

Darkei HaChizuk

ארבעה צריכים חיזוק (ברכות לב:) - שיתחזק אדם בהם תמיד בכל כחו (רש"י)

A *Sichah* from Maran Rosh HaYeshivah Rav Gershon Edelstein *shlita* .Parashas Eikev 5782

499

Double Sin; Double Consolation

Last week was Shabbos Nachamu, when we read *divrei nechamah*, words of consolation, to Klal Yisrael. “*Nachamu, nachamu ami yomar Elokeichem, ‘Be comforted, be comforted My nation,’ says your G-d.*” We know that the Name “*Elokim*” denotes Middas HaDin, the Attribute of Justice. So this *pasuk* is telling us that even Middas HaDin is mandating a *nechamah*. It’s not just Middas HaRachamim, the Attribute of Mercy, that is giving us consolation, it’s “*Elokeichem*” — Middas HaDin is giving us a *nechamah*!

Why is this so? Chazal tell us (*Eichah Rabbah*, end of chap. 1), “They sinned doubly, as it states, ‘Yerushalayim committed a sin (*cheit chat’ah*),’ and they were punished doubly, as it states, ‘For they have taken from Hashem’s hand double for all their sins,’ and they are consoled doubly, as it states, ‘Be comforted, be comforted My nation.’” The word used for sinning, *cheit*, refers to unintentional sins. Let us try to understand the meaning of the “double sin” mentioned.

It is possible that it means they sinned, and then repeated the same sins, as Chazal say (*Kiddushin* 40a), “Since a person sinned and repeated the sin, it becomes ‘permissible for him.’” The Gemara explains that in his mind, he views the sin as something permissible. When he sinned the first time, he may have been an unintentional sinner, but after committing the sin, he understood and knew that he sinned. And then, when he repeats the sin, he views it as a permitted act and doesn’t even feel that he has sinned.

This is the explanation of “sinned doubly” — they repeated the same sin, which is much more serious than sinning once, since it becomes “permissible” in his eyes. And that’s why they were punished doubly, as the haftarah of Nachamu states: “**For they have taken from Hashem’s hand double for all their sins**” — even the punishment was doubled. Although it was “just” an unintentional sin, they received a double punishment — because even though it was a *cheit*, an unintentional sin, it was “doubled,” it was a sin performed more than once and they subsequently treated it as something permitted, which makes it a more severe sin. As such, the punishment was “doubled,” a more severe punishment, *Rachmana litzlan*.

And then Klal Yisrael is comforted doubly. That is, when the *yeshuah* occurs, when Mashiach comes, it will be double. The reason for this is written at the beginning of the same *pasuk*: “**Ki mal’ah tzva’ah, ki nirtzah avonah, For she has become full from her host, for her iniquity has been appeased.**” “*Mal’ah tzva’ah*” refers to the punishment Klal Yisrael received, and as a result, “*nirtzah avonah*,” her iniquity — even those sins committed intentionally — have also become favorable. Klal Yisrael has already come into Hashem’s favor, as it states (*Vayikra* 1:4), “And it will be accepted for him (*v’ nirtzah lo*), to atone for him.” Not only don’t they have a sin, they are actually favored and wanted! HaKadosh Baruch Hu wants them, He is satisfied with them. This is the meaning of “*nirtzah avonah*.”

Consolation through Strict Justice Since Punishment Caused Repentance

And why is this so? Because “they have taken from Hashem’s hand double for all their sins.” That is, the punishment — the double punishment, such tremendous punishments — awakens us and brings us to repentance. There are a number of levels in teshuvah: there’s *teshuvah m’yirah* (out of fear) and *teshuvah m’ahavah* (out of love). In this case, the *pasuk* states: “*nirtzah avonah*, her iniquity has been appeased” — they will reach the level of *teshuvah m’ahavah*, and through that, they will become favored by Hashem. Their *yissurim*, being punished and hit doubly, caused the *teshuvah m’ahavah*. And if there is teshuvah out of love, the Attribute of Justice also demands a *nechamah*. That’s the meaning of “*yomar Elokeichem*”!

Chazal tell us (*Yoma* 86b) that when one does teshuvah out of love, his intentional sins become *zechuyos*. We must understand the reason for this. Why do a person’s *aveiros* become *zechuyos*?

I heard from Rav Dessler *zt”l*, and it’s in his *sefer* too (*Michtav Me’Eliyahu* vol. 2, p. 80, Hebrew edition): “When one repents out of love, his profound repentance is the result of recognizing Hashem Yisbarach’s kindnesses, and his iniquities are transformed into merits. Since he rose to such a great level of love due to his sins, HaKadosh Baruch Hu, in His abundant kindness, judges his sins as if they were merits.”

clarity of understanding the entire Creation, of understanding what transpires in the seven skies. And just as Hashem opened the upper skies, the *Elyonim*, He also opened the *Tachtonim*, lower worlds, and they all saw that He is the Only One. Whatever there is in the world, the stars, sun, moon, and earth, is all *dvar Hashem*. *Hashem Hu HaElokim, Ein Od Milvado!* They reached such clarity of *emunah*; they realized that whatever we see in this world is not a physical reality at all, *dvar Hashem* constitutes the entire Creation. Whatever we see with our human eyes is just an illusion. Hashem's word is the only thing that sustains Creation at every given moment, as if it were reality.

