



# OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI  
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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## **Thoughts on DEVARIM by Dayan Abraham David**

We are told in the Midrash (Midrash Rabbah) that it should have been Bilaam who should have given the reproach '*Tochachot*' to the Bnei Yisrael but because they would have said it is our enemy giving us reproach and would have disregarded it so it was Moshe who was chosen to give them reproaches mentioned in our Parasha. The blessings and praise Bilaam gave about the Bnei Yisrael should have been given by Moshe. But the nations would have said, only the one who loves them blesses them with praise, so Bilaam who hated them gave the praises. Thus both the reproach and blessings were given properly and effectively to the Children of Israel. We can understand well that blessings and praises given by an enemy are more powerful than that given by a loved one. And we see that in order for reproach to be taken notice of it must come from a friend or loved one. And so it said of the great Chofetz Chaim that when he had to reproach someone he would do the person a favour or bring him a gift first and then give him the

reproach so that it would be effective. It is very difficult for a person to accept reproach especially on spiritual matters or behaviour and with the slightest excuse it can be disregarded; or if there is the slightest suspicion that the one who is giving it dislikes the recipient. There is an obligation on every Jew to give reproach to another when he is aware of a wrongdoing. '*Hocheach Tocheach et amitecha ve lo tisa alav chet,*' reproach your fellow Jew and do not carry his sin for we are all responsible for one another. The Midrash on Eichah on the pasuk '*Sareh keayalim*' that Jerusalem was destroyed because its leaders behaved like sheep with their heads down ignoring the wrong doings about them just following each others tails. Sometimes we feel we are unable to give reproach for fear that we might be admonished ourselves for our wrong doings. It becomes comfortable for us to put our heads down and get on with our own lives and this seemed to be the reason the princes and leaders of the generation of Jeremiah did not give reproach prior to the first destruction of the Temple. But there could be another reason, not caring

for the other person, for sure if we see our own son doing wrong and destroying himself we would do our best to stop him. Or if we see another harming someone we love we would reproach that person and try and stop him. The Second Temple was destroyed because of '*Sinat Chinam*' hatred without cause, it became impossible for anyone to give another '*tochachah*' – reproach. Either because they did not care for the one who was doing wrong and even when giving it would not be taken notice of because of the atmosphere of hatred. We see this well depicted in the story of Kamza and Bar Kamtza, when Bar Kamtza was taken by his hand and publicly thrown out of the party he was mistakenly invited to, not one of the other guests present, not a Rabbi or dignitary present said a word in protest or reproach at the cruel behaviour of the host. This could only be because they did not care enough for another Jew who suffered and not for the host who by embarrassing another Jew in public was losing his *olam habah*. They sat back and missed out on a great salvation. May we learn to love each other, as we should, after all we are all branches of the same tree.

**As we mourn for Jerusalem, may we merit to see its rebuilding soon.**

### **GEMS**

In the Talmud in Gittin, Rabi Yochanan introduces the immediate causes of the destruction of Jerusalem, a large city Tur Malka and Beitar with the pasuk '*Ashre adam mefached tamid vu makshe*

*libo yipol be ra-ah*', happy is the man who is always afraid but a person who hardens his heart will fall to bad. Rashi explains '*Mefached*' not to mean fear but being wary for the future to make sure that no bad comes from his actions but an unheeding heart will fall to bad. '*A kamtza vu bar kamtza charav Yerushalayim*'. Yerushalayim was destroyed because of a mistake in the invitation when Bar Kamtza who was the antagonist of the host was mistakenly invited to his seuda instead of his friend Kamitza. Bar Kamtza came to the seuda without bothering to find out why he was invited if there had been a mistake or was this an approach to peace. '*Ashre adam mefached tamid*'. The host cruelly and physically expelled Bar Kamtza in spite of his pleading and offering to pay the cost of the whole seuda to save himself from embarrassment. This was an example of, '*Makeshe libo yipol be ra-ah*' he who has an unheeding heart will fall to bad. But we may ask why is the name of Kamtza mentioned since he had nothing to do with the whole sorry episode. Perhaps we can put some blame on him. Since he was a friend of the host, he must have heard about the seuda. He should have worried why he was not invited. Maybe he had upset his friend. He could have discreetly enquired about it and the mistake would have been corrected. But he did not, there was no '*ashre adam mefached tamid*'. Maybe he was not such a good friend as he made out and would wait until after the event so he could hold a grudge

against the host for not inviting him. This would be a pointer to the underlying cause of the destruction of the Temple, '*sinat chinam*', wanton hatred. For even the friends were not really friends but preferred to hold grudges. Again, we find that those who were present did not bother to protest at the embarrassment of another Jew in public, a pointer to '*sinat chinam*'.

