T'shuva: "תיבת נח" / Compartmentalization or "דבר שהנשמה תלויה בו" / Gestalt?

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How is that we look at people, or even ourselves for that matter? Are we a conglomeration of parts that come together like the part of a puzzle? Or perhaps we are a gestalt, likened to a pond of undifferentiated drops?

Two different concepts drawing from the Torah and from the Rabbinic Structure will open up a conversation regarding growth, change, repentance and self perception.

14. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; with rooms shalt thou make the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15. And this is how thou shalt make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16. A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

עֲשֵׂה
לְךָ תֵּבַת עֲצֵי־גֹפֶר קִנִּים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת־הַתֵּבָה וְכָפַרְתָּ אֹתָהּ
מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ בַּכֹּפֶר: וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת
אַמָּה אֹרֶךְ הַתֵּבָה חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה רָחְבָּהּ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה
16 קוֹמָתָהּ: צֹהַר תַּעֲשֶׂה לַתֵּבָה וְאֶל־אַמָּה תְכַלֶּנָּה מִלְמָעְלָה
וּפֶתַח הַתֵּבָה בְּצִדָּהּ תָּשִׂים תַּחְתִּיִּם שְׁנִים וּשְׁלִשִׁים
17 תַּעֲשֶׂהָ:

Three the Holy One, blessed be He, loves: he who does not display temper, he who does not become intoxicated, and he who does not insist on his [full] rights.

Three the Holy One, blessed be He, hates: he who speaks one thing with his mouth and another thing in his heart; and he who possesses evidence concerning his neighbour and does not testify for him; and he who sees something indecent in his neighbour and testifies against him alone.

שְׁלֹשָׁה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ
הוּא אוֹהֲבָן: א מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ כוֹעֵס וּמִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מִשְׁתַּכֵּר,
ב וּמִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מַעֲמִיד עַל מְדוֹתָיו. שְׁלֹשָׁה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ
הוּא שׂוֹנְאָן, ג הַמְדַבֵּר אֶחָד בְּפֶה וְאֶחָד בַּלֵּב, ד וְהַיּוֹדֵעַ
עֵדוּת בַּחֲבֵירוֹ וְאֵינוֹ מֵעִיד לוֹ, וְהָרוֹאֶה דְּבַר עֶרְוָה
בַּחֲבֵירוֹ וּמֵעִיד בּוֹ יְחִידִי.

Mishnah 1 מִשְׁנָה א

הָאוֹמֵר, מִשְׁקָלִי עָלָי, נוֹתֵן מִשְׁקָלוֹ, אִם כֶּסֶף כֶּסֶף, אִם זָהָב [1]זָהָב. מַעֲשֶׂה בְּאִמָּה שֶׁל יַרְמַטְיָה, שֶׁאָמְרָה, מִשְׁקָל בִּתִּי עָלָי, וְעָלְתָה לִירוּשָׁלַיִם וְשָׁקְלוּהָ, וְנָתְנָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ זָהָב. מִשְׁקַל יָדִי עָלָי, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר, מְמַלֵּא [2]חָבִית מַיִם, וּמַכְנִיסָה עַד מַרְפֵּיקוֹ; וְשׁוֹקֵל בְּשַׂר חֲמוֹר [3]וְגִידִין וַעֲצָמוֹת, וְנוֹתֵן לְתוֹכָהּ עַד [4]שֶׁתִּמָּלֵא. אָמַר רַבִּי [5]יוֹסֵי, וְכִי הֵיאַךְ אֶפְשָׁר לְכַוֵּן בָּשָׂר כְּנֶגֶד בָּשָׂר, וַעֲצָמוֹת כְּנֶגֶד [6]עֲצָמוֹת? אֶלָּא [7]שָׁמִין אֶת־הַיָּד כַּמָּה הִיא רְאוּיָה לִשְׁקוֹל,

