



# דעם רבינ'ס א ווארט

A Word  
on the  
Parsha

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## ווארא

הֲנִי נָתַן לְנְבוּכַדְרֶעֶזַר מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל אֶת־אֶרֶץ  
מִצְרַיִם... פִּעֲלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר־עָבַד בָּהּ נָתַתִּי לוֹ אֶת־  
אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם (יחזקאל כ"ט, י"ט-כ; הפטרת פרשת ווארא)

Behold I will give Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, the land of Egypt... For his labor wherewith he worked against it I have given him the land of Egypt.

In the Haftora of Parshas Va'era, we read of Hashem's promise to Nevuchadnetzar that he will receive the land of Mitzrayim as a reward for fulfilling Hashem's will by conquering the city of Tzor.

It seems difficult to understand why Nevuchadnetzar deserved a reward—after all, he was not acting with the intent of fulfilling Hashem's wish, but rather to satisfy his own ambitions to conquer more territory?

This is why the *possuk* uses the words “פִּעֲלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר־עָבַד בָּהּ”: He was not rewarded based on his *intentions*, but rather for his *actions*. And since, ultimately, Hashem's will was carried out through him, he deserves a reward.

**Takeaway:** If this is true of Nevuchadnetzar—who certainly did not intend to carry out Hashem's wishes—how much more so with regard to a Yid: When someone performs an act of kindness, its value should not be minimized because of ulterior motives they may have had. Just for the act alone—even without pure intentions—they deserve great reward.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 21, p. 50)

## בא

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה גַם־אַתָּה תִּתֵּן בְּיָדֵנוּ זְבָחִים וְעֹלֹת וְעֲשִׂינוּ  
לְיָדוֹד אֱלֹהֵינוּ. וְגַם־מִקְנֵנוּ יִלָּךְ עִמָּנוּ לֹא תִשָּׂא רַחֲסָה  
כִּי מִמָּנוּ נִקַּח לְעַבֵּד אֶת־יְיָדוֹד אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאִנְחָנוּ לֹא־  
נֵדַע מַה־נַּעֲבֹד אֶת־יְיָדוֹד עַד־בֹּאֵנוּ שָׁמָּה: (י, כה-כו)

But Moshe said, "You too shall give sacrifices and burnt offerings into our hands, and we will make them for the L-rd our G-d. And also our cattle will go with us; not a [single] hoof will remain, for we will take from it to worship the L-rd our G-d, and we do not know how [much] we will worship the L-rd until we arrive there."

Rashi elaborates on Moshe's claim before Pharaoh לא "We will not know how intense the worship [of Hashem] will be," Moshe said. "Perhaps He will ask for more [animals] than we have in our possession."

Moshe's words seem to imply that Hashem would demand something of the Yidden that they could not fulfill—how is this conceivable? Moreover, if it is, indeed, the case that Hashem might ask them for more than they have, what is the benefit in bringing *all* their animals—that may *also* not suffice?!

The answer to both of these questions can be found in Rashi's precise wording—"perhaps He will ask for more than we have *in our possession*":

Obviously, Hashem would not ask the Yidden for something which is unattainable. But He might have asked them for more than what they owned at that moment, something they would have to obtain from another source—namely from Pharaoh (who certainly owned many more animals

than the Jewish slaves did).

Moshe's words come, therefore, as a continuation of the first *possuk*—"זָנַם אֶתָּה תִּתֵּן בְּיַדְנוּ זְבָחִים וְעֹלֹת": "You also"—said Moshe to Pharaoh—"will give us *korbanos*, since we do not know what Hashem will ask of us, and we may be required to use your animals as well."

**Takeaway:** There is a well known teaching of the Ba'al Shem Tov that everything a person hears or sees in the world around him needs to be applied as a lesson in *avodas Hashem*. Now, a person might ask: Are the instructions and guidance given to us by the Torah and the *Chachomim* really not enough? Do we also need to take lessons from the mundane, day-to-day occurrences in the world around us?

The answer is that yes, sometimes Hashem wants us to serve Him not only with "what we have"—the *horavos* in the Torah. He also wants us to serve Him with "Pharaoh's possessions"—the lessons in *avodas Hashem* that we derive from our daily experiences.

(*Hisva'aduyos 5746 vol. 2, p. 424*)

## בשלה

וְצֵא הַלֶּחֶם בַּעֲמֹלֶק (י"ז, ט)

And go out and fight against Amalek...

Parshas Beshalach speaks of two battles the Yidden faced on their way to Matan Torah—with the *Mitzriyim* and with Amalek.

The Yidden's response to these two threats were very different; even opposite from each other. With regard to Pharaoh and his army, we find that the Yidden were commanded to stay put while Hashem fought on their behalf. With regard to Amalek, however, the command was the exact opposite: "צֵא הַלֶּחֶם בַּעֲמֹלֶק"—go out and fight.

The reason lies in the fundamental difference between the two wars: Pharaoh and his army posed a physical danger to the Yidden. He pursued them and wanted to harm them, but he did not try—at least not directly—to hurt them *b'ruchniyus* and threaten their relationship with Hashem. In other words, Pharaoh was not an obstacle between the Yidden and Har Sinai, but rather between the Yidden and "the fish we ate in Mitzrayim"—if they wanted to enjoy what the land of Mitzrayim had to offer, they would have to submit to Pharaoh.

When faced with physical danger, the Yiddische response is: "ה' יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם תַּחֲרִישׁוּן"—we put our trust in Hashem and trust in Him to deliver us from the hands of our enemies.

Amalek's war, on the other hand, was a spiritual one. Amalek was intent on placing a wedge between the Yidden and Har Sinai, blocking their path to receiving the Torah.

They tried to harm the *ruchniyus* of Yidden and separate them from Hashem.

The response to this is "go out and fight Amalek!": When there is a spiritual danger, when there are those who try to interfere with *kabbolas haTorah*—the study of Torah and observance of mitzvos—it is necessary to respond immediately, and, if necessary, to go to war and face the risks thereof in order to save Yidden from the danger to their *neshamos*.

**Takeaway:** There are two points to bear in mind when faced with an "Amalek" that wants to cool down our passion for Yiddishkeit: 1. To use every tool at our disposal to beat "Amalek", and do whatever it takes to reach our personal Har Sinai and receive the Torah. 2. Not to mistakenly think that it is with our own *kochos* and resources that we are fighting, but to be aware that it is with the *ko'ach* of Moshe, the *ko'ach* of Torah.

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, p. 144*)

## יתרו

וְהָיִיתֶם לִי סִגְלָה (ט, ה)

You shall be to Me a treasure...

Rashi translates the word "סגולה" to mean "a beloved treasure... costly vessels and precious stones which kings store away".

Why does Hashem compare Yidden to precious stones hidden in the king's treasury—items which do not serve any practical use? Why not compare them instead to the jewels affixed to the king's crown (and the like) whose glory is visible to all?

The jewels in the king's crown (and the like) are used for an external purpose, to increase his honor and glory in the eyes of the people—"Melech b'yofo techezenah einecha; A king in his beauty, behold your eyes". The precious stones in his storehouse, however, are not used for an external purpose; as a means to an end. Rather, their purpose lies in their very existence, so that the king can delight in them and derive pleasure from their very existence.

This is why Yidden are likened to "costly vessels and precious stones which kings store away", to teach us that our preciousness in the eyes of Hashem is not because we serve as a means to a greater end—we are the end. The very existence of Yidden is precious to Hashem, and causes Him tremendous pleasure.

**Takeaway:** We need to be very attentive to how we treat a fellow Yid—every single Yid is a precious diamond in Hashem's treasury!

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 24, p. 162*)