During the time of Matan Torah, Klal Yisrael merited this clarity because Hashem opened the seven skies for them and they actually saw whatever was in the Upper worlds and in the Lower worlds. They saw that there actually is no reality. We will merit the same revelation in the future with the *geulah sheleimah*, with the materialization of the *pasuk*, "And Hashem's glory will be revealed, and all flesh together will see that the mouth of Hashem has spoken," *bimheirah b'yameinu*.

The Danger of Prikas Ol

Let's discuss what is relevant *l'maaseh* now during *bein hazemanim*. At this time, *zechus haTorah* is diminished, because *yeshivos* don't have set *sedarim* like they do in the middle of the *zman*. While there are *yeshivos bein hazemanim*, there is not as much Torah being learning now as there usually is throughout the year, and we are lacking the *zechus haTorah*. And *chas v'shalom* there might be *prikas ol Torah*.

We must know that while relaxation and rest is a need, it must be relaxation without *prikas ol*. *Ol* means **knowing that there is a Torah, and there are 613 mitzvos; knowing that you are enslaved, you are subjugated to the 613 mitzvos. There is never a moment that you are exempt from this subjugation.**

We've already mentioned that there have been tragedies *Rachmana litzlan* in the past during *bein hazemanim* because of the lack of *zechus haTorah*. While it we may be able to find natural reasons for these tragedies, the truth is that they happened because we lack the *zechus haTorah*.

Therefore, anyone who strengthens themselves and is *osek baTorah* during *bein hazemanim* is generating *zechuyos* for the entire *tzibbur*. In their merit, there will be *siyatta d'Shemaya* and protection for everyone.

While resting and relaxing are necessary, it must not be with *prikas ol, chalilah*. Chazal said in *Pirkei Avos* (3:5), "One who removes the yoke of Torah will be given the yoke of government and livelihood." *Poreik*, "removing" means that he had a yoke and took it off. If there is *prikas ol, Shamayim* will burden him with something even worse.

This is a known concept regarding Torah and mitzvos. If a person is involved in a mitzvah, and the mitzvah takes a lot out of him, so he wants to become absolved of it and stop doing this mitzvah, whether it is *esek haTorah, maasim tovim*, or any mitzvah — whatever each person is busy with — if he stops, it will just be worse! Because this is *prikas ol*, he is removing and unburdening the yoke from himself. While it's true that he's working hard and he needs some rest, he does not need *prikas ol*! If he is *poreik ol*, he will be slapped with the yoke of government and earning a living instead, which are much worse.

A Happy Life with Ol Torah u'Mitzvos

On the other hand, if a person accepts *ol Torah* on himself, they take away the yoke of government and earning a living. **This is well known; it's tried-and-true.** I myself have seen this happen to people who come for advice — **if someone has some sort of difficulty, such as *parnasah*, and he accepts ol Torah upon himself, he has *parnasah*! Anyone who takes upon himself ol Torah — each person according to his abilities, based on his *kochos* — in the *zechus* of this, he will not have other difficulties.** *Shamayim* takes away the burden of all the other difficulties due to his acceptance of *ol Torah* or *ol mitzvos* if he continues performing that mitzvah. Torah is more powerful than mitzvos. In any case, when it comes to *prikas ol*, the situation just becomes worse, but accepting the yoke of Torah leads to a happy, fortunate life.

Chazal say (*Avos* 6:4), "This is the path of Torah: eat bread with salt, drink measured water, and sleep on the ground, and live a life of privation, yet toil in Torah. If you do so, *ashrecha v'tov lach*. You will be fortunate and it will be good for you. *Ashrecha* in *Olam HaZeh*..."

Four types of difficulties are mentioned. 1) Bread with salt — the food is not so delicious, but it is food, and there's enough to satiate him. 2) Measured water — and yet, he has enough to drink and his thirst is quenched. 3) Sleep on the ground — even though it's not the most comfortable accommodations, he is able to sleep and is not tired. 4) Live a life of privation — this means even more difficulties on top of the first three, and yet: if you toil in Torah, which means accepting "*ol Torah*," you will be fortunate and happy in *Olam HaZeh*! A person like this is happy; he has the best, happiest life in this world.

The Mishnah promises this — this is the Torah's way — and you will be fortunate, *ashrecha*! It seems like toiling in Torah is another difficulty, but this is not so. *Amal haTorah* is what provides us with happiness and good fortune. And what does *amal* mean? The word *amal* is similar to *hitamlut*, exercise. Just as each person can only do physical exercise according to his abilities; he cannot exert himself beyond his abilities, the same is true regarding *amal haTorah*. And this will give you "*ashrecha baOlam HaZeh*." This is the reality, and it's

