

Orchos HaAmud

Weekly Presentation Highlighting an Amud of the Week



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BERACHOS 10A

BY RABBI AVIGDOR BERENSTEIN

During those days, Chizkiyahu became deathly ill. Yeshayahu ben Amotz, the navi, came to him and said to him, “So said Hashem: ‘Instruct your household, for you will die and you will not live, etc.’” What is meant by you will die and you will not live? You will die in this world and you will not live in the World to Come. [Chizkiyahu] said to [Yeshayahu], “Why to such an extent?!” He said to him, “Because you did not involve yourself in having children.” He said to him, “[That is] because I saw with ruach hakodesh that children who are not good will descend from me.” He said to him, “Why do you occupy yourself with the secrets of the Merciful One?! You should do what you are commanded to do, and what Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants to do He will do.” He said to him, “So, give me your daughter. Perhaps my merit and your merit will cause good children to descend from me.”

This Gemara describes a fascinating debate between two giants. Chizkiyahu Hamelech, who stuck a sword in the Beis Hamidrash and declared, “Whoever does not learn Torah will be pierced with a sword,” who increased Torah learning in K'lal Yisroel to the point where they could not find a boy or girl anywhere in Eretz Yisrael who did not know the halachos of tumah and taharah, who Hashem wanted to make Mashiach, was sentenced to death for neglecting to have children. Chizkiyahu defended his actions to the navi by explaining that his intent was for the sake of Heaven, as he knew that his children would not be good. But Yeshayahu responded that our job is not to make cheshbonos based on costs and benefits; our job is to do the mitzvos. Chizkiyahu accepted Yeshayahu’s words and realized their truth. So he married, after davening for Hashem to annul the decree.

The Sanz-Klausenberger Rebbe, author of Shefa Chaim, related that he had applied this lesson to a question he was asked after the Holocaust by a survivor who lived in America and had lost all children in the war. This man wanted to know if he should marry and have children again or if perhaps it would be better not to because he was convinced that in the America of those days it would be impossible to be mechanech children properly and to raise them to follow in the ways of their illustrious forebears.

The rebbe zt”l was amazed at the man’s tzidkus. He was prepared to live all alone and forego having children rather than marry and leave behind unworthy descendants. Nevertheless, the rebbe told the man what Yeshiyahu had told Chizkiyahu. We do not make cheshbonos. The rebbe told the man that he, too, must fulfill his mitzvah to marry and have children.

But why is it that we cannot make cheshbonos? Why should a man fulfill a mitzvah if it seems clear to him that doing so will damage him spiritually and, as in the case of Chizkiyahu, bring ruin upon the world? The Chofetz Chaim zt”l, in his Machaneh Yisrael (Ch. 26 “Davar B’ito”), discusses this:

“A man is only aware of what he sees before him, and therefore many aspects of the conduct of the Eibeshter are hidden from him. Even if he is a great man who has ruach hakodesh, he sees only the generation that will follow his own, like Chizkiyahu... so it could seem to a person that he should adopt certain behaviors that are inconsistent with the way of the Torah. Not so Hakadosh Baruch Hu. He reads the generations from the beginning. He looks and gazes until the end of all generations and until the end of all matters, and it is based on this clear and truthful gaze that He legislated and set for us our holy Torah, with all its mitzvos and subjects... We see this clearly with Chizkiyahu. He saw only that he would father Menasheh, but Hakadosh Baruch Hu knew that eventually Yoshiyahu

would descend from him, about whom is written, There was no one like him... and after him there will not be. The same idea applies in every single matter; our holy Torah will not change because of some direction of the world that appears to contradict our Torah, for that is only due to our limited knowledge.” The Chofetz Chaim stresses that one must therefore keep the mitzvos precisely according to their halachos, without concern for potential outcomes.

An addition to this lesson is repeated in the name of Hagaon R’ Yehonassan Eibushitz zt”l (Ohel Yosef, Berachos Vol. I p. 387). While it’s true that Menasheh was a rasha, he did teshuvah at the end of his life, and he sits in Gan Eden at the head of all ba’alei teshuvah. So, indeed, it was good for Chizkiyahu to marry and have Menasheh as a son. But Chizkiyahu could not see that with his ruach hakodesh because it is one of the secrets of Creation.

The lesson for us is that we must keep the mitzvos because Hashem commanded us to do them, even if at times it seems wrong to do so. We must believe that Hakadosh Baruch Hu orchestrates everything so that, ultimately, mitzvos bring about positive outcomes, as was the case with Chizkiyahu. The way Hakadosh Baruch Hu created the word is such that the fulfillment of mitzvos will always be beneficial.

Clinging closely to the ways of the Torah, without veering to the right or to the left, is the only way to ensure that our actions will benefit ourselves and the world.

Amud Ha Yomi recently began its 1st cycle through Shas with Masechta Brachos! This historic initiative will enable deeper comprehension of Shas. Additionally, there are optional monthly bechinos with stipends, which affords one a much greater opportunity to be koneh Shas through Dirshu’s proven retention and accountability methods.

UPCOMING AMUD HAYOMI LIMUD SCHEDULE

DAF HAYOMI	AMUD HAYOMI	DATE	תאריך	יום
קידושין עז	ברכות ה:	10/29/23	יד חשון	א
קידושין עח	ברכות ו:	10/30/23	טו חשון	ב
קידושין עט	ברכות ז:	10/31/23	טז חשון	ג
קידושין פ	ברכות ח:	11/1/23	יז חשון	ד
קידושין פא	ברכות ט:	11/2/23	יח חשון	ה
קידושין פב	ברכות יא:	11/3/23	יט חשון	ו
בבא קמא ב	ברכות יב:	11/4/23	כ חשון	שבת
בבא קמא ג	ברכות יג:	11/5/23	כא חשון	א
בבא קמא ד	ברכות יד:	11/6/23	כב חשון	ב
בבא קמא ה	ברכות טו:	11/7/23	כג חשון	ג
בבא קמא ו	ברכות טז:	11/8/23	כד חשון	ד
בבא קמא ז	ברכות טז:	11/9/23	כה חשון	ה
בבא קמא ח	ברכות טז:	11/10/23	כו חשון	ו
בבא קמא ט	ברכות טז:	11/11/23	כז חשון	שבת