

לעילוי נשמת
מרת עקא עדנה
צפורה ע"ה
בת משה מנחם הלוי ז"ל



עֵלֵי דֶשֶׁה

Weekly Torah Insights and inspiration on the Parsha from the Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"za of Gur

Center of Society

ואתה תצוה את בני ישראל (02:72)

Seforim hakedoshim find additional meaning in the word תצוה, beyond the straightforward “you shall command.” There is the Aramaic root צוות, denoting connection. And there is the related word מצוה, which also connotes a relationship between the One Who commanded the mitzvos and the people who were commanded.

Every mitzvah is a connection with the Ribbono shel Olam. It is the only eternal reality in this world

In Koheles, Shlomo Hamelech describes all that he has observed and understood in all of Creation. In the closing sentences he sums up all he has learned and all he wishes to convey with this *sefer*, and encapsulates it in a few short words. סוף דבר הכל נשמע את האלקים ירא ואת *After all has been heard; fear Hashem, and keep His mitzvos, for this is all of man* (Koheles

12:13). The Gemara (Berachos 6b; Shabbos 30b) expounds on these last words כל יזה כל האדם, and makes the astounding assertion that כל העולם כולו לא נברא אלא לצוות לזה – *the entire world was created for no other reason but to accompany this one.* The key phrase, לצוות לזה, has a number of meanings and inflections.

One understanding we could propose is based on the teaching of the Rebbe, R. Bunim of Peshischa.¹ We know that when a Yid does a mitzvah a *malach* is created. That *malach's* existence is totally dependent on the mitzvah; it was created from that mitzvah alone, and exists only because of it. *Seforim hakedoshim* teach us that if the mitzvah was lacking in some aspect, the *malach* created by that mitzvah will also be lacking in some aspect. The reason is plain to see: the *malach's* existence is caused by the mitzvah, so it has only as much existence as the mitzvah itself.

Compare this to a human life. A person lives in this world and walks around thinking that he has an autonomous existence. Living in this obfuscating world, he cannot see that his existence depends directly on Torah and mitzvos,

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The Prohibition of Tearing Bigdei Kehunah

The neck of the *Me'il* had a lip or hem, as the Torah says: *ספה יהיה לפיו לא יקרע – its opening shall have a lip; it shall not be torn.* There are two ways to read this last clause: A. *its opening shall have a lip so that it will not be torn;* B. *its opening shall have a lip; it is prohibited to be torn.* The Gemara (Yoma 72a) says that from this *pasuk* we learn that it is forbidden to tear the *bigdei kehunah*. The Gemara asks, perhaps the meaning of the *pasuk* is the former possibility: so that *it will not be torn.* The Gemara says that if the *pasuk* meant that, it would say *ספה יהיה לפיו שלא יקרע – its opening shall have a lip so that it will not be torn.* Since the *pasuk* omits the *ש*, I know that the *pasuk* is not just giving a reason for the hem, but stating an actual prohibition to tear the *bigdei kehunah*.

R. Akiva Eiger cites the *sefer Korban Chagigah* who raises the point that this *gemara's* approach seems to be at odds with another *gemara*. The Gemara in Sanhedrin (21a) discusses the *pasuk* that prohibits a king from marrying too many wives. *ולא ירבה לו נשים ולא יסור לבבו – he shall not increase wives for himself and his heart shall not stray.* The Gemara understands the second clause

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1 See *Kol Simchah*, Mishpatim.

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the life-force of Creation. That is not to say he doesn't value Torah and mitzvos. He may value them very much, and engage in them with dedication. Still, his operating assumption is that he is; although with a caveat that he is to fulfill Hashem's will.

But, R. Bunim says, in true reality, a person also has no existence without the Torah and mitzvos. He exists only in the context of performing the will of Hashem. And not only humans, but the entire Creation exists only for the purpose of fulfilling Hashem's will. With this in mind, we return to the meaning of *Chazal*, and the word לצוות. When a Yid lives the words "את האלוקים ירא ואת מצותיו שמור" existing only to fulfill Hashem's will, then we can point to him and say: זה כל האדם. This is the man for whom the world was created, and all of creation depends on him; כל העולם כולו לא נברא אלא לצוות לזה.

