TORAH TREATS

An Anthology of Short Divrei Torah & Stories

Compiled by Yitzchok Henry



בהעלותך

לעילוי נשמת



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ת*נ*צ*ב*ה

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בהעלותך

Hamaayan -The Torah Spring ~ Edited by Shlomo Katz



וְיַעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּמוֹעֲדוֹ - ***"Bnei Yisrael shall make the Pesach-offering in its appointed time."*** (9:2)

The word Pesach refers to the fact that Hashem passed-over ("pasach") the homes of Bnei Yisrael when He killed the firstborn of Egypt. After all the miracles before and during the Exodus, why does the name of the offering (and the holiday) commemorate this one detail?

R' Yitzchak Yerucham Borodiansky shlita (Yeshivat Kol Torah in Yerushalayim) explains: The fact that Hashem passed-over the homes of Bnei Yisrael is not a mere detail of the Exodus. Rather, it is a sign of the hashgachah pratit / Divine providence with which Hashem relates to the Jewish People. That hashgachah pratit is the surest sign of the uniqueness of Bnei Yisrael; therefore, it is appropriate to highlight Hashem's passing-over the homes of Bnei Yisrael. (Siach Yitzchak: Shmot p.52)

"Struggle is not the opposite of growth – it is part of growth." ~ Rabbi Yitzchok Hutner Zt'l.

זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם אֵת הַקִּשֻּׁאִים וְאֵת הָאֲבַטִּחִים וְאֶת־ הֶחָצִיר וְאֶת־הַבְּצָלִים וְאֶת־הַשּׂוּמִים - "***We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge; and the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic.***" (11:5)





R' Yosef Gikitila z"l (1248-1310; Spain; author of the influential work of kabbalah, Sha'arei Orah) writes: Although it was necessary that Bnei Yisrael be exiled and enslaved as part of their formative experience, it was an act of kindness on Hashem's part that He caused them to be enslaved in Egypt, where food was plentiful. This surely lessened the suffering compared to what it would have been in a place that lacked abundant food.

Moreover, Hashem decreed that Bnei Yisrael would multiply rapidly, and Bnei Yisrael had many mouths to feed. Therefore, in His kindness, He exiled them to Egypt. (Haggadah Tzofnat Paneach)

וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם בֹּכֶה לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָיו אִישׁ לְפֶתַח אָהֳלוֹ וַיִּחַר־אַף ה' מְאֹד וּבְעֵינֵי מֹשֶׁה רָע - "***Moshe heard the people weeping in their family groups, each one at the entrance of his tent, and the wrath of Hashem flared greatly.***" (11:10)

R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l (1910-1995; rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Kol Torah in Yerushalayim and one of the leading halachic authorities of the 20th century) observed that this verse serves as a criticism of those who mourn their own relatives who were killed

in the Holocaust–"weeping in their family groups"–while failing to recognize the national tragedy.

It is true, he said, that no one can grasp the full magnitude of the devastation; nevertheless, if one focuses on a Torah scholar who was killed, a yeshiva that was destroyed, or a town whose Jewish population was wiped-out, one can gradually develop an appreciation of what we lost. (Quoted in Minchat Avot p.50-51)



עַל־פִּי ה' יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־פִּי ה' יַחֲנוּ .. - "***According to the word of Hashem Bnei Yisrael would journey and according to the word of Hashem they would encamp .. When the cloud lingered upon the Tabernacle many days, Bnei Yisrael would maintain the charge of Hashem and would not journey. Sometimes the cloud would be upon the Tabernacle for a number of days .. and sometimes the cloud would remain from evening until morning ... or for a day and a night . or for two days, or a month, or a year.***" (9:18-22)

Why? **Rabbi Yitzchak Elchanan Waldshein z"l hy"d** (Assistant Mashgiach in Baranovitch) explains:

Hashem's intention was to teach Bnei Yisrael three traits — patience, restraint, and alacrity. They learned patience from staying in undesirable places longer than they wished. They learned restraint by staying in pleasant places a shorter time than they would have liked (and thus being restrained from enjoying whatever fruits that particular oasis offered). Finally, they learned alacrity by having to pack and unpack in a short time. (Quoted in Haggadah Shel Pesach Baranovitch p. 222)



"When I pray, I talk to Hashem. When I learn, Hashem talks to me." ~ The Rogatshover Gaon.



עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף מִקְשָׁה תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לְךָ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמַסַּע אֶת־הַמַּחֲנוֹת - ***"Make for yourself two silver trumpets . . . and they shall be yours for the summoning of the assembly."*** (10:2)



The gemara (Menachot 28b) teaches that all of the vessels that Moshe made could be used by later generations as well. However, the trumpets were for Moshe to summon the nation and could not be used by subsequent leaders.

Why?

R' Eliyahu Schlesinger shlita (rabbi of the Gilo neighborhood of Yerushalayim) suggests that there is a simple lesson here. The way that the leader of one generation calls his flock and relates to his congregants will not necessarily work for the leader of the next generation. (Eileh Ha'devarim)

וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה - ***"The rabble that was among them cultivated a craving [literally, 'craved a craving'] . . ." (11:4)***

R' Shalom Perlow z"l (1850-1925; rabbi of Brahin, Belarus) comments: Bnei Yisrael had been elevated to the degree that they had no cravings for food. But they craved a craving; they wanted the Yetzer Ha'ra to tempt them so they could then defeat it. [It seems Hashem did not approve of this approach to serving Him. Notably, many commentaries attribute the same motive to Adam for eating the fruit of the Etz Ha'da'at.] (Divrei Shalom)

וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה ה' וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ - ***"When the Ark would journey, Moshe would say, `Arise, Hashem, and let Your foes be scattered, let those who hate You flee from before You'."*** (10:35)



It is customary to recite this verse when the Torah is removed from the ark.

R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld z"l (1848-1931) offered the following explanation for this practice:

The Zohar teaches that at the moment when the ark is opened and the Sefer Torah is removed in order to be read from in public, the gates of Heavenly Mercy open as well and G-d's Love is awakened, so-to-speak.

Thus, says R' Sonnenfeld, it is a time when one can attain great spiritual levels. And we are taught that the greater the spiritual potential of a particular moment or event, the harder the yetzer hara fights to oppose the forces of holiness. Therefore, we pray at this moment: "Let Your foes – the yetzer hara and the forces of evil and impurity – be scattered, let those who hate You flee from before You." (Quoted in Chochmat Chaim)

"Just as the Torah is comprised of five separate books, independent units, nevertheless, they form one Torah. Similarly, Klal Yisrael is comprised of many different factions - Kohanim, Leviim, Yisraelim, Chassidim, Misnagdim - each with their own function, all forming one great Nation, cherished by G-d!" ~ Chiddushei HaRim, Reb Yitzchak Meir Alter (1799-1866)

עַל־מַצּוֹת וּמְרֹרִים יֹאכְלֵהוּ - *"[W]ith matzot… he shall eat it."* (9:11)



Matzah is called "lechem oni" / "poor man's bread." **R' Levi Yitzchak Horowitz shlita** (the "Bostoner Rebbe") comments:

The real poor man is someone who lacks proper understanding. One whose focus in life is tied to "bread" – to materialism – is a poor man. On the other hand, one who wishes to grow should focus on spirituality; he should break the bread – symbolized by "Yachatz" at the Seder – and disassociate himself from materialism. He should do this with the full knowledge that the ultimate reward is Tzafun / "hidden away." [Tzafun is the stage of the Seder at which the broken matzah is eaten.] (Haggadah Shel Pesach Ezrat Avoteinu)

וַיִּסְעוּ בָּרִאשֹׁנָה עַל־פִּי ה' בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה - *"They journeyed for the first time at the bidding of Hashem through Moshe." (10:13)*



What is the significance of "for the first time"?

R' Kluger explains: We read earlier in the Parashah (9:18), "According to the word of Hashem Bnei Yisrael would journey, and according to the word of Hashem they would encamp; all the days that the cloud would rest upon the Tabernacle they would encamp." However, the first time that the cloud actually rose from above the Mishkan, Bnei Yisrael could not be sure what it meant; maybe there was another reason why the cloud would rise. Therefore, "the first time" they traveled,

it had to be "at the bidding of Hashem through Moshe." He had to confirm what the rising of the cloud meant. After that, he never again had to tell them that the rising of the cloud meant they should prepare to travel.

"We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge, and the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic." (11:5)



R' Shlomo Moshe Amar shlita (former Sefardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, now Sefardi Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim) asks: Surely Bnei Yisrael understood that the Egyptians had not made these foods available to their Jewish slaves out of the goodness of their hearts. If Bnei Yisrael had these foods in Egypt, it could only be understood as evidence of Hashem's kindness! And, Hashem was now providing all of Bnei Yisrael's needs in a most miraculous fashion! What then was there to complain about?

R' Amar answers: We see here that it is human nature to complain, whether it makes sense or not. The way to defeat this tendency is through Bitachon / trust in Hashem, which enables a person to have no worries or complaints. (*Be'chasdecha Vatachti* p.88 n.4)

"One who truly loves to learn Torah for its own sake can never be tired of it, and never be satiated. – Have you ever heard a drunk say that he's had enough to drink?" ~ Rabbi Morderchai Gifter Zt'l.

וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יַאֲכִלֵנוּ בָּשָׂר - *"The rabble that was among them cultivated a craving, and Bnei Yisrael also wept once more, and said, 'Who will feed us meat?'" (11:4)*

Why, all of a sudden, did the nation crave meat?

R' Shaul z"l of Amsterdam (1717-1790) explains:

During the 40 years in the desert, Bnei Yisrael were forbidden to eat any meat except the meat of Shelamim sacrifices. Such sacrifices had to be brought in the Mishkan and could only be offered when the nation was encamped and the Mishkan was re-assembled.

The meat of a Shelamim sacrifice may be eaten for two days after the sacrifice is offered. At this point, however, Bnei Yisrael had been traveling for three days straight. Accordingly, they had run out of meat to eat. (*Binyan Ariel: Chadrei Torah*)

וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן – '*Aaron did so*.' (8:3)

Our parashah opens with the command to Aharon to light the Menorah in the Mishkan. The third verse relates: "Aharon did so; toward the face of the Menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe."

What is this pasuk teaching?

Rashi writes: "Aharon did so – the verse speaks Aharon's praise, i.e., that he changed nothing."

How are we to understand this? asks **R' Yaakov Kranz z"l** (the Dubno Maggid; died 1805). Is there anyone who would deviate from what G-d had commanded him?

He explains with a parable: Three patients came to one doctor with the same serious illness, and the doctor gave each of them the same prescription. One of the patients was a simple fellow who understood

nothing about his illness. He followed the doctor's instructions to the letter and was soon healed.

The second patient thought he knew something about medicine. He altered the doctor's instructions, taking only some of the medicines that had been prescribed. He did not recover from his illness.

The third patient also was knowledgeable about medicine, but he nevertheless followed the doctor's instructions. He also was healed.

The Torah is our prescription against the spiritual illness brought on by the yetzer hara, says the Dubno Maggid. And, the same three types of people can be found among Mitzvah-observing Jews. Some understand nothing and simply do the mitzvot. Others think they understand, and they pick and choose among the mitzvot. Finally, there are the scholars who do have some understanding of what lies behind the commandments, but they nevertheless do not try to "improve" on the mitzvot.

This is the Torah's praise of Aharon–whether he thought he understood the commandments or not, he fulfilled them to the letter. (Quoted in Ve'karata La'Shabbat Oneg)

When Bnei Yisrael camped in the desert, they did so in a tight and specific formation. No one complained about their place, and no one attempted to change their position in the total configuration.

We, too, should emulate this quality of our ancestors and not quarrel about where we sit in shul or who has a more honorable and respectable place. - It is not the seat that brings a man honor, but the man who brings honor to the seat. ~ R' Zalman Sorotzkin zt"l (Oznaim L'Torah).



וְהַמָּן כִּזְרַע־גַּד הוּא... וְהָיָה טַעְמוֹ כְּטַעַם לְשַׁד הַשָּׁמֶן – *'Now the Manna was like coriander seed... and its taste was like the taste of dough kneaded with oil.'* (11:7,8)



The manna which descended daily from Heaven had varied tastes – as described by the Torah. In Shemos 16:4, it is referred to as bread from Heaven, with a taste "like a cake fried in honey" (ibid 16:31). Here it is described as having the taste of dough kneaded in oil.

The Talmud Yoma 75b explains that for the young, it tasted like bread; for the elderly, it was like oil; and for the infants, its taste was similar to honey. These three tastes seem to contradict an earlier statement made by the Talmud (75a) that a person who ate the manna could taste anything he wanted. The taste varied with its consumer.

Horav Shimon Schwab, zl, explains that the Torah's description of the manna's taste applies to one who ate the manna in order to satiate his hunger. Then the young tasted bread, the elders tasted oil, and the infants tasted honey. One who ate for pleasure, however,

could taste to his heart's content. - The manna had the spiritual ingredients within it to provide the most demanding food connoisseur with whatever taste he so desired. Otherwise, its taste catered to the various stages of life of the individuals.

Rav Schwab writes that he had the zechus to spend Shabbos Parashas Vayakhel-Pekudei 1930, in the home of the saintly **Chafetz Chaim**. He quotes the sage's drashah that Friday night. - "'Chazal teach that the manna provided any taste that the individual who consumed it had in mind. If this was the case, we wonder what taste the manna had if, in fact, the individual had no specific desire. He just picked up a plate of manna and ate from it. What taste did it have?' "

The Chafetz Chaim looked around at his guests, expecting someone to give a reply. Everyone remained silent, understanding that the sage was presenting a rhetorical question which he himself would answer. He looked at the gathering and said in Yiddish, Az m'tracht nisht, hat kein taam nisht, 'When one does not think (specifically), then there is no taste.'

A spiritual entity receives its taste in accordance with the thought applied to it. For example, when one studies Torah, applying his mind to its profundities, going out of his way to understand the depth of the issues, the analytics behind the various logical deductions that are formulated and presented – then – and only then – does he experience the mesikus, sweetness, of Torah.

The Chafetz Chaim then placed his fingers to his lips to demonstrate the concept of sweetness. 'This is why we ask Hashem daily (in our morning blessings) V'haarev na… es divrei Sorascha, And sweeten for us… the words of Your Torah.

"'However, when one merely repeats words without delving into their meaning, without proper thought to plumb the depths of the subject matter that he is learning – his studies have no taam – taste.'

The Chafetz Chaim stopped speaking for a moment and then added, 'This will be the case when Moshiach Tziddkeinu arrives to herald the Final Redemption. Those who apply themselves to the experience will be privy to an unprecedented Revelation of the Kingdom of Hashem. They will sense this Revelation. It will have a taste so sweet, unlike anything else ever experienced. Otherwise, without thinking, he will feel nothing'" (free translation).

Torah study demands consciousness, awareness of what one is studying and Who the Author is. Only then can one appreciate its depth and sweetness.

While certainly every great Torah leader experienced the V'harev na, sweetness, of Torah study, one Torah giant whose countenance manifest this euphoric sweetness was **Horav Mordechai Gifter, zl**, Rosh Yeshivah of Telshe. To the Rosh Yeshivah, learning was living. His greatest joy was derived from studying Torah. Indeed, when he was able to explain a difficult passage in the Talmud or in one of the commentaries, his joy was so palpable that he would begin to dance.

In the nearly eighteen years that I spent in Telshe, I was privy to the joy that Rav Gifter had from studying Torah. It was evident in his entire demeanor.

Recently, I was reading Rabbi Yechiel Spero's wonderful biography of Rav Gifter, and I came across a story that is very telling of the Rosh Yeshivah's abiding love for the Torah.

At the end of second seder, the afternoon session, a talmid, student, waited patiently to speak to Rav Gifter. The student had decided that he was leaving. He had learned "enough." It was now time to move on. He felt that while during the decision process he had not consulted with the Rosh Yeshivah, he had to at least gezegen zich, say goodbye, to his revered Rebbe.

The Rosh Yeshivah continued learning. The talmid stood a few feet away – waiting patiently for the Rosh Yeshivah to close his Gemorah

and prepare to leave the bais hamedrash. He did not look forward to the "goodbye," since he was acutely aware that his Rebbe would not be pleased with his decision. He felt bad, but it was a decision which he had spent considerable time deliberating. His learning was no longer what it used to be.

When one's learning begins to go downhill, it is time to move on – so he felt. Sadly, his learning had become the victim of personal problems which included much self-doubt.

A few moments went by, and Rav Gifter closed his Gemorah. The young man was about to go over when, suddenly, Rav Gifter planted a resounding, love filled kiss on the Gemorah – as if he was saying goodbye to his best friend. - ***The kiss was magical***.

The love that exuded from the Rosh Yeshivah in that loving gesture was so palpable that it transformed the student from a spent, downcast young man into a newly-invigorated and rejuvenated person. He never said goodbye, returning to his Gemorah to continue his learning. He never stopped.

Rav Gifter's kiss was transformative. As a result of that magical kiss, that talmid continues to learn and teach Torah sixty years later. He was witness to the love of Torah!

וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן – '**Aharon did so**'. (8:3)

לְהַגִּיד שִׁבְחוֹ שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן שֶׁלֹּא שָׁנָה, *to teach the praise of Aharon that he did not deviate (anything from that which Hashem had commanded*).

In his eulogy for **Horav Aharon Kotler, zl**, the individual responsible for the transplanting of authentic Torah study (via the Yeshivah Movement which he championed) to America, **the Satmar Rav, zl**, declared that Rav Aharon embodied the concept of shelo shinah, adamantly refusing to initiate any change in the spiritual structure of the yeshivah from the way it had been, dating back generations. Whatever was good for our forebears would suffice for us. Thus,

the approach to Torah study, manner and discourse and the varied customs that were prevalent in the European yeshivos were carried over to America. - Once we allow change to occur, the alterations that may result from the slightest incursion are limitless.

The story is told that an individual who appeared to have the demeanor and erudition of a Torah scholar visited Yeshivas Be'er Yaakov, which was then under the leadership of **Horav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro, zl**, to present a sefer, halachic treatise, he had written. Apparently, he had spent months studying and collecting the various opinions concerning the enunciation of the word geshem in the recitation of mashiv ha'ruach u'morid ha'geshem, which is added during the winter to the Shemoneh Esrai prayer.

The issue was: Should the vowel beneath the gimmel be a segol, geshem, or a kamatz, gashem.

Despite the fact that all siddurim employ the komatz, goshem, vowel, he contended that it should be read geshem. He supported his position with many concrete proofs.

He sought the approbation of the Rosh Yeshivah for his work. The students listened to him and were almost prepared to change the yeshivah's nusach, version of the davening, until someone spoke to Rav Moshe Shmuel. His response was immediate and emphatic: No change of the yeshivah's tradition.

He explained, "To the best of my knowledge, I remember my father pronouncing the word as goshem. If my father read it as goshem, it was because this is what he had heard from the mouth of my grandfather, Horav Rephael Shapiro, zl, who had most certainly heard it from the Netziv, zl, who was Rosh Yeshivah of Volozhin. The Netziv never acted on his own. He followed in the footsteps of his father-in-law, Horav Itzele Volozhiner, zl, who must have heard it from his father, the venerable Horav Chaim Volozhiner, zl, who was the premier disciple of the Gaon, zl, m' Vilna. If the Gaon read it with a kometz, who are we to dispute him?"

To alter a minhag Yisrael is to attempt to alter halachah. Every minhag has its source in profound collective analytical thinking. Much is factored into the establishment of a minhag Yisrael. We saw what happened when the secularists made their first incursion into abolishing halachah and, eventually, the Torah. It all began with the subtle change of a single minhag Yisrael.

וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה יְהֹוָה וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ – ***'When the Ark would travel, Moshe would say, "Arise Hashem, and let Your foes be scattered, let those who hate You flee from You."*** (10:35)



Did you ever wonder why, once the Sefer Torah has been removed from the Aron HaKodesh and the reading of the Torah is about to commence, spiritual intensity in the shul seems to be lifted. It is almost as if Krias HaTorah, the reading of the Torah, is a break in the service. We have finished Shacharis; we are now taking a break for a conversation, for a walk outside, early Kiddush, etc. - Does Krias HaTorah signal a relaxation period, a time to socialize and catch up on the past week's events?

In Chochmas Chaim, a novel idea is quoted from **Horav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zl**, which rationalizes our change of pace during Krias HaTorah.

Rav Yosef Chaim spoke in 1936 at the dedication of Yeshivas Sfas Emes in Yerushalayim. He explained why we recite the pasuk, Vayehi binsoa ha'Aron, when we open the doors of the Ark. He quoted from the Zohar HaKadosh, "Rabbi Shimon says: 'When the Sefer Torah is

removed (from the Ark) with the intention of reading from it, the Heavenly Gates of Mercy are opened and Hashem's love for Klal Yisrael is aroused. Therefore, this is an auspicious moment for the recital of the prayer Brich Shmei, Blessed is the Name, which entreats for Hashem's compassion and pleads that He display His salvation by finally having the Bais Hamikdash rebuilt. We declare our faith in Him and His Torah, and we ask that He make us receptive to its wisdom.'"

Brich Shmei is a beautiful and meaningful prayer which is recited during the opening of the Ark, a time when we ask Hashem for arousement in all things spiritual. As a "rule," whenever an opportunity for spiritual ascendancy is present, it is almost certainly to be countered by the forces of spiritual impurity, which will employ any medium for deflecting and impeding the Heavenly spiritual inspiration that is descending at that moment. - We pray to Hashem to scatter the foes of spirituality and cause the forces that undermine holiness to flee from us, so that the sparks of kedushah, holiness, that sanctify us will be allowed to do their work.

Having said this, we now understand why, for some of us, Krias HaTorah is a difficult time during which to remain captivated by the intensity of the preceding prayer service. The forces that seek to deter us are working overtime, and, in some cases, they are successful.

"When someone walks the street and thinks words of Mishna or Tanya, or sits in his store with a Chumash or Tehillim – that is more valued today than it was when the streets were bright with the light of Torah. We must not go about in the street with a vacant heart. We must have some Torah memorized, to take with us into the street." – Lubavitcher Rebbe

וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יַאֲכִלֵנוּ בָּשָׂר – '***The rabble that was among them cultivated a craving, and Bnei Yisrael also wept once more and said, "Who will feed us meat?"*** (11:4)

The erev rav, mixed multitude, who left Egypt with the Jewish People, now showed their true level of commitment to Hashem. - Nothing! Instead, they were the first to complain, the first to undermine Moshe Rabbeinu's leadership, thereby showing that they had come along only for the ride.

How careful we must be of those usurpers who claim to stand with us, but, in truth, stand only for themselves. Only someone who is truly committed to Hashem can withstand the various challenges our People have encountered during our long journey.

Horav Avraham Schorr, Shlita, offers a novel interpretation of this pasuk. He quotes Yehudah ben Teima, whose well-known dictum in Pirkei Avos 5:20 accompanies the Jew throughout his life: **הֱוֵי עַז כַּנָּמֵר, וְקַל כַּנֶּשֶׁר, וְרָץ כַּצְּבִי, וְגִבּוֹר כָּאַרְי, לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹן אָבִיךָ שֶׁבַּשָּׁמָיִם** - "***Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a deer, and strong as a lion, to carry out the will of your Father in Heaven***."

In his commentary to the Aggadic portions of the Talmud, **Horav Elchanan Wasserman, zl**, derives from here that man is a composite of all of the creatures in the world. This means that he possesses the strengths and characteristics – both good and bad – which control the individual nature of each creature.

Man has within him: the strength and ability to lead like a lion; the viciousness of a snake; the foolishness of a donkey; the playfulness of a monkey, etc. He is, thus, unfortunately capable of the most heinous sin and, conversely, the most sublime act of kindness. He can run like the deer to perform a mitzvah, use brute strength in the service of his fellow man, and harness incredible energy to study Torah. He can do anything if he is properly motivated. If he is

negatively provoked, he can fall into the abyss of evil and commit unbelievable atrocities. - This is a man.

Rav Elchanan explains that this composite known to us as "man" must be guided by yiraas Shomayim, fear of Heaven, in order to control his animalistic urges and tendencies. Otherwise, he reverts to his creature instincts and is capable of just about any type of behavior.

If there were ever an era that brought out the worst in the human psyche, it was during the Cantonist period, during the mid-nineteenth century in Russia. Young Jewish boys were kidnapped by the Russians in order to serve in the Czar's army. The goal of the Russians was to dehumanize these children, alienate them from Hashem - with the goal of eventually baptizing them. While they did not always succeed in baptizing them, they did destroy their humanistic nature. These boys remained in the army for twenty-five years, during which they were subjected to the most cruel and inhumane torture.

Indeed, the **Tzemach Tzedek of Lubavitch** compared the suffering of the Cantonists to the persecution of the Jews during the Hellenistic Greek rule, because of the spiritual nature of the abuse. - He said, "We cannot imagine the greatness of praying and chanting Psalms by the Cantonists (this refers to those who survived spiritually intact). It is worth more in Heaven than the intention (kavanah) and fervor (dveikus) of the holy Arizal. Their prayers are filled with self-sacrifice (mesiras nefesh) and simple faith (emunah peshutah)."

The following story has made the rounds. I selected it to demonstrate how one can ascend from the abyss of being a conglomerate of creature instincts, to achieving spiritual sublimity – as long as his tendencies are all focused toward Hashem and guided by yiraas Shomayim. The most distant, base-minded Jew can be brought back to embrace Hashem, as long as he has the proper

motivation and the right rebbe – as was the story with this Cantonist soldier.

The holy **Chafetz Chaim, zl**, often traveled from city to city. Once, at an inn in Vilna, he observed a burly Jew sitting at a table and ordering the waitress to bring him a portion of roast goose and a glass of whiskey. Without first making a brachah, blessing, he quickly devoured the meal and washed it down with the whiskey. His "dessert" consisted of a coarse berating of the waitress, for no other reason than he felt like it.

Observing the entire scenario from a corner of the room, the Chafetz Chaim was about to get up and rebuke the man for his degrading behavior and foul language. The innkeeper rushed over to prevent the sage from following through with his intended reproof. He feared that the man, a simple illiterate individual, who had just recently been released from serving two and a half decades in the Czar's army, might be rude to the saintly Rav and even strike him.

"Please, Rebbe, leave him alone. You cannot speak to such a person. He is very crude, a true boor, who knows no way other than bullying. When he was merely seven-years-old, he was abducted with other child Cantonists and dragged off to Siberia. Until the age of eighteen, he lived among farmers, and then he served for another twenty five years in the Czar's army. With such an "education" could he have fared better? Is it any wonder that he is crude, wild and base? He was out of touch with anything Jewish for thirty years. He neither learned, nor spoke one letter of Torah. Judaism was foreign to him. It would be best that you do not speak with him. I value your honor too much."

A calm, affectionate smile radiated from the face of the Chafetz Chaim: "Such a Jew! I know quite well how to speak to him. I only hope that good will come from the conversation."

The Chafetz Chaim approached the man and greeted him warmly, "Shalom Aleichem! Is it true what I have just heard about you – that

you were kidnapped as a child and dragged off to Siberia? That you grew up among gentiles and did not learn even one letter of the Torah? You suffered unbearable persecution, pain and misery. You endured torture by day and nightmares at night. The evil ones attempted numerous times to force you to reject your faith, to be baptized to their godless religion. They forced you to eat pork and all kinds of non-kosher food. Nonetheless, you persevered: you did not convert; you remained a loyal Jew. "How blessed I would be to have such merits! You are so fortunate. Your place in the World to Come is guaranteed. You will sit among the greatest Jews of our nation. Your sacrifice and devotion is no trivial matter. You suffered immeasurably for over thirty years for the sake of Judaism and Heaven."

Suddenly, tears welled up in the eyes of the former soldier. He was moved by the warm and goodhearted outpouring of love from this pure, living fountain whose words refreshed and invigorated his weary spirit.

When he finally realized that he was none other than the saintly Chafetz Chaim, the holiest man of their generation, a sage who had no peer, he broke into bitter weeping and kissed the hands of the Chafetz Chaim.

The sage continued, "Enough! A man like you deserves to be amidst those holy Jews who gave their lives to serve and sanctify Hashem's Name. If you would be an observant Jew for the remainder of your life, no one would be more fortunate than you."

The man remained with the Chafetz Chaim until he became a fully observant Jew. This man had demonstrated what can become of a person who does not have Heaven as a control over his animalistic tendencies. He had become the opposite of yashar. Once the holy Chafetz Chaim activated his spiritual GPS, he became focused on Hashem, thus allowing him to become yashar – Keil – Yisrael.

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף מִקְשָׁה תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לְךָ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמַסַּע אֶת־הַמַּחֲנוֹת – *'Make for yourself two silver trumpets – make them hammered out, and they shall be yours for the summoning of the Assembly and to cause the camps to journey'*. (10:2)



The Talmud Menachos 28b states: "All the vessels which Moshe made were valid for him and (remained) valid for future generations. (This is exclusive of) the Chatzotzros, silver trumpets, which were valid for him and invalid for future generations." The limitations of age did not apply to such keilim, vessels, as the Menorah, Shulchan, Shofar; every utensil which Moshe Rabbeinu had made was perfectly kosher, valid, for all future generations.

The silver trumpets were different. They were made by Moshe for his own use; no one else could use Moshe's trumpets. They would have to fashion their own. The rationale behind the trumpets' exclusiveness is simple. The trumpets were used to rally the people; to call them together; to initiate forward movement. Every generation has its unique manner of communication. What was novel last century might be considered primitive by contemporary standards.

Likewise, the masses respond differently today than they did one hundred years ago. How we respond to the call of our leadership defines us; how our leadership conveys their message will somehow reflect upon them.

While it is important that, with the changing times, the method of communication must change to placate the level of and attitude

concerning the art of listening – the message must be the same. The call to Torah has not changed in three thousand years. We might resort to a different presentation or manner of expression, but the message is unchanging. Truth is immutable.

The Aron HaKodesh, the Shulchan and the Menorah could be handed down from one generation to the next, because they each, in its own way, represent a timeless valued aspect of Judaism. Their message is a constant and absolute. How their message is conveyed depends on the lifestyle and culture of the people of that generation. Someone living in an age of materialism must be spoken to in "his" language. At times the "volume" must be lowered, and, at times, it must be raised. It all depends on the generation's ability to hear and acquiesce, to listen and accept.



וְעַתָּה נַפְשֵׁנוּ יְבֵשָׁה אֵין כֹּל בִּלְתִּי אֶל־הַמָּן עֵינֵינוּ. וְהַמָּן כִּזְרַע־גַּד הוּא וְעֵינוֹ כְּעֵין הַבְּדֹלַח - '***But now, our life is parched, there is nothing; we have nothing to anticipate but the Manna. Now the Manna was like a coriander seed and its color was like the color of b'dolach'***. (11:6,7)

Rashi explains that the individuals who complained, "We have nothing to anticipate but the Manna," were countered by Hashem, Who said, "The Manna was like a coriander seed with a color similar to crystal."

As the commentators explain, it had the taste of dough saturated with oil. Rashi understands that Hashem was alluding to the world, "Look at about what My children are complaining! They say the Manna is nothing worth waiting for, and I show you that it is indeed special."

This does not mean that the Jewish People were full of complaints. It is possible that they conceded that indeed everything else was actually great, but there was one issue about which they had criticism: the Manna.

Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita, notes that, sadly, there are people whose lives are filled with good fortune: wealth, great wife,

wonderful children, nachas, satisfaction and acceptance in the community. Everything in their lives works – except for one issue which they have. Do they pay gratitude for all of the good and positive aspects of their lives, or are they consumed by – and obsess constantly about – the one area of their lives that does not work to perfection?

This is what angered Hashem. Everything about Klal Yisrael's life was just about perfect. They were no longer in Egypt serving as slaves to a despotic ruler. Whatever they asked of Hashem, they received. Were they thankful? No – all they could do was issue complaints about the Manna, complaints which were not valid.

This is an important lesson for all of us. No one has a perfect life. One thing is not always one hundred percent the way we would like it. Do we make the effort to thank Hashem for everything else, or do we focus all of our energies to complain about one thing that does not meet our standards?

Before we complain, or even ask for that one thing that is missing, it might be a good idea to first look around and thank Hashem for our many blessings.



וּמִבֶּן חֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה יָשׁוּב מִצְּבָא הָעֲבֹדָה וְלֹא יַעֲבֹד עֹוד – '***From fifty years of age, he shall withdraw from the legion of work and no longer work***.' (8:25)

While the Levi must "retire" at age fifty from the heavy labor of carrying the holy vessels on his shoulders, he continues to perform the remainder of Levite services, such as singing, closing the gates and loading the wagons.

In Pirkei Avos 5:21, the Tanna addresses the various stages of an individual's life. At age fifty, his advice is valued. The Bartenura cites this pasuk regarding the Levi who leaves the workforce and stays on to help his fellow Leviim. He serves them through the advice

he gives them. The experience he has gathered throughout the years is of great value to the "freshmen" Leviim.

What type of advice is he giving them? In response to this question, the **Chidushei Ha'rim**, was wont to tell the following story: A man once became lost in the forest. For days on end, he wandered from place to place with no hope of finding the exit to the forest. Suddenly, he saw an old man coming toward him.

Imagine his joy at this encounter; he was saved! He asked the man, "Can you direct me to the exit?" "I am sorry," answered the man, "I have been wandering in this forest for over seventy years and I have still not found a way out. In one way, however, I can help you. I can tell you where I have been so that you will not go there and make the same mistake that I did. You will have to find the correct way out on your own."

This is the type of advice that the Levi offered. He was in charge of the "gates," telling the younger Leviim where not to go. His experience was invaluable in that he was able to guide others to distance themselves from those "gates"/areas that might harm them.



וּבְיוֹם֙ הָקִ֣ים אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּ֔ן כִּסָּ֥ה הֶעָנָ֖ן אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּ֑ן לְאֹ֣הֶל הָעֵדֻ֗ת וּבָעֶ֙רֶב֙ יִֽהְיֶ֣ה עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּ֔ן כְּמַרְאֵה־אֵ֖שׁ עַד־בֹּֽקֶר – *''On the day the Mishkan was set up, the cloud covered the Mishkan...And in the evening, there would be upon the Mishkan like a fiery appearance until morning*.' (9:15)

This is the way it always was: a cloud by day and a fire at night. **Horav Shlomo Yosef Zevin, zl**, says this is a foreshadowing of our future: a cloud by day and a fire at night. - When man is doing well, when his success is encouraging, the sun shines brilliantly before him. At such a time, he must remember that it is not always going to be like this. There will be times when the cloud will cover the sunshine, and the radiance will not penetrate. Conversely, he who is plagued with suffering, overcome with pain and affliction, should

reflect upon the good times. He should never give up. Even in his darkest hour the fire will burn brightly, lighting up his life. He must have faith in the Almighty.

The Krias Shema of the morning and the evening are similar. In the morning, when the sun is shining and life seems to be idyllic, remember, "Hashem Elokeinu Hashem echad." He gives strength - whatever success you enjoy is His gift which He can take back at any time if you do not use it properly. In the evening, we recite Krias Shema to affirm our faith in Hashem during periods of darkness, that the grief to which Hashem subjects us is l'tov, for the good.

The Mishkan was an edifice, but it was to be a part of every person. It was to reside in the heart of every Jew. The lesson of the fire and the cloud was to imbue Klal Yisrael with faith in the Almighty that times may change, but Hashem is always present.

Horav Mordechai Rogov,zl, explains that this is the reason that during the Pesach Seder, we refer to the Marror after the Korban Pesach and the Matzoh. One would think that we address the affliction prior to discussing our freedom from bondage. The Marror, symbolizing the bitterness of the slavery, should follow after Pesach and Matzoh, which signify our liberation.

