



CHAVURAT HAMASCHACH

SYNAGOGUE SABBATH MESSAGE

## Taking Responsibility For The Consequences Of Sin

A d'rash for parashah Va'etchanan - Devarim (Deuteronomy) 3:23-7:11

By Rabbi Reuel Dillon

Sometimes we recognize when we have committed a sin and we ask for forgiveness. But, when someone is forgiven for a transgression does this mean that there are no longer any consequences to our sin? When Moshe sinned by not properly sanctifying Adonai in the eyes of the children of Yisrael regarding the miracle of the water coming from the rock, no doubt Moshe (Moses) repented, and Adonai forgave. But, did this mean that there would be no side effects or consequences to his sin? Perhaps Moshe thought for a moment that he could completely avoid the consequences of his sin. And, often we do the same.

In Devarim (Deuteronomy) 3:23-28 we read about Moshe begging Adonai to lift his consequences for his sin. It states, "I begged HaShem at that time, saying, Adonai HaShem, you have begun to show your servant your greatness, and your strong hand: for what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to your works, and according to your mighty acts? Please let me go over and see the good land that is beyond the Yarden, that goodly mountain, and Levanon. But HaShem was angry with me for your sakes, and didn't listen to me; and HaShem said to me, Let it suffice you; speak no more to me of this matter. Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift up your eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and see with your eyes: for you shall not go over this Yarden. But charge Yehoshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you shall see."

Sometimes forgiveness means that we don't receive in full the punishment for our sins. In Sh'mu'el Bet (2Samuel) 12:7-14 we read an example of this when King David was confronted with the sin of adultery and murder. It says, "Natan said to David, 'You are the man. This is what HaShem, the God of Yisrael, says: 'I anointed you king over Yisrael, and I delivered you out of the hand of Sha'ul. I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Yisrael and of Yehudah; and if that would have been too little, I would have added to you many more such things. Why have you despised the word of HaShem, to do that which is evil in his sight? You have struck Uriyah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have slain him with the sword of the children of `Ammon. Now therefore the sword will never depart from your house, because you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriyah the Hittite to be your wife.' This is what HaShem says: 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Yisrael, and before the sun.'" David said to Natan, "I have sinned against HaShem." Natan said to David, "HaShem also has put away your sin. You will not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to HaShem's enemies to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."

Although the passage says that Adonai did put away King David's sin, there were still some unpleasant consequences to His sin. David sought to please his flesh without consideration for anyone else or for the God he served. He probably knew it was wrong, but it was all about #1, that is, it was all about David and what he wanted. But, while he sought to serve himself in what he thought would make him happy, the actual result was that God removed any immediate shalom that would have been his. In addition, his future family suffered greatly for his sin. If David could have seen the consequences for his sin he surely would have thought twice before making the same choices. God will not be mocked by those whom claim to be His servants. Not only did David's future family suffer many heart breaking tragedies, but his firstborn was taken from him.

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, so we can assume that He will be consistent in dealing with sin when it comes to our sin. God forgave David and in His grace He didn't fully give him what he deserved, which was death. So too, if we fear Adonai and repent of our sin, He will not fully deal with us according to our sins, but we most likely will have to suffer some consequences. Tehellim (Psalms) 103:8-14 states, "HaShem is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness. He will not always accuse; Neither will he stay angry forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us for our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is his lovingkindness toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has he removed our transgressions from us. Like a father has compassion on his children, So HaShem has compassion on those who fear him. For he knows how we are made. He remembers that we are dust."

We should also know that one of the greatest consequences for our sin is that we give Adonai's enemies an occasion to blaspheme Him. We should take this more seriously than any personal consequence we may have to suffer. When we claim to be His servants and we act wickedly it reflects poorly on Him. For those of you whom are parents, just think of how it makes you feel when your children are out of control, act rudely, or commit a sinful act in the community. Think of how embarrassed you are when this happens. This makes you especially frustrated and angry if you have spent time teaching your child to act rightly and have given them righteous instructions for living only for them to completely disrespect you and disregard your words. In the eyes of others your child's actions can reflect on your parenting and you personally as an individual. Do we ever think about these things when we commit a sin and bring dishonor to our Heavenly Father? As we read our account of King David we see that Adonai took this so seriously that it was said to David, "...because by this deed you have given great occasion to HaShem's enemies to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.". Not only do we suffer when we sin, not only does Adonai's great name suffer when we sin, but others also suffer greatly when we decide to sin.

