

א ביסל תורה!

The Maimonides School Parsha Newsletter

כ"א אדר א' תשפ"ד-3/1/2024

כי תשא

abisltorah.wordpress.com

ה' The Everlasting Mercy of ה'

By Eitan Orkaby

In this week's פרשה, פרשת כי תשא, there is a very famous פסוק in which משה asks for mercy from ה', after בני ישראל sin with the golden calf. "וַיַּעֲבֹד ה' עַל-פְּנֵיו וַיִּקְרָא ה' ה' אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אֶרֶךְ אָפַיִם וְרַב חֶסֶד." And ה' passed before him and he said ה' ה' compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness. משה isn't trying to get ה's attention, like by אברהם, when the מלאך ה' stops אברהם from slaughtering יצחק, so why does משה say ה's name twice?

רש"י says, the name ה', which is used, symbolizes ה's traits of mercy. The first time it says ה', it is referring to ה's mercy when we sin. The second time is referring to ה's mercy after we sin and then we do תשובה. This is from ראש השנה יז:

In it says, if this were not written in the תורה, we wouldn't have been allowed to say it. ה' told משה that this is so powerful, anytime בני ישראל are sinning, these words should be said in תפלה, and ה' will forgive us. ה' is merciful before we sin, and after we do תשובה. These are two of ה's attributes.

The רשב"ם says, the way the פסוק should be read, ויקרא ה' ה' "...אל רחום...". This is being said to משה, by משה, where everyone already knows that what משה says is really from ה', but even so, משה still says that these words are really what ה' said. Even more so when teaching, to make sure you say who you learned the information from.

The אבן עזרא says that the פסוק should be read like any other time a name is repeated, with the names together in one phrase. ה's name, repeated twice, make up the first two of the thirteen מדות of ה'. This doesn't make sense if you read it like the רשב"ם, because the first time משה is saying who the words are from, and the second time is saying that ה' is the master. Also, it doesn't add up to thirteen מדות. There is one, the second time it says ה' and eleven after that, equaling 12. All of the thirteen מדות have to do with ה's מדות in the good and the bad things that we do.

Whichever way we read the פסוק, we get the same idea of ה' being all powerful, but still merciful. We are still in גלות because we sin, but ה' is always here with us and ready to hear our תפילות. According to ראש השנה יז, in the name of ר' יוחנן, we should be saying the thirteen מדות everyday in hope that ה' forgives us, like the many do in תפלה. We also see the importance of quoting sources. Even though the אבן עזרא disagrees with the רשב"ם's opinion, he still respects whose name he writes in and quotes them, while saying what the thirteen מדות are. May we be זוכה to disagree respectfully and always remember that ה' is with us wherever we are.

ה's Eternal Presence

By Lavi Simhi

This weeks פרשה is פרשת כי תשא. In this פרשה, בני ישראל sin by making the golden calf. An important question arises: why would בני ישראל, after seeing and being part of incredible miracles, still turn to idols and lose hope in ה'?

The מפרשים explain, that בני ישראל made the golden calf because of משה. When משה went up to הר סיני, he didn't tell בני ישראל how long he would be on הר סיני nor when he would come back down. Many days passed and, as a result of not knowing when משה would return, בני ישראל panicked and thought that משה had died. Other מפרשים take a different view and blame the sin of the golden calf on the ערב רב, the group of gentile slaves who joined the Jews during יציאת מצרים, who were accepted by משה and joined בני ישראל when they left Egypt.

רש"י, in contrast to the others מפרשים, lays the blame on בני ישראל, saying that they knew how long משה was going to be gone, but they had miscalculated by a day. Up to the last day, they counted both night and day but when the last day arrived they only counted half the day, which made them think that משה was dead.

Similar to רש"י, the עזרא אבן blames בני ישראל. בני ישראל wanted a physical body that would have the spirit of ה' upon it, so they made the golden calf.

The מדרש in מסכת שבת discusses this question and brings a מדרש to try to answer it. The מדרש says that when משה went up to הר סיני, he told בני ישראל that at the end of forty days, at the sixth hour, he would return. At the end of the forty days, the שטן asked בני ישראל where their leader, משה, was. בני ישראל answered that משה had gone up to heaven. The שטן then said to them that משה was dead because משה should have returned already since the beginning of the sixth hour had already passed. The שטן proceeded to show בני ישראל an image of משה's staff and בני ישראל confirmed that it was משה's staff with אהרן. According to this, the reason why בני ישראל made the golden calf was because the time when משה was supposed to return had already passed.

The רמב"ן takes a different approach from all the מפרשים to answer this question. He says that בני ישראל made the golden calf because they wanted a leader and a guide to replace משה, who had disappeared.

בני ישראל failed to keep believing in ה' and lost all hope. As a result, בני ישראל were severely punished. May we learn from this פרשה to never lose hope in ה'.

Editors in Chief: Binyamin Orkaby and Ephraim Fischer

Editors: Yochanan Cramer and Eitan Orkaby

Faculty Advisor: Rabbi Jaffe



Write a Dvar Torah for א ביסל תורה



Receive א ביסל תורה on WhatsApp