If one said, 'I vow [to give the equivalent of] my weight', he must give his weight in silver if [he had vowed to give] silver, or in gold if [he had vowed to give] gold.[1] It once happened that the mother of Yarmatia said, 'I vow the weight of my daughter', and she went up [with her daughter] to Jerusalem and weighed her and paid her weight in gold. [If one said], 'I vow [to give the equivalent] weight of my hand', R. Judah says, He fills a jar[2] with water and inserts it [namely, his hand] up to the elbow, [a volume of water equal to that of the part inserted is expelled; the limb is then withdrawn]; and he next puts in [a quantity of] the flesh of an ass with [its] tendons[3] and bones until [the jar] is [again] full[4] [to the top], [and the flesh with its tendons and bones is removed and weighed, and this weight is deemed to be the equivalent to that of the hand and lower arm]. R. Jose[5] said, And is it then possible [to assume that volume for volume one kind of] flesh is equal [in weight] to [that of another kind of] flesh, and [one kind of] bones is equal [in weight] to [that of an equal bulk of another kind of] bones?[6]—but, rather, they estimate[7] how much the hand is likely to weigh.

Mishnah 2 מִשְׁנָה ב

דְּמֵי יָדִי עָלָי, שָׁמִין אוֹתוֹ כַּמָּה הוּא שָׁוֶה בְיָד, וְכַמָּה הוּא שָׁוֶה בְּלֹא יָד. זֶה חוֹמֶר בַּנְּדָרִים *מִבָּעֲרָכִין, וְחוֹמֶר *בָּעֲרָכִין *מִבַּנְּדָרִים. כֵּיצַד? הָאוֹמֵר, עֶרְכִּי עָלָי, וּמֵת, [2]יִתְּנוּ הַיּוֹרְשִׁין; דְּמֵי עָלַי, וּמֵת. לֹא יִתְּנוּ הַיּוֹרְשִׁים. שֶׁאֵין דָּמִים *לַמֵּתִים. עֶרְכִּי יָדִי, וְעֶרְכִּי רַגְלִי עָלָי, לֹא אָמַר כְּלוּם; עֶרְכִּי רֹאשִׁי, וְעֶרְכִּי [3]כִּבְדִי עָלָי, נוֹתֵן עֶרְכִּי כֻּלּוֹ. זֶה [4]הַכְּלָל, דָּבָר שֶׁהַנְּשָׁמָה תְּלוּיָה בּוֹ נוֹתֵן עֶרְכִּי כֻּלּוֹ.

[If one said], 'I vow [to give] the worth of my hand', they estimate how much he is worth with a hand and what is his value without a hand.[1] This [is an instance wherein] vows [of worth] are more severe than the dedication of valuations,* and [there are cases wherein] dedication of valuations* obtains greater stringency than vows* [of worth]. How so? If one said, 'I vow my valuation', and he died, the heirs must pay it;[2] but [if he said], 'I vow my worth', and he died, the heirs pay naught, for the dead* have no worth. [If one said], 'I vow the valuation of my hand', or 'I vow the valuation of my foot', he has said naught [and is not liable]; [but if he said], 'I vow the valuation of my head', or 'I vow the valuation of my liver',[3] he must pay [as for the vow of] the whole of his valuation. This is the general principle:[4] [if one vow the valuation of any part of the body] whereon life depends, he must pay the whole of his valuation.

1. אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת נֹחַ כו' וְעָשִׂית לְךָ תֵּיבַת עֲצֵי כו', עִנְיָן
2. הַתֵּיבָה, שֶׁנִּתַּן הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ עֻצָּה וְהַגָּנָה לְנֹחַ עַד
3. שֶׁיַּעַבְרוּ יְמֵי הַזַּעַם וְכֵן לְכָל מִי שֶׁלֹּא נִזְדַּמֵּן לִבּוֹ עֲדַיִן
4. יוּכַל לִלְמוֹד עֲצוּת אֵיךְ יִסָּתֵר עַצְמוֹ וְיִגִּין בַּעֲדוֹ מִכָּל
5. רַע הַמִּתְרַגֵּשׁ בָּעוֹלָם, וְכֵן אָמְרוּ חַכְמֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה "אִם רוֹאֶה אָדָם
6. שֶׁיִּסְגְּרִין בָּאִין עָלָיו יָרוּץ לְחַדְרֵי חֲדָרִים שֶׁל תּוֹרָה
7. וְהוּא נוֹתֶנֶת לוֹ עֵצָה אֵיךְ לְהִנָּצֵל", וְעִנְיַן הַתֵּיבָה הוּא
8. עַל פִּי מַה דְּאִיתָא בַּגְּמָרָא "שִׁלְשָׁה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא אוֹהֵב מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ
9. כּוֹעֵס וְאֵינוֹ מִשְׁתַּכֵּר וּמִי שֶׁמַּעֲבִיר עַל מִדּוֹתָיו, מִי
10. שֶׁאֵינוֹ כּוֹעֵס הַיְינוּ שֶׁאֵינוֹ מַרְאֶה שׁוּם פָּעַס בְּפוֹעַל,
11. וְאֵינוֹ מִשְׁתַּכֵּר הַיְינוּ שֶׁיֵּשׁ לוֹ יְשׁוּב הַדַּעַת וּמַכִּיר וּמַאֲמִין
12. בְּבוֹרְאוֹ עוֹלָם, וּמִי שֶׁמַּעֲבִיר עַל מִדּוֹתָיו הַיְינוּ
13. שֶׁמַּסְתִּיר הַכַּעַס גַּם מִלִּבּוֹ שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה בְּלִבּוֹ שׁוּם תַּרְעוֹמוֹת
14. עַל חֲבֵירוֹ, וְעַל אֵלּוּ הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה מְרַמֵּז הַתֵּיבָה, "עֲשֵׂה לְךָ
15. תֵּיבַת עֲצֵי גֹּפֶר" הַיְינוּ שֶׁלֹּא תִּכְעוֹס כִּי גְּפָרִית מוֹרָה
16. עַל כַּעַס וְזֶה "עֲשֵׂה לְךָ תֵּיבַת עֲצֵי גֹּפֶר" הַיְינוּ שֶׁתִּסְגּוֹר
17. אֶת הַכַּעַס וְלֹא תִּכְעוֹס בְּפוֹעַל, "קִנִּים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת
18. הַתֵּיבָה" הַיְינוּ שֶׁלֹּא תַּשְׁתַּכֵּר רַק תִּהְיֶה בִּישׁוּב הַדַּעַת
19. כִּי "קִנִּים" הוּא חֲדָרִים כְּמוֹ מִי שֶׁיֵּשׁ לוֹ חֲדָרִים הַרְבֵּה
20. צָרִיךְ שֶׁיִּהְיֶה לוֹ יְשׁוּב הַדַּעַת לֵידַע מְקוֹם כָּל חֶדֶר
21. וְתַשְׁמִישׁוֹ, וְגַם מַסֶּכֶת קִנִּים מוֹרֶה עַל זֶה וְלָכֵן מִי שֶׁאֵין
22. לוֹ יְשׁוּב הַדַּעַת וְלֵב טָהוֹר אֵינוֹ מֵבִין לְאָמִיתָם אֶת
23. עוֹמֶק דִּבְרֵי תּוֹרָה נִמְצָא בְּמַסֶּכֶת קִנִּים, "וְכָפַרְתָּ אוֹתָהּ מִבַּיִת
24. וּמִחוּץ בַּכּוֹפֶר", הַיְינוּ שֶׁתַּעֲבוֹר עַל מִדּוֹתֶיךָ, כִּי "וְכָפַרְתָּ"
25. הַיְינוּ שֶׁתְּכַפֵּר מְעוֹמֶק לִבְּךָ, שֶׁלֹּא יִשָּׁאֵר בְּלִבְּךָ שׁוּם
26. מִכַּעַס עַל חֲבֵרֶיךָ.

