



Bet Horaah בית הוראה Shaarei Ezra שערי עזרא

Parshat Vayakhel

Zmanim for New York:

Candle Lighting: 5:37pm

Shabbat ends: 6:38pm

R"T 7:09pm

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LET NOT HIM WHO STRAPS ON HIS ARMOR BOAST LIKE HE WHO TAKES IT OFF.

WRITTEN BY RABBI SHAY TAHAN

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אל יתהלל חוגר כמפתח

The story of the rabbit and the turtle, often known as "The Tortoise and the Hare," is a classic fable tale that has been passed down through generations and goes as follows:

Once upon a time, there was a speedy and boastful rabbit who loved to brag about how fast he could run. He would often mock the slow-moving turtle, claiming that there was no way the turtle could ever beat him in a race.

Tired of the rabbit's taunts, the turtle finally challenged the rabbit to a race. The rabbit, amused by the turtle's audacity, accepted the challenge, thinking it would be an easy victory.

The race began, and the rabbit quickly sprinted far ahead of the slow-moving turtle. Confident in his speed, the rabbit decided to take a nap under a tree, thinking he had plenty of time to catch up and win the race.

Meanwhile, the determined turtle continued to plod along at a steady pace, never stopping or becoming distracted. Slowly but surely, the turtle made progress along the racecourse.

When the rabbit woke up from his nap, he was shocked to see the turtle nearing the finish line. Panicked and realizing his mistake, the rabbit sprinted as fast as he could, but it was too late. The turtle crossed the finish line first, winning the race.

The moral of the story teaches the value of persistence, steady effort, and humility. Furthermore, the story serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of boasting over victory and underestimating one's adversaries.

We constantly hear the enemies from the north and south declaring how they will crush the Jew-

ish nation if they dare to make the mistake of opening a war or even firing at them. They threaten to destroy the people and send the soldiers back in bags. This type of talk brings to mind a discussion brought down in the book of Melachim (מלכים א, כ, יא).



As Ben Hadad, the king of Aram, prepared to attack Israel, he gathered much horses and chariots and started to boast his victory even before defeating Ahab, the king of Israel.

He sent messengers to him, saying, 'Thus shall you speak to Benhadad: 'Your silver and your gold will soon be mine; your most beautiful wives and children also will be mine'.

Ben Hadad boasted with his great army and claimed, with an oath, that all the dust of the destroyed Samaria, which he planned to demolish, would not suffice to fill the clenched fists of his many soldiers.

Ahab, king of Israel, replied: "Let not him who straps on his armor boast like he who takes it off."

Meaning - Do not brag before you have won the battle. The one who straps on his armor is the soldier who puts on the belt before the battle. The one who takes it off is the soldier who unfastens or removes the belt from himself after returning from the battlefield. This expression comes to teach a person not to boast about their future successes, lest they be unable to prove their words with deeds.

edit: However, we should delve deeper into this phrase. Is the problem with bragging merely a moral issue of arrogance, or is there more to it? The commentaries explain that the problem here also includes a practical concern: when someone feels that victory is already assured, they

LET NOT HIM WHO STRAPS ON HIS ARMOR BOAST LIKE HE WHO TAKES IT OFF.

may not put in the necessary effort to achieve it. Conversely, when someone is not overly confident of victory, they will strive in various ways to secure it.

This is precisely what happened to Ben Hadad, who was completely confident in his victory, allowing himself to drink to excess in his tent before the battle, only to be defeated by Ahab. Similarly, the moral lesson from the story of the rabbit and the turtle is that while the rabbit became complacent and fell asleep, the turtle continued to put forth all its effort to reach the finish line.

The idea of feeling victorious before the battle due to a sense of strength is emphasized in the words of the Mishna (סוטה מב,א). It describes the words spoken to those preparing for war, including this very point. The Mashuach Milchama said: "Remember that they come to war championed by flesh and blood, and you are coming championed by the divine Shchina. The Philistines came championed by Goliath. What was his end? In the end, he fell by the sword, and they fell with him. The Ammonites came championed by Shobach. What was his end? In the end,



he fell by the sword, and they fell with him. But as for you, you are not so reliant upon the strength of mortals: 'For the Hashem goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.' This pasuk refers to the camp of the Ark of the Covenant that accompanies them out to war."

