

Kiddush Hashem

CURRICULUM & RESOURCES

BOOK 2

*...manifesting
Hashem's name
in the world.*



Rabbi Sholom Friedmann
Director, Zechor Yemos Olam
Torah Umesorah

Rouhama Garelick
Director, Walder Education Pavilion
Of Torah Umesorah



Please note that there will be new lesson plans available every year.

These lessons were developed in conjunction with **Mifal Kiddush Hashem**
and based on the **Sefer Mekadshei Shemecha** by Rabbi Shraga Freedman

For a free download of the sefer, more resources, and additional information on Kiddush Hashem,
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Director *Mrs. Rouhama Garelick* / Graphic Artist *Eliana Garelick* / Curriculum *Mrs. Leah Miller* / Editor *Mrs. Tirza Kahan*

8150 McCormick Boulevard Skokie, IL 60076 Phone: 847-674-0800 Fax: 847-674-1188 teacherscenter@waldereducation.org

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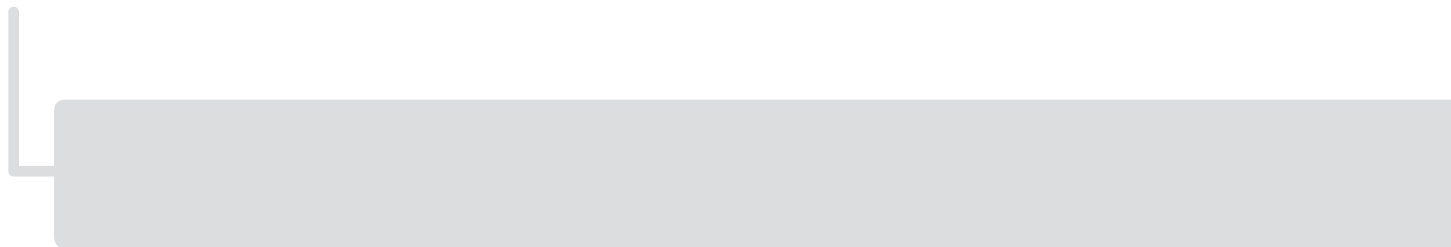
ZECHOR YEMOS OLAM OF TORAH UMESORAH

Director, Zechor Yemos Olam *Rabbi Sholom Friedmann* / Author *Rabbi Shraga Freedman*

Project Assistant *Ms. Alana Goldman* / Project Manager *Mrs. Leah Sugarman*

1090 Coney Island Ave Brooklyn, NY 11230 Office: 212-227-1000 Fax: 212-406-6934

Introduction.



■ DEAR TEACHERS,

These lessons have been designed to help students understand the importance of emulating ה' attributes in their daily interactions. It is our hope that through their study, students will gain the sensitivity to further their unique mission in this world. We believe that by teaching this material, students will become a link in the holy chain of Jews that have sacrificed to increase ה' honor through their righteous actions.

These lesson plans have been organized to facilitate the teacher's ease of use. Stories and extended text have been placed appropriately within the lesson plan, adding interest and depth to the lesson.

All תורה sources have been cited with footnotes for the teacher's convenience. At the end of each lesson, additional resources have been included for further clarification and study.

■ SHORT REVIEW LESSON

■ INTRODUCTION.

In the original five lessons, students learned about קידוש ה'. Presented below is a short review lesson to remind students of the essential points that were taught. The introductory lesson that follows this review introduces the students to the next set of lessons.

■ ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

As students enter the classroom, hand each student an index card, (or divide students into groups and hand each group an index card) and ask students to compose a question about each of the following original five lessons

- Lesson 1- Defining קידוש ה' and חילול ה'
- Lesson 2- Bringing the world to the recognition of ה': the purpose of creation and כלל ישראל
- Lesson 3- Publicizing the Name of ה' through His blessings and the השגחה of כלל ישראל
- Lesson 4- Honoring ה' for His own sake, not for a person's own honor
- Lesson 5- Emulating the ways of ה' so that each of us becomes a עולם אלוהים

Before beginning the following new lessons, the teacher should ensure that the previous lessons are clearly understood by the students. Only then should the following introductory lesson be taught.

The next lesson introduces the concept of the Jew as a leader. Through his adherence to תורה and מצוות, he becomes a light to the nations and a guide in ethical behavior. Through witnessing our conduct, the other nations are drawn to emulate and employ these behaviors in their own lives.

It is therefore essential that each Jew be aware of his mission and rise to the challenges of being a leader.

Introductory Lesson.

■ RESPONSIBILITY OF JEWS AS LEADERS

■ INTRODUCTION.

As ה'ס Chosen People, we have been entrusted with the unique mission of acting in accordance with the will of ה' and reflecting His Holy ways in all of our actions: "והלכת בדרכיו". It is not our job to impress or convince the nations about the righteousness of ה', but rather through acting in accordance to His Will, the nations will come to recognize His greatness.

■ OBJECTIVES.

Students will:

- Discuss the responsibilities of a leader and the benefits of fulfilling one's obligations responsibly.
- Be able to define the difference between the obligations of *בין אדם למקום* and *בין אדם לחבירו*.
- Learn that when they have made the wrong choice or have been tempted to make unwise decisions, they should reflect on their actions, learn from them, and then get back on track.

■ ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

To renew interest and involvement in the topic of קידוש ה', the teacher should start the discussion by explaining that our role as Jews in the world is similar to the role of a captain of

a ship who has the responsibility of guiding the entire ship and its passengers safely to their final destination.

The teacher will ask the students to list and define the obligations of a captain such as the responsibilities of directing, navigating, and safely bringing a ship to its final destination.

What jobs does a captain have to fulfill?

The students should be directed to consider the many roles that a captain must undertake vis-à-vis the skills of navigation, steering, directing his crew and interacting fairly and respectfully with his passengers.

The teacher should then divide the students into groups, asking them to:

- Draw or list in writing the many obligations that a captain has as the captain of his ship.
- Discuss the consequences should the captain be remiss in the fulfillment of his duties.

One group might be responsible for depicting a captain navigating the ship's course through studying maps, while a second group might depict the steering of the ship. A third group might represent the captain as a leader, skillfully directing the crew to work together as a team, each member using his talents to achieve a

“... ואתנך לברית עם לאור גוים” (ישעיהו מב:ו)

“...I MADE YOU FOR A PEOPLE’S COVENANT FOR A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS” (ISAIAH 42:6)

common goal. The final group might show the captain interacting fairly with the passengers. When the students have finished working, each group should have one person who will present the group’s understanding of the depicted obligation and the group’s conclusions about what would happen if the captain is remiss in the fulfillment of his duties.

When the groups have finished presenting, the pictures or lists the students made should be posted visibly in the room so that the teacher can refer to each one as he develops and presents the review.

This משל of a captain and his ship will be valuable in helping the students to frame and interpret the messages that will be taught in the following lessons.

■ DEVELOPMENT.

Rav Elchonon Wasserman compares the fact that we have many מצוות and the non-Jews have only a few, to the difference in responsibility between a captain and his passengers. Passengers on a ship need only abide by a few simple rules, while a captain has many rules and instructions and must also be proficient in many skills in order to successfully guide a ship to its proper destination.

The רמב"ל explains that ה' created millions of people who have the ability to draw close to Him through believing in and serving Him. At times such as the דור המבול, ה' gave every person the opportunity to recognize and serve Him, however, the entire generation failed to do so. Because of this failure, ה' appointed the future nation of עם ישראל as His ambassadors. They became the “captains” who would lead the world to the destination of recognizing ה' and acting according to His holy ways.

Just as the אבות were tested in the past, we as the Chosen People, are also tested. These tests purify us for the special role that ה' has planned for us. At הר סיני, we agreed to accept ה' and His commandments and were promised a special closeness to ה' for fulfilling our obligations. We were also warned about the consequences should we not fulfill our task.

The many מצוות that we are given raise us to a higher spiritual plane and connect us intimately to ה'. The other nations, however, are given only seven מצוות to establish law and order in the world. Our mission is to emulate the ways of ה' and in this way spread His holiness throughout the world. This causes the other nations to appreciate our lifestyle and pattern their actions after our behavior.

The way in which we conduct ourselves impacts upon the rest of the world. Our actions, much more than our words,

Introductory Lesson.

■ CONTINUED

make deep impressions. When we act in accordance with ה's will, we make a קידוש ה' and fulfill our mission.

Our actions speak louder than our words!

Too often, we have forgotten our role and mission as a nation, and we have suffered the pain of גלות (exile) in order to remind us of our special obligation. By focusing on our mission we will optimally hasten the coming of משיח.

■ AN ANALOGY.

Passengers on a ship have a destination. They do not need to exert effort to arrive there. They travel on the ship, follow some simple rules and eventually, with the help of ה', arrive at their final destination. The captain, on the other hand, has a much more difficult, albeit important, role. The captain's training, stamina, character and skill, all play a part in how safely and quickly the ship will arrive at its destination. While many people theoretically wish to become captains, when they see the difficulty involved and the many instructions that must be followed, they decide that it is not worth the responsibility or personal commitment required.

ה' in His great wisdom chose עם ישראל to be the "captains" of His "ship." Only עם ישראל were and are willing to make the sacrifices that are necessary and see the importance

of being the captains of ה's ship, even though this job requires vigorous tests and serious dedication. Therefore, in our strict adherence to ה's requirements, we sanctify the name of ה' in the world.

We believe in our mission and fulfill it responsibly and zealously. We tenaciously believe in and cling to ה' and because of our integrity, we are honored and looked up to by the "passengers" (the nations of the world).

There have been times when we have been tempted to live the life of a passenger. The captain might become jealous of his passengers' easy lives and lured by their carefree lifestyles. There have been times in our history when we have been influenced by the world around us and have been lured to follow the ways of the "passengers." We have forgotten that our purpose is to bring the world to perfection so that the nations recognize ה'. It is then that our ship has veered off course and we have moved further from our destination.

After many years in גלות the captain realizes that he is the leader and that it is he that must guide the passengers. He realizes that the pleasures of the passengers are meaningless. The captain longs again to be the leader he once was. He longs to be close and cling to ה'. He repents and happily takes on, once again, the responsibilities that need to be performed.

This reflects the deep longing of עם ישראל for ה' and their longing to arrive at the final and true destination. The ultimate fulfillment of our mission, the ultimate purpose of עם ישראל, is that through our unique ways and responsibilities, we will bring about the coming of משיח, when the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of ה'.

■ EXTENDING THE TEXT.

The recognition of our essential mission in this world is an important component of קידוש ה'. It is important for students to understand that each of them has an individual role in fulfilling this mission.

However, it is also important to emphasize that we must cultivate these מידות and while doing so, sometimes make mistakes. We are not born perfect and sometimes the job may seem overwhelming. Just as a captain can sometimes veer off course, we may also be tempted to follow the wrong path. The mistakes we make also serve a purpose: They help in our future growth if we take the opportunity to learn from them. Through reflecting on the actions that caused us to veer from the correct path, the next time, when faced with a challenge, we can more readily remain on the proper path.

■ ACTIVITY.

Students should be asked to reflect about a time that they erred, or were tempted to “veer from the path” and to examine what they learned from the challenge. Rather than to be disheartened when they realize that they have not lived up to a test, students should use this opportunity to learn from the challenge and to strengthen themselves for the future. This is the purpose of all tests that we encounter in life: To learn from our mistakes and to grow positively to make a קידוש ה'.

Lesson 6.

■ FAITHFUL AND HONEST BUSINESS PRACTICES

■ INTRODUCTION.

Conducting business dealings honestly goes above and beyond the natural expectations of honesty in the business world and reflects the G-dliness of עם ישראל to the rest of the world.

Rav Matisyahu Solomon שליט"א explains that the nations of the world cannot always detect "spirituality, sincerity, or integrity in the way that we shake a לולב" or perform any other מצוה בין אדם למקום. They are unable to completely understand our beautiful connection to ה' when they see us keeping שבת. The nations of the world do, however, understand our unique connection to ה' when they see how we conduct ourselves in our business dealings with them.¹

When we act honestly and forego unethical monetary gains, even those practices that are accepted in the world at large, then the nations recognize that we adhere to a higher standard and have a special connection to ה'.

■ OBJECTIVES.

Students will:

- Identify at least three reasons why it is important to conduct one's business dealings with honesty and integrity.
- List three examples in תנ"ך where telling the truth or not, led (or will lead) to important outcomes for עם ישראל.

- Explain in the context of קידוש ה' the difference between a vow that becomes public knowledge and one that remains private.

■ ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

The teacher should present the following scenario:

What would you do if this happened to you? Suppose you have just closed a business deal with a customer. As the customer is about to write his check, he asks, "So, I should make out the check for \$2,400, right?" Yesterday when you spoke to him, you quoted him a price of \$2,300, but he seems to have forgotten this. What would you do? A likely response might be: "The business owner could go along with the customer and accept the additional \$100." The discussion that follows should focus on whether or not this is ethical. It should end with the question: What does הלכה say?

The teacher should explain that the תורה teaches us how to respond to situations exactly like this. Depending upon how we choose to respond can be the difference between a קידוש ה' and a חילול ה'. Even if the other party never finds out that he had previously been quoted a lower price, it is a great מצוה if you remind him of the original quote that was \$100 less.

משא ומתן באמונה

Additionally, we need to think about the impression this would make on a non-Jew if he had paid the higher price, and later remembered the original quote or found the paper on which the original price was written.

■ DEVELOPMENT.

The אורחות צדיקים writes that during this time of our lengthy גלות, it is even more important to cling to the essential quality of ה', which is truth. This applies even when it might be permissible to manipulate the truth in business and other dealings.

He cites the נגמרא in פסחים 87b, "I have planted you in the land." When a farmer sows and plants a field, he does so in order to harvest more than he has originally planted as a "return" on his investment. In the same way, ה' has "planted" us among the other nations so that we will serve as an example to influence others to follow His ways. Whenever we conduct ourselves honestly, the nations of the world are impressed and of their own accord emulate our ways.² Our forefathers who have invoked the מידה of אמת (truth) have left a strong, lasting impression on our long history and when this truth has been compromised, we have suffered.

The יהודה on מדרש tells us that צדיקיהו, the מלך of יהודה, enjoyed free reign under מלך נבוכדנצר. One day צדיקיהו happened upon נבוכדנצר as he was eating a live rabbit. צדיקיהו made צדיקיהו swear that he would not reveal what he had seen to anyone. Later, צדיקיהו went to the סנהדרין to nullify his vow so that he could then tell others what he had seen. The סנהדרין nullified the vow and צדיקיהו told of the horror he had witnessed. When נבוכדנצר found out that the סנהדרין had allowed צדיקיהו to nullify his vow and repeat the incident, he punished the סנהדרין severely.

As the members of the סנהדרין waited to receive their punishment, they asked ה' to spare them in the merit of יעקב crying over יוסף. Why was this action a merit? יעקב believed that יוסף died after the brothers had sold him. He now believed that since יוסף was dead, he would not merit the fulfillment of his ultimate purpose in this world, which was to father the twelve שבטים. בית הלוי asks, "Couldn't יעקב have married another wife to have a twelfth son?"

The בית הלוי answers that this was the remarkable quality of יעקב: יעקב refused to nullify his vow to לבן not to marry another wife even though כלל ישראל might have benefitted from this action! Even though לבן himself was a known liar, יעקב steadfastly kept his word! He refused to cause a הילול ה'.

Even though, according to הלכה, they were permitted to nullify the vow, the סנהדרין did not act like יעקב: They did not take into consideration the חילול ה' that they would cause when they nullified the vow of צדיקיהו. Therefore, the סנהדרין prayed to be saved in the merit of יעקב.³ However, it is written in ירמיהו "...If you swear... in truth,

in justice and in righteousness, the nations will bless themselves through (Israel) and will praise themselves through it." רש"י explains that if בני ישראל will change their ways and swear truthfully, then every non-Jew will bless his children, saying, "May you be like this Jew."⁴

STORY #1— THE בעל שם טוב'S EXAMPLE

As the בעל שם טוב stood at the עמוד, leading the davening, he suddenly left the shul and headed to the marketplace. He purchased a wagonload of firewood from a non-Jewish peddler. After the man delivered the wood to shul, the בעל שם טוב paid him for the merchandise, adding a few coins for delivery and then gave him a drink of whiskey. Overwhelmed by this generosity, the peddler shouted, "Blessed be the G-d of the Jews — the non-Jews never give me anything for the delivery!"