According to the above insight, we understand the importance of relating to the Marror during our liberation. We should remember the bitterness during our moments of joy, so that we will remember our joy during those moments when Hashem tests our faith.

"Just as one goes early to the market to take advantage of bargains, so too, should one rush out to seize every opportunity to perform mitzvos!" ~ R' Aharon Hagadol of Karlin zt"l

וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם בֹּכֶה לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָיו – '***Moshe heard the people weeping in their family groups***.' (11:10)

To express their displeasure publicly, entire families gathered outside their tents and wept. Rashi explains that the word "families" alludes to the real reason for their complaint. The family laws that were initiated at Har Sinai became a source of frustration for them. They did not care to have their relationships governed by the Torah. Rather than viewing the laws of family life and morality as a privilege reserved for the nobility that comprises Klal Yisrael, they viewed them as an infringement on their freedom.

Horav Yitzchak Blazer, zl, suggests a novel interpretation to the word "families." The manna descended to all Jews equally. Status did not play a role in the distribution of the Heavenly food. The rich did not receive more than the poor; those of more distinguished lineage did not receive special treatment. People were frustrated; they cried that their "families" were not receiving preferential treatment.

This was bothersome to Moshe. Why should one family receive more than another, simply because of its lineage? Why should family be the prime factor in determining one's prize? They all stood together as "one person with one heart" at Har Sinai. Why should anyone claim pre-eminence over another? Regrettably, for some people this is cause for weeping.

Otzar HaTorah notes Moshe Rabbeinu's ability to discern between the various complaints and sounds emanating from the people. They complained about one thing - but he was able to hear another - the real underlying complaint. They complained about the manna. He heard a much more significant complaint, one that demonstrated the depths of depravity to which they had sunk.

Shlomo Hamelech entreats Hashem in Melachim 3:9, **וְנָתַתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ֥ לֵ֖ב שֹׁמֵֽעַ** - "And you shall give to Your servant an heart to listen." He was implying that a leader must possess the capacity to "hear," to listen,

to understand and focus upon what the people are really saying. Every expression, every word, every nuance, carries with it a different message. The leader must be capable of hearing that message and responding to it. A leader should be attuned to the pulse of his flock and understand exactly what motivates them. He should be able to focus on the origin of their desires to determine what they really seek. - Moshe understood the basis of the weeping.

Episodes such as this establish one's ability to lead and develop one's character in the leadership role.



וְנָסַע דֶּגֶל מַחֲנֵה בְנֵי־דָן מְאַסֵּף לְכָל־הַמַּחֲנֹת לְצִבְאֹתָם – *'The banner of the Bnei Dan, the rear-guard of all the camps, embanked according to its legions*.' (10:25)

Rashi explains why Shevet Dan traveled at the rear of the procession. They were the most populous of the tribes. They traveled at the rear in order to retrieve and return any item lost by its owner - who had traveled in front of them. - Tosfos explain that any member of the other tribes who was detained for some reason would also travel along with them. - Bnei Dan were people of integrity, helping out those who straggled behind - both physically and spiritually.

Michtav M'eliyahu emphasizes that they collected the "lost souls" along the road, restoring them to Judaism.

Why were Bnei Dan chosen to perform this most noble kindness towards their fellow Jew?

Apparently, Hashem sought to avail them of an opportunity to perform kindness for their fellow man.

Horav Zalmen Sorotzkin, zl, contends that Bnei Dan were in need of special merits because of their lapses and failures in the area of avodas Hashem. When Yoravaam ben Nevat, the evil king, wanted to introduce his calves for idol-worship, no tribe other than Shevet Dan

were willing to accept them. Moreover, the pesel Michah, the idol that traveled with them from Egypt, was located in the midst of the tribe of Dan.

Because of their shortcoming in the area of mitzvos bein adam la'Makom, between man and Hashem, they were given the opportunity to excel in the area of mitzvos bein adam l'chaveiro, between man and his fellow man.

Hashem desires that every Jew remain in close contact with the body of our People. Obviously, one remains an active "participant" in Judaism through Torah study and mitzvah observance. Hashem, however, refuses to discard any Jew, regardless of his religious orientation. - This is the reason that Shevet Dan was given the opportunity to remain involved via the medium of chesed.

We emphasize that these mitzvos did not in any way compensate for a lapse in mitzvah observance. It was a provision for the group as a whole, particularly those who did not accede to the temptation of idol-worship, to maintain a balance in their relationship with Hashem.



'And the people took to seeking complaints; it was evil in the eyes of Hashem. The rabble among cultivated a craving... and they said, 'Who will feed us meat? We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge, and the cucumbers, melons... But now our life is parched, there is nothing; we have nothing to anticipate but the manna.'" (11:1,4,5,6)

The chapter dealing with the "misonenim," complainers, demands interpretation. Let us address the following questions: First, they complained that they lacked meat. This is not true! The Torah (Shemos 12) clearly states that they took sheep and cattle with them when they left Egypt.

Second, when they complained that they had received fish in Egypt for free, Rashi comments that "free" actually means that there

were no "strings attached." They did not have to observe mitzvos in order to get food. They did, however, have to undergo backbreaking and degrading labor in order to receive whatever limited food they were given.

It seems difficult to accept that the generation that was privy to the greatest revelation of all time, the giving of the Torah, would complain about having to perform mitzvos in exchange for food.

Third, in regard to their complaint concerning the "wonderful" cucumbers and melons that they were able to get in Egypt, Rashi explains that the manna did not provide a taste of these vegetables. They were able to experience the taste of everything else, but they were concerned about the cucumbers and melons! How petty can one be? Indeed, it is common knowledge that the food served in prison is not a culinary delight. In Egypt they were slaves subject to the most inhumane torture; are we to believe that they really yearned for the "food" they were served under such conditions?

When they complained about the manna, they said, "Our life is parched." Should not their stomachs have been parched rather than their lives?

Last, why did Moshe respond with such hostility towards them? They only desired some meat. Is that such a terrible thing to request?

In response to these questions, **Horav Eliyahu Schlesinger, Shlita**, posits that human nature reveals the same hypocrisy today that was manifest by these complainers. They were probably not lacking any meat, and the absence of cucumbers and melons made little difference to them. Indeed, there was not a ring of truth to any of their purported claims. It is as Rashi comments on pasuk 11, "They sought to find fault and accuse." They searched for ways to justify their non-observance of mitzvos.

This attitude is, regrettably, prevalent in today's society when those who have alienated themselves from Torah heap scorn and

abuse against the Torah. They slander and denigrate anything religious. Their contempt for those who did not desert our beautiful heritage is quite apparent. - Blatant hypocrisy spews from their mouths.

The same individuals who would not consider refraining from commerce on Shabbos or Yom Tov have no qualms about closing down entire businesses for self-proclaimed holidays. They open their hearts to the homeless on secular holidays, but they do not respond when an observant Jew comes to their door, or an appeal is made to provide matzoh and wine for Pesach. They exemplify democracy in religion by doing whatever they want, proclaiming that no one need answer to a higher authority.

This is similar to what transpired concerning the complainers in our parsha. Although they had meat, they looked for something to complain about. This is indicated when they said, "Our life is parched." - Their stomachs were fine; it was their subjugation of their lives to religion that had become a problem. They would rather be in Egypt, suffering inhumane persecution than be in the desert devoting their lives to Hashem.

The more we delve into the character of the complainers of that era, the more we come to realize how many individuals continue to follow in their path today.

While waiting in a dentist's office in Jerusalem, Rabbi Noson Tzvi Finkel heard the groans of a patient who was having a tooth extracted.

Rabbi Finkel expressed his feelings of sorrow for that person and immediately stood up and prayed for his welfare. ~ Hameoros Hagdolim.

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף מִקְשָׁה תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לְךָ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמַסַּע אֶת־הַמַּחֲנוֹת. וְתָקְעוּ בָהֶן וְנוֹעֲדוּ אֵלֶיךָ כָּל־הָעֵדָה אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד - "***Make for you two trumpets of silver... and they shall be for you for the calling of the congregation... and when they shall blow with them they shall gather together unto you all the congregation***." (10:2,3)

Rashi explains that these trumpets were to be used only by Moshe. Moshe had been elevated to the unparalleled position of king over Am Yisrael. The trumpets were symbols of honor and prestige for him. Before he passed on, the trumpets were put away never to be used again. In contrast, all of the other vessels created for specific use in the Mishkan, i.e. the Aron, Luchos, Shulchan, and Menorah were to be passed down from generation to generation.

The Satmar Rebbe z.l. offers a profound explanation for this distinction. Everything can be bequeathed from generation to generation. The chatzotzros, trumpets, represent the power to rally all of Klal Yisrael together to listen to one leader and accept his command. Regrettably, this attribute had been limited only to Moshe Rabbeinu, the quintessential leader of Klal Yisrael. With Moshe's demise, this unique quality was lost.

In response to the pasuk in Shemos, "And Moshe gathered all the congregation of Bnei Yisrael (35:1)," Rashi explains that Moshe gathered Klal Yisrael together with his voice, rather than by any other means. The capacity to inspire a whole people simultaneously is Divinely endowed to the one individual who merits it; it is not inheritable. Consequently, every leader should entreat Hashem that he merit this Divine gift.

Indeed, in every generation there are those singular gedolei Yisrael, Torah giants, who reflect unparalled spiritual qualities and extraordinary devotion to the adherence of Torah and mitzvos. These leaders became the beneficiaries of this Divine gift.

וְכִי־תָבֹאוּ מִלְחָמָה בְּאַרְצְכֶם עַל־הַצַר הַצֹרֵר אֶתְכֶם וַהֲרֵעֹתֶם בַּחֲצֹצְרֹת וְנִזְכַּרְתֶּם לִפְנֵי ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיכֶם וְנוֹשַׁעְתֶּם מֵאֹיְבֵיכֶם - *If you will come into war in your land against the enemy that oppresses you, then you shall blow an alarm with trumpets, and you shall be remembered before Hashem your G-d and you shall be saved from your enemies*.(10:9)



Discussing Klal Yisrael's entry into battle, in Parashas Ki Tzeitzei (Devarim 21:10), the Torah does not seem to outline any specific means of aggressive attack. It simply states, "When you go forth to war against your enemies, and Hashem your G-d will deliver them into your hands." - Why is there such a disparity between the two parshios dealing with waging war on the enemy?

The Kotzker Rebbe z.l. distinguishes between two contrasting types of war. He suggests that the term "war" is actually an allusion to man's constant battle with the yetzer hora, evil inclination. The differential is determined by noting who has initiated the battle. In this parsha the Torah states, " If you will come into war," while in Sefer Devarim the Torah states, "When you go forth."

One who "goes forth" and initiates the battle against the yetzer hora, is assured of emerging triumphant. If, however, one allows the yetzer hora to approach him, to "oppress him in his own land," to get a foothold in his behavior and personality, then victory will be more elusive. He will have to battle with much more resolution in order to triumph over the enemy. - Such a battle must include astute strategy, sounding of alarms, and crying out to Hashem, for only with His help can man succeed.

וַתִּסָּגֵר מִרְיָם מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְהָעָם לֹא נָסַע עַד־הֵאָסֵף מִרְיָם - "***And the people did not journey until Miriam was brought in again***." (12:15)

Rashi explains that Hashem gave her this honor because of the one hour which she waited for Moshe when he was cast into the river.

Her waiting for Moshe was simply to find out what was going to happen to him. Does this act deserve such a significant reward?

There is a deeply religious thought stated by **Rabbi Yecheskel Abramsky Zt"l** regarding the concept of "waiting" which will clarify this question.

It is stated that when man will face his ultimate judgement before Hashem, he will be asked "Did you wait for salvation?". The implication of this question is, did he constantly expect Moshiach's arrival? He notes from the specific wording of this question "did you wait" as opposed to "did you hope", that there is a very distinct and unique meaning to "wait." One who "waits" for moshiach clearly believes in moshiach's arrival. He "waits" diligently for his imminent advent. He doesn't "hope"; he knows!

This concept can also be applied to Miriam. Her waiting for Moshe was not one of fear, hoping and praying for his safety. She was sure and secure in her belief that Moshe's welfare was in Hashem's hands; she waited to see how this salvation would transpire. Her waiting was one of ultimate belief in Hashem. - For this she was rewarded in having all of Klal Yisroel wait for her.

"Emunah is not proven in moments of inspiration, but in moments of concealment, when a person continues to act faithfully even though he does not feel Hashem's closeness." ~ Rav Dessler – (Michtav MeEliyahu).





How can a person make himself be liked by the people he meets every day?

So for that you'll have to be ready now for a two hour lecture! But first of all, don't talk too much. And secondly, show that you like that person – even though you don't. It's a mitzvah to be a good actor – Hakodosh Boruch Hu will reward you for showing that you like that person. Now, if it's a decent person, try your best to make a hit with him. But if he's a person of low character, so just be polite and get rid of him as fast as you can **לֵךְ מִנֶּגֶד לְאִישׁ כְּסִיל** - *'Go away from a fool.'* (Mishlei 14:7)

The resha'im are fools, so don't waste too much time on them. But if there is any hope, spend some time trying to win him over. But in either case, to everybody you have to be polite.

Now, the next thing, the third thing, is to find something that's good in that person that you can encourage. If you say some encouraging words he will prize it all his life. So, I've told you so far three things. That's an installment, maybe for some future lecture, I'll repeat it.

First of all, don't talk much, listen. Secondly, smile – show that you like the person. Thirdly, try to encourage him in some good thing – in his parnasah, or in his family – whatever it is, try to encourage him. Now as I said before, in case he's not a person of good character, so

as soon as possible part company with him. The less time you spend with him, the better you are. You want some more information? Maybe in the future we'll talk about this topic.



I would like to learn Mishlei from beginning to end for the first time in my life. Can you give me some advice about how to approach the learning of this sefer?

When you learn Mishlei, the first step is to make up your mind that Mishlei knows what he's talking about. He's not just wasting his time. And even though the statements might sometimes seem poshut, like it's simple, make up your mind that there is nothing simple in Mishlei. That's very important to understand. A wise man is talking to you – one of the wisest the world ever saw. And therefore, try to understand the profundity of his words. Sometimes you might need the meforshim, the commentaries, to help you out. Whatever it is, you should make up your mind that Mishlei is a repository of the deepest wisdom for practical living.

Although Mishlei is a sefer of Yiras Shomayim, like it says in the beginning of the first perek, you must understand that Mishlei is also a book of successful living. If you want to be happy in olam hazeh, in this world, then Mishlei is the guide to that. It tells you how to deal with people and how to deal with yourself in order to live successfully in this world.

There are so many gems in Mishlei. Advice on how to guard your health, how to guard your property, your money, how to get along with everybody – your wife, your children, your neighbors, your enemies. And it's a shame that so many people make the time to read everything else – newspapers, magazines and so much other garbage, but for Mishlei they don't have time.

Of course, the most important advice is how to get along with Hakodosh Boruch Hu. But Mishlei is full of wise counsel that will help you live successfully in olam hazeh, in this world. And knowing all this, you are going to approach this sefer with a different attitude. And that should be your first step in learning the sefer of Mishlei.



Should one send his son to the English classes in high school? Don't they teach apikorsis there?

And the answer is that they do. And that's why it's a very important question you're asking. First, there's a separate question: Should your children learn the language of the land? And the answer to that question is yes. It's valuable because a person should teach his son an umnus, a trade. It's a Gemara that a man should teach his son to make a living. And even though we don't know what he's going to do, but he'll have to know how to read and write and calculate; so he's going to need a certain amount of education.

Now, I'm not saying that if a person wants to send his son to a place where there's no limudei chol, that he's doing something wrong. But the people who are sending their children to limudei chol, if they're doing it lisheim shamayim, they should know that it's a good thing too; no question about it. You have to make a living in this world. You have to support a wife and children. And therefore when a young man has some kind of a preparation, so it's like teaching him an umnus. However, the problem that you mentioned of teaching apikorsis, that's a very important problem, and you have to be very careful. And therefore in some yeshivos, they have a hashgacha on what the teachers are saying, and you can rely on them.



How far do you have to go for shalom?

You have to go to the end of the world for shalom. You must do everything for shalom because shalom means you're making your character perfect. **כל עניני העולם נסיונות לאדם** – *'all the things in this world were made as tests for man.'* (Mesilas Yesharim) - A wife tests a husband and a husband tests a wife. They're made to test each other.

Of course you shouldn't look for a woman that will test you too much. You shouldn't look for a husband that will give you too much of a test. Once you're married, however, make up your mind that's your mitzvah, that's your test. That's your Olam Hazeh and Olam Habo. And you will not lose out.

A person who doesn't get excited will live longer. Make up your mind no matter what, you're married to this meshugene now and that's it. Now, don't tell him that, don't tell her that, but that's it. All your life, do your best to get along with that person. You're both meshugeh. That's the truth; both are meshugeh. He thinks he deceived her. But she also deceived him. They deceived each other when they married. And therefore all your life try to deceive your wife. Make her think you're a nice fellow. Make your husband think you're a nice person. Try your best to deceive each other all your life.

"If a person says that a rabbi cannot sing and a cantor is not a scholar, he is guilty of speaking lashon hora. But if someone says that a rabbi is not a scholar and the cantor cannot sing, it is tantamount to murder." ~ R' Yisroel Salanter zt"l.



You said at a previous lecture that a man should pray for health even when he has it; he should ask Hashem that he shouldn't get sick. But doesn't that contradict the idea of אל יפתח אדם פיו לשטן - not to open your mouth to the satan by speaking of misfortunes that could occur (Brachos 19a)?

There's a Jewish principle, not to speak about unfortunate things. For example, a man shouldn't say to his wife, "If one of us dies, then I'm going to Eretz Yisroel to settle." It's a Jewish principle in how we speak. It's goyish to say, like a boy said to his rebbe; he said, "Rebbe, if an ox would gore you and kill you, does he have to pay kofer?"- You don't talk that way. Jews don't talk that way.

However, when it comes to tefillah, it's just the opposite. You're praying to Hakadosh Baruch Hu and that's not **פתוח פה לשטן** and so we find everywhere that this kind of tefillah is employed. So you have a right to ask Hakadosh Baruch Hu to protect you from a whole list of misfortunes. Because when you're praying to Hashem, you can unburden yourself, and you don't have to worry. But otherwise, in idle conversation, we don't want to say anything that's not happy.

Even to make yourself unhappy is not virtuous. We always look at the sunny side of life and never mention misfortunes. There are some people who are crabby and are always thinking about what might happen and Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, "If you're misusing the opportunity I gave you to be happy, then I'm going to make you unhappy; I'll bring misfortune on you and now you'll look back and regret the good old days when things were going well." So don't talk about misfortunes and not happy things. - But when it comes to prayer, then you can pray to Hakodosh Boruch Hu for all good things including that He should save you from all misfortunes.



CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"L **מחשבת הלב**

וּמִבֶּן חֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה יָשׁוּב מִצְּבָא הָעֲבֹדָה וְלֹא יַעֲבֹד עֹוד – '***From the age of fifty he shall retire from the work legion, and do no more work***'.

A Ben Levi, when he reaches the age of 50, does not continue his physical service but instead receives other service opportunities. **Rashi** cites an example "**אֲבָל חוֹזֵר הוּא לִנְעִילַת שְׁעָרִים**". The *Levi* can't perform any work but is in charge of closing the gates.

Why do *Chazal* mention only closing of the gates and not their opening as well?

Perhaps we can explain with a story. At the **הנחת אבן הפינה** of the *Volozhiner Yeshivah*, **R' Chaim Volozhiner *zt"l*** shed copious tears. Years later, **R' Berel Soloveitchik *zt"l*** explained the reason for these tears: To open a *yeshivah* is one thing but to have the courage and wisdom to know when to close it - that takes herculean strength.

R' Chaim was *davening* that if ever need be, he would have the conviction and moral clarity to close its doors. And this is what happened. The *goyim* sought to undermine the *yeshivah's* purity by introducing and mandating the study of secular studies, which at the time was a breach in the *mesoras haTorah*. The *Roshei Yeshivah* convened and decided it was better not to have the *yeshivah* at all, than to have the influence of modernization and assimilation present. They locked the doors and closed the *yeshivah* until the danger passed.

Hence, these "retired" *Bnei Levi*, who possessed life's wisdom were tasked not with opening the doors, which could be done by others, but rather with closing the gates, to have the inner strength to maintain the purity of *Hashem's* sanctuary. **(**see **Sfas Emes)**



וַיְהִי הָעָם כְּמִתְאֲנְנִים רַע בְּאָזְנֵי ה' – '*The people were looking to complain, and it was evil in the ears of Hashem*'. (11:1)

Rashi comments that when the *Misonenim* were complaining, they had no real cause to complain! They were looking for an excuse to separate themselves from *Hashem*, so as to not feel obligated to keep His laws!

Complaining, very often, is just a way of justifying one's own negative behavior and lack of motivation to do what is right. It is the cause of so many *tzaros* in *Klal Yisroel.* The *Meraglim* in next week's *parsha* complained about *Eretz Yisroel* and because they cried tears for no reason, Hashem gave us many reasons to cry over the centuries of Jewish history.

The *Meraglim* CHOSE to see the negative in *Eretz Yisroel* because of their own personal agenda! We, too, must realize that when we complain, there is usually no reason to complain. We have to ask ourselves, what is my underlying motive for saying these negative words? - There is usually a reason.

When you complain, you become plain. You rob yourself of the ability to be a great person, because you are pulling yourself down and away from happiness and *Kirvas Elokim*. Ultimately, a person who goes through life complaining is robbing himself of all the wonderful things in his life that he does have, but does not see! If a person has a gift but does not appreciate it, it is as if he does not have it.

Imagine if you would wake up every morning only with the gifts that you appreciated yesterday. But *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, in His infinite and endless kindness and *rachmanus*, does not turn off the air if we

don't appreciate it. He continues to shower us with millions of blessings every day no matter if we acknowledge them or not.

By focusing on the negative and failing to appreciate all the good we have, is not only a *potch* in the Divine face, but it is a *potch* in our own face! The one who loses out the most is you. The more heightened our appreciation is for anything, the more we will enjoy it and the more pleasure we will have.

Happy people are those who choose to focus on their gifts and don't complain about things they cannot change. In fact, they understand that these challenges are also gifts from *Hashem* to help them grow!



R' Chaim Kanievsky and the IDF

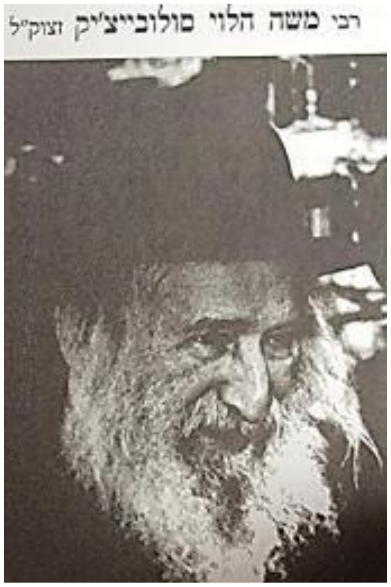
In August 2009 when R' Shmuel Grossbard, the father of one of the *mashgichim* in Ponevezh Yeshiva, passed away, R' Chaim Kanievsky went to be menachem avel. His children were surprised, so R' Chaim explained, "I have a debt of gratitude to your father who was my commander in the army and helped me immensely."

Those present were astonished as they never heard that either R' Grossbard or R' Chaim had ever served in the army. R' Chaim smiled and recounted, "During the War of Independence in 1948, I was studying at the Lomza Yeshiva in Petach Tikvah. When the war started, everyone was drafted into the army without exception.

Of course, we knew nothing, until one day a large vehicle arrived outside the yeshiva, and they said that everyone must come to protect the country. Because none of us knew how to hold a gun, they gave us sticks and stones and assigned us to guard a large hill. Everyone was very scared; R' Berel Povarsky hid in a bathroom and

avoided service. But R' Moshe Soloveitchik and I went. R' Moshe sat beside me the entire time reciting Tehillim while crying. Your father, R' Grossbard was appointed as commander because he was the oldest in the group. Because he was commander, he got the largest stick.

When we arrived, I asked him what we should do. He told me, 'You should go up the hill and sit and learn where they can't see you, but take a stick and two stones so that if the Arabs come, you can scare them away.' We stayed there for a long time, and after we left the place, we were told the Arabs had shot at that same place. Out of gratitude for then, I have come to be menachem avel."






During Israel's wars, R' Chaim Kanievsky did not alter his schedule and continued to learn at the same time as usual. During the Six-Day War, he was heading to Kollel Chazon Ish through the nearly deserted streets of Bnei Brak when he met his cousin R' Reuven Fine. R' Reuven asked, "Aren't the tanks in the street enough to scare you into changing your daily schedule?"

R' Chaim replied, "When I saw tanks, I pondered whether they are obligated to have a mezuza and whether a tank can be *mekabel tumah*." R' Chaim then began listing the applicable Rambams in Taharos and different reasonings.

The Weekly Vort

● **ויעש כן אהרן – *Aharon did so*** (8:3).

Rashi comments that this *pasuk* is praising Aharon that "he did not change." He did not deviate from what he was commanded. Would we have thought otherwise? What kind of praise is this for Aharon? What is Rashi trying to teach us?

Sfas Emes explains: It is only natural that one is very enthusiastic when embarking on a new venture. As the novelty wears off, the excitement wanes. Aharon performed this same *mitzvah* for 39 consecutive years with the same enthusiasm as the first time. (The Torah Treasury)

● **והעמדת את הלויים.. והנפת אתם תנופה לה' – *And you shall stand the Levi'im… and designate them as a wave offering to Hashem*** (8:13).

Here the command to designate the *Levi'im* is directed at Moshe, whereas two *pesukim* previous, it is directed to Aharon, as it states, "*…and Aharon shall designate the Levi'im*" (8:11). How is this contradiction reconciled?

Since the command to designate the *Levi'im* was given to Moshe who, in turn, conveyed it to Aharon, Moshe is regarded as having performed the designation. This teaches us that when a person induces others to study Torah or to do good deeds, it is considered as if he had actually studied that Torah or had performed those *mitzvos* himself.

R' Akiva told his students that "the Torah I have acquired and the Torah you have acquired all belongs to her [his wife]." Since it was his wife, Rochel, who inspired R' Akiva to study Torah, she received the credit for all the Torah studied by R' Akiva and his students. (R' Moshe Feinstein) (Torah Treasures)



Hiking Up The Mountain



An old friend of the **Koznetz Maggid**, the Avodas Yisrael, once paid him a visit. Growing up, they had been known as the smartest and the most respected boys in their class. They had been very close friends, but over the years, they'd lost contact. Now that something was bothering this friend, he felt it was time to visit the Maggid and get his advice.

Before their meeting, the friend inquired from others about his friend, the Maggid, to know a bit about what had become of him since they parted ways many years ago. He learned that the Maggid had been granted outstanding *siyata d'shmaya* in his growth, that he was sought after by all, and that he could perform *mofsim* that helped people tremendously. Hearing all this brought out feelings of envy in the Maggid's old friend.

When they met, the Maggid could detect a certain air of jealousy on his friend's part. Amidst their conversation, the Maggid slipped in a *mashal* to explain what made them different, and thus why the Maggid had grown so remarkably:

One of the hobbies people enjoy doing is mountain climbing. They go to the foot of a high mountain and try to make their way up to the top. Unlike today, when mountain trails are marked and established, real climbers then had to chart for themselves the way, sometimes having to climb steep, rocky cliffs to pave the path.

So, picture two friends, both with the same physical shape and capability, heading out for such a climb. Both are determined to get to the top. Yet, after half an hour into their climb, one decides to give up, while the other perseveres and ultimately makes it to the top.

What was the difference between the two? Was the one who made it to the top stronger than the other? Was he more determined? Not necessarily! If so, in what way do they differ?

The difference between the two, lies in their approach. One of them was always looking for the safe, sturdy branches to support him as he climbed, while the other one used anything that would get him higher. The one who looked for the steadfast branches was at a loss when he encountered shaky ones; he felt he didn't have what he needed to make it to the top, and he gave up.

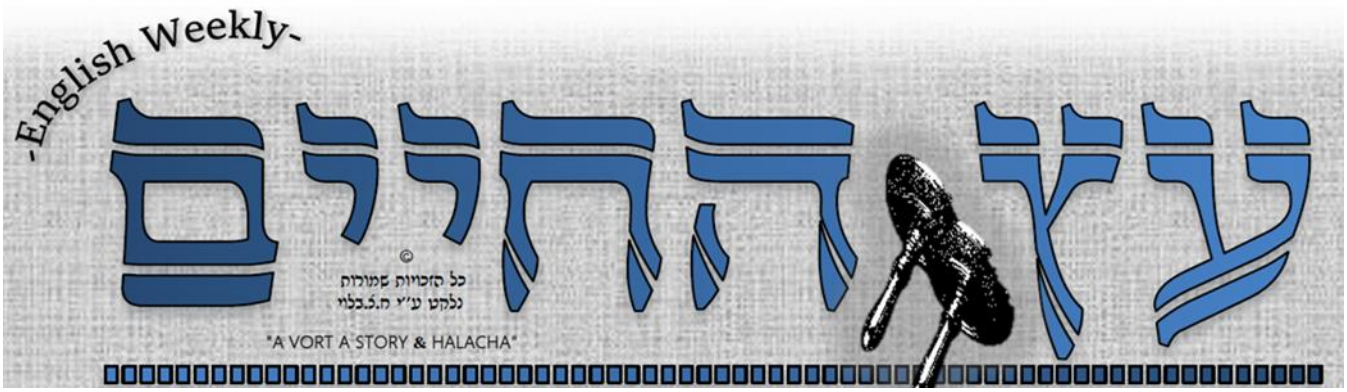
But the one who looked for anything that could get him higher found success no matter what. Whether it was a branch, a twig, or a shaky rock, he grabbed it and used it to advance. He didn't only use the secure branches to get him to the next level. Whatever came his way served him in his journey, and he was therefore able to make it to the top, since he had much more to support him.

Life has ups and downs, the Maggid continued. Those who only use the ups face a problem. What are they going to do when they face a down? How are they going to proceed? Are they just going to throw in the towel?

The one who uses even the days that so-to-speak "don't work out" and don't get down from them are the ones who'll continue, even

during those times. Keeping up their growth during those times will ensure that they are always growing.

"This is the underlying difference between us," the Maggid told his friend. "I cherish the down days, while you throw them away and don't use them productively." (*Tiv Hamasios, Bamidbar*, p. 18, 20)



Adirei Torah

Reb Shlomo Lorincz once accompanied a few Gedolim in the early years of America to a philanthropist to collect money for a very worthy cause known as "Chinuch Atzmai". Upon arriving to his home they asked the secretary if they can speak to the philanthropist. The secretary asked, "And what should I tell him?" They told her to tell him the names of the Gedolim who were there and wanted to speak with him. She went in and came out a minute later looking a bit shaken. - She told them he was not in!

It was clear that she was just following his instructions to cover for him. The Gedolim heard his reply and left the office heading elsewhere.

R' Shlomo being a member of the Israeli Knesset remained behind, pulled out his special card and asked the secretary if she can please show it to her boss. She did as he requested.

The philanthropist suddenly jumped up and welcomed him with great honor – telling him what a privilege it was to have someone from the

Knesset come to him… R' Shlomo looked at him and asked the following, "**Do you know what Gehinnom is?**"

The philanthropist answered, "Of course."

"Well there is no place deep enough for you in Gehinom for disgracing the kavod of Gedolei Yisrael - **You sent them away, and me, a simple layman you invited in with such honor?!**"

He got the message very clearly and it surely shot a spark in this man's Neshama. He then asked R' Lorincz what he could do to rectify his sin. R' Lorincz answered, "Maybe if you chase after them and beg them for mechila it will help you."

He raced out of his office and caught up to the Gedolim. The man begged for mechila and asked that they come back to his office. He then gave them a substantial donation. More than what they were expecting to get!

A Vort from Reb Yoel רב דוב ארי בערזאן



ויהי בנסע הארן...שובה ה' רבבות אלפי ישראל" - "*Whenever the Aron departed…come to rest Hashem among the myriads and thousands of Israel*." פרק י פסוק לה-לו

Question: Why are there *nun hakufin* - inverted "nuns" - setting off the two verses of **ויהי בנסע** ?

Answer: In Aramaic the word "nun" means fish – **אונקלוס** (11:5). The life of a fish depends mostly on its ability to swim upstream. If it allows itself to be swept along by the currents of the water, it will be thrown and squashed. It is

only because Hashem has given the fish the instinct of self-preservation, so it is able to swim upstream against the current, that it can survive and increase.

Jews have been compared to fish. Yaakov avinu blessed his children "**וידגו לרב בקרב הארץ** " – "And they may increase abundantly like fish in the midst of the earth."

His intention was that just like fish swim upstream and resists the tide, his children should resist the temptation to take the "easy way" in life by following the false ideas of their generation.

The message of the nun hakufin (inverted nuns) in connection with **ויהי בנסע הארון** is that to travel with the holy Aron a Yid must be ready to go against the tide and stand firm.

Parshah Pearls

- **Not on Shabbos and Yom-Tov**

וְנָתַן ה' לָכֶם בָּשָׂר וַאֲכַלְתֶּם. לֹא יוֹם אֶחָד תֹּאכְלוּן וְלֹא יוֹמָיִם וְלֹא חֲמִשָּׁה יָמִים וְלֹא עֲשָׂרָה יָמִים וְלֹא עֶשְׂרִים יוֹם " … ***Hashem will give you meat and you will eat. Not one day, not two days, not five and not twenty days. Until a month of days*** … " (11:18/19).

These details certainly appear superfluous, as it would have sufficed to say 'G-d will give you meat and you will eat for a month … '. Presumably, that is what prompts the **Da'as Zekeinim** to take the Pasuk completely out of context and to present the following explanations.

These numbers, he explains, pertain to all the sixty-seven (1+2+5+20+29) days of the year on which Yisrael is forbidden to work, and on which there is a Mitzvah to eat meat.

This incorporates the 50 Shabbasos of a regular year, plus the 4 Shabbasos of a leap-year; plus, four-4 days of Pesach (in Chutz la'Aretz (presumably because that is where they were);2 days of

Shavu'os and 2 days of Rosh Hashanah, 1 day of Yom-Kipur and 4 of Succos.

Alternatively, they write, the 1 day refers to Yom Kipur, the 2 days, to Shavu'os and Rosh Hashanah, the 5, to the intervening days between Yom Kipur and Succos (including the first day of Succos); the 10 days refer to the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kipur; whereas "ve'lo be'esrim yom" refers to the 20 plus 1 days on which Yisrael recite complete Hallel.

Either way, the Pasuk is coming to teach us that on these days, no harm will befall K'lal Yisrael.



A man told the Manchester Rosh Yeshiva, Horav Yehuda Zev Segal זצ"ל , that he had a lot of pain in his throat. Rav Segal told him to start learning the Sefer Chofetz Chaim on shmiras halashon every day.

The man listened, and soon after, his throat got much better.

A person should not imagine that Avodas Hashem begins only when life becomes calm and orderly. On the contrary, the pressures, distractions, and fatigue of daily life are the very setting in which true service takes place. Each moment offers an opportunity either to give in to habit or to act with intention.

One who serves Hashem steadily within the ordinary routine of life performs a quiet but enduring avodah, one that shapes the soul more deeply than rare moments of inspiration. ~ Pele Yoetz.



Parshah Thoughts – Ideas and Reflections – Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

עַל־פִּי ה׳ - When Bnei Yisroel traveled, it was always based on the direction of Hashem (9:18).

