



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on EKEV

by Dayan Abraham David

Moshe warns the Bnei Yisrael to guard and keep G-d's statutes and laws so that they would not forget G-d. Lest you eat and become satisfied and build fine houses and dwell in them, and you increase your cattle and wealth. *'VeRam Levavecha VeShachachta Et HaShem Elokecha'*, Lest your heart become proud and you forget G-d who has taken you out of bondage. As it says *'VaYishman Yeshurun vaYiva'*, And Israel became fat and kicked (its benefactor). There is a tendency in a person who is successful and blessed with wealth to become proud and arrogant and to turn away from his Maker. *'VeAmarta Bilvavecha Kochi veOtzem Yadi Asa Li et haChayil Ha-ze'*, and you will say in your heart it is my strength and power which has brought me my success. Remember, said Moshe, it is G-d who has given you this strength and power. A person in trouble turns to G-d for help but when he is successful he credits himself, whether in battle or in commerce. That is why Moshe warns them to guard and keep the Torah for these

have the power to remind and bind us to our Creator. By the manna it says, *'Lema'an Anotcha uLema'an Nasotecha leHetivcha BeAcharitecha'*, it was given to test you and to bring you goodness at the end. The manna fell daily and did not keep overnight. The people grumbled about this and it seemed troublesome and unnecessary to have to collect it daily. But it brought them closer to G-d, for everyday they had to look up to heaven for their sustenance and that was goodness. Similarly the pasuk tells us of the Ma'ala of Eretz Yisrael. It was not like the land of Egypt which had the Nile to water it all year round. Rather it was a land which depends on rainfall where, *'Enei HaShem Mereshit Hashana Ad Acharit Hashana'*, where we can feel the 'Eye' of HaShem is upon us – His scrutiny. A land which does not run on natural lines but must turn for its daily existence to G-d where our very sustenance depends on our behaviour and prayer. Where the presence of G-d can be felt, where we may have the greatest technology but cannot guarantee ourselves a living, and have the strongest army but no security. For G-d loves us and does not want us

to feel independent of Him. As a father who, if he loves his son, will not just divorce himself and give his son all he needs to become independent, for then he shows he does not care to see him. He keeps his son on a short string so the son turns to his father frequently for his needs and has more contact with him. The Chafetz Chaim explained why the serpent, for his sin, was cursed with crawling on his stomach eating dust. This might seem like a blessing as he always has his food (in the dust) close to him and in plentiful supply which made him independent. However, it was really a curse, for G-d had driven him away completely not wanting any contact with him. For even animals turn to Hashem in their own way, to provide for them. The Chofetz Chaim explains with this why we include in the Beracha, *'Boreh Nefashot Rabot'*, the word *'Ve Chesronan'*, what they are missing and need, which we do not mention in other Berachot only praise for what He is giving, that in fact we are thanking Hashem for making us creatures with needs so we should turn to Him for these needs. The reason G-d gives problems to people might be because He wishes to have contact with them. The poor man turns more often to G-d than the rich man and this might give him more pleasure than the arrogant man who feels His presence less because he is not short..

GEMS

Moshe begins recounting the sin of the golden calf with the words

'Shema Yisrael', 'Hear O Israel'. The Midrash Rabah explains Moshe warns them having lost the *'Na'ase'*, of those wonderful words at Kabalat HaTorah, *'Na'ase VeNishma'*; after the *'chet haegel'*, they must now guard the second part *'Nishma'*, the hearing. We know the *'Nishma'* cannot mean only to hear and study without deeds the *'Na'ase'*, the deeds, for our Rabbis teach us: *'Lo HaMidrash Eker Eley HaMa'ase'*, it is not the study alone that is important but the deeds. So what does the Midrash mean, 'Now guard the *'Nishma'*?'

The Torah describes a substantial difference between the first *'Luchot'* Tablets, and the second. The first were *'Ma'ase Elokim'* as it says: *'Ketubim BeEtzba Elokim'*, the Handiwork of G-d. The second were *'Pasol Lecha'*, you Moshe chisel them out and make an *'Aron'* of wood to house them in, but with the first *'Luchot'* there is no mention of this. The Or HaChayim tells us that after the sin of the *'Egel'* they had lost that closeness with G-d and the level benefiting from *'Ma'ase Elokim'*, they had dropped to the level of *'Ma'ase Adam'* and the second *'Luchot'* were not as supernatural they could not stand on their own, this is why they needed an ark to house and protect them.

