



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim

given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Vaeschanan 5763

In the portion of *Tana D'vei Eliyahu* that we learn this week, we find the following lesson.

Do not ignore your own flesh (ישעיה נ"ח:ז) – ומבשרך לא תתעלם
married a woman and discovered something that led him to divorce her, and
she then became impoverished, he should support her to the best of his
ability.

In the *Yerushalmi* (כתובות י"א:ג), we find the story of R. Yossi Haglili who
divorced his wife. She became so poor that she was reduced to begging door
to door. When R. Yossi became aware of her plight, he gave her a house to
live in and supported her for the rest of her life.

We find a similar story in the Midrash Rabba (ויקרא ל"ד:י"ד):

"In the days of R. Tanchuma, Am Yisrael needed rain. R. Yehuda Hanasi
decreed two fast days, yet no rain came down. Then, a man saw that his
gerusha (ex-wife), was suffering greatly. She told him 'From the day that I
left your house, I have seen no goodness.' He felt great mercy for her, and
gave her everything that she needed. In his merit rain came down for all of
Am Yisrael."

This is also the *psak halacha* as stated by the Rema in his *hagahos* on
Shulchan Aruch Even Ha'ezer (סי' קי"ט סעיף ח'':

"It is permitted for a person to support his *grusha*, and it is a greater
mitzva than supporting another poor person."



[1]

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These words of Eliyahu Hanavi, that we learn *b'siyata di'shmaya* on *Motzaei Shabbos Kodesh* of *Parshas Vaeschanan* and *Shabbos Nachamu* are (משלי כ"ה: כ"ה) – like cold water to a parched soul. In our state of *galus*, Am Yisrael are compared to a woman who has been divorced by her husband, as it says in Yirmayahu (י"ח: ג')
שְׁלַחְתִּיהָ וְאָתַן אֶת סֵפֶר כְּרִיתָתָהּ אֵלֶיהָ – I sent her away and I gave her document of divorce to her. (ירמיהו ג': ח').

In the Midrash Rabba on Megillas Eicha (א': ג') Chazal refer to that *pasuk* and say:

“Every time that Am Yisrael asks that miracles should be done for them as in the beginning, Hakadosh Baruch Hu says to them, ‘I have already divorced you.’” This is the meaning of the *pasuk* שְׁלַחְתִּיהָ וְאָתַן אֶת סֵפֶר כְּרִיתָתָהּ אֵלֶיהָ.

So too, in Hoshea, (ט': ט"ו) – I have hated them because of the evil of their deeds. I will banish them from my house. Here too, Chazal explain (בראשית רבה י"ט: ט), “I have decreed that they should be divorced”.

However, the words of Eliyahu Hanavi that we learn on this *Motzaei Shabbos Nachamu* teach us how to respond to the “divorce”. For even though Hakadosh Baruch Hu has exiled us, He must fulfill the Torah’s dictate, ומבשרך לא תתעלם by caring for us and providing all of our needs. Like the divorcee in the Midrash quoted above, we too have “seen no *tov*” from the time that we left Hashem’s home, and Hashem must take care of us.

It is also important to note that the phrase ומבשרך לא תתעלם begins with the letter *vav*. That *vav* teaches us that one must take care of more than the basic physical needs of his relative. It is forbidden to ignore any of his relative’s needs.

The sin which led to the “divorce” described by Hoshea was *avoda zara* - idolatry. This sin is also referred to in the portion of our Parsha, *Vaeschanan*, that is also read on Tisha B’av.



[2]

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כִּי תוֹלִיד בָּנִים וּבָנֵי בָנִים וְנוֹשְׁנֶתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ וְהִשְׁחַתְתֶּם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוֹנֶת כָּל וַעֲשִׂיתֶם הָרַע
בְּעֵינֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לְהַכְעִיסוֹ. (דברים ד" כ"ה)

When you will give birth to children and grandchildren and are long established in the land, and you will become corrupt and make idols, images of all things, and you will do that which is bad in the eyes of Hashem you G-d to anger him.

However, we must never forget that the reading concludes with the *pasuk* וּבִקְשֶׁתֶּם מִשָּׁם אֶת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ וּמִצֵּאתָ כִּי תִדְרָשְׁנוּ בְּכָל לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ

And from there you will seek Hashem your G-d, and you will find him if you search for him with all of your heart and all of your soul.

Where is the place referred to as שָׁם? It refers to the depth of the *klipos* that you will be submerged in during *galus*. Even there you will be able to seek and yearn for Hashem, and even to find Him.

The story of Menashe be Chizkiya illustrates the limitless power of this promise. He was more wicked than any of his predecessors, especially with the sin of *avoda zara*. Despite all of his evil deeds, Hashem accepted his *teshuva*.

The Midrash (במדבר י"ד: א), relates:

And Menashe is mine. If a person comes to say that Hashem doesn't accept those who do *teshuva*, Menashe ben Chizkiya will come and testify that none of my creations sinned before me as he did, and when he did *teshuva*, I accepted him.

As the *pasuk* says:

And he (Menashe) - ויתפלל אליו ויעתר לו וישמע תחנתו וישיבהו ירושלים למלכותו prayed to Him, and He accepted his supplication and restored him to Yerushalayim to his kingdom. (דברי הימים ב" ל"ג: י"ג)

The *Midrash Rabbah* in our Parsha describes the unique way in which Menashe's *teshuva* was accepted.



[3]

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“ויעתר לו - ויחתר לו. The word ויעתר which means to accept his request, can also be read as ויחתר לו - He excavated and broke through. This teaches us that the *malachei ha'sharess* were closing the windows of the heavens so that his *tefilos* shouldn't reach the *shamayim*. What did Hakadosh Baruch Hu do? He broke through the *rakia* beneath the *kisei hakavod* - His throne, received his *tefilla* and restored him to his *malchus* in Yerushalayim.

Malachei Hasharess aren't *malachim* of *din* - judgement. Nonetheless, even they tried to prevent the ascent of Menashe's *tefillos* because he had done so much evil. Despite Menashe's wickedness and the opposition of the *Malachim*, Hakadosh Baruch Hu accepted his *teshuva*.

The story of Menashe teaches us that even when we feel that we have been distanced and banished from before Hashem (something that will never happen), we must know that in Hashem's eyes, we are always precious and beloved. Hashem fulfills the dictate of the Torah, מבשרך לא תתעלם, do not ignore your relatives.

We also learn how truly close every Jew is to Hashem. Every Jew wants to do Hashem's will. Chazal taught us that it is only the שאור שבעיסה, the yeast in the dough (the Yetzer Hara), that prevents us. Therefore, any Jew can draw close to Hashem by calling out to him. We certainly have the ability to do *teshuva* for every forbidden thought or *aveira* whether great or small. When we do so, Hashem Yisbarach will draw us close in every way possible.

We are approaching the *Yamim Noraim*, the days in which every person in the world will be judged to receive life, or not. This is the most appropriate time to do *teshuva* and to close our ears to the voice of the *yetzer* that tries to tell us, “Some people's *teshuva* will never be accepted”.

Instead, we must listen to the words of Chazal who revealed to us that Hakados Baruch Hu says, “Let Menashe ben Chizkiya come and testify that no person before Menashe had ever been such a *rasha*, and yet, when he did *teshuva*, I accepted him. אכי"ר



[4]

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