The Gemara elaborates on this, saying: "He stood before Hashem with brazenness and stated: 'Choose yourselves a man, and let him come down to me' (שמואל א, יז). "The word "man" is referring to none other than Hashem. In other words, Goliath said he wanted to fight Hashem. Now, let's not deceive ourselves, as we are also guilty of much of the same arrogance. We, too, have let our guard down and miscalculated the enemy. While they were arming themselves to the teeth, building tunnels, and plotting, we were complacent. If only we wouldn't be so arrogant in thinking that we are so powerful and mighty that no one would dare to start a war against us, we could save many lives and avoid the ongoing conflict.

UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL.

Parshat Vayakhel starts with this word, referring to the gathering of the nation as Moshe instructed them about the building of the Mishkan. The pasuk says something quite remarkable: "the entire nation assembled." Now, how could that be? In normal circumstances, it is almost impossible to gather an entire nation for one task, as many people have different outlooks on life, and many would not agree with Moshe Rabbenu's message. Even more so, a nation that was so divided, as they were at the time. They had just created the golden calf, murdered Chur, and attempted to murder Aharon HaKohen. Hashem testified that the nation had been corrupted and strayed from His way. The nation had been complaining about Moshe for so many different things (שמות לב, ז).

It appears the nation had a change of heart, but what caused it? It seems that only a catastrophe has the ability to bring people together, and that is exactly what had just happened. After the sin of the calf, there was a terrible plague, and three thousand people of the nation died (שמות לב, כח). When three thousand people from a small nation die, it hits everyone close to home. It seems like everyone knew someone who had died, and it made a deep impression on them. This could have been the wake-up call that shook every person to their core. That could have been what caused people to unite.

Chazal (בראשית רבה לח, ו) emphasize this concept of being heavenly protected when we are unified, highlighting the difference between the generation of Noah, when Hashem sent the Flood, and the generation of the Dispersion, when the people tried to build a tower to reach Hashem and fight Him (רש"י בראשית יא, א). Of course, the sin of the generation of the Dispersion was much worse, but still, the punishment for them was much lighter. The generation of the Flood all drowned to death, while those of the tower were only dispersed.

Rashi (בראשית יא, ט) asks what the reason for the reversed punishment was, and he answers as follows: "The generation of the Flood were violent robbers and there was strife among them, and therefore they were destroyed; but those of the generation of the Dispersion conducted themselves in love and friendship, as it is said, 'They were one people and had one language.' You may learn from this how hateful to God is strife and how great peace is"

We see that even in our generation, when we were so divided, the catastrophe united us. However, as people get used to the current situation, many start dividing again. We should learn from this not to wait for the next catastrophe in order to unite.



WHEN SAFETY CALLS.

Although the Shabbat day is holy and should not be desecrated for any reason, in a situation of danger and saving lives, the Torah commands us to desecrate it. We learn that from the pasuk: "And you shall live by them". This halacha is not just for clear and present danger but also for potential danger, therefore, if there is a concern that a terrorist may be wandering around and could potentially carry out an attack, one is permitted and obligated to do everything possible to neutralize the danger, including calling the police on the phone, even though it involves a desecration of the Shabbat, and even calling a Jewish police force, even though they will be violating the Shabbat.

Shmirat Shabbat Kehilchata writes (Chapter 41, Halacha 36): "One who sees suspicious movement or suspicious individuals on Shabbat, and there is a concern that terrorists or criminals suspected of bloodshed are present in the area, it is permitted and a obligated to inform the police." The Mishna Berura (סימן שכט ס"ק טו) explains that we are not meticulous when it comes to saving a life.

Similarly, if one sees a thief breaking into a house and there is a concern that he may attack those inside, it is permitted for the homeowner, neighbor, or anyone else to call the police (Shmirat Shabbat Kehilchata, Chapter 41, Halacha 24). Likewise, it is permitted if one sees a thief breaking into an empty house, as it can be assumed he will break into another house where there is a person inside.

