

Torah thoughts from an honest mouse

Posted by an honest mouse - 15 May 2010 23:39

I thought it was silly to keep starting a new topic with every dvar torah so I decided to put them all in one place. Here goes....

PARSHAS BAMIDBAR

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz says in Sichos Mussar that we can learn a tremendous lesson from the fact that the Levi'im were counted separately. Rashi says (1:49) that H'shm foresaw that He would decree death against the 20-60 year olds that were counted in this week's parsha and He wanted to count the levi'im separately so they shouldn't be tangled up in the decree. We see from this that when there is a gezairo against the tzibur it doesn't matter if people are righteous, there's no differentiation made and everyone is given the same treatment as the tzibur.

He goes on to say that the opposite is true as well. When Elisha offered to daven specifically for the 'shunamis woman' on Rosh Hashono, she answered that she'd rather stay with the tzibur cause she would be judged with the whole tzibur for the good instead of being scrutinised personally (melachim 2: 4:13) .

The whole world is chasing shmutz and if we stay as part of that tzibur we will c'v risk being punished with the midas hadin that doesn't differentiate between good and bad people. But conversely, if we're part of GYE, then not only are we surrounding ourselves by positive influences, we are also joining the tzibur which is clocking up more zechusim than we can even imagine!!

May H'shm give us the koach and the ability to wholeheartedly move our allegiance over to the right tzibur!!!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse

Posted by an honest mouse - 17 May 2010 13:22

SHAVUOS:

This comes straight out of a book called 'timeless seasons' by Rabbi Pinchos Roberts but I figure most people haven't heard of it and it is SO relevant to us.

How come ALL the jews without exception accepted the Torah at har sinai? In parshas Vo'eschanan (Devorim 4:35) Moshe reminds the people that they had been shown with their own eyes 'ain oid milvado'. Rashi explains that at har sinai, H'shm opened all 7 heavens and showed the people Malchus H'shm in all its glory. It was so pleasurable and wonderful that everyone wanted in.

It could be that this is what the nations of the world were complaining about, when they said the jews got special treatment. If they had seen how good it was they would've accepted it as well! However, H'shm answered them to bring Him the book of their lineage. In other words, He was telling them that in order to see a Mareh Elokim, they needed pure eyes. This was an inheritance that we received from Shem (didn't look at Noach), Avrohom(wouldn't stare at Soroh - megillah 15a), Yosef and the people in the midbar camped in a 'ma tovu' way for this reason - not to see anything inappropriate.

In other words, the prerequisite for a proper kabolat hatorah is GUARD YOUR EYES!!! How can we daven every morning 'v'hoer eineinu besoirosecho' if those same eyes are tainted with shmutz? We have to make our eyes capable of becoming holy, before the Torah can do its work with them.

In conclusion, we gotta do it coz its only way we can trully connect with our special gift that makes us different from the nations (vehivdilonu min hatoyim venosan lonu toras emes) and we can do it coz we have the koach beyerusha!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 17 May 2010 22:07

THOUGHT FROM DAVENING:

We say in elokai netzor, '*p'sach libi besorosecha, v'acharei mitsvosecha tirdof nafshi*', we ask H'shm to '*open my heart with your torah and let my soul chase after Your mitsvos*'.

I try to have kavono that H'shm should open my heart to fill it with torah in place of the lust and that He should help me literally chase after His mitsvos with the same vigour and energy that I have been using until now to chase the lust.

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 22 May 2010 23:38

PARSHAS NASSO: (sorry its late but I couldn't get to a computer on friday...)

5:10 '*Veish es kodoshov loi yihiyeh*' - (drush, totally not p'shat) 'a man's 'sanctified' i.e. kiddushin shall be his'. You can interperate this to mean that *my wife is my own*. That means to say, that I should stop looking at other people's wives (kiddushin) and concentrate on my own, which I have *all to myself*. Stop concentrating on what I *don't* have that other people do have and concentrate on what I *have* that other poeple don't have!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 22 May 2010 23:53

PARSHAS NOSSO:

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky asks, how come in Emor (Vayikra 21: 2&3), when talking about who a kohen *can* become tomei for, it lists, parents, siblings, kids & spouse and with a nozir, when listing who he *can't* become tomei for (bamidbor 6:7) it only says parents and siblings?

