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DAF KESHER

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DVAR TORAH DESIRE AND DESIRE

The Torah opens the halachah of the **יפת תואר**, the beautiful captive woman, with “When you see among the captives a beautiful looking woman, and you desire her ...” (Devarim 21:11), using the verb root **חשק** for desire. In the end of the passage, when it says “It will be that if you do not desire her” (Devarim 21:14), it uses the verb root **חפץ** for desire. Why does the Torah shift from **חִשְׁקָהּ** to **חִפְצָהּ**?

Harav Yosef Shaul Natanson, זצ"ל (Galicia, 1808–1875), in *Divrei Shaul* on our Parshah (p. 91b of the 5638 edition), explains the difference between these two verbs. **חשק** is an indescribable desire that takes over the person; he is overcome by the attraction. **חפץ**, on the other hand, is much more rooted and deep. **חפץ** combines will, attraction, and rational decision making.

A similar verb shift appears in the Torah's narrative about Shechem son of Chamor, who raped Yaakov and Leah's daughter Dinah. Chamor approaches Yaakov and his sons, and says, “Shechem my son **נפשו** – deeply desires – your daughter” (Bereishit 34:8). The sons of Yaakov got Chamor and Shechem to agree to the condition that Shechem and the entire city undergo circumcision. That should have deterred Shechem from marrying Dinah if he was merely infatuated with Dinah. Instead, the Chumash tells us, Shechem did not hesitate getting this done; he and all of the males of the city – including all of the adults – underwent circumcision. Why did Shechem go through with it? **כי חפץ בבת יעקב** – for he desired the daughter of Yaakov. Here the Torah uses the verb **חפץ**. Shechem was not just overtaken by a transient desire, but was determined to marry Dinah.

Initially the soldier of our Parshah was overcome by overwhelming desire for the captive woman, **חשק**. But after she lived in his house for a month, cried and mourned over her family, and shed the external trappings of beauty, the man must now judge: “Do I really want to marry her?” Does he desire her in the sense of **חפץ**? If not, he must allow her to go free.

These two verbs, these two types of desires, says the author of the *Divrei Shaul*, are used by the Midrash to describe how Hashem relates to the People of Israel. “Not because you are more numerous than the rest of the nations did Hashem desire you – **חשק ה' בכם** – and choose you ... For out of Hashem's love for you and because of the oath that He made to your forefathers ... (Devarim 7:7-8). Hashem has a desire for Israel that is independent of whether or not they are worthy. His love for us sometimes seems almost irrational.

But the ultimate way Hashem relates to Israel is through **חפץ** desire. As the prophet Yishayah says about the end of days: “No longer shall ‘forsaken’ be said of you, and ‘desolate’ shall no longer be said of your Land, for you shall be called **חפצי-בה** – ‘My desire is in her’ – and your Land, **בעולה** – ‘inhabited’ (using the word for intimate relations) for Hashem desires you – **כי חפץ ה' בך** – and your land shall be inhabited. As a young man lives with a virgin, so shall your children live in you, and the rejoicing of a bridegroom over a bride shall your G-d rejoice over you” (Yishayah 62:4-5). We, Israel, should strive to not only be the recipients of Divine “**חשק**” but also be worthy of Hashem's “**חפץ**” – to once again be called **חפצי-בה**.

SOURCE GUIDE: JUDGED BY HIS FUTURE

The Torah's passage about the straying and rebellious son presents a number of difficulties. One of them is that he is punished severely for what seem to be minor crimes: overeating, drunkenness, and not responding to his parents' chastising. The Gemara explains that the need to finance his gluttony and drinking will drive that youth to crime and he will end up murdering people for their money. But the Gemara's solution presents us with a new difficulty: Why are we so certain he will become a criminal? Maybe he will do teshuvah, repent? This source guide is based on an article by Harav Chaim Goldvicht, זצ"ל (1924-1995, the late Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh) in Asufat Maarachot (Devarim, pp. 163-175).

