



פרשת עקב
מנחם אב תשפ"א

CHOF AV LEARNING

To mark the Yartzeit of the Rebbe's father, we hosted a Chassidus learning evening.

Making the most of the end of lockdown, over 80 members of Anash joined together to learn Chassidus.

A selection of Maamarim of the Rebbe and the Kabbalistic teachings of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, the Rebbe's father, was provided and the Chavrusas got busy learning.

The program included a raffle for Seforim, an assortment of refreshments and concluded with a Farbrengen.

SHABBOS SHIUR

The Shabbos shiur between Mincha and Maariv on Shabbos afternoon resumes this week in the Yeshiva Shule.

This week join Rabi Y. Johnson for a taste of Likutei Levi Yitzchak, the Kabbalistic teachings of the Rebbe's father on Shas.

DOR LEDOR LEARNING

Dor Ledor resumes all together in the Mezzanine this Motzai Shabbos.

All boys are invited to join with their fathers or other adult for learning, prizes, nush and a weekly story`.

Each Motzai Shabbos at
7:15pm in the Mezzanine



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The difference between love and sacrifice

Both the first and second Parsha of Shema refer to the obligation to love Hashem, but with a key difference.

The first Parsha says that we must live Hashem בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך, with all of our heart, with all of our soul and with all of our *Me'od*. The second Parsha of Shema tells us that we must love and serve Hashem בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם with all of your heart and with all of your soul. But it does not mention the third level of מאדך.

Chassidus teaches loving Hashem with all of your heart and with all of your soul refers to a love of Hashem that comes through meditation and understanding of G-dliness and how He is the source of our existence.

To love Hashem with all of your "*Me'od*" means to serve Hashem with your very being. This refers to a serving Hashem with Mesiras Nefesh, sacrificing and surrendering oneself to Hashem.

The first Parsha of the Shema refers to the Avodah of Tzaddikim, the spiritual elite who serve Hashem with passion and feeling and do not experience spiritual struggles. The second Parsha refers to those who struggle spiritually, having to contend with their Yetzer Hara and with temptation to sin.

This is why the second Parsha of the Shema warns us "take care lest your hearts seduce you and you will turn away..." because it is addressing someone who is struggling with this temptation.

This being the case, it would be more appropriate to mention בכל מאדך in the second Parsha, since those who struggle with temptation have a greater need for Mesiras Nefesh in serving Hashem to be able to over-

come their challenges.

The Rebbe explains: It is true that generally בכל מאדך refers to serving Hashem with Mesiras Nefesh. However, more specifically it too is a level of love of Hashem as the Posuk indicates. But unlike love which is generated through understanding which by definition is limited, the love of בכל מאדך is a love which transcends understanding and is therefore unlimited.

However since even this unlimited love is still ultimately a feeling and spiritual craving, it too is an expression of self, albeit from a deeper level of the soul.

Mesiras Nefesh means to completely transcend and surrender oneself entirely. Mesiras Nefesh is the revelation of the very essence of the soul which serves Hashem not because of a deep feeling of love and desire, but because the Neshama is one with Hashem and cannot do anything but serve Hashem.

Every Neshama possess this core and therefore the Alter Rebbe teaches that even the most 'lowly' Jews will sacrifice themselves rather than renounce their faith, because they cannot become separate from Hashem. In order to overcome spiritual challenges and temptation, we need to tap into this inner core.

The love of בכל מאדך appears in the first passage because it is the deep love of Tzaddikim. The absence of the love of בכל מאדך from the second passage of the Shema is because for the one who struggles, their ability to overcome their temptation comes from the essence of the soul, the Mesiras Nefesh which is deeper than the deepest of loves.

~ Based on Maamer Veata Yisroel 5728

Continuation of Halachic analysis from reverse

Another suggestion is that Rabbi Yehuda sent a Mezuzah, so that he would not have to send a Sefer Torah. i.e. he chose the lesser of the two to avoid this difficult situation of upsetting the ruler.

