

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

The Gift of Yesurim – פרשת כי תצא תשפ"ו

אַרְבָּעִים יָבֹנּוּ לֹא יִסֵּיף פֶּן יִסֵּיף לְהַכּוֹתוֹ עַל אֶלֶף מִכָּה רַבָּה וְנִקְלָה אֲחִידָה לְעֵינָיִךְ
He shall receive [one less than] 40 lashes. He must not exceed this number, lest he give him a much more severe flogging [than these 39 prescribed lashes], and your brother be belittled in your eyes.
 (Devarim 25:3)

The very next Posuk that follows is: **לֹא תַחֲסֹם שׁוֹר בְּדִישּׁוֹ** - *You must not muzzle an ox when it is threshing* (Devarim 25:4)

The juxtaposition of these two Pesukim teaches us important criteria for the protocol of administering Malkos, lashing. The Gemara (Makos 13b) tells us that only transgressions which are similar to **שׁוֹר בְּדִישּׁוֹ**, **לֹא תַחֲסֹם**, namely that they entail an action - **לֹא שֵׁשׁ בּו מַעֲשֶׂה** - and are not attached to a rectifying positive commandment - **לֹא שְׂאִינוּ נִיתַק** - are eligible to receive flogging.

The Rambam (Hilchos Sanhedrin Perek 19) enumerates 168 negative transgressions that are eligible for the penalty of flogging. The one transgression chosen by the Torah to teach the criteria for the rest of these transgressions is the transgression of not muzzling an ox while it threshes. Why is that? What lesson is there for us to learn from this?

The Sefer Birchas Ish (By Rav Avrohom Yitzchok Shain Shlita) suggests an approach to explain this. Malkos is a very painful penalty. It is a heavy dose of *Yesurim* which demands thirty nine lashes administered at full strength on an unclothed body. The recipient of these lashes may err and think that Hashem has forsaken him. *"Can't one or two lashes suffice to cleanse me of my sin?"* he may think. *"Why does Hashem demand such a strict regimen of thirty nine blows?"*

To get this erroneous thought process out of his mind, the Torah juxtaposed the standard of Malkos with the transgression of muzzling oxen. **שׁוֹר בְּדִישּׁוֹ** is in place to prevent us from stopping the ox from eating while he works, which would cause him a little pain. If Hashem has compassion on an ox, surely He has a lot more compassion on a human being; a **צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים**. If so, why did He mandate such a harsh regimen of 39 lashes? Must be it's for the benefit of the recipient of the lashes. It is either bringing him a *Kapara* for this sin, or a *Tikun* for past sins, in past lives, or otherwise rehabilitating his character.

This world is a hospital for souls. We are here to be fixed, purified, transformed and primed for an eternity of bliss in the next world; the real world.

Yesurim are not punitive, they are a gift from Hashem. They are our ticket to Olam Haba. The Vilna Gaon taught that if not for the *Yesurim* that we receive here on this earth, we would be unable to withstand, and pass the ultimate judgement in the next world. One who lives with Bitachon knows that nothing happens TO him; everything happens FOR him. Every experience we have in life – good or seemingly otherwise – is orchestrated with precision by the Master of the world.

Rabbeinu Tam (Sefer Hayashas Perek 18) writes:

אִךְ הַצַּדִּיק בְּהֵיוֹתוֹ בְּשִׁלוּהוֹ, אִזּוֹ יִזְהַר וַיִּפְחַד פֶּן תָּבוֹא עָלָיו הָרָעָה

One whose life is too tranquil or uneventful should worry, as one who does not experience Yesurim in this world will have to deal with a lot worse in the next world.

וְכַאֲשֶׁר תָּבוֹא עָלַי צָדִיק תִּלְאָה אוֹ צָרָה יֹאמַר עֲוֹנוֹתַי הִטּוּ אֵלַי וּמִיָּדַי הִיטָה זֹאת אֵלַי אֲנִי עֲשִׂיתִי וְאֲנִי אֲשָׁא חַיִּיב אֲנִי לִקְבֹּל כָּל זֶה כִּי הַבּוֹרָא לֹא עָשָׂה לִי רָע, וְחָלִילָה לֹא לְמַרְשֵׁעַ אֶךְ אֲנִי הִרְעֵיתִי לְעַצְמִי. וַיֹּאמֶר מִי יוֹדֵעַ אִם הַבּוֹרָא מֵיִסְרֵנִי מְרֹב חֲמֻלָּתוֹ עָלַי אוֹ אִם הַצָּרוֹת הָאֵלֶּה הֵן לְטוֹבָתוֹ אוֹ לְכַפֵּר בְּהֵן עֲוֹנוֹי אוֹ לְמַעַן לֹא יִהְיֶה לִּי פְנָאִי לְהַתְעַסֵּק בְּמַעֲשִׂים רָעִים אוֹ לְתַתּ לִי שֶׁכֶּר עֲלֵיהֶם אוֹ לְיִנְצֵל בְּשִׁבְלֵן מִמֵּיתָה מְשֻׁנָּה, אוֹ מִצָּרוֹת אַחֵרוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת מְאֹלָה.

When trouble or distress come upon a righteous person, he should say, "My Aveiros have brought about these things, and all this came about through my own hand. I did it and I must bear it, I am obliged to accept all of this. Hashem has not done me evil. Far be it from Hashem to act wickedly. But I have done evil to myself." A

righteous person should say, "Who knows if the Creator is not admonishing me because of His great pity for me, or if these troubles are not for my own good, or to atone for my sins through them, or in order that there will be no time for me to occupy myself with Aveiros, or to give me a reward because of them, or to be saved because of them from an unnatural death or from other troubles greater than these."

When *Yesurim* happen, we would be wise to recognize them for the gift that they are, and utilize them as best as we can to realize that they are not cruel or merciless; quite the contrary, they are Hashem's compassionate way of operating on our ill souls in this earthly hospital, so that we can merit eternity in good spiritual health.

Living with Bitachon means accepting *Yesurim* as coming from Hashem with compassion, and muzzling any negative thoughts that the Yetzer Hara may try to plant in our minds.

הַבּוֹרָא
מֵיִסְרֵנִי
מְרֹב
חֲמֻלָּתוֹ עָלַי

Good Shabbos!