Based on this, **the Sh"lah** (B'ha'alos'cha 12) teaches that we should verbalize and incorporate Hashem in each of our endeavors. Before we start anything, we should ask Hashem that it should be successful, and when we complete it, we should express that it was completed with Hashem's involvement.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

Rav Avigdor Miller, zt"l, spoke about one who wastes his time: You have to realize that one day you're going to have to give a Din V'Cheshbon. The gift of time from Hashem is a tremendous opportunity, but it's also a tremendous responsibility.

The Pasuk in Tehilim says (31:16), 'B'Yadcha Itosai', in Your hand, Hashem, are all my times. That means, all my hours are in Your hands, and all my minutes are in Your hand. It's not mine, it's Yours. And if I take out of Your hand another minute, it's really another diamond, and if I take it and throw it out the window, HaKadosh Baruch Hu says, "Oh, that's Chutzpah! I'm handing you every minute, it's such a precious gift! It's from My hand, and you're taking it from Me and wasting it?!"

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

Manna Gathering Separates The "Men" From the "Boys"

There is an interesting Medrash/Commentary which says that when the Manna originally came down from heaven, it came down with precious stones and diamonds. The greatest people of the nation (Gedolim she'bahem) went ahead and took these precious stones and diamonds. However, the simple people, the masses, only collected the Manna, leaving the gems behind.

This is very strange. Everyone appreciates a bargain - especially free diamonds! How was it that only the leaders of the people took advantage of free riches?

Rav Michel Twerski of Milwaukee pointed out the unique economic conditions that existed in the Wilderness. For the only time in the history of civilization, there existed a society where all of a person's physical needs were met. Food was effortlessly available from Heaven. Water was effortlessly available from the Well. Clothing did not wear out, so it was not necessary to buy new clothing. Shelter was available from the Clouds of Glory. We can probably assume that G-d threw in Health Insurance as a guaranteed benefit as well. This was a society that had no needs whatsoever. If one does not have any needs, then of what use are precious stones? What would one do with them? There was nothing to buy and no need to buy anything. Therefore, people looked at these precious stones, determined that they had no purpose for them, and considered them worthless.

However, the great people among them knew that there would come an occasion when there would be a Mishkan and Bigday Kehunah which required the contribution of precious stones. This Medrash teaches us that what differentiates the masses from the leadership, is perspective. A person who only sees in front of his

nose, who only considers his requirements for the day, is in the category of a non-leader. The leader recognizes that although certain things might be unnecessary in the current situation, in the future there may come a time when these things will have value.

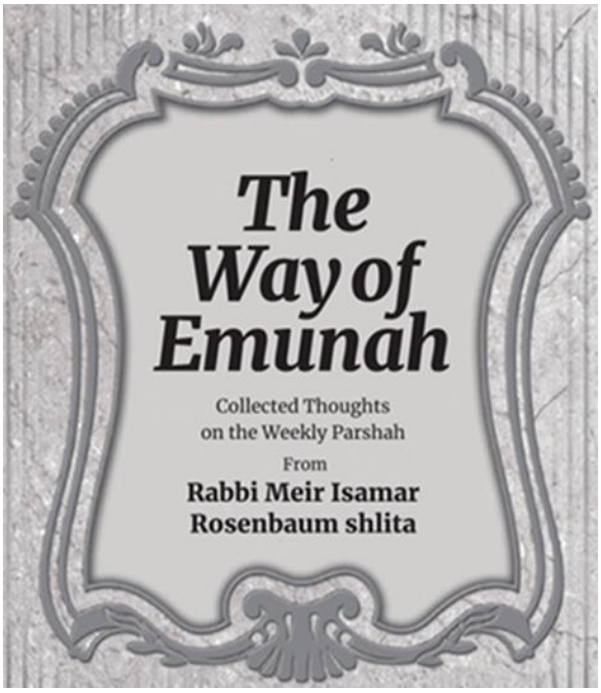
It is well known that trees do not grow in deserts. The Jews needed a significant amount of lumber to build the Mishkan. Where did they obtain the lumber?

Our Sages tell us that Yaakov planted cedar trees when he first came down to Egypt so that his descendants would be able to cut them down and take them out with them for the purpose of building the Mishkan. - This is the perspective of a great individual. He is not merely caught up in 'today'; he plans for and considers what will be in the future.

Ed. Note: Moreover, whatever we encounter in our lives is for a reason and purpose. The great people understood that if Hashem sent them precious stones, there was a good reason – so they held onto them and waited to find out what it was.

The Chofetz Chaim was once speaking to a group of students and they were discussing the mon, the miraculous food eaten by the Jews in the desert. "We all know," said the sage, "that the mon miraculously tasted like whatever you wanted. If you thought about cake, it tasted like cake. If you thought about fruit, it tasted like fruit. But what would happen if one ate the mon and did not have any specific thought?"

The boys thought about it and agreed it was a good question. They looked to the Chofetz Chaim to enlighten them. "It's simple," he explained. "Az men tracht nisht, hot es kain taam nisht – If you don't put in any thought, it has no flavor!" This lesson was about much more than food; it was a lesson about everything we do in life.



וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה הֶעֱלָה נֵרֹתֶיהָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֶת־מֹשֶׁה - *'And Aharon did so; he lit the lamps toward the face of the Menorah, as Hashem had commanded Moshe.'* (8:3)

- **Fulfilling a Mitzvah Even While in the Midst of Dveikus**

Rashi says that this teaches us the praise of Aharon for not changing anything. Many Meforishim ask why Rashi needs to tell us this. Would anyone think that the great Aharon Hakohen would change and do something differently than what he had been commanded by Hashem?

My ancestor, **Rav Mordchele of Nadvorna zy"a** explains that the highest level a tzadik can reach is when he is fully connected to the Upper Worlds but still retains a connection to this world, without losing any of his sanctity and holiness.

Rashi is saying that Aharon was on this level. When he lit the Menorah, he was deeply connected to the upper realms and was on a higher plane of ruchnius. Still and all, he remained connected to this world and was able to perform the physical actions of lighting the neiros without any mistakes or changes.

On Friday, in the rush to finish Shabbos preparations on time, a person is apt to become short-tempered. On Shabbos, when the entire family sits at the table together, parents might become angry with young children for misbehaving. Thus, special care should be taken on Shabbos to control one's anger. ~ R' Eliyahu Lopian zt"l.

- **The Oil Never Spilled**

Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov zy"a answers this question similarly by quoting the Sefer Hachasidim which relates that there once was a big tzadik who was exceedingly connected to Hashem. He hid his greatness and no one knew about the lofty level he attained.

This man worked as the shamash in the shul, and he would fill up the cups with oil to provide light in the bais knessess. When he did this job, he thought about his great love of Hashem, and he would become so immersed in his thoughts that he would spill the oil without even realizing it.

The people around him had no idea what was wrong with him, and they thought he was crazy. The Chochom of the city, however, realized that he was full of dveikus, which is what caused him to spill the oil. He told the people that the shamash should take his place as Chochom, and he would serve as shamash!

We see from this that some tzadikim are so full of dveikus with Hashem that they lose touch with their physical senses and cannot control what they are doing. However, there is an even higher level than that, which is the level of tzadik who has sanctified his body to such an extent that he can be fully connected to Hashem and still retain control of his actions. - This was the greatness of Aharon Hakohen. He was fully immersed in the lofty kavanos of lighting the menorah, but he still kept control over his body and he poured the oil into the menorah without spilling a drop.

Chazal praise him for this and say that despite his holy thoughts and great dveikus, he did not change anything and was able to do exactly as he was commanded. Thus, the pasuk testifies that he did the action of the mitzvah of the menorah with no changes, and also did it "as Hashem commanded", meaning that he was fully connected to Hashem as he did this mitzvah.



- **Always Humble**

Sefer Sifsei Tzadikim quotes **Rav Meir of Premishlan zy"a** as explaining this Rashi by saying that even when a tzadik reaches lofty levels of Divine glory and is uplifted to great spiritual heights, he remains humble. He does not change and become haughty. Rather, he stays as modest and unassuming as he was before.

Accordingly, the pasuk is teaching us that although Aharon was honored with the crown of kehuna and with the privilege of lighting the Menorah, he did not change and he remained as humble as ever.

עַל־פִּי ה' יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־פִּי ה' יַחֲנוּ – '***By the word of Hashem, they traveled and by the word of Hashem they camped***.' (9:18)

- **Always Remembering the Name of Hashem**

The Shlah Hakadosh writes that we are meant to learn a mussar lesson from these pesukim. Whenever a person does any action, he should say, "Im Yirtzeh Hashem" or "B'Ezras Hashem."

For example, before a person embarks on a trip, he should say, "Im Yirtzeh Hashem, I am traveling to such-and-such place." When he arrives at his destination, he should say, "B'Ezras Hashem, I have made it here". In this way, Hashem's name will always be in a person's mouth and he will always remember that whatever he does is guided by Hashem. Thus, the pasuk is saying that they traveled with the name of Hashem and they camped with the name of Hashem, meaning that the name of Hashem was always on their lips.

18 Sivan –Yahrzeit of the Saba Kadisha of Radoshitz Zy"a

- **Enthusiasm for Torah and Avodah**

The Saba Kadisha's parents were extremely poor. His father didn't have a penny to his name and was known as "Berel the Batlan". He didn't make any attempt to do business to earn a living but rather spent his days in the bais medrash, learning Torah and serving Hashem, or with his holy rabbeim.

- **Not Listening to the Yeitzer Hara**

The Chozeh of Lublin zy"a was once sitting with his chassidm and he pointed out the Saba Kadisha to them. He said, "Do you see that young man who is filled with the yeitzer hara from head to toe?"

The chassidim were puzzled by his words, so he explained, "But he doesn't listen to it at all…"

- **The Power of His Tehillim**

The Yid Hakadosh of Peshischa zy"a once pointed out the Saba Kadisha to his students before he became revealed to the world and said, "Look how he says Tehillim with such passion. His Tehillim is more precious to Hashem than all of our Torah!"

One of the students who was present at the time was **Rav Shimshon of Zvolin zt"l**. He later told the Saba Kadisha what the Yid Hakadosh said about him. When the Saba Kadisha heard this, he got up and walked away.

After he became revealed and was leading his community in Radoshitz, Rav Shimshon came to visit him but he would not let him in. When he finally let him in, he told him that the reason he didn't want to see him was because when he told him how the Yid Hakadosh had praised his Tehillim, he had to work very hard for a long time to make sure that he was not proud of himself and did not feel any haughtiness.

- **Healing the Sick With an Apple**



A wealthy man once came to see him and related that he was suffering from a wound on the center of his head that gave him extreme headaches, which caused him much pain. His doctors had told him that his life was in danger, as the ailment could spread to his brain, and there was no known cure.

The Saba Kadisha looked at the wound and took an ointment out of his drawer. He placed some on a clean bandage and tied it on the wound. He told the man to wear the bandage for a full 24 hours and then to come back to him.

When the man returned the next day, the Saba Kadisha removed the bandage and saw that a scab had formed over the wound.

Rav Nosson Dovid of Shidlovitza zy"a was in the room at the time. He saw the scab and said, "It seems like it is already healing and nothing else needs to be done!" However, the sick man asked for the ointment to be placed on his head once more. The Saba Kadisha did as requested and told him to come back in another 24 hours.

When he returned, he took off the bandage and saw that the wound was completely gone, with not a trace remaining. Rav Nosson Dovid asked if he could have a little bit of the ointment so that he could use it to heal people but the Saba Kadisha told him, "There is no medicine in this ointment. I made it from pieces of the apple I dipped in honey and ate on Rosh Hashana!"

May the tzadik's memory be a blessing for Klal Yisroel.

Taken for Granted - Eliyahu Maksumov



If I were to take all the holidays, including Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Succos, Hoshana Rabbah, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Purim, Pesach and Shavuos, - take any holiday that you can think of, and place it on one side of the scales, and then on the other side of the scale place just one hour of Shabbos, (not 25 hours, but just the one hour) – **Chasam Sofer** says that this one hour of Shabbos will outweigh all the holidays combined together! They pale in comparison to Shabbos.

This should blow your mind! That means that Shabbos is so valuable and great! As great any of the holidays are, they cannot compare to the holiness of Shabbos.

The problem is that we take Shabbos for granted. - Do you know why we take it for granted?

Because it happens every week. We get used to it. The other Yomim Tovim occur once a year, and we have to prepare for that and get excited about it. But the fact that Shabbos comes around every week is an indication of its importance and greatness. Hashem is showing us how special it is. He wants us to connect to Him on the greatest level possible. – Don't underestimate Shabbos!

Do not regret growing older. It is a privilege denied to many.

The Blessing of Your Child Waking You Up - Rabbi Shlomo Landau

For so many children in Israel, the trauma that they experienced since October 7th, has changed them.

For one family in Bet Shemesh, their 7-year-old child has really not been the same, and this manifests itself in the fact that every single night, in the middle of the night, come what may, he wakes up. He has scary dreams, and his father or mother soothe and sit with him until he eventually falls back to sleep again.

This time it was even more challenging for the parents, as it was Seder night. They had ended the Seder and cleared up in the small hours of the morning. They had only been to sleep for a short while, when the nightly cries started. They were exhausted and drained.

The father schlepped himself out of bed and went to his child. He put him back to sleep, but as he leaves the room, he notices a smell of smoke! The smoke is coming up from the floor below. He starts shouting fire and quickly wakes up his wife and their other children.

By the time he did this, the apartment was filled with thick black smoke. They ran to the balcony and shut the door, while the entire inside of the apartment was engulfed in flames. - Eventually, the fire department came, rescued them, and they were all saved.

You know, it's such an inconvenience when our children wake us up. And there are so many other inconveniences that Hashem throws upon us at times, and sometimes we resent them. They are challenging, and they are difficult, especially when you are so tired from having been woken up. - The fact that the child woke them up every night, became the thing that saved the entire families lives.

Hashem throws challenges at us that have a purpose, and we can either resent them, or we can embrace them. – The choice is ours.

TORAHANYTIMES NEWSLETTER



Flight 603 - Rabbi Mike Bengio

October 2, 1996, 12:42 a.m., Aeroperú Flight 603.

Departure: Miami International Airport, Miami, Florida.

Destination: Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport, Santiago, Chile.

Taking off from Miami, the Boeing 757 had touched down at its last stopover: Lima International airport in Peru. It's final leg and final destination in Chile would be next.

The night was a thick black, but pilots are trained to fly under such conditions. Abrupt weather changes, unexpected turbulence and water landings are all par for the course. October 2nd was no different a night. Except for one thing.

Once airborne, Aeroperú Flight 603 discovered irregularities in its flight instruments. Altitude and airspeed, rudder ratio, mach speed trim, overspeed and underspeed were all misreading. Knowing what this meant, the pilots immediately contacted the air traffic controller, concerned yet confident that they'd be able to guide

them to an immediate emergency landing. If the instruments weren't working on the plane, the controller would have to play that role tonight.

But there was one problem. Major problem.

The altitude information displayed on the controller's screen was being sent from the aircraft's Mode C Transponder. And the transponder itself was receiving the same mistaken altitude information, just like the aircraft's altimeter was.

Both the pilot and the controller were getting the wrong reading.

The controller immediately dispatched a Boeing 707 to take off and help guide the 757 to safety. The pilot had already begun his descent, believing that their altitude was 9,700 feet. The truth was otherwise. The plane was much lower.

Blinded by the black darkness of the night, before the captain and controller knew it, the 757 had dropped altitude without any corresponding change being indicated on the altimeter. And then it happened, all so fast.

The 757's left wingtip clipped the ocean water, searing off a chunk of the left wing. The pilot gave a push to climb some altitude, to which he was successful. For all but 22 seconds. The left wing had already sustained damage, and as if time was spiraling forward faster than it could handle, the aircraft slammed into the water, inverting. - All 70 passengers and crew members perished.

13 hours earlier… The skies had opened, buckets of rain pelting the ground with a deafening might. But it was time to go, and when it's time to go, it's time to go. Our long-awaited Miami vacation had come to an end, and we needed to return home to Chile.

My mother, along with me and my siblings, carefully maneuvered down the stairs, mindful of the hurling rain. To this day, I remember it. All at once, my mother slipped, the wet stairs paving her way down to the ground in tumbling motion. Stair after stair she slid, until she

came to a halting stop at the bottom. I stood frozen in fear, my mother laying there unmoving.

Immediately, the hotel manager and attendants came rushing to her aid, helping her to her feet and rushing her to the local hospital. As a young boy, I was unsure what to make of everything. On the one hand, I was forced to remain back at the hotel and wait around until my mother was ready for us. On the other hand, with no bedtime and no parental authority telling me and my siblings what to do, things didn't seem too bad.

But then, I learned the truth. The doctors remained uncertain if and when my mother would be able to walk again. That news was haunting. Until, thank G-d, the tables turned. Hashem healed her and the prognosis that she'd be unable to walk was crossed off. In fact, she'd regained her mobility and ability to walk. But there was something else we all quickly realized. - We'd missed our flight. We never boarded Aeroperú Flight 603.

Hashem places us wherever we need to be and when we need to be there. In davening, we describe Hashem as, "*Elokei Ha'Rishonim V'ha'acharonim*—The G-d of the beginning and the end." Hashem is in control of the beginning of the story and the end of the story. Sometimes, the beginning is inexplicable and we have no idea why something must have occurred as it did. But don't worry. Truly, don't worry. There's a very good reason your life turned out just the way it did. Sometimes, you will be privy to the *Elokei Ha'acharonim* and discover the end of the story and understand why things unfolded as they did. But whether you do or you don't, take solace at the beginning of the story that there's a purpose and reason to be revealed at its end.

May G-d rest the lives of those who perished on that flight, enabling their legacy to be remembered. And as it was for me and my family, we know why we missed our flight. - And thank G-d we did.

"This Is My Mitzvah! You Get Your Own Garbage!" by R' Paysach Diskind

Rav Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky was the previous Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisrael. For a year and a half, one of Rav Kulefsky's talmidim lived with his wife and family in the same building as the Kulefskys, in "401," as it is known in Yeshiva Lane. This talmid had many encounters with his esteemed neighbor, some of them humorous, but all memorable and meaningful.

One Erev Shabbos, the talmid drove into the parking lot of 401 just as Rav Kulefsky walked out the back entrance, holding a bag filled with garbage. The talmid quickly jumped out of his car and ran over to offer to take the trash bag and throw it into the dumpster. But Rav Kulefsky pulled it away from him and declared with a twinkle in his eye, "This is my mitzvah! You get your own garbage!"

The rebbetzin did not drive a car. Although Baltimore has buses, the system is not as user-friendly as in other cities. Rav Kulefsky took it upon himself to drive his wife to the grocery store each week and to any other stores she had to shop at. He did this happily and graciously.

Many talmidim, as well as other Baltimore residents, remember seeing Rav Kulefsky sitting in his car (which did not have air conditioning for many years) in the parking lot of the local supermarket, learning from a huge pile of sefarim as he calmly waited for his wife to complete her purchases.

Some took advantage of the chance to talk to him in learning right then and there in the parking lot. At times, he even gave oral semichah tests while waiting in the car. If circumstances warranted, it was not unusual to meet him in the store on his own.

(From Rav Kulefsky, By Yisroel Besser, Published by Artscroll Mesorah)

Dvar Torah

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld

Rosh Hayeshiva



This week's Parshah begins with the directive to Aharon ha'Kohen to light the Menorah. The verse says, " – "ויעש כן "and he did so," which means, as Rashi explains, that Aharon did not deviate at all from what Hashem commanded him.

The obvious question is what is so praiseworthy about not deviating from the command of Hashem? It is obvious that Aharon, one of the greatest men of the generation, did exactly what Hashem told him!

There was a flag boy in Russia, who had the job of holding a lantern to direct the trains at a railroad junction, directing the trains which way to go throughout the night.

One evening there was a terrible accident. Two trains collided and there were many casualties. The boy was brought to court to be prosecuted for his neglectful behavior. In the Russian system, there was no clemency for mistakes. The boy was standing trial for his life.

The judge asked the boy, "Were you holding the lantern?"

The boy replied, "Yes, judge."

"Did you direct the trains to the right destinations?"

"Yes sir, I did," said the boy.

The judge dismissed the case, exonerated the boy, and sent him home.

The chief prosecutor leapt forward and said, "Excuse me, judge, but you missed the most important question! Was the lantern lit?!"

This anecdote can be used to explain the praise the Torah gives Aharon. **The Sefas Emes** explains that when the verse teaches that Aharon did not deviate from what Hashem told him, it does not mean literally that he did not deviate from fulfilling his instructions, for indeed that is obvious. - Rather, the Torah is pointing to something deeper.

For Aharon, the lighting of the Menorah every day did not become a mechanical habit. He lit the Menorah anew every day with the same hislahavus, freshness, and excitement as if he were doing it for the first time.

How often do we do Mitzvos, day in, day out, and we feel like our Avodas Hashem has become a little stale? We daven, we learn, we put on Tzitzis and Tefillin, and it feels very monotonous.

What we can learn from Aharon ha'Kohen is how to perform recurring acts of mitzvos with a renewed sense of enthusiasm every day, and to feel the excitement and geshmak in our yiddishkeit even as we perform so many of the mitzvos on a regular basis.

As the **Kotzker Rebbe** sharply said, "It's one thing to revive the dead. It's quite another thing to revive the living."

Wishing you a good Shabbos!



Beis Aharon

The 17th of Sivan is the *yahrtzeit* of **Reb Aharon of Stolin, *zt'l*, the Beis Ahron**.

The Rebbe of Kozmir *zt'l* called him "the *freilechen tzaddik*" because he was always happy!

בס"ד
Menucha
A Shabbos table companion for the whole family
לע"נ ר' ברוך חיים בן סלמון ז"ל

Eye Must Honor My Parents by Avishai Hill

Rav Shmuel Engel of Radomishla zt"l (1853-1935) – the author of the famous Sheilos Uteshuvas Maharash, experienced a calamity in his youth: When he was seven years old, he lost his sight.

His devoted mother took him from doctor to doctor, and from professor to professor, seeking a cure for her son, travelling the length and breadth of Europe. But the situation seemed hopeless, as all the professionals threw their hands up in defeat and exclaimed emphatically that they were unable to help.

In sheer desperation, the mother took him to the **Sanzer Rav zt"l** (1797- 1876) and beseeched the tzaddik for a blessing. "If Hashem returns your sight to you, what will you do with it?" he asked the child.

"I'll be able to learn Torah," came the answer.

"Will you also observe the mitzvah of kibbud av v'aim?" continued the tzaddik.

"Certainly!" answered the child emphatically.

"If you assure me that you will use your eyes for the study of the Torah, and that you will also honor your parents – I will bless you that your eyesight be restored, and that you will illuminate other people's eyes!"…

Only a short while passed, and the young Shmuel recovered, without any intrusive procedure or operation!

Chabad.ORG

From our Sages

דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־הַנֵּרֹת – *'Speak to Aaron and say to him: "When you raise light in the lamps . . .' (8:2)*

Were not the lamps of the menorah also extinguished with the destruction of the Holy Temple?

But this alludes to the Chanukah lights, which were instituted in the time of the Second Temple by the Hasmoneans, descendants of Aaron, and which did not cease. (**Nachmanides**)

When a person builds a house, he makes the windows narrow on the outside and wider on the inside, so that the light from the outside should optimally illuminate the interior. But when King Solomon built the Holy Temple in Jerusalem he made the windows narrow within and wide without, so that its light should emanate to the outside and illuminate the world. (**Midrash Rabbah**)

וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן – *'And Aaron did so.' (8:3)*

Imagine standing in the Sanctuary, before the holy menorah, and to be capable of actually lighting the lamps—to place the wicks in position, and to fill the lamps without spilling the oil on the floor! This was truly an exceptional achievement on the part of Aaron. (**Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev**)

"Teshuvah is the soul's way of coming home." ~ Rebbe Nachman of Breslov.

וְעָשָׂה פֶּסַח לַה' ... בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי בְּאַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם בֵּין הָעַרְבַּיִם יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ – *'If any man of you, or of your future generations, shall be unclean .. or be on a journey afar off, he shall keep the Passover to G-d on the fourteenth day of the second month..' (9:10–11)*

The meaning of the "Second Passover" is that it is never too late; there is always a second chance. (**Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch**)

זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם – *'We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt.' (11:5)*

Pharaoh did not even give them straw (cf. Exodus 5), and they said that they received free fish! - If they would have known about the manna beforehand, they would have claimed to have already eaten it at Pharaoh's table . . . (**Midrash Rabbah**)

זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם – *'We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt.' (11:5)*

"For nothing"—without the responsibility of the mitzvot. (**Sifri**)

וְעַתָּה נַפְשֵׁנוּ יְבֵשָׁה אֵין כֹּל בִּלְתִּי אֶל־הַמָּן עֵינֵינוּ – *'But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.' (11:6)*

A person derives pleasure from material things only by comparing what he has to what his neighbors have. So although they could enjoy every taste in the world in the manna, they derived no pleasure from it, since everyone had it . . . (**Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz**)

אֶסְפָה־לִּי שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל – *'Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel.'* *(11:16)*

The seventy elders correspond to the seventy biblically ordained holy days of the year: 52 Sabbaths, seven days of Passover, eight days of Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Shavuot. (**Yalkut Shimoni**)

וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא קִבְרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה – *'He called the name of that place Kivrot Hataavah, because there they buried the people that lusted.'* *(11:34)*

The literal meaning of **קִבְרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה** is "graves of lust": not only the "people that lusted" were buried there, but also the lust itself. (**Binah Le-Ittim**)



הָאִשָּׁה הַכֻּשִׁית - *'The Cushite woman.'* *(12:1)*

Was she then a Cushite? - She was a Midianite! - Rather, it means that her beauty was obvious to all, as the blackness of a Cushite is obvious to all. (**Sifri; Rashi**)

בַּחֲלוֹם אֲדַבֶּר־בּוֹ...לֹא־כֵן עַבְדִּי מֹשֶׁה – *'I . . . speak to him in a dream. My servant Moshe is not so.'* *(12:6–7)*

In sleep, when the soul frees itself to a certain degree from the confines of the body, it can begin to perceive the divine essence that hides behind the material world. Moshe, however, was able to see G-dliness even when awake—for him the material world did not conceal. (**Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov**)

אֵ-ל נָא רְפָא נָא לָהּ – *'I beseech You, O G-d, heal her now.'* (12:13)

When Moshe began to pray at the shore of the Red Sea, G-d said to him: "Moshe! My children are in dire straits, and you stand and pray profusely? . . . There is a time to pray at length, and there is a time to pray briefly. (**Mechilta Beshalach**)

In An Unrelated Story by Rav Hanoch Teller

Rabbi Yosef Weinfeld was one of the primary fundraisers for the Yeshiva Bnei Dovid. Before becoming the executive director, he would travel the entire length and breadth of America - and Rabbi Weinfeld refused to cut people out of his route just because their donations were paltry since he wanted to continue giving them the opportunity to support Torah study.

When the price of gasoline rose after the Yom Kippur War, he had to seriously reassess his policy. There were some Jewish farmers in rural Pennsylvania whose yearly five-dollar donation cost almost double that amount to retrieve. Rabbi Weinfeld was a man of principle, but he never spent yeshiva money on a losing proposition, so he deducted the expense involved from his own pocket. The younger guard of the yeshiva alumni were far more outspoken and felt that as great as Rabbi Weinfeld's self-sacrifice was, his old-fashioned methods made him the wrong man. - His persistence in producing the yeshiva calendar each year yielded more headaches and complications than donations, as they broke even in a good year.

As the board was discussing the building's costly yet necessary repairs, an envelope inched through the mail slot and gently fell to the floor. One of the board members opened the letter, skimmed it over, and gave Rabbi Weinfeld a massive bear hug. They then read the letter aloud: "Dear Rabbi Weinfeld, my client - the late Sydney Miller - has willed one-third of his estate to your school. I realize that Sydney Miller is not a name you are familiar with, for my client

lived a very private life that would not have provided anyone with a clue that he was a man of means. Fortunately for the trustees and students of your school, my client quietly took an interest in your school and chose to bequeath a large sum to it. We have yet to determine the precise value of the estate, but we estimate that it exceeds twenty million dollars. Syd told me himself that he cherished the calendar he received every year from your school. I am sure you are delighted by this news. I shall be in touch with you within ten days regarding the precise details of this matter. Cordially, Frank Rowe, Esq."

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner

The *Mesillas Yesharim* wites that when the Torah commands us to refrain from lying, (the opposite of *emes*) it uses the words "*midvar sheker tirchak* – stay far away from deceit." The term "*tirchak*"is not a mandate to desist from falsehood; it connotes distancing ourselves, running away from *sheker.*

Reb Dov Fuchs recalls the following incident. "It happened almost 20 years ago. I flagged a taxi in Yerusholayim to take me to the Kosel and, after entering the car, I noticed the name of the driver printed on the dashboard: "Mussawi." (In those days it was common to travel with Arab drivers and I was not concerned.)

"I told him my destination and he began driving towards Shaar Yafo. As we neared the gate, I noticed an older *yiddisher* lady slowly making her way down the cobblestone street. She paused for a second and looked up, and I recognized her. It was Rebbetzin Teflinski o"h, the saintly wife of one of Yerushalyim's great *tzaddikim.*

" I had visited her many times, beseeching her for *brochos* and *tephillos,* and she knew me very well, too. When she saw me in the front seat of the taxi, she raised her hand as a sign of greeting. I

asked the driver to stop and give her a lift. She was profoundly grateful. Walking was not easy for her and it would have taken her at least another half hour to reach her destination.

"*A dank, a dank,*" she repeated over and over again as she tried to catch her breath. She asked me how I was and as I began responding, the driver interrupted: *Giveret, ze eser shekel.*" He wanted to charge he NIS10 for the ride. She was taken aback. After all, she had not asked him to stop, it had been my idea, and I was already paying him for the trip.

"She began explaining, but he cut her off, *"Lo, Lo, alzart oti* – No, you flagged me down." She explained that she had noticed me, not him, and was merely trying to catch my attention. He would have none of it and demanded NIS10.

"Irate, he called he a *shakranit,* a liar. For a moment, all of us in the car were silent. And then I heard heaving sobs: she could barely get ahold of herself. Her refined, delicate voice turned into a roar. *"Shakranit?* You call me a liar? For most of my adult life I haven't said anything remotely close to *sheker.*"

"Ani borachat misheker k'mo me'eish – I flee from falsehood like from fire. Don't you dare call me a liar!"

"We arrived at the Kosel and I silenced the taxi driver, handing him the extra NIS10. I opened the door for the Rebbetzin and she exited the car. It took her a few moments to get back to herself but finally, she was able to walk down the steps to her beloved Kosel.

"In her most vulnerable moment, as the Arab driver berated her, I had witnessed her zeal for *emes*, her passion for truth. Just as the *Mesillas Yeshorim* says, *sheker* is something you need to run away from, like fire."

Good Shabbos

Devotion

The Rebbetzin's incredible devotion to her husband was seen on a daily basis, but her most famous task was disseminating her husband's written works.

A short time after they were married, she noticed her husband wrote many novel ideas. However, there were papers all over, so she was concerned some of his Torah insights might get lost. It was a colossal effort to collect all the papers and type them one page at a time on a typewriter.

Even early on in their marriage, she viewed her husband as a giant. It was not popular to print Torah works at that point in time, but she did it because she felt her husband's insights were supreme. She simply collected his papers and copied them. His handwriting was difficult to read, and no one else could read what he wrote, but that was not a deterrent to her. After investing all the time and energy into transcribing each paper through the typewriter, she then took them to a printer to prepare the proof.

In order to afford printing the manuscript, the young wife scrimped on food to get the first volume of her husband's lectures printed. When she presented the published work to her husband, it gave him the impetus to continue writing seforim.

With contagious joy, she pulled off this feat almost singlehandedly. Even the proofreading was her job - with no computers to catch mistakes. She was the one who ran down to the printer to scan the proofs for printing errors, and at times the text was particularly complicated. Even the book's binding and cover were overseen by the Rebbetzin in order to ensure the seforim looked nice as well. Then she herself would send the works to stores to be displayed prominently so that people would see and purchase them. In fact, she contacted Yeshivos all over the United States and Europe to find young men who would be willing to sell the seforim in their respective Yeshivos.

The Rebbetzin packed up the boxes, bound them with the necessary cords, devotedly put on the stamps, and happily sent them to the post office.

Were it not for the incredible devotion of this one young wife, perhaps we might never have seen the magnificent works of her husband, one of the great sages of our generation - **Rav Moshe Sternbuch**!



- **The Humble Man**

In *Parshas Behaaloscha* we find some of the most glorious words of acclaim that Hakodosh Boruch Hu ever heaped upon a single human being. About Moshe Rabeinu the Torah tells us: **וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד** – *And the man Moshe was very humble,* **מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה** – *more humble than any other human being on the face of the earth* (Bamidbar 12:3).

Now, the Torah doesn't tell us that he was a *chacham mi'kol ha'adam*, the wisest man on the face of the earth – although he was. And it doesn't say that he was a *zariz m'kol ha'adam* – and Moshe was that too. There are many words of praise that the Torah could have chosen to laud upon Moshe, absolutely. And yet, the one thing that

the Torah chooses to tell us is that he was "more humble than any other human being on the face of the earth."

- **What Is Humility?**

Now, a statement like that about Moshe Rabeinu, an encomium of such magnitude, deserves to be studied at length; the truth is that we could spend many hours on the subject and it wouldn't be enough. However, the first thing we make note of is that this whole subject of Moshe Rabeinu's exceptional *anivus* doesn't really make sense to us altogether; because according to the way we usually understand the subject of humility we would have believed that Moshe was a meek person; a quiet and self-effacing man who didn't recognize his own greatness. Isn't that what humility means after all? Doesn't it mean that you have a low opinion of yourself in comparison to others; that you don't consider yourself as wise and as virtuous as others?

And so, if we were saying *pshat* in the Torah, we would have said that "the man Moshe was more humble than any other human being on the face of the earth" means that Moshe Rabeinu considered himself inferior to everyone else on the earth. That's what I would have said anyhow.

- **An Impossible Conclusion**

And yet, such a conclusion is impossible to conceive of. It would be preposterous for us to imagine that Moshe Rabeinu considered himself inferior because in the Torah it's written, **וְלֹא קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה** – *Never again did there arise a prophet like Moshe* (Devarim 34:10). Our great Torah teacher, Moshe Rabeinu, wouldn't deny that *possuk*. He had to believe he was the greatest prophet – it's part of the Torah.

And it's not just *part* of the Torah – it's *the* Torah! Because that's the certification of the whole Torah; that there's no such thing as a prophecy that supersedes the prophecy of Moshe Rabeinu! "Never again," says Hakodosh Boruch Hu, "will there arise a prophet as great

as Moshe." And if anyone should come along subsequently with a claim that he has been given a vision that Moshe's Torah is abolished – "The Old Testament was good up to a certain time but I've been told directly from Hashem Himself that from now on its null and void" – so he's a liar and a false prophet. No one will ever have the power to say, "I have been given a vision *min hashamayim* to nullify what Moshe Rabeinu taught."

- **No Inferiority Complex**

Now, of all the men on the face of the earth Moshe Rabeinu knew the Torah best and he certainly believed this fundamental principle that never again would a *navi* arise like himself. Moshe Rabeinu believed every word of the Torah; he wasn't an *apikoris, chas v'shalom*. He knew that he was the only man in history to speak face to face with Hashem and that the *dvar Hashem* that had come to the *Am Yisroel* through him was the final word forever.

And so we come back to our question: How could it be that the man who was *greater* than anyone on the face of the earth was also *humbler* than anyone on the face of the earth? It presents a problem to the usual definition of meekness because Moshe certainly knew his worth; he certainly didn't have an inferiority complex.