Later, the students of the בעל שם טוב asked him why he had interrupted his davening to go to the market place to purchase wood. He explained that he had sensed that there was an indictment in the Heavens against the Jews of the villages for taking advantage of the non-Jewish peasants in their business dealings. He was seeking a means to negate this accusation.

-RABBI YAAKOV PERLOW, *The Jewish Observer* FEB. 1993

STORY #2—RAV PAM'S GUIDING PRINCIPLE AND ADVICE

In the early years of Shuvu (a Russian kiruv organization), Rav Pam conveyed to his administration his guiding principle: It would be better to close the organization than to compromise on אמת in order to raise funds.

To a תלמיד who was entering the non-Jewish business world for the first time, Rav Pam had this advice to offer. "In order to succeed, make sure to fulfill three conditions. You must be the hardest worker, the most honest worker and the most pleasant worker in the office."

-RABBI SHIMON FINKELMAN, *Rav Pam*

■ LIVING EXAMPLE.

רש"י explains in פירשת וזאת הברכה, that when the nations of the world will have business dealings with זבולן at the ports of Israel, [they will be so impressed] that they will go to ירושלים and see how the Jews serve One ה' and eat one kind of food. They will say, "There is no other nation like this one" and they will desire to convert.⁵

This is the foundation for the way we should conduct ourselves in business. Because the introduction that the people of the nations received when they had external business dealings with Jews was so favorable, the nations of the world then had the desire to see the inner life of the Jewish people.

STORY #3—MR. KRAVITZ AND THE NEO NAZI

A Neo-Nazi with a shaved head and arms covered with violently anti-Semitic tattoos, walked into Mr. Kravitz's furniture store. Mr. Kravitz, wearing a cap that covered his yarmulke, was polite and helpful as the customer made his furniture choices. An hour later the transaction was completed. After debating with himself and checking to see that his customer was unarmed, Mr. Kravitz decided to engage the man in further conversation. He said to him, "Do you really believe in all those tattoos you have? What do you have against Jews?" Mr. Kravitz queried.

"They are liars, thieves, and control the world," the Neo Nazi snarled back.

Mr. Kravitz watched the man's expression carefully as he removed his cap and asked the man, "Are you aware that you have just spent the past hour dealing with a Jew? Was I not fair and honest with you? Did I not give you a good price on your purchase today?"

The man looked up, surprised at this revelation, as Mr. Kravitz continued. "How could you subscribe to such nonsense? Your parents surely did not bring you up with such hatred. I'm willing to bet that you have no relationship with your parents."

A sad expression appeared on the man's face. "You're right," he said quietly. "I haven't spoken to my parents in many years." Then he left the store.

Six months later, this same man returned to Mr. Kravitz's furniture store. His appearance was completely different. He no longer had a shaved head, but had let his hair grow. His offensive tattoos were now covered by his shirt. He told Mr. Kravitz that he had completely changed his outlook since his last visit. "After our conversation last time, I left with a lot to think about. I came to realize how wrong I was to harbor all that hatred. And do you know what else? I have even begun to repair my relationship with my parents!"

-HEARD THE THE PROTAGANIST MR. KRAVITZ

STORY #4—THE HONEST ELECTRICIAN

Reporters in Israel broadcasted an investigative report on unfair business practices. The reporters were trying to catch unscrupulous electricians in the act, as they attempted to fleece their clients for repairs. After the reporters hid cameras throughout the house, they rigged wires in a refrigerator to cause a short circuit in a house's electrical wiring. They then videotaped everything. The first electrician who arrived at the house offered to fix the problem for 2,000 shekels. The second electrician offered to do the work for 2,800 shekels. Both electricians neglected to ask the homeowner any background questions (such as which appliance seemed to set off the short circuit).

A visibly religious Jew was the third electrician to be filmed. He, however, acted professionally. He asked the right questions of the homeowner, which led him to suspect the refrigerator as the cause of the house's electrical problem. He then checked the refrigerator's wiring, fixed the problem and restored power to the house. His charge for his work: 120 shekels. As this electrician left the house, he was interviewed by the investigative reporters on camera. He was asked why he had not inflated his bill and the amount of work that he needed to do to restore power to the house. The electrician was shocked by the very idea that someone would be so unethical and unprofessional. He said that because ה' watches every move we make and, "I would be judged for my actions by ה'. In addition, since a person is allotted a certain amount of income each year by ה', it will not help if I take money dishonestly because I will surely lose it some other way."

A kiruv professional told Rav Yitzchok that for years he had been trying to influence a certain family to become religious, but it was this story that impressed them. The family said that if there are people in the world who, because of their אמונה, adhere to such high standards of אמת, then they want to be a part of such a group of people! The whole family became religious.

-TAKEN FROM ספר עלינו לשבת, פרשת בלק, AS TOLD TO RAV YITZCHOK ZILBERSTEIN BY A KIRUV PROFESSIONAL.

STORY #5—AARON FEUERSTEIN, AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL

A feisty septuagenarian named Aaron Feuerstein became a hero overnight as he watched three buildings in his hundred-year-old factory complex in the slum neighborhood of Lawrence, Massachusetts being destroyed by fire. Mr. Feuerstein did not have to run into a burning building to save endangered employees. No, the president and chief executive officer of Malden Mills became a hero and a celebrity by investing in his people and ultimately saving the entire city of Lawrence.

Just twenty-four hours after the devastating fire, Feuerstein gathered many of his 3,000 workers in a high school gymnasium. The employees were prepared to hear him say that he was going to collect the insurance for his destroyed factories, retire and close what was left of the factory... or that he was going to move his operation to Mexico or Asia where his costs would be much lower and the profits higher. While closing down the city's biggest employer would wreck what little economy was left in Lawrence, it wasn't Aaron Feuerstein's problem, was it? The employees of Malden Mills who huddled in the small gymnasium expected to have a bleak holiday season without a paycheck. But Aaron Feuerstein's Orthodox Jewish faith had taught him to put people ahead of profits. They listened in stunned silence as he told them that he had every intention of rebuilding his factory in Lawrence, while continuing to provide full salary and benefits to all employees during reconstruction. The employees responded with cheers and tears. It would cost Aaron Feuerstein \$25 million to do the "right" thing. He never thought it would make him the recipient of many humanitarian awards and that he would be invited by then-President Clinton to be an honored guest at a State of the Union address. "Fifty years ago, nothing would have been thought about somebody who rebuilt his factory after it was burned and worried about his people and his community," said Feuerstein humbly. "Today a nerve has been struck, shocking people into the realization that the country is going in the wrong direction.... Chief executive officers, because of short-term gains, are cutting and killing off the very labor this country needs for its future."

—ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY SAM POLLAK WHICH APPEARED IN THE *DAILY STAR* ON DECEMBER 8, 1995, "FIRMS SHOULD PUT PEOPLE OVER PROFITS"

■ PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.

Most people's opinions of others are often based on what they have seen and heard. In general, people take what they see "at face value." They do not look for explanations or excuses. Therefore when we act a certain way, we cannot assume that people will understand or give us the benefit of the doubt if we act incorrectly, even when we feel we have a right to do so.

Everyone has bad days and reasons why they do not feel up to par. It is important to remember, however, that others often scrutinize our actions and form opinions that are not necessarily based on fact. When we make decisions we need to think about the impression that our actions make on others.

■ ACTIVITY.

First have students enact short skits that they composed portraying scenarios where a person's action(s) might be misunderstood or misinterpreted. Then reenact the same scenarios, but this time change the script to show how with some forethought the misunderstanding(s) could have been avoided. Below are some possible characters for these scenarios.

- A Mashgiach
- A Rebbe in Yeshiva/ A Bais Yaakov Teacher
- A Yeshiva Bachur/ A Seminary Student
- A Rav of a shul/ A Rebbetzin
- A Physician
- A Salesman
- A Lawyer
- A Worker/ A Store Clerk

■ PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS (CONT.)

WHO DESERVES THE COMMISSION?

Credit for a sale goes to the salesman who rings up the sale. Suppose 'Salesman A' helps a customer select the appropriate product that fits his needs. As 'Salesman A' is closing the deal, he is called away for a family emergency. 'Salesman B' completes the sale. Who should receive the commission for this sale? On one hand, 'Salesman

B' closed the sale, while on the other hand, 'Salesman A' did all the work of convincing the customer what to buy. Technically, 'Salesman B' should receive the commission. However, by giving the commission to 'Salesman A', 'Salesman B' performs a קידוש ה'.

■ SOURCES.

INTRODUCTION.

¹ Rav Matisyahu Solomon, in an introduction to "Halachos Of Other Peoples Money" (by Rav Bodner) writes: "The nations of the world cannot judge how close we are to ה' by the מצוות בין אדם למקום. They cannot see any particular spirituality, sincerity, or integrity in the way we shake a lulav. They do not see the beauty of our connection with הקב"ה in the way we keep שבת.

Where the nations themselves can see the difference between Jews and the other nations is in our business dealings with them. If we are honest, straightforward and forgo unethical gains, even from practices that everyone else does, that is where they see the difference. If we do not move a hairs breadth from the path that we have been told by ה', if we remain steadfast in our integrity in not so honest practices, even though such practices have become acceptable, that is where they see the difference. That is קידוש ה'.

It is part of the plan of creation that in business we must mingle with the nations. The purpose is for us to make a קידוש ה'. And when we fail this test ה"ו, when we use the חכמה that ה' has given us for the תורה, to subvert the system-what a terrible חילול ה' results."

DEVELOPMENT.

² באורחות צדיקים (שער האמת) - "עתה שהאריכו הגלות בעוונותינו הרבים, יותר מדי יש לישראל להבדל מהבלי העולם ולאחוז בחותמו של הקב"ה שהוא אמת, ולקדש עצמם אף במותר להם, ולא לשקר לא לישראל ולא לגוי ולא להמעותם בשום ענין שגא' שארית ישראל לא יעשו עולה ולא ידברו כזב ולא ימצא בפייה לשון תרמית. ועוד כתיב "וזרעתיך לי בארץ" כלום אדם זורע סאה אלא להכניס כמה כורים, כך לא הגלה הקב"ה את ישראל לבין האומות אלא כדי שיתוספו עליהם גרים (פסחים פ"ז ע"ב), וכל זמן שהם מתנהגים עמהם בלא מרמה ידבקו בהם."

■ SOURCES (CONT.)

³ בית הלוי פרשת וישב כתב דברים נפלאים: "וישם שק במתניו", במדרש איכה: "אמר להם דומה אני שאתם התרתם לצדיקה השבועה שנשבע לי, [שנשבע לו צדיקהו שלא יגלה לאדם שראה את נבוכדנצר אוכל ארנבת חיה, ולבסוף נשאל על שבועתו וגילה]. מיד גזר והורידן לארץ, הדא הוא דכתיב ישבו לארץ ידמו זקני בת ציון. העלו עפר, התחילו מזכירין זכותו של אברהם, דכתיב (בראשית יח) ואנכי עפר ואפר. חגרו שקים, התחילו מזכירין זכותו של יעקב, דכתיב (שם לו) וישם שק במתניו. מה עשו להם, קשרו שערן בונבי סוסיהם והיו מריצין אותם מירושלם ועד לוד, הדא הוא דכתיב הורידו לארץ ראשן בתולת ירושלם". נמצא שהאבלות על יוסף היתה זכות גדולה ליעקב, שהרי הזכירו את זכותו בפסוק "וישם שק במתניו" שנאמר באבל יוסף, וצריך להבין מה היתה הזכות על שהתאבל על יוסף?

ופי' הבית הלוי ע"פ מה דאיתא בילקוט בצערו של יעקב על יוסף: "הרי נפרצה ברית השבטים. כמה יגיעות יגעתו להעמיד י"ב שבטים, י"ב מזלות, י"ב שעות ... הרי נפרצה ברית השבטים...". הרי שזה היתה כל תשוקתו של יעקב, להעמיד י"ב שבטים, ועל זה הצטער כל כך על מיתת יוסף, שהרי חסר המנין של י"ב שהיה כל תכלית חייו. ויש להקשות, מה היה הצער כל כך על מספר י"ב שנחסר, נהי שהאימהות כבר עמדו מלדת ולא היו ראויות לילד, אבל יעקב היה יכול לישא אשה אחרת ולהוליד ממנה ויתקן הכל? מתרין הילקוט: "ולא רצה יעקב לישא אשה ולהוליד בן מפני שבועתו של לבן, "אם תקח נשים על בנותי!"

אם כן הרי סבל יעקב כל כך הרבה שנים צער ויגון, והסכים להפסיד את כל תכלית חייו של מנין י"ב שבטים, והכל כדי שלא לעבור על השבועה שנשבע ללבן, ואע"פ שהיה יכול להתיר את שבועתו, מ"מ לא עשה כן משום שהיה ירא שלא לעשות חילול ה' אצל לבן שיאמר לא קיים יעקב את שבועתו. [והוסיף הבית הלוי כשנתבונן על זה הרי זה נסיון גדול, אולי אפילו גדול כל כך כמו הנסיון של העקידה, שהרי היה סבור שאיבד את כל הבטחותיו וכל יגיעותיו, והכל למען כבוד שמים שלא יטעה לבן לחשוב שעבר על שבועתו].

ולפיכך הביאו את הזכות הזו על המעשה דאיכה, שהסנהדרין לא נהגו כיעקב אבינו בזה, והתירו לצדיקהו את שבועתו לנבוכדנצר, וגזר נבוכדנצר והורידן לארץ, שנחשב להם זה לחמא מחמת החילול ה' לגבי נבוכדנצר.

⁴ בירמיה (ד א) כתיב: "אם תשוב ישראל נאם ה' אלי תשוב, ואם תסיר שקוציך מפני ולא תנוד: ונשבעת חי ה' באמת כמשפט ובצדקה, והתברכו בו גוים וכו' ותהללו". ופירשו: "ונשבעת" – ואם כשתשבע בשמי חי ה' תשבע באמת, ולא כאשר עתה שאתם נשבעים לשקר – "והתברכו בו", אם תעשו כן אז יתברכו בישראל הגוים, **כל גוי יאמר לבנו תהא כפלוני ישראל**. "ותהללו" – יגידו שבחכם. ד"א מי שיוכל להתדבק בישראל יתפאר בדבר.

LIVING EXAMPLE.

⁵ ברש"י פרשת וזאת הברכה: "דבר אחר, עמים הר יקראו, ע"י פרקמטיא של זבולון תגרי אומות העולם באים אל ארצו, והוא עומד על הספר, והם אומרים הואיל ונצטערנו עד כאן, נלך עד ירושלים ונראה מה יראתה של אומה זו ומה מעשיה. והם רואים כל ישראל עובדים לאלוה אחד ואוכלים מאכל אחד, לפי שהעבדים אלוהות של זה לא כאלוהות של זה ומאכלו של זה לא כמאכלו של זה. והם אומרים, אין אומה כשרה כזו, ומתגייירין שם, שנאמר שם יזכחו זבחי צדק" (לג'יט). [רואים יסוד גדול שהאומות באים לראות בפנים רק אם ההקדמה מבחין היה טוב וישר].

■ ADDITIONAL USEFUL RESOURCES.

ובפרשת כי תצא (כג כא): "לנכרי תשיך ולאחיך לא תשיך, למען יברכך ה' אלקיך בכל משלח ידיך על הארץ אשר אתה בא שמה לרשתה". בפשטות הברכה היא על מניעת לקיחת רבית מלווה ישראל, אבל החלק הראשון של "לנכרי תשיך" אינו שייך לברכה. אבל בספורנו מבאר שזה הולך גם על "לנכרי תשיך". וזה לשונו: "לנכרי תשיך - תתן לו הרבית אם התנית עמו, ולא תבגוד, 'למען יברכך'. כשלא תבגוד בנכרי ולא תחלל את ה'. דהיינו שברכת ה' תהיה רק אם תעמוד בדבורך ותתן לגוי מה שהתחייבת לו.

