



PARASHAT KI TEITZEI

"ובערת הרע מקרבך וכל ישראל ישמעו ויראו"

כתוב בפסוק (כא:כא) "ובערת הרע מקרבך וכל ישראל ישמעו ויראו". יש לפרש את הפסוק בדרך דרוש, אם תבער מקרבך, מעצמך, את הרע, אז ישמעוך אחרים כשאומר להם דברי מוסר. אבל כל זמן שהרע מצוי בקרבך, לא ישמעו אחרים את דבריך. (מעיינה של תורה)

"We'll Start The War From Right Here"

The Pasuk at the beginning of this week's Parashah states: "When you go out to war against your enemies, Hashem will place him in your hands; you will take him as a prisoner". Commentators point out that the Pasuk is written in the singular form "When **you** will go to war", suggesting that the Torah is referring not only to a communal war, but also to the personal war we each wage with our own Yetzer Harah (evil inclination), which is constantly trying to persuade us to do the wrong things. The Torah promises: You will overcome it; Hashem will place it in your hands. However this is only under one condition: We must go to war! We can't expect to win the battle lying on the couch. If we come ready to struggle, and determined to win, then Hashem will be there to help us emerge victorious. On June 6, 1944, D-Day the troops were coming ashore before their tanks landed on Utah Beach. They were a mile up the beach from where they were supposed to have landed. The men were under fire and taking cover. The advance was stalled. Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt came upon his officers in a foxhole where they were trying to decide on whether to withdraw and land where they had been intended to land a mile down the beach, or to stay put and await orders from the Allied high command. They asked Roosevelt what they should do. Without a second thought, Roosevelt stood there with bullets flying past and told his men to advance. "We'll start the war from right here," he told them, and he moved forward. At times our fight with the Yetzer Harah may seem overwhelming; however, we need to learn from General Roosevelt, to begin fighting from the level that we are at. Once we start fighting we are giving Hashem the opening to follow through with his guarantee that it will be delivered into your hands.

Caring About Another Person's Feelings

In this week's Parashah (22:10), we are taught about the seemingly puzzling commandment of "you shall not plow with an ox and donkey together." The Daat Zkainim offers a beautiful reason for this commandment. Since an ox chews its cud and a donkey does not, the donkey will suffer the pain of envy when it sees that the ox has food in its mouth and it doesn't. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz commented that this is a tremendous lesson in how much we have to care about another person's feelings, if we need to care about the feelings of an animal, all the more so the feelings of a person.