- **Know Your Strong Points**

So we'll have to repeat what we've said before from the *Chovos Halevavos*: *A beheimah*, he says, also seems to be an *anav*. You see a big ox and he's being driven down the road by a little boy. Now, your standard ox weighs more than a thousand pounds and the little boy is maybe seventy, eighty pounds. The ox could step on him and mash him in an instant but it marches along meekly, following the boy's commands. So, you're going to tell me this ox is an *anav*?! No, it's not an *anav*, it's just a dumb ox! It has no *seichel* – it doesn't know its power; it's not aware of its capabilities.

So a leader of the *Am Yisroel,* even if he's an *anav,* can't be a dumb ox; he can't be someone who yields. Moshe Rabeinu was not a *nebech'el;* he wasn't a milquetoast. He didn't yield to Korach or anybody else. He was a strong man, and he spoke with teeth when he had to. He showed anger too! **וַיִּקְצֹף מֹשֶׁה עַל פְּקוּדֵי הֶחָיִל** – *Moshe Rabeinu was angry at the commanders of the troops* (Bamidbar 31:14).

- **Sign Of A Great Man**

And yet, as big as he was, as imposing and tough as he was, when it was needed, he was an *anav* towards men. Certainly Moshe Rabeinu dealt with his fellow man in a most humble manner when it was called for. All of our great men were like that – if someone *didn't* deal with others with *anivus,* then you can be sure he wasn't great.



Zest by Rabbi Moshe Krieger

In this week's Parsha, Hashem commands Aharon regarding the lighting of the Menorah. The Torah states that Aharon did exactly as he was commanded and Rashi comments that on the merit of Aharon's obedient behavior in lighting the Menorah exactly as he was commanded, he was praised by the Torah.

This comment of Rashi seems very strange. If Hashem commanded Aharon with specific instructions in the lighting of the Menorah, is there any thought that Aharon Hacohen, or any one of us for that matter, would deliberately ignore the command of Hashem and "do

our own thing"?! Why would the Torah give such praise to Aharon for such a seemingly insignificant act?

One possible solution to this difficulty is offered by many of the commentaries. They explain that although it is true that it would not have been that big of a deal for Aharon to comply with Hashem's specifications in dealing with the Menorah for one or two days, Aharon successfully carried out His instructions for every day for *forty years*!

This consistency which Aharon displayed is what earned him the praises of the Torah. As we all know, there are times when we are more "in the mood" to serve Hashem and times when we are less. Despite Aharon's "chemical changes" or his physical health, despite any weather conditions, Aharon lit that Menorah every day with the same conviction, and same attention to detail as he did on the first day. - This is certainly an admirable feet and deserving of praise.

Indeed, my Rebbi, R' Dovid Solevechik used to explain that this ability to serve Hashem under any circumstances, and not to be affected by the many deterrents that come to every Ben Torah daily, is the key ingredient to growth in Torah and in many cases, this consistency is the hallmark of a Gadol!

Perhaps we could invoke the famous words of the **Chasam Sofer** on this week's Parsha to bolster what we have said. The Chasam Sofer points out that Aharon did not have the easiest life. We know, for example, that during the forty-year period, both of Aharon's sons died on the same day and that was the day that all of the children of Israel had reached the pinnacle of happiness – the day the Mishkan was inaugurated. Yet we have no record that Aharon took a break that day from the lighting of the Menorah.

Furthermore, continues the Chasam Sofer, we know from the Torah, that Aharon himself was not required to be the one lighting the Menorah, he could have had any one of his brethren, the other

Kohanim do it. Yet he did not. He chose to personally be involved with the fulfillment of Hashem's commandment even during such a trying moment and not to indulge in his own personal grief, even though he had full right to do so.

From these powerful words of the Chasam Sofer, we see that indeed Aharon certainly earned the praise that he received for his consistency in the lighting of the Menorah.

The Sefas Emes offers another interesting possibility to explain the Torah's lavish of praise on Aharon. The Sefas Emes explains that while it is true that to physically follow the Torah's specifications for carrying out the daily service and the lighting of the Menorah would not have been that difficult, there was another aspect which was.

When the Torah tells us that Aharon lit the Menorah every day without changing, the Torah is testifying to us that Aharon lit the Menorah with the same excitement and the same enthusiasm that he did on the very first day! That gusto was certainly not easy to maintain for a full forty years.

We all know that when we begin a new task, it comes with a certain element of intrigue and excitement which rapidly evaporates. But if one can somehow capture those feelings, and maintain them for an entire lifetime, obviously their success in whatever they are doing will be infinitely greater.

The Sefas Emes concludes by saying that very often, when that initial excitement wears off, we become jaded and spend the rest of our life looking for those feelings again. But if instead of doing that, we would have preserved that original enthusiasm that we had, we would have been far happier because those first few moments are the purest and holiest of all!

I would just like to conclude with the verse in Devarim (6:6). **וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם עַל־לְבָבֶךָ** - "*And these*

commandments that I have given you will always be on your heart…" Rashi explains that the commandments of the Torah should not be like an old decree from the king which one never reads or fulfills with enthusiasm, but rather like a new and exciting one which all of the citizens perform with alacrity and zeal.

May Hashem help us that our service of Him should always be with excitement and zest!

In this week's Parsha, the Torah records that the Jews committed two seemingly minor sins, but were dealt with, with extreme severity. The Jews first complained about the roundabout manner in which Hashem appeared to have been taking them out of Egypt. And then shortly afterward, lodged a complaint about the lack of meat in their diet, which they voiced to Moshe, and caused a plague to descend upon the Jews in which many of them perished.

Regarding the first complaint, it seems quite natural for the Jews to be upset. Imagine your GPS device in your car took you on a circuitous route which added *three days* onto your two-hour trip. How would you feel? I'm sure some of us might have some colorful expressions for the manufacturer of the GPS. Yet the Jews' complaint here earned them a severe reprimand. Then they asked for meat. The meat was Glatt Kosher, following every stringency known to man. What was wrong with asking for a little variety in their diet?

The Sfas Emes was bothered by these two difficulties. He explains that every Jew must develop two fundamental foundations, upon which the rest of their Judaism is built. These foundations are first, the concept that everything which befalls us during the course of our lives is from Hashem, and second, no matter what it looks like, it is ultimately for our benefit, since Hashem is not diabolical or malicious.

These two foundations are so critical in a Jew's development, that if there is the tiniest crack in them, or the slightest shred of doubt as to their veracity, the entire building will eventually crumble.

When the Jews complained about the route in which Hashem chose for them, and Hashem's choice in their provisions, what they were essentially doing was questioning Hashem's judgment, implying that their belief in one of the above-mentioned foundations was defective.

This was a very dangerous threat indeed and warranted immediate punishment in order to deracinate any remnants of it from their hearts. Indeed, the route they were taking, and their diet were two essential components into bringing them into the land of Israel, because Israel cannot be acquired but through discomfort, and Hashem was only putting them through these uncomfortable situations out of His unending love for them and His desire to give them their own land. Had they merely trusted in Him a little bit longer, they would have been let into Israel, with Moshe, and lived happily ever after. - Such is the power of trusting in Hashem's goodness and holding on a little while longer when things seem to not be going our way.

It is said about the Tzaddik from Manchester, **R' Segal**, who before his death, was bedridden and incapacitated for a great deal of time, that he always seemed extraordinarily happy and pleased, even at the end. One of his students was hesitant to visit him, out of fear of seeing his Rebbi in such a disgraceful state, thereby adding to his level of discomfort. But when he came in, he was shocked to see his Rebbi smiling contentedly.

He asked him, "Rebbi, how do you feel?" R' Segal responded, "I couldn't be better! I'm feeling exactly what Hashem wants me to feel. Could there be anything nicer in the whole wide world?" - Such is the attitude a Jew must foster in order to serve his Creator properly.

R' Avigdor Miller used to hold up an apple, and point to the seed and say, "Look how much kindness Hashem performs through this little seed. Hundreds of generations of apple trees are contained in this tiny, sophisticated creation". When we look around, it is not difficult to identify the myriads of kindnesses Hashem is constantly performing, and doing so, will help us improve our view when things seem to be going wrong.

When **R' Pam** was 88 years old, his health was poor and his grandson approached him and said, "Zayde, I don't understand. All you have to do is take a pill called Tylenol, and your pain will go away. Why are you hesitant?"

R' Pam explained, "I am now 88 years old. Many of my friends and acquaintances didn't make it past 50 or 60. In all these years Hashem has given me, nothing has ever gone wrong. Why should I try to change now what he is doing?"

May we all merit to trust in Hashem's goodness, all of our days!

Rabbi Jeremy Golker – Light up the World!

דַּבֵּר אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו, בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת הַנֵּרֹת אֶל מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יָאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת – *'Speak to Aaron and say to him: "When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah.'* 8:2

The word **בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ** (to make rise) is a strange usage – surely it should say **לְהַדְלִיק** (to kindle)? Interestingly, the Targum translates **בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ** as **בְּאַדְלָקוּתָךְ**.

Rashi says Since the flame rises, Scripture describes kindling in terms of ascending - **לְשׁוֹן עֲלִיָּה**. He is required to kindle the lamp until the flame rises by itself.

What is the message?

Rabbi Shloime Yitzchok Bixenspanner says a very beautiful idea:

The Gemara **שבת כב:** says that the Menorah was situated **מחוץ לפרוכת העדת** – *'Outside the veil of the testimony, in the Tent of Meeting.' The lighting of the Menorah is testimony to mankind that the Divine Presence rests among Israel.*



Since Har Sinai, the entire world has been watching us to see if we live up to our national mission of showing that the Shechina dwells amongst us. - **(שבת פט:)**

Perhaps this is what Rashi means. It is not enough to just kindle the lights - we need to make sure the light burns brightly, strongly and beautifully – a charge to make a Kiddush Hashem at all times. And this would prove that the Shechina still dwells amongst us.

It is incumbent on us to ensure that we always make a Kiddush Hashem in all situations, and at all times.

102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar - The Promissory Note

Rabbi Avigdor Ahronson from Beit Shemesh related the following story:

It happened on a Friday. I finished davening Shacharis in shul and put away my tefillin. But I wasn't heading home yet. I had to go to the shopping center to buy a few things for Shabbos. Then I remembered that the day before I'd used up all my cash, and there was no ATM machine nearby.

I looked around to see if there was anyone who might be able to lend me some money. The shul where I davened was the kind they call a

shtieblach-several minyanim davened one after the other, and for the most part, people didn't know each other by name even if they'd been davening in the same place at the same time for years.

My gaze landed on one of the regulars of my minyan. He wasn't known as a man of means. But I knew he worked hard for his living, and he seemed to be a person with a kind heart.

I went over to him and discreetly asked him if he could lend me a few hundred shekels so I could buy a few necessities for Shabbos. I promised I would return the money on Sunday. - He was taken aback at my request and hesitated. I understood him. He didn't know me aside from the times we'd davened together. He didn't even know my name.

Then he smiled at me, opened his wallet, and pulled out the exact sum I had requested. I promptly pulled out a piece of notepaper and wrote, "I confirm that I have received a loan for such-and-such sum, on such-and-such day, and I promise to repay it, b'ezras Hashem, on the upcoming Sunday." I signed my name and handed over the note. Then I went to take care of my shopping with a light heart and entered Shabbos feeling good.

It was a beautiful Shabbos. On Sunday morning, before going to shul to daven, I went to an ATM machine and took out cash in the amount I had borrowed. When I got to the shul, I spotted my benefactor immediately and handed over the payment.

When he saw me, his face lit up. "Baruch Hashem!" he cried joyfully. "Baruch Hashem! Yasher ko'ach! Thank you so much!"

I was puzzled. He seemed unusually enthusiastic. Sure, I'd repaid the loan, but it didn't explain his extreme reaction.

I asked him for my promissory note back, but he apologized and said he didn't have it. He asked me to sit down and started to tell me what had happened since I had seen him last. We had a few minutes before the tefillah would start, so I sat and listened.

On Friday, he had taken a bus to another city where he would be spending Shabbos. When he got there, he realized he had left his wallet on the bus. He didn't usually use checks or credit cards, and whatever cash he had in the wallet was all the money he had. for the month.

It was a significant loss-the wallet had contained a lot of cash, and on Sunday he was supposed to pay a few bills and buy some things he desperately needed. He called the bus company and even spoke to a few drivers, but no one seemed able to help. In all his distress, he had forgotten that he'd loaned me a portion of the cash he had been carrying around with him on Friday. - Suddenly, to his joy, he realized that because he had given me the loan, he hadn't lost all his money and he could pay those bills.

Everything a person does he ends up doing for himself. At my request, he wrote a note confirming that I had repaid the loan. Then the chazzan announced the start of Shacharis, and we turned our attention to our siddurim.

But the story didn't end there. That afternoon I received a phone call. It was someone who told me that he'd found a wallet on the bus. He'd searched through the wallet to find some identification but had found only cash, which obviously gave no indication of who owned the wallet. Then, in one of the wallet's compartments, he found the promissory note I had written, which had my name on it.

The finder looked up my name (a somewhat common one) in the phone book and called all the people with that name until he found me. I told him I knew the owner of the wallet and described to him the anguish the wallet owner felt when he realized it was lost.

I was thrilled for my benefactor and gratified I'd had the opportunity to see in real time the merit a person earns from doing a kind act for another. Because he loaned me the money, he got all his money back, not only the funds he'd lent me but everything he else he had in his wallet. The saying of Chazal echoed in my mind:

"More than the ba'al habayis does for the pauper, the pauper does for the ba'al habayis."

I wanted to tell the owner of the wallet the good news to spare him more hours of anguish before we saw each other again in shul, but I didn't know his name to look up a number in the phone book. Then, I remembered the note he'd given me confirming my repayment of the loan, which had his signature.

After a few tries, I finally reached him. Now it was my turn and told him his wallet had been found. I gave him the number of the person who had found it, and soon he and his wallet were reunited.





A Package Deal

Rav Yosef Zimbal, a rav in West Gate in Lakewood, once shared a story of an interaction he had with Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky at a wedding. Before the chuppah, Rabbi Zimbal had a lengthy conversation with the rosh yeshivah, yet after the chuppah was over, when Rav Shmuel passed him again, he greeted Rabbi Zimbal effusively as if he were seeing him for the first time.

Rabbi Zimbal respectfully pointed out that they had already spoken.

"I know that, of course," Rav Shmuel replied, "but there are many more people here now who did not see us talking earlier. I wouldn't have wanted all of them to think that I simply walked by without greeting you."

There is much we can learn from the example of Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky, one of the greatest Torah luminaries of our time, who excels in striking the balance between the mitzvos of bein adam laMakom and bein adam lachaveiro.



Rav Shach loved Torah as a father loves an only child. When Rav Shach's vision deteriorated. Rav Shach was offered a magnifying device that the sefer would be placed on the device and the words of the Sefer would appear on a screen with enlarged letters.

Rav Shach refused the offer explaining, "I cannot learn that way. When I learn, I have to be able to hug the sefer!"



A Depression That Impresses

The beginning of Parshas Beha'aloscha, which deals with the kindling of the Menorah, immediately follows the lengthy section at the end of Parshas Nasso, which deals with the gifts of the Nesseyim to the Mishkan. Rashi explains this juxtaposition: Aharon was chalsha da'ato [depressed] that neither he nor his tribe (Shayvet Levi) participated in the inauguration ceremony of the Tabernacle. Therefore, the Almighty told him, "By your life, your lot is greater than their lot – for you (and your descendants) will kindle and prepare the lamps of the Menorah."

We have spoken numerous times in the past about this Rashi and analyzed how exactly the lighting of the Menorah served as a "consolation prize" for not having participated in the inauguration. Rather than repeating our prior discussions, I will make another observation about Rashi's comment.

Rashi says that Aharon was "weakened" or depressed by the fact that he and his tribe did not participate with the Nesseyim. Aharon was depressed because he could not participate in a mitzvah. This is an admirable quality. It is a measure of a person as to what upsets him and gets him dispirited. Some people get depressed over the

stock-market. Some people get depressed when their sports team loses. What gets Aharon depressed? When does he feel deprived? "I could not participate in a mitzvah." That depressed him.

We find another example of this in our parsha: "We are impure as a result of human corpse impurity – why should we be left out, unable to sacrifice the offering to Hashem in the midst of the Children of Israel?" [9:7]. At the offering of the first Paschal sacrifice in the Wilderness, one year after the exodus. A group of people were unable to participate because they were Tameh Mes. They protested before Moshe – Lamah Nigarah (why should we be deprived)?

Again, it is praise-worthy to feel deprived because you could not do a mitzvah, because you could not offer the Korban Pessach. Usually "I am deprived" refers to materialistic deprivation – I cannot go on vacation, I cannot afford this, I cannot afford that.

People who are depressed because they could not do a mitzvah or who feel deprived because they could not bring a Korban Pessach are very special people. Such emotions say a lot about who they are.

This is in stark contrast to another group of people in this parsha: "And the rabble that were in their midst cultivated a craving, and the Children of Israel, also turned, and they wept, and said, 'Who will feed us meat? We remember the fish that we would eat in Egypt free of charge; the cucumbers, and the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic…'" [11:4-5]. What were they crying about? They felt deprived because they did not have meat!

These are two opposite ends of the spectrum. Aharon is depressed because he cannot bring a Korban. The carriers of Yosef's coffin felt deprived because they could not bring a Korban Pessach. And then there is the other end of the spectrum: "Who will feed us meat?" That which makes one depressed is a measure of the man.

Do The Trumpets Send A Mixed Message?

This week's parsha contains the mitzvah of the silver trumpets. The trumpets were to be blown in war time: "When you go to wage war in your land against an enemy who oppresses you, you shall sound short blasts of the trumpets…" [10:9]. The trumpets are also blown on happy occasions: "On a day of your gladness, and on your festivals, and on your new moons, you shall sound the trumpets over your olah-offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; and they shall be for a remembrance for you before your G-d…" [10:10].

This appears to be a contradiction. What is the nature of the trumpets? Are they like a fire alarm? If so, we understand that the "fire alarm" is pulled when there is a danger. But we do not pull the "fire alarm" when we have a Yom Tov! Sirens announce danger – be careful! How can the same trumpet be blown for tragic occasions, for dangerous occasions, AND for joyous occasions?

The answer is to be found in the Mishneh Torah. **The Rambam** writes: "There is a positive Biblical command to cry out and to blow the trumpets for any tragedy that comes upon the community… And this matter is part of the ways of repentance, for when trouble comes and everyone cries out and they blow the blasts then everyone will recognize that because of their evil ways this calamity has befallen them…" [Hilchos Tanis 1:1-2]

The trumpets' blast proclaims that this trouble comes from the Almighty. "Do not think that this is a land grab, an oil grab, a money grab. Do not think this is global politics. If the enemy attacks, you should know that the Almighty is behind it. G-d is saying he wants you to be attacked." Blow the trumpets as a reminder of the nature of the calamity.

This is precisely why, when a person has a simcha, a festival, a joyous occasion, we are called upon to blow these same trumpets. We should remember that this too comes from the Almighty. Both our troubles and our celebrations come from Hashem.

When bad times occur, our tendency is often to ask "Why is G-d doing this to me?" However, when the good times occur, we think "We are lucky, smart, and successful." The Torah commands us to blow the trumpets when good things happen as well, to remind us that this too is the Hand of G-d in our lives.

Perhaps, suggests the **Shemen HaTov**, if we remember — when the good times happen — that this is from G-d, then there won't be a need to blow "when the enemy attacks," because the enemy will not attack. If we remember when the good times happen that "from the L-rd this event transpired" [Tehillim 118:23], then there will be no need for the Almighty to have to "set us straight" with some kind of crises situation.

Where's The Beef?

It is interesting to note G-d's response when Moshe presented the case of the people clamoring for meat. Moshe expressed his frustration over the situation: "…Where shall I get meat to give to this entire people when they weep to me saying 'Give us meat that we may eat'?…" [Bamidbar 11:12]. G-d's very first response to Moshe's plea had nothing to do with meat. G-d stated: "Gather for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel…" [Bamidbar 11:16]. The response to the people who were complaining for meat was the establishment of a Sanhedrin. Moshe's spirit would rest on the 70 elders and they would form the first Jewish High Court.

That is all fine and well but "Where's the beef?" What happened to the people's complaint about lack of meat? What's the answer to that question?

The answer is that what was required to resolve this situation was not meat, it was an education. It was necessary to change people's priorities in life. How is that going to be accomplished? "Gather for me 70 elders…" Gather together a group of people who will become

holy like you; prophets like you, and who will be able to teach the people.

If the problem would have merely been solved by giving them meat, they would have asked for something else tomorrow and a third thing the day after tomorrow. They would never be satisfied. The way to rectify people who cry over the lack of meat is not with meat but with a Torah education.

Aharon's Greatness: Forty Years of Consistency

There is a very famous comment of Rashi on the pasuk - "And Aharon did so." [Bamidbar 8:3] Rashi states: "This teaches that he did not deviate" (melamed shelo shinah). These few words of Rashi have been the springboard for countless homiletic expositions by commentaries and expounders of Chumash throughout the ages.

The question is: What novelty is there in telling us that Aharon did exactly as he was commanded by G-d, by lighting the Menorah? Of course Aharon did what G-d told him to do!

Rav Elya Meir Bloch explains that the novelty of Aharon not changing is simply that he did the same thing daily for almost forty years.

What mitzvah have we done day in day out for the last forty years? There are not many items that fall into this category. True, some of us can say that we have put on Tefillin every day (except Shabbos and Yom Tov) for the last forty years. But there are not many things that a person can say he has done consistently for such a long period of time. How many people can say "I have never missed a minyan in the last 40 years?" or even "I have never missed the zman Krias Shma once in the last 40 years?" It is not so simple.

The praise of Aharon is that he did the same thing for 40 years without fail. That is greatness!

Chumras Must Be Stage-in-Life Appropriate

This week's parsha contains the people's complaint about their lack of meat. The Almighty's response was sending of massive quantities of pheasants (Slav), which the people consumed and subsequently died. The Torah tells us "The meat was still between their teeth, not yet gone, when the wrath of Hashem flared against the people, and Hashem struck a very mighty blow against the people." [11:33]

The Talmud derives the prohibition of eating dairy foods after meat from the expression "the meat was still between their teeth". One of the reasons for this prohibition is that we see from this pasuk that meat remains between a person's teeth after he has consumed it and thereby, he will in effect be eating meat and milk together if he eats milk products following the eating of meat.

In discussing the laws of waiting between meat and dairy dishes, the Talmud [Chulin 105] quotes Mar Ukva as stating "Regarding this matter, compared to my father, I am like vinegar compared to wine. My father would wait 24 hours between meat and cheese, and while I would not eat meat and cheese in the same meal, I would eat cheese at the next meal, even the same day."

This is the basis of the famous dispute as to the meaning of the phrase "the next meal". Some Rishonim interpret literally that a person is allowed to say the Birkas HaMazon and begin a new meal (dairy) immediately following the conclusion of a meat meal. Others interpret that a person must wait the amount of time between the morning meal and the evening meal, which is the source of the custom to wait 6 hours between meat and milk.

Mar Ukva said he was spiritually not in his father's league. His father waited 24 hours and he merely waited until the next meal. Why in fact did Mar Ukva NOT follow the custom of his father? While there may be some parental stringencies (chumras) to which a son might not realistically aspire, this would not seem to be one of them. All that is involved here is waiting. What is so hard about that?

Perhaps we would understand if his father used to spend a full hour davening Shmoneh Esrei. A son may realistically argue that he is not on his father's level – and cannot drag out his Shmoneh Esrei for a whole hour! But why couldn't Mar Ukva wait 24 hours after meat in order to follow his father's tradition in this area?

We learn from this Gemara that observing stringencies for the sake of doing stringencies, when one is not really on that spiritual level is a very hollow act. A person can adopt a certain practice, but if he is not ready for that 'chumrah,' if he is not ready for that spiritual level, then it can become a self-defeating act of piety. It may indeed lead to feelings of emptiness and spiritual regression when one takes on levels of super piety that he is not "ready for".

This is a very important lesson that people should learn about chumras. I was told that a certain Jewish books store sells baseball caps that have a caption: "I keep chumras that you haven't even heard of." A person must know where he is holding in the spiritual world. Halachic chumras are not a one-size-fits all religious expression. They must be appropriate to one's level of ascent of the ladder of spirituality.

This is the lesson of Mar Ukva. It is also the lesson taught by the Gemara [Yoma 47a] which relates that Kimchis had 7 sons who became High Priests because she was so modest that "the beams of her house never saw the hairs of her head" (She would always keep her hair covered even in the privacy of her own home).

The Gemara comments that "many tried to do what Kimchis did, but they were not successful". Why not? Anyone can keep their hair covered at all times. But only Kimchis and a select few like her can keep their hair covered at all times, even in the privacy of their own homes, as the result of an acute sense of the presence of the Ribono shel Olam and what tznius is all about.

The Definition of the Term 'Chareidi'

In Parshas Beha'aloscha, we are introduced to the laws of *Pesach Sheni* (the "Second Passover"). There were certain individuals who were unable to bring the Pesach offering in its proper time (on the 14th of Nissan) for very legitimate reasons. They were *Tameh Meis* (impure by virtue of contact with a dead body). They approached Moshe Rabbeinu with the famous words, "Why should we miss out (on the opportunity to bring the Korban Pesach)?" (Bamidbar 9:7)

At this point in time, the *Ribono shel Olam* told Moshe about the mitzvah of *Pesach Sheni*. This is a rare exception in Torah where people have a "make-up opportunity" to compensate for having missed fulfilling a given commandment in its proper time. **The Sifrei** notes here that this shows that these individuals were upright and righteous individuals (*tzadikim* and *kesheirim*) who trembled (*chareidim*) to do the mitzvos.

In America, Jews who are exceptionally "*frum*" are often labeled "ultra-Orthodox." Whether we know it or not, the vast majority of us are "ultra-Orthodox" in the eyes of most American Jews and the general public at large. In *Eretz Yisrael*, the popular terminology for describing such "ultra-Orthodox" individuals is "*Chareidi*." I always wondered where that expression came from. I have my doubts about the theory that it came from the Sifrei in Parshas Beha'aloscha.

Chareidi is actually a curious title. *Chareidi* really means a person who trembles. Why was this adjective chosen to describe someone who is '*frum*'? Perhaps there is a different twist to what the word *Chareidi* really means.

I would like to explain this by citing an incident I saw in one of the sefarim of **Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein**. A few days before Yom Kippur, a Jew came to Rav Zilberstein and told him that he would not be able to fast on Yom Kippur. Many times, for various medical reasons, a person must eat on Yom Kippur. If a person is well enough to abide

by such a protocol, the specified halachic dispensation for eating on Yom Kippur is a process known as *pachos, pachos, m'k'shiur* (consuming less that the amount for which a person is culpable for breaking his fast — pausing a certain length of time — and then again eating less than the specified amount). In this way, the person is able to get the nutrients he needs without having been in strict violation of the mitzvah of fasting. This process can be a bit complex — how many ounces one consumes at a time, how long he waits between each eating, etc.

Rav Zilberstein sat down with the fellow and explained to him in detail how much to eat and how much to drink, and how to pause appropriately between the various food intakes, and what further leniencies are allowed if he is feeling exceptionally weak, etc. The fellow thanked Rav Zilberstein for the information and went home. However, he came back the next day and said, "I forgot what you told me, could you go over it with me again?" Rav Zilberstein went through the entire set of halachos again with him. Rav Zilberstein asked him if he now had it clear in his mind. The fellow confirmed he had it, and went home. The third day, the entire process repeated itself. This happened four or five times.

Finally, the person who had the query admitted to Rav Zilberstein, "I am nervous about this matter." In other words, he was not an imbecile, but rather the tension caused by the thought of eating on Yom Kippur was so great, that it made him keep forgetting exactly how he was supposed to do it. He was so upset about not being able to fast, that he kept needing reassurance that what he needed to do was okay. Rav Zilberstein wanted to console him so he told him, "It is a wonderful thing that you are so nervous."

Rav Zilberstein explained that when a person is so upset about eating on Yom Kippur that he cannot remember the instructions from one day to the next, it does not say anything about his mental capabilities. It says something about the importance he attaches to

proper *mitzvah* performance, and how much the lack of the ability to perform them bothers him.

We see this regularly when people spend hours picking out an Esrog. People buy a beautiful Esrog, paying a fortune for it, and then taking it to a*posek* (i.e. – a person with halachic expertise in being able to rate the quality of the Four Species) to ask him — is this *mehudar* ("exceptionally beautiful")? The posek looks at it for three seconds and proclaims it "*mehudar*." The fellow comes back a day later and asks the same*posek,* "But, did you see this little 'pimple' over here…?" The posek looks at it again and says, "It's fine. It's *mehudar*." The person comes back on the third day and says, "But, you missed this…"

What is going on with such people? The word to describe such people is *chareidim*. *Chareidim* are not "tremblers." *Chareidim* are people who are passionate. They are passionate about their Yiddishkeit. They are passionate about their performance of *mitzvos*. They feel deprived when they cannot do a *mitzvah*. "Why should we be left out?" The Sifrei says these people are *chareidim*. That is the real meaning of the term. *A chareidi* is a person to whom it makes a difference, who cares about his Divine Service.

Like a Nursing Mother Carries a Baby

We are told that the Jewish people complained about the Manna, and asked for meat. Moshe became frustrated "Why, oh G-d, have You done evil with your servant… to place the burden of this nation upon me?" [Bamidbar 11:11]. It is very difficult to be the leader of the Jewish people and to carry them "…as the nursing mother carries the suckling baby…" [Ibid. 11:12].

The Talmud derives a special lesson from the fact that Moshe Rabbeinu sets "the nursing mother who carries the suckling" as the standard for Jewish leadership. This is an

exhortation to the judge and leader of the Jewish people that they must endure the people [Sanhedrin 8a]. The leader must be able to endure all the crazy demands and expectations that are dished out to people in positions of leadership.

Any person who has ever raised an infant knows of the following, all too common, scenario: a little baby is dressed in his or her most beautiful outfit, sitting on the lap of his or her mother (herself wearing a beautiful dress), who is cuddling and enjoying time with her infant. All of a sudden, the baby does what babies do… but the diaper does not perform as advertised.

What does the mother do? Yes, she is upset. But does she take the baby, chastise it, and throw the baby down, saying "how could you do this to me?!"

Of course not! Any mother understands that a baby is a baby, and has limited intelligence. The baby is not capable of realizing what he or she is doing. What does the mother do? She takes the baby, washes off the baby, changes the baby, changes her own dress, and goes on … all with a smile on her face.

That is the image of "as a nursing mother carrying a baby", which is set by Chazal, our Sages, as the standard for Jewish leaders. One has to be able to endure the people, and to accept even the "unacceptable" from them. One has to sometimes look at the people and excuse them with the thought "alas, they have no intelligence."

They are babies. But therefore, what? Should I throw them down? Should I throw in the towel? Whether we are talking rabbinic leadership, or even lay positions, to be a leader is to be the nursing mother of the infant who soils her.

The Hebrew word for congregation "Tzibbur" (Tzadee, Beis, vov, Reish) can be viewed as an acronym for Tzaddikim, Beinonim, u'Reshaim (the righteous, the in-between, and the wicked). In dealing with the congregation, one will encounter some wonderful people —

Tzaddikim. Then one finds the many who are okay, fine people, — the "in-betweens". But included in every congregation are the wicked. If not truly wicked, at least those who sometimes act like wicked people.

One is tempted to ask, "What do I need this for?" That is why our Sages tell us that a leader is warned that he has to be prepared to 'endure' the congregation. Whenever we ask ourselves "How far does it go?", "To what extent?", we should remember the example of the baby soiling its mother's dress. That is how far it goes.

It Was Not the Cucumbers and Onions!



The *pasuk* says: "We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge, the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic" (Bamidbar 11:5). The people were ostensibly crying over the food that they missed while they were in the Wilderness. Rashi quotes the teaching of Chazal that they were not really crying over the fish, cucumbers, garlic and onions, but rather they were crying over "family matters." They were bemoaning the fact that they recently became forbidden in the *arayos* prohibitions.

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky shares a very basic idea over here. He asks, how do Chazal know this? The simple reading of the *pasuk* is that they were crying over food deprivation. Chazal say that rather than crying over food, they were really crying over the newly-given *arayos* prohibitions. There is no indication of such in the *pasuk*,

so how do Chazal put words into the mouths of the Jews in the Wilderness that appear nowhere in the *p'shuto shel Mikra*?

Rav Yaakov answers that there is a concept in Torah interpretation called "*PaRDeS*". ***PaRDeS*** is an acronym which represents the Torah being understood on several different levels—the level of ***P****shat* (simple interpretation), ***R****emez* (hidden allusion), ***D****rash* (homiletic exposition), and ***S****od* (mystical interpretation). So too, he says, human beings need to be understood on different levels. When a person says something, it needs to be analyzed at the level of *Pshat*, at the level of *Remez*, at the level of *Drush*, and at the level of *Sod*. Many times, people don't really understand their own words on the subconscious level.

Sometimes something much deeper is really going on than the face value of someone's words. People don't really cry about fish and cucumbers—especially when they have *mann* falling from Heaven on a daily basis. The *mann* was the best food in the world. According to *Chazal*, it could taste like whatever the person consuming it desired. So obviously, no one's taste buds were being deprived by a lack of garlic or onions. Either through *Ruach HaKodesh* or some other means, *Chazal* realized that something much deeper than onions was motivating them over here. This is what Rav Yaakov calls "*Klayos v'Lev*" (literally kidneys and heart), which is a Rabbinic idiom for what we call the subconscious. In other words, they were not even aware themselves of what was really bothering them.

This occurs all the time with interpersonal relations—with our children, our spouses, our employees and our employers. Sometimes a person has a "fit" about something and we ask him, "Why are you having a fit about this? It is such a trivial issue. Why are you having a fit about this?" Sometimes the answer is that something else is going on. It is not the onions. It is something else.

Rav Yaakov says the same thing in Parshas Lech Lecha. Lot said he wanted to separate from Avraham Avinu and go live in Sodom. Why

did he say that he wanted to go live in Sodom? It was because "Sodom was a fertile lush valley" (Bereshis 13:10). Rashi there cites a Medrash that Lot's real interest in moving to Sodom was because they were an immoral and licentious people. He desired to live in a region where the residents had an "everything goes" lifestyle.

Rav Yaakov asks the same question there: Why do *Chazal* attribute such amoral intentions to Lot? Where do *Chazal* see this motivation? Why not assume that Lot is going there to make a better living in the fertile region? Rav Yaakov explains the same idea: Lot was with Avraham Avinu. Not only was he with Avraham Avinu, which is a tremendous merit, but he made an economic fortune by virtue of having attached himself to Avraham. "Also, Lot, who went with Avram, had flocks, cattle, and tents." (Bereshis 13:5) So if he wanted to make a good living, he should have stayed with Avraham Avinu! Why then is Lot migrating to Sodom? The answer is that it is for some unverbalized reason. It is not for *parnassah*!

There is an old quip: "We say the *Hagaddah*, but we want the *Kneidlach*." It was the same thing over here: We say "*Parnassah*, *paranassah*," but it is not really *parnassah*. Now, Lot may not have even realized this himself. That is the nature of the *PaRDeS* of human conversation—there is *Pshat*, *Remez*, *Drash*, and *Sod* behind each of man's comments. Lot may not have fully understood what he was saying, and neither do we fully understand everything we say.

Sometimes we get upset about something. We need to ask ourselves, "Why am I so upset?" Sometimes we don't even realize it. "Why should this bother me so much? It is such a minor issue!" We need to ask ourselves: "What is **really** bothering me?" We see this by the cucumbers and onions. We see this by Lot. We always need to ask the question: What is really motivating us?