A. The Straying and Rebellious Son Is Judged by his Future Crime

The **בן סורר ומורה**, the straying and rebellious son, receives the death penalty, but his sins seem much less severe than other sins in that category. The death penalty is usually reserved for sins like murder, adultery, or idolatry. He seems to be punished severely for minor crimes:

<p>1. Devarim 21:18-21</p> <p>(18) When a man will have a straying and rebellious son, who does not listen to the voice of his father or mother; and they chastise him but he does not listen to them.</p> <p>(19) His father and mother should grasp him and take him out to the elders of his city and the gate of his place.</p> <p>(20) And they should say to the elders of his city: "This son of ours is straying and rebellious; he does not listen to our voice; [he is] gluttonous and a drunkard."</p> <p>(21) And all of the men of his city should stone him with stone and he should die. And you should destroy evil from your midst, and all of Israel should hear and see.</p>	<p>דברים כא: יח-כא</p> <p>(יח) כִּי יִהְיֶה לְאִישׁ בֶּן סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֵה אִינּוֹ שָׁמַע בְּקוֹל אָבִיו וּבְקוֹל אִמּוֹ וַיִּסְרוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע אֲלֵיהֶם.</p> <p>(יט) וְתִפְּשׁוּ בּוֹ אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְהוֹצִיאוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל זִקְנֵי עִירוֹ וְאֶל שַׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ.</p> <p>(כ) וְאָמְרוּ אֵל זִקְנֵי עִירוֹ בְּנֵנוּ זֶה סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֵה אִינּוֹ שָׁמַע בְּקוֹלֵנוּ זוֹלָל וְסָבָא.</p> <p>(כא) וּרְגַמְהוּ כָּל אַנְשֵׁי עִירוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים וּמָת וּבַעֲרֹת הָרַע מִקִּרְבּוֹ וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמְעוּ וַיִּרְאוּ.</p>
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The Gemara explains why he is punished so severely:

<p>2. Sanhedrin 72a</p> <p>Rabbi Yossi the Galilean says: Because this [youth] ate a "tartimar" of meat and a "log" of Italian wine the Torah says he should go to the court to be put to death? Rather, the Torah foresaw the eventual end of the straying and rebellious son. He will eventually finish off his father's wealth, yet still seek out his regular amount [of meat and wine] but not find it. In the end he will go out to the crossroads and rob people. The Torah said: Let him die innocent and not die guilty.</p>	<p>סנהדרין עב.</p> <p>רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר: וכי מפני שאכל זה תרטומר בשר ושתה חצי לוג יין האיטלקי אמרה תורה יצא לבית דין ליסקל? אלא, הגיעה תורה לסוף דעתו של בן סורר ומורה. שסוף מגמר נכסי אביו ומבקש למודו ואינו מוצא, ויוצא לפרשת דרכים ומלסטם את הבריות. אמרה תורה ימות זכאי ואל ימות חייב.</p>
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This seems to contradict another passage in the Talmud, based on a verse in the Torah's narrative about Hagar and Yishmael. Yishmael was dying of thirst, and Hashem miraculously saved him, judging him favorably:

<p>3. Rosh Hashanah 16b</p> <p>Rabbi Yitzchak said: A person is only judged according to his deeds at the time of judgment, as it says, "For G-d heard the voice of the youth as he was there" (Bereishit 21:17).</p>	<p>ראש השנה טז:</p> <p>אמר רבי יצחק: אין דנין את האדם אלא לפי מעשיו של אותה שעה, שנאמר, "כי שמע אלהים אל קול הנער כאשר הוא שם" (בראשית כא: יז).</p>
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The Midrash presents this teaching through a discussion between Hashem and the angels:

<p>4. Bereishit Rabbah 53:14</p> <p>"As he was there" – Said Rabbi Simon: The ministering angels jumped up to accuse against him (Yishmael) and said before Hashem, "Master of the worlds! For a man who will, in the future, kill your sons through thirst, You (miraculously) bring</p>	<p>בראשית רבה נג: יד</p> <p>"כאשר הוא שם" – אמר רבי סימון: קפצו מלאכי השרת לקטרגו אמרו לפניו, "רבון העולמים, אדם שהוא עתיד להמית את בניך בצמא אתה מעלה לו באר?!" אמר להם,</p>
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up a well?! He said to them, "Right now, is he righteous or wicked?" They said to Him, "He is righteous." He said to them, "I only judge a person based on the time of judgment."