The poskim still differentiate between a doubtful danger, which still has some possibility, and a danger that is very far and unexpected with little likelihood.

The poskim point out contradictions, such as in one Mishna that says when a house collapses and there is a possibility of a live person, even though there might not be anyone there or even if there is, he might already be dead, we still remove the rubble on Shabbat and violate Shabbat to seek a person who might be alive. On the other hand, there are many instances where we don't violate Shabbat on suspicion that danger might happen. For example, we aren't afraid that the building we walk to for prayer will collapse, even though there is such a potential possibility.

The answer provided is that we differentiate between a danger which is existing and in front of us, like the

collapse of a building, and that which is potential, like walking into a building (מנחת שלמה ח"ב סימן כט, ה).

In the event that a person called the police and after they inspected the suspect, they found him not to be a terrorist or a cause of danger in any way, the act is not considered a violation of Shabbat since he was allowed to do so at that moment. Moreover, his act is considered a mitsva and its praiseworthy שו"ע סימן שכח (סעיף טו).



Of course, the above applies only in cases where there is a suspicion of potential danger. However, if the scenario clearly indicates that

the robber has no intention of harming the homeowner, for example, if we know the robber and know he is harmless, or if it is evident that he is not capable of harming anyone, such as a weak person who clearly does not carry a weapon, then in such a scenario, one should not violate the Shabbat since neither his life nor the lives of others are in danger (שש"כ סימן מא סעיף כד).

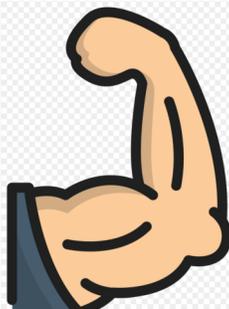
In the case of apprehending a Jewish burglar, there is a distinction between a dangerous individual, in which case one may call the police and have them arrested. According to Shmirat Shabbat (שם סעיף כו), it is permitted even on Shabbat to detain them until the police arrive. However, if the burglar is not dangerous, one should avoid calling, as explained by Rav Moshe Feinstein. The reason he gives is that according to halacha a thief is only obligated to return the stolen item, and one may not cause them to receive a greater punishment such as sitting in jail.

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כוחי ועוצם ידי.

אלהיך כי הוא הנותן לך כח וגו'... ואחר כך אמר שמע ישראל אתה עובר היום את הירדן לבא לרשת וגו'. וכאן לא אמר ואמרת כחי ועצם ידי וגו' אבל אמר אל תאמר בלבבך בהדוף ה' אלהיך אותם מלפניך לאמר בצדקתי הביאני ה', והוא כאומר שמעני ישראל עוד בדבר אחר שאני מסופק ממך, כי אתה עובר את הירדן לבא לרשת גוים גדולים ועצומים ממך, ואיני מסופק בזה שתאמר שבכחך עצמת מהם כי הם גדולים ועצומים ממך ואתה ידעת ושמת בשם האנשים אשר תרו את הארץ כי אין איש אמיץ לבו ויכל להתיצב לפני בני ענק, וידעת היום כי השם יתברך הוא יבניעם, ולא תיחס הכנתם אליך כי אין לאל ידך, אבל אני חושש שלא תאמר בלבבך שעם היות שהשם יתברך הדפס ולא בכחך, שהיית גורם מצד צדקתך ויושר לברך, כי מטבע גאות האדם רום לבבו המסלף מועצותיו, הוא ליחס הצלחותיו לעצמו לצד מהצדדים, וכשהן דברים תלויים בקנין ובחכמה וטוב העצה, חושב כי חכמתו עמדה לו, וכשהן בענין שהוא רואה כי נשגבו מכחו ומעצתו מיחס אותו לזכותו, ולכן אמר בכבוש הגוים האלה העצומים אשר בהצרה ממנו מזמתך וכחך, ירא אני פן תיחס הדבר לצדקתך, לא תעשה כן עם עם קשה ערף אתה", עב"ל.



