

טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

And I will see the good land – ואראה את הארץ

We find ourselves in a week that is not at all simple, it begins and most of it is in mourning until we reach the bitter day of Tisha B'Av, and immediately afterwards there is a dramatic change when it is already Shabbos and we receive double condolences from Hashem Yisbarach, 'נחמו נחמו עמי יאמר – אלוקים – 'Comfort, comfort my people, says your G-d' (Yeshaya 40:1). We are sure that if we tried that in our generation, psychologists would scream, "How is it possible to do this!" To act the exact opposite in one week, and even to change so drastically emotionally in one day, from complete mourning to the joy of Shabbos. But Chazal did not think like this, in fact just the opposite, Chazal set this up for us like this, also, all the laws of mourning for the entire year, so that we do not forget for a moment the great loss of the Bais HaMikdash that was destroyed, and we do not have it. But as for us, in our low and distant generation, we do not comprehend how great our loss is, and with difficulty we succeed in mourning a little during The Three Weeks.

There is a *posuk* in our parsha that applies to both aspects: 'אעברה נא ואראה את הארץ הטובה אשר בעבר הירדן ההר הטוב הזה – והלבנון' – 'Please let me cross and see the good land that is on the other side of the Yarden, this good mountain and the Lebanon' (3:25). Rashi explains, 'And the Lebanon – this is the Bais HaMikdash. The Gemara (Yoma 39b) says, 'Why is it called Lebanon, because it whitens the sins of Israel', and in another place Chazal say it is an expression of 'lev' [heart] for all the hearts rejoiced in it. This is the Bais HaMikdash that we do not have. We lost the source of our joy. In truth, those of that generation were not able to be joyful at all since they knew what we lost. In the beginning of the *posuk*, Moshe Rabeinu gives us direction for the days we go out 'to see the land'. He requests of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, – 'Please let me cross and see the good land', he wants to see only the good of the land, for if we go out 'to see the land', this does not prove that we only see good things, but Moshe Rabeinu teaches us that before we go out we must pray that we merit to only see good things, and not stumble by seeing prohibited things.

As we have said, we find ourselves in a confusing situation. True, the laws of mourning of The Three Weeks have ended, but to our dismay we still have not been redeemed and we are still in exile. Even if we go out 'to see the land', we must first pray 'to see the good land', only see good things.

- Tiv HaTorah – Va'eschanan

טיב ההשגחה

'A fool will not understand – וכסיל לא יבין'

For many years I would fly to the United States for the Yamim Noraim to be a *chazzan* in a shul in one of the communities.

Two years ago, we had a baby close to the holidays and it was not doable to fly, so I found them a replacement *chazzan* so that the congregation should not lose out and I also thought that I would reserve my place with the community. I sent my friend in my place, and I was sure that my friend would give it back to me the next year. But when the time came and I spoke to the congregation in order to make reservations. To my surprise, the *gabbai* explained to me that they had already reserved my friend that I sent the previous year, he also explained that he took less than I did and he worked harder to make himself likeable by the congregation.

I went to that friend and asked how he could do this and take my livelihood, and he simply replied, "This is how it is in the workplace, he who succeeds takes!!!"

I was so speechless from his response that I did not even get angry, the mind could not grasp his thinking, of course I had time to work on my *midos*, and I accepted with love that everything that Hashem did was calculated and precise, and no one could touch what was meant for me...

Two weeks later I received an invitation to an amazing congregation whose *chazzan* could no longer take the position and they had heard about me. This was a congregation of *Bnei Torah* who wanted a yeshivish davening unlike the congregation of *baalei batim*, where one of them would stand behind me breathing down my neck, and woe to me if I took a little too long because I was emotional. This congregation paid more than the other one, and I give thanks to Hashem for the kindness bestowed upon me for the extra money. Also, it is a wealthy community and they donated to an organization I maintain for struggling youth. Two donors paid all the expenses for an entire year, and I used the extra money for other things.

I saved the sweetest thing for last: That friend suddenly came to me and asked if I could find a place for him in America. I asked him what happened to the community that took me, he told me that the congregation dispersed and they have no minyan, and everyone went to another shul... [of course it took me time so as not to rejoice at his downfall...]

Just thank Hashem and do not get angry, for everything is truly for good and blessing!!!

.א.י

וְאֶתְחַנֵּן אֵל ה' בְּעֵת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר: (ג:כג)

I implored Hashem at that time saying. (3:23)

Rashi explains: 'Implored in all places means nothing except requesting a gift for free. Although the righteous could make their requests dependent on their good deeds, they seek nothing from the Omnipresent but a gift without payment.

Another meaning, this is one of the ten expressions that denote prayer, as stated in Sifrei (Sifrei 26).

We have to understand what Rashi's intent was by adding the second explanation that is one of the expressions of prayer. This does not add to the explanation of imploring, just that this is one of the ten expressions of prayer, that is, asking for a free gift is one of the expressions of prayer, why 'another meaning'?

