

Kinder Torah

Parashas Ki Sisa

Hashem Loves You

"Shalom, Imma. I'm home."
"Shalom Avi! How was your day at school?"

"Terrible!"

"Oy vey, what happened?"

"Someone caused me a lot of tsaar (aggravation). I did a big favor for him. Shortly after that, he said something very insulting to me. What chutzpah! This is how he treats someone who does him a big favor? I am so upset! Please help me Imma."

"Just take it easy, Avi. Hashem loves you."

"I know that He loves me, Imma, but I need help. Can you help me?"

"I am helping you, Avi. Hashem loves you."

"How does that help me, Imma?"

"That is a very good question, Avi. The answer is in this week's parasha."

"Please tell me, Imma."

"Back in the days of Yetzias Mitzrayim, Hashem treated the Jewish people royally. He freed them from slavery, punished the Mitzrim, took them out of Mitzrayim, split the sea, brought them to Har Sinai, and gave them the Torah."

"Those are surely great expressions of His love for Klal Yisrael."

"Yes they are, Avi. One can only imagine His disappointment (so to speak), when only forty days later, they made the egel ha'zahav (golden calf). That was one of the worst sins in history."

"Oy va voy, Imma. How did Hashem react to that?"

"Look at the verses in this week's parasha - Shemos 34:6-7, Avi. Hashem proclaimed His Thirteen Attributes of Mercy to Moshe Rabbeinu. He explained that although Klal Yisrael had insulted Him terribly by sinning, He still had mercy upon them."

"I see. In what way did He have mercy, Imma?"

"The verse says that Hashem is patient - He does not rush to punish the sinner; perhaps he will repent and not require punishment. He is Rav Chesed (Abundant in Kindness) - He continues to act kindly to people, even though they sin. He keeps the sinner alive, keeps his heart beating, and provides him with food."

"That is true chessed."

"Hashem is also kind in His punishments. He punishes slowly. This does not crush the sinner, but cleanses him from the sin."

"Hashem really does love us."

"Yes, Avi. Now, you have two jobs to do. One, you have to emulate Hashem. You should have patience with that boy who wronged you. Perhaps tomorrow he will realize his mistake. He may apologize and resolve to never do it again. You are doing a big chessed by giving him the opportunity to do teshuva (correct his mistake)."

"I understand, Imma. Secondly, you must

realize that your suffering is from Hashem. Perhaps you did something wrong in the past. Hashem sent you this tsaar in the form of insult to help you do teshuva and cleanse you from the sin. You should thank Him for that."

"That is a bit more difficult, Imma."

"I know, Avi. However it is possible, and surely worth the effort. Hashem loves you as a Father loves a son. He sometimes needs to reprimand the boy for his own good. If He did not care about you, He would ignore you, and allow you sin to go uncleansed."

"Hashem really does love me Imma. He gave me a little patch. Why should I hold a grudge against that boy? He is just Hashem's messenger. I will be patient with him and continue to act kindly toward him. I will forgive him, just as Hashem forgave the Jewish people."

"Avi, you make me so proud. You are such a mensch. Hashem is not the only one who loves you. I love you too, Avi. With all of my heart."

"Thank you, Imma."

עַל הַטָּא



Kinderlach . . . Hashem loves you. He is patient with you. He does chessed for you 24 hours a day. Even His punishments are kind. Try to be like Him. Have patience with others. Treat them kindly at all times. Even if they cause you tsaar, realize that it is from Hashem. Be merciful to them, and Hashem will be merciful to you. As our Sages say, "Heaven will have mercy on all those who have mercy upon others" (Shabbos 151b).

Don't Panic

Let us try to imagine that we lived in the generation that left Mitzraim. We experienced the miracles of the eser makkos, kriyas Yam Suf, Har Sinai, and kaballas HaTorah. These were wondrous events; each one alone would have been enough to inspire a person for a lifetime. How could we have fallen so quickly to commit the chet ha'egel, (sin of the golden calf), just forty days after receiving the Torah?

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz in Sichos Musar explains the chet ha'egel as follows. The Jewish people had grown to trust and depend upon Moshe Rabbeinu. He was leading them through every facet of their miraculous deliverance from the time they were slaves in Egypt. Now, suddenly, he did not descend from the mountain at the expected time. The Satan tricked them into thinking that their beloved leader had died. The prospect of continuing without him made the Jewish people frightened and panicky. In this type of environment, the Satan was able to convince them to commit the chet ha'egel. He would never have been able to accomplish this under normal calm circumstances. It all began with panic.

Rav Dessler, explains the prayer Al Chet that we say on Yom Kippur when confessing our sins. The first sin mentioned is oness (a sin committed under duress). Rav Dessler explains that due to the pressure, we are likely to be overly lenient in our mitzvah observance. We thought the situation warranted a heter, (leniency) when in reality our tension biased our judgment.

Kinderlach . . . How many times does it happen that someone takes our toy away from us? What should we do? Should we panic and grab it back, or should we ask nicely? What happens when they give out candy or goodies in shul? We should not get excited and misbehave. We have to behave nicely even in these situations. Remember that Hashem is really deciding who gets the treats. If He wants us to get one then we will. And if we don't it is really so terrible? It is much worse to display bad middos (character traits). Whenever we feel that we are under pressure, we have to stop ourselves and say that we will not let this ruin our behavior.

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