Let's take this idea a step further. Rashi in Brachos defines the term לצוות with the Old French שול"ץ. The linguists who research Rashi's Old French terms render this as *solaz: recreation: a society which prevents its members from boredom*. It sounds hard to believe. Does someone who lives with the dictum את האלוקים ירא ואת מצותיו שמור need a society to prevent him from boredom? He has what to do with his time. He needs no more than his own *dalet amos* where he lives with Hashem; learning and davening and performing the mitzvos. What do Chazal mean, according to Rashi's understanding?

To explain this, we turn to another instance of this noun, צוותא. The Gemara in Bava Basra (21a) says דקארי, קארי, דלא דקארי קארי ליהוי צוותא לחבריה *[a schoolchild] who learns his Chumash, he remains to learn; [and even] one who does not learn his Chumash, [we do not expel him;] let him be company for his friend*. The Maharsha explains that the child who does not learn should remain in school because if he doesn't, the one who does learn may start considering truancy himself. We therefore keep everyone in *cheder*; let them be friends in school, and not *chas v'shalom* on the streets.

But that is not how Rashi understands the Gemara. "Let him be company for his friend – It is not necessary for you to discipline him too much, nor to expel him. He should sit in the company of the others and he will eventually become motivated." In other words, who is company for whom? Rashi reads the Gemara as saying that the child who learns is to provide company for the nonreader, and that as a result of his company, the difficult child will eventually open his heart and desire to learn and understand. This understanding of Rashi is codified in Shulchan Aruch (*Yoreh De'ah* 245:9).²

According to this Rashi, we can understand Chazal's statement — that the entire world was only created לצוות to the person who fears Hashem and keeps His mitzvos — in a new light. It doesn't mean that the world is there to keep this

Yid from getting bored. With *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* and a Gemara one is never bored. It means the opposite: the entire world should have the company of the tzaddik, to be influenced by him. There is no better recreation or entertainment for a society than fear of Hashem and performing His mitzvos.

This is perhaps a deeper meaning within the *pasuk* with which we began. Hashem tells Moshe, ואתה תצוה את בני ישראל – You, Moshe, shall be the good company, the positive influence for Bnei Yisrael.

And it didn't stop with the passing of Moshe Rabbeinu, because the spirit of Moshe Rabbeinu exists in every generation, and in every individual.³ Every Yid is imbued with a spark of Moshe Rabbeinu, which powers his yearnings and inspires his desire to do good.

Every mitzvah is a connection with the *Ribbono shel Olam*. It is the only eternal reality in this world. Everything will cease and dissipate, and only this remains, "after all has been heard: fear Hashem and keep His mitzvos." May Hashem help us merit to connect with this spark of the best company in the world, and through it to the proper yearning and the proper performance of mitzvos.

(סעודה שלישית תשכג – מאמר א)

2 The Shulchan Aruch writes: "Even a child who does not understand well enough to read *Chumash*, he should not be expelled. He should sit with the others; perhaps he will start to understand." But Rashi says it as a certainty: "He will eventually become motivated." Without doubt he will learn something by sitting in class.
3 Imrei Emes, based on *Tikunei Zohar* 112b. This is a common theme in the *avodah* taught by the Rebbes of Gur.

The Prohibition of Tearing Bigdei Kehunah

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of the *pasuk* as giving a reason for the prohibition: *he shall not increase wives for himself so that his heart shall not stray*. The *Korban Chagigah* asks: why doesn't the Gemara in Sanhedrin retort, as does our Gemara in Yoma, that the *pasuk* does not preface the second clause with a ψ which would indicate that it is a reason for the prohibition?⁴

I believe that there is a simple

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distinction to be drawn, and the reason for the discrepancy will then be clear. The Gemara in Sanhedrin is discussing the prohibition of the king marrying numerous wives; whether they cause his heart to stray, or whether they are righteous

like Avigail. There is no question that the first clause of the *pasuk* is a prohibition. Since that is a given, the second clause is certainly giving a reason for the prohibition; there is no need to spell it out with an extra ψ .

