



Volume IV Issue #40

Written by Rabbi Yair Hoffman

Parshas Devarim, 6 Av, 5784

August 10, 2024

– Sponsored anonymously for the Refuah Shleimah of Yair Nissan Ben Sara –

Chizuk - Inspiration

"Shlomo," a former Yeshiva student, entered the working world of Public Relations. At the beginning of the year, his manager sat him down and asked him his preference regarding his compensation. "Would you like a raise this year of X amount per month, or would your preference be to forego a raise, and instead receive a significant bonus of Y dollars?" Although, the actual dollar amounts for either alternative were similar, Shlomo responded that he would prefer the raise, because it offered him a better chance of higher compensation in the long-term.

At the end of the year, when the time for bonuses came, Shlomo's employer provided him with a bonus check. Shlomo knocked on the office door of his manager and gave the check back to him saying, "I don't know if you recall the initial conversation we had several months ago, but I opted for a raise instead of a bonus check. I am therefore returning the check to you." His manager responded that he should keep the bonus check, nonetheless. The next day, Shlomo's employer gave him a large and expensive bottle of Kosher whiskey as a token of appreciation for his honesty.

Halacha – Jewish Law

QUESTION: I told a negative story about "Rivkah", that would normally be considered Lashon Harah (slander) if I had mentioned her name. The problem is, the person that I told the story to, responded with, "I know who you are talking about! It's Rivkah, isn't it?!" I did not want to violate the prohibition of Lashon Harah so I lied and said, "No, it actually was a man that I was talking about." Was I allowed to lie in this circumstance?

ANSWER: This is an excellent question! I found a similar scenario cited in She'ailas Rav, Vol. I - Page 103 where Rav Chaim Kanievsky ZT"L responds that it is, "Quite possibly permitted," and family members of Rav Chaim have informed me that whenever he would give that response, he meant that it wasn't, "possibly" permitted, but that it was indeed permitted.

On The Parsha

This week's Parsha is always read on the Shabbos before Tisha B'Av (the day of mourning for the destruction of the Jewish temples and other Jewish calamities). On the night of Tisha B'Av, Megilas Aicha (Book of Lamentations) is read which laments the destruction of the first Bais HaMikdash along with the exile of the tribe of Yehudah.

"How can I carry alone your troubles, your burdens, and your strife?" (Devarim 1:12)

The verse above begins with the word, "How" or, "Aicha" in Hebrew, and Megilas Aicha also begins with the word, "Aicha". In fact, when we read this week's Parsha on Shabbos morning, it is the custom that when we get to this verse, we read it with the same, sad and mournful tune that we use when we read Megilas Aicha.

The Midrash in the very beginning of Aicha Rabbah explains: "There were three who prophesied with the language of 'Aicha' – Moshe, Yishayahu, and Yirmiyahu. Moshe said, 'How can I carry alone...', Yishayahu said, 'How has she become like a prostitute...', and Yirmiyahu said, 'How lonely has the once so populous city become...'

Rabbi Levi said, 'The above is analogous to a noble woman with three servants who saw her in three different states. One servant saw her in a state of peace, one saw her in a state of rebellion, and one saw her in a state of dishevelment. Moshe saw Bnei Yisrael in peace and with honor [i.e. powerful, exalted, and feared by other nations,

Everyone should subscribe to our weekly Emes Parsha Sheet which emphasizes the importance of Emes (honesty) in everything we do.

Provide us with new Parsha Sheet subscribers and get paid \$3.00 for each new subscriber!

Please contact us at info@everydayemes.org for terms and conditions.

yet still saw the seeds that would spell future disaster and therefore said] ‘How can I carry alone...’ Yishayahu saw her in rebellion [i.e. he saw that Bnei Yisrael were sinning openly] and said, ‘How has she become like a prostitute...’ Yirmiyahu saw her in dishevelment [i.e. after Hashem punished Bnei Yisrael and forced them into exile] and said, ‘How lonely has the once so populous city become...’”