ומטעם זה לא הרגו בני ישראל את הגבעונים, ע"י גיטין (מ"ו ע"א): "רבי יהודה אומר כל נדר שידעו בו רבים לא יחזור, ושלא ידעו בו רבים יחזור. אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי מ"ט דר' יהודה, דכתיב: (יהושע ט) ולא הכוס בני ישראל כי נשבעו להם נשיאי העדה. ורבנן, התם מי חלה שבועה עילויהו כלל, כיון דאמרו להו מארץ רחוקה באנו ולא באו, לא חיילה שבועה עילויהו כלל. והאי דלא קטלינהו משום קדושת השם". ופירש"י: "משום קדושת השם - שלא יאמרו העובדי כוכבים עברו על שבועתן".

הגר"א פאם בעטרה למלך כותב: "צריך להראות לעיני כל העמים הנעימות של חיי התורה, שדרכיה דרכי נועם. הבעל' בתים העוסקים במשא ומתן באמונה והם מצויינים בדרכי הנועם שבתורה, עליהם אמר ישע"י (סא ט): "ונודע בגוים זרעם וצאצאיהם בתוך העמים, כל רואיהם יכירום כי הם זרע ברכך ה'".

Lesson 7.

■ STEALING, LYING, & RETURNING LOST OBJECTS

■ INTRODUCTION.

In monetary matters, it is especially important to go out of our way to act honestly, with Jews and non-Jews alike, to refrain from making a חילול ה'.

This applies particularly to stealing from a non-Jew. Even under circumstances that might allow a person to keep money that was found or given to him, a person should act stringently and return it. This avoids any possibility of making a חילול ה'.

The same applies to returning a lost object to a non-Jew. If returning a lost object would cause a קידוש ה', then the object should be returned. In addition, if by not returning the lost object a חילול ה' is created (because the non-Jew is expecting him to do so, or is testing his honesty), then it is all the more so a מצוה.

A Jew is obligated to fulfill the requirements of the land in which he lives (if they appear to contradict תורה, consult a competent Rabbi).

■ OBJECTIVES.

Students will:

- List at least five areas where people are lax in the מצוה relating to other people's property that could cause a חילול ה'.

- Create a poster or a picture depicting a קידוש ה' that the students may have witnessed or participated in regarding monetary matters. Students may also depict an imaginary situation.

- Choose one of the real-life scenarios throughout the lesson, analyzing and explaining how the person in the story created a קידוש ה'. They should also elaborate on what might have been the consequences if the person had decided to keep the money or object.

■ ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

The teacher should ask his students the following question: If a student has a negative interaction in a particular school, or in a particular class, what are some of the conclusions that he might draw? It is human nature to make generalizations—meaning that when a student has only one bad interaction with a teacher or with a particular classmate, he may assume that the teacher is “bad” or that the class is “mean”. (If needed, give other examples of what the word generalization means to ensure that students understand the term.)

While the student's conclusion is completely false and has no basis in truth, his perception is that his assumption is correct. So too, when one Jew makes a חילול ה' by acting dishonestly towards a non-Jew, it is

גנבה, שקר, והשבת אבדה

human nature for the non-Jew to generalize and assume that all Jews are dishonest. It is therefore extremely important to act honestly with non-Jews and make a *אמת מידה* of *קידוש ה'*, and thereby exemplify

STORY #1—"HE WOULD NOT TELL A LIE"

Rabbi Shapiro (*name changed*) was once shopping in a department store when an elderly non-Jewish man approached him and exclaimed, "L'chaim!" When Rabbi Shapiro did not respond, the man continued talking, "Do you know where I learned that word? Fifteen years ago, I had a friend who was a religious Jew, and he taught me the word. He was an incredible person!"

At this point, Rabbi Shapiro's interest was aroused. "What was so incredible about your friend?" he asked.

"We worked together in a factory," the old man related. "One day, our boss told him that he had to lie to a customer to complete a sale." The old man's eyes filled with tears and he began to tremble with emotion. "Do you know what my friend did? He quit his job right then, that very day, to avoid dishonesty. What a man!"

That religious Jew made such a deep impression on his co-worker that the man still remembered his actions fifteen years later. He shared the story with Rabbi Shapiro simply because he associated that virtuous act with the Jewish religion. A person who is visibly a *בן תורה* can bring much more honor to *ה'* through his actions than a person who is not so obviously a *בן תורה*. In other people's minds, his appearance creates a positive link with his behavior and *תורה*.

-AS HEARD FROM RABBI AARON YEHUDA SCHWAB

■ DEVELOPMENT.

The הלול ה' tells us that stealing from a non-Jew is worse than stealing from a Jew because of the damage that it causes. If someone steals from a non-Jew, and then swears to him [that he was not the one that did it], and afterwards the non-Jew dies, the Jew will not receive atonement because of the הלול ה' that he caused.¹

A non-Jew who realizes that a Jew has stolen from him will assume that there is no תורה that the Jews follow and therefore they do whatever they please. In addition the non-Jew will say, "What kind of people did ה' choose to be His nation? It is a nation of crooks and liars."²

One who borrows an item without permission is also considered a thief. Borrowing includes using without permission either a neighbor's yard for a shortcut,

parking in someone's reserved parking spot, or using someone's belongings. However, if the item is clearly something that the owner would not care if someone used, then it is permissible.³

Deceiving a non-Jew is also forbidden. One may not lie about his age in order to get cheaper admission to a park or zoo, or a discount in a store. If the non-Jew makes a mistake, such as giving back too much change, one is allowed to keep the money. However if a religious Jew would make a קידוש ה' by returning the money (the person can see his yarmulke and realize that he is a Jew), he should do so. In addition if there is a possibility that the non-Jew is testing him, then he should most definitely return the money to avoid causing a הלול ה'.⁴

STORY #2—THE UNCASHED CHECK

Due to the mistake of a mortgage company, a kollel member realized that a \$30,000 check that he had used as a deposit towards the purchase of his house had not been subtracted from his bank account. He had been planning to enter the workforce in order to relieve the financial strain on his family. But now he realized that if he kept the additional money from the check that had not been cashed, he would not be forced to get a job and instead would be able to learn for another whole year. That is, of course, if he remained silent about the uncashed check and used the money. He asked Rav Pam if he was obligated to alert the mortgage company about the uncashed check. Rav Pam answered unequivocally, "This is not the way to remain in kollel; please do so and return the money." When someone suggested that the הלכה might permit the kollel member to keep the money, Rav Pam responded that the importance of developing an אדם שלם overrode all other considerations. Later Rav Pam was happy to learn that a similar ruling is cited in the name of Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ztz"l.

-RABBI SHIMON FINKELMAN, *Rav Pam* PG. 395

It is also forbidden to cheat on tests, even those administered by a non-Jew, which is categorized as גניבת דעת (deliberate deception). (This includes plagiarizing.) Even if a Jew would have more time to learn תורה by cheating on a test, it is forbidden.⁵

A Jew must also pay taxes and abide by the laws of the place in which he lives.⁶

STORY #3—TAXABLE INCOME, NOT A GIFT

A story regarding Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky captures the spirit that a Jewish person should develop in regard to paying taxes. (Rabbi Kamenetsky was one of the most prominent Rabbis in America until his death in 1985.)

An appreciative congregant once gave Rabbi Kamenetsky a silver קידוש cup as a gift. Later, it was discovered that Rabbi Kamenetsky had taken the silver קידוש cup to a silversmith for appraisal. It seemed unusual that such a distinguished person would be preoccupied in determining the monetary value of a gift. However, it was subsequently discovered what Rabbi Kamenetsky's motive was in seeking this appraisal. Since the silver קידוש cup was received for performing rabbinical services, Rabbi Kamenetsky knew that the monetary value of the silver קידוש cup needed to be reported as taxable income. Hence, he needed to know its value in order to list it as income on his income tax forms.

-HEARD FROM RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND

RETURNING A LOST OBJECT.

It is a מצוה to return a lost object to a non-Jew if it would cause a קידוש ה', either because the recipient is able to identify the person as Jewish through his mode of dress (such as a yarmulke) or if he knows the person. One is obligated to return an object if by not doing so he would cause a חילול ה', either because the non-Jew knows that a Jew found the article or because he is testing the Jew.⁷

When the sons of יעקב found silver in their bags upon their return from מצרים, יעקב told them that they must return it "with their own hands." The Brisker Rav explains that when the מצרים saw that a Jew returned the item, it caused a קידוש ה'.⁸

■ PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

The teacher should ask the students to think of real life situations when it might be tempting to cheat or deceive a non-Jew.

Students will most probably bring examples such as lying about one's age to get into an amusement park, zoo, or similar places at a cheaper price.

It should be explained that intentionally lying or fooling a non-Jew is forbidden. However if the non-Jew made a mistake on his own (by assuming that a child is younger in age than the child appears, or by making an error and giving back too much money after a sale), then the Jew would be allowed to keep the money. However, if by returning the money the Jew would cause a קידוש ה', then it should be returned. The ש"ך says that the money should be returned in any event, since there is a chance that the non-Jew is testing the Jewish person and by not returning the money, a חילול ה' is caused.

STORY #4—PAYING THE TOLL

As the Kleinbarts raced through traffic to get to the hospital in time for Mrs. Kleinbart to have her baby, they had to travel through New York's Brooklyn Battery Tunnel. To avoid being stuck in traffic, Mr. Kleinbart illegally used the lane reserved for taxis and buses and then raced through the toll without paying. A policeman pulled his

car over to ticket it, but as soon as he heard that Mrs. Kleinbart was in labor, the officer sent them on their way. The baby was born later that morning.

On his way home through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel (in the days before the E-ZPass, when one had to pay tolls when exiting into the city as well as when entering the city), Mr. Kleinbart gave the toll keeper two tokens (instead of one) and began explaining his situation. Before he could finish his sentence, the toll-keeper asked excitedly "Oh! Congratulations! What did your wife have?" With surprise, Mr. Kleinbart asked the toll-keeper how he knew, and he responded "They told us that a guy like you would surely come back and pay." The policeman had taken one glance at this Orthodox Jew and had come to the conclusion that this must be an honest person. Why? Because... Jews are honest.

-RABBI PAYSACH KROHN, *Echoes of the Maggid*

After reviewing these scenarios with the class, the teacher should ask students to create skits or a play, acting out similar situations where one might be tempted to lie or steal. Students should show how a person might overcome these temptations:

- A Jewish merchant cheated a non-Jew by incorrectly weighing some figs that the non-Jew had bought and thereby earned extra profit. He used this extra money to buy some oil. On his way home, the oil spilled and he

was unable to use any of it. It immediately became clear to him that stealing from a non-Jew is forbidden.⁹

- The *באר הגולה* writes that he has seen many people make entire fortunes by cheating a non-Jew. However, this money did not produce any *ברכה* and did not last. Those who made a *קידוש ה'* and returned money that they received by mistake to a non-Jew, received tremendous *ברכה* from their money and were able to pass it on to their children.¹⁰

■ SOURCES.

DEVELOPMENT.

גניבת עכו"ם.

¹ שו"ע שמ"ח סי' ב - כל הגונב אפילו שוה פרוטה עובר על לאו דלא תגנובו וחייב לשלם, אחד הגונב ממון ישראל או הגונב ממון של עכו"ם, ואחד הגונב מגדול או מקטן.

² תוספתא בב"ק פ"י, ח - הגוזל את הנכרי חייב להחזיר לנכרי, חמור גזל הנכרי מגזל ישראל מפני חילול השם. הגוזל את הנכרי ונשבע לו ומת אינו מתכפר לו מפני חילול השם:

³ בסמ"ג לאוין ב ובס' היראה לר"י סי' קלט כתבו וכל המשקרים לגוים וגונבים מהם הם בכלל מחללי השם, שיאמרו הגוים "אין תורה לישראל". ובעשין ע"ד כתב הסמ"ג ועוד שיאמרו ראו מה עשה הקב"ה שבחר לחלקו גנבים ורמאים, והכתוב אומר "שארית ישראל לא יעשו עולה ולא ידברו כזב ולא ימצא בפייה לשון תרמית" (צפניה ג, יג) אפילו הלוקח בשאלה שלא מדעת הבעלים, נקרא גזלן.

אפילו אם לא חוסר ממנו כלום, ואפילו לזמן קצר מאד ומחזירו, אפילו אם לא עבירא לאגרא ואין ההשתמשות שוה פרוטה, ואפילו אם אחר ששואל אותו, הבעלים אמר לו שלא מקפיד, ג"כ גזילה היא, כיון שהשתמש בו תחלה לפני דעת של בעל הבית, ואפילו מגוי או מקטן אסור וכגוילה. ואם הוא דבר דליכא מאן דקפיד ביה שרי, כגון ליטול מהחבילה או מהגדר לחצוץ בו שיניו.

דבר שמקצת בני אדם מקפידים עליו מפני חשש קלקול אע"פ שרובן אין מקפידין מפני שהוא חשש רחוק אין הולכין בזה אחר הרוב.

⁴ אסור להטעות נכרי במקח או בחשבון (ספר ממון ישראל בשם ר' אלישיב לאסור, שרוב ראשונים סוברים הכי, (רמבם ועוד). אנ"מ חו"מ ח"א סי' פ"ח) לפיכך להטעות נכרי כדי להכנס ולעמוד בגן חיות שלו אסור מטעם מטעה עכו"ם (שם בשם הג"ר זלמן נחמיה גולדברג)

אם טעה העכו"ם מעצמו שרי, אבל עיין בש"ך (שמ"ח סק"ג, ועוד בשו"ע הרב הל' גזילה סעי' בדפוס שבספר אמרי יעקב בלי השמטות הצנוור) שאפילו אם הגוי טעה מעצמו ונראה שאינו יודע מהטעות, מ"מ אינו מותר דלילמא אין זה טעות, והגוי מיכוון לבדוק את הישראל ויבא לחילול ה', אבל אם יאמר "ראה שעל חושבנך אני סומך" מותר מפני שמסלק מעליו החשש.

באופן שיש קידוש השם טוב להחזיר טעות נכרי ואף אם טעה מעצמו (מרדכי בב"ק פרק י' אות קנח, עיין בכנסת הגדולה חו"מ סיק קפג אות נד)

⁵ אנ"מ סימן ל': באיסור גניבת תשובות לשאלות מבחני הסיום שעושה המדינה

"הנה דברך שאלתו על מה ששמע שבישיבות מתירין להתלמידים לגנוב את התשובות להשאלות במבחני הסיום שעושה המדינה (רידענס) כדי להונות ולקבל את התעודות שמגמרו בטוב, הנה דבר זה אסור לא רק מדינא דמלכותא אלא מדין התורה, ואין זה רק גניבת דעת שג"כ אסור כדאמר שמואל בחולין דף צ"ד ע"א שאסור לגנוב דעת הבריות ואפילו דעתו של עכו"ם וכ"ש הכא שהוא גניבת דעת לכולי עלמא אף לישראל, אלא דהוא גם גניבת דבר ממש דהא כשירצה לפרנסתו במשך הזמן להשכיר עצמו אצל אחד לעבוד בעסקיו ורוצים ברוב הפעמים במי שגמר היטב למדודי דחול והוא יראה לו התעודה איך שגמר בטוב ועל סמך זה קבלוהו שזהו גניבת ממון ממש, ואין לו לטעות ולומר שאף אם קבלוהו לעבוד אצלו אדעתא דהכי הוא כמקפיד על דבר שאינו צריך שרשאי לשקר, דהא דאף אם הוא אמת שאין להקפיד הוא ודאי קפידא ובטלה קבלתו, וגם שאסור לשקר בכל אופן אף אינו נוגע לשום דבר דאינו מהתלת מילי דרשאי לשנות (בכ"מ דף כ"ג ע"ב) וגם אם ידע שהוא משקר לא היה סומך עליו בכלום ויגרם שיחשוד לאחר כשיחסר איזה דבר דאותו לא יחשוד מחמת שלמד בישיבה ומחזיק לת"ח ואיש נאמן ויסלק להאחר ממשרתו אף שהאמת שהאחר לא לקח, ואם היה יודע שזה שלמד בישיבה שיקר לו לא היה בטוח לסלק את האחר. ועוד דכאן שמקפידין אינשי ודאי שייך להקפיד דיש ודאי דברים דמי שהוא בקי בלמודי חול הוא יותר יודע בעניני עסקי פרנסה ממשא וממתן וממילא ודאי אסור אף למחשבתו שירייה עי"ז בלמוד התורה, שגם בשביל למוד התורה אסור לגנוב. ואם חשקה נפשו בתורה אין לו לדאוג שמא לא ידע כל כך ולא יהיה לו סימן טוב עליהו, אבל האמת שאין בזה ענין בטול תורה דמאחר שהולך ללמוד למודי חול הוא רק עצלות בעלמא כשלומד באופן שלא לידע כי הזמן הוא עכ"פ מבטל ואדרבה מתרגל שלא לידע מה שלומד ומתרגל לעצלות."