In our *pasuk*, the prohibition is not unambiguous; it depends how you read it. Reading *לא יקרע* as the reason for *שפה יהיה לפיו* will preclude reading the *pasuk* as indicating a prohibition. Since the prohibition is not a given, the Torah should spell out its intention. Is there a prohibition here, or just a reason for making a hem on the neckline of the *Me'il*? If is the Torah wanted to negate the reading of the prohibition and leave the reading that it is merely a reason, the *pasuk* would do so by adding the ψ : *לא יקרע*. Since it leaves out the ψ , we can conclude that the two clauses are separate, and *לא יקרע* is a prohibition.

But there is no inherent contradiction with reading both the prohibition and the reason in the *pasuk*. We can say that the reason there should be a lip on the neck of the *Me'il* is because there is a prohibition to tear it. The fact that there is no ψ need not indicate that the second clause is not a reason. In the same way, *ולא יסור לבבו* can be the reason for *לא ירבה לו נשים* even without a ψ .

With this understanding we can answer another question raised by the *Korban Chagigah*.⁵ Rashi to our *pasuk* says *לא יקרע – כדי שלא יקרע, והקורע עובר בלאו* *it should not be torn – so that it will not be torn, and one who tears violates a prohibition*. Rashi accepts both approaches! The *Korban Chagigah* asks how that can be; the Gemara considers both options, and presents them as a binary choice. Either we understand that it is a reason, or that it is a distinct prohibition, as the Gemara concludes. How can Rashi accept both?

But according to our understanding there is no question. There is no inherent contradiction between the two. The Gemara was only asking how we know that it is *only* a reason and not a prohibition at all. To that, the Gemara says that if the *pasuk* wished to preclude reading a prohibition into it, the *pasuk* would have used a ψ to indicate that it is *exclusively* a reason. But now that we understand that there is a prohibition here, and the *pasuk* puts the prohibition in the clause following the instruction to put a lip on the neck of the *Me'il*, we can certainly see that the prohibition is *also* a reason for the lip.⁶

(קונטרס טהר יומא, קובץ נר ישראל, ירושלים)
תשל"ט – ילקוט שיעורים, ענינים עמ' פד)

4 See *Korban Chagigah* (Klei Hamikdash 9:3) for a number of resolutions to this question.

5 *Pardes Yosef* also asks this question.

6 I subsequently found that my *zeide* the *Degel Yehudah* gives the same explanation of Rashi in a short few words, in *Hilchos Ribbis* 159. [The *Degel Yehudah* was the father-in-law of the Sfas Emes. Rabbeinu *shlita* is a great-grandson (and twice a great-great-grandson) of the Sfas Emes.]

The Pnei Menachem – On His Yahrzeit 16 Adar

The Final Letter

בה"י, יום א' לסדר "רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב חסד
נוצר חסד לאלפים" י"ב אדר תשנ"ו
עם ה' חזקו ונתחקה

It is a time of trouble for Yaakov⁸; that which we feared and warned about has arrived.⁹ Let us abandon all accounts and the 'scorekeeping' that exists among us. Chazal have said (Bava Kama 60a) that once the Destroyer is given permission he does not distinguish between the righteous and the sinners. "All of Yisrael are guarantors for each other."¹⁰ Let us root out the hatred of other Jews from within us; let us increase our *chessed* and kindness, let us be stronger in our Torah learning, pleasantness, and *yiras Shamayim*. Let us fulfill the *pasuk* (Devarim 23:10-15) *When you will campaign against your enemy; guard yourself from all evil things..., lest He see amongst you anything improperly exposed, and turn away from you.* Let us call