Returning to Moshe’s lament in this week’s Parsha, we find that Rashi, based upon the Sifrei, provides us with insight into all three of the matters mentioned above by Moshe.

“‘[How can I carry alone] your troubles...’: This teaches us that Bnei Yisrael were troublesome [people]; if one saw that his opponent in a lawsuit was [justifiably] about to win, he would say, ‘I have [other] witnesses to bring, [more] evidence to introduce, or I [will exercise my right to] add judges to you [in your tribunal]’ [Meaning, he would unjustly delay the verdict in the hope that his opponent would eventually give up.]

‘...and your burdens...’: This teaches us that Bnei Yisrael were heretics. If Moshe was early leaving his tent [in the morning] they would say, ‘Why does the son of Amram leave [his tent] so early? Perhaps he is not at ease inside his house?’ [Meaning, he does not have a peaceful relationship with his wife.] If he left [his house] late, they would say, ‘Why does the son of Amram not leave? What do you think? He is [probably] sitting and devising evil schemes and plots against you.’

‘...and your strife.’ This teaches us that Bnei Yisrael were contentious (Sifrei).”

What is common to all three of Moshe’s observations above? Each of the three items of which Moshe finds unbearable, has to do with a certain lack of Emes (truth) that Bnei Yisrael possessed. Regarding lawsuits, they could not bear to admit the possibility that their opponent was right and that they were wrong. In the second instance, the perspective in which they looked at Moshe was not truthful. Instead of being honest and appreciative for all that Moshe had done for them, they looked at him negatively and accused him of having marital issues (if he left his house early) or that he was plotting against them (if he left his house late). In the last instance, they had a false and negative view of the world, which made them contentious.

And perhaps this is what Moshe is lamenting when he said, “How can I carry you?” – he was lamenting the lack of Emes

that he saw in Bnei Yisrael. Maybe we too, should lament with Moshe when we hear this verse read in Shul on this Shabbos before Tisha B’Av.

Mussar – Introspection

This week, we continue with translating the

Chofetz Chaim’s Sefer entitled, “Sefas Tamim.” Sefas Tamim, from which our foundation takes its name, focuses on the importance of honesty in word and deed. We continue to translate Chapter 1, “Defining Deceit”.

“Chazal have further said that the signature of HaKadosh Boruch Hu is ‘truth.’ With absolute certainty, if ‘truth’ is what HaKadosh Boruch Hu determined to use as His signature, how so very ugly and disgusting is the person who has accustomed himself to the very opposite character trait. HaKadosh Boruch Hu has warned us very sternly regarding ‘truth’ and has said (Zecharyah 8:16-17) ‘Speak truth with each other... do not harbor bad thoughts about your friend in your heart, and do not love lying oaths, because these are all of the things that I hate.’

Shlomo HaMelech has taught (Mishlei 12:19) ‘Words spoken truthfully, will endure forever but a lying tongue only for a moment.’ Shlomo HaMelech means to warn us about our speech to express only the truth and to be careful not to lie. One who always expresses himself honestly and is careful in his speech to express himself truthfully, that speech will be successful and will endure forever. People will believe him in whatever he says since people will uphold him as a man of truth, because he has accustomed himself throughout his life to speak only the truth. However, regarding a person who has a lying tongue, people will believe him only for a moment, because the people who listen to him will believe him for a short while, but later when they examine his words and investigate what he said, they will conclude that his words were lies. And so, this text comes to warn people to be pure in expressing themselves and to speak only the truth.”

*“May I back out of a school carpool that
I have already committed to?”
“Should I report a co-worker who is acting dishonestly?”*

Call our **Emes Halacha Hotline**
with your Everyday Emes questions at: **718-200-5462**.

To subscribe to this weekly, free newsletter or for further
information about our Foundation, please visit us
at www.everydayemes.org
or contact: info@everydayemes.org.