It's Summertime, And The Parshiyos Are Depressing

A chassidic Jew came to visit **The Chidushei HaRim**. The chassid looked depressed and the Rebbe asked what was troubling him. The response was that he was bothered by the fact that it was summer. The Rebbe then asked if the heat bothered him. The chassid responded that his problem was not with the weather — it was with the weekly Torah portions. For two months during the summer, we read parsha after parsha that relates troubling episodes about the attitudes and behavior of our ancestors in the Wilderness.

Beha'aloscha, Shelach, Korach, Chukas, Balak, Pinchas, and Mattos-Massei contain incident after incident in which the pioneers of our nation acted in a manner unbecoming of the "Dor Deah" ["Generation of Knowledge"] which they were supposed to represent. In these parshiyos, the Torah describes sin following sin, complaint following complaint, rebellion following rebellion. "If this can happen to the generation that received the Torah at Sinai, what hope is there for us?" moaned the visiting chassid.

Of course a person needs to be on a very high spiritual plane in order to become depressed for such reasons. Most people who are down during this time of year in fact are down because of the heat or some other minor reason!

The Chidushei HaRim responded that the "sins" that were committed by the generation of the wilderness are not "sins" in our sense of the word. At our level, these actions would in fact be considered to be "mitzvos," perhaps greater than the mitzvos we do.

This is the introduction to any analysis we might provide over the next several weeks of the various "sinful" incidents related in these "summertime parshiyos." The incidents, as they actually occurred, are only considered sins in contrast to the high spiritual level of the generation.

Shuva Hashem: A Prayer For Tranquility

There are a couple of *pesukim* in the *parsha* that are very well known to us: -"When the Ark would journey, Moshe said, 'Arise, Hashem, and let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee from before You.' And when it rested, he would say 'Reside tranquilly, Hashem, among the myriads and thousands of Israel'." [Bamidbar 10:35-36] When the Jewish people set out on their travels and the *Aron* – the centerpiece of the *Mishkan*–began to travel, the people would recite a prayer that G-d should protect them and scatter their enemies.

This is an extremely appropriate and logical thing to say at such a time. While *Klal Yisrael* were travelling in the desert, their enemies in fact sometimes attacked them. Whenever they travelled it was a hostile environment and hence the prayer 'Arise Hashem and let Your enemies be scattered' was both a timely and appropriate prayer each time the camp of Israel set out on their journeys.

When *Klal Yisrael* arrived at their encampment and came to a place of rest, Moshe Rabbeinu said another prayer: *Shuva Hashem Rivevos Alfei Yisrael*. The simple way of translating this is "Return, *Hashem*, among the myriad and multitudes of *Klal Yisrael*". The first question we should ask is why was it even necessary to utter this prayer? They are camping. They have arrived at a secure place. What is the need for the prayer of *Shuva Hashem Rivevos Alfei Yisrael*? More to the point, Rashi [Bamidbar 10:36] writes the following on the words *Shuva Hashem*: Menachem (ben Saruk) [Spain, c 920-980] rendered the word *Shuva* as expressing tranquility, as in the *pasuk* "*b'<u>shuva</u> v'nachas teevashayun*" [In tranquility and calm you shall be saved] [Yeshaya 30:15].

Without this Rashi, If I would ask, "What does Shuva Hashem mean?" chances are most people would translate "Return Hashem". This means, we have been travelling, now Hashem return. This is in

fact how Targum Onkelos interprets it (Tuv Hashem) and this is in fact how the Targum Yonosan ben Uziel interprets it (Tuv k'don meimre d'Hashem…). The simple translation is that the word Shuva comes from the word Shuv meaning return. Rashi, however, interprets differently. Based on the tenth century Spanish grammarian who Rashi quotes several times in his commentary, Rashi translates Shuva as having the connotation mirgo-ah, meaning tranquility, peace and quiet, serenity. Rashi cites a pasuk in Yeshaya where the word shuva has that connotation.

I looked up two authentic English translations of Chumash and saw two different interpretations. The Samson Raphael Hirsch Chumash translates *Shuva* as "Come home, again Hashem". This is in line with the Targum Onkelos and Targum Yonasan, which is certainly the most common interpretation. However, the Art Scroll Chumash follows Rashi's translation, which is "Reside tranquilly, Hashem."

Why did Rashi take this approach to translating this expression and what is the real meaning of "with tranquility and calm"?

I saw an interesting observation in the *sefer Ikvei Erev*: When people are busy and occupied with important matters, most of the time they are too busy to get into arguments. People are too preoccupied with what they need to do so there is not much time for quibbling or argumentation. When the Jews were travelling, the only thing they had to worry about was an outside enemy. Therefore, the prayer "Your enemies, Hashem, should be scattered" is appropriate. However, when they camped, they had an idyllic situation, a situation the likes of which we have otherwise never seen: There was no need to make a living! What was there to do? Their clothes did not wear out; every morning they went outside and collected their daily provisions (the mann); everything was taken care of. There was nothing to do. It was a seemingly tranquil

utopian situation. No taxes, no traffic, no hassle, no nothing! What could be better?

In such a scenario – when people have absolutely nothing to do –they start to get restless and start carping at one another. That is why, "And when it (the Aron) rested, (Moshe) would invoke the prayer of 'Shuva Hashem' – based on the connotation of *mirgo-ah*, tranquility.

I learned this truth several years ago and it took me a good part of my adult life to understand it: This idea is counter-intuitive and against the prevailing wind, but vacations are terrible. I do not know how many people notice this, but when a person has a schedule – he must get up at a certain time and needs to be somewhere at a certain time, when he is occupied with things that he needs to do most of the day so he has a schedule – everything is fine. However, when a person gets up in the morning and there is (seemingly) nothing to do, he becomes jumpy, uncomfortable, irritable, and argumentative. Why? It is precisely because he has nothing to do. It is not an idyllic situation when a person has too much free time on his hands.

This applies to vacations. How much more so this applies to retirement. Baruch Hashem, we are a community that after we all retire we will have what to do. The time that we did not have when we were employed – to learn *daf yomi*, to learn *halacha* on a daily basis, to review the weekly *parsha*– there is plenty for us to do. However, the average Joe Blogs working person did nothing but work for most of his life. When he retires, he drives his wife crazy. He has nothing to do. How many times can a person read the newspaper? This is a common phenomenon. All sorts of periodicals write about it. Husbands who retire find themselves out of sorts, not knowing what to do, and they drive their wives crazy.

In fact, *Avos D'Rabbi Nassan* mentions this very concept: 'If a person has nothing to do and he sits around idly, he becomes

depressed, his health deteriorates, and ultimately he in fact leaves this world.'

While they were in the Wilderness, they did not go to work. Of course, they had just received the Torah so they could spend their time learning, but I do not know if everybody could handle that full time. Therefore, they instituted a special prayer: When you come to your campsite, *Shuva Hashem, Rivevos Alfei Yisrael*: Grant tranquility, *Hashem*, to the myriads and thousands of Israel.

Two Approaches for Staying Enthusiastic About Mitzvos

There is a famous Rashi at the beginning of Parshas Beha'alosecha which we comment on almost every year. Aharon was given the mitzva of lighting the Menorah every day in the *Beis HaMikdash*. The Torah says: "And Aharon did so, toward the face of the Menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe." (Bamidbar 8:3) Rashi comments on the words "And Aharon did so" that "This is stated to tell the praise of Aharon in that he did not deviate."

On a simple level, Rashi is saying that this pasuk is a testimony to Aharon that he did not change what he was supposed to do. Everybody asks on this Rashi, what else would we expect of Aharon? Of course he did not deviate!

In past years, we quoted the famous *vort* of the **Sefas Emes (Rav Yehuda Aryeh Leib Alter, 1847-1905)**. This year we are sharing a *vort* from the **Ishbitzer Rebbe (Rav Mordechai Leiner, 1801-1854)**, which also tries to understand this Rashi, but has a totally different take on this question.

The Sefas Emes says that when a person does something over and over again, by the thousandth time, it becomes a little monotonous and the person loses his enthusiasm. This is the time of year when schools let out for the summer. If you look at children coming into

school on the first day of school in September or you look at the teachers on the first day of school, you can see an excitement and a passion for learning. However, in June, you can see the proverbial "child running away from school." Why? Because it has become "Same old, same old… Day in, day out, same thing." That is the way it is with people.

If you ever see a *Bar Mitzvah bochur* putting on *Tefillin* for the first time, you see how carefully he wraps the straps around his arm to make sure that they are equidistant from each other and so on and so forth. After a person puts on *Tefillin* for thirty or forty years, his level of meticulousness is not the same. That is the way people are. Enthusiasm wanes.

The Sefas Emes explains that this is what Rashi is saying. The Torah states the praise of Aharon that no matter how long or for how many years he lit the Menorah, his enthusiasm for the mitzvah never waned.

The Ishbitzer, on the other hand, says that the word "שְׁנָה" (in Rashi's expression "שֶׁלֹּא שְׁנָה ") can mean something else. It can mean that Aharon never did it the same way twice. He didn't repeat. Each day he had a different *kavannah* (intent and focus) when he lit the Menorah. The *hadlakas haMenorah* of yesterday was not the same as the *hadlakas haMenorah* of today and tomorrow will yet again be a different *hadlakas haMenorah*.

These are two different approaches to Rashi, but the similarity is that either there was a tremendous enthusiasm which did not wane, or there was newness with every single lighting of the Menorah that introduced a new *kavannah* with each new day.

We just finished Parshas Nasso, the longest parsha in the Torah. It is not, however, the hardest parsha in the Torah because a good part of it is just repetition. Everyone asks why the Torah needs to repeat the offering of each *nasi*, even though they were identical to the

offerings of the previous day's *nasi*. The answer is that even though it was the same offering, each *nasi* had a special *kavannah*.

We can relate to that, because we know that for different folks there are different strokes. Each person thinks in his own unique way. But it is perhaps even more noteworthy for the same person, doing the same thing over and over again, to have a unique *kavannah* each time. That is the praiseworthy attribute of Aharon *haKohen*.

The Message of the Leveyims' Five-Year Training Program

The Torah says in this week's parsha that from the time a Levi is twenty-five years old, he enters into service in the *Bais Hamikdash* [8:24]. However, as Rashi points out, there is a contradiction between this *pasuk* and another *pasuk* earlier in the sefer [Bamidbar 4:3], which states that the age of service for the Leveyim begins at thirty, not at twenty-five. Rashi reconciles the two *pesukim* by explaining that the Levy comes to the *Bais Hamikdash* at age twenty-five to begin a five-year training period. Then he in fact begins to serve at age thirty, as is says in Parshas Bamidbar.

The Shemen HaTov (volume 5) asks an interesting question: How long does a Kohen need to train? A Kohen's service in the *Bais Hamikdash* is seemingly much more intricate and involved than a Levi's service. However, we do not find anywhere in the Torah that the Kohanim had a five-year training period. The Torah does not even mention them having a one-year period of learning before they could start participating in the*Avodah*. Why is that?

The Shemen HaTov suggests a very interesting idea. A Kohen can perform the*Avodah* from the time he is Bar Mitzvah until the time he dies. He could be serving in the *Bais Hamikdash* for sixty or seventy years. A Levi's service is only for twenty years. As soon as

he turns thirty, the clock starts ticking and once he becomes fifty, he is out of there. When someone has such a limited period of when he can do the *Avodah*, he wants to hit the ground running. He cannot waste any time. He needs to be ready on day one! He does not have the luxury of puttering around with on-the-job training.

A Kohen, who potentially has sixty or seventy years of service ahead of himself, can take a couple of years "to get up to speed." However, a Levi, whose time is so limited, needs to know clearly, what he is doing from the first day on the job. Therefore, a Levi trains for five years before the clock starts ticking for him.

The most important thing we can impress on our children is "Don't waste your time while you are in Yeshiva." *A masmid* is not necessarily someone who learns 18 hours a day. *A masmid* is someone who learns sixty minutes an hour, for however many hours a day he is able to devote to learning. Do not waste your time. That is a lesson we need to impress on our children.

When only a limited amount of time is available, we must make maximum use of it. Just as the Levi needed five years of preparation so that when he began his service at age 30, he would not need to "waste time" with on-the-job training, we need to be just as careful with the limited time that is available to us for our learning.

Showing Appreciation For Miriam After 80 Years

At the end of the Parsha the Torah tells us that Miriam had complaints about her brother, Moshe Rabbeinu, and she talked about these complaints. G-d Himself comes down and says do not speak about Moshe; don't hold him to the standards of any normal human being — "Not so is My Servant Moshe, in My entire house he is the trusted one…" [Bamidbar 12:7].

Moshe was in a league by himself and for talking about him, Miriam was stricken with Tzora'as. The law concerning such a person who is

stricken with Tzora'as is that they have to be sent outside the Camp. Miriam was in fact sent outside the Camp of Israel for 7 days. The verse tells us that "…The nation did not travel until Miriam was brought back in." [12:15].

Rash"i, quoting the Talmud [Sotah 9b] says that this honor (that the entire Jewish people waited for her) was accorded to Miriam as reward for waiting by the Nile for her infant brother Moshe (to see who would pick up the basket in which he was floating).

The question can be asked — why now? It is 80 years since Miriam waited for Moshe. Why all of a sudden is now the time for her to receive a reward?

At a simple level we could answer — now is when she needed it. She is down and out, so to speak; now is a good time to give her honor.

The Shemen HaTov gives a different answer. He says that the reason why it was now the appropriate time to reward Miriam is because now we — as a people - - recognize what she did for us.

Sometimes a person does an act and even though we appreciate the act, we do not appreciate it to its fullest extent. Right now, we retroactively realized what Miriam did — we realize who Moshe Rabbeinu really is. Now is when G-d gives personal testimony and says something about Moshe Rabbeinu that He never said about any other human being: "You don't realize who Moshe is. I speak to him mouth to mouth. He is in a league by himself!"

They had been living with Moshe Rabbeinu. They become used to Moshe Rabbeinu. They forgot who Moshe Rabbeinu was. So therefore G-d tells the people, "There is no one who was ever like him; there never will be any one like him."

Now, eighty years later, they can realize what Miriam did. That act — standing and waiting, making sure that all would be all right with her brother, eighty years earlier — saved a Moshe Rabbeinu! Now they are first able, to fully appreciate this.

Sometimes we do a Chessed and we don't realize the implications. Sometimes it takes time, a week, a month, a year. Sometimes it takes 80 years or longer to realize "Wow! What a remarkable act!" That is what they finally realize here. And now, 80 years later they had to show their appreciation.



Rabbi Eli Mansour

Parashat Behaalotecha begins with the command concerning the lighting of the Menorah in the Mishkan, and Rashi comments that this command was given in order to "console" Aharon.

The previous section – the final section of Parashat Naso – described the special gifts brought by the Nesi'im, the twelve tribal leaders, in honor of the dedication of the Mishkan. The leader of every tribe brought several lavish gifts and numerous animals for sacrifices to G-d. The only tribe that did not participate in this event was Aharon's tribe, the tribe of Levi.

Unlike the leaders of all the other tribes, Aharon did not bring a special gift and special sacrifices for the Mishkan's inauguration. Aharon was distressed over having been excluded from this event, and thus Hashem told Moshe to console Aharon by reminding him of the special privilege he had to kindle the Menorah each day.

The Ramban (Rav Moshe Nahmanides, Spain, 1194-1270) raises the question of why Aharon would have felt distressed over not participating in the Mishkan's dedication. He was selected from among the entire nation to be the Kohen Gadol, who is granted several unique privileges, including the privilege of entering the Kodesh Ha'kodashim – the most sacred chamber in the Mishkan – on Yom Kippur each year. - Given his special status, why would his exclusion from the Mishkan's dedication have mattered? Why did he

need the comfort of being reminded of his privileges as Kohen Gadol?

Rav Yerucham Levovitz of the Mir Yeshiva (1873-1936) explained that when it comes to Misvot, righteous people are indeed "greedy." Their love for Misvot is so overpowering that they are never content and always want more. - Just as a wealthy person always looks to increase his fortune, and is never satisfied with what he has, a spiritually "wealthy" person is never satisfied with his "fortune." He is always looking for more Misva opportunities. - And thus despite all the special Misvot Aharon was able to perform by virtue of his position as Kohen Gadol, he was never satisfied, and he felt distressed by every missed opportunity to perform yet another Misva.

Our Sages make a similar comment about Moshe Rabbenu. Moshe's "resume" included accomplishments that no human being could ever possibly come close to matching, such as leading Benei Yisrael out of Egypt, splitting the sea, and spending forty days with G-d receiving the Torah without eating or drinking. And yet, the Gemara says, Moshe pleaded with G-d to allow him to enter Eretz Yisrael so he could perform the Misvot that are unique to the Land of Israel. Moshe did not need to enter Eretz Yisrael to establish his legacy of greatness, but this did not matter. His love for Misvot was so immense that he was constantly seeking more opportunities.

The Hafetz Haim (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933) was once seen walking about outside his home on a frigid, snowy night. A family member was asked what he was doing outside in those conditions, and it was discovered that he was doing this already for three consecutive nights. He had not yet recited Birkat Ha'lebana that month, and so he was waiting outside every night to see if the clouds would dissipate for a moment to allow him to see the moon and recite the Beracha. The Hafetz Haim was already a world-renowned Sage and author of groundbreaking Torah works. If he

would have missed Birkat Ha'lebana that month, his stature of greatness would not have been compromised one iota. But this did not matter. He loved Misvot and passionately sought each and every opportunity he could get to perform them.

This is the lesson we learn from Aharon Ha'kohen. When it comes to spirituality, we should be greedy. We must never be satisfied with what we've accomplished, and should always be striving to reach even greater and loftier heights, one Misva at a time.



Awestruck by Others

The pasuk says **והאיש משה ענו מאד מכל האדם**, *Moshe was exceedingly humble more than any person.* (Bamidbar 12:3).

But how could someone who spoke directly to Hashem remain so humble? Another question is why does the Torah add **מכל האדם**, more than any person? It could have simply said, **והאיש משה ענו מאד** ?

The key to Moshe's humility was **מכל האדם**, from every person. Moshe looked at each individual and saw their inner battles, their challenges, their temptations — and was awestruck by their ability to overcome them. It wasn't despite his greatness that he was humble — it was **because** he truly saw the greatness in others. That perspective is what made Moshe the humblest of all.

Let us all take a lesson from this and be humbled by other people.

"If you want to praise, praise Hashem; if you want to blame, blame yourself." ~ Rabbeinu Bechayei – Chovos Halivovos.

Fascinating INSIGHTS

Fascinating Insights by Rabbi Yehoshua Alt

Moshe- Unlike Anyone Else



The sin of Adam was rooted in **גאוה** - haughtiness since he put his mind before Hashem's and didn't follow Hashem's command. So, humility is the way to rectify the mishap of Adam. There are 3 that are known for their humility. They are **אברהם** who said **אנכי עפר ואפר** - I am but dust and ash, **משה** (and **אהרן**) who said **ונחנו מה** - what are we, and **דוד** who said **אנכי תולעת ולא איש** - I am a worm not a man. Is it any surprise that **אַברהם מַשה דַוד** form the initials **אדם**. (**של"ה**)

Of these 3, the most humble one was Moshe and as it says he was an **ענו מאד**.This is because in the expressions used by Dovid and Avraham- **תולעת** and **עפר ואפר** - there is still substance, in contrast to what Moshe said.

The more a cup is full of a liquid the less anything else can be put in. This applies to humility as well. The more humble one is, the more he can be filled with Hashem. Just as Hashem rested on the lowest of mountains, similarly, He rests on those who make themselves humble. We can now understand why the letters of **משה** rearranged spell **השם** as since he was so humble, he was filled with G-dliness.

The Wait

One who eats meat is forbidden to eat dairy afterwards. The Halacha according to the Tur as well as the Shulchan Aruch among many others is to wait six hours.



What is the reason for the wait? Rashi explains it is because meat exudes fat which clings to the inside of the mouth and causes the taste to linger. The Rambam's reasoning is because the meat gets lodged between the teeth.

What is a practical difference between Rashi and the Rambam? If after the six hour wait what is the law if there still remains meat between his teeth? According to the Rambam it may be assumed that those slivers of meat have decomposed sufficiently because of the acids from the saliva. Therefore, they are no longer a concern as it is considered digested. According to Rashi one must remove the meat between his teeth even if he already waited six hours after eating meat.

Although six hours is the most common opinion for waiting between meat and dairy, let us cite some others. Mar Ukva's father would wait 24 hours between meat and cheese! In fact, the Reishis Chochma writes that the custom of **אנשי מעשה** - men of good deed, is not to eat dairy after meat for 24 hours. R' Yosef Yuspa Haan writes that he saw the Shela wait 24 hours to eat dairy after eating meat. R' Yosef Yuspa Haan said about himself that since he found meat stuck in his teeth even after waiting 6 hours, he started to wait 12 hours for dairy- as a **גדר** - fence, not as an obligation.

Although the father of Mar Ukva waited 24 hours, Mar Ukva himself would only wait from one meal until the next meal.

Some wait five hours and a minute or five and a half hours. This is based on the wording of those, including the Rambam, who writes one should wait **כמו שש שעות** - approximately six hours.

A four-hour wait is suggested by the Pri Chadash who comments that the six hours mandated are not referring to regular sixty minute hours but to **שעות זמניות** - seasonal hours. This calculation is done through dividing the amount of time between sunrise and sunset into twelve equal parts. The Pri Chadash states that in the height of winter when days are very short, it is possible that six hours can turn into only four halachic hours!

Waiting three hours is the common German Minhag. Where was this number taken from? The **מזמור לדוד** suggests the three-hour opinion is based on the view of **שעות זמניות**.

Another theory is that their original custom was to wait only one hour just as the Rema writes. Yet, when the six hour wait required by the Rambam among others became more widespread, these people decided to meet at the midpoint, as a sort of compromise.

R' Moshe Sternbuch explains that eating dairy after meat is permitted applies by whatever is considered a different meal. The German Jews held that when the sages instituted the amount between one Seuda and the next, their intention was what is normal in that place. Since in Germany they waited three hours between breakfast and lunch, so they wait three hours between meat and dairy.

A one hour wait between meat and dairy is the custom of Jews from Amsterdam. This opinion is stated by the Rema. The Gra comments this is based on the Zohar who disallows one to eat meat and dairy together or in the same hour…as it arouses judgement in the world….

Another opinion is that of Tosafos, who interprets 'from one meal to another' literally. That is to say, as soon as one finishes his meat meal, clears off the table and recites Birkas HaMazon, he may start a new dairy meal.

One last custom we will mention is that of sleeping after eating a meat meal. They maintain that sleeping causes the food to digest quicker thereby lessening the required waiting period. The Chassam Sofer initially ruled like this leniency. However, when he prepared his coffee with milk to drink in the morning it would spill. He concluded that this must not be the halacha.

Attitude of Gratitude



When Yehuda was born, Leah was especially grateful as **נטלתי יותר מחלקי** - I took more than my share. It should be the same with each of us as whatever we have is more than we deserve. For this reason, we are called **יהודי** - from the term **הודאה**, to be grateful for all we have and say I took more than my portion. Indeed, this is the attitude we begin our day with- **מודה אני** - thanking Hashem.

We should constantly ask ourselves what am I grateful for now? We always have what to be grateful for at any given moment. Our health, food, beautiful weather, just being alive… is not something to be taken for granted.

There is so much to appreciate: the air we breathe- which is in abundant supply. Water- which is plentiful. The sunlight, wind, rain, trees, gardens, mountains, seas, moon, stars, fire, heat, cold, snow, dew, use of our limbs, the ability to see, hear, smell, taste, feel, the faculty of speech, thought, memory, the variety of food of every taste and colour, the body's secretions, and chemistry. The materials that compose our clothing and supply our homes. Utensils, grains vegetables, fruits, meat, chicken, fish, minerals, electricity, light, wood, coal, petroleum and all the resources of the earth.

If the happiness of life passes by unnoticed, it also passes by not enjoyed. It is when one is about to leave the world that he looks back with regret at all that he possessed but failed to enjoy. There is an expression, ***"The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our own blessings."***

"At the root of complaining is thinking the situation could be better. At the root of satisfaction is being aware that the situation could be worse."

What is a truly wealthy person? Although many may take for granted what they are born with, let us take a look at what we possess so we can appreciate it. Eyes to see which is more sophisticated than the best camera. Teeth to chew and grind up the food. Hands to take care of our many tasks. Feet to walk with. With this we can grasp **איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו** ; one who is happy with his lot is a truly wealthy person, as the Chida tells us **עשיר** is an acronym for **עֵינים,שִׁינים, יָדים, רַגלים** ; eyes, teeth, hands and feet. To see how wealthy we are, we must see all that we have that money can't buy (children, being married, health, just being alive and so on).

"One kind word can keep a person warm for years." ~ Chofetz Chaim.

Higher Than Kaddish



As a 12-year-old boy, **Rav Pam** (1913-2001), who lived in Lithuania, was sent by his parents to Yeshiva in a different town. When his parents heard that the wagon driver from their city was headed to where R' Pam was learning in Yeshiva, they would send him regards. When he would receive those regards, he felt such a thrill because he felt lonely as a 12-year-old boy away from home.

When his parents had more notice that the wagon driver was headed there, they would write a letter and send it. Upon receiving it, R' Pam was overjoyed. When his parents had even more notice, his mother would make him a fresh kugel. When R' Pam received that, he felt tremendous joy.

Later in life, after his parents passed away, he took that as a lesson, as he would say the following. When I say Kaddish, I am sending my parents regards. When I learn Torah, I am sending them a letter. When I strengthen public Torah learning, I am sending them a fresh kugel.

The Divrei Malkiel says that people have forgotten the big picture around Kaddish: The masses have thought that the essence is to lead davening and say Kaddish. And there are those who say Kaddish as much as possible, but all day they do whatever they want. In truth, the essence is to increase Torah and good deeds, and keep away from forbidden things. And in this a child confers merit on his parent.

Timeless Tefillos

Some may be under the notion that we have only three times daily to daven. The truth is that we can daven many times daily. This idea is shown throughout Tanach as people would daven although it wasn't a set Tefila.



The Chofetz Chaim writes …it is not enough for one to just daven three times daily rather many times a day he needs to pour himself out to Hashem with Tefilos and requests from the depths of his heart. The Chofetz Chaim would tell one who was broken-hearted to talk to Hashem where one doesn't require formal Tefilos and can speak in any language. This is what is meant in **ובקשתם משם את ה'** - One can seek Hashem from wherever he is.

So, one may hear that a relative is ill and he can call out to Hashem wherever he is, from the depths of his heart in order that he should be completely cured. One who is in dire need of money can just cry to Hashem for help.

The Kotzker Rebbe once remarked, "There is nothing as whole as a broken heart." **The Noam Elimelech** writes that davening for yourself from the depths of your heart is even greater than the Tefilos of Tzadikim for you.

We have three set Tefilos daily: Shacharis, Mincha and Maariv. On a deeper level this means that we need to daven whether life is going good (symbolized by Shacharis when it is light outside), mediocre (Mincha) or tough (represented by Maariv when it is dark outside which is symbolic of the dark times).

The Rabbi of Buchenwald by Dr. Rafael Medoff



Liberating the concentration camp changed Rabbi Herschel Schacter's life.

On a sunny afternoon 76 years ago this spring, Chaplain Herschel Schacter was drinking coffee with several officers from his unit, the Eighth Corps of the Third US Army, on the outskirts of Weimar, Germany, when "a friendly Colonel, a nice man" approached. "You know, this may be of interest to you," the colonel began. "We just got word that our troops penetrated a place called Buchenwald. It's some kind of concentration camp, I think."

The date was April 11, 1945, and what Rabbi Schacter was about to experience would change his life forever.

Schacter and his assistant, Private Hyman Schulman, drove five miles to the site. The German guards had fled as American forces arrived earlier that day. Trembling, Schacter stepped through the front gate. His eye "caught a glimpse of a tall chimney with billowing smoke still curling upward." It was Buchenwald's crematorium.

"I scarcely could believe my eyes," he later recalled. "There I stood, face to face with piles of dead bodies strewn around, waiting to be shoveled into the furnace that was still hot. It was just an incredible, harrowing sight. I stood there for a while in utter confusion and disbelief. I then began to really feel what this horror was all about."

A GI led the rabbi to a nearby prisoners' barracks.

"A foul odour hit me as I entered. I saw a series of shelves, hard cold planks of wood from floor to ceiling. There were hundreds of

men and a few boys lying on stinking straw sacks, looking out at me from dazed and bewildered eyes, skin and bones, more dead than alive."

Schacter was "overwhelmed, stunned, terrified, not knowing what to say or do. Impulsively, instinctively, I shouted in Yiddish, ***'Sholom aleichem Yidden, ihr zeit frei – Greetings, Jews, you are free!'***

Raised in the heavily Jewish Brooklyn neighborhood of Brownsville, Schacter earned his rabbinical ordination at Yeshiva University, and assumed his first pulpit in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1941. Then the United States entered the war and everything changed. Members of the clergy were exempt from military service.

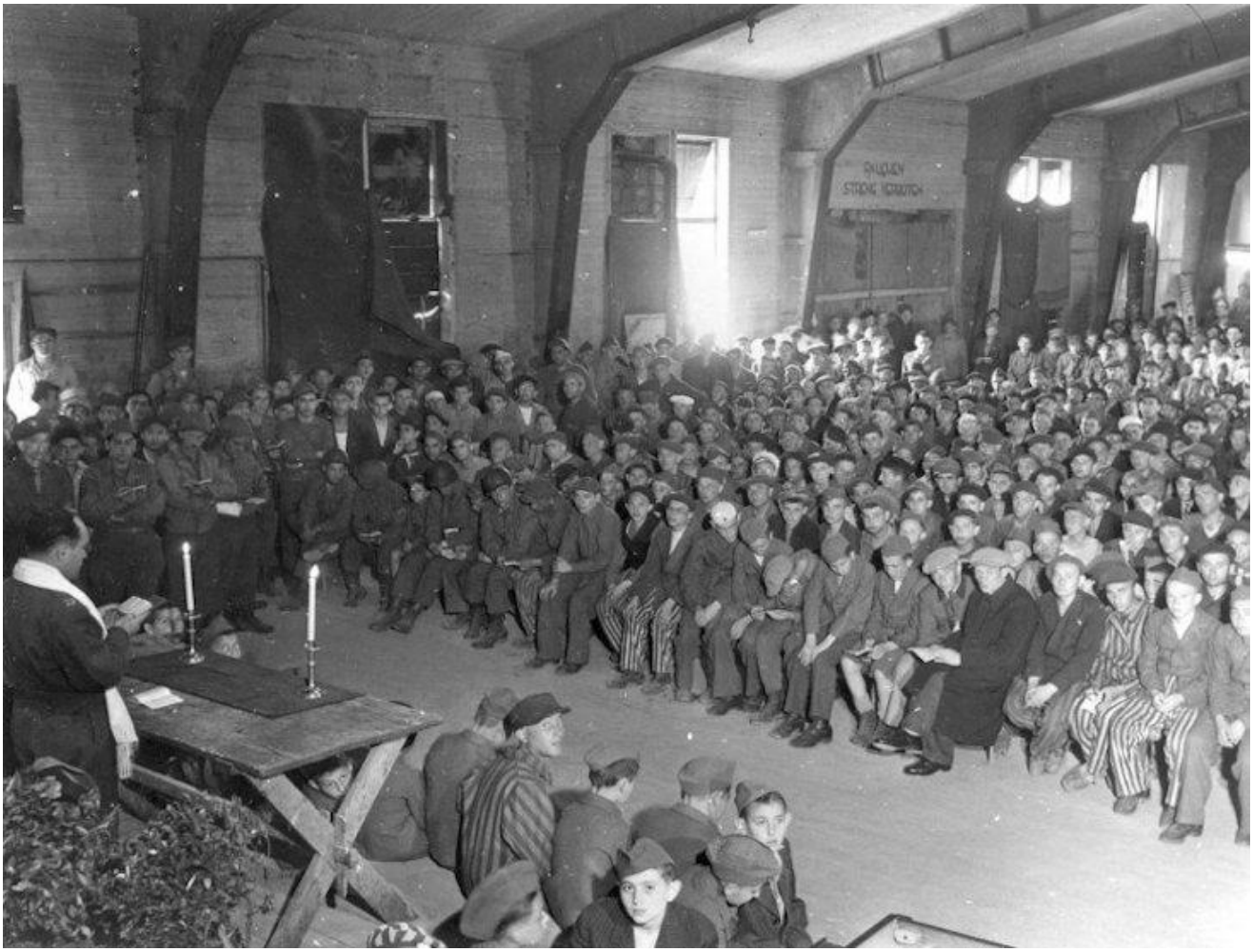
"But after Pearl Harbor, I felt uncomfortable that all the other young men were enlisting, and I wasn't," he recalled. "I couldn't stand it."

After completing a training course at the Army Chaplain School on the campus of Harvard University in Boston, Schacter was first stationed in New Orleans, and then San Juan, Puerto Rico. He conducted religious services for Jewish GIs, counseled them on personal matters, and gave classes.

The Caribbean would have been a pleasant place to spend the remainder of the war but in the wake of the Allies' D-Day land invasion of continental Europe, Schacter was anxious to join his comrades on the front lines. After repeated pleas to the Office of the Chief of Chaplains in Washington, he got his wish.

Soon Schacter found himself accompanying troops into newly liberated Holland. There he presided at the first bris by Dutch Jews since the war began. The guest of honor was a baby born a year earlier in attic in Maastricht, where a young Jewish couple had been hiding from the Nazis. In the weeks to follow, Schacter conducted Passover Seders for soldiers in units that were pushing through Germany.

"Just as the ancient Children of Israel had to cross the Red Sea to celebrate the first Passover, so have we crossed the Rhine to celebrate the first Passover in Nazi Germany since the rise of Hitler," he wrote to his family. The Jewish soldiers "had tears of joy in their eyes when we tore down a swastika flag and put up a sign with a Magen David [Star of David] over the doorway" where the Seder took place.



Rabbi Herschel Schacter conducting services at the liberated Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945.

Approximately 21,000 Jews remained alive in Buchenwald on its day of liberation. When Chaplain Schacter entered their barracks, prisoner Moshe Avital later recalled, "We were afraid [because] we always associated military uniforms with the SS."

But then they heard the rabbi call out "*Yidden, ihr zeit frei*!" and saw the Jewish chaplain's symbol of the Ten Commandments on Schacter's lapel.

"We crowded around him and hugged and kissed him," Avital wrote. "And some asked him, 'Why did you take so long to come?'"

They followed him as he proceeded from barracks to barracks, announcing the news of their freedom. At one point, Schacter found himself "paralyzed in front of a mound of corpses."

He noticed a small movement from among the bodies and stepped closer. The eyes of a young boy stared out at him. After extracting the child from the pile, Schacter asked him his age.

"I'm certainly older than you," the boy replied cryptically. Schacter recalled: "'Older than me?' I asked, startled. 'What makes you think so?'

'Because you cry and laugh as a child, while I have forgotten how to laugh, and I can't even cry. So tell me, which of us is older?'"

The eight-year-old boy, known as *Lulek*, was **Israel Meir Lau,** who grew up to become the chief rabbi of Israel.

With the permission of his superiors, Schacter returned to Buchenwald every day for the next two-and-a-half months. Neglecting his army chaplain's duties and ignoring the constant risk of communicable diseases, he devoted himself to nursing the survivors back to life. He conducted religious services, counseled the grieving and broken, and served as their liaison to the military authorities.

Schacter compiled long lists of the survivors' personal information and worked with the Red Cross and Jewish relief groups to reunite the prisoners with their families.

He also convinced US Army officials to set aside a nearby tract of land for a group of young men and women who established "Kibbutz Buchenwald," a site for agricultural training in preparation for immigrating to the future State of Israel.

