

to the paycheck, he is responsible for the worker's feelings, working conditions and welfare. He is responsible to provide a safe environment, suitable provisions, and above all *derecho erness*. And when *Yobel* arrives and the workers and servants return home, they are not the only ones going free. A great burden is lifted from the shoulders of the master. Freedom is declared for all the inhabitants of the land. The servants are not the only ones who are "home free." As we used to say in the heat of the game of ring-o-lee-vio, we are, "home free -- all." (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky)

Pirke Abot

It is customary to study *Pirkei Abot* (Ethics of the Fathers) during the six weeks between Pesah and Shabuot, one chapter every Shabbat.

“עֲשֶׂרָה נְסִינּוֹת נִתְּנָה אֲבֹרָהּ אֲבִינוּ”

“With ten tests was our father Abraham tested.” (Abot 5:3)

The Hebrew word for test is “*bechinah*.” Why doesn't it say “*Asarah bechinot nibchan Abraham*”?

The word *nes* in Hebrew means not only a test, but also a banner, as the Psalmist says, “*Natata lere'echa nes lehitnoses* – You gave those who fear you a banner to raise themselves” (Tehillim 60:6). A banner is something which is raised high to show its beauty. Similarly, when Hashem tests an individual, the purpose is to lift him into a higher sphere. When the individual passes the test, he is spiritually elevated and exalted.

Hence, the verse can be read: “And Hashem exalted Abraham.” Through the trial, his hidden potential powers of faith were evoked and brought to fruition. (*Vebibrata Bam*)

Free Lunch

When R' Nosson Einfeld served as *Rosh Yeshivah* of *Yeshivat Be'er Sheva*, he chanced upon a visitor to the city who was searching for a kosher restaurant where he could eat lunch. Without offering his credentials, R' Einfeld took the man to his yeshivah, brought him to the dining room and served him lunch. The man thought that he had been served lunch in a cafeteria and upon finishing his meal offered R' Einfeld a five-dollar bill. When R' Einfeld politely refused the money, the man thought that perhaps he had offered too little, so he took out a twenty-dollar bill.

R' Einfeld warmly refused and said, “The Torah tells us that when our father Abraham lived in *Be'er Sheva*, he had an inn where he served wayfarers. You, my friend, have come to such an inn! Our yeshivah is accustomed to welcoming guests. It is our pleasure to serve you and no payment is necessary.”

The man began to ask R' Einfeld about himself and about the yeshivah. R' Einfeld attempted to ask the man about himself, but at first, he was evasive. Then, suddenly, the man exclaimed. “R' Nosson, you are indeed fortunate! I am a man of means and have come to Israel because I would like to make a generous contribution to a yeshivah somewhere in the land. I have found that yeshivah!”

Later, he told R' Einfeld, “Had you accepted the twenty dollars which I offered you, I would not have considered giving a contribution to the yeshivah.” Only because R' Einfeld had shown him genuine kindness, without any thought of remuneration, did he decide to contribute generously to the yeshivah.

Before returning home, the man handed R' Einfeld five hundred dollars. After he returned home, he and R' Einfeld corresponded with one another. Eight months after their first meeting, R' Einfeld received a telegram that the man had died and in his will he had bequeathed to *Yeshivat Be'er Sheva* the sum of one hundred thousand dollars. (More Shabbos Stories)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition
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SHABBAT BEHAR-

BEHUKOTAI ☆ η♥,↔E♠φ□X-ρ♥ט□X□,□X♥↑

.Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 16:19 - 17:14

MAY 19-20, 2017 24 IYAR 5777

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 6:40 & 7:15 pm Shahrarit: 4:37, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15 am

Candlelighting: 7:51 pm

Morning Shema by: 8:19 am

Evening Shema and Omer after: 8:49 pm

Shabbat Class: 6:20 pm

Day 39 of the Omer

Shabbat Minhah: 7:30 pm

Shabbat Ends: 8:49 pm (R" T 9:21)