The Talmud tells us that if the first Tablets had not been broken we would never forget the words of the Torah – they would have miraculously become a natural part of us inscribed on our hearts and fulfilling of the Mitzvot would come naturally without great effort. But

now we need our own efforts to achieve and keep the Torah as 'Ma'ase Adam', through the deeds of man. We lost the level of being able to feel the Torah naturally as part of us even without the effort of 'understanding'. We would understand automatically. But what we have today is the 'Nishma' the necessity to work to understand and not forget and make a positive effort to draw ourselves to the Torah. Perhaps this is what the Rabbis meant when they explained: 'Torah Tzivah Lanu Moshe Morasha Kehilat Yaacov – Al Tikra Morasha', Do not say inheritance, 'Eley Meurasa' – but say betrothed to us as a bride. The Torah is no longer an inheritance which falls naturally from father to son but a betrothed bride whom one must reach out to.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu z"l was invited to Brazil. A dinner was held in his honour in the home of a wealthy donor, some twenty very wealthy people were invited there. As soon as they settled down, one of the guests turned to the Rabbi: "I have a question for the Rabbi!" There was complete silence in the room, everyone turned to hear the question. "What is the Rabbi's opinion, our Host gives donations to the Reform Rabbi for his Synagogue?" It seems this guest had some disagreement with the Host and was intent on embarrassing him, he knew the strong view of the Rabbi against the Reform. He had put the Rabbi in a very difficult situation. The Rabbi

took it in his stride. He answered with a story as Sephardi Rabbis usually do. He said: "I will tell you a story which happened to me once on one of my journeys 'to chutz la aretz'. It was getting late and we were afraid to miss Mincha so we asked the non-Jewish chauffeur to take us to the nearest Synagogue, he did not quite understand and took the Rabbi and his entourage to a Reform Synagogue. Of course the Rabbi would not enter and stood by the side of the Synagogue to pray but they were only 8 Jews altogether, no Minyan. Just then the caretaker and the Rabbi of the Reform Synagogue came out and offered to make up the Minyan. Rabbi Eliyahu said there were only 9 and one still missing. The Reform Rabbi turned to him and said: "I don't understand if you don't count us there are only eight not nine?" The Rabbi replied: "I am counting the Jewish caretaker because even though he is from the Reform Synagogue he is only there for his job, 'Parnassah', and not out of conviction but the Rabbi of the Synagogue cannot count". The Reform Rabbi then turned and whispered in his ear: "Don't worry about me, I am also only in this for the money, 'Parnassah'". Everyone present at the dinner began to laugh, the tension was broken and the Rabbi with his story was able to give over his strong opinion against the Reform that they cannot be counted in a Minyan and at the same time he was able not to embarrass the Host.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

Some relevant Halachot for the Holiday Period

1) Even though there are circumstances when bread baked in a non-Jewish bakery '*pat akum*' could be permitted where Jewish bread is not available, one must be absolutely sure the ingredients do not contain any animal fat or derivatives. 'Vegetarian' is not a sign for Kashrut; investigations show that vegetarian fats etc. comes out of the same machines used for animal fats. With traces of such animal fats they could still be labelled 'vegetarian'. There are now some brands of Pat Akum which have been checked out for Kashrut.

2) One may not even eat a boiled egg in a non-Jewish hotel even if there would be no doubt concerning the ingredients because of the issur of '*bishul akum*', food cooked by a non-Jew. Fried fish and potatoes, cooked by a non-Jew, which in addition to the issur of '*bishul akum*' could also be '*taref* because of the oil or forbidden fish or meats being fried in the same oil.

3) Salads in a non-supervised restaurant even if owned by a Jew would be forbidden because of insects and bugs in the greens and because of suspect dressings.

4) Non-Kosher cheeses, without supervision, even if made with vegetarian rennet or chemicals are forbidden by decree of the Chachamim.

5) On Shabbat when staying in a hotel where electronic cards are

used to open room doors, one must ask the clerk to send a non-Jewish porter to open the room.

6) Even when the doors open with keys one must check that the lights do not come on automatically when the door opens on Shabbat.

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences 8:22 pm

We should not light candles before 7:04 pm

Shabbat terminates 9:36 pm

Mincha Erev Shabbat 7:15 pm

Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat

Shacharit 8:30 am

Shabbat :Latest Shema

Magen Avraham 8:44 am

Shabbat Latest Shema Gra 9:20 am

Shiur by Dayan David 6:30 pm

Mincha 7:30 pm Shabbat 7:30 pm

Arvit 9:45 pm

WEEKDAY TIMES

Shacharit 7:00 am

Sundays 8.00 am

Mincha 7:30 pm

followed by Arbit

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL THE GUIDELINES AND WARNINGS CONCERNING COVID-19

PANDEMIC

VUSHMARTEM MEOD

LE'NAFSHOTCHEM

VEHAVTA L'REACHA KAMOCHA