



# דרכים בפרשה

כי תצא



## כי תצא למלחמה על איביך ונתנו ה' אלקיך בידך ושביית שבי

*When you will go out to war against your enemies, and HaShem will deliver him into your hand, and you will capture its captives*

The Zohar tells us that the battle which the possuk refers to is that of a person's internal struggle with his *yeitzer hara*. The possuk begins by referring to Klal Yisroel's enemies in plural: על איביך - *against your enemies*, but then switches to the singular, ונתנו ה' אלקיך בידך - *HaShem will deliver him into your hand*. The Rosh Hayeshiva, Rav Gifter z"l explained that on a daily basis we go to battle with an enemy that seeks to destroy us, i.e. the *yeitzer hara*. He is extremely cunning and will show up in all different manners trying many tricks to cause us to fall. His attacks can come when we least expect it and even when we most certainly expect it. He comes at us from so many different angles that it may seem like we are fighting with a full army of enemies, but in fact it is just one enemy.

As a simple *mashul*, assume two people make up to learn Torah together each night at 8:30pm. At 8:15 the phone rings. It is a *chessed* phone call. "This should only take a minute," but before you know it, it's already 8:35. The next night, it's a *meshulach* at the door. Another time it is a flat tire or a phone call from the parents or even one of the children needing your

help. While these are all different legitimate reasons for coming late, the bottom line is that the *yeitzer hara* is getting involved at that very moment to cause you not to be on time for learning. He will do whatever he can to stop you, even by giving you other mitzvah opportunities.

When setting out to fight, there may be many reasons that will stop us from succeeding but in fact, once we buckle down and focus on where we need to get to, we realize that it is all the same enemy; the *yeitzer hara*. So now, the possuk switches to the singular to teach us this lesson, that it is in fact all a big façade caused by the *yeitzer hara*.

But how do we fight the *yeitzer hara*? The gemara in Masechta Sukkah (52b) states: — תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: אם פגע בך מגוול זה — *The school of Rebbe Yishmael taught: If this scoundrel, (the yeitzer hara), accosted you, seeking to tempt you to sin, drag it to the Beis Medrash (and study Torah)*. The gemara in Masechta Kidushin 30b states: כך הקדוש ברוך הוא אמר להם לישראל בני בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו תורה תבלין ואם אתם עוסקים בתורה

אין אתם נמסרים בידו - *So too Hashem, said to Klal Yisrael: My children, I created a yeitzer hara, which is the wound, and I created Torah as its antidote. If you are engaged in Torah study you will not be given over into the hand of the yeitzer hara.* One who engages in Torah study lifts himself above the *yeitzer hara*, thus able to overcome him.

In the לדוד ה' אורי that we recite daily during these days of teshuva, Dovid Hamelech makes a singular request from HaShem. אחת שאלתי מאת ה' אותה אבקש שבתי - בבית ה' כל ימי חיי לחזות בנעם ה' ולבקר בהיכלו - *One thing I ask HaShem, only that do I seek, to live in the house of HaShem all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty Hashem, to frequent His heichal.* We know the classic question: why does Dovid first begin with a single request, but then he continues to ask for several things? We can explain that Dovid understood that the *yeitzer hara* is the ultimate roadblock to acquiring any level of serving HaShem. As we quoted from the gemara, the way to render the *yeitzer hara* ineffective is by going to the *Beis Midrash* to learn Torah. So Dovid requests one thing which is in fact the key that will open the door for everything else: שבתי - בבית ה' כל ימי חיי - allow me to go and learn Torah, thus disabling the *yeitzer hara*.

לחזות בנעם ה' - Upon successfully doing so, Dovid can now merit the rest of his requests.

Coming back to our possuk, we can explain the words ושבית שביו in a new light. The word שבית *to capture*, is comprised of the same letters as שבתי *to dwell*. כי תצא למלחמה על איביך ונתנו ה' אלקיך - *When you will go out to battle the yeitzer hara, and HaShem will give him into your hand* - How then do we make him our captive? Through the power of שבתי - *dwelling in the beis hamedrash*. By adding Torah to our schedules and seeing to it that time we do spend in the beis medrash we are actually learning, then -ושבית שביו - he becomes our captive and we are now in charge of the *yeitzer hara*.

מרדכי אפפעל, Good Shabbos,



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