דינא דמלכותא דינא.

⁶ הברחת המכס מנכרי אם המוכס אינו לוקח יותר מקצבתו אסור להבריה, וכל המכירה עצמו מן המכס הוא גזלן לפי שגזל מנת המלך (שו"ע סי' שס"ט סעי' ו', ואג"מ חו"מ ח"ב סי' סב, חו"מ ח"א סי' פח, שבט הלוי ח"ב סי' נח).

דינא דמלכותא דינא, דהיינו שחוקי הלכות ודיניהם בדיני ממונות, יש להם תוקף גם בדיני ישראל (מור שו"ע חו"מ סי' שסט ס"ו).

השבת אבידה.

⁷ ישראל אינו מצווה על השבת אבידתו של נכרי, ואפילו אחר שבאה האבידה לידו אינו חייב להשיבה ומותר לו לזכות בה לעצמו, שנאמר "לכל אבידת אחיך" (דברים כב, ג) לאחיך אתה מחזיר ואי אתה מחזיר לנכרי שאינו אחיך.

ועי' בשו"ע יו"ד (סי' רס"ו): "המחזיר אבידה לכותי הרי זה עובר עבירה, מפני שהוא מחזיק ידי עוברי עבירה. ואם החזירה לקדש את ה' כדי שיפארו את ישראל וידעו שהם בעלי אמונה ה"ז משובח. ובמקום שיש חילול ה', אבידתו אסורה וחייב להחזירה". והמקור לזה הביא הסמ"ע מהגמ' בסנהדרין (ע"ו ע"ב) דילפינן מדכתיב "למען ספות הרוה את הצמאה", והיינו שמשוה את השבת האבידה לעכו"ם להשבת אבידה לישראל. ש"רוה" הוא העכו"ם שהם שבעים ואינם צמאים לעבודת יוצרם, ו"הצמאה" הוא ישראל שצמאים לעבודתו, ו"ספות" הוא לשון של חיבור, שמחבר ומשוה את העכו"ם לישראל, וע"כ אסור להחזיר להם אבידתם. [ועיין ברש"י שם שכתב כעין זה בפשט הראשון, עיי"ש].

⁸ בספר טללי אורות הביא משם הגרי"ז שביאר ע"פ דין זה את הפסוק בפרשת מקץ: "וכסף משנה קחו בידכם, ואת הכסף המושב בפי אמתחתיכם תשיבו בידכם אולי משנה הוא. וצריך להבין מהי ההדרגה "תשיבו בידכם". וביאר הגרי"ז שיעקב אמר לאחים שישבו למושל מצרים את הכסף בידם דוקא, שעל ידי שיתנו לו בידו יראה ויבין שבני ישראל נתנו לו את הכסף, ועי"ז יהיה קידוש ה' ומותר להחזיר את האבדה. אבל אם לא היו מביאים בידם אלא היו שולחים להניח באוצרותיו – היה אסור להחזיר לו, שהרי אסור להשיב אבידה לעכו"ם אלא אם כן זה גורם לקידוש ה'.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

⁹ ועי' בקיצור שו"ע (סי' קפ"ב ס"א): "מעשה באדם אחד שספר לי שעשה עולה לנכרי במדידת התמרים שמכר לו, ואח"כ קנה בהמעות שמן ונשכר הכר ונשפך השמן. ואמרתי ברוך המקום שאין לפניו משוא פנים ... שגזל הנכרי גזל!!". ובספר הלכות בית נאמן (דף קפ"ט) כתב: "החיד"א בשם האר"י שכל הגונב מן הגוי, אפי' עובר ע"ז, כאשר מת הגוי בא המלאך שלו ואומר לו שהיהודי גנבו, והגוי צועק ומקטר על היהודי".

10 בבאר הגולה על שו"ע חו"מ (שמ"ח) כתב: "ואני כותב זאת לדורות, שראיתי רבים גדלו והעשירו מן מעות שהטעו העכו"ם, ולא הצליחו וירדו נסכיהם לטמיון, ולא הניחו אחריהם ברכה, וכמ"ש בספר חסידים סימן תתרע"ד. רבים אשר קידשו ה' והחזירו מעות העכו"ם בדבר חשוב גדול, והעשירו והצליחו והניחו יתרם לעולליהם".

Lesson 8.

■ DERECH ERETZ KADMA L'TORAH

■ INTRODUCTION.

Rav Matisyahu Solomon שליט"א explains that "דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה" means that without an emphasis on דרך ארץ we nullify the purpose of תורה, which is to bring about קידוש ה' in the world. Therefore דרך ארץ comes before תורה. Without דרך ארץ we cannot accomplish the mission that we have been given. Although as educators we concentrate on teaching the מצוות of בין אדם למקום, we often see a gap in the development of our students. Developing students who demonstrate the fundamentals of קידוש ה' demands that the מצוות of בין אדם לחבירו must be taught in tandem with the מצוות of בין אדם למקום. This will be the bridge that closes that gap in מידות development. As it is our mission to reflect G-dliness in the world, it is important that we emphasize both aspects of בין אדם למקום and בין אדם לחבירו. Together, they lead to the ultimate goal of revealing ה'’s name in the world. We must therefore allot equal importance to דרך ארץ and בין אדם לחבירו, in order to develop fitting ambassadors in the service of ה' and at the same time enable our students to bring honor to ה'’s name.

As ambassadors of ה', we were given the תורה to complete ה'’s work in the world, to be the captains that guide the ship, so to speak. By emphasizing both the מצוות of בין אדם למקום and בין אדם לחבירו in the תורה we are able to fulfill this purpose.

■ OBJECTIVES.

Students will:

- Write five ways in which the מצוות of בין אדם לחבירו make a great impact on the non-Jewish, as well as the Jewish, world.
- Discuss the idea that the Jewish nation is the ambassador of ה', emphasizing the idea that the non-Jews scrutinize our actions. When we conduct ourselves properly our actions make a true קידוש ה' possible.
- Create and present a group project that illustrates one of the aspects of בין אדם לחבירו.

■ ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

The teacher should explain that our behavior reflects who we really are. The letters of the עשרת הדברות were engraved into the לוחות all the way through to the other side, to teach us that we must be the same through and through. We cannot study תורה diligently, daven with בונה, and then say that we are too tired to help another Jew or give our seat to an elderly person. Our mark as true Jews is that we work to make sure that our תורה learning actually affects our behavior.

Ask students to come up with several examples (without using names or identifying characteristics) about a time

דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה

when they witnessed a Jew acting in a way that could have been misunderstood by others.

What kind of impact did this action have on others? How would a non-Jew have reacted if he had seen this?

Finally, the teacher should ask how the scene they came up with could have had a different outcome, had the behavior been different. How do you think a non-Jew feels/ thinks when the non-Jew sees a Jew exhibit exemplary behavior?

■ DEVELOPMENT.

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsh explains that our תורה observance must completely penetrate us through and through and be apparent in every aspect of our being, like the לוחות which were engraved from one side through to the other. Our תורה observance should not be one-sided. We cannot appear תורה observant on one side and then turn our backs and be involved in inappropriate behavior or relationships on the other. Divine service has no reverse side. Each side of the person must be engraved with ה' will.

The giving of the תורה to עם ישראל was like a marriage between ה' and עם ישראל. In a marriage, a man and wife

have an important mission to help each other fulfill their individual mission and thereby fulfill their joint purpose. ה' created us to participate in bringing the world to perfection. When He began building the world He deliberately left it incomplete so that we would have the merit to be His partners in Creation. ה' gave us His תורה and the Divine spark within each of us as tools to fulfill our תפקיד in completing His creation. Therefore, תלמידי ה' are called "builders."¹

In addition, The מסילת ישרים writes that the more one learns תורה, the greater his obligation to be exemplary in his behavior להכיר. בין אדם להכיר. In this way, he brings honor to the תורה. If a person is learned and behaves in an inappropriate way towards others, he causes a חילול ה', which contradicts the purpose of the תורה that he learns. The whole purpose of ה' giving us His תורה is that through our learning, we achieve perfection.²

The ספר הישר explains that ספר בראשית is called ספר הישר. Those who did not act honestly led to the destruction of the second בית המקדש. The אבות are greatly praised because not only were they righteous, but they treated the other nations with respect and were concerned for their welfare. אברהם even davened for סדום because he did not wish to see its destruction.

The מדרש declares that ה' says about אברהם, "he loves to find righteousness in ה'’s creations and hates to find evil." Therefore, he was called the "father of many nations." He was just like a father who never loses hope when his son goes astray, but inquires about him and hopes for his good.

יעקב אבימלך was also quick to make peace with לבן kindly and quickly forgave him, even though לבן made many problems for him. Because we learn so many lessons from the דרך ארץ and the righteous conduct of the ספר הישר in ספר בראשית, it is called ³.

The נמרא in יומא says that the מצוה of "ואהבת את ה' אלקיך" also includes making ה' beloved to others **through you**. If a person serves תלמידי חכמים and his business dealings with others are pleasant, then people will admire his praiseworthy behavior. ה' says about such a person, "You are My servant ישראל, it is through **you** that I am glorified."

However if a person serves תלמידי חכמים while his business dealings with others are dishonest and he doesn't speak softly to others, then people will say about him, "Woe to the person who learns תורה, woe to his father and woe to the teacher who taught him תורה. Look how crooked his actions are."⁴

STORY #1—THE OHR CHODOSH SCHOOL

In the Ohr Chodosh School, a non-religious woman wearing an army uniform was pacing the corridor. She explained that she was looking for a school for her daughter. The principal asked her, "Why would you wish to send your daughter to a religious school? The woman explained, "In my neighborhood there is a secular family that shares our views in many areas of life. They recently began sending their children to this school. What can I say? Their children have undergone an amazing transformation. They respect their elders and are not violent or selfish. I have an older son whom I have already lost to drugs. I do not even know where he is anymore. I want a better life for my daughter. This is something that the state school cannot offer."

-The Jewish Observer OCT. 2003

■ PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

Sometimes, without our realizing, we act in negative ways that make the previous נמרא in יומא a reality. For example if a class or a student studies תורה in the morning and shows the proper respect to his Rebbeim and he also shows respect and acts pleasantly towards his English teachers, then he is consistent through and through. People will say about him, "How praiseworthy are those who learn תורה, look at how sweet he is and how well he acts."

This is the type of person about whom ה' says, "You are My servant ישראל, it is through you that I am glorified." However if someone learns תורה and respects his Rebbeim in the morning, but during secular studies he deviates from this and does not respect his English teachers, people will say about him, "Woe to the children that learn תורה, how crooked are their actions."

STORY #2—RAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN

Rav Moshe Feinstein taught that we must respect all human beings, not only Jews. In Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim an elderly Russian man worked as a janitor. He spoke little English and few paid any attention to him. One day he suffered from a toothache and came to work with a kerchief wrapped around his cheeks. When Rav Moshe chanced upon the janitor in the hallway, he spoke to him in Russian, inquiring after his welfare. After this brief conversation, the janitor walked away with a bright smile on his face, happier than anyone could ever remember seeing him.

-RABBI SHIMON FINKELMAN, *Reb Moshe*

■ ACTIVITY.

The teacher should divide the students into groups and give each group a section of the **יומא נגמרא**. Each group should create two types of scenarios of student behavior, either through a skit, a poster, or a drawing. The first scenario should depict a student who fails to act with **דרך ארץ** and the second should be how the incorrect behavior could have been remedied or even avoided in the first place. Suggestions for scenarios among others could include recess, a class trip, or a class party. These scenarios should be presented to the class and used as a springboard for discussion.

■ DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

Our actions make strong impressions on the world around us. The **פרשת ואתחנן** in **מלבי"ם** tells us that non-Jews will even be impressed by the **מצוות** in the **תורה** that

they do not understand (the **חוקים**). How is this possible? When they see how much sense the **מצוות** that they do understand (**משפטים**) make, then they will have respect even for the laws that they do not understand. If a Jew acts honestly in his business dealings and in his interactions with the non-Jews and in other **מצוות** of **בין אדם לחבירו**, then they will automatically respect the other **מצוות** as well.⁵

The **נגמרא** in **ברכות** relates that **ר' יוחנן בן זכאי** was always the first to greet others on the street – even a non-Jew. Rav Dessler tells us that **ר' יוחנן** knew the entire **תורה** and its hidden secrets. He was the **נשיא** at the time of the destruction of the **בית המקדש** and he carried the needs of **כלל ישראל** on his shoulders. However, he was never too busy or preoccupied to greet his fellow on the street, even a non-Jew in the market place. The needs of others were a priority to him!⁶

STORY #3—THE FRIENDLIEST GUY AROUND: SHLOIMI

Everyone knew Shloimi. He was hard to miss. Shloimi was the friendliest guy around and he made sure to say hello to everyone on the street, in the supermarket, or in shul – and everyone would reciprocate with a smile. Not only that, but any strangers who responded with a nice word would also be asked their names, where they davened, and what **דף יומי** shiur they attended. He had the uncanny ability to make the large religious community where he lived feel like a small town. There was another reason why Shloimi was unforgettable: He was mentally challenged. Although most of the time he lived in a world of his own, he would reach out to all around him until his world became their world. All had a place in their hearts for Shloimi.

Each week, Shloimi's brother used to take him to the local JCC to exercise. Shloimi would lift weights, jog, and smile a lot, making conversation with anyone who would listen. It was in this way that he met Mike. Mike had recently moved to the city after having graduated from law school and was working for one of the most successful law firms in town. That day, he happened to notice that Shloimi was lifting more weight than was suitable for him. "Hey, kid," he said. "You better be careful. You can hurt yourself if you don't lift properly. How much do you weigh?"

"What's your name?" Shloimi asked, ignoring his question.

"Mike Schwartz. What's yours?"

"Shloimi," Shloimi said smiling profusely. "Where do you daven?"

"I don't know what you're talking about, Shloimi," Mike said. "I haven't been to shul since my Bar Mitzvah!"

"Come to the **שני ימי** shiur in our shul."

"Ok, Shloimi, whatever you say. It's been nice to meet you. Take it easy with those weights."

The next week, Shloimi ran up to Mike as soon as he walked into the weight room.

"Hi Mike! When are you coming to shul with me?" Shloimi asked.

"Hey... Shloimi, right? How ya doing? I was wondering if I would see you around here again."

"Come to our house for **שבת**!"

"Gee, thanks Shloimi, that's really sweet of you. Maybe some other time, I already have plans this weekend."

This persisted week after week, until at last Mike agreed to come with Shloimi to shul on **שבת** morning, just so that he would stop asking. To Mike's surprise, he actually enjoyed it! Although the shul wasn't used to not-yet-religious guests, they received Mike with the utmost warmth and kindness and he immediately felt at home, despite all the time that had elapsed since he last attended shul. A few weeks later, he attended again – this time on his own initiative. He soon gave in to Shloimi's invitation for **שבת** as well. It was his first traditional "heimish" **שבת** experience and he was, once again, pleasantly surprised. He loved the warm family time, the break from his busy work schedule and the incessant ringing of his Blackberry. He enjoyed the stimulating conversation and even the cholent! Soon, other people in shul started to invite Mike for **שבת** meals and before long people were even fighting over who would host him that week. Mike was adopted by the shul and he became a regular congregant. When Mike's brother Eric visited his house one day, he noticed a great book on Jewish ethics and asked where he could get a copy. Mike immediately called Shloimi's house to ask. Soon Eric also became a regular at Shloimi's parent's **שבת** table and at the shul.

