



A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

ראש השנה

כִּי זִכָּר כָּל הַיָּצוֹר לְפָנֶיךָ בָּא, מַעֲשֵׂה אִישׁ וּפְקָדָתוֹ, וְעֲלִילוֹת מַצְעָדֵי גֵבֶר, מַחֲשָׁבוֹת אָדָם וְתַחבּוּלוֹתָיו, וְיִצְרֵי מַעֲלָלֵי אִישׁ. אֲשֶׁרִי אִישׁ שְׁלֵא יִשְׁכַּחְךָ, וּבֶן אָדָם יִתְאַמֵּץ בָּךְ. כִּי דִרְשִׁיךָ לַעוֹלָם לֹא יִכְשְׁלוּ, וְלֹא יִכְלְמוּ לִנְצַח כָּל הַחוֹסִים בָּךְ. (מוסף ר"ה)

For the remembrance of everything fashioned comes before You: everyone's deed and mission, the accomplishments of man's activity, man's thoughts and schemes, and the motives behind man's deeds. Praiseworthy is the man who does not forget You, the human being who takes strength in You, for those who seek You will never stumble nor will those who take refuge in You ever be humiliated. (Musaf Rosh Hashanah)

In the Zichronos section of the Rosh Hashanah Musaf, we encounter various aspects of our judgment by Hashem as He assesses our deeds on Rosh Hashanah. The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* elaborates on the distinctions between these aspects and the messages they convey.

He explains that the first phrase of *מַעֲשֵׂה אִישׁ וּפְקָדָתוֹ* means that individuals are judged based on two criteria: *מַעֲשֵׂה אִישׁ* – the deeds they have actually done, and *וּפְקָדָתוֹ* – what they lacked and what they were unable to accomplish. We find this term in the *possuk*, *וְלֹא נִפְקַד מִמֶּנּוּ אִישׁ, and not a man of us is missing (Bamidbar 31:49).*

This can be better understood with the Vilna Gaon's explanation of the Mishnah (*Pirkei Avos 4:22*): *וְעַל כִּרְחֻק אֲתָה עֹתִיד לִתֵּן דִּין וְחֶשְׁבּוֹן לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים הַקֵּב"ה, and you are destined against your will to give a judgement and accounting in front of the King of Kings, Hashem.* The Gaon clarifies that, in addition to the *דִּין, judgment*, regarding the actual sin an individual commits, there is another aspect to consider. Hashem conducts a *חֶשְׁבּוֹן, accounting*, based on the time and resources that were expended during the sin. A person will be judged and found lacking for all the positive actions that could have been performed during the time spent on sinful activities. Furthermore, an individual will be held accountable for the efforts and abilities used for negative behaviours, which could have been better utilised for more beneficial and positive actions.

Rav Isaac Sher, Rosh Yeshivas Slabodka, once remarked that when he walks down the streets, he feels as though he is walking through a vast graveyard filled with living people. He explained that he recognises many individuals he encounters and remembers them well from their younger days. These are people who possessed incredible capabilities and had the potential to develop into greatness. For instance, one person could have become a distinguished Marbitz Torah, delivering *shiurim* to countless *talmidim* in the greatest *yeshivah*. Another could have been a significant Mashpia, inspiring and moving listeners with passionate speeches in Mussar and Yiras Shomayim. A third individual had the potential to be a great Moreh Ho'roah, leading a large city as their halachic authority.

However, these individuals ultimately did not utilise their remarkable talents and did not achieve what they could have become. This, he explained, is the graveyard he refers to. On one person would be inscribed, "Here lies the great Gaon, so-and-so, who disseminated Torah to the public." On another, "Here lies the elevated Tzaddik who inspired many, bringing numerous students closer to Torah and Yiras Shomayim." And on the third, "Here lies the renowned Rav of the city, who led them for many years."

All of these individuals had immense potential for greatness, yet due to their unwillingness to work hard or their inclination toward matters of lesser importance, they buried their abilities within themselves. As a result, their strengths and talents remained unrealised.

The Rosh Yeshiva offers another interpretation of the phrase from R' Chaim of Volozhin. He explains that the word **וּפְקִדָּתוֹ** stems from the term **תְּפִקִּיד**, *mission*. Each person has a mission and purpose in this world that they are obligated to fulfil. Thus, individuals are especially accountable for not performing or fulfilling their unique mission in this world. We find this term in the *possuk* describing the responsibilities of Elozor HaKohen: **וּפְקִדַת אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אַהֲרֹן**, *and the task of Elazar, son of Aharon*.

He illustrates this concept with a parable. Imagine someone who wishes to make a request of the king. Even if he is very close to the king, he will approach him with fear and trembling. This is even more true for someone who has committed a crime against the king; they will approach with trepidation. It is especially true for someone appointed by the king to oversee his treasury who then, in turn, steals from it. If a person is entrusted with the responsibility of guarding a specific place or item and then abuses that position, jeopardising what they were meant to protect, their punishment will be far more severe than that of someone who was not given such responsibility. This is the meaning of **וּפְקִדָּתוֹ**; if a person sins in the very area where they have been given a mission, their punishment will be immeasurably greater.

We further find this concept concerning the atonement required for **טומאת מקדש וקדשיו**, *tumah of the Mikdash and its holy things*. As noted in the Mishnah (*beginning Shevuos*), the *korban* required for the *kohanim* differed from that required for the rest of the nation. The Meshech Chochmah explains that since it is the responsibility and mission of the *kohanim* to safeguard the Mikdash and its *korbanos*, they are held to a higher standard and therefore require special atonement.

When approaching the Yemei HaDin and striving to improve our actions, we should internalise the messages outlined above. We must recognise that we will be judged not only on our deeds but also on the time and resources that we could have used positively, which we instead wasted. It is crucial to ensure that our many talents and abilities do not remain buried within us but are expressed in our Avodas Hashem. Furthermore, we must appreciate that each of us has a unique and important mission to fulfil in this world, and we bear significant responsibility if we fail to achieve it.

May we embrace the continuation of the phrase in Zichronos: **אֲשֶׁר־אִישׁ שָׁלָא יִשְׁכַּחְךָ, וּבֶן אָדָם יִתְאַמֵּץ בָּךְ**, *Praiseworthy is the man who does not forget You, the human being who takes strength in You*. Through this, we will merit the fulfilment of **כִּי דֹרְשֶׁיךָ, לְעוֹלָם לֹא יִכְשְׁלוּ, וְלֹא יִכְלְמוּ לְנֶצַח כָּל הַחוֹסִים בָּךְ**, *for those who seek You will never stumble, nor will those who take refuge in You ever be humiliated*. May this grant us the necessary *zechus* for a favourable verdict, along with a year filled with growth, success and blessings.

כְּתִיבָה וְחִתִּימָה טוֹבָה

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