We should learn from the examples given to us in scripture so we don't have to repeat the errors of the people found therein. But, if we do fail and have to suffer the consequences for our past sins, we should accept the consequences without resenting God. We should continue to seek to serve Him even better and not return to our sin as a dog does to his vomit. In Ivrim (Hebrews) 12:3-13 we are exhorted with the following words, "For consider him who has endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, that you don't grow weary, fainting in your souls. You have not yet resisted to blood, striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons, "My son, don't take lightly the chastening of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov'd by him; For whom the Lord loves, he chastens, And scourges every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you endure. God deals with you as with sons, for

what son is there whom his father doesn't discipline? But if you are without discipline, whereof all have been made partakers, then are you illegitimate, and not sons. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they indeed, for a few days, punished us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. All chastening seems for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been exercised thereby. Therefore, lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, that that which is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.”.

In our personal relationships between family, friends, and acquaintances we are commanded to forgive someone when they repent of their sin against us. Mattityahu (Matthew) 18:21-22 states, “Then Kefa came and said to him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Until seven times?” Yeshua said to him, “I don't tell you until seven times, but, until seventy times seven.”. So, we are to continually forgive our brother when he comes and repents of their sin. But, if the sin is forgiven, this doesn't mean that there are no consequences to the sin when it comes to how it affects the relationship. The two individuals still may fellowship with one another, they may be pleasant with one another, and they may not be holding any bitterness against one another, but certain privileges and freedoms that once were enjoyed may no longer be possible for a time.

For example, if I have a friend that I continually borrow money to with the condition that it gets paid back, and the friend never pays me back, but asks for forgiveness and is granted forgiveness...if that friend makes it a regular habit of doing such things...I may forgive the person, but that forgiveness doesn't mean that I will continue to lend money to him or her any time soon. Another example could be with our children. Let's say that one of our children spoke with disrespect to us and the punishment was that they were grounded from playing video games for a week. If the child later felt remorse and came asking for forgiveness, we of course would forgive him or her, but that doesn't mean that the punishment of being grounded from videogames would be removed.

When someone sins against us we are commanded to forgive and have grace. And, even though the sins may result in certain restrictions in the relationship...nonetheless, the relationship is to be maintained. We are not to turn our back on the relationship. This is true whether it is a family member or a friend, and it is especially true when it comes to a husband or wife. Some consequences have more permanency than others. But, in general, after the person whom commits an offense demonstrates through their actions that they have changed their ways, privileges should be restored and restrictions should be lifted. Yisrael suffered many consequences for their sin and many privileges were taken from them. They experienced several restrictions in their relationship with the God of Yisrael. But, the model that we see God painting is one that is working and moving towards complete restoration.

Even after all that Yisrael (His spouse) has done to Him, even after all the wickedness and unfaithfulness that Adonai experienced with Yisrael...Even when He reached out His hand to them in love only to have His beloved strike it with a nail...even then Adonai doesn't give up on us. He continues to reach out His hand in love to His spouse and seeks complete restoration. Even when there are restrictions in the relationship, even when He doesn't feel like being our spouse...He will never give up on us. Never. To love us and to keep His covenant with us is a choice that He makes, even when He doesn't feel like doing so. We need to follow this example

of Adonai's amazing grace and love...even if we feel like our friend, family member, or spouse is causing us unbearable damage and diminishing our happiness.

It is one thing for us to patiently accept the consequences for our own sin. But, when it comes to applying consequences to others, we should exercise the same grace and mercy that we would hope Adonai would show us. When we repent of our sin we pray that Adonai doesn't give us what we fully deserve, but that He would give us His grace. Of course He will judge sin and His grace does have limits, especially when we refuse to repent...But, if we repent He will never separate from us and turn His back on our covenant relationship. If we want to experience additional favor when it comes to Adonai judging us for our sin...one sure way is to be ready to show abundant grace to others when they later come and repent after grievously sinning against us. For what does our Rabbi Yeshua teach us about God's forgiveness, grace, and repentance?

In Mattityahu (Matthew) 18:23-35 he states, "Therefore the Kingdom of Heaven is like a certain king, who wanted to reconcile accounts with his servants. When he had begun to reconcile, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But because he couldn't pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, with his wife, his children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and kneeled before him, saying, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will repay you all!' The lord of that servant, being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. "But that servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, who owed him one hundred denarii, and he grabbed him, and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' "So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you!' He would not, but went and cast him into prison, until he should pay back that which was due. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were exceedingly sorry, and came and told to their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him in, and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt, because you begged me. Shouldn't you also have had mercy on your fellow servant, even as I had mercy on you?' His lord was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors, until he should pay all that was due to him. So my heavenly Father will also do to you, if you don't each forgive your brother from your hearts for his misdeeds.".

In addition, when Yeshua teaches us to pray he is careful to teach us the following in Luke 11:4, "Forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.". And, in the book of Ya'akov (James) 2:13 we are told, "For judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.". After we have repented for our sin, if we don't want to suffer the full consequences for our sin...than we shouldn't insist that others do so either.

Shabbat shalom!

To read more messages like this visit: [www.synagoguechm.com](http://www.synagoguechm.com)