Today, Mike lives in **ארץ ישראל** with his wife and six children and learns in kollel. Both he and his brother Eric are now completely religious, simply as a result of Shloimi's delight in greeting another Jew. The irony is that Shloimi may not even know what he has accomplished.

The truth is that it is the same with all of us. When a person goes out of his way to say hello to a not-yet-religious Jew, it is impossible to know what the outcome will be. Every kind word, every smile, every warm gesture is planting a seed that may someday blossom into a beautiful flower. Like Shloimi, you may never know what you have accomplished, but years later, someone may be raising religious children somewhere in the world because of you.

-GAVRIEL HORAN, PROJECT INSPIRE

■ LIVING EXAMPLE.

A Ba'al Teshuvah once described to his friend the events in his life that caused him to change his ways and begin observing תורה and מצוות.

"I once lived in an apartment building. In the building lived one religious Jew whom I would see each morning as he returned from davening and I was leaving for work. Each morning he never failed to give me an authentic smile and

say "שלום". The other people living in my building did not greet me at all. I realized that someone who smiles and greets another every day must have a deep שמחת החיים and therefore he is able to share it with others.

It was then that I made up my mind that if I want to live a real life I should become שומר תורה ומצוות. It was this that set the ball rolling."

ספר עלינו לשבח-

■ SOURCES

DEVELOPMENT.

¹הנה נתינת התורה היתה כנישואין בין ישראל לקב"ה, כמבואר בשיר השירים (ג יא): "צאינה וראינה בנות ציון במלך שלמה בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו ביום חתונתו וביום שמחת לבו". וידוע ש"המלך שלמה" הוא הקב"ה שהשלים שלו, כמו דאיתא כמה פעמים בחז"ל, ו"יום חתונתו" הוא יום מתן תורה, כמו שהביא רש"י שם בשם מחז"ל. ועיי' עוד במדרש רבה במדבר (יב ח): "ביום חתונתו זה סיני, חיתונין היו, שנאמר (שמות יט) וקדשתם היום ומחר. וביום שמחת לבו זה מתן תורה, שנא' (שם לא) ויתן אל משה ככלותו וגו', ככלתו כתיב [מלשון כלה]. ואיתא במפרשים שכפיית ההר כניגית על ישראל זה היה החופה, והקב"ה קישט את ישראל בכ"ד קישוטין כמו שמקשטים לכלה. ואינו מובן, איך שייך לדמות את מתן תורה לנישואין? ובאיהו בחינה שייך נישואין עם ה'?

ומתחילה צריך להסביר הענין של נישואין באיש ואשה, איש ואשה יש להם תפקיד אחד בעולם, והאיש והאשה מסייעים זה לזה למלא אותו התפקיד שמוטל על נשמתם, וכל אחד פועל לאותו תכלית באופן השייך לו, זה בתחומו וזו בתחומה.

והוא גם ענין הנישואין בין כלל ישראל והקב"ה, שה' עשה אותנו להיות ה"עזר כנגדו", שכביכול לקב"ה ולכלל ישראל יש תפקיד אחד ומטרה אחת בעולם, והקב"ה נתן בידי ישראל לסייע בחלקם לאותו תכלית משותפת להם ולו. והתכלית הזו היא להביא את העולם לשלימותו, שה' התחיל בבנין העולם, אבל לא השלים אותו, ונתן לנו חלק אלוך ממעל [דהיינו חלק של מהותו, כמו האשה שיש לה חלק מנשמתו של האיש ממש], שעל ידי אותו חלק אנו יכולים להביא לשלמות העולם ולתכליתו. ונמצא שאנו שותפים עם ה' כמו נישואין ממש!!

והטעם שיום הנישואין הנ"ל הוא ביום מתן תורה, משום שרק על ידי התורה אנו יכולים להביא את העולם לתכליתו ולשלימותו. וכמו שבבריאת העולם הקב"ה ברא את כל הבריאה על פי התכנית של התורה, שמו שאמרו חז"ל על הפסוק "ואהי אצלו אמן", שהתורה היתה כלי האומנות של הקב"ה וכמו האומן שמצייר לעצמו את תכנית הבנין כך התורה היתה התכנית של העולם, וכמו שאמרו חז"ל "הסתכל באורייתא וברא עלמא", כך עכשיו כשישראל התחתנו בו כביכול וצריכים להשלים את תיקון העולם - נתן להם את התורה שיוכלו על ידה להשלים בנין הבריאה. ולכך התלמידי חכמים נקראים בונים, [סוף פטום הקמורת: אל תקרי בניך אלא בוניך", וכן בשבת (ק"ד ע"א) נקראים ת"ח בנאים], משום שהם העוסקים העיקריים בבנין זה של השלמת תיקון העולם. "ברוך אלקינו שבראנו לכבודו והבדילנו מן התועים ונתן לנו תורת אמת ודיי עולם נמט בתוכנו" (ספר מקדשי שמך).

²ובמסילת ישרים (פי"א) כתב: "כי כפי רבות חשיבותו וחכמתו כן ראוי שירבה זהירותו בדברי העבודה ודקדוקו בה, ואם איננו עושה כן הרי שם שמים מתחלל בו חס וחלילה. כי כבוד התורה הוא שמי שמרבה הלימוד בה ירבה כמו כן ביושר ובתיקון המדות. וכל מה שיחסר מזה למי שמרבה בלימוד גורם בזיון ללימוד עצמו, וזה חס וחלילה חילול לשמו יתברך, שנתן לנו את תורתו הקדושה וצונו לעסוק בה להשיג על ידה שלימותנו".

³בפתיחה של הנצי"ב לספר בראשית כתב: "זה הספר נקרא ספר הישר ... ויש להבין מעם למה מכונה זה הספר ביחוד בכינוי ספר הישר? ... בחורבן בית שני ... היו צדיקים וחסידים ועמלי התורה, אך לא היו ישרים בהליכות עולם. על כן מפני שנאת חנם שבלבם זה את זה, חשדו את מי שראו שנוהג שלא כדעתם ביראת ה' שהוא צדוקי ואפיקורס, ובא על ידי זה לידי שפיכות דמים בדרך הפלגה, ולכל הרעות שבועולם, עד שחרב הבית ... שהקב"ה ישר הוא ואינו סובל צדיקים כאלו, אלא באופן שהולכים בדרך הישר גם בהליכות עולם, ולא בעקמימות אע"ג שהוא לשם שמים, דזה גורם חורבן הבריא והריסות ישוב הארץ.

וזה היה שבה האבות, שמלבד שהיו צדיקים וחסידים ואוהבי ה' באופן היותר אפשרי, עוד הם ישרים, היינו שהתנהגו עם אומות העולם, אפילו עם עובדי אלילים מכווערים, מכל מקום היו עמם באהבה וחשו לטובתם, כאשר היא קיום הבריא. כמו שאנו רואים כמה השתמח אברהם להתפלל על סדום, מכל מקום הפין בקיומם. בראשית רבה פמ"ט "א"ל הקב"ה, אברהם, (תהלים מה) אהבת צדק ותשנא רשע, אהבת להצדיק את בריותי ותשנא להרשעין". והיינו ממש כאב המון גוים, שאע"ג שאין הבן הולך במישרים מכל מקום שוחר בשלומם וטובו. וכן הוצק חן ודרך ארץ נפלא על דבר אברהם את לוט ... וכן ראינו כמה נח היה יצחק אבינו להתפייס ממשאיו, ובמעט דברי פיוס מאבימלך ומרעיו נתפייס באופן היותר ממה שבקשו ממנו. ויעקב אבינו אחר שהיטב חרה לו על לבן, שידע שביקש לעקרו לולי ה', מ"מ דבר עמו דברים רכים ... ונתפייס עמו מהר. וכן הרבה למדנו מהליכות האבות בדרך הארץ... ומשום הכי נקרא ספר זה ספר הישר".

⁴ביומא (פ"ו ע"א) איתא: "אביי אמר: כדתניא, (דברים ו) ואהבת את ה' אלהיך שיהא שם שמים מתאהב על ידך, שיהא קורא ושונה ומשמש תלמידי חכמים, ויהא משא ומתנו בנחת עם הבריות, מה הבריות אומרות עליו אשרי אביו שלמדו תורה, אשרי רבו שלמדו תורה. אוי להם לבריות שלא למדו תורה, פלוני שלמדו תורה ראו כמה נאים דרכיו, כמה מתוקנים מעשיו, עליו הכתוב אומר (ישעיהו מט) ויאמר לי עבדי אתה ישראל אשר כך אתפאר. אבל מי שקורא ושונה ומשמש תלמידי חכמים ואין משאו ומתנו באמונה, ואין דבורו בנחת עם הבריות, מה הבריות אומרות עליו אוי לו לפלוני שלמדו תורה, אוי לו לאביו שלמדו תורה, אוי לו לרבו שלמדו תורה, פלוני שלמדו תורה ראו כמה מקולקלין מעשיו וכמה מכווערין דרכיו ועליו הכתוב אומר (יחזקאל לו) באמר להם עם ה' אלה ומארצו יצאו".

DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

⁵ובואתחנן כתיב: "ושמרתם ועשיתם כי הוא חכמתכם ובינתכם לעיני העמים אשר ישמעון את כל החקים האלה ואמרו רק עם חכם ונבון הגוי הגדול הזה: כי מי גוי גדול אשר לו אלקים קרבים אליו כה אלקינו בכל קראנו אליו: ומי גוי גדול אשר לו חקים ומשפטים צדיקים ככל התורה הזאת אשר אנכי נתן לפניכם היום". ועיין במלבי"ם שמסביר בשני אופנים איך יתכן שאפילו ע"י החוקים שאינם מובנים נחשב לחכמים ונבונים בעיני העמים. א' – על ידי שרואים שה' קרוב אלינו בכל קראנו אליו בכל תפילה ותפילה. וב' – כשרואים את הצדקות של המשפטים המובנים בעיניהם, עי"ז הם מודים גם בחוקים שאינם מובנים, שבודאי גם הם דברים של חכמה. וצריך לידע שכך הוא גם בכל ענין פרטי, שאם אדם מתנהג באמת ויושר עם הגוי בדברים של משא ומתן ובין אדם לחבירו, עי"ז גם לא יזלזל הגוי בשאר המצוות, ויחשיב גם את מצות תפילין, סוכה וציצית אע"פ שהם אינם מובנים, מאחר שרואה את הצדקה והישרות של הישראל במו"מ.

הקדמת שלום.

⁶במכתב מאלהו (ח"ד דף רמו) מביא את הגמ' בברכות (י"ז ע"א): "אמרו עליו על ר' יוחנן בן זכאי שלא הקדימו אדם שלום מעולם ואפילו נכרי בשוק". ומוסיף הגר"א דסלר זצ"ל, נתאר לעצמנו את ר' יוחנן בן זכאי, זה שנאמר עליו שלא הניח מקרא ומשנה גמרא הלכות ואגדות דקדוקי תורה ודקדוקי סופרים תקופת וגימטריאות ... שיחת מלאכי השרת ... ומעשה מרכבה" (סוכה כ"ה). שהוא היה נשיא ישראל בתקופת חורבן הבית, וכל צרכי ישראל עליו היו מוטלים, והיה כל כך חשוב בעיני הקב"ה עד שאמר על עצמו שהוא "דומה כשר לפני המלך" (ברכות ל"ד ע"ב), ובכל זאת מעולם לא קרה שיהיה כל כך מרוד במחשבותיו עד שישכח להקדים שלום אפילו לנכרי בשוק!

■ ADDITIONAL USEFUL RESOURCES

במדרש רבה (במדבר ח ד): "איש או אשה וגו', הה"ד (תהלים קלח) יודוך ה' כל מלכי ארץ כי שמעו אמרי פיך. אמר רבי פנחס, בי דברים שמעו מלכי אומות העולם מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא ועמדו מכסאותם והודו. בשעה שנתן הקב"ה תורה לישראל ואמר (שמות כ) אנכי ה' אלקיך, אמרו מלכי או"ה, זה כמוני אומר, אי זה מלך רוצה שיהא אחר מכחיש. וכן הקב"ה, בשעה שאמר לא יהיה לך אמרו אי זה מלך רוצה שיהיה לו שותף. וכן הקב"ה בשעה שאמר לא תשא, אמרו אי זה מלך רוצה שיהיו נשבעים בו ומשקרים. וכן הקב"ה בשעה שאמר זכור את יום השבת, אמרו אי זה מלך רוצה שלא יהיו הבריות מכבדים את יום השביעי. אבל בשעה שאמר כבד, אמרו, בנימוסות שלנו כל מי שמכתיב את עצמו סיגרון למלך הוא כופר באבותיו, וזה מכריז ואומר כבד את אביך ואת אמך, עמדו מכסאותם והודו לו. בשעה שאמר הקב"ה ואת אשר חטא מן הקדש ישלם, אמרו, בנימוסות שלנו כל דאכיל צינורא מן קיסר יהב ביה סכין דפדן, וזה מכריז ואומר ואת אשר חטא מן הקדש ישלם! ולא עוד אלא שהחמיר בהדיוט יותר מגבוה, שבגבוה כתיב (ויקרא ה) נפש כי תמעול מעל וגו', ובהדיוט כתיב נפש כי תחטא וגו', עשאו כמוזר. ולא עוד אלא שבזה הקדים מעילה לחטא ובזה הקדים חטא למעילה, ולא עוד לישראל אלא אפילו בגזל הגר כן, מי הוא אלוה כזה האוהב את אוהביו ומקרב רחוקים כקרובים הבאים לשמו, עמדו מכסאותם והודו לו". [ועי' בקידושין ל"א ע"א בדומה לזה]. הרי שדוד משבח את הקב"ה בזה שמלכי האומות הודו לו והבינו שהנהגתו ישרה.

בתהילים (קיט) על הפסוק "ראש דברך אמת ולעולם כל משפט צדקיך" כתב רשי "ולא סוף דברך אמת! אלא סוף דברך הוכיח על ראש דברך שהוא אמת, שכששמעו האומות אנכי ולא יהיה לך ולא תשא אמרו הכל הנאתו ולכבודו, כיון ששמעו כבד, לא תרצח ולא תנאף הודו על ראש דברך שהוא אמת". רואים כמה צריכים לזהר בענינים של בין אדם לחבירו שבהנהגת בין אדם לחבירו נתגלה כבודו של הבין אדם למקום, ומכירים האמת של המצות בין אדם למקום, רק אחר שרואים הנהגת בין אדם לחבירו.

Lesson 9.

■ PRIDE, HUMILITY AND HONOR

■ INTRODUCTION.

Essential to successfully serving ה' is developing a strong sense of Jewish pride. This pride enables us to entirely devote ourselves to a Jewish lifestyle and to stand strong in the face of challenges and foreign influences.

As a priestly nation (ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש) our actions bring honor to ה'. If we misuse this status to demean others who do not follow the ways of ה', then we have committed a gross distortion of our sacred task – to be מקדש שם ה'.

The pride that we feel at being worthy ambassadors in representing ה' enables us to properly represent ה' in the world and sanctify His name. Understanding this mission will prevent us from misusing this pride and causing a חילול ה'.

■ OBJECTIVES.

Students will:

- Discuss the factors that bring about קידוש ה' and those that lead to חילול ה'. חילול ה' will only be effective when implemented with humility, and חילול ה' is the result if a person acts with haughtiness.
- List the positive and negative aspects of the characteristic of pride and distinguish between them.

■ ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

The teacher should write the מידה of pride on the board with the words PRO (positive) and CON (negative) written beneath it. He should then ask the students to give examples of when the מידה of pride might be considered a pro and when it would be a con.

The teacher should explain that while pride can be used to impact people in a positive way, it can also be used to hurt them. As ה's Chosen People, we must be careful to use our Jewish pride in the way in which it was intended.

