**Noach 2015**

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Serving Hashem in private and public

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| **ו:ט** "...נֹח אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה, בְּדֹרֹתָיו: אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים, הִתְהַלֶּךְ-נֹחַ." | **6:9** “...Noah was in his generations a man righteous and whole-hearted; Noah walked with God.” |

- Beis Aharon daf 10:

**It seems like the pasuk is using a double lashon, if he was righteous then for sure he was going with God!?** This is coming to tell us that there are 2 types of people. One type is a person who is frum and pious in his house but when he goes out he doesn't want to be embarrassed so he acts differently in public. On the other side, you can have a person who acts very frum when he is with other people but when he is alone he doesn't act properly.

**A real Jew needs to act appropriately both in his home (in private) and out in public.** There’s a pasuk that says “don't be a Rasha in front of yourself.” The Beis Aharon explains this pasuk as meaning even when you’re alone, by yourself; you still need to be doing the right thing. That's what our pasuk is telling us. Noach was an eved (servant of) Hashem in both private and in public. **He was a tzaddik in public and wasn’t embarrassed to do the ratzon (will of) Hashem, building the teivah while everyone made fun of him while also doing Hashem’s ratzon in his private life as well.**

- The Gemara in Berachos 35 quotes two pesukim that seemingly contradict each other. One pasuk says "The heavens are for Hashem and the land he gave to man" and another pasuk says "The land is Hashem's and he fills it". So who owns the land, man or God?

The Gemara answers that before a person makes a beracha on anything it belongs to Hashem, but after a person makes a beracha it is given to man. The Gemara continues and says R Chanina bar Papa says anyone who benefits and gets pleasure from this world without reciting a beracha is as if you stole from God and the Jewish people. How do we know this? Shlomo Hamelech writes in Mishlei: "A person may steal from his parents and says there's nothing wrong, but really he is a brother to the man of destruction." Rashi says because he didn't make a beracha people will learn from him and they will come to benefit from this world without making a beracha and that's how he is ‘destroying’ the Jews. The Gemara continues further on and says what does it mean that he is a “brother to the man of destruction”? He answers that he is considered a friend of Yaravom, who Rashi tells us sinned and caused other people to sin with idolatry. So too, **someone who doesn’t say a beracha is sinning and causing others to sin.** We see from here that a person needs to serve Hashem in public as well, because if he doesn’t then he will be violating this. **This is an idea of serving Hashem in public. If a person recites a beracha or davens with proper intent, don't start to think that there might be someone looking at you, who sees the intensity you have and is thinking poorly of you... you shouldn't be embarrassed** like the Rama writes siman alef seif alef**. All your focus should go to the avodah you are doing at that time.**

Now let’s focus on when you are in private.

- The **Rama writes** in the beginning of the Shulcah Aruch, first seif in the first siman: **you need to be modest**; when you go to sleep you need to know who you are sleeping in front of. Mishna **Berura seif katan 7 says even when you're in your house alone you need to follow in God's ways.** A pasuk in Trei Asar (Micha 6:8) says to "walk modestly with God." The Malbim there writes you need to go with Hashem just like Noach did! This is the root of the mitzvos between man and God to go in the ways of God and to sanctify yourself. This will help you be humble as well, modesty leads to humility.

What's the link that the Rema is bringing?

- The Piskei Teshuvas os daled asks: what is the connection between being holy both alone and in public? Quotes The Baal Shem Tov who says that you will come to not worry about doing mitzvos in public when what you are doing is the same as what you are doing in private! When you do everything l’shma then is makes no difference whether you are in public or private.

There is an exception, however, to the pasuk in Micha about being modest. In footnote 20 the Piskei Teshuvas quotes the Sefer Hikon l'kras Elokecha Yisroel chelek 5 footnote 27 who quotes the Drash Moshe in parshas Vayetzei**. Rav Moshe Feinstein says that only in earlier generations can you be hidden and modest about your mitzvos and good deeds. Nowadays, though, we should let everyone know and show everyone that you're learning seriously. Tell them about the tzedaka, the learning, and all the maasim tovim. Share and inspire others in order that they will learn from your positive ways. That being said, you need to be careful that you are doing it lesheim shamayim.** Don’t do it just to brag, but if you think it will have an effect on them then tell them.

That's the pshat in our pasuk. Noach was righteous in front of everyone as well as when he was alone.

**A practical example is to not be embarrassed to say ashar yatzar in public. Keep it in your wallet to read from it when you say the beracha. Then if someone asks you ‘what are you doing?’ you can tell them that we have a beracha to thank our God that we can use the restroom normally.** That's what the seemingly double lashon is coming to teach us. That's the yesod to learn from Noach.

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Cursing

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| **ז:ח** "מִן-הַבְּהֵמָה, הַטְּהוֹרָה, וּמִן-הַבְּהֵמָה, אֲשֶׁר אֵינֶנָּה טְהֹרָה; וּמִן-הָעוֹף--וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר-רֹמֵשׂ, עַל-הָאֲדָמָה." | **7:8** “Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creeps upon the ground.” |

- Diamonds from the Dubno Maggid page 26-27:

In this pasuk it talks about which animals went into the teivah with Noach. **The question is why does the pasuk refer to some of the animals as “not pure” when it could have just said impure?! The Gemara in Pesachim 3a tells us that the Torah used that lashon to show us that we always need to speak in a clean language.** The question is why specifically here is pasuk referring to the animals as not pure when in other places it just says they are impure?