The Igros Moshe¹⁴ writes that from this Yerushalmi, there is clear proof

that there is no technical prohibition. The Mahari"l was being stringent beyond the letter of the law. Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi's situation must have been a specific case of need that justified waiving this stringency.

Elsewhere, he explains that Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi was absolutely sure

the Mezuzah would protect Artavan, so that he would not turn against it. In the Shaalah of the local ruler, the Mahari"l was not sure that the ruler would be deserving of protection and may as a result throw away the Mezuzah in anger.

1. Minhagim Hilchos Mezuzah

2. We do not have a copy of the Teshuvah itself as recorded in the Minhagim of the Mahari"l, but the response is recorded there.

3. See Ben Ish Chai Ki Savo, that the Name י-ו-ד (written on the outside of the Mezuzah) only assists the Jewish people. See Likutei Sichos vol 19 where the Rebbe proves that the protection of the

Mezuzah is not limited to the fulfillment of the Mitzvah and can apply to a non-Jew'

4. Yoreh Deah 391

5. Yoreh Deah 391:2

6. ibid

7. For example if one was renting from a non-Jew. This concern overrides the Sakana that is associated with taking down Mezuzos.

8. Yoreh Deah 1:184

9. Peah Chapter 1

10. Bereishis Rabbah 35

11. Eikev

12. Sheilas Yaavetz 2:122

13. Pnei Moshe. See Aruch Hashulchan

14. ibid

15. Yoreh Deah 2 141:3

The Weekly Halachic Analysis

A Mezuzah for a non-Jew

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

One of the questions that arose this week concerned the permissibility of giving a Mezuzah to a non-Jew. With the recent promotion of Mezuzos to strengthen our Divine protection, some Rabbis have been asked by non-Jews if they too can have a Mezuzah.

Rabbi Yaakov ben Moshe Halevi Moelin (Mainz, Germany 14th Century), known as Mahari"l, was asked the following question¹;

The regional ruler has requested a Mezuzah to put up on his fortress and if the questioner will give him the Mezuzah, the ruler will bestow kindness and goodness upon him for all of the days of his life. Is it permissible to give a Mezuzah to a non-Jew? The questioner was also concerned that if they do not comply, it may lead to untoward repercussions.

The Mahari"l responded that it was forbidden to give the non-Jewish ruler a Mezuzah, bringing many proofs for this position. The questioner should try to do whatever they can to excuse themselves².

This can be done by explaining that the Mezuzah will not bring them protection as they are not commanded in the Mitzvah³.

The Ram"o in his Darkei Moshe⁴ quotes the position of the Mahari"l. However, he adds that whether one may give the Mezuzah to a non-Jew depends on the circumstances. If there is the concern of Eivah (arousing the ire or hatred of the non-Jews), it is permissible to give the Mezuzah.

In his glosses on the Shulchan Aruch⁵, the Ram"o (after bringing the Mahari"l's opinion) adds that if there will be either Eivah, or a risk that by not giving the Mezuzah it will bring harm to the Jew, it is permitted.

From the Mahari"l, it seems that even in the face of Eivah and the like, it would remain forbidden.

The primary reason to forbid giving a Mezuzah to a non-Jew is out of concern that they will not treat it with the proper respect or may denigrate or desecrate it. This is why Halacha⁶ requires one to remove their Mezuzos when vacating their home and the next tenants will be non-Jews⁷.

Even if the non-Jew says that they are going to guard the Mezuzah and look after it – as evidenced by the fact that they want to place it on their door for protection, it is still problematic for a number of reasons;

Perhaps the non-Jew will only honour the Mezuzah when no harm comes to them and it ap-

pears that the Mezuzah is bringing them protection. However, if they come to harm for example a robbery, they will turn against the Mezuzah and denigrate it.

Further whilst this non-Jew may respect the Mezuzah, after they pass away, their inheritors may not treat it with the same respect.