גאווה, ענוה, ותפארת

STORY #1—RABBI YEHUDA CAHAN

Rabbi Yehuda Cahan called the garbage disposal company to arrange an additional garbage pickup right before פסח. After explaining to the manager about the requirements of פסח, the manager immediately replied that he would do whatever he could do to help the Jews because he has tremendous respect for them!

He explained that he recently saw yeshiva boys who lived in the dorm on 14th Street, walking down the block. A car drove by and the passengers yelled insulting remarks at the boys. The boys, though, continued walking, completely ignoring the insults; their heads held high with pride and dignity.

-AS HEARD FROM RABBI CAHAN

Since the source of our pride is that we are able to fulfill מצוות and תורה, a Jew might feel that it is permissible to demean those who are not as observant. However if he understands that we are proud only because we have been chosen to be מקדש שם שמים, then it will become impossible to use this pride to belittle others. If we are not fulfilling our mission to be מקדש שם שמים, then we have nothing of which to be proud.

A captain who is skillful in navigating will not belittle his passengers because he is more skilled than they are. He understands that he acquired his skills in order to bring his passengers safely to their destination. Because he respects them and does not use his knowledge to demean them, he receives their cooperation and they follow his

commands. It is because of the respect that he gives to them, and then in turn receives from them, that he is considered an effective captain.

■ ACTIVITY.

The teacher should ask the students to think of examples in their lives when they may have been critical of those who are not תורה observant. He should explain that by looking down at others, they may limit their ability to influence the less observant. Students may be asked to present different scenarios showing how to influence others positively, rather than limiting their influence by looking down at them.

As observant Jews, we might become smug and arrogant because we have such a special heritage. Rather than feeling superior, we should recognize the gift that we have been given and regard it as a privilege that we can use to positively influence others.

■ DEVELOPMENT.

Success in serving ה' and adhering to His מצוות is accomplished through recognizing our enormous potential as ה'’s nation. Developing an appreciation for our lineage aids us in refraining from sin. If a person is tempted to act incorrectly, he should remember his illustrious lineage and think, “I am the heir of a great heritage. How could I possibly participate in such a lowly act and stain my heritage?”

One who does not recognize his own greatness and see the great value of his נפש will find that it is easy to fall and be led down the wrong path.¹

A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS.

High ranking officials answer only to the highest authority. רבינו יונה tells us that כלל ישראל has been appointed as a ממלכת כהנים – the highest ranking officials who serve their Creator. ה' promised כלל ישראל that they would leave מצרים with great riches. Every person left with ninety donkeys laden with silver and gold. This bestowed glory to ה', showing the nations the success of כלל ישראל. This is why אברהם said to אבימלך, “I see that ה' is with you in everything that you do.” (וירא כאב:כב)

The מדרש tells us that these riches caused thousands of מצרים to convert to Judaism. It was clear to them that ה' watches over and protects those who serve Him. Now in גלות, when the nations of the world see that religious Jews are successful and are well provided for, a positive impression is made on them. This creates a קידוש ה'. When כלל ישראל suffers and does not succeed materially, a חילול ה' is created and gives the nations of the world the impression that ה'’s children are not cared for.²

The שם משמאל explains that just as everything in the world has the potential for good or bad, so too, every מידה can be used for good or evil. חסד originates

from an outpouring of love which can be channeled to serve ה', but can also be used wrongly, to pursue physical pleasures. The גבורה of מידה (passion) can be channeled to serve ה' with great intensity or it can explode into anger. While pride can glorify the name of ה', it can also be used by someone acting with arrogance and conceit. It then can be used to humiliate others or treat them with less respect than they deserve.³

How do we ensure that the pride that we feel as Jews in our yiddishkeit, does not cause us to look down upon those who are not in our privileged position?

When we channel our pride correctly and we understand that we have been granted the mission of sanctifying ה'’s name in the world, we become role models to others and cause a קידוש ה'. Our pride is in what we can give to others not only for our own benefit.

רב אלעזר.

The רבי אלעזר tells us that once רבי אלעזר, on his way from the house of his teacher, felt great pride in his considerable achievements in תורה study. While walking, a very ugly man greeted him, but רבי אלעזר did not return his greeting. Instead רבי אלעזר declared, “What a worthless fellow. How ugly he is!”

The man overheard this comment and responded, “Go complain to the Craftsman who fashioned me and say, ‘How ugly is Your creation.’”

רבי אלעזר immediately realized that he had sinned and followed the man all the way to town, begging him for forgiveness.

The קרן אורה explains that this incident teaches us that the main purpose of תורה is not only to perfect oneself, but rather to perfect the world around us. It is our job to spread the light of תורה to all creations so that they will serve ה' and bring honor to His name. רבי אלעזר learned that we must not, חם ושלום, let the fact that we are proud of our achievements in תורה cause us to be arrogant and demean others. Instead, we should use our accomplishments to help bring others close to ה'. Without humility, תורה learning can be wasted.⁴

כלל ישראל embodies the מידה of עוזות - which is strong-mindedness, orchutzpa. This מידה allows us to withstand pressures and go against the tide; it can also be used in the wrong way. We were given the מצוה of learning תורה in order to channel this strength and subdue our strong will.⁵

The מהרש"א explains that it says in ערובין that one who is traveling alone on a path should involve himself in learning תורה. In this way he will be granted favor in the eyes of all who see him. This is why we say in תפילת הדרך, "Grant us grace, kindness and mercy in Your eyes and in the eyes of all who see us."⁶

STORY #2—TEARS AND TIRES

One could hear a pin drop in the fourth grade class of the Shuvu school in Yerushalayim. The students were taking their first test on הלכות שבת and all the children had studied hard. One young boy's hand pressed his pencil down harder than the others, as if trying to engrave his answers onto a plaque for eternity. Moshe Polchik had shown a special interest in שבת from the very beginning and had studied harder for this test than for any other that year. He was able to direct his pencil to write the correct answers to the questions, but his parents, unfortunately, were a different story. While they appreciated the well-rounded Jewish education that Moshe received, observing שבת was not part of their lifestyle. Nevertheless, their son was maturing into a respectful, diligent boy, learning more and more about תורה and מצוות. As hard as they tried to convince him that "School is school, and home is home," Moshe persisted in his sincere pleas for a "real שבת." Eyes glowing, he excitedly told his parents of the beauty and holiness they could experience in their home if they observed שבת. "It's just not for us," was their reply. And that was that.

Mrs. Polchik avoided her son every Saturday morning. She could not bear to watch as her normally lively nine-year-old son would dissolve into tears. Whenever his father left the house to go for a drive, Moshe's heart would break in two. As he heard the engine start, he would reach for a small תהילים and recite the words between tearful sobs. At first, his mother tried to reason with him, begging him to just accept the situation, but she soon gave up. This pattern continued each and every שבת, week after week, until Mrs. Polchik could stand it no longer. She managed to convince her husband that for their child's emotional well-being and her own sanity, he would have to comply with his son's wishes. From then on, Moshe's father stopped driving on שבת.

The Polchik family looks back at this commitment as their first step on the road towards bringing שבת into their home. They proudly tell this story to all of the many guests who come to their home in order to experience a "real שבת."

-*Jewels from the Crown* / WITH PERMISSION FROM SHUVU

■ LIFE LESSON.

In general, people tend to humble themselves only before important figures, or those with a unique status. The אורחות צדיקים explains that we should be humble before all those with whom we come in contact, not only great people. Those who follow this prescription are "מזכה"

(bring merit to the community) and people will look up to them for their humility and constantly praise them. Others will want to emulate their actions and bless their children to be like them. Their actions create a קידוש ה'.

However, one who is haughty causes a הילול by causing others to sin. People distance themselves from him and he is compared to a rotting carcass. People will say, "Why should we learn תורה if those who learn תורה become like him? This causes people to avoid תורה."⁷

■ PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

Once ר' ישראל סלנטר watched as two boys fought over which of them was taller. One of the boys pushed the other down into the gutter and then as he stood over him, he stated triumphantly, "See, now I am taller!"

At this point ר' סלנטר intervened and pointed out to the boy that he had a serious problem. "Right next to you is a rock that you could have stood on to show that you are taller! You did not need to push him down to be taller."

The way to exhibit our greatness, protect our children from harmful influences and give them a sense of pride is not to cast others down and demean them. Rather, by raising ourselves up and showing our children the beauty of our heritage, we give them a way of life that is too appealing for them to turn away from. Our confidence in our way of life will lift us without ever feeling the desire to destroy others.

STORY # 3—ATON REESE AND THE AFRICAN TRIBESMEN

I came to daven מעריב one night in a shul in ירושלים. I often stop in this particular shul to daven, and over a period of time, I became friendly with a young man named Aton Reese (*name changed*), who heads a night kollel there. Since we had a few minutes until מעריב, I asked Aton what he had heard from his Rosh Kollel that day. Aton learned during the day in a prestigious kollel under the direction of a prominent Rav. Then, at night, Aton ran his own kollel for a select group of men.

Aton replied, "Today, the Rosh Kollel talked about the ברכה we say on the תורה each morning: 'Who chose us from all the nations of the world and gave us His תורה.' The מעמד הר סיני (47 אורח חיים) explains that when you recite this ברכה each morning, you should think about the revelation on הר סיני and how ה' chose us from all the nations of the world and allowed us to hear His words from the midst of the fire."

As Aton continued to speak, his voice began to choke and fill with emotion. I wondered why and asked him why the Rosh Kollel's answer had affected him so deeply.

Aton replied, "Rabbi, it's a long story. You see, I wasn't always like this. Four years ago, believe it or not, I was living a totally different lifestyle. I was not religious. I spent my days hanging out on the beaches of Tel Aviv and following my heart's desire. I travelled the world seeking out fun and excitement, always searching for new thrills. "At one point, my travels brought me to the jungles of Africa. I was excited by the adventure. I rented a jeep, took my backpack and a map, and set off for the thrill of my life.

"One day, while I was travelling through the wilds, I saw a young African boy in the distance. As I came near him, he stretched out his hand towards me. This was not an unusual sight. I had gotten used to such encounters. When some young African boys see a foreigner, they stretch out their hands in the hopes of receiving some candy. I was prepared for this. I stopped the car near the boy and signaled to him to wait a moment while I stuck my hand into my backpack to fetch a piece of candy for him.

"As I got the candy out to give to the young boy, I looked up and had the shock of my life. I was totally surrounded by a very large group of frightening Africans. The boy had been part of a ploy to entrap a tourist. The boy would get the tourist to stop, and then the group would pounce on their prey.

"I immediately thought of slamming my foot on the gas pedal, but realized that in my open jeep with these wild men facing me carrying machine guns and machetes, I would certainly not survive if I attempted to flee. My entire life flashed before me. Fear gripped my heart as the men made threatening motions and sounds that I could not understand. Surely, they were going to rob me or worse.

"Suddenly, the leader of the group approached my jeep as the rest of the men made way for him. With a fearsome face and with a gun in his hand, he came up close to me. It seemed like it was all over now. This was truly a living nightmare.

"Where you from? Where you from?" repeated the man in broken English.

"I wasn't sure what to say. Should I tell him the truth? He would certainly kill me if he found out I was Jewish. Should I lie? I decided that it was safest to tell the truth, as they would probably find out anyway when they took my wallet and found my Israeli driver's license.

"I am from the Land of Israel," I said with fear in my heart.

"You from Israel?" he asked incredulously. 'Israel?' He was excited about this revelation. I thought that now I was really in trouble as he began to tell his other tribesmen that I was an Israeli. Then he turned to me and said something totally unexpected and incredible. 'You Chosen People! You Chosen People!' he shouted.

"His sinister face turned into a giant smile and he began to laugh. He seemed to be admiring the fact that I was a Jew. All the men began to jump up and down in excitement. As they chanted, 'Chosen People, Chosen People,' I was shocked beyond words. They were ecstatic that they had met a Jew.

"And I, in turn, felt lower than ever. Here I was in the depths of the African jungle and these African men were telling me how special the Jewish people are. I had never viewed myself before as part of a Chosen People. Truth be told, I didn't even know why we were chosen or what being chosen meant.

"As I was sent away unscathed, with blessings to boot, I made a promise to myself. I was going to find out what it meant to be part of a Chosen People. When I returned to Israel, I began my search into Judaism. I discovered a shul in Tel Aviv and attended davening and a shiur. After a few days of being in the shiur, the Rav introduced himself to me. I told him my story. He advised me to begin my studies in a Ba'al Teshuvah Yeshiva. I did. The rest is history.

"That is why this ברכה means so much to me. Because each time I say it, I remember just how lucky I am, to be a part of the Chosen People. And I thank ה' for giving me the opportunity to learn His תורה."

-RABBI BINYOMIN PRUZANSKY

SOURCES

DEVELOPMENT.

¹ בשערי העבודה של רבינו יונה "הפתח הראשון הוא שידע האיש העובד ערך עצמו ויכיר מעלתו ומעלת אבותיו, וגדולתם וחשיבותם וחתם אצל הבורא יתברך... ויצא לו מזה כי כאשר יתאווה תאוה... לעשות דבר שאינו הגון יבוש מעצמו ויבוש מאבותיו וישיב לנפשו ויאמר, אדם גדול וחשוב כמוני היום שיש בי כמה מעלות טובות רמות ונשאות ושאינו בן גדולים בן מלכי קדם, איך אעשה הרעה הגדולה הזאת... ואם חלילה וחס לא יכיר מעלתו ומעלת אבותיו נקל יהיה בעיניו ללכת בדרכיו הפריצים להגלות נגלות כאחד הנבלים למלאות תאוותו בחיקו. כאשר אמר המשל כל מי שאינו מתביש מנפשו אין לנפשו ערך בעיניו"

² ברבינו יונה (שער שלישי אות קסז) "כי עם הקדוש שהם עובדי השם יתברך אין להם להכנע לבשר ודם, ואינו מן הראוי להיות מורא בשר ודם עליהם אלא לשם שמים, שנאמר (ויקרא כה, נה): "כי לי בני ישראל עבדים" ולא עבדים לעבדים, ונאמר (שמות יט, ו): "ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש", לשון "כהנים" - אדונים ושרים, וכמוהו (שמואל ב ח, יח): "ובני דוד כהנים היו". וכל העם נקראו ממלכה, מלשון (מלכים א יח, י): "אם יש גוי וממלכה", (ישעיה ס, יב): "כי הגוי והממלכה", פירושו: אתם תהיו לי ממלכה שכלה שרים שלא יהיה עליכם עול בשר ודם, ונאמר (שם נא, יב): "מי את ותיראי מאנוש ימות" ונאמר (שם פסוק ז): "אל תיראו חרפת אנוש".

ועל דרך זה מסביר ר' יצחק מאלצ'ן (בפתיחה להגדה שלו) הענין של הרכוש גדול שיצא ישראל ממצרים שאין לך כל אחד ואחד מישראל שלא היו עמו תשעים חמורים לובים טעונים מכספה וזהב של מצרים (בכורות ח:). למה צריך לזה, ולמה הבטיח הקב"ה לאברהם שיצאו ברכוש גדול למה זה דבר עיקרי כל כך שהיה צריך לכפות את ישראל לשאול מהמצריים כלי כספם? התשובה היא שזה היה הכנה לעשות ישראל לממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש להיות עבדים לה' איזה מין עבדים שיהיה תפארת לה' "עבדי אתה ישראל אשר כך אתפאר" ואברהם אבינו שמח בבשורת הרכוש גדול כי ידע מעצמו כי הצלחתו בפרסום שמו של הקב"ה היה תלוי הרבה במה שעמי הארץ ראו הצלחתו וכדברי אבימלך אליו (וירא כא, כב) אלקים עמך בכל אשר אתה עושה. וידע שאם יצאו ככה יתוספו להם הרבה גרים וכן היה.