Tur Malka was destroyed because they made too much fuss over a minhag without giving due thought to the consequences. '*Ashre adam mefached tamid*' they had a minhag to bring a chicken and a hen for the marriage as a sign the couple should multiply. Some Roman soldiers took these from them; the people attacked them without thinking of the consequences bringing about the siege of Tur Malkha and its destruction. And again when the general who came to attack them turned back because he felt G-d had done a miracle for him by causing the death of Jewish '*Gibor*' Bar Daroma, whom he feared. The people of the town began to celebrate with bonfires, and singing and dancing in the street without giving a thought to the consequences of antagonising the Romans, which they did. Perhaps they should have gone to the synagogue to say Hallel for the salvation instead.

Beitar was destroyed because of the fuss they made of a minhag. They would plant a cedar when a child was born and when they married they made the chupah from its wood. The carriage of the ruler's

daughter broke down and they took this wood to repair it, the town people came and attacked her entourage not thinking about the consequences. Jerusalem had been destroyed and Tur Malka as well and yet they had not taken notice. '*Ashre adam mefached tamid vu makshe libo yipol be ra-ah*'. We must be wary of the consequences of our actions both for ourselves and the harm to others. Let us think of our actions and how they can help rebuild the Temple.

### **STORIES OF TZADDIKIM**

In 1920, Sir Herbert Samuel, the High Commissioner of Palestine, visited all religious leaders of Jerusalem. His last visit was to Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the Rav of Jerusalem. Sir Herbert was escorted by a whole procession to the house of the Rav. Sir Herbert walked down the steps to the cellar-like apartment. Sir Herbert entered the cramped, dark dwelling and greeted the Rav in jest 'The Rav couldn't find himself a home deeper in the earth?' The Rav opened the shutters which revealed a panoramic view of the Temple Mount lying in ruins. The Rav turned to the High Commissioner with tears rolling down his eyes saying 'As long as the dwelling place of my beloved G-D lies in ruins, my home need not to be any better than His.' Sir Herbert, awe-struck at the Rav, turned around and left quietly.

***Shabbat Shalom***

## HALACHOT – TISHA B'AV

1. At the Seuda Mafseket we should only eat bread and one cooked dish. A common Minhag is to eat a boiled egg with some ash and bread (hamotze).
2. We sit on mats or low stools for Seuda Mafseket and we do not sit three men together so that there should be no 'Chiyuv Zimun'.
3. Every adult, even a pregnant or feeding mother, is obliged to fast. The exception being someone who is ill, even someone who has an illness with no danger to life, or is too feeble to fast.
4. A feeding mother should start the fast but if she feels she does not have enough milk for the baby and he does not take a bottle, may break the fast. A woman who has given birth up to 30 days is considered a sick person and does not have to fast.
5. Those who are permitted to break their fast do not have to eat or drink in small quantities as they are required to on Yom Kippur.
6. We are not permitted to wash ourselves even in cold water, and not even to dip our hands into cold water. But washing which is necessary after the toilet etc, we may but only up to the end of the fingers. Women who cook and prepare food may wash the vessels and vegetables she needs to even though her hands get wet since it is not for pleasure.
7. We may only wear plastic or rubber shoes, not leather, even if only the top or sole is made of leather. There are some Poskim who object to wearing shoes with thick soles even when the shoes are not made of leather.
8. One may not rub cream or oils on any part of his body, but if there is a medical necessity one may do so.
9. We sit on a low stool until midday, we do not go for walks even after midday so we should not come to fun and frivolity.
10. Normal subjects of Torah are avoided. We only study those subjects concerning the destruction and mourning.
11. According to many great poskim, including the Ben Ish Hai, we put on tallit and tefillin with a beracha at home and say the Shema before coming to the Beth Haknesseth. Some keep the minhag of the

Mekubalim of Beth El and say Shaharit with tallit and tefillin in the Synagogue. According to the Shulhan Aruch, tallit and tefillin are worn only for Mincha. Minhagim should be respected and not changed.

There is no objection for those who wore Tefilin at home to wear them again for Mincha.

### **SHABBAT TIMES**

Shabbat commences 8:45 pm  
**We should not light candles before 7:22 pm**  
Shabbat terminates 10:04 pm

Mincha Erev Shabbat 7:15 pm  
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat

Shacharit 8:30 am  
Shabbat :Latest Shema  
Magen Avraham 8:34 am  
Shabbat Latest Shema Gra 9:10 am

Mincha pn Shabbat 7:30 pm  
Arvit 10:15pm

### **WEEKDAY TIMES**

Shacharit 7:00 am  
Sundays 8:00 am  
Mincha 7:30 pm  
followed by Arbit

### **TISHA B'AV TIMINGS**

#### **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> 2020 Erev Tisha B'Av**

Shacharit 7:00 am  
Mincha 7:00 pm  
Fast Commences 8:52 pm  
Kinot Arbit 9:00 pm

#### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

##### **Tisha B'Av**

Shacharit 8:00 am  
Midday 1:07 pm  
Mincha followed by Arbit 8:15 pm  
Fast Terminates 9:42 pm

#### **PLEASE FOLLOW ALL THE GUIDELINES AND WARNINGS CONCERNING COVID-19**

**PANDEMIC  
VUSHMARTEM MEOD  
LE'NAFSHOTEHEM**

**VEHAVTA L'REACHA KAMOCHA**