

Following the scathing Tochacha that is the central theme of this parasha, the laws of Arachin are outlined. These laws detail how one can donate his/her own value, or someone else's value to the Beit HaMikdash. What is the connection between the Tochacha, which threatens our ominous fate if we do not follow the Torah, and Arachin, which deals with the values of people? Indeed, a very strange juxtaposition.

How can we really tell what someone is made of and what values he has? Chazal (Sages) tell us in Gemara Eruvin (65b) "*BISH'LOSHA D'VARIM ADAM NIKAR, B'KOSO, B'KISO U'VEKAASO*" (*The character of a person can be identified in three ways: the way he drinks, the way he spends his money and the way he reacts in time of anger*). When one becomes intoxicated his true feeling become revealed, "*NICHNAS YAYIN YEITZEI SOD*" (*When wine enters secrets come out*) [Eruvin 65a]. The second is the way he spends his money. Does he use it to help people in need? or does he indulge himself in luxuries? And the third is how he reacts when provoked to anger.

When everything in life is rosy and easy, having strong faith in HaShem is not a challenge. When things go smoothly, we are prone to fooling ourselves into thinking that it is because we are deserving His Graciousness. So we thank HaShem but with no urgency in our prayers. The truth is, however, that personal strength and fortitude is commonly the product of adversity. In Pikei Avot [5:26] we are taught "*Lefum Tzara Agra*", according to the pain is the reward.

This idea provides insight into the order of the Tochacha and Arachin. It teaches that if we really want to see what a person is made of-his personal values- we should observe his reaction in trying circumstances. We don't ask for challenges. However, each person, to varying degrees, has their own problems and carries their own burdens. We often do not have control over these situations, but we do have the ability control how we react to them

The Brisker Rav once commented that every attribute, no matter how bad, has its place in the world—even anger, haughtiness, jealousy and “heresy”. There are times when one needs to be angry. There are times when it is appropriate to argue. Where is the proper place for this attribute of “heresy”? When your friend is in need, that's when, the Brisker Rav said, you should be a “kofer”. When someone has a problem do not take the attitude that G-d will take care of him, that G-d will provide his needs. At such times, a person should “not believe” in G-d. A person must take the responsibility upon himself and do what he can. That is not the time for faith. When it comes to your own parnasa you should make every effort to help yourself and leave the rest to faith in G-d. But when it comes to someone else's health and livelihood, you must be an activist, as the Torah states, (Vayikra 25:35) “If your brother becomes impoverished” [don't preach to him about faith in HaShem, but] “you shall strengthen him, so that he can live with you”

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