והביא ראיה ממכילתא "וגם ערב רב וגו'. מאה ועשרים רבוא דברי רבי ישמעאל. רבי עקיבא אומר מאתים וארבעים רבוא. רבי נתן אומר מאתים וששים רבוא: וצאן ובקר. עליהם אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא לאברהם (בראשית ט"ו) ואחרי כן יצאו ברכוש גדול עם יציאתם ממצרים אני ממלאן כסף וזהב" וצריך להבין למה הביא המכילתא זה כאן ולא לעיל על הפסוק "וינצלו את מצרים"? אלא הכונה הוא להראות שזה היה עיקר הפעולה של הרכוש גדול שכ"כ גרי צדק נלוו אליהם. נמצא המטרה של רכוש גדול ועשירות ורוממות, יש ביכולתו לקדש שמו באופן נפלא שישראל שהוא עבדיו של הקב"ה מאד מעולים וכבני מלכים ושרים. כמו שפי' רבינו יונה (שער ג' קסח) הפסוק "כי לאלקים מגיני ארץ מאד נעלה" וז"ל "ונאמר (תהלים מז, י): "נדיבי עמים נאספו עם אלקי אברהם כי לאלקים מגיני ארץ מאד נעלה"... והמלכים והשרים נקראו מגינים. מלשון (ישעיה כא, ה): "משחו מגן". פירושו: נדיבי עמים נאספו לעבוד את השם יתעלה, כי מלכיהם ושריהם לאלקים, שהם עבדיו ואמוניו, כענין שנאמר (תהלים פט, יט): "כי לה' מגננו ולקדוש ישראל מלכנו". "מאד נעלה" - שהקדוש-ברוך-הוא מתעלה ומתהלל באסיפתם ועבודתם.

נמצא שהרוממות והתפארת של ישראל הוי תנאי גדול בריבוי כבוד שמים ואם מצינו אצלנו זמן מן הזמנים שיש לישראל הצלחה ורכוש גדול בגלות ויש להם צורה של שרים ובני מלכים, יש יכולת גדול להשתמש בכל ההצלחה לקדש שמו במגיני ארץ להיות תפארת לה'. שפשוט הוא שכשעבדי ה' מבוזים ומושפלים ולא מצליחים בדברים גשמיים ורדאי הוי חילול ה' גורא. שהרואים אומרים אין כאן תועלת להיות עבד לה'.

³ בשם משמואל פרשת וירא כתב שבכל מדה טובה יש גם צד רע. המדה של "חסד" ששרשו הוא אהבת ה', לעומתו יש בה סכנה לאהבת חיצונית. מידת "גבורה" ששרשה הוא להיות לבו בוער באש ללכת אחרי ה', לעומתה יש לחשוש בה מאש זרה של כעס ורציחה. מידת "תפארת" ששרשה בקדושה לשבח ולפאר ולרומם ה' ולקיים "ויגבה לבו בדרכי ה'" ובכללו לזכות בתורה, לעומתו יכול ליפול לניאות ולהתפאר על זולתו.

⁴ גמרא תענית כ. מעשה שבא רבי אלעזר ממגדל גדור מבית רבו, והיה רכוב על חמור ומטייל על שפת נהר, ושם שמחה גדולה, והיתה דעתו גסה עליו מפני שלמד תורה הרבה. נודמן לו אדם אחד שהיה מכוער ביותר. אמר לו: שלום עליך רבי ולא החזיר לו. אמר לו: ריקה, כמה מכוער אותו האיש שמא כל בני עירך מכוערין כמותך? אמר לו: איני יודע, אלא לך ואמור לאומן שעשאי כמה מכוער כלי זה שעשית. כיון שידע בעצמו שחטא ירד מן החמור ונשתחח לפניו.

קרן אורה - ידוע כי עיקר נתינת התורה הקדושה לא לצורך תיקון ישראל לבד ניתנה אלא אם לחקן כל בראוי יתברך ויעלה לרצון לפניו מעשה כל הברואים, כמש"נ (שמות י"ט ה') והייתם לי סגולה מכל העמים כי לי כל הארץ ואתם תהיו לי. יכוין כי לא ניכר הסגולה ואוצר חביב אם ח"ו אין לבעל הסגולה אלא זאת הסגולה

אכן אם יש לבעל הסגולה עוד דברים יקרים ונכבדים והסגולה חביבה אליו מכל אז יוכשר להקרות בשם סגולה. כמו כן בכל עת שהברואים אינן על שלימותן וכל הימים ההם אשר הרשעים מכעיסין ובאין ואין בהם קורא בשם ה' איננו ניכר חשיבות עם סגולתו ועיקר רצון הקדוש הוא שע"י עסק התורה יתקנו כל הבריות וכולם יקראו בשם ה'. לבר כאשר אנחנו מצפים לגאולה השלימה במהרה בימינו ועם ה' יהיו כולם קודש לה' ראשית תבואת כל הברואים כמש"נ (ישעיהו ס"א ו') ואתם כהני ה' תקראו כו'. וזה שנאמר (שמות י"ט ה') והייתם לי סגולה מכל העמים וא"ת איזה חשיבות היא זאת להיות סגולה מכל העמים, לזה נאמר (שם) כי לי כל הארץ כי ע"י העסק התורה שלכם כל הארץ יהיו לי כי כולם יתקנו ויבאו לתכלית בריאתן ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש. מזה נראה שעסק התורה העיקר בזה להזריח מאורה לזולתו ג"כ ולהביאו אל השלימות ולא ח"ו להתגדר בה לאמר לי לבדי ניתנה הארץ כי בזה הוא נותן מחסור בברואיו ח"ו ועיקר שלימות התורה הוא להשלים הבריאה ולא יהי בה שום חסרון. וזהו שאמרו ז"ל (שבת צ"ב ע"א) אין השכינה שורה אלא על חכם גבור עשיר ועניו כי אחרי כל המעלות אם ח"ו מחמת זאת יתן מחסור לזולתו כל מעלותיו לחסר תבואנו, על כן צריכה מדת ענוה להיות עמהם ובלעדה כולם כאין ולזה בשביל שהי' דעתו של רבי אלעזר גסה עליו נודמן לו אדם שהיה מכוער ביותר לנסותו אם יתן בו חסרון או תורתו יעמוד לו שלא ליתן חסרון בשום בריה ואדרבה להשלים את הכל לתכלית ולא עמד בנסיון והתחיל לבזותו ולספר בחסרונו והשיב לו האיש לך לאומן שעשאני לרמוז לו כי כל החכמה שלמד הוא ח"ו בלא יועיל אם עי"ז הוא נותן חסרון בבריות ועיקר לימוד ועסק התורה הוא לעלות חן כל הברואים בעיני יוצרן ע"י אור תורתו אשר יזריח עליהם. וזהו שסידר בן זומא במשנתו (אבות פ"ד מ"א) אחר חכם גבור ועשיר איזהו מכובד המכבד את הבריות כי זהו כבודו של מקום ב"ה כמש"נ כי מכבדי אכבד:

⁵ ביצה (כה ע"ב) "תנא משמיה דרבי מאיר: מפני מה נתנה תורה לישראל - מפני שהן עזין. תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: (דברים לג) מימינו אש דת למו, אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: ראויין הללו שתנתן להם דת אש. איכא דאמר: דתיהם של אלו אש, שאלמלא נתנה תורה לישראל אין כל אומה ולשון יכולין לעמוד בפניהם. והיינו דאמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש: שלשה עזין הן: ישראל באומות, כלב בחיות, תרנגול בעופות. ברשי כתב שהן עזים - ונתנה להם תורה שיעסקו בה, והיא מתשת כחם ומכנעת לבם.

⁶ עירובין (גד ע"א) אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: המהלך בדרך ואין עמו לוייה - יעסוק בתורה, שנאמר (משלי א') כי לויית חן הם. במהרשא מפרש "כי לויית חן" דעסק בתורה נותנת לו חן בדרך בעיני כל רואיו כמ"ש בתפלת הדרך "ותתננו לחן ולחסד ולרחמים בעיניך ובעיני כל רואינו..."

LIFE LESSON.

⁷ ובאורחות צדיקים (שער ב') כתב: "ועוד אמרו רבותינו (אבות פ"ד מ"ד): "מאד מאד הוי שפל רוח", בפני כל אדם. לא בפני הגדולים לבר צריך להיות שפל רוח, אלא אף לפני הקטנים. וההולך בדרך זו יזכה את הרבים, כי הוא נושא חן בעיני כל רואיו, וכל מעשיו וסדרי ענייניו מקובלים להם, ותמיד הם משבחים אותו, ומתוך כך הם חומדים לעשות כמוהו, וכל אדם יברך את בנו שיהיה כמו פלוני, ובוזה הוא מקדש השם ברוך הוא. אבל המתנאה הוא מחלל השם ברוך הוא ומחטיא את הרבים, והוא דומה לגבילה שהיא מושלכת בשוק, וכל עובר ושב מניח ידו על חוטמו עד שיעבור. כך המתנאה, הוא מגנה את התורה ולומדיה, ומרחיק בני אדם מן התורה, כי אומרים: מה תועלת יש בתורה, אחרי אשר לומדיה רעים? ומתוך כך פורשים הם מן התורה."

Lesson 10.

■ OUR UNIQUE JEWISH MISSION

■ INTRODUCTION.

Our mission as Jews is to influence the world with our exemplary behavior and adherence to ה'׳s commandments. Although we are instructed to influence the world around us, it is only by maintaining our unique and separate Jewish character that we are able to positively influence others. In truth, it is our emulation of the **צלם אלוקים** that makes such a deep impression on those who witness our **תורה** lifestyle.

To maintain this uniqueness ה' has given us many **הלכות** that require us to distance ourselves socially from the nations. These include: the prohibition of **יין נסך**, which forbids a Jew from drinking wine prepared by a non-Jew and the **מצוה** of **בישול ישראל**, which requires us to eat food that was cooked by or had the involvement of a Jewish person.

This can be understood by way of an analogy to the human body, which is a miraculous conglomeration of organs, arteries, veins, etc. Each organ is separated from the next and is nourished and replenished by the network of arteries and veins that surround it. Should one of these arteries or veins tear, it might prevent the flow of life-sustaining fluids and nutrients from reaching the organs. If fluids leak into places where they do not belong, it could cause great harm to the body. Each organ, artery and vein has its own unique purpose but must maintain its distinctive place and function in order

to benefit the body. This is why we say the blessing **”אשר יצר את האדם בהכמה...”**, acknowledging our gratefulness to ה' that the various parts of our body function properly and do not open or close at the wrong time.

So too, we as Jews have our unique mission in this world. In order to fulfill our purpose, which is to make a **קידוש ה'** by teaching the world morality and upright behavior, we must remain separate from the other nations. When a Jew allows outside influences to flow into his life, he will be harmed and less able to sanctify ה'׳s Name.

When we maintain our uniqueness and refuse to be influenced, the nations recognize the truth and have love and respect for **תורה**, **מצוות** and **כלל ישראל**.

■ OBJECTIVES.

Students will:

- Identify several ways in which maintaining our separation leads to influencing the nations and to making a **קידוש ה'**.
- List the qualities that exemplify a true **תורה** persona.

הבדלה בין ישראל לנכרי

ANTICIPATORY SET: INITIATING INTEREST.

The teacher should have students read the excerpt from *Witness to History* chapter 5 page 28, “German Jewish Society,” describing conditions as they existed in Nazi Germany before World War II. After the students read this excerpt, they should be able to answer the question: What was happening to the Jews as a whole before the war began? The teacher should then ask the students to remember their thoughts on what they read as they learn the following lesson and how it relates to what was happening in pre-war Germany. Have students share their opinions at the end of the lesson.

The teacher should point out that when Jews become influential, it is also possible for them to become more assimilated. This can manifest itself on a subtle level, but in some cases can be more prominent. Therefore, we must be vigilant to maintain our תורה values especially when we are in positions of influence.

■ DEVELOPMENT.

On סוכות we bring seventy קרבנות to atone for the nations of the world. The מצוות of סוכות separate and elevate בני ישראל above the rest of the nations. It is specifically

when בני ישראל separate themselves from the rest of the nations that they are able to bring merit to the rest of the world.

The שפת אמת explains that when בני ישראל maintain their uniqueness, they affect and influence the nations. ה' told אברהם אבינו “Separate from your family” “לך-לך”, אברהם stand separately – that is when we “will be blessed by the families of the land.”¹

The נצי”ב explains that ה' wishes to maintain the uniqueness of כלל ישראל. The purpose of creation depends on this separation. In ישעיהו ה', ה' says, “I **formed** you to establish a covenant to the people; to be a light to the nations.” (מבוי)

Through our actions, the nations recognize the Oneness of ה' and live in the way that the תורה dictates. This is achieved only when we live with the proper “צורה” and have the “**form**” of a true תורה Jew.

The תורה guides and protects us from being influenced by the nations during גלות, when בני ישראל are in danger of losing their unique holiness. In this way the purpose of creation is fulfilled.

Only when we maintain our unique behavior do the nations have love and respect for us.

STORY #1—THE משנה

On 5766 י"ט טבת, the Rabbonim and Roshei Yeshivos in Monsey, New York, convened to find ways to tackle the challenge of the Internet in homes and businesses. The large assembly was addressed by the משנה (guidance counselor) of Lakewood, Rav Mattisyahu Solomon, who shared the following story that dramatically depicted the awesome power of one person who carefully protected the sanctity of his eyes. Rav Solomon related:

"A good friend, who is a Rosh Yeshiva in Haifa, told me about his neighbor who lives in the same apartment building. This fine young man is a משנה in a Yeshiva and he appears to be one of the most refined and decent people my friend has ever met. Moreover, this fine man has children who look and act like little angels. The Rosh Yeshiva was very curious to know the full life story of the משנה and therefore asked him to share his background.

The משנה humbly revealed his frightful background. "I am a Ba'al Teshuvah, raised in a totally secular, rabidly anti-religious kibbutz of Hashomer Hatzair, where they actually ate חזיר (pork) on יום כפור! The kibbutz prided itself on the fact that they provided their children opportunities to transgress every sin prohibited by the תורה! They kept us so involved in every forbidden, illicit indulgence that I never even left the kibbutz until I was sixteen years old!

"At that time I heard that in Haifa there were places where one could find newer ways to sin. I eagerly traveled there in order to enjoy a fresh עבירה. When I arrived in Haifa, I immediately proceeded to the address I had been given with great anticipation of the innovative, immoral pleasures I would soon enjoy. As I neared the address, I saw a long line of people waiting to enter this evil place. But then I also witnessed something which would change my life forever. I noticed a bearded, religious Jew dressed in black, unknowingly approaching the same house from the opposite direction. (By the way, this was the first time in my life that I had even seen a religious Jew. At the kibbutz we had been taught to despise Chareidi Jews as ancient, archaic, close-minded and evil enemies of normal Jews like us.) When this good man saw the line of people and realized what was happening and what kind of a place this was, he averted his eyes and swiftly ran to the other side of the street, where he would be at a safe distance from the place of sin. He simply ran away!

"I saw all this and was astounded! Where did this creature of flesh and blood derive such moral willpower to withstand temptation? I decided that he must be enjoying some other delight which surpassed these cheap thrills and did not want to ruin his real pleasure with this distraction. However, I simply could not imagine what could be more desirable than the attractions found here.

"I found myself consumed by curiosity. I lost all interest in that immoral place and was determined to discover the secret of this religious Jew, but he had disappeared. I walked around Haifa searching for another such observant person who might be able to enlighten me. Since there are not many religious Jews in Haifa, I had to search for a while until I found one – the very first religious Jew I had ever spoken to in all of my sixteen years! I was fortunate to meet an intelligent individual who carefully explained that תורה observant Jews delight in the bliss of a close, sacred bond with ה' through תורה and מצוות. Sullyng their souls with sin would spoil the special sanctity of their relationship. Therefore, they take great pains to avoid places and people who would ruin their unique rapport with ה'. I told this man that personally, I was a driven "pleasure seeker" and I wanted to enjoy "תורה pleasure" as well. I asked him where I could go to study about this type of pleasure. He referred me to a fine Ba'al Teshuvah Yeshiva where I found the sacred satisfaction I sought and my life was transformed forever.

"Everything I am, all that my family will be, all results from the G-d-fearing person who sanctified ה' Name by scrupulously avoiding a place of sin. To this day that man is unaware that I witnessed his actions and he has no idea how much this very brief encounter accomplished for me and for untold generations!"