We can say that at first Rashi explains that 'va'eschanan' is a way of *avodah* that only applies to *tzaddikim*, for only the righteous can request a free gift, for with their broader understanding they recognize their worth. Although they increase Torah and good deeds, they do not see this as a merit for themselves, for to their broad minds they recognize this as the loftiness of Yisbarach, and they know that to His great loftiness even Heaven does not merit in His eyes, how much more so is it not relevant to a human to fulfill his obligation to his Creator, therefore, they can request a 'free gift'. However, ordinary people who do not come to this level cannot merit a prayer like this.

A similar story is brought down in the *sefer* 'Sidduro shel Shabbos' (Cheilek 2, Third Drush, Perek 3) about Rav Saadya Gaon. Once one of his students came to him suddenly at night and found him rolling in the snow. The student stood there shocked, trembling with fear, and asked him, "Rebbe, Rebbe, do you *chas v'shalom* need to do *teshuvah* so much to endure such great sorrows and suffering?! Has his honor ever transgressed a hint or thought of sin that he oppresses himself like this? What should we do when we are like a wall filled with sins and iniquities, various types of punishments and challenges as bitter as death would not suffice to cleanse us? Why is the Rav rolling in the snow?"

The Rebbe replied, "You should know that I have never done this before for I knew in my soul that I have never transgressed a sin that would be deserving of this. However, I learned this from a householder who I came to stay by in his hotel. He did not recognize me and he honored me like he honored every other person. When word got out in the city that I had come there, all the people of the city gathered, men, women and children, to receive me like Jews all over who honor *talmidei chachmim* who are dear in their eyes.

"When the host saw that this was so, he also began to honor me with great honor as much as he could and even more. When I wanted to leave there and go on my way, he fell before my feet, cried, and begged me to forgive him for not showing me respect. I said to him, 'All this honor that you showed me was in your power to do so, what else could you have done to honor me?' He replied, 'I am apologizing for the first hour I met you when I did not know the esteem of the Admor, and I did not honor him properly. For this I fall at the feet of the Admor and ask his forgiveness since I did not know his greatness.'

"His words aroused me very much as I said to myself that if he falls before me for the honor of a flesh and blood person and begs me for my forgiveness, certainly it is appropriate to beseech our Creator.

For even if in the past I recognized His greatness, now I recognize His greatness even more, also now I have increased my *avodah*, my awe, and my love for Him in line with my recognition of Him. I regret the past and I beg of Him, and I punish myself like this so that He forgive me for my diminished *avodah*, awe, and love in the past, since I did not serve Him out of fear and awe as I serve Him today as you see."

You see from this story that this is the trait of *tzaddikim*, they do not see the value of their deeds, therefore, they request all their needs as 'free gifts', but the masses are not able to merit Tefillos like this.

Since this is so, Rashi adds an alternate explanation, that this is one of the ten expressions of prayer, and all expressions of prayer are for people in general not just the *tzaddikim*, and even if an ordinary person does not have the trait of humility of the *tzaddikim*, he can still earn this category, and in a way more than the *tzaddikim*. This comes about when he prays to Hashem for his troubles, that he recognizes that he is owed nothing since he has transgressed much and his troubles that come upon him are justly deserved, based on this he only requests a 'free gift', and he says before his Creator, 'It is true that I am not fit for anything, but I am only asking for a 'free gift' and accept me like a father to his children, even if they have nothing.

Based on what was mentioned, I would like to explain the intent of the *posuk* in this light (Tehillim 69:14) 'אוני תפילתי לך השם' – 'But as for me, my prayer is to you, Hashem' – when I ask that my prayer go up before Hashem Yisbarach, 'עת רצון אלקים' – 'at a time of favor, O G-d' – I want that even at a time that I do not deserve it based on my deeds, and the category of 'Elokim' which is the trait of true justice holds it back, even then, it should be 'a time of favor' to accept my Tefillah, the advice for this is 'ברוב' – 'in the abundance of Your kindness, answer me' – I request to be answered in the merit of 'an abundance of His kindness', for there is no opening for an accuser with a Tefillah like this, and the person even prepares himself with this to receive the abundance since he realizes that he is nothing.

Perhaps we can also explain that this is the meaning of what we say every day in *Tachanun*, 'מתרצה ברחמים ומתפייס בתחנונים' – 'become favorable through compassion and become appeased through supplication', that from the side of your abundant mercy there is no limit to help, and even if the person is not prepared to receive abundance based on his deeds, still, when he asks through supplication, out of the realization that he is not deserving based on his deeds, he is found favorable. Therefore, 'התרצה והתפייס' – 'become favorable and appeased to the poor generation', since we recognize our low worth, and we know that 'כי אין עוזר' – 'for there is no helper' – we are not worthy of help based on our few deeds. We double up and request, 'אבינו מלכנו' – 'our Father, our King, be gracious' with a free gift 'ועננו' – 'and answer us' once we realize 'כי אין בנו מעשים' – 'we have no deeds', and we know that we do not deserve anything based on merit, rather all our requests are 'עשה עמנו צדקה וחסד' – 'treat us with charity and kindness', so it is fitting that You arouse Your trait of mercy and kindness 'והושיענו' – 'and save us'.

Hashem Yisbarach should help us that we recognize how small our deeds are before Him, and we should merit to stand before Him with humility, and in this merit our prayers should be accepted before Him, and He should grant our requests for our good.