Sunday Minhah: 7:00 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

This bulletin is dedicated by the Betesh family
 in loving memory of Sharon Betesh

ט"פ♦♦α, □χ ul♦♦α, ♦v♣α°β ηΥκη□γ□κ

This bulletin is dedicated by Mitchell & Robin Antar
 in memory of Rose Antar לְעִילּוֹי נְשֻׁמַת רוֹז בַּת אֶסְתֵּר

A Message from Our Rabbi

“וְהַשְׁמֹתִי אֶנְי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְשָׂמּוּ עָלֶיהָ אִיְבִיכָם הַיְשָׁבִים בָּהּ”

“I will make the land desolate and your foes who dwell upon it will be desolate.” (Vayikra 26:32)

Rabbi Raymond Beyda explains the above *pasuk* beautifully. The harsh warnings delivered in this week's *parashah* are considered more brutal than those presented in *Parashat Ki Tabo* because there, the rebuke is a prophecy delivered by Moshe, like all other Torah portions, whereas here the words are spoken by Hashem directly to the people through the throat of Moshe. Yet, there are still words inserted in the rebuke that demonstrate Hashem's constant love for His people even when they do not behave as they should, thereby raising His ire.

When a man divorces his wife, so long as he doesn't marry another, she feels hope that perhaps he will reconsider and remarry her. However, should he take a second wife, all hope of reuniting is extinguished. Our Creator banished us from His land and burned down His House, yet He never replaced us with another nation. This demonstrates to us that He has not forgotten us. In a more physical way, His yearning for our return to Him is demonstrated by the fact that our homeland that we shared with

Him in better days, remained desolate. For centuries, the land of Israel remained mostly uninhabitable and undesirable to the nations because they saw an unproductive landscape lacking oil, coal, and diamonds, and bountiful produce as well. Then about seventy years ago the Jewish people returned and the desert began to bloom.

When *Ramban* arrived in the Holy Land he dropped to the ground and lay crying over the barren sight he confronted. Moments later he stood upright with a happy smile on his face. His traveling companions were perplexed and inquired about his contradictory behavior.

“When I saw a land covered with rocks and thorns I thought, ‘Can this be the land of milk and honey we were promised?’ and therefore I cried. Then I realized that if the land was fruitful as in the days of old, the nations of the world would inhabit it. This would make our return difficult, if not impossible. So the undesirable physical state of our Homeland made me smile.”

In our generation we have seen another instance of this blessing within a curse. When we abandoned the fields and hot-houses of Gush Katif they were flourishing with produce. Once the control passed to others, the land returned to a desolate wasteland. This desolation is a bright spot in an otherwise dismal situation.

Hashem promised, even as he delivered His rebuke, that the Covenant of our Patriarchs will never be forgotten. One day soon, *be'ezrat Hashem*, He will act upon His Covenant and return us to our Land speedily in our days, Amen.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Walk With Me

”וְאִם־תֵּלְכוּ עִמִּי קָרִי וְלֹא תֵאבְדוּ לְשִׁמְעַ לִּי וְיִסְפְּתִי עֲלֵיכֶם מִכָּה שֶׁבַע
כְּחַטְאֵיכֶם”

"And if you walk with Me casually...then I will increase the punishment of your sins seven-fold." (*Vayikra* 26:21)

Parashat Behukotai begins on a very positive note. G-d tells the nation that if they follow His path and keep His commandments, then He will bestow many blessings upon them. These blessings include the assurance that G-d will walk among *B'nei Yisrael* and be their G-d, and they, in turn, will be His nation.

However, if they will not listen to G-d and keep His commandments and instead, insist upon straying from the path of G-d, then He will punish the nation.

If we look closely, we can find a direct correlation between the blessings and punishments. We will either follow G-d and live in peace in a land of milk and honey, or we will choose to ignore the path of G-d and live in fear in a barren land.

Then, midway through the punishments, G-d tells the people, "And if (with all these punishments going on) you walk with Me casually, then I will increase the punishment of your sins seven-fold."