"עכשיו מה הוא צדיק או רשע?" אמרו לו, "צדיק." אמר להם, "איני דן את האדם אלא בשעתו."

Why is the straying and rebellious son judged based on his future crimes, while Yishmael's descendants' future crimes were ignored when Hashem judged him?

B. Yishmael's Call

Rav Goldvicht resolves this difficulty through resolving a difficulty that appears in the Yishmael and Hagar episode. There seems to be a lack of clarity in the Torah's passage about Yishmael dying of thirst: who prayed and who did Hashem answer? **Hagar** lifted up her voice and cried and the the angel responded to Hagar, but Hashem listened to the voice of the **youth** (Bereishit 21:16-17). Rav Goldvicht – through coordinating a number of Midrashic passages (Bereishit Rabbah 53:14 and Yalkut Shimoni Bereishit 21:95) – suggests that Hagar prayed and cried, but Yishmael merely called out to G-d. She prayed, but whether or not her prayer would be answered was contingent on his at least calling out to G-d. When he called out she was answered. The word קול can mean two different things, voice and sound. Hagar used her voice in prayer, but Yishmael merely called out.

B. Yishmael, the Straying & Rebellious Son, and the Shofar

Why was Yishmael judged based on his status at that moment, while the straying and rebellious son is judged severely because of his future crimes?

Sin can affect a person in two different ways: A person can sin in a way that does not compromise his essential identity. He remains a good person with wicked externals. At the core he did not detach himself from Hashem. But, says Rav Goldvicht, a person can detach himself from his core connection to G-d. It is not necessarily the intensity of sin that determines whether it is in the first category or the second. Great sins might still remain external while less severe sins might create detachment. This explains the difference between Yishmael and the **בן סורר ומורה**, the straying and rebellious son. Yishmael had been involved in serious sins:

6. Bereishit 21:9

Sarah saw that the son of Hagar the Egyptian, that she gave birth to through Avraham, was "making merry."

Rashi's Commentary on Bereishit 21:9

"Making merry" – This is an expression of idolatry, as it says, "They got up (at the Golden Calf) to make merry" (Shemot 32:6). Another explanation is that it is an expression of sexual immorality, as it says (Potiphar's wife's accusation about Yosef Hatzaddik, "to make merry with me" (Bereishit 39:17). Another explanation is that it is an expression of murder, as it says (in the war between Shaul's and David's soldiers), "Let the youth get up and make merry before us" (II Shmuel 2:14).

בראשית כא:ט

וַתֵּרֶא שָׂרָה אֶת בֶּן הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְאַבְרָהָם מְצַחֵק.

רש"י על בראשית כא:ט

מצחק - לשון עבודת אלילים, כמו שנאמר, "ויקומו לצחק" (שמות לב:ו). דבר אחר לשון גילוי עריות כמה דתימא "לצחק ביי" (בראשית לט:ז). דבר אחר לשון רציחה כמה דתימא "יקומו נא הנערים וישחקו לפנינו וגו'" (שמואל ב' ב:יד).

Yishmael had gotten involved in deep sins and had to be sent away. But he had not yet severed his connection with G-d. The proof is that when in danger of death he called out to Him. It was an unintelligible cry but it showed that he had not severed the bond with G-d. And Hashem answered him, ignoring how his future descendants would torture Israel in the future. But the straying and rebellious son, even though his sins seem minor, has detached himself from Hashem. He was on a trajectory to murder – and (as the Sforno says in his commentary on Devarim) **כי מריו מסיר התקוה שישוב מסוררתו** – His rebelliousness removes any hope of him returning from his straying" – and had disconnected from his Source. That is why he is judged so severely.

