

שבת קודש פרשת כי תשא | מסכת נדרים דף כ'

This week's newsletter has been dedicated לע"נ פסח מאיר בן טוביה

INSIGHTS FROM OUR CHABUROS

Torah scholars and the ministering angels

מאן מלאכי השרת? רבנן וכו' ואמאי קרו להו מלאכי השרת דמצינו כמלאכי השרת

The ר"ן explains that the term "ministering angels" refers to Torah scholars. They are referred to by this term because they remain distinguished and separate from the general population due to their intense commitment to Torah study, just as the heavenly angels are separate from humans due to their unique nature. The מפרש explains that Torah scholars are similar to angels in that they sit wrapped in their tallis. Rashi (to Kiddushin 72a) writes that the Gemara is referring to the fact that Torah scholars are distinguished in that they wear nice clothes.

Rebbe Tzadok Hakohen of Lublin, (שיחת מלאכי השרת א') explains the association of Torah scholars to angels in that all ways and manners of a true Torah scholar are guided by Torah law. He will not engage in endeavors which are purely mundane, unless he sees it as necessary for Torah and to fulfill the will of Hashem. This is the motivation for his thoughts, his speech, and his actions. This is similar to the function of the heavenly angels, in that they are created solely to fulfill a mission, and they do not waver from it.

שם משואל (Vayishlach, 5678) writes that according to this Gemara we can understand the difference between the angels of Eretz Yisroel and those who serve outside Eretz Yisroel. The angels of Eretz Yisroel influence the people there and help them develop a closeness and love in the service of Hashem. The angels which minister outside Eretz Yisroel stir people to anger and fury. The Jewish people, in their holy manner, utilize all these traits and direct them to enhance their service of Hashem. Those in Eretz Yisroel grow in their love of Hashem, and they cleave to Hashem as they perform many good deeds. Those outside the land use their combative traits to battle the yetzer hara and use their fury to fight evil.

POINT TO PONDER

The ר"ן ד"ה שלא עמדו אבותיו על הר סיני writes that it also says in נצבים that Moshe was addressing even those who were adding to the ר"ן, what is the ר"ן adding to the Gemara? The passuk in פרשת נצבים has nothing to do with הר סיני. So why is the ר"ן quoting it?

Response to last week's Point to Ponder:

The גמרא says that if we have liquids (משקין) and we don't know if they are טמא we say that they are טמא. (We assume לחומר) But if the same liquids touch something else we assume that it's not טמא. What's the difference? If one is טמא the other should be the same.

רש"י פסחים דף ט"ז writes that their own טומאה is דאורייתא and because it's דאורייתא we go לחומר just like every דאורייתא. However when it concerns other liquids, they are only טמא מדרבנן and therefore we go לקולא.

STORIES OF THE DAF

Shamefacedness

זו בושה

The verse states, "In order that the fear of Hashem will be on your face so you will not sin." Today's daf explains that a feeling of shame and modesty leads to fear of sin.

Rav Aryeh Adler, shlit"a, a student of Rav Shach, zt"l, once went to see his Rebbe. The Rosh Yeshivah asked him a question, "You work in chinuch, tell me how you explain the vast spiritual descent of our generation?"

Rav Adler was noticeably confused, "Does the Rosh Yeshivah really believe that I need to know the answer to that question in my capacity as a mechanech?" "Absolutely," responded the Rosh Yeshivah decisively. "Everyone in chinuch must understand this essential point."

"I assume the reason is the natural yeridas hadoros from Har Sinai downwards," responded Rav Adler. Rav Shach disagreed. "It is true that there is a yeridah from generation to generation, but that surely doesn't explain the extent of the present generation's descent."

Rav Adler did not respond. After a short pause Rav Shach answered his own question. "The solution is simply a deficiency of shame and a natural sense of propriety in the present generation. When I was young, it is true that the haskalah was making inroads everywhere, pushing people to all sorts of follies and sin. They instigated all kinds of big changes in much of the populace and caused many to change priorities in a shocking and damaging way. But with all this, people had a natural sense of shame and this protected them from doing the terrible indecencies of the present generation. The curse of דמשיחא, a lack of common decency, has come upon us and there is no stopping the resultant ירידה."

The Rosh Yeshivah concluded, "You are mistaken if you think we have reached the worst of it, Hashem should protect us. Where there is a marked lack of common decency, anything is possible. Who knows to what depths we can fall, לרחמא ליצלן?"