-AS RELATED BY RAV AVROHOM CHAIM FEUER

■ SUGGESTED ACTIVITY.

Have students research the following periods in history when we see the great influence Jews exerted on the communities in which they lived. What was it about the behavior of the Jews of that time that made such an impression on the non-Jews?

PERIODS OF INFLUENCE.

- Amoraim in Bavel
- Rav Ashi
- Shmuel Hanagid
- The Golden Age of Spain
- The Ramban (Debate)
- The Ari
- Ottoman Empire
- The Baal Shem Tov

The **משל** describes this relationship with a **משל**, comparing **עם ישראל** to fire and the other nations to water. Fire can be used to heat water, purify the water, or to cook things in the water. Yet at times fire and water clash. Water can extinguish fire or make the fire smoke unpleasantly. However, these negative effects only occur when the fire comes into direct contact with water. If something separates the water from the fire, such as a pot, then the fire and water do not clash and the fire can positively affect the water.²

A **תורה** lifestyle should attract those who come in contact with it. The **גמרא** in **ברכות** relates that the non-Jews of the town Masa Mechasya were very stubborn because they would see and experience the **כבוד** of the **תורה** twice a year (during the holidays) and yet none of them converted. This implies that in most cases, if a Jew acts properly and affords honor to the **תורה**, a non-Jew would naturally convert*³ and love the Jews. A **תורה** way of life should be so attractive, that a non-Jew who becomes familiar with an authentic Orthodox Jew and sees a true **תורה** lifestyle, should immediately wish to live in the same way.³

STORY #2—A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Rabbi Moshe Gilbert, the principal of the Shuvu School in Arad, eyed his visitor with unfeigned surprise. A few weeks into the school year, Rabbi Gilbert had hired Mr. Smolanov to install an air conditioning unit in each classroom in the school. In Arad, the intensity of summer's heat renders living in Arad virtually impossible without a cooling system and Rabbi Gilbert was glad to be able to provide his students with this necessity. Mr. Smolanov had proven to be a gregarious and hard-working person. While chatting with Mr. Smolanov, Rabbi Gilbert had taken note of the installer's heavy Russian accent and made a mental note to get in touch with him at a later date to see if Shuvu could befriend the immigrant. The next day, with air conditioners operating beautifully, Rabbi Gilbert was surprised to find Mr. Smolanov, who had already been paid in full, standing before him, obviously uncomfortable, shifting from one foot to the next and waiting for permission to speak.

"Good morning, Mr. Smolanov," Rabbi Gilbert greeted him heartily. "Thank you so much for the work you did yesterday. Our students are already enjoying the fruits of your labor. The comfortable atmosphere makes for a longer attention span and the teachers keep coming in to thank me for the air conditioning. What can I do for you today, sir?"

Mr. Smolanov did not bother beating around the bush. "I want to register my son, Sasha, in your school, right away!"

"This is a rather sudden and momentous decision," replied a stunned Rabbi Gilbert. Taking note of Mr. Smolanov's attire, Rabbi Gilbert assumed that his son had little, if any, background in religious education and lifestyle. He was certain that, like many Russian immigrants, yesterday had not been Mr. Smolanov's first encounter with Shuvu.

Presumably some of his friends were already sending their sons to Rabbi Gilbert's school and Mr. Smolanov had deliberately refrained from doing the same. "Something must have happened to bring about this sudden change," Rabbi Gilbert mused aloud.

"Yes, something did happen," Mr. Smolanov admitted. "Yesterday, as I went from classroom to classroom installing your air conditioners, I could not help but hear snippets of the marvelous lessons being taught. I always knew that I was Jewish, but I didn't think that Judaism had so much to offer over and above the secular way of life. Yesterday, I realized that the difference between your education and the education my son has thus far received, is like the difference between a naturally cool, invigorating breeze and the simulated blast of cold air from the systems I install. My son is learning a lot in his school, of that I have no doubt. But he is not invigorated, inspired, or taught the beauty of life the way I witnessed your teachers doing. After just one day in your school, I received an inspiring glimpse into what our heritage is all about. I cannot bear to have my son miss out on this for even one more hour. Please, Rabbi Gilbert, accept my son in your school!"

Needless to say, after such an impassioned plea, Rabbi Gilbert agreed to interview Mr. Smolanov's son. To his father's great delight, the boy was enrolled in the school, which he happily attends and whose teachings have now become an inseparable part of his life.

-Jewels of the Crown / WITH PERMISSION FROM SHUVU

When we do not place the proper value on תורה, it will become less valuable in the eyes of the non-Jews. It is written in מגילת איכה that the non-Jews scorned and ridiculed שבת. The פלגי מים explains that it was the sins of בני ישראל that allowed the non-Jews to respond in this way. If one places something beautiful on a filthy person it will be ridiculed. The מצוות are like ornaments that are beautiful only when placed on a worthy person who exemplifies תורה. If the person is not a fitting example of תורה, then the מצוות will be ridiculed.⁴

■ PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

The teacher should ask the students to visualize a leader with whom they are familiar and also respect. Suggestions might be a Rosh Yeshiva, Rav, principal, family member, or someone of this nature.

The teacher should ask the students to list the qualities that cause them to respect this person. Is their mode of behavior, speech, action or dress different from others with whom they come into contact? What is it about this person's behavior that causes the students to choose him as a leader?

The teacher should explain that those qualities that are worthy of respect are what make these people stand out from the crowd. They exhibit behavior that is different from what people usually see. Just like a captain must stand apart from his passengers and a leader or great person must be different from the common person to be a role model, so too, a Jew must stand apart and be a role model to the rest of the world. ה' has given us the מצוות to separate us, in order to be role models to others, not as a reason to feel superior or indifferent to others.

STORY #3—IRVING BUNIM

Irving Bunim found a mistake in his bill from Julliard, the sole American company manufacturing corduroy, headed at that time by Burnet Valentine. The company had under-billed Mr. Bunim by \$40,000, but he had not noticed this mistake for several months. When he did, Mr. Bunim called the company to alert them to their error and to pay them the \$40,000 he owed them. He wanted to correct the mistake. The company replied that his account had been paid and was closed, that he did not owe them anything. Mr. Bunim made an appointment with the president of the company, Mr. Valentine, for the next day. At that meeting, Mr. Bunim told Mr. Valentine, "Today is a great day!" He explained that today is the day that a Jewish businessman can show what our *תורה* ethics and morality demand of us. He went on to explain what had happened and returned the \$40,000 that he owed.

Mr. Valentine was shocked. He explained that such an error would never have shown up in the company's audits. "I do not know anyone else in the business world who would have returned this money."

Mr. Bunim related to people how big of an impact this had on Mr. Valentine. Whenever Mr. Bunim would meet with Mr. Valentine, Mr. Bunim would bring his own kosher food. Once, Mr. Valentine had lunch with another Jewish businessman, who ordered pork chops. Mr. Valentine was incensed, and later told Mr. Bunim how he felt like slapping the other Jewish businessman in the face for not having respect for his own religion.

When Mr. Bunim would relate this story to his family he would add, "See how important it is to act according to the *תורה* wherever you go. If you respect yourself, then others will respect you. A Jew stands for something in the world. If you do not stand up for the *תורה*, then the world will resent you."

-FELDHEIM, *A Fire in His Soul*

■ LIVING EXAMPLE.

A *קידוש ה'* can be brought about only when we maintain the *קדושה* of our *תורה* lifestyle. Even if we believe we will have a positive effect on others by compromising our values, it is not our knowledge of "the latest show" that will impress others, but rather our adherence to our high standards that will make an impact on others.

The teacher may want to discuss this issue and ask students to identify areas where they might feel uncomfortable in maintaining *תורה* standards. If we can help our students find dignifying solutions for their dilemmas, they will feel more secure in maintaining the *קדושה* of their lifestyle.

SOURCES

DEVELOPMENT.

¹ וראיתי בשפת אמת (תרס"ד) דבר נפלא בסוכות נבדלים ישראל מן האומות ע"י מצוות סוכה, ודוקא משום כך מקריבים שבעים פרים כנגד שבעים אומות לכפר עליהם, שכל מה שישראל נבדלים לעצמם על ידי כך גופא הם מזכים לכל העולם. כמו שמצינו בבית המקדש כשישראל נבדלים מן האומות האירו לכל העולם כולו. וכן מצינו אצל אברהם שביקש לקרב את כל העולם אל הקב"ה לכך אמר לו ה' "לך לך" שרק כשתהא נבדל בפני עצמך על ידי זה "ונברכו כך כל משפחות האדמה"

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY.

² בספר "שאר ישראל" להנצי"ב ביאר ענין זה היטב, וכתב שם וז"ל: "הטעם שהקפידה ההשגחה העליונה על זה הפרט [פי' על הבדלת ישראל מהעמים] יותר משארי עונות המצויים בישראל, הוא דבר שהדעת נותנת, מאשר ההשגחה העליונה מקפדת על שינוי תכלית הבריאה והצורה שנברא בה יותר מכל דבר הנעשה כנגד רצונו כשאינו משנה הצורה ... שנתן לישראל הכח והחיוב להיות מתקנים ומשלימים בני אדם להכיר את אחדות ה' ולהעמידם על דרך ארץ והליכות עולם, כמו שאמר הנביא ישעיה' (מב) "ואצרך ואתנך לברית עם לאור גוים", פי' ואצרך היא צורה בפני עצמה, צורת היהדות ... ובוזה נתן כח לישראל לתקן גם ברית כל עם, שיכירו גם המה את ה', ולהיות לאור גוים בהליכות עולם ודרך ארץ.

כמו באברהם, בשעה שצוה ה' להיות אב המון גוים צוה אותו במצוות מילה ליתן לו צורה מובדלת מהגוים, כמו כן בכלל ישראל, תחילה נתן להם צורה על ידי נתינת התורה, ואח"כ אילו לא היה עון המרגלים והיו נכנסים לארץ ישראל בדרך נס נגלה היה נתפרסם שם ה' בכל העולם. אבל מחמת הטאם נגזר על ישראל להשיג את זאת התכלית ע"י פזור וגלות ... ובשעת פיזור אין לנו דבר שיהא מבדיל ומשמר צורת ישראל בעמים כי אם החזקת לימוד התורה...

ובזה ביאר שם את המדרש באיכה: "אני אמרתי "ישכון ישראל בטח בדד", עתה הוא "איכה ישבה בדד". ומבאר הנצי"ב שרצונו של הקב"ה היה שישבו ישראל בדד בכבוד ומנוחה, בלא שיתערבו יחד עם האומות...

הבית הלוי מסביר שבשעת הגאולה כשהם הקריבו את קרבן פסח שהיה העבודה זרה של המצריים, ולא חשו למרוד באלהותם ולהיות נפרדים מהם לגמרי, ודוקא אז נהפך ליבם לאהוב את ישראל, ומצאו חן בעיני המצריים עד שהשאלום כלי כסף וזהב. וזה ממש כדברי הנצי"ב, שכאשר ישראל לא שטים ליבם להיות ככל העמים וגשארם מופרדים מהם מכח עצמם, אז יש סיבה מאת ה' להפוך את לבב העמים לאהוב את ישראל.

ומוסיף הנצי"ב וז"ל: "והנה הכתוב המשיל את ישראל לאש ואומות העולם למים. והנה משונה היא האש מהמים בצורתה, בתכונתה פנימה ובפעולתה על אחרים. באש יש הכח לשנות המים למיכה, לחמם ולהגיעם לתכלית מה, שתהא רוח הישוב נוטה מהם באכילה ובשתיה מכל דבר אשר בשל יבושל במים... אלא בשעה שהאש פוגעת בגוף המים, אז המים מאבדים את צורת האש כ"כ עד שנעשה גרועה מהמים ע"י העשן המחנק והמעורר את העינים, וכל אדם לא יקרב בעת ההיא אליה ויתרחק ממנה הלאה והלאה. מה שאין כן כשיש דבר המפסיק ביניהם אז ... אין תחרות בין האש והמים, ואדרבה המים מבכערים מרתיחת האש ומתפעלים יפה יפה ואין פרץ ואין יוצאת", עכ"ל.

והיסוד הזה, שעל אף שאנו מצפים שילמדו הגויים מאיתנו, אבל צריך זהירות רב להיות מובדל ומופרש שלא ללמוד ממעשיהם שלא לאבוד את הצורה היהדות שרק בזה הצורה שייך לתקן העולם, דבר זה אנו מוצאים בתורה ע"פ פי' הספורנו. וזה לשון הכתוב בואתחנן (ד ו): "ושמרתם ועשיתם כי היא חכמתכם ובינתכם לעיני העמים, אשר ישמעון את כל החקים האלה ואמרו רק עם חכם וגבון הגוי הגדול הזה: כי מי גוי גדול אשר לו אלקים קרבים אליו, כה' אלקינו בכל קראנו אליו: ומי גוי גדול אשר לו חקים ומשפטים צדיקים, ככל התורה הזאת אשר אנכי נתן לפניכם היום: רק השמר לך ושמר נפשך מאד, פן תשכח את הדברים אשר ראו עיניך, ופן יסורו מלבבך כל ימי חיך, והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך". ולכאורה אינו מובן מה שאמר "רק השמר לך וכו'", מה זה נוגע להאמור לעיל? וביאר הספורנו: "אף על פי שאמרתי שראוי שתהיו נחשבים חכמים בעיני האומות, השמר לך מדעות אותם הטועים המהכזישים מציאות האל – ליתברך ויכלתו והשגחתו ...". א"כ התורה עצמה מזהרת על הסכנה שבדבר, אם אתם חשוכים בעיניהם יש להישמר מאוד מדעותיהם הכוזבות ולא ללכת אחריהם.

³ עיין ברכות (י"ז ע"ב): דאמר רב יהודה מאן אבירי לב, גובאי טפשאי. אמר רב יוסף תדע, דהא לא איגייר גיורא מינייהו. אמר רב אשי: בני מתא מחסיא אבירי לב גינהו, דקא חזו יקרא דאורייתא תרי זמני בשתא ולא קמגייר גיורא מינייהו. (*צריך עיין אם כוונת הגמרא היא לגר צדך או לגר תושב).

⁴ איתא במדרש (רות א ב): "אימתי דברי תורה מתבזים בפני עם הארץ, בשעה שבעליהן מבזים אותם". ובאיכה (א ז-ח) כתיב: "ראוה צרים שחקו על משבתיה", ועיין בפלגי מים שביאר שהגויים שחקו אפילו על המצוות שאינן חוקים, רק שכליות ומוכנות, כגון שבתות ומועדים, אפילו הם נהפכו לשחוק בעיניהם. והטעם לזה נמצא בהמשך הפסוק: "חמא חמאה ירושלים על כן לגדה היתה, כל מכבדיה הזילוה כי ראו ערותה ...". וכתב שם: "כמו תכשיטין, שאם נשימם באף חזיר אין לך דבר מגונה גדול מזה, כן אם יתקשט איש המלוכלך במינופים ודאי הקישוטין גנות ובזיון הוא להם, ואין לך שחוק גדול מזה. וכמו כן במצוות שהם תכשיטין, ומקודם כשהיו ישראל צדיקים היו מכבדים אותם, אבל עכשיו מחמת החטאים "כל מכבדיה הזילוה"!

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ZECHOR YEMOS OLAM OF TORAH UMESORAH

Director, Zechor Yemos Olam *Rabbi Sholom Friedmann* / Author *Rabbi Shraga Freedman*
Executive Assistant *Ms. Alana Goldman* / Project Manager *Mrs. Leah Sugarman*

1090 Coney Island Ave Brooklyn, NY 11230 Office: 212-227-1000 Fax: 212-406-6934

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WALDER EDUCATION PAVILION OF TORAH UMESORAH

Director *Mrs. Rouhama Garelick* / Graphic Artist *Eliana Garelick* / Curriculum *Mrs. Leah Miller* / Editor *Mrs. Tirza Kahan*

8150 McCormick Boulevard Skokie, IL 60076 Phone: 847-674-0800 Fax: 847-674-1188 teacherscenter@waldereducation.org

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