sin. Only after Kayin did not acknowledge his sin, and also he made himself as if he could steal the Supreme Knowledge (fool Hashem), HaKadosh Baruch Hu spoke to him harshly and told him 'מה עשית' – 'What have you done?' (4:10) and these words did their job and brought him around to do Teshuva.

To illustrate our words, I will tell a story of a distinguished Mashgiach in one of the famous yeshivas here in Yerushalayim. One of the boys was absent from the yeshiva for several days. When he again showed up at the yeshiva the Mashgiach asked him to explain his absence. The boy replied that he did not feel well and needed a few days rest. At the time, the Mashgiach accepted his words and believed him, but a day later, the Mashgiach found out that the days the boy was absent from the walls of the yeshiva, he was in places that were not appropriate. He even convinced other boys to join him to do what he was doing. Immediately, the Mashgiach was determined to throw the boy out of the yeshiva.

Before he had a chance to do anything, he happened to meet one of the great rabbis in Yerushalayim, and when he saw the Mashgiach's face he realized that something was amiss. He asked the Mashgiach to tell him what had happened, and the Mashgiach told him about the boy and what he had done, and he added to his sin by lying to him, and so he told him that he decided to throw the boy out of the yeshiva.

The Rav heard the details and he wanted to save the soul of the boy from being destroyed, and to have the Mashgiach see his point, he asked him, "Tell me, do you now what is going on with the boy? Do you know if the boy knows the severity of his actions? First, we have to determine if the boy knows how bad his actions were, then you can determine his punishment. But until the matter is clear, it is not possible to punish him because the boy does not know what he has done, nor how severe his actions were. If he were aware of the severity of his actions, he might not have stumbled. Therefore," advised the Rav, "my advice is to set him up with a *chavrusa* to learn Mussar regarding lying and he will be aware of the severity of lying." The Mashgiach listened to the Rav and he found some excuse to ask the boy to set up a time to learn with him between *sedorim* in books of *yireh*, and within a short time, the Mashgiach realized that the Rav was right, for after learning with the boy the severity of lying, tears began to stream from the boy's eyes, and he burst out admitting to the inappropriate things he had done which were couched in lies. It never entered his mind how severe his actions were...