He answers that the torah is speaking beloshen hoiveh - in a general, stereotypical way. The

gemorah in sotah 2 (a) says that nozir comes right after sotah because *'kol haroeh sotah bekilkulo, yazir atsmo, mehayayin'* - 'anyone who sees a sotah's degradation, should stay away from wine' which leads to sin. Rav Yaakov says, that the type of guy who is more capable of making such a fundamental change in his life on the spot, is more likely to be a bochur, (therefore, no wife & kids in the posuk) 'coz he is unmarried and unattached. He hasn't yet got into a groove and accustomed himself to a certain way of life for so long.

The lesson is appropriate for those of us not so young & already married too. In recovery, we must never allow ourselves to become complacent and bogged down with where we are. we must constantly strive to be on the lookout for where we can improve (in all areas of our life) and not just let ourselves drift at the same level for years on end.

Let's find our inner bochur and keep it fresh!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 23 May 2010 15:51

PARSHAS NOSSO:

The gemorah in sotah (3a) says that a person only sins because a ruach shtus went into him as it says in the parsha of sotah (in the torah) *'ki sisteh ishto'* a loshen of shtus. Rav chaim shmulevitz explains that the 'shtus' is that a person thinks they will be on the same level after the aveiro, it's one act but it won't cause any long term damage. Of course this isn't true, a sin is a step down, a mitsva is a step up, but a person fools himself in the heat of the moment.

Rav Chaim's advice is to stay away from the heat of the moment, the limmud coming from the next parsha of nozir - *'kol haroeh sotah bekilkuloh, yazir es atsmoi min hayayin'* (sotah 2b). He compares it to the edge of the pit, if you stand there, you're vulnerable to falling in with the slightest gush of wind. If you stay well away, no wind in the world can blow you in.

Clearly our 'wine' is lust and we have to stay away from it at all costs, skirting around nisyonos and pre-thinking what issues could come up to avoid them or find a solution. We must avoid the 1st drink! That's where our avodah should be.

p.s this idea can be found all over GYE but there aint nothing wrong wrong with a little
! plus i thought it gives it extra umph coming from a godol of the previous generation
:D

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 24 May 2010 17:05
chazorah

[an honest mouse wrote on 23 May 2010 15:51:](#)

... coming from a godol of the previous generation :D

...and retold by **Honest Mouse**, a godol in *our* generation!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 27 May 2010 19:46

PARSHAS BEHA'ALOSCHO

In this week's parsha we are told the order in which the shevotim travelled in the midbar. This story really started back in parshas bamidbar when bnei yisroel were counted and divided into four groups and told where to camp around the mishkan. Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky asks (in emes leyaakov parshas bamidbar) why Hashem waited a whole year after yetzias mitzrayim to sort out the camping and the degolim etc... why not do it right away?

He answers, that by separating the shevotim, they were being shown that there isn't one path in

avodas Hashem, each shevet has its own strengths and mehalech and thats the way its supposed to be. However, if there would have been a segregation before the mishkan went up it would've been dangerous. it could have caused major separation and machlokes. Only when there was a central place of kedusha and hashroas hashechina, where everybody would come together with one common goal, would it be safe for everyone to go do their separate avodah.

GYE is our mishkan, it's our makom shechina where we gather together for our common goal of kedusha vetahara and no matter that we come from different walks of yiddishkeit, different countries and with different levels of addicton, GYE is our central makom which binds us and is me'ached us bachdus atsumo!! Only working together with GYE at the center can we succeed and we *will* succeed b'ezras Hashem!!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 27 May 2010 19:55

Eggzactly!

Hey, if the Yezter Horah doesn't recognize the artificial borders between segments of the Jewish community, why should we? HE tries to get us ALL into his net.

Imagine, even though some of us might feel a bit embarrassed to be seen walking down Rechov Meah Shearim in the company of some others from this holy GYE Kehilah, we would have no problem davening together in one minyan. After all, we all daven to the same One Hashem!

We all love each other!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 30 May 2010 15:38

PARSHAS BEHA'ALOSCHO:

Rashi (10:36) says *'ein shechina shoireh b'yisroel pechusim mishnei alpayim ushte revavos'* - the shechina only dwells amongst 22,000 jews or more.

We are here coz we have a void in our lives, we've been filling it with the wrong stuff, what we really want is dveykus with Hashem and hashro'as hashechina. That means we can't rest till there are 22,000 members !!

