

BOSTONER TORAH INSIGHTS

BOSTONER 'CHASSIDUS' IN ENGLISH

PARSHAS KI SAVO – 20 ELUL 5781

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Over the past few weeks we have seen the recurring phrase of ובערת הרע מקרבך 'you shall remove the evil from your midst'. It appears once in Parshas Re'eh, five times in Shoftim and another five in Ki Saytzay for a total of eleven times. The Pri Tzadik explains that the number ten is parallel to the ten statements Hashem pronounced while creating the world and the ten Dibros pronouncements from Har Sinai at Matan Torah. The eleventh mention of 'you shall remove the evil from your midst' corresponds to the times of Moshiach ben Dovid when evil will be uprooted forever.

As the Gemara explains (Sukkah 52b), in the future Hashem will slaughter the Yetzer Hara before the righteous and the wicked. To the Tzaddikim the Yetzer Hara will appear like a mountain and to the Reshaim it will appear like a strand of hair, and both the righteous and wicked will cry. The Tzaddik will cry in amazement, how they were able to overcome such a mountain and the Rasha will cry in agony that they could not overcome a strand of hair.

"Hashem Elokecha you shall follow and Him you shall fear. His commandments you shall observe and to His voice you shall adhere. Him you shall serve and to Him you shall cling to" (Devarim 13:5). The Pri Tzadik explains that 'Hashem Elokecha you shall follow' corresponds to Avraham Avinu (see Beraishis 17:1). The phrase 'you shall fear' refers to Yitzchak Avinu (see Beraishis 31:42). The phrase 'His commandment you shall observe' refers to Yaakov Avinu (see Rashi to Beraishis 32:5). The phrase 'His voice you shall adhere' refers to Moshe Rabbeinu who could withstand the direct voice of Hashem, unlike any other prophet. The phrase 'Him you shall serve' refers to Aharon HaKohen who served Hashem in the Mikdash. The phrase 'you shall cling to' refers to Yosef HaTzadik, as the ultimate Tzadik has no independent existence from Hashem and becomes completely 'dissolved' in his D'veikus with Hashem. In the next Pasuk (Devarim 13:6) we find the command to 'remove the evil from your midst which corresponds to Dovid HaMelech.

It will be his descendent, Moshiach ben Dovid who will 'remove the evil' of Amalek from our midst once and for all and make His name complete and His Throne complete (see Rashi to Shemos 17:16) and then rebuild the Beis HaMikdash (see Hilchos Melachim 1:1). Melech HaMoshiach will begin the ultimate Teshuva movement which will implant the desire of Teshuva within all of Klal Yisroel and nullify the Yetzer Hara forever (see Yoma 86b).

Parshas Ki Savo in the opening section of Bikkurim mentions 'Hashem Elokecha' ten times. Here the stress is on praising Hashem and thanking Hashem and performing the Mitzvah of Bikkurim out of love and commitment to Hashem. The Gemara (Taanis 16a) describes the ineffectiveness of trying to purify oneself in the Mikvah while still holding on to the Sheretz that transmits Tumah. In order to achieve Teshuva we must first abandon the sin and only then can we repent and pledge to accept upon ourselves a future free of transgression. Thus after we have 'removed the evil from our midst' we can renew our commitment to 'Hashem Elokecha' by attesting to our belief in Hashem through the Mitzvah of Bikkurim.

The Mishnah (Megillah 23b) teaches that in regards to Birkat Aveilim, the mourner is not counted as part of the quorum of ten men. However, in regards to the blessing for the Chasan or the evaluation of Hekdesh, the bridegroom and Kohen, respectively, are counted toward the Minyan of ten. Accordingly, the 'removing of evil' and the death of the Yetzer Hara requires eleven Pesukim to make a 'quorum', however, the Parsha of Bikkurim represents Hischadshus, rebirth and recommitment to Hashem, only requires ten Pesukim of 'Hashem Elokecha' to make the Minyan.

After further inspection there are nine times it says 'Hashem Elokecha' and one time where it says 'to Hashem Elokecha'. "You shall come to whomever will be the Kohen in those days and say to him: I declare today **to Hashem Elokecha...**" (Devarim 26:3). In 'those days' of the final redemption it will be the Kohen Eliyahu HaNavi, who is Pinchas, (see Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer 46) who will be included to complete the Minyan of the ten Sefiros and rebuild the Beis HaMikdash once more in order to fulfill the Mitzvah of Bikkurim.

For the Ashkenzaim that begin saying Selichos on Motzai Shabbos, we must likewise abandon sin and remove the evil from our midst, revive ourselves to begin anew and complete the process of Teshuva to 'Hashem Elokecha', so that we should merit a year to be written in the Book of redemption and salvation