

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

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פרשת עקב תשפ"ו

If One Does Not Sin, There Is No Fear of Man

לא תערז מפניהם כי ה' אלקיך בקרבך כל גדול ונורא: (ז כא)

The Torah states: "You shall not be terrified of them, for Hashem is בקרבך in your midst, a great and awesome God." (7:21) Why does the Torah specifically use the word "בקרבך in your midst / inside you"? The Question on the Verse It could have simply used the word "עִמָּךְ" with you—meaning "Hashem is "with" you"! Why does the Torah say Hashem is "inside you" instead of just saying Hashem is "with you"?

The Torah is teaching us a fundamental lesson: "Do not be terrified of them" —do not fear human beings. Rather, "for Hashem is "inside" you", harbor the fear of Hashem within your very heart! When a person fears Hashem, who is within them, they refrain from sin. We find this principle illustrated in the Gemarra (Berachos 33a): There was once a city that was plagued by a dangerous, poisonous snake-like creature, an "Arod" that was harming the people. They came and informed Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa. He said to them, "Show me its hole." They went and showed him its hole. Rabbi Chanina placed his heel over the opening. The creature came out, bit his heel, and the creature died! He placed it on his shoulder, brought it into the Bais Hamidrash, and said to them: See, my children, it is not the creature that kills—it is sin that kills! At that moment, they declared: "Woe to the person who encounters an Arod, but woe to the Arod that encounters Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa!" When a person truly fears the Almighty and avoids sin, no harm can come to them.

This was also King David's declaration: He expresses this exact thought in Tehilim 59:4 גורו עלי עוים לא פשעי ולא "Mighty men gather against me, through no offense or sin of mine, O Lord." King David means: Mighty enemies assemble against me, yet I have no fear of them because I am free of offense and sin. I fear only You, Hashem! This is the meaning of the Posuk: "Do not be terrified of them, for Hashem is in your midst, who is great and awesome." Hashem sees all your actions and deeds. When you internalize His presence, refrain from sin, and fear Him alone, you are granted complete protection.

This can also be alluded to the pshat and become a connection to the opening posuk of the Parsha: עקב והיה עקב תשמעון את המשפטים האלה ושמרתם ועשיתם אותם, "And it shall come to pass, עקב because you listen to these laws..."

(7:12) Because you possess true Yiras Shamayim (fear/reverence of Heaven) and safeguard His commandments, the end of that verse is immediately fulfilled for you: ושמר ה' אלקיך לך את הבטת ואת החסד אשר נשבע לאבותיך:

"...Hashem will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers." When your fear of Heaven is intact, Hashem guarantees your protection, and you have absolutely nothing—and no one—left to fear!

We see the same idea in the Posuk Devorim 28:10 ויראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ה' נקרא עליך ויראו ממך: "and all the nations of the earth will realize that Hashem's name is proclaimed over you and they will be afraid of you." the Rabbeinu Bachya explains: If someone is a servant of the king's minister his stature does not compare to someone who is a servant of the king himself. Even the ministers of the king are in awe of the king's "private secretaries," because the title of the private secretary is "Royal such and such," that reminds people of the proximity of this individual to the king.

this is what the Posuk says: ויראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ה' נקרא עליך When we do Mitzvohs and fear Hashem and we become close to Him, ויראו ממך all nations and people will fear us. Hence, we have the key to living a tranquil, and peaceful life. By adhering and doing constantly Mitzvohs, we are protected by Hashem.

We see the posuk in Beraishis 1:20 ויבא אלהים אתי האדם And Hashem created man in His image, in the image of Hashem He created him; Chazal teach us when one sins, he loses the image from Hashem. This is also explained by Yosef, when his brothers threw him into the pit, where there were dangerous reptiles inside. Their test was to see if Yosef was a Tzaddik, he would not be harmed. Yosef was a tzaddik and no harm came upon him!

However, by doing mitzvohs, we retain on our face, the image of Hashem, ויראו ממך all nations and people will fear us, which causes people to fear you. Dovid Hamelech promises us in Tehilim 91, One who fears Hashem לא תאנה אליך רעה ונגע לא יקרב באהלה: no harm will befall you, no disease touch your tent. כי מלאכיו יצוה לך לשמרך בכל לשמךך בכל: For Hashem's angels will be ordered to guard you wherever you go. This is a powerful remedy! (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

***** ***The Young Genius a chavrusa of the Chiddushei Harim delivered a powerful Drasha*** *****

In the city of Warsaw, Poland, there lived a righteous and wealthy man named Rabbi Feivel Kaminitzer. Rabbi Feivel was a follower of the greatest Chasidic Rebbes of his generation, including the Chozeh of Lublin, the Koznitzer Maggid, and later, the Yehudi Hakadosh of Pashischa.

