ADAM and DAVID: A 70 Years Gift

By Shemuel Bitton (edited by Tehila B.)

We know that Adam, the first person created, lived a long life of 930 years. But our Rabbis tend to analyze every tiny detail in the Tora and ask why Adam did not reach the more "perfect" number of 1000?

There is a beautiful midrash providing us with an answer. Adam Harishon was originally granted 1000 years of life on this earth. He was privy to see all the neshamot which would reside on earth after him; but one neshama was not shining as brightly as the others, it was flickering. Adam asked HaShem about this odd soul. God responded, telling Adam that this neshama belongs to someone who will die immediately after he is born; and what a shame that is, because this soul happened to have great potential. Adam immediately asks HaShem to take 70 years off of his own life and grant it to this neshama, which just so happened to belong to David Hamelech.

Ok, very nice. Adam lived to 930, David lived to 70; together it equals 1000.
But surely there is more connecting these two Biblical characters other than the ages they reached.

Let us look back to the most famous, or rather, the infamous story of Adam. The sin of the forbidden fruit.
Adam and Chava are told that they can enjoy all the wonders of Gan Eden, and take from any tree they want- except for one! And of course, they go ahead and eat from that very tree.

Many Rabbi's tell us that when HaShem told Adam and Chava not to take from the forbidden tree, HaShem knew they would fail

to listen. After all, it is simply within the grounds of human nature to succumb to fault.,

So if HaShem really intended them to eat from this tree- was that really their sin?

Once Adam eats from the tree, HaShem calls out to him asking him what he has done. Adam responds trying to turn the tables on God- it was the woman YOU gave me who convinced me to eat the fruit! Why am I at fault??
He took zero responsibility, and managed to blame HaShem for his own mistake!
Most of us are in shock from this ordeal- how could he blame the faultless Creator? But this is in fact a sin in which many of us are guilty ourselves- we blame the circumstances we are put in (undoubtedly by God) for our own mistakes.

However, this is not something David Hamelech ever did.
Our king David is known for his ability to admit to his sins and apologize for them. After the incident with Batsheva, the prophet Natan goes to David and publicly calls him out, saying he is deserving of great punishment! David could have very logically concluded that he is king, and any man- prophet or not- audacious enough to rebuke him is deserving of death! Or at the very least, he could have kicked Natan out and ignored him. But David opens his mouth, and the first two words which come out are, “Hatati LaHaShem,” I have sinned to Hashem.
David took responsibility for his actions.

Perhaps in his 70 years of life, David did not only compensate for Adam’s 1000 years, but he also in a way compensated for his actions. He mastered the main trait Adam was lacking in.

Every single one of us is going to make mistakes; we are all going to do things that are not ok. HaShem knows that.
So what will we be judged on?
How we act after we make those mistakes.
Do we flail our arms around frantically, pointing fingers at

anyone but ourselves? Or do we step up and admit to fault?

Once we recognize our mistakes, we can not only move past them, but learn from them, and we are less likely to repeat them in the future.

After all, this is the whole point of Asseret Yeme’ Teshuva. We first must recognize and admit to our sins, and then make a plan to change and grow from them.

Be’Ezrat HaShem may we all learn from David Hamelech and be able to imitate his humble ways as we stand before God on these precious days.