1. וְהַשִּׁיעוּרִין מֵהַתֵּיבָה הֵם אוֹתִיּוֹת

2. לָשׁוֹן, ג׳ מֵאוֹת אוֹרֶךְ וְחֲמִישִׁים רוֹחַב וְלַמ״ד קוֹמָה,

3. וְהֵיינוּ שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה לְךָ לָשׁוֹן שֶׁקֶר, וְגַם אִלּוּ הַשִּׁיעוּרִין

4. הֵם נֶגֶד ״בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל מְאֹדֶךָ״, לָמ״ד

5. אַמּוֹת גּוֹבַהּ כְּנֶגֶד ״בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ״, נ׳ רוֹחַב נֶגֶד ״בְּכָל נַפְשְׁךָ״

6. וְג׳ מֵאוֹת אוֹרֶךְ נֶגֶד ״בְּכָל מְאֹדֶךָ״, כִּי מְאֹד הַיֵּינוּ בְּכָל

7. מַה שֶּׁיּוּכַל הָאָדָם לְשַׁעֵר בְּדַעְתּוֹ וְלְהוֹסִיף, וְעַל זֶה

8. רוֹמֵז אוֹת הַ׳ה כִּי הַ׳ה הוּא אַחֲרוֹנָה שבא״ב כִּי סוֹד

9. הַת׳ הוּא בָּמוּס לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא וְלָכֵן בְּכָל מָקוֹם שֶׁרָצוּ

10. חֲכָמִים לְגַזֵּם גָּזְמוּ כְּשָׁלוֹשׁ מֵאוֹת כְּמוֹ ג׳ מֵאוֹת כּוֹר,

11. וְג׳ מֵאוֹת פְּרָסִים שֶׁבְּמַסֶּכֶת מִדּוֹת פֶּרֶק ג׳, ״צוֹהַר תַּעֲשֶׂה

12. לַתֵּיבָה״ הַיֵּינוּ שֶׁתֵּדַע כִּי ״הַפֶּל בְּיִדֵי שָׁמַיִם״, כִּי צוֹהַר

13. הַיֵּינוּ בְּהִירוּת וְיִדִיעָה, ״וְאֶל אַמָּה תְּכַלֶּנָּה מִלְמַעְלָה״,

14. הַיֵּינוּ שֶׁתִּצְטַמְצֵם בְּכָל קַבָּלוֹת הַשְׁפָּעָה שֶׁלֹּא תִּהְיֶה

15. רַעֲבָתָן, ״פְּתַח הַתֵּיבָה בְּצִדָּהּ תָּשִׂים״, הַיֵּינוּ כְּמוֹ

16. שְׁמוּאֵל עַל פָּסוּק ״בַּקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם וְרָדְפֵהוּ״ וּכְמוֹ דְאִיתָא

17. בַּמִּדְרָשׁ ״בַּקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם מִמְּקוֹמְךָ וְרָדְפֵהוּ מִמָּקוֹם אַחֵר״

18. הַיֵּינוּ מִצִּדָּךְ וּמִכָּל־חַ לֹא יִהְיֶה שׁוּם מְנִיעָה לְשָׁלוֹם, אַךְ

19. גַּם לְרָדוֹף אַחַר חֲבִירוֹ לְקָרֵב אֶת עַצְמוֹ לְחֲבִירוֹ גַּם זֹאת אֵין

20. מַהֲצוֹתָךְ כִּי בְּכָל דָּבָר נִמְצָא סָפֵק כִּי יוּכַל לִהְיוֹת שֶׁזֶּה

21. אֵינוֹ רָאוּי לָבוֹא אֶל בֵּיתְךָ, אַךְ לִדְחוֹתוֹ גַּם כֵּן אֵינוֹ

22. רָשַׁאי, וְזֶה פֵּירוּשׁ ״בְּצִדָּהּ תָּשִׂים״ לֹא בְּפִירְסוּם, ״תַּחְתִּים

23. שְׁנִיִּים וּשְׁלִישִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂה״ הַיֵּינוּ שֶׁנִּצְטַוֵּה נֹחַ לֵידַע אֵיךְ

24. לְהִתְנַהֵג עִם ג׳ בָּנָיו בְּכָל אֶחָד לְפִי מַדְרֵגָתוֹ, עִם חָם

25. כְּפִי מַדְרֵגָתוֹ הַיֵּינוּ ״תַּחְתִּים״ שֶׁתְּדַבֵּר עִמּוֹ רַק לְפָנִים

26. וְעִם יֶפֶת ״שְׁנִיִּים״ וְעִם שֵׁם ״שְׁלִישִׁים״ הַיֵּינוּ שֶׁתְּדַבֵּר עִמּוֹ

27. מַעֲמִיק הַלֵּב וְכָל סוֹדוֹתֶיךָ תְּגַלֶּה לוֹ.