There is also the concern that the Mezuzah may be used to fool Jewish people that the owner is also Jewish.

Kuntres Mezuzah writes that if this applies even when the non-Jew wishes to put up the Mezuzah, where he is certain to honour it, certainly it is forbidden to give or sell them a Mezuzah that will not be put up on the door.

Due to the dispute between the Ram"o and Mahari"l whether it is permitted to give a non-Jew a Mezuzah where there is the risk of Eivah, the Birkei Yosef takes a middle position. He writes that in a situation of Eivah, one may avoid the Eivah in a passive manner (שב ועל תעשה) such as leaving the Mezuzos up when leaving their home. However, one may not do so in an active manner (קודם) (קודם ועל תעשה) such as giving it (or selling it) to them or putting it up for them.

However, most Acharonim adopt the position of the Ram"o and allow the giving of the Mezuzah as well in such circumstances.

Rav Moshe Feinstein⁸ was asked to give guidance in a case where a non-Jewish tenant had requested that their Jewish landlord put up a Mezuzah on the door and the landlord was concerned that they may lose the tenant and rental income by refusing. Would this qualify as 'harm' which the Ram"o says is grounds for leniency?

Rav Moshe understands that the Ram"o is giving 2 independent Heterim, allowing one to give the Mezuzah either if there will be Eivah, or if it will possibly lead to direct harm.

To what extent one may be lenient with the laws of the Torah where there is the concern of Eivah, depends on whether the matter involves a Biblical or Rabbinic issue. Perhaps the Mahari"l is stringent because he understands that giving a Mezuzah to a non-Jew would be a Biblical matter because it is a concern for the desecration of Holy writings,

However, Rav Moshe is more inclined to treat this as a Rabbinic issue, rather than a Biblical one, allowing for greater leniency. Nonetheless, he concluded that since it would be easy to find another tenant and therefore no real loss would be incurred, the landlord should not put up the Mezuzah. Implied is that if it would not be easy, it would

be permitted.

In the same Teshuvah, he also addresses the suggestion that one could avoid the issue by putting up an invalid Mezuzah. Rav Moshe wrote that aside from being dishonest and a matter of Geneivas Daas, there is still the problem of desecration even if the Mezuzah is not written correctly.

Based on the following Yerushalmi⁹, the Poskim question the premise of the Mahari"l that giving a Mezuzah to a non-Jew is forbidden;

The Persian king Artavon once sent Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi a gift of a priceless precious jewel. He asked the Rabbi Yehuda send him a gift in return that would match its value. Rabbi Yehuda wrote a Mezuzah and sent it to Artavon. On receiving the Mezuzah, Artavon was offended and sent Rabbi Yehuda that he had given Rabbi Yehudah an incredibly precious gift and Rabbi Yehuda had sent something cheap in return.

Rabbi Yehuda responded saying that Artavon had given him something that he would now have to pay guards to protect. Whereas he had sent Artavon something that would protect him.

(This story is also recorded in Midrash Rabbah¹⁰ and in the Sheiltos¹¹, with a continuation. Immediately afterwards, Artavon's only daughter was possessed by a demonic force. All of the doctors were unable to cure her. But when Artavon placed the Mezuzah on the door, the spirit fled and she was healed).

If there was a Halachic problem giving a Mezuzah to a non-Jew who was going to treat the Mezuzah with respect, how could Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi have done so? On the other hand, how could we say that the Mahari"l had overlooked a clear Yerushalmi¹²?

Some of the commentaries¹³ write that Artavon was actually a Jew. Others suggest that even though he was not Jewish, he was not an idolater. Some suggest that the Mezuzah was written with the intention of being a mere amulet and lacked the holiness of a Mezuzah. These answers are difficult to justify.

Teshuvos Be'er Sheva suggests that Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi was trying to draw Artavon towards the belief in the oneness of Hashem, hoping that he would convert.