Says Rav Goldvicht: The shofar is our calling out to Hashem that expresses our constant connection with Him – no matter what sins we have drifted into. When we call out – like Yishmael – we say, without words, "We are still with You."

CHANAH'S PRAYER BY RABBI YITZCHAK HIRSHFELD

As Rav Hamnuna tells us (Berachot 31a), there are many great things we can learn about prayer from the prayer of Chanah, the focus of the Haftarah of the first day of Rosh Hashanah (I Shmuel 1:1 – 2:10). These teachings can be especially helpful as, during Elul, we prepare for the Days of Awe, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur:

A. “Rabbi Elazar said: There was no one who called the Holy One, blessed be He, ‘the G-d of Hosts’ until Chanah came and called Him ‘[the G-d of] Hosts’” (Berachot 31b). Crying, Chanah began her prayer with, “ה' צבא-ות – G-d of Hosts” (I Shmuel 1:11). The Gemara likens Chanah to a poor man who came to the door at a king’s banquet. He asked for some bread, but all of the king’s servants and attendants (the king’s “hosts”) ignored him. So the poor man made his way to the king himself and said, “My master the king, of all of this feast that you made, is it so hard to give me just one piece of bread?” Chanah pushed her way past all of G-d’s hosts – all of the angels as well as the Kohen Gadol – and prayed directly to Hashem Himself. The subordinates are too busy trying to please the King to notice the problems and suffering of one individual, but the King himself is free to take care of every one of His subjects. Chanah dealt directly with Hashem.

B. “Chanah said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Master of the World! Of all of the hosts upon hosts that You created in Your world is it difficult to give me one son?” How did Chanah manage to take a request which was, for her, the entire world, and in her prayer make it seem so minor?

It is a matter of perspective. When a person primarily focuses on himself, he ends up seeing himself in a distorted light. That results in person-centered tefillah. “I need” and “I want” deems the person as the master and G-d is, so to speak, serving his needs. The response might end up being: “You are, indeed, asking for a lot.” That is because from the person’s vantage point his request is a big one.

But when one adopts Hashem’s perspective, His point of view, he says, “I am a leaf on a tree. I am here to serve Him and my needs are determined by His Will. I exist for Him and not for myself.” Then the request in prayer is, indeed, not so great. In Chanah’s tefillah she viewed herself and her request from Hashem’s perspective, not her own. Asking for a child was like asking the King at the banquet for one slice of bread.

C. Chanah’s words, “אם ראה תראה כעני אמתך – If You will surely see the affliction of Your maidservant” (I Shmuel 1:11), are, most likely, the basis of Chazal comparing Chanah to the poor person at the door of the king’s banquet. Chanah viewed herself as an עני, as a poor person with nothing, with no personal resources to draw upon. She felt totally dependent on Hashem for everything. And her prayer reflected that. As the verse in Mishlei states: “תחנננים ידבר רש וְעשיר יענה עזות – A poor man speaks with supplications but a rich man responds brashly” (Mishlei 18:23). Chanah was a רש before Hashem.

Rabbi Yitzchak said: Every year that is poor at its opening becomes rich by its end” (Rosh Hashanah 16b). Each of us enters the new year totally divested of our possessions (we use zero-line budgeting). The health, wealth, and prosperity we have enjoyed until now were given for the year – like in a year-by-year budget or grant – and at the end of the year we have to reapply. May we and all of Israel be blessed with a year of all good things.

שבת שלום ומבורך

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DBS – Hataklitor Hatorani, Otzar Hachochmah, the Bar Ilan Responsa Project, and Hebrewbooks.org.

We continue to pray for a refuah shleimah, a complete healing, for all those wounded in the attacks against our People.