Points to Ponder

Ki Tze Tze 5779

**כִּי־יִֽהְיֶ֣ה לְאִ֗ישׁ בֵּ֚ן סוֹרֵ֣ר וּמוֹרֶ֔ה When a person has a rebellious son (21:18)- Rashi** explains that he is judged based on his end. The Torah prefers that he pass as one who is worthy instead of being a major sinner. The **Alter of Kelm** notes that the opposite is true as well. If we start to move in the right direction— even if we only make the start, we can be considered on the right road even now.

**הָשֵׁ֥ב תְּשִׁיבֵ֖ם לְאָחִֽיךָ Return them to your brother (22:1)** - The Midrash notes that when it comes to Ir Miklat, we have a Mitzva to set up direction signs on the road so that s/he who is running will be able to get there and not need to stop for directions. **Rav Elyashiv ztl** noted that if this is the case for a inadvertent murderer (i.e. that we show that person the way to go) then when someone had lost something, we certainly need to give him the direction to find it. Moreover, if it is not an item s/he has lost but himself, certainly, we need to give people direction to find themselves. In the old days, there was a stone -- the Even HaToen -- that people went to announce the location of lost objects. Today, there is no such stone but there ARE shuls and Battei Midrash that announcements for lost people -- who’ve lost themselves or their way, can go to be found.

**לֹֽא־תִדְר֥שׁ שְׁלֹמָ֖ם וְטֹֽבָתָ֑ם Don’t seek out their peace or goodness all your days (23:7)** - The Gemara (Gittin 57b) notes that Bilaam was asked by Onkelos, who the most important nation was in the world of truth and replied that it was the Jews. He asked if Onkelos should join them and Bilaam responded with this Possuk. Isn’t that contradictory? Shouldn’t one seek out to be among the most successful? **Rav Avigdor Miller ztl** explains that this is the intent of a truly wicked person. They see the truth but they understand the hatred of the Jew so much more, that they are willing to falsify it even in the world to come.

**וְנִ֨שְׁמַרְתָּ֔ מִכֹּ֖ל דָּבָ֥ר רָֽע: Protect yourself from all evil (23:10) - Ramban** explains that the rules of keeping the army camp clean are based on the fact that Hashem sees even this place as a place of Kedusha. **Rav Haim Sabato Shlita** adds that sometimes people assume that war time is a hazardous time and laxity is allowed. While there might be a set of different circumstances during a war, the person who recognizes that he is obligated to the same Hashem who is still with him in the war camp will allow him to stay focused and holy, deserving of the protection and Hatzalah that those with Hashem always deserve.

**וְאֵלָ֕יו ה֥וּא נֹשֵׂ֖א אֶת־נַפְשׁ֑וֹ He risks his life for it (24:15) - Rashi** explains that the day laborer takes major risks during the day for his daily wage. Therefore, you must pay it on time. **Rav Aryeh Finkel ztl.** commented that it must be the power of the investment that makes its payment so significant. Therefore, if a day laborer takes risks for Parnossa, what kind of risks must a Ben Torah take in order to demonstrate his value of the Torah?

**לֹֽא־תָבִיא֩ אֶתְנַ֨ן זוֹנָ֜ה וּמְחִ֣יר כֶּ֗לֶב Sale of a dog (23:19**) - What is so terrible about the Dog that makes its exchange value disqualified from being able to be brought on the Mizbeiach? **Rav Zalman Sorotzkin ztl.** explains that dogs are the biggest spies on their friends -- the other animals. When a dog is sent out, the dog betrays the animal kingdom by giving away the location of the other animals to the hunter. This is a mussar to us, we should not be spies.

**מִתַּ֖חַת הַשָּׁמָ֑יִם לֹ֖א תִּשְׁכָּֽח: From under the heavens (25:19) - Rav Kook ztl.** noted that when Amalek is to be destroyed it is from under the heavens -- because in Shomayim, Hashem sees a purpose in everything he created. Kol D’Avid Rachmana L’Tava Avid. The Gemara in Gittin notes that Haman’s children learned Torah in Bnei Brak. Thus, there are descendants that can have a purpose. **Rav Schachter** quoted that the students asked Rav Soloveitchik about the Nazis and whether it is possible to accept anything good from them. Rav Schachter noted that in general, in the next generation after intense antisemitism there is a general uptick in the descendants of the aggressor to join the Jewish nation -- whether at the time of the Churban, Amalek or even Germany. He explained that when the next generation wants to understand why the earlier one was so opposed to the Jewish nation, they fall in love with it. Either way, Rav Soloveitchik was initially outspoken against finding anything good from the Nazis but later reportedly accepted that history bore out that the need to accept those reparations proved that it was ok to accept.

**Haftara: וְזַרְעֵךְ֙ גּוֹיִ֣ם יִירָ֔שׁ And your children will inherit many nations (Yeshayahu 54:3)** - The Midrash (tanna D’Bei Eliyahu Zuta) notes that Geulah happens in the merit of Pru U’Revu. As it did in the past so it will in the future. **Rav Melamed Shlita** explains that whether we were speaking of the slavery in Mitzrayim or the after-effects of the Shoah, believing in the future and building it through the creation of the next generation, is the guarantee that we WILL experience Geulah.