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## פרשת וישב

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פרק לז פסוק ד

וַיִּרְאוּ אֶחָיו כִּי־אָתוּ אָהַב אֲבֵיהֶם מִכָּל־אֶחָיו וַיִּשְׁנְאוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוּ לְשָׁלֹם:

רש"י

וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוּ לְשָׁלוֹם: מִתּוֹךְ גְּנוּיָתָם לְמַדְּנוּ שְׂבָחָם, שְׁלֹא דַבְּרוּ אֶחַת בְּפִהּ וְאֶחַת בְּלֵב.

Through their disgrace we can learn their praise, that they did not speak one way with their mouths and another with their hearts.

מושג

שְׁלֹא דַבְּרוּ אֶחַת בְּפִהּ וְאֶחַת בְּלֵב.

### Translation:

They did not speak one way with their mouth and another with their heart.

### Explanation:

Our Rabbis teach us that it is forbidden to be two-faced, hating a person in your heart while befriending them with your words. The גמרא lists such an action as one that is hated by Hashem.

In truth even harboring hatred in one's heart, without ever saying a word to the other person, is forbidden by the Torah. One who does so transgresses the negative commandment of לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך. Whether or not simply letting the person know you hate them would remove this particular transgression, or if you have to let them know why you hate them, is a subject of debate<sup>1</sup>.

The underlying reason behind these laws is that by hiding your displeasure with others, either by saying nothing or by lying about your feelings, the feud between you and your fellow will never be solved and will only grow and deepen. Not only will the hate you carry with you injure your emotional well being, but it will also deny your friend the benefit of the doubt that his actions were unintentional and not provide him with the opportunity to correct his actions<sup>2</sup>.

### Looking in the Pasuk:

The Midrash Rashi quotes is bothered by the fact that the Torah feels a need to tell us that Yosef's brothers could not speak civilly with him. Isn't it sufficient to tell us that they hated him? The Midrash answers by telling us that the Pasuk is actually noting a point of praise for the brothers; that at least they did not hide their hatred or speak nicely to him while hating him in their hearts.

### Musag Learning Outcomes:

Know: It is forbidden to harbor hatred for your fellow Jew in your heart, and certainly one should not act as if they like someone while hating them in their heart.

Understand: Frequently, those who hurt us do so out of insensitivity, not hatred. Only by telling them how you feel can you help them change for the better.

Think: Since we know that Yosef's brothers hated him, why does the Torah need to tell us that they could not speak civilly to him? Could they have acted differently?

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<sup>1</sup> See note #1

<sup>2</sup> See note #2

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## NOTES

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1. The source for Rashi's comments is the מדרש רבה which reads:

ויראו אחיו כי אותו אהב אביהם מכל אחיו: א"ר אהבה בר זעירא מתוך גנותן של שבטים אתה יודע שבחן, להלן (שמואל ב יג) ולא דבר אבשלום עם אמנון למרע ועד טוב, די בליביה בליביה (מה שהיה בלבו השאיר בליבו), ברם הכא ולא יכלו דברו לשלום די בליבהון בפומהון. (אבל כאן לא יכלו דברו לשלום, מה שהיה בליבם היה בפיהם).

The wording that Rashi uses, which is our Musag, בלב, שלא דיברו אחד בפה ואחד בלב, does not appear in the Midrash. Rashi borrowed this terminology from a Gemoroh (ב"מ מט.) which teaches:

רבי יוסי ברבי יהודה אומר: מה תלמוד לומר (ויקרא י"ט:לו) הין צדק<sup>3</sup>? והלא הין בכלל איפה היה? אלא לומר לך: שיהא הן שלך צדק, ולא שלך צדק. אמר אביי: ההוא שלא ידבר אחד בפה ואחד בלב.

Rabbi Yossi the son of Rabbi Yehudah says: What does the Torah mean when it says you should have a just 'Hin measure'? Is this not already included in the commandment to have an 'Eifah measure'? Rather it is to teach you that your 'yes' (Hen in Aramaic) should be just and your no should be just (you should keep your word). Abaya said it is to teach you not to speak one way with your mouth while thinking another in your heart<sup>4</sup>.

An additional source is the Gemoroh (פסחים קיג:) which teaches:

שלשה הקדוש ברוך הוא שונאן, המדבר אחד בפה ואחד בלב וכי

Yosef's brothers clearly hated him as the Pasuk relates. While criticizing the brothers for this hatred, the Pasuk teaches us that the brothers did have a redeeming feature: They let Yosef know exactly how they felt! The brothers could have lied to Yosef about their feelings, or they could have simply kept silent. Either would have been a sin.

If they would have kept silent they would have transgressed the commandment of לא תשנא את אחיך (ויקרא יט:יז) which forbids a Jew to harbor hatred in his heart against another Jew. The Rambam (הלכות דעות פרק ו הלכה ה) writes:

כל השונא אחד מישראל בלבו עובר בלא תעשה שנאמר לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך... ולא הזהירה תורה אלא על שנאה שבלב, אבל המכה את חברו והמחרפו אע"פ שאינו רשאי אינו עובר משום לא תשנא.