What could the people do to get seven times more punishment? Are there worse sins than not walking in G-d's ways? Why is walking casually worse than walking arrogantly or not walking at all?

Rashi explains that the Hebrew word "*keri* - casual" carries the implication of "by chance." This suggests that while all these curses are occurring, the people casually carry on with their lives, suffering and accepting their punishment. They see everything that is happening to them as a matter of chance, a coincidence. They don't relate to their troubles as a warning by G-d. G-d doesn't even come into the picture. They are casual about the whole thing.

"Things are terrible," they say, watching their crops wither and their livestock die,

"but life is cyclical. It'll be better next year."

In Judaism, there is no coincidence. As long as you believe that G-d interacts in this world, there cannot be chance, because G-d controls the world.

So why are the people going to be punished with curses that are seven times worse than those already enumerated?

Because in not seeing the Hand of G-d in what is happening to them, *B'nei Yisrael* lose their chance to atone. And without atonement, and the realization that one has done something wrong, there is no hope for forgiveness and blessing.

That is why G-d points out, clearly, for all to see, that even if the punishments come, you can still eventually receive the blessings as long as you don't walk casually with G-d, and ignore His role in the world. (Tell it from the Torah)

Freedom for All

It is probably the most famous Biblical verse in American History. Each year thousands of people come to see its bold raised lettering prominently encircling the rim of the Liberty Bell. Those words are from this week's portion, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all its inhabitants thereof" (*Vayikra* 25:10).

Truth be told, however, those words refer not to a revolution or liberation, they refer to the *misvah* of *Yobel* -- Jubilee. Every 50 years, all Jewish servants, whether employed for only a six-year period or on an extended docket, and even those who desire to remain as servants to their masters, are freed. They return home to their families, and their careers of indenturage are over.

But the verse is confusing. It says, "proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all its inhabitants thereof." Isn't the Torah referring to the freedom of slaves and the servants? Isn't that a proclamation of freedom for only a select few? Why would the Torah say "and to all its inhabitants," when only some of its inhabitants are going free? The masters and employers were never slaves. They are not going free. Or are they?

In the first volume of his *Maggid* series Rabbi Paysach Krohn relates this story.

It was a cold and blustery day and Rabbi Isser Zalman Melzer, the dean of the Eitz Chaim Yeshiva in Jerusalem, was returning home from a long day in the Yeshiva. Accompanied by his nephew, Reb Dovid Finkel, who normally walked him home, Rabbi Melzer began to ascend the steps to his Jerusalem apartment. Suddenly, Reb Isser Zalman stopped and retreated down the old staircase as if he had forgotten something. As he reached the street, he began to wander aimlessly back and forth, in thought. His nephew began to question the strange actions of the Torah sage. "Did Reb Isser Zalman forget something?" "Why didn't he enter the home."

The winds began to blow, and despite the chill Reb Isser Zalman walked back and forth outside his home. About 15 minutes passed and once again, Rabbi Melzer walked slowly up the stairs, waited, and then headed back down.

His nephew could not contain himself, "Please, Rebbe," he pleaded. "What's the matter?" Reb Isser Zalman just shrugged. "Just wait a few more moments. Please."

"But, uncle, it's getting cold. Please answer me. What are you waiting for?"

Rabbi Melzer realized that he could no longer keep his motivations to himself. "I'll explain. As I walked up the steps I heard the young woman who comes once a week to help with the housework in the kitchen. She was mopping the floor and singing while she mopped. I knew that if I were to walk in she would have become embarrassed and stopped her singing. The singing helps her through her work, and I did not want to make her work any bit harder, let alone deny her the joy of her singing. Despite the cold, I decided to wait outside until she finishes her work and her song. Then I'll go in."

The Torah uses a very significant expression this week that synthesizes the true meaning of ownership and servitude. "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all its inhabitants thereof." When one employs he is also indebted to his employee. In addition