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WEEKLY PARSHA  
ARCHIVE Q&A

**BILVAVI**

VAYIGASH 5784

# A TRAGEDY IS HASHEM TALKING TO US HARSHLY

There are two ways to talk to someone. There is a way to speak to someone softly, called *amirah* (*speech*), which is the way to speak to a woman. Then there is a way to speak harshly – *dibbur*, which is the kind of speech that men have to hear.

When a tragedy happens, Hashem is speaking to us harshly. But we need to listen with our ears to what Hashem is telling us. If a person is materialistic, he doesn't hear Hashem talking to him. Nothing moves him. If he doesn't hear anything, it will take a lot to get him to hear – and the only thing that can wake him up is the shock of a tragedy. When Hashem sends us a tragedy, He isn't just talking to us – He is screaming at us to hear Him.

What does Hashem want from us? Why is He screaming at us? When a person screams, it is because there is danger. When Hashem screams at us, it is because our very life is in danger.

How have we come to such a situation that Hashem has to scream at us?

## TODAY'S PROBLEM

There is a lot of Torah today; it is unprecedented. But what is going on in our internal world? Our hearts are hearts of stone. What are our aspirations of life?

There is no truth to be found anywhere. The streets are full of materialistic pursuits which we have. There are only a few individuals who aren't influenced by the materialism that our world today is seeped in.

We cannot change the entire generation, but each person on his own can change himself and see that the kind of life we are living today is not the kind of life that our Avos had. Even the most recent generation, before today's generation, didn't live like we do today. Our spirituality is in very real danger, each day.

Do we feel a love for the Torah? Do we see anyone today who is searching for the truth? Do we see anyone today who longs for Hashem? Do we see anyone today who is living a truthful kind of life?

I also have children, and I worry too what will be with them. What kind of world are they growing up in?! Hashem should have mercy on them.

The choice we are faced with today is like the choice that Avraham Avinu had to make in his life, when the entire world was seeped in idol worship. Our choice we face on this world – and this applies to every person – is to decide if we want a true kind of life, a life of Hashem and His Torah and to be connected to the Jewish people.

We must understand that the tragedy that happened is not another story that will come and go. We must hear how Hashem is talking to us harshly through it. We cannot just let it pass and move on. If we want to just move on, we are sleeping. Our choice we face on this world is like a choice between life and death. We must decide if we will want a true kind of life – or a life that is influenced by our secular surroundings.

In the Holocaust, they faced physical death and suffering. Their job was to give up their bodies and die al Kiddush Hashem. Our generation also needs to live al Kiddush Hashem, but we must do this through our spirituality. We must be ready, every single day of our life, to live like we should – and this is how we live a life of Kiddush Hashem. It's not enough for us to just think in our mind to have mesirus nefesh when we say Shema; we need to actually live a life of mesirus nefesh, to be ready to give ourselves up for Hashem. All of us must do this.

We are not speaking about a high level to be on. Anyone who isn't ready to have mesirus nefesh today will definitely fall wayward.

We have to make a change in the whole way we live our life. Our heart has to burn with a desire for Hashem. Dovid HaMelech asked Hashem for a lev tahor, a pure heart. That is precisely what we need today as well. We need a pure heart.

We need to ask Hashem to take away all other desires we have which aren't important. It's not enough to seek improvement in our heart -- we need a whole new heart to begin with.

What does Hashem want from us? Hashem wants us to leave the false kind of life we are living. The new generation lives totally different today than in previous times. Anyone here remembers how the world looked a few years ago, and can attest that the world today is far different from even a few years ago.

## WHAT TO DO

What should we do? Each person, every day, should close himself off in a room and do Teshuvah. Who can say that he's perfect? We all need to improve. The clothing we wear – would we stand at Har Sinai with it? If a person really wants to return to the true way that a Jew used to live, he has to return to there from the depths of his heart and cry to Hashem, “Hashem, show me the way and purify my heart.”

We should ask Hashem that we should only want what's important and holy. If we all daven to Hashem like this, Hashem will show each person the way he should go in. If we don't do this, no amount of inspiration will help us. There is so much evil in the world and we need big changes to counter it.

It is written, “My son, give your heart to me.” If we give Hashem our heart, we have hope.

We know our financial situation is in danger, but what about our spiritual situation? What do we want throughout the day, and what do we want as we go to sleep?