If they would have lied to him about how they felt, they would have also been guilty of being two-faced, speaking אחד בלב ואחד בפה. This too is codified by the Rambam (שם פרק ב הלכה ו) who writes: אסור לאדם להנהיג עצמו בדברי חלקות ופיתוי, ולא יהיה אחד בפה ואחד בלב אלא תוכו כברו והענין שבלב הוא הדבר שבפה, ואסור לגנוב דעת הבריות ואפילו דעת הנכרי וכי

What needs clarification is why Rashi chose to add the issue of אחד בלב ואחד בפה, whereas the מדרש did not. That is to say Rashi seems to be focusing on the fact that the brothers were not two-faced, while the מדרש seems to be focusing on the fact that they did not harbor their hatred in their hearts.

One might answer that Rashi actually includes both. For if I say they were not two faced, and that they let Yosef know exactly how they felt, then obviously they had not harbored that hatred in their hearts. However, we still wonder why Rashi felt a need to add this issue at all. Why not simply quote the מדרש as is, and only credit the brothers for not keeping silent and not transgressing לא תשנא את אחיך? Why add the issue of אחד בלב ואחד בפה?

We may answer by asking the following question: Does one fulfill his obligation of לא תשנא את אחיך simply by telling the person that you hate them, or are you obligated to tell them in a way that might heal the rift? The Rambam quoted above would seem to answer the former, as he

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<sup>3</sup> מאנני צדק אבני צדק אפת צדק והין צדק יהיה לכם אני ה' אלקיכם וכי

<sup>4</sup> The practical difference between the opinion of Rabbi Yossi and Abaye is whether there is an obligation to keep your word. According to Rabbi Yossi הן צדק teaches us that we must fulfill what we promise. However, Abaye argues and claims that the only obligation is not to promise or say one thing while in your heart you know it is not so. However, in situations when at the time of the promise you had planned to keep your commitment and then the situation changed, Abaye would claim that you no longer have an obligation to keep your word. The Halacha is that is important to both keep your word and not be two-faced.

explains the prohibition to be simply harboring hatred. This is supported by the words of the Rambam in Sefer Hamitzvos (ל"ח שב) where he writes:

אמנם כשהראה לו השנאה והודיעו שהוא שונא אותו אינו עובר על זה הלאו.

However, I believe, the Ramban disagrees. The Ramban seeks to explain the connection between the first part of the Pasuk which teaches בלבבך לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך and the second part which teaches הוכיח תוכיח את אחיך, followed by the third part<sup>5</sup> ולא תשא עליו חטא. The Ramban entertains the possibility that there is no strong connection but then adds:

והנכון בעיני, כי "הוכח תוכיח", כמו והוכיח אברהם את אבימלך (בראשית כא כה). ויאמר הכתוב, אל תשנא את אחיך בלבבך בעשותו לך שלא כרצונך, אבל תוכיחנו מדוע ככה עשית עמדי, ולא תשא עליו חטא לכסות שנאתו בלבבך ולא תגיד לו, כי בהוכיחך אותו יתנצל לך, או ישוב ויתודה על חטאו ותכפר לו.

The Ramban here connects the three parts of the Pasuk, לא תשנא, הוכיח תוכיח, ולא תשא עליו חטא into one continuous idea. One must not harbor hatred for his brother in his heart, rather he must tell him what he has done wrong, and by telling him he will save himself from the sin of carrying this hatred in his heart.

It is, therefore, possible to infer from the Ramban's words that if one were to simply tell his brother that he hates him but not say it in a way that would help him correct his actions, he would not fulfill the intent of the Pasuk.

What did Yosef's brothers do? The Pasuk tells us לא יכלו דברו לשלום, they could not speak with him in a civil manner. Clearly they had no interest in healing the rift between them, only in letting him know how much they hated him! Are they to be lauded for baring their feelings to him? According to the Rambam the answer is yes, for they thus fulfilled the commandment of בלבבך לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך. According to the Ramban the answer is no, for they did not seek reconciliation, only to vent their hatred. According to the opinion of the Ramban, if we were to credit the brothers with anything it would be that at least they were not two-faced, בלבבך לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך.

We may thus propose that Rashi agrees with the Ramban and therefore did not wish to understand the Midrash as referring to the לאו לא תשנא, for by not being able to talk with Yosef civilly they indeed transgressed the לאו. Rather, Rashi chose to understand the Midrash as crediting the brothers for not speaking בלבבך לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך for this they most certainly did not do.

2. I think it is important to ask: Why is it so important to express one's hatred? After all, couldn't one argue that bringing it out into the open will only cause the other person to become defensive and deepen the hatred?

I believe the answer is that one who harbors hatred in their heart does so because they feel that the other person cannot or will not change their ways. They believe that the actions of the other that caused the feud in the first place were deliberate and intentional and reveal their true evil character. In truth, this is rarely so. I once heard a brilliant line which read: "Never attribute to malice that which can be explained by incompetence." Most people hurt others not out of malice but rather out of social incompetence; simply put, they just were not thinking how their actions would be interpreted by others. Telling others that they have hurt you means giving them the benefit of the doubt that their actions are not rooted in a deeply based evil streak, but rather in unintentional acts that can easily be corrected.

3. Question for further thought:

If you suspect that by telling the person that you hate them, they will not try to reconcile with you, but only damage your relationship, do you think there is still an obligation to tell them?

<sup>5</sup> ויקרא יט: יז לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך הוכח תוכיח את אחיך ולא תשא עליו חטא