

פסוקים and שמחת תורה and שמיני עצרת for דברי תורה everybody. I have two brought down in a wonderful set of ספרים called צלותא דאברהם, a two-volume set which I came across many years ago and I purchased it, and he has tremendous הערות in davening. It's based on the תפילות of a certain R' Avraham Landau of Chekhanov, written by R' Menachem Mendel Chaim Landau from a city Zawiercie in Poland.

The רצון יראיו יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֵת שׁוֹנְעֵתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם: שׁוֹמֵר ה' אֶת כָּל אֲהָבָיו וְאֵת כָּל הַרְשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד are: אשרי in פסוקים. He brings down a fascinating הארה which after you hear it you say, why didn't I think of that? It says for the יראים, those who fear Hashem, Hashem does their רצון; שׁוֹמֵר ה' אֶת כָּל אֲהָבָיו - Hashem hears them and saves them from their צרות. However, שׁוֹמֵר ה' אֶת כָּל אֲהָבָיו - the ones who love Hashem, Hashem watches over them that their צרות should not come on them in the first place. So the שמירה that Hashem provides for those who love him is definitely a much higher מדרגה than the ones who fear him. יראת שמים is not a small thing, it's something to aspire to. However, let's first discuss the idea of אֲהָבָיו, that הקדוש ברוך הוא loves us and we love הקדוש ברוך הוא.

The Ruzhiner Rebbe, quoted in the sefer שיש בהם חיים, has a very interesting take on a Gemara which we all know, and he applies it to שמייני עצרת. It's brought down in the Gemara in שבת ל"א ע"א that a goy came to הלל and said to him, תורה על רגל אחת, אֶחָת - I'm willing to become a גר on the condition that you teach me the whole תורה. הלל replied with the famous line, דַּעְלֶךָ סֵנִי, לְחַבְרֶךָ לֹא תַעֲבִיד - Do unto others as you would have others do unto you, which we say in the negative way, don't do others what you would not have them doing to you. The Ruzhiner has a completely different take on this Gemara. He points out that the תורה brings the basis for every single יום טוב that we have. There's one יום טוב for which that is not the case, and that's שמייני עצרת. The תורה doesn't give us any טעם, doesn't give us any reason whatsoever as to what this יום טוב is, and we only about שמייני עצרת's significance from the מדרש. That's what the גר was asking הלל. This גר apparently was already fairly well-versed. He said "Every יום טוב in the תורה has a reason, אֶחָת, תורה על רגל אחת, except this one. רגל." Which רגל is that? That רגל is שמייני עצרת. That's called a רגל בפני עצמו, we make a שהייונו on שמייני עצרת. What did הלל answer him? דַּעְלֶךָ סֵנִי לְחַבְרֶךָ לֹא תַעֲבִיד - The reason for this יום טוב is to remove the separation between Yidden. It should be a time where we all become one nation of אחדות, one nation of קשה עלי, אהבה and חיבה between every single Jew and his friend. That's why הקדוש ברוך הוא says, פרידתכם. Just as the הקדוש ברוך הוא loves each and every one of us, he wants each and every one of us to love each other.

Now, a vort from R' Meir'l of Premishlan on שמחת תורה, also brought down in חיים שיש בהם. One year, at this time of the year, R' Meir'l's daughter became gravely ill. When שמחת תורה came, she was actually closer to מיתה than to חיים. However, R' Meir'l's עבודה was unchanged. Exactly as he did every other year he was שמח במשחת תורה as if there was nothing wrong, as if everything was completely fine. The חסידים came running to him and they said, "Go look what's going on, see what her מצב is." He went into her room, took a look at her situation, came out, and made the following proclamation: "ריבונו של עולם, you told us to be תוקע בשופר on ראש השנה - Meir'l was תוקע. [He always spoke about himself in the third person]. You told us to be מתענה, to fast on יום כיפור - Meir'l fasted. You told us to sit in the סוכה on סוכות - Meir'l did that too. You also told us to be משמח on שמחת תורה, and Meir'l is having the שמחה. But you made R' Meir'l's daughter sick. And Meir'l has to be מקבל this situation בשמחה, as חז"ל say (ברכות נ"ד) (ע"א) - The same way that a person is שמח when Hashem showers him with הברכה והצלחה על הדרך, he has to have exactly the same שמחה when a misfortune befalls him. So Meir'l is מקבל all of this בשמחה. But ריבונו של עולם, I have a שאלה for you. There is a הלכה פסוקה אין that the הלכה פסוקה is שמחה של יום טוב and שמחה of being שמח. How can I simultaneously have שמחה של יום טוב and שמחה of being שמח? They noticed that his daughter immediately began perspiring profusely, and a little while came back to her full state of health.



The last words of this דבר תורה are: רָצוֹן יִרְאֵיוּ יַעֲשֶׂה. יִרְאֵת שָׁמַיִם is not a little thing. We want to have that level of being אוֹהֲבֵי ה'. But let's also work very hard to be מְקַבְּלִים on ourselves יִרְאֵת שָׁמַיִם. We should work very diligently to understand that everything comes from Hashem. We should respect that and treat הַקְדוּשָׁה with the awesomeness He is worthy of.

