

שבת
חזון

KINDER TORAH®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table
Parshas Devarim – Shabbos Chazone

I Can Handle It

The very first verse in Sefer Devarim mentions the names of many of the places that the Children of Israel visited during their years of wandering in the desert. Rashi explains that these were all places that the Jewish people sinned. Moshe Rabbeinu was reminding them of their sins, to avoid repeating them in the future. The Keli Yakar zt”l adds his own explanation how each sin led to the next one after it. This illustrates the principle stated in Pirkei Avos (4:2) that one *aveyra* (sin) leads to another. We may think that an *aveyra* is an isolated event, that it has no long-term effects or harm outside of itself. Not so. Each *aveyra* leaves an impression on our body and soul, making it that much easier to repeat the *aveyra* and to do another one.

Kinderlach . . .
Should I wear this dress today? It is not 100% tznuah (dignified). However, it's not that bad. Only a little too short and a little too tight. I don't have the koach (strength) to look for another dress right now. I think I will put it on just this one time. After today, I won't wear it any more. Wait a minute. I remember how I felt the last time that I was wearing this dress. People were looking at me. At first, I felt uncomfortable, but then I didn't mind so much. It took me a long time to get over that feeling. It affected my whole attitude. I surely don't want that to happen. I'm never going to wear this dress again. Look at that! I found a very nice 100% kosher dress. Boruch Hashem.

Self Esteem

The beginning of Sefer Devarim recounts some of the events that the Jewish people experienced during their forty years in the desert. One of those events was the *Chet HaMeraglim* (Sin of the Spies). This was the first of many calamities that occurred on Tisha B'Av. Loshon hora was spoken about the Land of Israel, which led to the punishment of *golus* (exile from the Land). What caused the people to commit such a terrible sin? The Chofetz Chaim zt”l explains in his sefer, *Shmiras HaLoshon*, that the

spies sensed the extreme holiness of the Land of Israel. Hashem rules the Land with *Middos HaDin* (strict justice). One must be on a very high spiritual level to live there. We are not *tsaddikim gemurim* (completely righteous people); therefore, we are not fit to inhabit the Land.

In retrospect, we can look back and say that they were able to inherit the Land at that point. After all, Hashem never gives anyone a test that is too difficult for him. We learn an important lesson from their mistake. A person should never underestimate himself. His *madrayga* (spiritual level) may be higher than he thinks. His potential may be much greater than he imagined. There is only one way to find out. Consult knowledgeable people for their opinion of your abilities. Then, go ahead and give it your best. Don't sell yourself short. Don't count yourself out. B'ezras Hashem you will be pleasantly surprised at what great things you can accomplish.

Kinderlach . . .
“Abba, the class is having a contest to memorize a perek of Mishnayos. Should I do it?” “Why not Shuie?” “But I never memorized a whole perek before. Maybe I will make a mistake. I will be so embarrassed.” “If you don't try Shuie, you will never know. I am sure that you have a wonderful memory. You just have to learn how to use it. That takes practice. These contests are designed to help you along the way. Give it a try. Nothing ventured nothing gained.”
Later that week . . .
“Abba look what I got!” “Wow Shuie, that's a beautiful prize!” “I memorized more Mishnayos than anyone else in the whole class!” “I knew that you could. You only needed a little encouragement. Shuie, you are only beginning to discover the greatness inside of you.”

A Pure Heart

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh zt”l has a different interpretation of the first verse in Sefer Devarim. He explains that each of the names of the places alludes to a different *midda tova* (good character trait) that a person must possess to serve Hashem

properly. The seventh trait that he mentions is purity. A person should have a pure and clean heart. Dovid HaMelech prayed for this when he wrote, “Create a pure heart for me, Hashem” (Tehillim 51:12). Distance yourself from hatred, jealousy, strife, and animosity. This is hinted to by the word “*lavan*” (white). The heart should be as pure as a fresh white snowfall.

We are now in the period of mourning for the Beis HaMikdash. The reason for the destruction of the second Beis HaMikdash was *sinas chinam* (senseless hatred). This is one of the bad *middos* that poisons a pure heart. Now is our chance to rectify this problem, and do our part to rebuild the Beis HaMikdash.

Kinderlach . . .
Your friend who sits next to you in class prays so loudly during the Amidah (silent prayer). It always interferes with your kavannah (concentration). What should you do about it? You can also pray loudly and disturb him just as much as he disturbs you. That is surely not the trait of a leiv tahor (pure heart). You can try to tell him about it. How are you going to tell him? Are you going to let him know in a not-so-nice way that it bothers you? That is also not a leiv tahor. Or, are you going to tell him softly, for his own best interest that this might be something that he wants to correct. That is a true leiv tahor. Always examine your heart and your intentions. May we all be successful in purifying our hearts and helping to rebuild the Beis HaMikdash speedily in our days.

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