If we don't listen to Hashem screaming at us through this tragedy, He will only scream louder at us to hear Him and send another tragedy. We need to be ready to give our life for Hashem and separate ourselves from the falsity of this world, even though we see that everyone else is living a false kind of life.

If we set aside time every day to make a self-accounting and ask Hashem to purify us, and we cry to Him about this, then Hashem will answer us – He does not close the Shaarei Demaos, the Gate Of Tears. It is not enough to make resolutions to become better; all inspiration cannot help us unless we are prepared to give up our life for Hashem.

OUR EMOTIONS ARE DEADENED  
FROM THE CRUELTY & VIOLENCE OF THIS WAR –  
WHAT DOES HASHEM WANT FROM US?

RAV'S ANSWER

The question is clear, and there is a clear, simple answer to this. The greatest pain that there is today is - that suddenly, when a situation of physical trouble and suffering has come to the world, everyone is waking up from this – but what about the fact that every day, neshamos are being burned and destroyed? That is so much worse, and yet it results in very, very little awakening.

When Moshe Rabbeinu saw the Egyptians inserting babies into the walls to complete the structure, he asked Hashem why He is letting this happen. Hashem told him that the babies being killed are those who, if spared, are destined to become wicked people who won't be redeemed from Egypt. What really bothered Moshe then? Not just the fact that they were putting babies into the walls, but something much worse - that these Jewish souls won't leave Egypt. That was his main pain. Moshe Rabbeinu wanted the Eirev Rav to become good, it was his own decision to bring them out of Egypt and convert them, and once he removed a baby from the walls. That baby grew up to become the only idol worshipping Jew to leave Egypt and bring idol worship with him into the sea. What truly pained Moshe was that there were souls who would remain behind in Egypt. What bothered him more – the physical labor in Egypt or the 49 levels of spiritual contamination which the Jews

were in then? Certainly, the latter was what bothered him more.

Anyone who lives in this generation, who has gone through the recent period we are in, must mainly be pained – and this is a deep awareness to have – unlike the main pain which people are feeling now that there is a war, the main pain which we must have is: There is an internal, spiritual war taking place within ourselves personally. Suddenly a physical war has broken out on Simchas Torah and now people are banging on the doors “What can we do??” Why didn’t they come banging during the rest of the year? Suddenly because there is a war, so instantly people become afraid of being killed and everything is in upheaval now. But what should be our main pain now? The pain we must feel on the internal war within us personally, which is taking place every day- and to feel pained at the very fact that people are in pain only when there is a war and when they are afraid of what’s going to happen to our physical situation. Our pain now must be comprehensive, both on the physical and spiritual suffering we are in. We should not remain only at the level of being pained about the physical situation now.

What happens when people are only pained over the physical situation now? They join with the Eirev Rav, who have made this war, and who are the cause for this war. Every success that the Eirev Rav has becomes turned into the three cardinal sins of idol worship, illicit relations, and murder.

The internal, true way to go about the situation now is to have a pain that is comprehensive (*to feel pain both over the physical and spiritual situation*). This is true about everything, but it is especially applicable

to the current situation. People are left homeless, people have been exiled from their homes, and the pain is enormous. But every person also can know something else that is even more frightening - that 99% of souls who leave the world do not reach Gan Eden. That is a punishment far worse than any of the physical suffering now. Yet why doesn't this bother people, where is the pain over this? Because it is something abstract and spiritual which we don't see with our eyes. But anyone who lives just a bit spiritually doesn't have to hear the news, he doesn't have to know what's happening in Gaza or Turkey or Lebanon in order to be in pain. For he is already in a much more profound kind of pain, because he is aware of the very painful reality of today [the internal war that is taking place inside each of our souls, which so many are falling in]. When one sees even a bit of what's happening today, he knows that it is all painful, and now we have additional pain because of the situation now - and altogether all of this pain adds up, and it is enormous! When a person has an entire spectrum of existence beginning from the depth of the neshamah, all the way down to his physical existence, it certainly pains him when he sees the physical pain that others are in, but will he be in pain only about this...?

The most painful thing in the world today is the very painful reality which we are in where people only see the branches without seeing the root, when they see the outcomes without seeing what's channeling it, when they see only the body and they don't see the soul. That is the main thing to be bothered and pained about.

[ דרשות 068 עקב האסון הכבד והנורא שארע תשע"א ]





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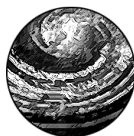
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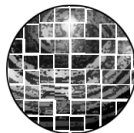
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