



דרכים בפרשה

וילך

ואמר ביום ההוא הלא על כי אין אלקי בקרבי מצאוני הרעות האלה ואנכי

הסתר אסתיר פני ביום ההוא (לא-יז-יח) *And they will say on that day, 'Is it not because our God is no longer among us, that these evils have befallen us?' And I will hide My face on that day (31:17-18)*

The Torah tells us that HaShem will conceal Himself from us as a result of our response to hardships and difficult times. But if we look at our response, there is an obvious question which the *meforshim* ask. If man admits to his sins, and further acknowledges that the hardships were brought about due to a lack of HaShem in his midst, isn't this the greatest form of *teshuva*? What is lacking in this statement? Shouldn't this bring about a revelation of HaShem? Yet, HaShem responds to our comments with *hester panim*. The Ramban tells us that although the *passuk* speaks of feelings of introspection and recognition of wrongdoing, there is still something missing. This is not a complete *teshuva*! But what is lacking?

Let us think about the words to a well-known song for a moment: דער אייבישטער זאגט אינז קינדערלעך: אנוכי הסתר פני ביום ההוא. אבער דרבי זאגט ואפילו בהסתרה שבתוך ההסתרה בוודאי גם שם נמצא (מלובש) השם יתברך גם - מאחורי הדברים הקשים העוברים עליך, אני עומד. Loosely translated, these words of Rav Nachman zt"l (Likutei Moharan 56:3) mean, "Even in the most concealed of concealed places, certainly HaShem

Yisborach is also found there. I stand with you, even through the hard times that befall you". Rav Nachman was explaining the *pesukim* that we are discussing. He further elaborates that no matter how far a person may have sunk due to his actions; he needs to realize that the Aibeshter is right there next to him.

If a person finds himself in a situation in which he feels that HaShem is not with him, he must realize that even there, HaShem is right next to him "holding" his hands. Believing that הלא על כי אין אלקי בקרבי, is in itself a sin, because it is not true. Until we internalize this idea, that even in our darkest moments, and surely in our brightest moments, HaShem does not leave us, we cannot come to a complete *teshuva*. The Sfas Emes and others answer the question in the same manner as well.

The Alshich in Parshas Nitzavim makes an interesting observation. The Torah tells us (29:23-30:2) that the *Goyim* will ask why it is that HaShem did this to the Land and why is there so much wrath? They continue to explain that it is due to serving other gods. and -וישלכם אל ארץ אחרת כיום הזה HaShem cast them into another land, as is

still the case. When someone throws something, the item is no longer being held onto; he is now cut off from that item. This is exactly what the Yeitzer Hara advises one that experiences *hester ponim*. “HaShem has tossed you aside and no longer holds onto you, and therefore you cannot return even if you wanted to.”

A few pesukim later, it says *והשבת אל לבבך* and you take them to heart amidst the various nations to which HaShem has banished you. The Alshich notes that it does not say *אשר* which means (like the *goyim* said earlier) that you were cast, but rather *אשר* which can mean that you were pushed. The difference is that while an item is being pushed, one pushing it is still connected to it. The possuk should now be read as: *והשבת אל לבבך* - a response to the Yeitzer Hara, *בכל הגוים* - the claim that the *goyim* made (that we have been cast away) is inaccurate. Rather *אשר הדיחך ה'* - HaShem has pushed us there, but He is still holding onto us and not letting go. No matter where we are or how far we have sunk *Rachmana Litzlan*, HaShem is still right there with us. *ואפילו בהסתרה שבתוך* - the hiding in the chest! *ההסתרה בוודאי גם שם נמצא השם יתברך*

Dovid Hamelech writes in Tehillim (139: 6-8) - *פליאה דעת ממני נשגבה לא-אוכל לה* *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; I*

cannot attain it. *אנה אלך מרוחק ואנה מפניך* - *אברה* - *Can I go from Your spirit? Can I flee from Your presence?* *אם-אסך שמים שם* - *אתה ואציעה שאול הנך* - *If I go up to the Heavens, You are there. If go down to the lowest depths of the abyss, You are there as well.* On a simple level, Dovid Hamelech is proclaiming that one can never escape HaShem's presence. A person can perhaps run, but hiding is never an option because HaShem is truly everywhere. But according to what we have explained, Dovid Hamelech was expressing this idea. Even if a person sinned in a way that caused himself to spiritually run far away, he needs to realize that even over there, HaShem can be found.

The *Gemara* in *Masechta Krisos* tells us that even the greatest sinner should not be considered unworthy of joining the *tzibbur* in *tefillah*. The proof is from the *chelbena* in the Beis HaMikdash. Although it had a terrible odor, it was included in the *ketores* twice a day. Once again, this teaches us that HaShem never removes Himself from one's midst, even if he does an *aveira*. May we be *zoche* to achieve *teshuva sheleima* in front of HaShem!!

גמר חתימה טובה and a Good Shabbos

מרדכי אפפעל



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