When the Swiss government agreed to admit several hundred children, Schacter bent rules and forged documents to include many additional passengers on the train, even hiding mothers in the train cars' bathrooms so they would not be separated from their children.

Schacter joined them on the long train ride to Switzerland and emerged victorious from a tense standoff with border officials, who accused him of bringing more orphans than permitted.

The American Jewish military chaplains who were sent to Europe during World War II had no advance warning or training for dealing with survivors of death camps. Schacter rose to the challenges posed by extraordinary and unimaginable circumstances, and the survivors whom he impacted regarded him as having saved their lives.

Schacter's months in Buchenwald deeply affected his own life as well. In the short run, he served as the voice of the survivors in a coast-to-coast speaking tour in 1946 that drew the American public's attention to the plight of displaced persons, and the need for a Jewish homeland.

Rabbi Hershel Schacter's personal connection to the Nazi genocide inspired him to devote his life to Jewish communal service; first as a major figure in the revitalization of American Orthodox Judaism in the 1950s and early 1960s, then as an early leader of the Soviet Jewry protest movement, and finally as the first Orthodox rabbi to chair the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Through his decades of community leadership, there pulsed a sense of commitment that had been nurtured in the crucible of Buchenwald, where Schacter had witnessed the ultimate, tragic toll of inhumanity.

Better a Jew without a beard than a beard without a Jew.

The Light of Shabbos Food

During their travels in the wilderness, a group of complainers began to protest the Manna that they were forced to eat day after day (11:5). They wailed that they missed the fish that they used to eat in Egypt, and now they had nothing to look forward to except Manna.

The Midrash Pliah cryptically remarks "from here we may derive that it is obligatory to light candles for Shabbos," a mitzvah which has no apparent connection to their grievance.



The Chida explains by noting that we must first understand what they were complaining about. Rashi writes (11:5) that the Manna tasted like whatever the person eating it desired. If so, why were they mourning the fish they used to eat in Egypt when they were capable of making the Manna taste like fish with no effort whatsoever?

The Talmud (Yoma 74b) teaches that although a person could make the Manna taste like anything he desired, it nevertheless retained its original appearance. Even though the complainers were able to make the Manna taste like fish, they lacked the pleasure and satiety which comes from seeing the food that they wanted to taste. The Talmud adds that a blind person won't enjoy or become as full from a meal as a person with normal vision who consumes the same food.

In light of this complaint, the Midrash questioned how a person will be able to avoid the same dilemma on Shabbos since he won't be able to appreciate the Shabbos delicacies if he is forced to eat them in darkness. The Midrash concluded that from their protest, we may derive that a person is obligated to light candles so that he can see and enjoy his food on Shabbos!

Parsha Potpourri, by Rav Ozer Alport

Step Up to The Menorah

Rashi writes (Numbers 8:2) that there was a step in front of the Menorah upon which the Kohen would stand when cleaning out and lighting it. As the Menorah was only 18 tefachim tall (approximately 5 feet), why was it necessary for the Kohen to stand on a step to light it?



Rabbi Leib Tzintz (Peninei Kedem) points out that Moshe was speaking to Aharon, who was a Kohen Gadol. The Talmud (Sotah 38a) rules that although Kohanim in the Temple recite the Priestly Blessing with their hands raised above their heads, the Kohen Gadol may not do so. Rashi explains that this is because G-d's name is written on the Tzitz (Head-Plate), and it is inappropriate to raise his hands above this level. Just as Aharon could not raise his hands above his head for the purpose of Birkas Kohanim, so too was he forbidden to do so to light the Menorah, and he had no choice but to stand on a step to light it.

"Torah is not merely wisdom; it is the bond between the soul of man and the will of Hashem. When a person learns Torah with sincerity, he is attaching himself to eternal life." ~ Rav Chaim of Volozhin – Nefesh HaChaim.

והמן כזרע גד הוא ועינו כעין הבדלח (11:7)

During their travels in the wilderness, a group of complainers began to complain about the Manna which they were forced to eat day after day. They wailed that they missed the succulent tastes of the meat, fish, and vegetables which they ate in Egypt, and now they had nothing to look forward to except for Manna. On our verse, Rashi explains that in response to their complaint, G-d wrote in the Torah a description of how wonderful the Manna was as if to say, "Look, inhabitants of the world, at what my children are complaining about."

Rabbi Avrohom Yaakov Pam (1913-2001) notes that although we don't merit hearing it, a Divine voice expressing frustration over the things we complain about still goes out regularly. We live in a time of unprecedented freedom and material bounty, and we are surrounded by a society which influences us to believe that we are entitled to immediate gratification, to have everything we want, exactly when and exactly how we want it. If we would only step back and view our lives with the proper perspective, we would be so overwhelmed by the blessings we enjoy that there would be no room to complain about trivialities.



Although we don't usually hear G-d's direct communication about this point, sometimes He sends us the message about priorities and values through a human agent, as illustrated in the following story.

A student in a yeshiva was once complaining with his friends about the quality and variety of the meals that they were served. He heaped more and more criticism on every aspect of the food, until they were jolted to their senses by one of the elderly teachers in the yeshiva. The Rabbi couldn't help but overhear their loud

complaints in the dining hall and walked over to deliver a succinct lesson: ***"In Auschwitz we would have done anything to have gotten such food."***

Every time that a husband comes home to a messy house, filled with children's toys and dirty clothes, and once again berates his wife over her inability to keep their house clean, a Heavenly voice challenges, "How many families would do anything to have children and would gladly clean up the mess that accompanies them, and here is somebody who has been blessed with healthy children and is upset that they make his house disorderly? Where are his priorities?"

When a husband or a child complains about eating the same supper for the 3rd consecutive night, G-d can't help but point out how many poverty-stricken families would do anything to eat this dinner every night for a year, if only to enjoy a nutritional and filling repast.

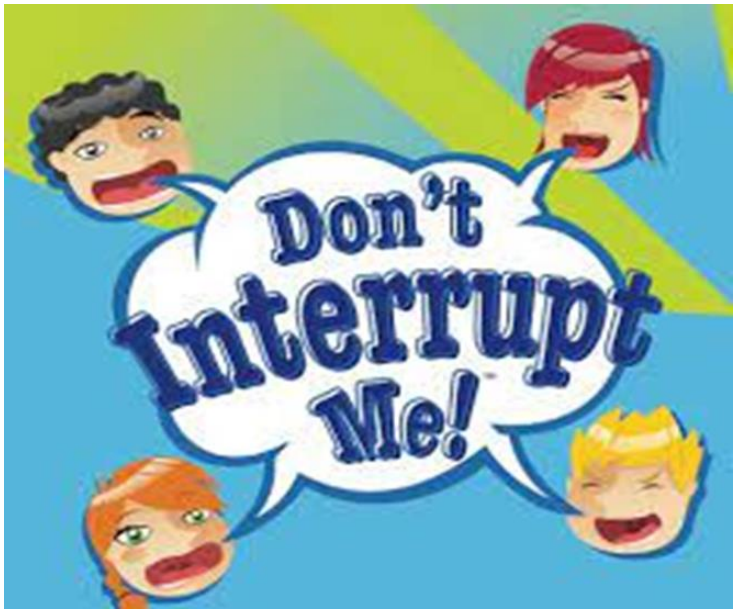
Every time that the parents of the bride and groom quarrel over petty wedding-related issues, a Heavenly voice wonders how many parents will cry themselves to sleep that evening over their inability to find a proper match for their aging son or daughter, and who would gladly accede to any terms the other side would set … if only there would be another side.

The next time that we find ourselves upset about issues which are objectively nothing more than nuisances and minor inconveniences, let us remember the lesson of the Manna and open our ears to hear G-d's response to our complaints.

"Speech reveals the inner world of a person. One careless word can cause damage that many good deeds cannot repair. But one who guards his tongue protects his soul and brings peace to himself and to others." ~ Chofetz Chaim (Shemiras HaLashon).

Don't Interrupt!

The Mishnah in Avos (5:7) lists seven characteristics of a wise person, one of which is that he doesn't interrupt another person who is still speaking. From where in Parshas Behaaloscha is this lesson derived?



Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura explains that the reason for not interrupting somebody who is in the middle of speaking is so that he shouldn't become confused and distracted. He writes that the source for this teaching is G-d's request (Numbers 12:6) that Aharon and Miriam please listen to his words of rebuke for speaking negatively of Moshe. In introducing His comments in this manner, G-d was asking them to hear Him out and not to interrupt Him. If this concept applies to G-d, Who doesn't lose His focus, all the more so does it require us to hear out a human speaker in full before responding.

Rabbi Peysach Krohn- Project Mesorah

Rav Pam, the rosh Hayeshiva of Torah V'Daas once metioned the very interesting Rambam and asked an obvious question.

The Rambam in hilchos Teshuva 5:2 says **כָּל אָדָם רָאוּי לוֹ לִהְיוֹת צַדִּיק כְּמשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ** *"Every person can be a Tzadik like Moshe rabeinu."* Rav Pam asks, how can that possibly be? We know that the posuk tells us that there was never a navi like Moshe Rabeinu. He spoke to Hashem panim al panim. He was the Rebbe and leader of Klal Yisrael.

Rav Pam says that the answer is in this week's parsha. It says in the Pasuk when Miriam spoke loshon hora against Moshe Rabeinu, Hashem says about Moshe - **בְּכָל־בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמָן הוּא** 12:7 – *In My whole house, he is the one that is most faithful.*

What does it mean – most faithful? That means that when a person has certain talents, and he **uses** those talents l'shhem shamayim, then that person is considered a **נֶאֱמָן** – ***faithful.*** Of course, none of us will ever be like Moshe Rabeinu, but each one of us have been blessed with certain talents. If we take these talents and use them l'shhem shamayim, to enhance Yidishkeit, than we are like Moshe Rabeinu. This is considered as being a tzaddik like Moshe Rabeinu. Rav Pam says that when people get married, we wish them that they should build a **בית נאמן בישראל** – that the home should be a kiddush shem shamayim and that the husband and wife should use their talents l'shhem shamayim.

Jewish Education Program [JEP] - The Light of Love!



בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־הַנֵּרֹת "When you light the lamps [in the Menorah] …" (Bamidbar 8:2)

Hashem gave Moshe instructions on how to light the Menorah in the Mishkan.

The **Midrash Raba** (15:5) says that the Jews asked Hashem, "'You asked us to light [the Menorah] before you. [But] You are the Light of the World!'" Why would Hashem need our light if He is the source of all light?! Hashem answered that of course He does not need our light. Hashem wanted

us to provide a light for Him just as He provided light for us. What does that mean?

The **Midrash** explains that Hashem wanted us to light the Menorah for two reasons. Hashem wanted to elevate our position amongst the nations. Hashem wanted them to view us with the utmost respect "They should say, 'Look how the Jewish nation lights for the One who lights up the whole world.'" Secondly, Hashem wanted to give us an opportunity to repay Him now for lighting our way in the desert, in order that we not feel the pressure of having a burdensome debt of gratitude to repay Him at a later point in time.

The trait of *hakaras hatov*, showing gratitude and appreciation for kindness and favours, is a very praiseworthy trait and one of the noble characteristics of a Jew. There are many instances where the Torah teaches us the importance of appreciating everything that Hashem or people do for us.

King David rose at midnight **every** night and thanked Hashem for His kindness to King David's great grandmother, Rus. During the harvest, Boaz had slept near his fields to protect them from robbers. Boaz awoke in the middle of one night and found a woman, Rus, in his tent. He could have easily become angry and cursed her. How dare she come to him in the idle of the night? Had Rus been cursed, King David would not have been born. Instead, Hashem caused Rus to find favour in the eyes of Boaz. Boaz blessed her noble intentions and agreed to perform the mitzvah of *yibum*, of marrying her, if a closer relative would refuse. They did marry and King David was their great grandchild. Every night King David thanked Hashem for this kindness done many, many years ago.

If so, why would Hashem give us the mitzvah of lighting the Menorah so that we no longer would feel indebted to Him? Why would Hashem want us to feel as if we are already repaid the favour and that we didn't owe Hashem a further feeling of gratitude?

Furthermore, was this act needed to elevate us in the eyes of the other nations? Didn't they already know that Hashem loved us dearly? Hashem had performed so many miracles for us, taking us out of Egypt and throughout our sojourn in the desert (see Rashi Bamidbar 14:13,14)?

The Maharzu on this Midrash explains. Indeed, we were already elevated in the eyes of the other nations. When the Midrash says "to elevate us before the other nations" it means to elevate ourselves. Hashem asked us to light the Menorah in the Mishkan as an expression of His love for us. Hashem wanted to make **us** feel special and beloved to Him.

There was a possibility that the average Jew would not have fully appreciated why Hashem had lit the way for us in the desert. The average Jew may have felt that Hashem did it because of His mercy and not because of His love. After all, Hashem is merciful to all His creations. Maybe that is why He had lit the way for us. To counter that feeling, Hashem instructed us to light the Menorah in the Mishkan for "Him". That expression of love made it clear that when Hashem provided light for us in the desert it was because of His great love for us and not solely because Hashem is merciful to all.

Hashem does so much for us because His love for us is boundless. It is a pleasure to show our gratitude to Hashem in any way that we can. That shows that we reciprocate the endless love.

(Based on a dvar Torah by Rabbi Alter Henach Leibowitz zt"l)

"Faith is not an abstract idea, but a lived experience shaped by tradition, practice, and closeness to Hashem. Through mitzvos and daily devotion, belief becomes something felt and real, not merely understood." ~ Kuzari (Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi).

Travel with Hashem and See the World!



עַל־פִּ֨י ה' יַחֲנ֜וּ וְעַל־פִּ֤י ה' יִסָּֽעוּ

"...According to the word of Hashem they would encamp and according to the word of Hashem they would journey." (9:20)

The advertisement for the hotel was so exciting. I was looking forward to a long-awaited vacation, after having a very difficult year. When I arrived at the hotel, it looked nothing like the advertisement. The walls were cracking. Springs popped out from the furniture cushions. The shower had no hot water. The swimming pool was a garden of weeds. I couldn't afford to lose my deposit. I was stuck. I stayed in those difficult conditions for 3 weeks!

The following summer, I thoroughly and extensively researched a hotel before booking it. When I arrived, it was wonderful. The hotel was magnificent. I was treated like royalty. The rooms were beautiful, and the beds were so comfortable. The hotel staff even left a tray of pastries in the room. There were two outdoor pools with clear and fresh water. There was an indoor pool, an exercise room, and an indoor basketball court. I was looking forward to three weeks of "heaven". After enjoying the hotel stay for just one day, I got a phone call from home. There was a medical emergency and I had to leave immediately.

This was the story of the Jews in the desert, on their way into the Land of Israel. They camped numerous times. Sometimes the resting place was very uncomfortable. Yet they had to stay. Sometimes they stayed for such a short time that they didn't even have the time to unpack their belongings. Sometimes their encampment was beautiful.

Weary, after a long journey, they encamped in a paradise. Yet, there were times that they stayed in such beautiful surroundings but had to leave after a brief rest.

Although the travel seemed so difficult, each resting stop was restful and relaxing for the Jewish people. Nothing disturbed them because they "went with Hashem". Hashem determined where they would rest and when they would go. "According to the word of Hashem they would encamp and according to the word of Hashem they would journey". Since they travelled "with Hashem", with emunah and bitachon; total faith and trust in Hashem, their travels were peaceful and restful.

The Jews already had seen how much love Hashem had shown them and how He had taken care of them. They had witnessed how Hashem took them out of Egypt with great miracles, contrary to the laws of nature. They benefited when Hashem provided them in the desert with miraculous food that fell from the sky and with a well that provided water, daily, for all three million people and their animals too. They saw how Hashem protected them from the elements with Holy Clouds. Hashem levelled the ground so that wouldn't need to climb hills or descend into steep valleys. They felt Hashem's infinite love. They realized that everything that Hashem did came from His love for the Jewish People and was for their ultimate benefit, whether or not they understood it.

Our forefather Avraham had an excruciating test, to sacrifice his beloved son to Hashem. Yet, the **Alter of Slabodka** says that Avraham was able to sleep peacefully the night before, because he had total faith in Hashem.

Everyone has challenges in life. The more faith and trust we have in Hashem, the less stress we will feel. We will understand that Hashem has a master plan for everything that happens to us, and that it is all for our benefit.

Torah Tavlin – From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

8:6 קַח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְטִהַרְתָּ אֹתָם

Hashem tells Moshe to take the Leviim. How can you take someone? Rashi tells us it means to take them **with words**: **אשריכם שתזכו להיות קחם בדברים, שמשים למקום** :- *How lucky you are to be the ones chosen to serve Hashem.*



Rashi is teaching us a profound lesson. Forcing someone to do something is not accomplishing your goal. Say you managed to get your kids to clean up their room or got your wife to stop using the credit card for a day, or you managed to get your husband to pick his socks off the floor. You asked, you begged, you cajoled, and then you screamed. They finally did it!

Were you successful? Only partially. You accomplished a very short-term goal. The real achievement is to capture their heart! Making someone do what you want is one thing but making someone WANT to do what you want - that is the long-term goal! How do we make people want?

The answer to this question is that it is not WHAT you say, but HOW you say it. Always build people up. Make them feel special. Make them feel that you care about them. Don't YELL - TELL them how lucky they are to do this great chessed. If you take a person with your hands, they might do what you ask, but they will wind up resenting you and having negative feelings. In the end, you lose more than you

gain. If you take someone with kind words and speak to their heart, you will help that person grow and truly build them into a person who loves to do good. In marriage, parenting and all interpersonal relationships, words are the building blocks or the bulldozers that will make or break a relationship.

The key word is ASHREICHEM - How fortunate you are! Tell your husband how special he is, tell your wife how precious she is. Tell your children that they are heilege neshamos. Make people feel special and they will do what you know they should do. One who masters this key to successful relationships, "Kach es Haleviim - Take them with nice words" will truly accomplish the long term goal of "V'tihartem osam" - helping others become truly pure and great people.

The "Misonenim" - The Complainers

The parsha discusses the "Misonenim" - the complainers, who were not satisfied with all that Hashem gave them. Even after He rescued them from Egypt, the Yam Suf, Amalek, the Mann, and all the miracles they lived with on a daily basis, the people wanted more. They complained that life was not good - that they had it better when they were slaves.

Their complaints made no sense. Hashem allowed them to vent, before He vented His wrath on them. No good ever comes out of complainers. Anyone who has ever travelled on an Israeli bus knows that time schedules and overcrowding do not always make for a pleasant trip. The same goes for long distance bus rides from city to city. Families who go away for a Shabbos or Yom Tov, especially with small children, babies and lots of "pekalach" often find themselves waiting tensely for buses amid the hullabaloo of shrieking, impatient, hungry and crying children; the experience is a trying one, to say the least.

R' Elimelech Biderman shlit'a recounts the following story, and the lesson learned therein. On Motzei Rosh Hashana 5777 (October 4, 2016), a large group of people found themselves waiting at the Egged bus stop on Rechov Kahaneman for the #402 bus to Jerusalem.



They had all spent Yom Tov in Bnei Brak, and late as it was, they all needed to get back home to Jerusalem, as soon as possible. The night hour was late, and the bus was not coming. People's patience was being tried, and one after the other, upset riders called the bus company to complain about the #402 and why it STILL hadn't come. A few demanded that they send out another bus to pick up the huge crowd of Jerusalemites who needed to get home. After an additional frustrating wait - it was after 1:30 in the morning - when they saw an approaching Egged bus. But sadly this bus was not the #402 to Jerusalem, but the #318 to Rechovot.

The driver kindly slowed down and a few people jumped on and asked if perhaps he can change his route and take them all to Jerusalem, instead of Rechovot. The man calmly explained to the group, that he can get fired for changing his route and sadly he could not do as they asked. They pleaded with him. "No one is going to Rechovot. You have an empty bus. Please take us - do this mitzvah!" The driver was literally bombarded with requests, persisting and cajoling him to take them to their intended destination.

Finally, he smiled hesitantly and reluctantly agreed to switch his route. He changed the digital display in front from #318 to #402

and after what seemed like a mass embarkation onto his bus, he drove off in the direction of Jerusalem. The entire group was extremely grateful, continuously singing his praises all throughout the entire bus ride to Jerusalem.

As they approached the outskirts of the holy city, one curious passenger asked, "Why did you agree to risk your career and change your route for us? Instead of a frown, the driver broke out in a wide smile. "To be frank with you," he said, "my route tonight was not to Rechovot after all - it was truly meant to be Jerusalem all along!"

The passenger's jaw dropped in astonishment. "So many people had called that the bus company dispatched a bus to come get them. The problem was that no driver was willing to take the route. We all knew how irate and upset the large group on Kahaneman was going to be at 1:30 am, and how they would likely take their angst and indignation out on the driver.

Finally, I agreed to take the route, but I made an usual request of my superiors. I proposed - and received approval - to allow me to change the display to Rechovot and pretend that I was not meant to pick them up. But when I will agree to take them all, instead of complaints, they will be thrilled and show their appreciation. Instead of viewing my late arrival with contempt and exasperation, they will view it as a huge favour. I am happy to say, it worked!"

We see from here, a new lens from which to view the way we appreciate all that is done for us. Hashem provides us with all that we need, and He maintains us on this world He created, with no benefit to Him. And yet, what do we do? We complain about this and that - and lose sight of the big picture. "Kol Mah D'avid Rachmana L'tav Avid" - all that Hashem does is for our good, and even if it takes an Israeli bus driver tricking us into seeing that it's all worth it in the end.

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

The Torah discusses the wanderings of the Jewish people in the desert - and it was quite an adventure! They were led by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire by night. They never knew how long they were to remain in one place. When the clouds of glory would begin to move, the Nation would immediately "break camp" and begin to move. When the clouds stopped, the people would do so as well. This happened a total of 42 times. Why did they need to change locations so often?

R' Yeshaya Ehrenfeld zt"l (Shevet Sofer) explains that as long as the Jewish people were following the ratzon Hashem, they were allowed to remain settled in their place with the Mishkan in their midst. But as soon as they sinned, the land itself spit them out, because the Shechina that was in their midst could not tolerate being encamped with impurity. Thus, when the clouds of glory would rise, it was a sign that the Nation sinned and needed to move to a different location.

This idea seems to be describing the history of our people. Whenever we settled in and became too comfortable in our host country, we were "spit out." The expulsion from Spain and the Holocaust in Europe to name just two, were examples of our people becoming too settled in foreign lands, being too assimilated with the cultures and societal ills of those places.

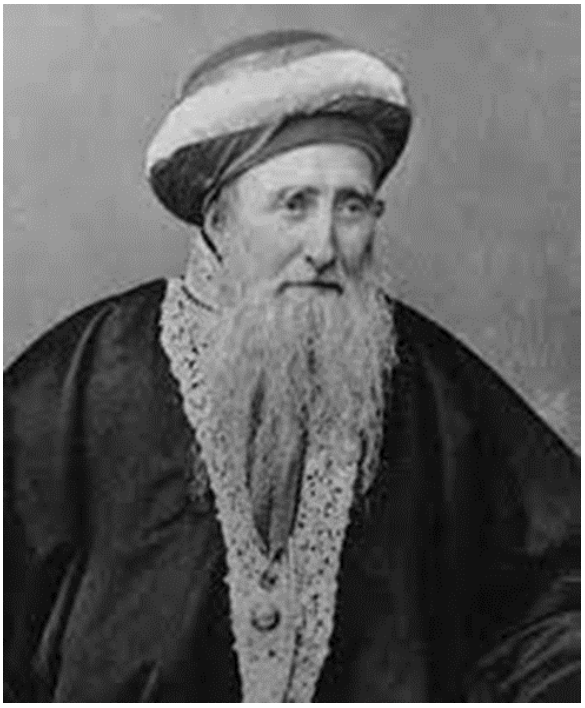
R' Avigdor Miller zt"l warned the people of his time (that would be us): "Be very careful not to become too comfortable in America. Don't mimic their goyish ways, lest we get spit out from this land." His warning is based on the history of our people. Am Yisroel is a holy Nation and we must hold onto our kedusha no matter where we are. If you live in America, make sure that you remain a Jew who happens to live in America - not an American who happens to be Jewish!

Torah Gems

וְהֵנִיף אַהֲרֹן אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי ה' מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת ה'

When Shevet Levi was elevated above the rest of Bnei Yisroel, the entire Shevet - twenty-two thousand strong - were gathered together and Aharon Hakohen "waved them before Hashem."

Rabbeinu Bechaye interprets this in its literal sense: Aharon Hakohen lifted up every single member of Shevet Levi - all 22,000 people - in the course of one day, and "waved" each and every one of them. It was no doubt an incredible display of the strength of Aharon Hakohen. But practically speaking, how is it possible for one man - over eighty years old at the time - to accomplish such an amazing feat by himself?



The great Sephardic Gaon, **R' Chaim Falagi ZT"L**, was renowned as one of the most prolific writers in Jewish history. In the course of his lifetime, R' Chaim published 72 seforim on all areas of learning, ranging from Pilpul to Halachah. On top of this, he authored an additional 54 works which were lost in a terrible fire in his hometown of Izmir. Many people speculated on the ability of one man to write so many seforim and a rumour spread to the extent that R' Chaim employed certain **שמות** - holy Names of Hashem, which allowed his thoughts to miraculously be penned on paper and ready for print.

When his son, **R' Avrohom Falagi ZT"L** heard the rumours, he dismissed them out of hand. "It is true that my father probably was familiar with these special 'Names.' Yet it was his incredible resolve and will to accomplish this feat, that allowed him to do so. There was no miracle; his **כח הרצון** - power of will, was even stronger than than

the **כח** of a miracle!" Through sheer determination and iron-clad will, Aharon Hakohen lifted up and waved 22,000 Leviim.

R' Menachem Mendel Morgenstern zt"l (Kotzker Rebbe) would say: מְקִבְרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה נָסְעוּ הָעָם חֲצֵרוֹת 11:35



Many chassidim think they can do all sorts of sin and misdeed, and then come to me and I will wipe their slate clean. No! First clean out your own waste receptacles and then come to see me! We see this from the posuk: **מְקִבְרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה** - First go ahead and bury (**קבר**) all your actions borne from desire (**תאוה**) and once you've done that then, **נָסְעוּ הָעָם חֲצֵרוֹת** - you can travel to my courtyard (**חצר**) and I will teach you to grow to greater heights!"

Someone compared friendship to a pot of cholent. Various ingredients are cooked together, and each ingredient picks up the taste of the others. If each ingredient were cooked separately, it wouldn't have that effect.

The same is with friends. Each one picks up on the qualities of the other. But if each person remains alone, it doesn't have this effect.

R' Meir Yechiel M'Ostrovtza zt"l (Yagdil Torah) would say: ויצעק משה אל ה' לאמר קל נא רפא נא לה -



When a person is sick, why do we daven on his or her behalf by mentioning his/her name and the name of his/her mother? After all, even the Gemara (**ברכות לד.**) seems to learn out that when one prays for a sick person, he need not even mention his name, as we see that Moshe Rabbeinu prayed on behalf of his sister Miriam, without ever saying her name!

The answer is that Moshe did indeed say her name! He screamed out to Hashem, **רפא נא** - 'Please heal (her).' The gematria of these two words is 332, which is equal to **מרים יוכבד**. Thus, we see that indeed Moshe prayed and used Miriam's name, as well as the name of their mother Yocheved!"

Rabbi YY Jacobson

A young man went over to someone at a wedding and said, "do you remember me?" He replied," No, I don't remember you, who are you?" He introduces himself. He said, "Ah! You were my student in third grade. Yeh, I haven't seen you in such a long time. How are you doing, how is life treating you?"

The young man says, "I am a teacher just like you were." The older man says, "what inspired you to become a teacher?" He replied, "**you** inspired me to become a teacher." The older man said, "how did I inspire you to become a teacher?" He said, "I saw what an impact that you had on me, that I realised that I could also have an impact on other children. So, I started to go into education."

"What type of impact did I have on you?" "I will remind you, but I'm sure that you remember the story."



One day, one of my friends received from his parents a beautiful new watch. I always dreamed of owning such a watch but couldn't afford one. So, I decided to steal his watch. He once put it in his pocket, so I stole it. He came into class and realised that someone had taken his watch. He came complaining to the teacher. So you made an announcement. "whoever has stolen this boy's watch should please return it straight away." I was too embarrassed, so I didn't return it. So, you locked the door, and you said, "I am going to have to line everybody up and empty your pockets in order to get the watch back." And that's what you did.

I thought to myself, that this is going to be the most shameful moment of my life.

You said," all boys line up against the wall, but I want everybody to have their eyes closed."

You went from pocket to pocket, until you came to mine, where you found the watch and took it out. You continued going through all the rest of the boys' pockets, all the time with their eyes closed. You then said that everybody can now open their eyes. You gave the watch back to its owner, and you never said a word to me throughout the entire year. You never mentioned this episode, not to me, the headmaster or my parents.

When I thought to myself, of how you saved my dignity that day, instead of being stereotyped as a *ganev* – a thief, as a *shakran* – a liar, as a *no-goodnik*, you really saved my soul and my dignity.

It happened, it's over, I understood the message. When I look back to that time and episode, I thought, wow! This is what a real teacher is. This is what a real educator is. This is what I want to do with my life. And therefore, I went into education.

The older man is listening to all this, and he says, "wow! That is amazing!" The young man says, "but Rebbi, don't you remember the story?" Like when you see me, and you hear my name? I am sure that you must remember me and what I did that day.

He said, "actually, no, I don't remember what you did that day".

He replied," why not, it is an unforgettable dramatic story?"

He said, I don't remember what you did, "because I also closed my eyes!"

R' Yitzchok (Itzele) Blazer zt"l of Peterburg (Pri Yitzchok) would say: וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם בֹּכֶה לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָיו 11:10-



Bnei Yisroel complained that the apportioning of the mann did not allow for individual family uniqueness. Each one felt his family pedigree or personal wealth rendered him deserving of a greater portion than his neighbour. The people could not tolerate the mann's lack of distinction between families of wealth, nobility and importance. Such an egotistical attitude reached the heights of ingratitude and threatened Moshe's tolerance level."

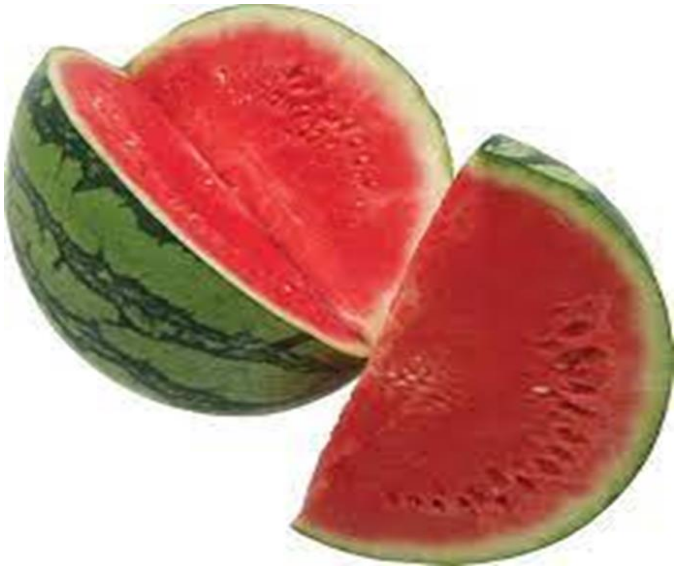
TORAH TAVLIN

STORIES AND SAYINGS, WIT AND WISDOM FROM OUR TORAH LEADERS

זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם אֵת הַקִּשֻּׁאִים וְאֵת הָאֲבַטִּחִים וְאֶת־הֶחָצִיר וְאֶת־הַבְּצָלִים וְאֶת־הַשּׁוּמִים
11:5

In Sefer Tzror Hamor, he relates the following story:

Rabbeinu Meshulam zt"l was the personal physician to an Arabian king. One day, the king told him, "You Jews are such ingrates! After G-d provided the Jews with Mann from Heaven, they still complained about not having 'cucumbers and watermelons.' Is that any way to show gratitude?"



Rabbeinu Meshulam told the king that he would give him an answer the next day. Meanwhile, he went to the king's butler and directed him to leave garlic off the king's table when he serves him his formal meal the next day. The butler assumed it was for medical reasons and did as he was told.

The next day, the king was irate when he noticed that there was no garlic on the table.



He accosted the butler, but the man said that he was just following the physician's orders. Rabbeinu Meshulam was called to the king's table and an explanation was demanded. "How can you direct the butler to leave my most favourite garlic off my table?" "Listen to yourself," replied Rabbeinu Meshulam. "You get angry when you are missing your favourite spice one time. Meanwhile, in

the desert, the Jews ate Mann for forty years straight, with no spice to give it flavour. Can you blame them for complaining?" The king smiled and admitted defeat.

The Imrei Emes of Ger says that the cause of the sin of the complainers was that they became depressed due to the monotony of the desert, and this caused them to desire things they didn't have like fish, cucumbers, watermelons etc. This scourge of depression is what drags a Jew down from his proper service of Hashem. Every person has dips and valleys in his life, but he must strengthen himself to serve Hashem with joy and simcha. A Jew must always see the good in every situation and this will lead him away from depression.



Chacham Rabbi Eliyahu Yaloz zt"l (Patach Eliyahu) would say: וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה ה' וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ: 10:35- This posuk contains twelve words corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel.

This teaches us that when the entire nation, including all its tribes, factions and groups, unite together as one person with one heart, the Shechinah rests upon them, and their enemies flee from before them. When, however, the nation is plagued by divisiveness, then victory becomes distant, Heaven forbid."

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

The Parsha describes the two very distinct times when trumpets are blown in the Jewish camp. One is during wartime to warn the nation when the enemy is attacking. It is a cry of fear, a warning of impending danger. The second is on Rosh Chodesh, holidays and days of joy. It is a cry of joy, an expression of happiness and appreciation.



R' Yissachar Frand shlit'a points out the obvious inconsistency here: What exactly are these trumpets? Are they instruments of fear or tools of cheer? He explains based on the **Rambam** that when a trumpet is sounded in a city, it is meant to wake people up! It is meant to make people realize that everything comes from Hashem for a reason!

We need to introspect and understand that difficulties are often a way of shaking us up to return to Hashem. And yet, when things are going well and a person is feeling on top of the world, he also needs a "wake-up call" - to call out to Hashem and thank Him with joy! What often happens, though, is that when things are difficult in a person's life, he tends to blame the problem on Hashem! He wonders to himself, "How can this happen to me? What did I do to deserve this?" Conversely, when things are going well, one tends to take credit for his success - "It is my brains and my power that has made me what I am today!"

Thus, the messages of the trumpet are not in contradiction at all! It is teaching us that in ALL situations in life - both good or bad - we

must connect and call out to Hashem. As we say in Tehillim: **צרה ויגון אמצא ובשם ה' אקרא** - When I find myself in times of distress and worry, what do I do? I sound MY trumpet! I call out to Hashem! **כוס ישועות אשא ובשם ה' אקרא** - And when I lift up my cup of salvation, what do I do? I sound MY trumpet, and I call out to Hashem! In every situation, do not forget: "Sound YOUR trumpet and call out to Hashem!"

Time Is Life

On the day following his Bar Mitzvah, **R' Binyamin Kamenetsky Shlit'a**, son of the Torah Vodaath Rosh Yeshivah, **R' Yaakov Kamenetsky ZT"L**, was summoned into his father's office. When he walked in, he raised his inquiring eyes towards his father, but R' Yaakov said nothing. Instead, he stood up on a bench and took down a small, carefully wrapped package from the bookcase. "My father took the package in his hand and said to me, 'Now that you're an adult, I want to give you the most precious piece of merchandise in the world. But first, I want you to promise me that you will protect it with your own life!'" R' Yaakov untied the strings that bound the package, removed the wrapping, and handed his son a watch as a gift!