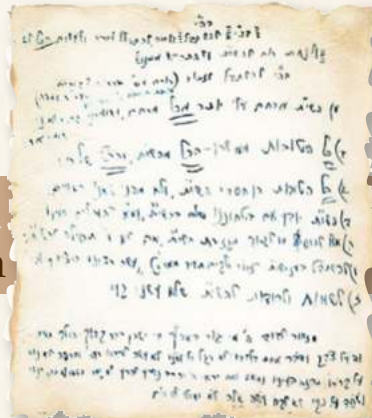
out to *Tzur Yisrael, Baruch Hu*, לנו הנפרע לנו *Tzur Yisrael, Baruch Hu*, מצרינו האל המושיע *Who exacts for us [what is due] from our oppressors, the God Who saves.*¹¹

Those who are fasting tomorrow [on Taanis Esther] and those who are not fasting, let us all call out – wherever we may be – in *tefillah*, on this 'Day of Gathering for All,'¹² the 13th of Adar. May the *middos* of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* written in this week's *parshah* "וגו" save us. As the *pasuk* says (Tehillim 125:4), "Do good, Hashem, to those who are good, and who are of righteous hearts."

We are sure that we will see the fulfillment of the *pasuk* (Tehillim 94:13) "For Hashem will not forsake His nation nor abandon His portion," and He will save us.

Pinchas Menachem Alter

(אוצר מכתבים חלק א מכתב רכה)



7 Selichos, yom chamishi of Aseres Yemei Teshuvah.
8 Based on Yirmiyahu 30:7.
9 Based on Iyov 3:25.
10 Shevuos 39a.
11 Based on the *brachah* recited after the Megillah reading.
12 Megillah 2a.

Reminder of Fundamentals of Emunah, Bitachon, & Avodas Hashem

Written By the Pnei Menachem Hundreds of Times in the Flyleaf of Many *Sefarim* in His Home

1. To remember, with *Hashem yisbarach's* help; most are from *Orchos Tzaddikim*¹³ and are also found in *Chovos Halevavos*.¹⁴
2. *Hashem yisbarach* has mercy on me, more than anyone can, and watches over me even when I fail to watch over myself.
3. Any good that I get from anyone – everything is from Hashem; all are His emissaries.
4. Any good [we receive] is out of Hashem's goodness, and not because we are entitled to it.
5. We cannot add or detract from what Hashem has ordered, except through *tefillah* to Him. [At times he would add: and by changing oneself through *teshuvah*.]
6. Hashem knows if we are completely relying upon Him. It's not possible to conceal it from Him.
7. To resolve in the heart to constantly keep the words of Chazal (Avos 2:4), "Make His will as your will..."
8. To thank and praise *Hashem yisbarach*, שלא עשני גוי.

13 *Shaar Hazechirah* and *Shaar Hasimchah*.
14 *Shaar Habitachon* Chapter 3.

(אוצר מכתבים חלק א, מה)

Final Farewell

My father wrote in his final letter, which can be taken as his last will and testament, "Let us abandon all accounts and the 'scorekeeping' that exists among us... Let us root out the hatred of other Jews from within us; let us increase our *chessed* and kindness..." Accounts, that is, if someone did something to him, he bears a grudge. But what is 'scorekeeping'? That is the further calculations and intrigue thought up by one who bears a grudge. He starts imagining that his adversary did such-and-such to spite him, and he will do such-and-such next time; so he will preempt the next round...

The *heilige* R. Ahrele Belzer said that he has a special affinity for the *Chiddushei HaRim* on Bava Kama, because it is more convoluted than his other *seforim*; he created *pilpulim* founded upon other *pilpulim*. The Belzer Rav explained that sometimes he needs far-fetched *pilpulim* and tortuous reasoning to be able to find a way to speak favorably of a Yid who has strayed far from *Yiddishkeit*. He therefore appreciates the *Chiddushei HaRim* on Bava Kama specifically, which helps him develop tortuous reasoning.

In line with the Belzer Rav, perhaps let's try to develop 'accounts and scorekeeping' for the good – to find the good in another Yid. As we abandon the negative accounting and scorekeeping, let us adopt them instead for the positive. If we will be Berdichevers it's not the end of the world. Let's raise ourselves above the petty *sinas Yisrael*, and go in my father's path of *ahavas Yisrael*.

יומא דהילולא של רבינו הפני מנחם
ז"ע – טז אדר א' תשפ"ב