שלום לרבנים החשובים באתר ואללה יהדות. מאוד מפריע לי שהפוליטיקאים תולים את הצלחת המלחמה בכח הזרוע שלהם, ושוב ושוב הם אומרים שאנחנו חזקים ואמיצים ובזכות הצבא המפואר שלנו ננצח במקום לתלות את ההצלחה בבורא עולם. האם אני צודק בגישה שלי או שמא אני מגזים. תודה מראש. שלום וברכה.

אני מסכים לחלוטין שאין לנו לתלות את ההצלחה בעצמינו וכמו שכבר הזהירה התורה בכמה מקומות: "ואמרת בלבבך כחי ועצם ידי עשה לי את החיל הזה" (דברים ח, יז). והטיב להסביר זאת הרמב"ן: "ידוע כי ישראל גבורים ואנשי חיל למלחמה, כי נמשלו לאריות ולזאב יטרף, ומלכי כנען - במלחמה נצחו אותם. על כן אמר: אם תחשוב 'כוחי ועוצם ידי עשה לי את החיל הזה', תזכור השם שהוציא אותך ממצרים, ולא היה לך שם כוח ועוצם יד כלל, ותזכור עוד כי במדבר, אשר אין לאל ידך לחיות שם, עשה לך כל צרכיך, אם כן גם החיל הזה אשר עשית בכוחך - השם הוא שנתן לך הכוח כאשר עשית אותו. ואם תשכח את השם יכלה כוחך ושארך ותאבד כאשר אבדו הם, כי כל עוזבי ה' יכלו."

וכן הוא בשערי תשובה לרבינו יונה (שער ג' אות כט): "אל תאמר בלבבך בהדוף ה' אלהיך אותם מלפניך לאמר בצדקתי הביאני ה' לרשת את הארץ הזאת [וגו'] לא בצדקתך ויושר לברך וגו' (שם ט). הוזכרנו בזה שלא נדמה בנפשנו הצלחתנו בצדקתנו ויושר לבבנו. אבל נאמין ונדע עם לבבנו, כי הצלחתנו מחסד העליון ורב טובו, וכענין שאמר יעקב אבינו עליו השלום (בראשית לב) קטנתי מכל החסדים ומכל האמת:"

ולכן אף שיד הלוחמים האמיצים שלנו על העליונה ויש לנו להודות להם על ההקרבה והגבורה הפילאית, אך אל לנו לשכוח מנין מגיעה ההצלחה הזו. וכמו שהזהיר הר"ן (בדרשות הר"ן תחילת דרוש י'): "ועתה ישראל מה ה' אלהיך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה את ה' אלהיך ללכת בכל דרכיו ולאהבה אותו ולעבוד את ה' אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך לשמור את מצות ה' ואת חקותיו אשר אנכי מצוך היום לטוב לך (דברים י': י"ב-י"ג)"

פרשה זו דבוקה וקשורה עם שלמעלה ממנה, כי בתחלה הזהיר את ישראל על ב' דברים, הא' שלא יתלו הצלחתם בכחם ועוצם ידם. והב' שלא יתלו כבוש הארץ בזכותם, כי למעלה מזה אמר פן תאכל ושבעת וגו' ובקרך וצאנך ירביין וגו' ואמרת בלבבך כחי ועצם ידי וגו' וזכרת את ה' אלהיך כי הוא הנותן לך כח לעשות חיל, רצה בזה כי עם היות שאמת שיש באישים סגולות מיוחדות לדבר מהדברים כמו שיש אנשים מוכנים לקבל החכמה, ואחרים מוכנים לשית עצות בנפשם לאסוף ולכנס, ולפי זה יהיה אמת בצד מה שיוכל העשיר לומר כחי ועוצם ידי עשה לי את החיל הזה, עם כל זה עם היות שהכח ההוא נטוע בך זכור תזכור הכח ההוא מי נתנו בך ומאין בא, והוא אומר וזכרת את ה' "

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