

Mesorah Tishrei Series:

Dr. Rivka Maron

Tehillim Perek 51: The Paradigm of Teshuva

I. פרק נא

למנצח מזור לְדוֹד:
בְּבוֹא־אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנָּבִיא כְּאֲשֶׁר־כָּא אֶל־בֵּית־שֹׁבֵעַ:
חֲגִנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחֹסֶדְךָ כָּרֵב רַחֲמֶיךָ מִחַה פִּשְׁעִי:
(הַרְבֵּה) [הָרֵב] כְּבֹסְנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי וּמִחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי:
כִּי־פִשְׁעִי אֲנִי אֲדַע וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִי תָמִיד...

לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי אֱלֹהִים וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן סַגֵּשׁ בְּמִרְבֵּי:
אֶל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלִּפְנֵיךָ וְרוּחַ קָדְשְׁךָ אֶל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי:
הַשִּׁיבָה לִי שִׁשְׁוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִּסְמְכֵנִי:

A psalm of David,
when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had come to Bathsheba.
Have mercy upon me, O God,
as befits Your faithfulness;
in keeping with Your abundant compassion,
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly of my iniquity,
and purify me of my sin;
for I recognize my transgressions,
and am ever conscious of my sin...

Fashion a pure heart for me, O God;
create in me a steadfast spirit.
Do not cast me out of Your presence,
or take Your holy spirit away from me.
Let me again rejoice in Your help;
let a vigorous spirit sustain me.

II. שמואל ב: פרק יב:

וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־נָתָן אֶל־דָּוִד וַיֵּבֶא אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ שָׁנִי אֲנָשִׁים הָיוּ בְּעִיר אַחַת אֶתְּךָ עֹשִׂיר וְאֶתְּךָ רָאשׁ:
לְעֹשִׂיר הָיָה צֹאן וּבָקָר הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד:
וְלָרֶשׁ אֵין־כֹּל כִּי אִם־כִּבְשָׁה אֶתְּךָ קִטְמָה אֲשֶׁר קָנָה וַיִּחַיֶּה וַתִּגְדֵּל עִמּוֹ וְעַם־בָּנָיו יִתְּנוּ מִפִּתּוֹ תֹאכֵל וּמִכֶּסֶן
תִּשְׁתֶּה וּבְחֵיקוֹ תִּשְׁכַּב וַתַּהֲיֵלֵךְ בְּבֵית:

וַיָּבֹא הַלֵּל לְאִישׁ הָעֶשְׂרִי וַיִּחְמַל לְקַחַת מִצֹּאנוֹ וּמִבְקָרוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת לְאֶרֶס הַבָּאֵלֹו וַיִּקַּח אֶת־כִּבְשֶׁת הָאִישׁ הָרֹאשׁ
וַיַּעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ הַבָּא אֵלָיו:
וַיִּסְרֹאֲף דָּוִד בְּאִישׁ מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־נָתָן סִי־יִהְיֶה כִּי בֶן־מִנָּת הָאִישׁ הָעֹשֶׂה זֹאת:
וְאֶת־הַכִּבְשֶׁת יִשְׁלַם אַרְבַּעַתַּיִם עֶקֶב אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְעַל אֲשֶׁר לֹא־חָמַל:

וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל־דָּוִד אַתָּה הָאִישׁ... וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־נָתָן חֲטָאתִי לַיהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל־דָּוִד גַּם־יִהְיֶה הָעֶבֶר
חֲטָאתְךָ לֹא תָמוּת:

And G-d sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said, "There were two men in the same city, one rich and one poor.

The rich one had very large flocks and herds, but the poor one had only one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He tended it and it grew up together with him and his children: it used to share his morsel of bread, drink from his cup, and nestle in his bosom; it was like a daughter to him.

One day, a traveler came to the rich man, but he was loath to take anything from his own flocks or herds to prepare a meal for the guest who had come to him; so he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

David flew into a rage against the man, and said to Nathan, "As G-d lives, the man who did this deserves to die!

He must pay for the lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and showed no pity."

And Nathan said to David, "**That man is you!**

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned before Hashem!" And Nathan replied to David, "Hashem has remitted your sin; you shall not die.

III. בראשית ג:יג

"מה זאת עשית" אמר זה לעורר גם אותה על התשובה "כי לא יחפץ במות המת כי עם בשובו (יחזקאל יח: כג)

IV. שמות ג

"והכיתי את מצרים בכל נפלאותיו" באופן שיפלא עליהם כל שומע, ורבים יראו ויראו, אולי ישובו קצתם

V. כִּי יִהְיֶה אֶל־הֵיכָלְךָ הוּא אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וְאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנִים הָאֵל הַגָּדֹל הַגִּבֹּר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִשָּׂא פָנִים וְלֹא יִקַּח שֹׁחַד:

VI. For Hashem your God is the Sovereign supreme, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who shows no favor and takes no bribe, שאין מצוה מכבה עברה וכל זה יורה שלא תבטחו אם תחטאו, להנצל בשום זכות מן העונש כלל, זולתי בתשובה השלמה

