

## Parshas Vayeshev 5762

1. Story of Yehudah and Tamar. If not scandalous, at least indecorous. Yet from this episode מלכות בית דוד is born, with the birth of פּרָץ; whose name, even denotes מלכות: מלך פּוֹרֵץ גֹּדֵר.
  2. Recurring pattern: רות המואביה, whom חז"ל describe as אמה של מלכות, the mother of מלכות בית דוד, comes from מואב, who is fathered by an incestuous union between לוט and his daughters in the aftermath of the destruction of קדום. And חז"ל emphasize this strange connection: On the מצאתי דוד עבדי: פסוק, the Midrash says: היכן מצאתי? בסדום.
  3. And even the marriage of בועז and רות raised eyebrows; the leader of the Jewish people and a גיורת from a nation whom the Torah forbade to marry into the Jewish people.
  4. The ש"ך in his commentary on the Torah offers a very important answer, which, however, requires some elaboration:
  5. All familiar with עין הרע; whenever we confess to some spiritual or material achievement. Defensive mechanism. Perhaps specious; but the instinct has a firm root in our tradition; drawing attention to wealth - spiritual or material - is dangerous:
  6. In the world there are physical forces - electricity, magnetism etc. - each with laws that it must obey. Likewise there are spiritual forces, of קדושה and of טומאה, which have certain laws of their nature that they must obey.
  7. One such law is that קדושה is attracted to פנימיות and טומאה to חיצוניות.
- For example: קדושה of מקדש has to be contained within a wall; likewise קדושה of ירושלים, טומאה, on the other hand, adheres only to surfaces; the interior of a person or of a vessel - בית הסתרים - cannot contract טומאה.
8. Another example: We are not מברך החדש before Rosh Hashanah, and we don't blow shofar on ערב ראש השנה, in order to be מערבת השטן. Is the שטן so foolish? Doesn't he remember what happened last year?
- The answer is that the שטן is neither wise nor foolish; he is a spiritual force, and obeys the laws of his nature. And his nature is that he is attracted to what is on the surface; and the more something is brought to the surface, the more it is publicized, the more vulnerable the forces of טומאה and הפסד.
9. Back to ש"ך. Greatest good - greatest קדושה - is גאולה. מלכות בית דוד carries that. Prime target for טומאה; especially at those critical and vulnerable moments when it is being brought into being: זיווג בועז ורות, לוט, לידת פרץ, זיווג בועז ורות.

So those events - full of moment and portent - have to be disguised; their spiritual

potential has to be hidden beneath the veil of scandal.

10. Midrash: ויהי בעת ההיא ורד יהודה מאת אחיו. ר' שמאל בר נחמן פתח, כי אנכי ידעתי את המחשבות. שבטים היו עוסקים במכירתו של יוסף, ויוסף היה עסוק בשקו ותעניתו, ראובן היה עוסק בשקו ותעניתו, יהודה היה עוסק בשקו ותעניתו, ויהודה היה עסוק ליקח לו אשה, והקב"ה היה עסוק ובורא אורו של משיח

Least possible auspicious moment. News uniformly bleak. דוקא then - when שטן is least on his guard - אורו של משיח creates הקב"ה -

11. Gemara in סנהדרין: אין בן דוד בא עד שיתיאשו מן הגאולה: When the world has given up hope of his arrival. When even the שטן doesn't expect him.

Which is not to say that we should give up hope of his arrival. We, to whom the Tora divulges the story of יהודה ותמר, on the contrary, we have to understand that דוקא when the world seems so profane, when the situation so bleak, when the news out of ארץ ישראל so disheartening - we should strengthen ourselves in expectation of his arrival. So that when פתאום יבוא האדון ה', when the גאולה suddenly comes, it will be the שטן who will be surprised, while we will be waiting expectantly.