

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

PARSHAT ACHAREI-KEDOSHIM

Honesty

In this week's Parsha, Kedoshim, we find the mitzvah of making and keeping honest measuring tools. Whether they are for measuring weight, dry measure, or liquid, they need to be accurate. It is forbidden to make or have in your possession inaccurate measuring tools, even if you have no intention to use them.

While with many mitzvahs, Hashem signs off with "I Am Hashem" or "I Am Hashem your God." After this mitzvah, Hashem signs off with, "I Am Hashem your God who took you out of Egypt."

What is the connection between honest weights and measures and the exodus from Egypt? Why is it a sin to merely own them, even if you have no intention to use them?

The simple answer brought by Rashi is that it is for this reason that Hashem took us out of Egypt, to be a paragon of honesty in business dealings. Also, just like Hashem could discern in Egypt who is a firstborn and who is not, so can He discern if someone falsifies his weights to be dishonest in business.

But there is a deeper reason. This is the way of the evil inclination. He doesn't tell you to steal or rob another. You would never go for that. First, he says, "What is so bad to own these false weights? You're not even going to use them." Then he goes a step further. "What is the big deal about using them? They are just a drop off. It is not a big deal." And step by step, he drags you down until he's made a thief out of you.

Owning false weights and measures is the first step. It is the beginning of dishonesty. Though no action was done with them, they represent ill intent and bad choices, which is the prelude to dishonesty.

HONESTY TO OTHERS STARTS WITH HONESTY TO YOURSELF.

This is where Egypt comes in. Though Hashem decreed that the Jewish people would suffer at the hands of the Egyptians, each individual Egyptian had the freedom to choose not to. It was their ill intent and bad choices that caused them to oppress the Jewish people. The Jewish people would have been oppressed without their involvement because it was Hashem's decree. It was their evil intention and bad choices

that got them involved and ultimately punished, etc.

It all begins with ill intent and bad choices. For example, choosing bad friends, purchasing inappropriate clothing, etc.

Hashem is saying, I took you out of Egypt, the place of ill intentions and bad choices. I want you to be better than them. I want you to be a beacon of goodness and honesty. That is why I took you out of Egypt. And honesty is the starting point for all the mitzvahs and what defines us as Hashem's people.

To dispel dishonesty, first, we need to dispel ill intent and bad choices. Get rid of self-acquired bad influences and temptations. You will find it freeing like a weight being removed from your shoulders. And finally, being honest in business and with your acquaintances is the way you influence them to want to be more like you and to follow in Hashem's ways.

One more thing, by connecting honesty with the exodus from Egypt, Hashem gives us a clear indication that honesty is a prerequisite to bringing the future redemption. May it come soon.

"Thank you so much for teaching us Torah and inspiring us always. I teared up from your story, thank you for being open to sharing. Hashem should bless you and your family with so much health and happiness and goodness!!!"

- Elianna B, New York

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



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