HALACHA HIGHLIGHT

Compensating for the days a vow was violated

בדתניא מי שנזר ועבר על נזירותו אין נזקקין לו עד שינהג בו איסור כימים שנהג בהן היתר דברי ר' י

As was taught in a Baraisa: One who vowed to be a nazir and violated his nezirus, we do not address him until he properly observes the days that he behaved permissively, these are the words of R' Yehuda

Shulchan Aruch¹ rules that one who takes a vow and subsequently violates that vow is fined and may not have his vow annulled until he compensates for the number of days that he violated his vow. [In other words if he violated the vow for five days he must observe the vow for five days before he may have the vow annulled.] If, however, forcing the vower to compensate for the missing days will pose a stumbling block, i.e. his vow involved refraining from something that he will be unable to refrain from, his vow may be annulled without requiring him to compensate for the missing days. Therefore, if someone vowed to refrain from meat and wine, if he will transgress a particular prohibition and after transgressing the prohibition has violated his vow, he may have his vow annulled immediately without compensating for the days he violated his vow since it is likely that he will continue to violate his vow. Rema² adds, however, that if the Torah scholar thinks it is possible for the vower to compensate for the missing days the vow should not be annulled until that time.

Shulchan Aruch³ adds that the requirement to compensate for the days that were violated applies only when those days are few in number, i.e. fewer than thirty days. If he violated the vow for many days he does not have to compensate any more than thirty days. Shach⁴, however, notes that Tosafos and Rosh maintain that even if the vower violated his vow for many days he must compensate for all those days before he may have his vow annulled. He also notes that since Tur does not distinguish between one who violated his vow for a few days or for many days it seems that he agrees with Tosafos and Rosh. Therefore, in light of all these authorities Shach concludes that one should not be lenient on this matter and one should compensate for all the missing days even when they number more than thirty.

1. שו"ע י"ד ס"ר ח ס"ב
2. רמ"א שם
3. שו"ע שם ס"ג
4. ש"ך שם ס"ג

MUSSAR FROM THE DAF

A foundation of love

“וברותי מכם המרדים והפושעים בי”, אמר רבי לוי: אלו בני תשע מדות, בני אסנת משגח

R’ Levi teaches that a child born from a woman who is “hated” is destined to be rebellious. What lies behind this idea? Let’s explore a similar concept in the Torah.

The law of תואר אשת in Devarim 21:10-14 deals with a non-Jewish woman captured in war. The Torah permits a Jewish soldier to marry her, but the Gemara (Sanhedrin 107a) explains that eventually the child from this marriage will become a בן סורר ומורה (a rebellious son). According to the Sifrei, the reason for this is that a man who selfishly marries for beauty will eventually come to hate his wife. This child was raised in a home where true love and giving were absent. The father began the relationship with selfish motives, and eventually, he will come to hate the woman.

We see from the Sifrei that when a marriage lacks genuine love and selflessness, the child from such a union will not have the spiritual foundation needed to overcome difficulties. This child is raised in an environment where giving is not modeled, and thus, the child will likely become a “taker” rather than a “giver.” And the ability to give is the root of all spiritual growth (ruchnius). The same idea is present in our Sugya. The Shita quotes Yesh Mefarshim that R’ Levi is teaching us that בני שנואה, means that the man did not marry the woman l’shem shamayim (for the sake of Heaven). Any marriage in which the husband does not love his wife, but is instead motivated by selfish desires, will result in a problematic outcome for the children. Without a foundation of true love and selflessness, the child will lack the necessary spiritual foundation to thrive and will likely adopt negative behaviors, such as rebellion.

We learn from Rabbi Levi how our relationships have great ramifications for the next generation, and it reminds us to be givers in our relationships, not takers.

PARSHA CONNECTION

In this week’s daf says that someone who doesn’t have בושא we can assume that his forefathers did not stand at הר סיני. This week’s פרשה includes the events which took place after הר סיני. We read that משה רבינו was in שמים for 40 days and 40 nights. At the conclusion of the 40 days the possuk ויתן אל משה ככלתו לדבר אתו בהר סיני שני לחת (שמות פרק ל”א פסוק י”ח) says:

ככלתו. What does it mean when it says: העדת לחת אכן כתבים באצבע אלקים. Were they talking for 40 days? Why didn’t משה הקב”ה give משה the תורה sooner and thereby avoid the terrible situation of the העגל? This question is reinforced by the גמרא נדרים לח ע”א which says that every day during the 40 days that משה רבינו was in שמים he learned the תורה and forgot what he learned, until משה הקב”ה gave it to him במתנה like it says ויתן which is a מתנה. If he was going to be given the תורה as a gift anyway, what was accomplished by him “trying” to learn it for 40 days? The אלשיך הקדוש explains that in order to be capable of accepting the תורה as a gift, משה had to be transformed from a person into a איש אלקים, a spiritual person. The process of elevating משה to this ultimate level of רוחניות was done through his learning directly from הקב”ה. The 40 days represent a timeframe for transformation or creating a new being, similar to the first 40 days of an embryo which transforms a טיפה into a living being. The only way that משה רבינו was able to receive the “במתנה” תורה and retain it was by first undergoing the transformative process of learning with הקב”ה. This is why it says **ככלתו לדבר אתו** meaning that the process of learning with משה and elevating him via the learning was complete. This also explains why הקב”ה did not give him the תורה earlier which would have prevented the העגל, because the process takes a full 40 days.

For more points to ponder by Rabbi Yechiel Grunhaus, or insights by Rabbi Yitzchok Gutterman, please visit our website, dafaweek.org, or download the app

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