(9)

MEI HASHILOACH (R' Mordechai Yoseph Lainer of Ishbitza, 1800-1854)

The issue of the ark is that Hashem gave advice and protection till the days of wrath pass and also to anyone who hasn't purified his heart, one can learn this advice how to cover and protect themselves from all bad that occurs in the world.

And also the Rabbis taught us that if a person sees that afflictions are coming upon him they should run to the most inner rooms of Torah and she gives them advice how to save oneself from them. (Tana D'vei Eliyahu Rabba 6).

The issue of the ark is according to the Gemarah (Psachim 113b): "Three the Holy One, Blessed be He, loves: he who does not display temper, he who does not become intoxicated, and he who does not insist on his [full] rights". "He who does not display temper", in other words that they don't show any actual anger. "He who does not become intoxicated" in other words that he has the peace of mind and acknowledges and believes in the Creator of the world. "He who does not insist on this [full] rights", is one that removes the anger from ones heart as well, that there should be no complaints in ones heart towards ones friends.

In regard to these three things the ark corresponds, "Make thee an ark of gofer wood", in other words, don't get angry, because gofer relates to anger and this is "Make thee an ark of gofer wood", in other words that you should close the anger and not actualize it. "Rooms shallt thou make in the ark" relates to "He who does not become intoxicated", that you should always have peace of mind because "kinim" is like rooms, that one that has many rooms needs to have peace of mind to know that location and use of every room and also the tractate of Kinim relates to this. Therefor, one that doesn't have peace of mind and a pure heart doesn't understand he true depth of the teachings of tractate Kinim. "And shalt you pitch it within and without with pitch" is "He who does not insist on this [full] rights", because "and you shall pitch" (v'chafarta), in other words, you shall forgive from the depth of your heart, that there shall be no imprint in you heart left from you anger towards your friend.

And the measurements of the ark are the letters of the word LaSHoN (tongue) - three hundred length, fifty width and thirty tall, meaning, that you should not have a "tongue" the lies. And also these measurements correspond with "with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your possessions" (D'varim 6, 5) - thirty (lamed) cubits high in regard to "with all your heart" (L'vavcha), fifty width in regard to "all your soul" (Nafsh'cha), and three hundred length is in regard to "with all your possessions" [relating to the letter shin]. Because the notion of "me'ode" relates to anything where a person can go beyond what they imagine. In correlation to this is the letter Shin, for she is the last letter of the alpha-bet, for the secret of the letter Tav is concealed for the world to come. And therefor every place that the sages wanted to exaggerate the did it with the number three hundred, for example, three hundred coor (Chulin 90b), and three hundred priests in the tractate of Midot, chapter 3, mishna 8.

"A light thou shalt make for the ark" in other words, that you should know that all is in the hands of the Heavens, for " light" / "window" is clarity and knowledge. "And to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward", in other words, that you should limit the receptivity of abundance, that you should not be greedy.

"And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof", in other words as in the verse, "seek peace and peruse it" (T'hillim 34, 15), and as explained in the Midrash, "week it from your place and peruse it from another place", meaning, from your side and in regard you your strength, there should be no holding back to make peace, but you also don't have to run after your friend to make peace. For there is an element of doubt in everything, for it is possible that it is not appropriate for your friend to enter your home, though you are not permitted to reject him. And this is the meaning of "in the side", and not where is it is public.

"With lower, second and third stories shalt thou make it", meaning, that Noach was commanded to know how to behave with each and every one of his three sons according to there level. Meaning, "lower" that you should only speak to him about things that are apparent. And with Yefet, "second" and with "Shem" "third", meaning, that you should speak with him from the depths of your heart and reveal to him all of your secrets.

[translation: Reb Nimi Feigelson]