The young boy was excited with his new prize but R' Yaakov remained serious when he said, "My son, know that **R' Yisroel Salanter ZT"L** used to say that time is life. If we lose time, we lose life!"

R' Binyamin concluded, "These words of my father engraved themselves deeply in me, and the lesson that I learned on that day lasted much longer than my watch!"

The Manchester Rosh Yeshivah, R' Yehudah Zev Segal ZT"L (Yirah V'Daas) would say:



"Aharon HaKohen ascended steps in order to kindle the Menorah which symbolizes the spiritual elevation in the World to Come that awaits those who study Torah. Torah must be studied amid the tranquillity born from being satisfied with one's lot, and bitachon, trust, that Hashem will continue to provide for one's needs in the future.

The blend of these qualities with the diligent study of Torah will ensure a life of joy in This World and the Next."

R' Yechiel Michel of Drohovitch ZT"L (Zhlotchover Maggid)

"It is my custom to begin davening very late in the day. I learned this from Shevet Dan. The Torah tells us that when the Jewish people travelled through the desert, Shevet Dan went last, behind all the others. Their job was to pick up and return all the lost items that their brethren had dropped along the way.

On the spiritual level, their function was to elevate all the prayers that had been uttered without the proper intentions. I am just following their example."

"Emunah is not knowing that Hashem exists, but living as if nothing else exists." ~ Chazon Ish.

Feel The Pain

Aharon Hakohen was well known for his outstanding ability to make peace between people. He was involved in so many sholom bayis cases in the desert that when he died, 80,000 boys named Aharon walked in the funeral procession! These were all babies born after Aharon had brought peace back into the lives of their parents and in a show of appreciation, they were all named Aharon! So Aharon must have been very busy in the desert helping so many people.



The question is: HOW? How did he do it? What was the secret to his success? How you ask? Well, the answer is simple: Aharon felt their pain! The only way one can truly help someone is if he truly feels the other person's pain and anguish!

R' Wolbe ZT"L explains that when a person has a misfortune in his life, he really has two **צרות**. One is the problem itself and the other is the loneliness and helplessness he feels because of his situation. He looks around and sees other people smiling, laughing, enjoying life - and he feels so alone, so different and so left out.

Says R' Wolbe, if someone would take the time to listen to the person pour out his heart and try to empathize and feel the pain of his fellow Yid, he will have alleviated the more severe aspect of the problem, and he gives strength so that the difficulty itself becomes manageable!

Chazal tell us that Aharon Hakohen merited to wear the **חושן** - "Breastplate" over his heart, which allowed him to receive direct

responses from Hashem, because he truly felt the heart of the people. Perhaps, he was chosen to light the lamps in the Bais Hamikdash because he brought so much light, peace and harmony into the lives of his fellow Jews.

8:3 וַיַּ֣עַשׂ כֵּ֔ן אַהֲרֹ֖ן אֶל־מוּל֙ פְּנֵ֣י הַמְּנוֹרָ֔ה הֶעֱלָ֖ה נֵרֹתֶ֑יהָ כַּאֲשֶׁ֛ר צִוָּ֥ה ה' אֶת־מֹשֶׁ֖ה

Rashi quotes the words of the Sifri: "And Aharon did it so; To tell us the praise of Aharon in that he did not deviate." Many Meforshim comment on this quality of Aharon Hakohen - that he listened to the Word of Hashem and did not so much as change an iota - and why the Torah found it necessary to even mention something as basic as this.

The holy Rebbe, **R' Yerachmiel Yisroel of Alexander ZT"L**, offers a novel approach: When a tzaddik does a mitzvah, often his fervour and enthusiasm overcome him and he cannot proceed out of sheer zest and excitement. Yet the Torah tells us that Aharon Hakohen was able to control his emotions, to subjugate his will to the command of Hashem and ensure that the mitzvah is done accordingly.

"Had the Ribono Shel Olam given the mitzvah of lighting the Menorah in the Mishkan to **R' Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev ZT"L**," joked the Rebbe of Alexander, "He would undoubtedly have spilled the oil and probably broken the Menorah out of sheer zealousness to perform the mitzvah!"

Control and self-discipline in the performance of mitzvos was praiseworthy of Aharon Hakohen.

One night, a group of bochurim were studying diligently in the Radin Yeshivah. The sweet sound of their voices, rising and falling to the familiar Talmudic chant, was music to the ears and a joy to behold. The hour was late, past midnight, when suddenly the door to the Beis Medrash opened and in walked the holy **Chofetz Chaim, R' Yisroel**

Meir Hakohen Kagan ZT"L, accompanied by his son-in-law, R' Tzvi. Of course, the sight of the great tzaddik spurred the young men to study even more diligently and it took a few minutes for all those present to realize that the Chofetz Chaim had raised his arms in a motion indicating that he would like to say a few words.

Suddenly, the Beis Medrash became as silent as an abandoned ship and the bochurim craned to hear the words of the holy man, who had come to speak to them and impart from his wisdom at this late hour of the night.

"My dear students," began the Chofetz Chaim in a soft voice, "Please go to sleep! It's past midnight. One is not permitted to over-exert one's body to the point that it will affect his learning for the next day. Please go to your rooms and go to sleep - this is what the Torah wants of you."

These were the all-important words of the great tzaddik who had come to speak to the bochurim after midnight. R' Yisroel Meir, as well as many Gedolei Yisroel, believed that everything has its limit, even Torah study, and one is not permitted to overstep his physical bounds. A Masmid is one who utilizes his time wisely and never wastes a minute; not one who pushes himself until he causes a detriment to his health. For some reason, however, a strange thing occurred.

The short speech of the Chofetz Chaim had the opposite effect on the bochurim. Rather than get up and leave the Beis Medrash, they threw themselves into their learning with even greater gusto and their voices rose to a new crescendo, louder than before.

It would have appeared as if the tzaddik had just delivered an inspiring message exhorting them to study with even greater enthusiasm, as opposed to a short heartfelt plea urging them to go to sleep! Such was the power of influence that the great Chofetz Chaim had on people, and especially on young innocent bochurim who misunderstood the intentions of the great man.

But the Chofetz Chaim would not let it be. After a moment, he



realized that the bochurim were not leaving like he had asked and were in fact learning with extra effort. Without another word, he climbed up on a bench and began extinguishing the kerosene lamp that was burning on the wall. One by one, he climbed up - no small feat for a man already in his seventies - and put out each lamp until the entire Beis Medrash was dark.

Then, in a voice filled with love and concern, he called out, "My dear children, please go to sleep." Aharon Hakohen was praised for kindling the lights in the Mishkan with self-control and discipline. The Chofetz Chaim employed the same discipline to extinguish the lights, all for the benefit of his students.

Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and Reflections - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

עַל־פִּי ה׳ יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־פִּי ה׳ יַחֲנוּ - When Bnei Yisroel travelled in the desert, the Torah emphasized that they travelled based on the direction from Hashem (9:18).

Rav Shamshon Refoel Hirsch, zt"l, observes that this teaches us a lesson for our times. We should develop a confidence and the ability to rely on Hashem. We should be able to trust Hashem even when we do not understand what we are experiencing.

Life



There were once two novice builders who were given the tools and material to build a house. The first one had a plan. Before he even lifted his hammer, he sought out an expert to teach him the necessary skills. Only upon becoming adequately trained did he begin to build.

The other decided that he would skip the tutorials and figure things out for himself. It would simply be a matter of trial and error before he would have it down just right. He cut a plank too long. No problem; just saw it off a bit. A masonry block turned out misshapen. A little extra chiselling should take care of it. Still no good? Chisel some more. The block is already beyond salvage? No problem; take another piece of stone and start all over again.

Eventually, he had picked up the skills he needed to know and become competent, just like the first fellow. Through trial and error, he had taught himself well. The problem was that by the time he was ready, he had run out of material with which to build the house!

Moshe was unable to figure out how to make the Menorah and Hashem personally showed him with His finger to avoid any possible "mistakes" during the process.

So is it with our own lives, says **R' Nison Alpert ZT"L**. The time is short, and the work is great. We don't have the luxury of checking out one lifestyle after another until we find something that looks like "a good fit," because rather than running out of building material, like the second fellow, we may discover that we have run out of something far more precious and irreplaceable: ***Life.***

וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל־ה׳ לֵאמֹר אֵ־ל נָ֣א רְפָ֣א נָ֣א לָ֔הּ

Miriam, the sister of Moshe Rabbeinu, spoke negatively about her holy brother and Hashem punished her appropriately. Aharon Hakohen came running to Moshe begging him to intercede on behalf of their sister, so she should be healed from her terrible infliction.

Rashi writes that in fact Moshe Rabbeinu did pray on her behalf, but not in a lengthy manner as one might have thought. A short prayer was all he uttered, and Hashem agreed to commute the punishment for one week.

We see from here that when one comes to a tzaddik to ask him to pray on behalf of a sick person, he must trust in the power of the tzaddik's blessings and prayers, even if they appear to be less than one might have expected.



An amazing story took place not long ago in Eretz Yisroel. A forlorn man came to the home of the tzaddik, **R' Chaim Kanievski**, with his young son in tow. The man held his son in his arms until he entered R' Chaim's private room. There, he presented his young child and asked R' Chaim to cut some of the boy's hair so he can make an "upsheren" for his son.

This was not uncommon, but when R' Chaim looked at the child he thought that the child appeared rather young. He asked the father how old his son was. The man replied that he is two years and one month old. Surprised, R' Chaim told him to come back next year, when the child turns three, which is the normal time when the minhag is to cut the hair. The father sighed heavily and replied that

his son was just diagnosed with a brain tumour (rachmona litzlon), and the doctors told him that in their estimation, the child has less than a year to live. He won't reach the age of three, sobbed the father, could R' Chaim at least give him a beracha to live out the year without much pain and suffering?

A moment of stunned silence. Then, R' Chaim motioned to the father and took the boy by the hand into one of the adjoining rooms in his apartment. A few short minutes later, they both emerged from the room. "Please come back next year and we will do the upsheren," said R' Chaim and indicated that they were finished.

The father stood there for a moment uncomprehending. That was it? No blessing? No words of encouragement? The man did not understand what had transpired and took his son home. The next day, at the scheduled doctor's visit to re-scan the child's brain, a strange thing occurred: the doctor looked at the X-ray but couldn't find any growth. He told the man to bring his child back the next day, as the machine must be broken.

The next day, however, nothing came up on the scanner again, to the surprise of the staff, since earlier that morning it had worked fine. They consulted with the other specialists, and concluded that miraculously, the tumour was completely gone. The ecstatic father immediately realized that this must have to do with R' Chaim and went right back to ask the tzaddik what occurred the day before.

R' Chaim explained that every year, he completes the entire Torah and makes a siyum on it. At the siyum, which he celebrates with his family, he customarily leads the bentching on a cup of wine. This year, he made the siyum just yesterday and when he took the little boy into his private room, he gave him to drink from that cup of wine - wine which was blessed and drunk over **כל התורה כולה** - The entire Torah. It was this beracha that cured the young child.

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

ויעש כן אהרן.. כו:ג פירוש – נזדרז אהרן לבדו במצוה זו – כלי יקר



One never knows how much time he has been allotted in this world. There is so much to do, so much to accomplish. We all know this, and yet we tend to waste a great deal of time. We allow precious seconds, minutes and hours to drift away never to be recovered. When an opportunity to donate our time or money arises, we often become slow and reluctant to react. We busy ourselves with foolish preoccupations, while the important things go unattended.

A man was once rewarded for a good deed with the chance to spend a day in the king's treasure vault and take as much as possible in the time allotted. The man purchased large sacks and journeyed for several days to reach the palace. Once inside the treasury, however, he felt exhausted from his trip, and since he had so much time, no harm would result from taking a short nap. - Unfortunately, the poor man slept through almost all his given time. When there were but ten minutes left, he awoke with a start, and quickly went to work filling up a sack. When the king's soldiers came to escort him from the room, he had barely filled one sack. Bitterly disappointed, he left the palace having thrown away the opportunity of a "lifetime."

Why do we sleep through life, every second of which presents us with another chance to earn **עולם הבא**? Wake up! Fill up your sacks with as many mitzvos as you can! Jump out of bed in the morning in anticipation of the day ahead! Open your eyes to the needs of others and rush to do for them! Live life with enthusiasm and zeal! The day is short. Life passes by too fast. So, act quickly, before the chance disappears, and the last grain of sand settles silently on the bottom of the hourglass!

Torah Gems

וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מוּל ׀ פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה הֶעֱלָה נֵרֹתֶיהָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה׳ אֶת מֹשֶׁה

On these words, the question arises: Why does Torah find it so important to emphasize the fact that Aharon Hakohen did as Hashem commanded when lighting the menorah? Would it occur to anyone that such a solid tzaddik as Aharon Hakohen would actually change any of the mitzvos that Hashem gave to Bnei Yisroel, or fulfil them in an incorrect manner?

Answers the **Sfas Emes ZT"L**, that ordinarily, when a person does a special mitzvah for the first time, he is very enthusiastic and meticulous in his performance. However, as he constantly repeats the mitzvah, again and again, his enthusiasm tends to wane somewhat and his performance becomes perfunctory.



For this reason the Torah praises Aharon Hakohen. For the entire duration, the thirty-nine years that he performed the act of lighting the menorah each and every evening in the mishkan, not once did he ever change the manner in which he set about to accomplish the mitzvah, even one iota. Rather, he performed it in exactly the same enthusiastic manner that he had when he did it for the very first time.

This truly marked the greatness of Aharon Hakohen, for his holy service never became matter of fact or, G-d forbid, mundane. It was always accomplished with an accompaniment of Kedushah- holiness, and inner zeal, with the intensity of a first-time mitzvah.

וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה ה' וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ



Every Shabbos, a group of worshipers from one shul, would finish davening Shacharis and then walk outside for a "recess" during Krias HaTorah. Only actual davening was important, they felt, and "laining" was not for them. The Rov was greatly distressed by his "recess crew" and spoke to each one in private to give up his nasty habit. But to no avail. Kiddush and a good "shmooze" was obviously much more important than following the parsha being read.

Finally, the rabbi had had enough. The disrespect to the Torah had gone too far and he was prepared to take extreme measures. One Shabbos, before Krias HaTorah, he stood up and announced from the pulpit, "I must publicly apologize to those people whom I had criticized for leaving by the Torah reading. You see, when we take the Torah out of the Aron Hakodesh, we recite the words, **קוּמָה ה' וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ** 'Arise Hashem, and let Your foes scatter. Let Your enemies flee before You,' and these people are simply doing precisely what they are told. May we all learn from their sense of obedience!

"The Aron in which the Torah is contained is the symbol of Divine Protection for Klal Yisroel. When the Jews travelled in the desert, their enemies would scatter in fright from the sight of the Aron. Should we be so foolish to act like our enemies by running away from the Torah, thereby disrespecting it and the holy words within it?

"The only way to truly be successful in raising children is by constantly praying for them." ~ The Steipler Gaon.

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: 12:3



The great Tzaddik, **R'Leib Premishlaner ZT"L** was once travelling to the town of Riminov to visit his Rebbe. As the wagon approached the outskirts of Riminov, R' Leib asked the coachman to stop the wagon. Then, he asked if it would be alright if they switched places; R' Leib would take over the reins in the guise of the coachman, while he would sit inside the wagon and pretend to be a passenger.

The wagon-driver agreed, and they even exchanged clothing as well. Then they continued into Riminov, where the wagon was soon surrounded by hundreds of adulating chassidim who came out to honour the great tzaddik of Premishlan and give him "Sholom." All except one, **R' Naftoli Hurvitz ZT"L**, who walked straight up to the wagon-driver and extended his hand. "Sholom Aleichem, Rebbi Mori," he intoned.

"How did you know?" asked R' Leib amazed. The future Rebbe of Ropshitz smiled. "I took one look at the humility and ענוה of the 'coachman' and I instantly recognized who was who!"

Moshe Rabbeinu was given the honourable title of "most humble of men" by Hakodosh Boruch Hu, Himself, who is "most humble in the entire world." No matter how righteous a person may be and how many mitzvos he performs, without the attribute of humility, he is no better than a lowly wagon-driver!

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה 12:3



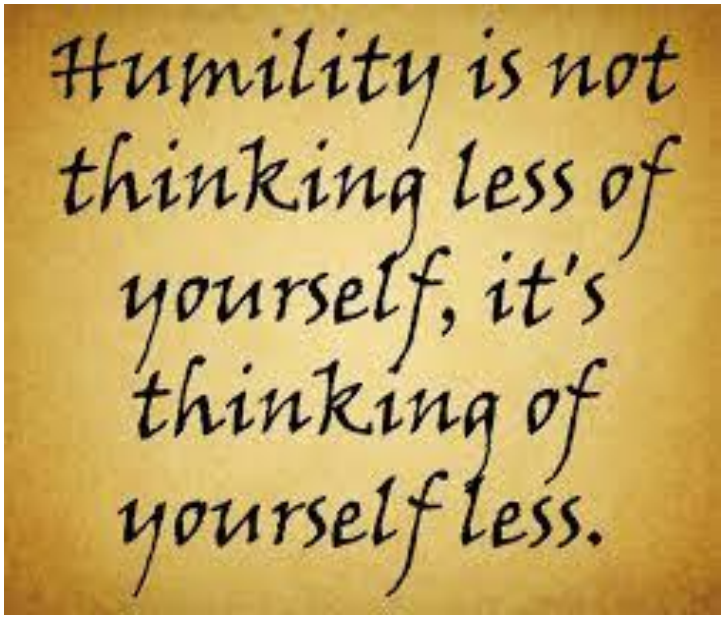
Humility is a most important character trait. With all of Moshe Rabbeinu's greatness, the only feature the Torah lists in praise of him is that he was "the most humble from any man on the face of the earth".

Given its enormous importance, why does the Torah not include humility among the mitzvos? Explains **R' Menachem Mendel of Kotzk ZT"L**, a mitzvah should be done with a true awareness of the mitzvah that he is doing and with the proper concentration and intent. This is impossible with humility, because if a person thinks of himself as having achieved humility, he is, in effect, vain. Thus, for one to be fully aware of performing this mitzvah, by thinking to oneself, "In spite of how wise and virtuous I am, I am going to remain humble" - this is pure vanity. A person who is offended because he is not accorded what he feels is his due, is obviously an arrogant person. For one to say, "It doesn't bother me that I was not given the honour due to me," is not only being vain, but also being self-deceptive.

Said the Kotzker, if humility were a mitzvah, pious people might first go to the mikvah, put on their finest clothes, and say, "I am hereby about to fulfil the mitzvah of being humble!"

To pull a friend out of the mire, don't hesitate to get dirty. – The Baal Shem Tov

The Torah's Definition of HUMILITY by Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher



What is the definition of humility? The English Dictionary defines humility as, having a low self-esteem of one's own importance. But **Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky** says to understand the Torah's definition of humility, we have to look at Moshe Rabbenu, who is described in Bamidbar 12, as exceedingly humble, more than any other person.

Yet in Parshat Korach, Moshe's leadership is challenged by his very wise and highly respected cousin Korach. Moshe does not allow Korach to take his leadership from him but stands up to Korach and declares that he (Moshe) is the appointed leader of the Jewish People, and he will not step down from his position.

Now, if we would apply the English definition of humility to Korach's challenge to Moshe, it would appear that Moshe was not the most humble man on earth. The fact is that Moshe not only considered himself important enough to be recognized as the leader of his people, but also aggressively defended his right to that leadership.

Obviously, the Torah's understanding of humility differs from that of the English definition. According to the Torah, true humility does not require a rejection of one's unique qualities and talents. Dismissing the importance of your abilities is a silly and false humility, because it is based on a false self-perception. True humility recognizes reality. A person who is humble knows his strengths but recognizes that all his talents are given to him by G-D and are not a result of his own efforts.

When a person experiences this true humility, it does not weaken his self-esteem, nor does it cause him to reject his abilities and responsibilities, rather, it drives him to utilize the skills that G-D granted to him. A humble person feels lowly in relation to others by recognizing that if G-D had given his talents to someone else, that person could have utilized these gifts better than he. However, the recognition that he has these talents and abilities remains.

If Moshe had backed down and relinquished his position as leader of the Jewish People, it would NOT have been a humble act. In the incident with Korach, Moshe's defence of his leadership was indeed the most humble approach he could have taken. G-D granted Moshe the position of and unique qualities for leadership. This position did not make Moshe feel that he was better than any other member of the Jewish People, but rather that he had the responsibility of leadership, because G-D gave it to him.

No other Prophet achieved the level of G-dly revelation that Moshe did. This went together with Moshe being the most humble man to ever live, for humility allows G-D to be present.

When we consider our talents and skills to be our own creation, and our own accomplishments, then we leave little space for G-D in our lives. We must recognize that we are all custom designed and uniquely special, because G-D Personally picked us to exist in His world and granted us our own individual package of talents and abilities. Only then are we able to live a truly happy and G-dly existence.

"Spiritual growth is built quietly and slowly. The greatest changes occur through small, repeated efforts that are barely noticed. One who is patient with this process will eventually see lasting transformation." ~ Rav Shlomo Wolbe (Alei Shur).

Travelling with Hashem

Bamidbar talks a lot about the travels of Israel in the desert. The verse tells us that theses travels were עַל־פִּי ה' יַחֲנוּ וְעַל־פִּי ה' יִסָּעוּ...According to the word of the Almighty they shall travel" (9:23).



When a person is in his usual place it may be easy for him to keep mitzvot - he has his regular minyan, regular daf yomi shiur, and regular sick people that he visits. But **the Chafetz Chayim** on this verse points out that when a person travels there may be tests that arise on the way. In a strange place it may require extra effort on his part to do the mitzvot. He might have to go out of his way to find a place to daven, to buy kosher food, or find a mikveh. Sometimes when people travel, they get into a vacation mode and might even be lax in their mitzva observance.

The Chafetz Chayim teaches us that the verse from our portion tells us that no matter where we are at home or on the road, everything a person does should be what G-d would want us to do. Even on vacation we should go out of our way to do mitzvot and as the guard at the airport pointed out, we should go out of our way to help others and be a good example. Especially on the road is the time when we can do a Kiddush Hashem by our exemplary behaviour.

A story is told about **Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky** who was going on a bus trip. He took his place at the end of the line. A student of his who was ahead of him in the line told him that he should come stand in front of him in the line. Rav Yaakov desisted, saying it is not

allowed. He said it was like stealing from all the other people behind him. He would be taking away their time and their choice of seat.

Even on the road we must have Hashem with us.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings - Emunah Resolves Problems



A mashal is told about someone who was looking through a keyhole. He can't see everything that is in the room, his range of view is limited, but he sees a pen swiftly writing on paper. The man watched in amazement; it appeared to him that the pen was writing on its own because he couldn't see that a person was holding the pen. When the door opened and his range of vision broadened, he saw that a man was writing with the pen.

The nimshal is, we look at life and we try to understand what's happening, but our range of vision is very limited. One thinks, He did that to me; why did he hurt me? etc. because he doesn't see that everything is being orchestrated from Above. When one attains the true vision, all his problems will disappear, for two reasons. First, when one knows that it is from Hashem, he also knows that everything is for the good. Secondly, knowing that everything is from Hashem abolishes the hardships and sweetens the dinim (castigations).

This is one of the fabulous and wondrous ways that Hashem leads the world; when one knows that Hashem's hand is in charge and that everything is from Him and for the good, this realization is mesugal to remove all hardships, and to make life good for him again.

The Ben Ish Chai said: **חוב** - [negative matters, problems] is gematriya 16, while **טוב** - [goodness] is gematriya 17. The difference is 1, because troubles disappear and even become good when one strengthens his emunah in the Hashem.

We can see this in the Yiddish language. When a person is going through hard times, chalilah, he will commonly shout, gevalt! And when good things happen, he says, gevaltig! The difference between the two words is **יג** at the end of the word. **יג** is gematriya 13, the same as **אחד** . Gevalt and strife become gevaltig and wonderful when one remembers the one Hashem.

Short Vort – Rabbi Moshe Kormornick - Where's the G-d of America?

וְהָאסַפְסֵף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יַאֲכִלֵנוּ בָּשָׂר: זָכַרְנוּ אֶת הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם

...The gatherers among them generated a craving, and the Children of Israel also wept again, and they said, "Who will feed us meat?" We remember the fish we ate in Egypt free of charge…(11:4-5)

These verses teach us that the Jewish People were not satisfied with the *mannah* they received; for even though it tasted of almost any flavour they could imagine, they nevertheless wanted real fish, even suggesting that they were better off in Egypt where it was sold to them for almost nothing.

This complaint is incredulous! Here, the Jewish People were being provided their needs yet they still complained that they would fare better elsewhere, relying on their own efforts as opposed to being sustained directly from Hashem.

The understanding that Hashem provides for all our needs wherever we are is a fundamental precept of *emunah, faith in Hashem*. The *Chovos Halevovos* says, "*Someone who trusts in anything except for Hashem (either someone else, or his own wealth, or his wisdom and strength etc.) Hashem removes his providence from him and leaves him with that which he trusts.*

One person whose life was saved by placing his trust in Hashem once met **Rav Yaakov Galinsky**. The man was from Vienna and was having difficulty in finding a livelihood; so, like many other Jews, he bought a ticket to travel to America to gain his fortune. Although he was not a *chassid*, his friends convinced him to receive a parting blessing from *Rebbe Yisroel M'Tshorkov*. After explaining why he was there, the Rebbe responded, "Aha! You're going to America. Allow me to give you a spiritual remedy for protection. I want to make you into a *shaliach mitzvah, one actively involved in a mitzvah (which offers protection from harm)*."



The man was delighted; he didn't even really expect a blessing, and now the Rebbe was giving him a *mitzvah* to perform on his behalf. "Please send regards, in my name," said the Rebbe, "to…. G-d in America." "But Rebbe," the man said in embarrassed astonishment, "isn't He the same G-d as the One here in Vienna?"

"Ah!" said the Rebbe, "if He's the same G-d, then why are you going all the way to America for a livelihood? He could give it to you just as easily right here!"

With that message, the man decided to forgo his travel fare, and remain in Vienna with a newfound level of trust in Hashem.

Not only did the man's finances begin to turn around for the better, but by staying in Vienna his life was saved, for the ticket that he had paid for was the Titanic (the ship termed at the time "The Unsinkable Ship") which sank on its maiden voyage, drowning most of the passengers, including almost all of the male immigrants travelling from Europe to America.

Parsha Points to Ponder Compiled by Ozer Alport



The Torah records (12:13) that Moshe prayed on behalf of his ill sister Miriam. Why do we pray for the healing of a sick person using his mother's name?

The **Maharshal** and **Chasam Sofer** suggest that we pray using the name of the sick person's mother because we are certain about the identity of the mother, while paternity may only be assumed based on probability. The **Ben Yehoyada** questions this reason, arguing that it is degrading to imply that the identity of a person's father is in doubt. However, this explanation is supported by the **Zohar HaKadosh**.

Alternatively, the **Ben Ish Chai** maintains that we use the mother's name because the sick person needs as many merits as possible, and the mother is less likely to have Heavenly accusations against her, as she is exempt from most positive time-bound mitzvos as well as from the mitzvah of Torah study.

Etz Chaim - Stories of Gedolim

The people were lined up, gripped with panic. The Nazis intentions were becoming clearer each day and the Yidden were trying to escape Europe. Many people were waiting, hoping to receive a precious visa. One person was extremely anxious to get to the front of the huge line and inadvertently bumped into the man in front of him. The man turned calmly to the nervous boy and offered him his spot; one step closer to the front. This was an incredible act of kindness, for the number of visas was limited and could easily run out. The boy was grateful to accept and happy that in the end both had received their visa.



Years passed. The boy came to America and became close to the famed Rosh Yeshiva, **Rav Aharon Kotler zt'l**. R' Aharon was the leader of American Jewry, and helped many during and after the war. The Yidden were crushed at his passing and many clamoured around his aron to be close to the gadol one last time.

The boy found himself pushing once again, and once again inadvertently pushed a person in front of him. Amazingly, the boy pushed the same person he had years ago while he waited for his visa. And, once again the man politely moved aside and gave the boy his spot next to his father's aron. For the polite man was none other than R' Aharon's son, **R' Shneur Kotler zt'l** who had risked receiving his own exit to freedom years ago and now surrendered his precious spot next to his father's aron so a talmid could be close to his Rebbe one last time.

Parsha Pages – Tosefes Beracha

11:5 זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם



The Ramban asks, how did the Jews eat fish in Egypt for free? And he answers that the Gemara (Sotah 11b) explains that every time the Jewish women went to draw water, HaShem caused them to draw into their buckets half water and half fish (in order to sustain themselves), and this was the concept that the Jews obtained the fish for "free" (without effort).

Rabbi Epstein explains this is why the verse uses the word **דגה** and not **דג** or not **דגים**.

These other words indicate normal or larger size of fish. The word **דגה** indicates smaller fish, which were small enough to be found in the water buckets of the Jewish women.

"When troubles come upon a person, he should not think that Hashem has abandoned him. On the contrary, he should strengthen his faith and say: 'This too is for my good, even if I do not understand it.' - For just as a father sometimes causes pain to heal his child, so too does Hashem guide a person through challenges to cleanse his soul and bring him closer." ~ Pele Yoetz – (Emunah).

You Had a Great Day by Rabbi David Ashear

The pursuit of a livelihood can cause a lot of worry and stress. Many people who are not earning what they thought, would become depressed. Their business occupies their minds day and night, and they can't enjoy the simple pleasures of life.

It is important for a person to never lose focus on the real purpose of life. We're here for a short amount of time on a mission to serve Hashem in the surroundings that He puts us in. If over the course of a day, a person prays, learns Torah, does good deeds and makes other people feel good, then he had a great day. We've no control over the amount of money we make.

The Pasuk says in Mishle: it is only the blessing of Hashem that determines whether a person will be rich or poor. Hashem, who knows what we need much better than we do, gives each person the exact amount of money that he needs to do his job here properly. Sometimes a person needs to serve Hashem under financial hardship. And for him, the doors of Parnasa are closed. He shouldn't blame himself for not achieving; he shouldn't get depressed for not having; he should focus on fulfilling his real purpose-following the Torah and Mitzvot with joy under the conditions he has been placed in.

Money is such a small part of life. It is needed to get us by, but there is a much greater purpose that we're here for. We need to trust Hashem that He knows how much money we need, and He will provide accordingly. It is so clear that Parnasa in determined only by Hashem. We see it with our own eyes. Two people selling the exact same products: One is making millions while the other is struggling. How could that be? Because [it is Hashem who makes rich]

There's an amazing phenomenon in the world: A sheep gives birth to just one or two offspring per year while a dog has about seven puppies per litter, and its gestation period is only two months. There are millions of sheep slaughtered every single year, while dogs are never slaughtered.



We would imagine that the number of dogs in the world would far surpass the number of sheep. Yet, there are over a billion sheep in the world and only close to fifty million dogs. How is it possible that sheep outnumber dogs by more than twenty to one? The sheep have a blessing while the dogs don't.

Hashem could give a person money so easily. The Targum says that even the idea of which business to go into comes from Hashem. There's a company called Airbnb that is worth over ten billion dollars. How did it start? There were three roommates who couldn't make their rental payments, so they decided to blow up three air beds in their living room and rent them out.

With a little advertising, they got three customers and their business started off like that. Success is determined by Hashem and failure is determined by Hashem. Somebody in Israel had an idea to purchase a certain type of Maror to sell before Pesach. He bought an enormous amount of it, but it turned out to be the biggest bust, and he lost a tremendous amount of money.

That idea was given to him by Hashem, because at this point in his life, it was determined by Hashem that he needs to live without that money. If he continues serving Hashem despite his difficult situation, he will be a huge success; he'll be fulfilling his real purpose.

I know someone who needs to borrow money to make his monthly rental payments. Recently, one of his customers made an order that will bring him over one million dollars profit. He didn't know how he

was going to pay for his basic expenses, and now, suddenly, he's a millionaire.

The amount of money we have is determined by Hashem. What's important in life is what we do with what we are given. Some have, and some don't. Some have today and they won't have tomorrow. And some don't have today and they'll have a lot tomorrow. What's important is putting our energy into what really matters, serving our Creator. And if we concentrate on that, we're a definite success.



Shabbos Candles

זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־ נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם (11:5) **Written by Oizer Alport**

On our verse, which relates that the complainers lamented their recollection of the fish they used to eat in Egypt, the **Medrash Pliah** cryptically remarks ***mi'kan she'madlikin neiros b'Shabbos*** – from our verse we may derive that one is obligated to light candles on Shabbos, a mitzvah which has no apparent connection to our verse whatsoever.

The Chida explains the Medrash Pliah by nothing that we must first understand what they were complaining about, as we are told that one was able to make the Mon taste like anything he so desired simply through his thoughts. If so, why were they complaining about the fish they used to eat in Egypt when they were perfectly capable of causing the Mon to take on that taste with no effort whatsoever?

Rather, the Gemora in Yoma (74b) states that although one was able to make the Mon taste like anything he desired, it nevertheless

retained the standard appearance of the Mon. Even though they were able to make the Mon taste like fish, they lacked the enjoyment and satiety which comes from seeing the food which they wished to taste.

The Gemora there even notes that a blind person won't enjoy or become as full from a meal as a person with normal vision who consumes the same food. Based on this complaint, the Medrash Pliah questioned how a person will be able to avoid the same dilemma on Shabbos, as he won't be able to enjoy and appreciate the Shabbos delicacies if he is forced to eat them in darkness, and it therefore concluded that from our verse we may derive that one is obligated to light candles on Shabbos!

Parshah Thoughts By: Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn



Throughout our travels through the Midbar, we made multiple stops for different amounts of time (ex. 10:33, 12:16). What was the purpose of these stops?

Rav Eli Mansour shared an idea based on the **Baal Shem Tov**, that these travels reflect the experiences each of us has in our lives. Throughout life we end up in situations which we could never have anticipated, and this is because we have a mission to impact the world positively. Wherever we end up in our lives, it is always for a reason. When we face challenging situations, we must view them as opportunities to benefit and enhance the world, because this is just another one of our stops on our personal journey.

Essential Rabbi Nachman - Shabbos Joy

Be very careful to feel only joy on Shabbos. There is nothing to compare with the greatness and holiness of Shabbos. The key to honouring the Shabbos is joy. Don't show even a hint of depression or anxiety on Shabbos.

Treat yourself to all kinds of delights in the food you eat, what you drink, your clothes... whatever you can afford. The food of Shabbos is completely holy. It is purely spiritual and filled with G-dliness. It rises to a totally different place from that of the food of the six working days. Make an effort to feel the joy of Shabbos and you will find true happiness. *(Likutey Moharan)*

Be Grateful! Written by Oizer Alport



Rashi explains that in response to the complaint of the Jews [not being able to eat fish that they used to eat in Egypt] that they have nothing to look forward to but the Mon, Hashem wrote in the Torah a description of how wonderful the Mon was as if to say, "Look, inhabitants of the world, at what my children are complaining about."

Rav Pam notes that although we don't merit it here, a Divine voice expressing frustration over the things we complain about still goes out regularly. We live in a time of unprecedented freedom and material bounty, and we are surrounded by a society which influences us to believe that we are entitled to immediate gratification, to have everything we want, when and exactly how we want it.

If we would only step back and view our lives with the proper perspective, we would be so overwhelmed by the blessings we enjoy that there would be no room to complain about trivialities. Every time that a husband comes home to a messy house, filled with children's toys and dirty clothes, and once again berates his wife over her inability to keep their house clean, a Heavenly voice challenges, "How many families would do anything to have children and would gladly clean up the mess that accompanies them, and here is somebody who has been blessed with healthy children and is upset that they make his house disorderly? Where are his priorities?"