When a young scholar named Rabbi Yitzchak Meir arrived in Warsaw, Rabbi Feivel recognized his exceptional mind. Rabbi Feivel introduced the young man to the Yehudi Hakadosh of Pashischa, who immediately warmly embraced him. Rabbi Feivel and Rabbi Yitzchak Meir forged a close bond. Rabbi Yitzchak Meir became famous as the Chiddushei HaRim (the founding Rebbe of the Gerer Chasidic dynasty). Because Rabbi Feivel was wealthy, he spared no expense when it came to shidduchim for his children and grandchildren. He was privileged to intermarry with the most prominent rabbis and righteous leaders of the era.

When the time came for Rabbi Feivel's grandson—the son of Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Plonsk—to marry, Rabbi Feivel sent a matchmaker to propose a match with the daughter of Rabbi Baruch Frankel-Thumim, known as the Baruch Taam of Leipnik, one of Torah giants of Europe. He was the father-in-law of the heilge Sanzer Rav.

The Baruch Taam was deeply impressed by the young boy's mind, and agreed, setting the wedding for a year later. Wanting his grandson to make the most of his remaining time, Rabbi Feivel asked Rabbi Yitzchak Meir to tutor the young choson. One day, long before the wedding date, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir taught the boy a deep, complex Talmudic topic and said, "This will be drasha you deliver to your grandfather-in-law on the Shabbos before your wedding."

The choson mastered the lecture quickly, Rabbi Feivel was somewhat puzzled why Rabbi Yitzchak Meir was teaching him a drasha so early, when the wedding was still many months away? However, he kept his questions to himself.

Shortly afterward, the true divine foresight Ruach HaKodesh of Rabbi Yitzchak Meir became clear. Unexpectedly, a letter arrived from the Baruch Taam. Due to pressing circumstances, he needed to move the wedding date up significantly and asked the family to prepare immediately to travel to Leipnik. Rabbi Feivel and his family quickly packed their belongings and set out on the long journey.

The trip to Leipnik was scheduled to take four weeks. They planned carefully, aiming to arrive on Wednesday before the Shabbos celebration. Arriving early would give them plenty of time to rest and prepare for the festivities. However, instead of arriving on Wednesday, they did not reach Leipnik until Friday afternoon, well past chatzos.

The Baruch Taam had established a strict rule in Leipnik that all local businesses and shops had to close promptly at noon on Friday to prepare properly for the Shabbos. When Rabbi Feivel's family arrived late and found the entire town closed up, they were deeply stressed and exhausted. Finding the town shut down, the exhausted travelers went straight to their inn, stressed and empty-handed.

It was tradition in Leipnik for a groom to deliver a sharp Torah sermon on Friday night before the town's top scholars. The Baruch Taam had intended to spend a few days preparing the choson himself, but seeing how late and exhausted the boy had arrived, he realized there was no time left.

Fearing the young man might be publicly embarrassed, the Baruch Taam called Rabbi Feivel to find a solution. "Local scholars here look down on typical Polish pilpul," he worried. "I want to teach him a short speech so he wouldn't be embarrassed!" Rabbi Feivel said the Almighty has already taken care of everything! My grandson's lecture is brilliant."

The Baruch Taam asked to hear it, and was left speechless by its depth and precision. "Who taught you this unbelievable lecture?" he asked. "My grandfather's chavrusa in Warsaw," the boy replied.

The Baruch Taam proudly announced to the local scholars: "The drasha you are about to hear was taught to this young man by a scholar in Warsaw. You must grid yourselves to grasp its brilliant depth." The choson delivered the drasha flawlessly, bringing immense pride to both families. Afterward, the Baruch Taam declared emotionally, "If I had the physical strength, I would walk on foot to Warsaw just to learn Torah from that young man!" Even before the Chiddushei HaRim became famous, his foresight was clear: he had anticipated the travel delays months early, ensured the groom would not be embarrassed, and brought deep delight to one of the greatest Torah scholars of the generation.

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