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 01 Jun 2010 22:40

PARSHAS SHELACH:

Many reasons are given for what was the logic behind why the meraglim decided to paint erez yisroel in a bad light. The footnotes in the artscroll stone edition chumash give an answer based on the maharal and chidushei harim. They had just lived an incredibly miraculous life in the midbar where everything was blatantly provided for by Hashem. They were now going to have to move into erez yisroel and come down a notch, living a regular life, with work and mundane stuff. Apparently they misinterpreted this to mean that they would be without Hashem's help in the battle for the country - it would have to be in totally natural means and they rightly reported that bnei yisroel weren't capable. They forgot that even though Hashem's help would be less apparent, it would still be there.

Speaking from personal experience, when starting out on the 90 day road, or even just a new behaviour, however small, when the inspiration and excitement is there, it feels like there is a siyata dishmayah, that Hashem is right there helping me through. When it starts to fade, He doesn't feel so close anymore, it feels as though He's forgotten about me. When i do that, im making the same mistake as the meraglim, He's always there for me no matter what, whether i can feel it or not and the avodah is to take Him with me even when i dont feel good about it all.

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 01 Jun 2010 22:53

PARSHAS SHELACH:

(15:39-40) *'Velo* *sosuru acharei levavchem veacharei eineichem asher atem zonim achareihem: Lema'an tizk'ru va'asisem es kol mitsvosai ve'hiysem kedoshim leilokeichem'*

One of my rebeim in yeshiva once said - if you want to remember and understand your learning, **GUARD YOUR EYES!** It's the poshut way of reading these 2 pesukim, they go right next to each other, we can only learn properly, keep mitsvos properly and be holy if we first control our eyes and our hearts. It's like dov always says - derech erez kodmo, we have to first build ourselves before torah can make a proper roshem on us.

Perhaps in derush we can see another dov yesod in this possuk *'loi sosuru acharei levav**CHEM** vacharei einei**CHEM** asher **ATEM** zonim achareihem'*. in order to get the torah, mitsvos and kedusha, we have to stop being so self centred and stop focusing on ourselves, what we desire. In fact, now that I think about it - Hillel made this the entire torah, encapsulated by 'veohavto lereicho komoicho' - torah and selflessness are one and the same.

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 06 Jun 2010 21:02

PARSHAS SHELACH:

disclaimer: I dont know if this p'shat is emes, i plan to check it out with my rebbe and get back to you guys but i thought the lesson was worth putting up anyways...

Famous question - Rashi (13:3) on *'kulom anoshim'* says that the maraglim were keshairim at that time. Later on (13:26) on *'vayeilchu vayovoyu'* he says its to be makish the yetsiah to the biah, just as they came back with an eitzoh ro'oh, so too they left with an eitzoh ro'oh, an apparent contradiction.

I was thinking, perhaps there is no s'tiroh. When they left, they were keshairim with an'eitzoh ro'oh - bad intentions and that is no contradiction. It is possible to have bad intentions and still be a kosher, as long as you haven't implemented those bad intentions. Once they came back, however and had spent 40 days coming up with the script of how they could speak badly about the land, then they were no longer keshairim.

For us, this is a strong message, when we start slipping, bad thoughts are in our head, the lust is building up, but if we stop at that point and come back to reality without having implemented those fantasies, we are still keshairim, only if we follow through with the lust are we doing wrong. What an incentive to stop the slip rather than saying 'i already slipped - i might as well fall the whole way'.

p.s i think this idea is in the attitude booklet somewhere about Yosef Hatsadik (the original im) who stopped the slip and didnt finish the fall with eshes potiphar...

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 07 Jun 2010 15:35

You're excused.

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Re: Torah thoughts from an honest mouse
Posted by an honest mouse - 16 Jun 2010 21:17

PARSHAS CHUKAS:

afraid reb y h

perhaps a source for dov's answer about accountability partners not triggering eachother (in last weeks email).

(19:21) *'umazei mey hanidoh yechabeis begodov'* 'the one who sprinkles the water shall

immerse his clothing'. The literal meaning is that the guy who does the purifying, by sprinkling on the tomei guy, will himself become tomei. This was the line of thinking of the person who asked dov the q. when I help out the other guy and discuss what he's fantasising about - its gonna trigger me.

But Rashi sets us straight - he quotes a gemorah in nidoh daf 9a, which says that the purifier is actually tahor and this pasuk is used for something else. Perhaps the reason why he remains tahor when everyone else who comes into contact with the ashes of the poroh adumo becomes tomei is dafka because he is purifying the tomei, how could we penalise him for helping out and purifying the tomei. It would seem that there is special protection from harm if we are helping to cure people. What an incentive to reach out to others on the forum and help in their recovery. (see steve's post today in his thread for more incentives to help others in recovery)

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