For no mitzvah can "cancel out" a sin, all of this teaches that you should not rely, if you sin, on any merit whatsoever to save you from punishment. **Only complete repentance can do so.**

VII. אֲרִדְהָנָא וְאֶרְאֶה הַכְּצַעְקָתָהּ הַבָּאָה אֵלַי עָשׂוּ וְכָלָה וְאִם־לֹא אֲדַעָה:

I will go down to see whether they have acted altogether according to the outcry that has reached Me; If so, I will end them, and if not, I will know (according to Rashi)

ספורנו: עשו כלה: עשו כלום, שאין ביניהם מוחה

Edmund Burke “all it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing”

VIII. Gershom Sholem: Sabbatai Zevi the mystical Messiah 699-702

A. “An important factor...was the extreme reserve manifested by the Turkish authorities. The well-nigh miraculous fact that the Jews were left unharmed although they were guilty of rebellion and *lese majeste* made a profound impression on all observers, not least the Jews themselves...

B. From a letter **written from R Yoseph haLevi of Livorno and Cited by R. Yaakov Sasportas in ציץ נובל הצבי**:

“Sabbatai had shown to the Sultan the letters of homage of the Jewish communities whereupon the sultan in his anger ordered all the Jews above the age of seven to be put to death and those under seven to be forcibly converted to Islam..”and the books of wrath and anger were written and sealed. But two of the chief men in the kingdom came to the sultan and entreated him to avert his anger and not to destroy a whole people because of one scelerate, the like of which none of his ancestors had ever done; and the sultan’s mother, too, took pity...and the sultan granted their requests..and wrote a letter of pardon. But the apostate’s [Sabbatai Zevi’s] anger was not turned away and he again informed against the rabbis saying that they had incited him. The sultan sent for them in order to put them to death, but he was again entreated in their behalf and he pardoned them

C. From a letter written on **December 9, 1666 from the rabbis of Constantinople to R Yitzchak Yeshurun in Smyrna**:

“As for Sabbatai Sevi, you have received a full report...Let it suffice to say that we and our children should render infinite praise and thanks to Hashem who has saved us from the sword to which our lives would have been forfeited, had it not been for a mediator who interceded for us.” (The identity of this mediator remains a mystery, although it is widely believed that it was the Sultan’s mother).

D. From reports **from Thomas Coenen to the Levant Trading Company at The Hauge** (Thomas Coenen was a Dutch Protestant Minister who wrote one of

the most comprehensive eye-witness accounts of the events surrounding Sabbatai Zevi)

“The Sultan gave orders to arrest a number of leaders of the Jewish communities...Twelve rabbis were to be arrested in Constantinople, and some more in Smyrna. The authorities had already begun to make arrests when new messengers arrived bringing counter orders. The rabbis were given only a reprimand and the Jews were pardoned.

E. A letter from **R. Leib ben Ozer cited by R. Yaakov Emden in *Torat ha-K'naot*:**

“...They [Rabbanim of the time] said that it was written in the books that hitherto, whenever men had declared themselves to be messiahs this had brought persecution upon Israel. **But this time no evil at all had befallen the Jews throughout the dispersion...nor had they suffered any financial loss. And they [the Rabbanim] said the reason for this was the great repentance in those days, the like of which had not occurred since the foundation of the earth, and it was through the merits of this repentance that the evil decree was nullified.**”

457

Prayer for Sabbatai Sevi by Nathan of Gaza. Seder Hafsakah Gedolah (prayers for repentance with long fasts), arranged by Nathan of Gaza, the prophet of Sabbatai Sevi, the false Messiah (1665-1666), *circa 1666*.

Hebrew manuscript on paper, 15.8cm. by 11.2cm., pp.37,(1), 21/22 lines to the page written in Oriental Sefardi Rabbinic cursive script with God's and combination of God's names in square script, modern cloth.

Nathan of Gaza, the well-known prophet of Sabbatai Sevi sent 'Tikunim' (special Kabbalistic prayers for repentance) to shorten the agonies of the Messiah ('hevlei Mashiah') to numerous Jewish communities in Western Europe, Turkey, Egypt and the Holy Land. These nocturnal prayers, to be recited nightly, were printed in Constantinople, Mantua, Amsterdam and Prague but the 'Tikunim' for selected kabbalists were never printed and are therefore extremely rare. Hafsakah manuscripts are in the Jerusalem Library (no.159), Jew's College Library (no.40) and three manuscripts in the Guenzburg Collection in the Moscow Lenin Library. Each one has substantial textual differences. The manuscript offered here differs in many ways from the texts analysed and printed by Professor Isaiah Tishby and Gershom Scholem, especially in the Eighteen Benedictions section. Isaiah Tishby, *Tikunei Teshuvah Shel Nathan Ha'Azati*, in his book *Netivei Emunah U'Minut*, Tel-Aviv, 1964, pp.30-51; Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, Princeton, 1975, p.291-296.

\$5,000-6,000