The Dubno Maggid brings the following mashal: A wealthy talmid chacham lived in a town. In the same town there also lived a poor am haaretz called Yossele the batlan. Someone once knocked on the rich man's door asked for R’ Yosi. The servant laughed and said you must mean Yossele the batlan. The rich man said to the servant ‘Aren’t you ashamed to embarrass the neighbor like that, to degrade him in front of a stranger?” The next day there was another knock at the rich man's door. It was a messenger from Yossele the batlan who wanted to suggest his son as a shidduch for the wealthy talmid chacham’s daughter. The rich man said ‘No way! Not with Yossele the batlan!’

The servant then said to the rich man ‘Why did you scold me for speaking of him in a derogatory way and now you are doing the same thing?’ The rich man responded that when someone asks for directions to our neighbors, which is none of our business, then we need to be polite. There is no need to talk bad about the guy. If they are suggesting a shidduch I need to explain why it's not a suitable shidduch! (Seemingly the derogatory words of the wealthy talmid chacham regardingYossele are lashon hara? It must be they were asking for a reason because otherwise he could have just said that the shidduch is not shayach).

So this can answer our question from earlier. **When the pesukim are talking about impure food that we are not allowed to eat, foods that will be harmful to our nefesh (soul) then it needs to tell us that it’s outright assur (prohibited). That’s why the pasuk refers to the animals specifically as tamei. That is not the case though here when the Torah is just talking about and identifying which animals were going into the teivah. It is irrelevant to us which animal is pure or impure therefore the pasuk speaks in a clean language and calls them not pure in order to teach us how important it is for us to speak in a proper language.**

With this we must discuss the prohibition of cursing.

- The pasuk in Vayikra 19:14 says "Don't curse a deaf person, don't put a stumbling block in front of a blind person, and fear your God, I am God."

The Ramban says the pasuk talks about cursing a deaf person specifically, because even though he can't hear you the Torah still warns you not to curse him. Therefore, it goes without saying that it is assur to curse someone who can hear you! The pasuk is referring to cases that, unfortunately, happen. People curse those that can’t hear him and put stumbling blocks in front of the blind, they are easy targets. That’s why the pasuk ends with "you shall fear your God," because even if you are doing something that no one will find out about, Hashem will still know, so don’t do it. (shtims with the first vort about acting the right way in private)

So why exactly is it assur to curse, what's the reason?

**- The Chinuch brings in mitzvah 231: don't curse anyone. Even though we might not necessarily see the effect of the curse, we know that people don't want to be cursed. From the fact people don’t like it, you shouldn't be doing it. Just like it is prohibited to physically damage a person so too it is prohibited to verbally damage a person. Also, the ability for a person to speak is considered a very high level as it says** in Bereishis 2:7 "And He blew into his nostrils the soul of life." Targum, there, explains this refers to the ability to speak. **Hashem instilled within us the great power to affect that which is outside of ourselves.** The greater a person is, what they say will have a greater effect. **Additionally, if you want to create peace between you and someone, then you need to make sure not to say anything against him, even privately like the pasuk says in Koheles 10, 20 “a bird of the skies may carry the sound.” (As Rashi writes in Berachos 8b people say ‘the walls have ears.’ You never know where your words will end up.) Finally, he quotes the Rambam that says in order not to get a person upset and cause him to want to take revenge on you shouldn’t curse him.**

- Rabbi Hoffman in Not Your Usual Halacha volume 2 pages 213-215 quotes the pasuk in **Devarim perek 23 pasuk 10: "when you go out to war guard yourself from every evil matter."**

**Vayikra Raba 24, 7 says cursing is what that evil matter is. The Midrash is telling us that there is an issur deoraisa to curse at any time. It’s just that cursing is more prevalent at war time because of the nature of everything that is going on at that time.**

Machzir Vitri also says that cursing is assur deoriasa!

The Torah says in Devarim 23:17 that you "shouldn't see an ervas davar." Vayikra Raba 24, 7 says R’ Shmuel Ben Nachmani says read it ervas dibbur, meaning that you can't speak badly.

(Dirshu on Chafetz Chaim Hilchos Lashon Hara laviin in footnote 96 says even **if you curse someone without using Hashem's name it's still assur. The Chazon Ish learns it's even an issur deoriasa!**)

- Gemara in Shabbas 33 tells us that because of sins of cursing harsh decrees come to Jews. Young people die, orphans cry and aren't answered.

- The Shlah in os 300, 24 writes that cursing is the “avi avos hatumah (father of fathers of impurity),” it is one of the worst things you can do. That is because cursing undermines holiness of Jews.

- The Gemara in Kesubas 5 explains that the reason we have earlobes is to block your ears off from hearing bad things.

- Pesikta Zuta shemos 6, 10 says the Jews in Egypt reached 49th level of tummah but even still they didn’t curse.

- Gemara in Nidah 16b says it reduces our predestined lifespan. If you have a decree for 70 years, cursing can change that decree in the blink of an eye.

- Maharal in his Nisivos Olam 2 tznius in perek gimmel, explains the Gemara in Pesachim that we quoted above. Good is opposite of bad. Completeness is opposite of lacking. These are complete opposites. When a person doesn't speak badly he is distancing himself from bad. That's why Rebbi Yishmael says to always speak in a clean way because it shows you are removing yourself from a low status. On the other hand, when a person speaks negatively and curses it shows how low you are. **Something that comes from a person is called a ‘pri’ (fruit). Just like a good fruit probably came from a good tree, so too if a person speaks in a nice and clean way it probably means the he himself is clean.** **The Rambam explains why Hebrew is called lashon hakodesh. He says that it’s because Hebrew is very holy language. In lashon hakodesh there are no curse words or dirty word.** The private areas of a person are just called ‘that place’ or a ‘limb’. Physical relations are just called ‘moving’.

This is why the Torah refers to the animals in the way that it did, to show us how important it is to speak in a clean way! By speaking properly it will show our holiness and we will be zocheh to kedusha!!

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