When a husband or a child complains about eating the same supper for the 3rd consecutive night, Hashem can't help but point out how many poverty-stricken families would do anything to eat this dinner every night for a year, if only to enjoy a nutritional and filling repast.

Every time that the parents of the bride and groom quarrel over petty wedding-related issues such as who will walk which child down to the chuppa, a Bas Kol wonders how many parents will cry themselves to sleep that evening over their inability to find a proper match for their aging son or daughter, and who would gladly accede to any terms the other side would set … if only there would be another side.

The next time we find ourselves upset about issues which are objectively nothing more than nuisances and minor inconveniences, let us remember the lesson of the Mon and open our ears to hear Hashem's response to our complaints.



Rebbe Mordechai of Lechovitz zy'a said,

"We should really be dancing with music, because in this week's parashah it says, **כִּי־ה' דִּבֶּר־טוֹב עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל**: *Hashem promised that He will do good for the Jewish people*" (10:29).



Humility Only Works If Your Rich? by B Rose

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם 12:3 Moshe's greatness was that he was more humble than any other person.

The gemara in Nedarim (38a) says that the Shechina only rests on someone who is wise, strong, wealthy, and humble.

Rav Chaim Volozhin asks why is being strong and rich mandatory for someone to have the Shechina rest on him?

He answers that the real key is humility just like the pasuk says about Moshe. However, if a person is weak and poor his humility is not as telling since he doesn't have much to be haughty about. A person who is wise, strong, and wealthy, yet is still humble, he is truly deserving to be a sanctuary for the Shechina.

Why Eat Fish on Shabbos? By Yehuda Shurpin



The prophet Isaiah (58:13) tells us, "And you will proclaim the Sabbath a 'delight,' and the holy [day] of G-d, 'honoured.' "

Noting that this verse requires us to both delight in Shabbat and honour it, our rabbis explain that one honours Shabbat by wearing special, clean clothes, and delights in Shabbat through enjoying fine food and drink.

In Talmudic times, fish was considered a "delight" and was often savoured on Shabbat. In fact, the Talmud relates the story of

how Yosef Moker Shabbat, "Yosef Who Cherishes Shabbat," would always buy fish in honour of Shabbat. He thus merited to discover a precious gem in the belly of a fish, which resulted in him becoming very wealthy.

So, on a basic level, it seems as though fish is really just a preference, and if one prefers another food over fish, there is no reason to specifically seek it out and serve it on Shabbat.

However, the mystics explain that one should try to have fish at the Shabbat meals. In the words of the *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (quoting the kabbalists):

It is desirable to be meticulous and partake of fish during every meal unless [a person's physical constitution is such that eating] fish is harmful to him or he dislikes it, i.e., it brings him discomfort, not pleasure—for *Shabbat* was given for the sake of pleasure.

Jews throughout the generations have been meticulous to eat fish on Shabbat. In fact, *halachah* discusses the not uncommon scenario where non-Jewish fishermen would specifically raise the price of fish before Shabbat due to the demand.

There are many reasons given for the custom to eat fish on Shabbat. Here are 11 of them:-

1. Triple Blessing

Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, known as the B'nei Yissaschar, explains that during the six days of creation, G-d blessed three things as they were created:

On Thursday, He blessed the **fish**: "G-d blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas . . .'" On Friday, He blessed **mankind**: "G-d blessed them (Adam and Eve). G-d said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth!'"

On **Shabbat**, "G-d blessed the seventh day and He declared it holy."

"A three-stranded cord will not quickly be broken," says Scripture. Thus, we combine all three: **man** eats **fish** on **Shabbat**, and is thus blessed with the threefold Priestly Blessing:

1. *May the L-rd bless you and watch over you.*
2. *May the L-rd shine His countenance upon you and grant you grace.*
3. *May the L-rd raise His countenance toward you and grant you peace.*

2. The Number Seven

On Shabbat, the seventh and final day of the week, we eat foods that are associated with the number seven. The Hebrew word for fish is **דג**, which has the numerical value of seven.

3. Souls of the Righteous

The mystics explain that if the souls of the righteous must return to earth, they are often reincarnated as fish, which are one with their surroundings. Unlike other animals, fish don't need to be slaughtered, and thus they cannot become unkosher due to the preparations or any damages to their innards.

On the holy day of Shabbat, we have the extra merit and energy to elevate these souls through using them for the mitzvah of delighting in Shabbat.

4. Easy Elevation

Unlike meat and fowl, which require a special process in order for the food to be kosher and ready for us to elevate, fish are ready to be elevated without much preparation. Eating fish on Shabbat symbolizes that on this holy day there is no need for extra work to elevate the mundane.

(This is also one of the reasons why, in a meal in which both fish and meat are served, the custom is to have the fish course first. We first approach and tackle the food that is spiritually easier to

elevate, and having mastered that, we move on to the more difficult foods.)

5. Thirsting for Every Drop of Torah

Just as a fish lives in the water, which is crucial for its survival, so must we remain immersed in Torah, which is compared to water, as we read, "Everyone that thirsts, go to the water."

But though fish are constantly in water, it is said that when a drop of rain falls, they open their mouths to snap up the drops as if they never tasted water in their life.

So, too, the Jewish people, who are immersed in Torah at all times, make an effort to learn new interpretations of the Torah on Shabbat. Additionally, it is written in the *Zohar* that Shabbat is dedicated to Torah and matters of the soul—for it was on Shabbat that the Torah was given to Israel on Sinai.

6. No Eyelids

Fish don't have any eyelids. As a result, their eyes are always opened. We eat fish on Shabbat, alluding to the notion that G-d's "eyes" are always opened, watching over us with love and compassion.

7. First Course

Fish were the first created living beings, and Shabbat is the root of all life for the upcoming week. Therefore, the custom is to begin the Shabbat meal with fish.

8. More Refined

During the Great Flood in the days of Noach, the land animals were also punished, since they had become corrupted and were mating with animals that were not of their kind. The fish, however, were able to survive in the water, since they had not become corrupted. On Shabbat, when we celebrate the most spiritually elevated day of the week, it is only fitting that we do so with the most spiritually elevated of the creations.

9. Fishing for a Mitzvah

In general, kosher animals have mitzvahs performed on them prior to being eaten (e.g., kosher slaughter and salting away the blood). Fish, however, are the exception. They have no special mitzvahs or rituals required to be performed prior to consumption. Therefore, to make up for this lack, we eat fish on Shabbos—thus associating fish with the great mitzvah of Shabbos.

10. The Missing Dish

The Midrash tells us that the manna had every conceivable taste that one could wish for, except for the taste of fish. That is why the people murmured: "We remember the fish we ate in Egypt." This lack of fish became the focus of their dissatisfaction and complaints in the desert. Therefore, we now have the custom to eat fish, demonstrating that we are thankful to G-d and our delight in the Shabbos is "complete." What was once a symbol of our grievances to G-d has become a symbol of gratitude.

11. The Leviathan in the Messianic Era

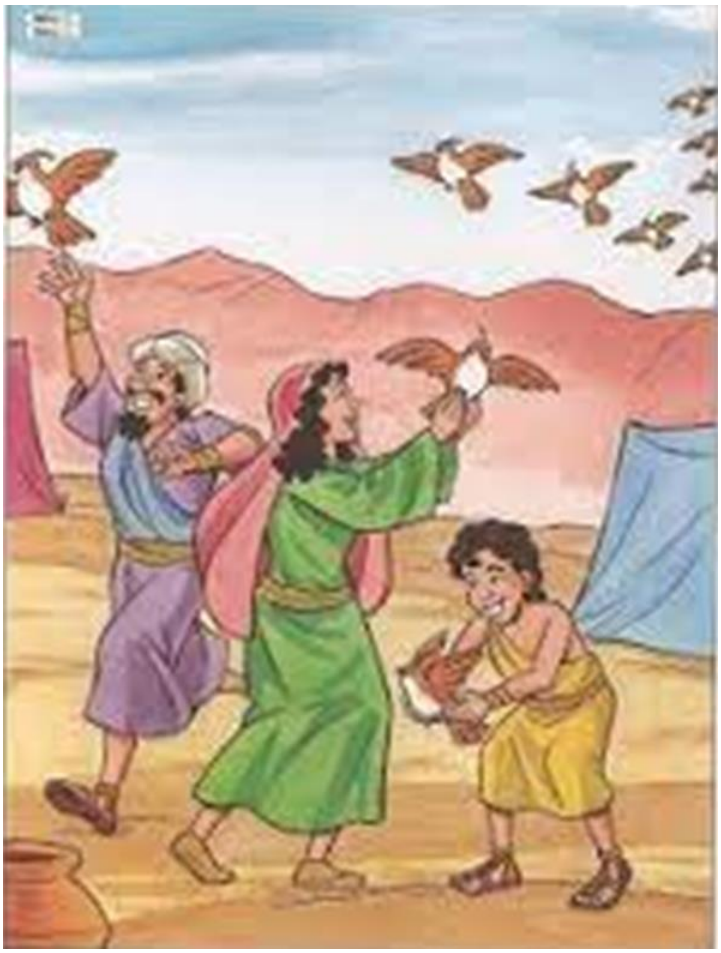
The holy day of Shabbos is a glimmer of Olam Habah, the World to Come, which is referred to as "a day that is completely Shabbos." Since one of the foods that will be served at the great feast when Moshiach comes is the Leviathan, we have the custom to eat fish on Shabbat.

Perfect Justice Written by Oizer Alport

The Darkei Mussar quotes Rav Yitzchok Meir ben-Menachem (son-in-law of Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer) as deriving from here [when the Jews received quail in the desert] a beautiful lesson in how Hashem runs the world.

Rashi explains that the quail floated in mid-air at a level of two amos (3-4 feet) off the ground, so that the Jews who went to gather them

wouldn't have to exert themselves to bend over and pick up the quail from off the ground. However, we know that a mere two verses later (11:33), the Torah relates that those who gluttonously consumed the quail died with the unchewed meat still between their teeth.



If Hashem felt that their complaints and request for meat were inappropriate and planned to use the quail as an instrument of Divine punishment, why did He miraculously suspend the quail in mid-air in order to prevent unnecessary efforts on the part of such sinners?

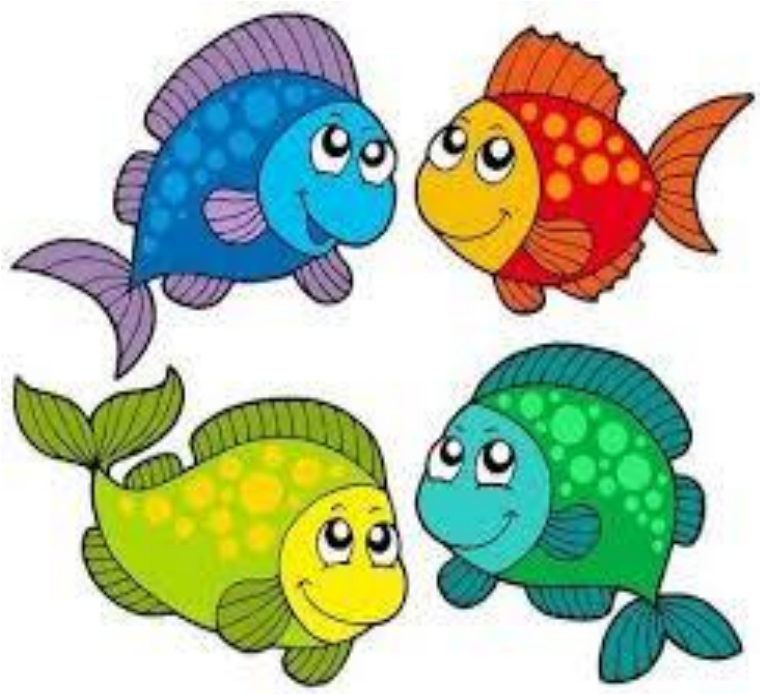
Rather, we may derive from here that Hashem's Divine system of reward and punishment is precisely meted out, and even a person upon whom suffering is decreed will only experience exactly the amount of pain which is coming to him and not the slightest bit more. We similarly find that although Yosef was sold into slavery and forced to endure untold suffering in Egypt, the Arab caravan which took him to Egypt was uncharacteristically carrying sweet-smelling spices (Bereishis 37:25) in order to save him from unnecessary suffering.

Rashi also writes (Vayikra 14:34) that even when Hashem brings tzara'as upon the house of a person who speaks evil of others, it still brings with it the blessing of allowing the owner to discover valuable treasures which were hidden in the walls of house by the previous Canaanite inhabitants. Although nobody enjoys the suffering he is forced to endure throughout life, the knowledge that it is precisely

meted out by a loving and compassionate G-d who won't put him through the smallest amount of unnecessary pain can make it significantly more bearable.

Fishful Thinking by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

This week the Torah tells us that the Children of Israel once again complain. This time they want meat in the desert. They recall what they now consider a better time in a better place. Like many of us who are discontented with the world we live in, they talked about the good old days — in Egypt of all places!



"The rabble that was among them cultivated a craving, and the Children of Israel also wept once more, and said, "Who will feed us meat? We remember the fish that we will eat in Egypt free of charge; and the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. But now, our life is parched, there is nothing; we have nothing to anticipate but the manna!" (Numbers 11:4-6) The commentators are bothered by two simple questions; the first a grammatical, the second, a historical one.

The words that the complainers used were "zacharnu es hadagah asher naochal we remember the fish we would eat or actually will eat." They did not use the pure past tense "achalnu, we remember the fish that we ate." Why do they complain of remember fish that was to be eaten in the future, instead of fish to be eaten in the past?

Second, the Talmud and later commentaries ask, "Straw for bricks was not given to them, how was it possible that they had free fish?" The Talmud indeed implies that there was no fish, and the implied freedom refers to freedom of the yoke of mitzvos. So, if that was the case, what were they truly complaining about? Why mention non-existent fish?

Yankel would spend a few of his precious kopeks each week to by a lottery ticket. And every week he would come home from work that much poorer.

When his wife got wind of his habit, she repeatedly implored him to stop. She said his efforts were futile and it would be impossible for him to win.

It was, however, to no avail. Yankel would keep on betting the almost impossible odds that one day he would win. One day she could take it no longer. She shlepped him to the rabbi who was going to make him assure them that he would no longer waste his money on the lottery.

When he finally acquiesced, his wife put her hands on her hips and reminded him of her predictions. "For the last five years, you did nothing but lose the lottery. What a waste!"

Poor Yankel shrugged. "My dear wife he sighed; you don't understand. Every night before the big lottery drawing, I went to sleep winning the lottery! And that my dear was surely no waste!"

The Sefer Shalal Rav brings quote the following interpretation: Sometimes, it seems, people think that it is better to think of the world that would be instead of the world that is. They refuse to revel in the good realities of life and instead would rather fantasize about a better world that was not to be. The Jews in the desert, talked about the fish they dreamt of in Egypt.

To them, like to many of us, the imaginary fish was more appealing than real Manna. In the world of wishful thinking, it seems that

obsessing about imaginary dreams may be more appealing than reveling in the real good that G-d has given us and the mitzvos that we are able to relish. And that is more than fishy. It's scary.

The Torah Any Times Newsletter

Rabbi Yoel Gold - I Remember You

For Chana Weinstock, a 23-year-old girl studying abroad in Israel, her stay over Shabbos in Tzefat was not the most pleasant. Having gotten sick and bogged down with a headache, she decided to return back to her normal living quarters in Har Nof and rest up. There she would hopefully recover from her cold and regain her strength.

But then the phone rang. It was one of Chana's good friends from Chaifa, calling for a favour. "Chana, if you would be able to help me, I am working on a project for my company, and I need a picture of the Temple Mount from a certain angle while standing on Har HaZeitim. I know you have a knack for this, so I was wondering if you would be able to help me get this picture." After hearing of her friend's predicament, Chana replied that she would gladly do her best to help, despite being a bit under the weather.

Chana proceeded to get up and ready herself to take the bus. As she finally headed out the door, she spotted where the bus would pick her up and take her to Shar Shechem, where she would board another bus to take her to Har HaZeitim. Upon arriving in Shar Shechem, Chana got off the bus and began walking to where she needed to be next. But now Chana felt a bit lightheaded, with her head spinning and eyes blurred. Not feeling so well, she got on the first blue and white bus that pulled up and took a seat, knowing that her ride would be short until she arrived at Har HaZeitim where she needed. Yet, amid the fatigue Chana was in, it wasn't long before she fell fast asleep.

Twenty-five minutes later Chana awoke. Looking out the window, she immediately realized that she had gone far beyond her destination. Getting off the bus, she crossed the road and began heading back in the direction she came from. But the streets were just about empty and there was no bus stop in sight. Chana kept on walking and walking until she came across a settlement with houses. And then she realized. She was in East Jerusalem.

Unaware that it was the first night of Ramadan and everyone was home breaking their fast, she was at a loss to explain why just about no one was out in the street. But now, how this ever happened became clearer to Chana. Amid her frenzied state, she had mistakenly gotten on an Arab blue-and-white bus, mistaking it for an Israeli bus due to its colours.

Now stuck in East Jerusalem at night by herself, Chana began to panic. Barely any lights were shining from the shuttered-up houses, all the street lamps were dark, and posters were plastered on the walls highlighting different Palestinian heroes. Nothing more was needed to make Chana conclude that she was in trouble.

Chana immediately took out her phone, hoping that someone could help her get out of there. But that option didn't last long, as she looked down at her phone and, despondently, saw that it was out of battery. She couldn't have hoped for a worse scenario to be in. Stranded in East Jerusalem alone with no way of contacting anyone. She didn't know where to go or what to do.

Chana started mumbling Tehillim, as Jews have done throughout the ages when caught in unfavorable conditions. She pleaded to Hashem that He help her at this time, when quite literally, no one else could help her.

But realizing that she ought to make some personal effort in getting herself out of the situation, she decided that she would look for the house that looked the least Arabic. She would look for a house that had lights on the outside and grass in front nicely taken care of. If

she ever wished to give herself a chance of making it out safely, she needed to do something.

Spotting one particular house with no Palestinian pictures hanging or the like, she began heading in its direction. She told herself that she would pretend to be a Pro-Palestinian, UCLA student from California who believed in social justice and was in the process of writing a report on the Palestinian life and working for their cause. That would be her best shot at presenting herself in a neutral way and perhaps earning the pity and succour of someone.



Knocking on the door, Chana's heart fluttered as she waited a response. And then the door opened. Standing before her was a 19-year-old Palestinian girl wearing a hijab. "Chana?" the Palestinian girl called out. Caught off guard, Chana looked back at the girl in confusion, having expected to present herself as a stranger from a college campus. But before Chana could further process the situation, the girl grabbed hold of Chana and pulled her inside, giving her a gigantic hug. Chana just about froze in shock as to what was happening. The girl then pulled out a card off the shelf and said in Arabic-Hebrew, "*Yesh li et ha'michtav* – I have the card."

Suddenly, Chana remembered…

Six months earlier, she had been running a program in Israel for Aish HaTorah in the King Solomon hotel. With a large number of staff on-site, Chana would certainly meet difficulty reaching everyone and attending to their needs and requests. Chana therefore decided that she would go the extra mile in extending herself to connect with the many staff members, from the highest to lowest. And so, she bought herself a notepad and slowly made her way around the hotel, writing down each of the staff member's names, shift hours and position and interests. It was Chana's best way of connecting to everyone she would have otherwise overlooked.

After tallying up the names of everyone there, Chana's list reached fifty staff members. Everyone's name was noted, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, with a short description about them which would assist Chana in relating personally to them.

It was the last day of the program that Chana noticed a Pakistani girl positioned in front of the coffee station. It was clear to Chana that she was manning the coffee and tea area and even clearer to her that she had missed introducing herself to this girl.

Approaching her, Chana softly began, "I haven't seen you around; I'm so sorry I missed you. What is your name?" The Pakistani girl looked back at Chana, touched that a stranger was taking interest in her. She introduced herself and began explaining her plans for the future. "I'm on my way to medical school and wish to become a doctor, but at the moment I am in need of a job and money. And so, I found this position here at the King Solomon hotel for the meantime."

For the rest of the day, as the many guests and staff began turning out to leave, Chana was busy writing thank you cards to the many staff who had joined her in coordinating such a beautiful program. With little extra money to give tips to the hard working and dedicated staff, she decided that it would be nice to personally thank each of them with a card.

Of all the thank you cards Chana prepared, the one for the Pakistani girl was the last, given that Chana had only met her some hours ago for just a brief period. But, notwithstanding the short introduction and conversation, Chana wrote her a beautiful thank you note extending her deep appreciation for her help.

Chana now stared at the same Pakistani girl she had crossed paths with months before. Except only now, it was in her home in East Jerusalem. Those words, "*Yesh li et ha'michtav* – I have the card," rang in Chana's ears.

"Chana!" the girl exclaimed again. "What a surprise! I'm so happy to see you!" Extending her hand to the nearby shelf, she grabbed a hold of a card. "I still have what you gave me the last time I saw you!" Chana could not have been more shocked by the turn of events and what she was witnessing. It was the very last thing she could have ever expected.

"Chana, come here," the girl excitedly motioned. Chana was led to the girl's dining room, where her entire family was sitting down at the table, breaking their fast of Ramadan. Surprisingly or not, they all recognized Chana and Chana recognized them. They had as well met Chana before, and now assumed that she had come to visit them all. "It's so nice to see you, Chana," they all chimed in. Playing along with the scenario that she had intended to "visit them", Chana graciously smiled and extended warm greetings to all those around the table.

But Chana had no intention to stay around much longer. After a few moments of catching up, she asked if there was a bus available which would take her back home. But unanimously, she was told that there wasn't. "But I'll drive you to the bus stop at Shimon HaTzaddik, if you'd like," offered the girl's uncle.

Getting into the car, they made their way over to the security checkpoint. The Israeli officer looked into the car, noting the peculiar sight of a clearly Jewish girl along with an Arab man and

woman. "*Ha'kol b'seder* (is everything alright)?" he asked. "Yes," Chana replied. "These are my friends." And with that, they kindly dropped Chana off and sent her on her way.

Aside from the wondrous Divine intervention and protection which went into assuring Chana's safety and survival, what likewise stands out in this series of events is Chana's kind-hearted character and considerate attitude. She was someone who stayed present and wrote down everyone's name, job and interests and tried to connect with them all in a genuine and real way. It was that extra mile she went which made an ever-lasting impression on other people and touched them in a way that when help was needed, it was ready right behind the door and in the envelope.

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein - The Greatest Praise



In the beginning of this week's Parsha, the Torah (*Bamidbar* 8:3) relates that "Aharon did so" as Hashem commanded regarding lighting the menorah. Rashi, citing the Sifri, explains that these words teach the praise of Aharon, namely that he did not deviate from all that Hashem had instructed.

As would be expected, many of the commentaries are bothered by the seeming obvious statement of the Torah and conclusion drawn by Rashi. What is the great praise of Aharon? Who would have thought that anyone would deviate from a direct command received from G-d, let alone Aharon Hakohen?

The Maharal Diskin and Rav Yonasan Eibeshitz offer a brilliant insight into the nature of what really occurred during the lighting and cleaning of the menorah.

As Chazal make clear, the menorah was eighteen *tefachim* (handbreadths) tall. Rashi, in our Parsha, writes that there were actually three steps before the menorah upon which the Kohen would stand when he carried out the service of the menorah. This is similarly echoed in the Mishnah (*Tamid* 3:9), which articulates the same, and implies that the steps were there to enable the Kohen to reach the top of the Menorah (see Bartenura ibid.).

It is in relation to these steps, explains the Maharal Diskin, that the Torah emphasizes, "Aharon did so" as he was commanded. Despite the fact that Aharon was capable of lighting the menorah without needing the steps to lend him height, he nevertheless followed the dictate of Hashem and used the steps in the process of doing so. This is the great praise of Aharon. But that still does not encompass the entire picture.

The Maharil Diskin goes further to cite the Yalkut Shimoni (*Tehillim*, 570) which states that the Shemen HaMishacha (anointing oil) embodied a special transformative quality, namely that it enabled the person upon whom it was poured to grow taller. One point in example is that of Dovid Hamelech, who in fact fit into the garments of King Shaul, despite that fact that the Navi attests about Shaul that he was a shoulder taller than everyone else. Dovid Hamelech was able to fit into his clothes by virtue of the fact that the anointing oil spurted his growth, thereby making him bigger and thus capable of wearing them.

In the case of Aharon HaKohen then, upon being anointed with the Shemen HaMishcha, he grew even taller than he previously was. With the average height of a person being three amos, or eighteen tefachim (*Eruvin* 48a), Aharon would have already met the height of the menorah. With the additional growth caused by the Shemen

HaMishcha, he must have grown even more and towered over the menorah. Yet, even with his current height being above the menorah, Aharon still used the steps and lit, despite them adding even more height.

But Rav Yonasan Eibeshitz goes even further to add one fascinating detail. Although his original source is left unknown, he writes that when Aharon was anointed with the Shemen Hamishcha, he grew to equal the height of his brother, Moshe Rabbeinu, who was ten amos tall. If that was the case, then Aharon would have needed to significantly bend down to simply avoid bumping his head on the ceiling of the Mishkan, which was likewise ten amos tall. Notwithstanding, Aharon even so used the steps to light the menorah. Despite the major difficulty at contorting himself to light the menorah considering his height, he still stood upon the steps in order to fulfill the command of Hashem. Such dedication and devotion to the word of Hashem truly shows "the great praise of Aharon" that he did not deviate even so ever slightly.

In our own service of Hashem, we would be wise to remember that every effort expended to carry out Hashem's mitzvos with their proper degree of exactitude and detail is the greatest praise we could gain. It shows our care and regard for Hashem's word and brings us so ever closer to His true will.

"Patience is a great protection for the soul. Many sins are committed not out of evil, but out of haste and emotional pressure. One who trains himself to pause, to remain silent, and to endure insult without retaliation, saves himself from countless transgressions and merits great reward. Fortunate is the one who is slow to anger, for he resembles his Creator." ~ Pele Yoetz – (Savlanus).

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser – The Same Love

Our Parsha tells us that Aharon HaKohen lit the Menorah daily just as Hashem had commanded. He did not veer one bit from the instructions he received, explains Rashi, and this is to his great credit and praise.

The Bobover Rebbe asks the obvious question. Aharon HaKohen was a great individual and certainly someone who adhered to Hashem's commands. What therefore is the special praise that he is due because he lit the Menorah as he was told?

Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk, known as the Noam Elimelech, was recognized for his lifestyle of self-imposed exile. As other Torah scholars and leaders had done, Rav Elimelech would travel with not much more than himself and some clothing and in doing so, strive to obtain greater levels of spiritual greatness. He went from town to town, engaged in self-introspection and teshuva and inspired others in the ways of Hashem.

After returning from his exile to his hometown, he overheard two people talking about a certain boy named Elazar who was deathly ill. Upon hearing this, the Noam Elimelech realized that they were talking about his very own son, prompting him to start running in the direction of his home. As he was on his way, it came to light that it was not Elazar his son, but Elazar, the son of the launderer.

The Noam Elimelech calmed down slightly, though continued running. Later that day, however, he felt that something was off. What had happened that slowed him down while running? Sure, it may not have been his own son, but it was still another Jewish child? The Noam Elimelech took this message to heart and decided that very same day to venture into another self-imposed exile and ponder how he could better improve himself.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avos tells us of Aharon, "He loved people, and brought them close to Torah." Aharon viewed all Jewish people and

children as the same. It may have been Aharon's own son, or someone else's son, but he loved them all and worked with each of them. There was enough love in his heart to share himself with everyone.

This is what is alluded to in the above verse, explains the Bobover Rebbe. When Rashi states that Aharon did not "change" from the directives of Hashem, it is referring to Aharon's own attitude. He viewed the Jewish people with the same eyes of love and care. Whether the Jew was from one tribe or another, looked the same or different, he did not change his approach and show them any less dedication. And that is truly an attribute worthy of praise.



Rav Shalom Schwadron was once walking down the streets of Jerusalem, whereupon he noticed a young boy ailing in pain. Grasping the boy's hand, he began running with the boy in an effort to receive medical help.

Suddenly, an elderly woman standing on a nearby balcony called out, "Rav Schwadron, Rav Schwadron! Calm down and take it easy!" As they passed by her balcony, however, allowing her a closer look, she noticed that the young boy was her very own grandson. "Meir!" she yelled out. "Meir!"

We often draw a distinction between people we interact with. But, like Aharon HaKohen, we would be wise to appreciate that any and every Jew deserves our full and equal love and attention.

Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein - A True Leader

שאהו בחיקך כאשר ישא האמן את הינק Carry them as a nursemaid carries an infant… (Bamidbar 11:12)

I have always felt that Moshe Rabbeinu is someone I draw much inspiration and guidance for life from. In fact, the Zohar teaches that every single Jew has a DNA flag, a spark from Moshe Rabbeinu. Otherwise, he or she could not learn Torah and draw close to Hashem.

Yet why do we need DNA from Moshe Rabbeinu? We already have DNA from our *Avos* and are an innately compassionate people (*Yevamos* 79a). What does Moshe Rabbeinu especially give us?

The Midrash tells the story of Moshe Rabbeinu who once counted his flock and realized that one of the sheep was missing. He understood that the little sheep had run back to the water hole they had just come from. Returning to the hole, sure enough, Moshe found the little sheep all by himself. He proceeded to put the sheep on his shoulders and carry it back to the rest of the flock.

The Midrash remarks that when Hashem saw Moshe Rabbeinu do this, He said to the angels, "That is going to be the leader of Klal Yisrael. The person who puts a sheep on his shoulders and doesn't make it walk by itself is fit to lead the Jewish nation. Even though the sheep was wrong and ran away from the flock, Moshe still cared for it. He didn't get angry and take a stick and say, 'What did you do? Why are you running away from everyone else?' He simply picked the sheep up on his shoulders and returned it back home."

The story in this Midrash is much deeper than appears. Was Moshe Rabbeinu the first shepherd ever to put a sheep on his shoulders? Weren't there were many other shepherds who tended to sheep and carried them? What did Moshe Rabbeinu do that made Hashem say, "He is going to be the leader of Jewish people"?



Reading further into the Midrash, however, reveals that Moshe did more than simply retrieve the lone sheep. He gently said to it, "I am carrying you on my shoulders and asking for forgiveness. Had I let you drink long enough when all the other sheep drank, you would not have needed to run away. The reason you are thirsty and ran away from the flock is my fault. And since it is my fault, it is my job to let you drink your fill and carry you back." When Hashem saw that, He declared, "That is a true leader."

This Midrash teaches a profound lesson. Before throwing a child out of school or class, it is wise to consider, "Could it be my fault that this kid is out of hand? Did I not give this little sheep which is running away enough time, enough love and enough care?"

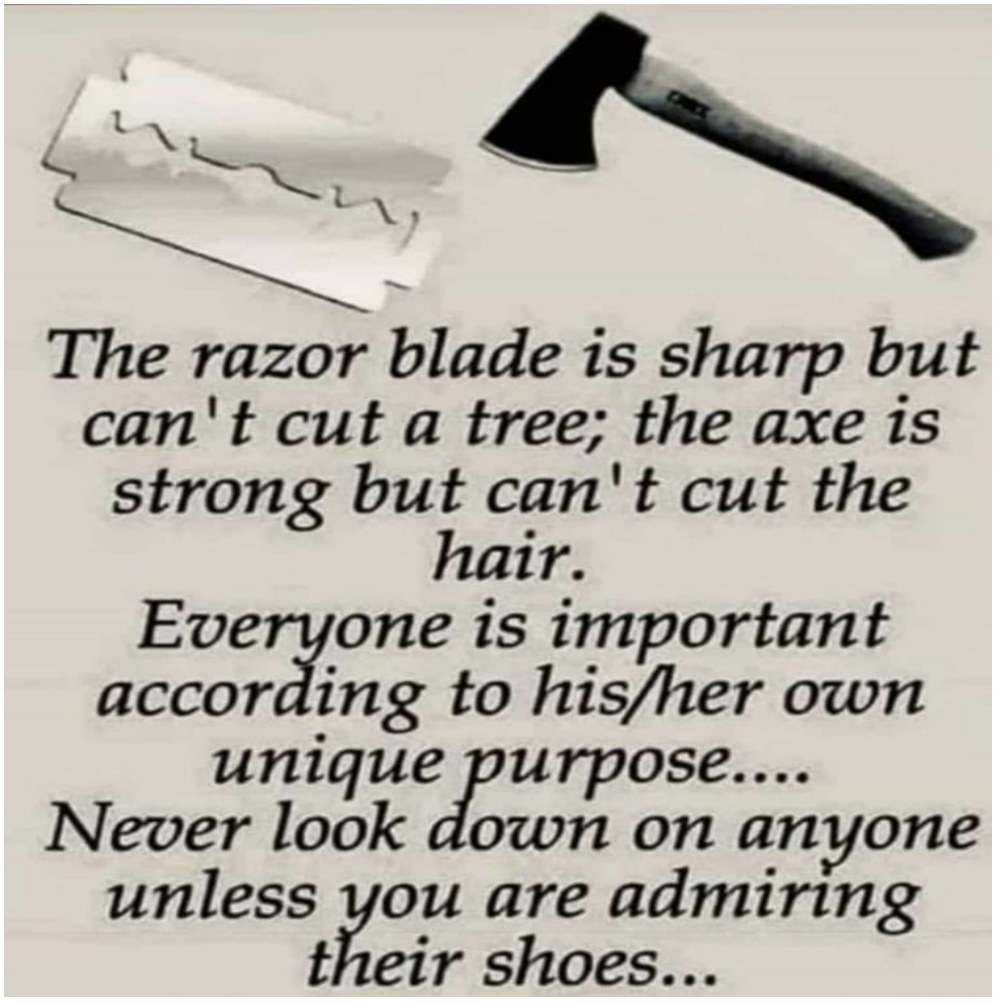
That is a teacher, a principal, a leader and a parent. Parents often say when a child misbehaves, "Do you know what you are doing to your father and me? Do you know what you are doing to us?" What does the child oftentimes hear when he or she is told this? Blah, blah, blah. They don't hear a word because it is all about the parent, school or teacher. "I am not interested in what I am doing to everyone else!" the child says. "I am suffering, and it is about me, and all you are talking about is you and dad and school. I don't care about the name of the family. I am suffering!"

Moshe Rabbeinu teaches us that we should instead say, "Do you know what your behavior is doing to yourself? It is not about me or your father or the name of family. It is about you yourself." Moshe did

not think about himself, but about the sheep. "It is not about me having to come find you drinking water; it is about you. If I would have known that you needed to drink more, I would have let you."

That is what Hashem saw in Moshe as a leader. A leader is someone who looks at a problem and accepts responsibility. If there is an issue, it is on his shoulders. In numerous instances, Moshe blamed himself for what was happening to Klal Yisrael. That was who he was.

This is how we must be as teachers and parents. If something is wrong with a child, maybe we didn't say hello this morning; maybe we said we will call back and didn't; maybe we promised the student a prize and never gave it to him. Maybe it has to do with me. That was Moshe Rabbeinu: a true leader. That is what we must learn from this Midrash.



A Short Message From Rabbi Doniel Kalish

Have you ever wondered what the name of your neshama is? What about your friend's neshama? In truth, they have the same name: kavod (honour).



When Dovid Hamelech wishes to refer to the soul, he uses the expression "k'vodi," my honour (e.g. Ura k'vodi ura," "Awake, my soul, awake" – Tehillim 57:9).

The implications of this are far-reaching. As the ***Maharal*** *articulates, when we honour another, we are doing no less than giving them life and uplifting their very being. We are recognizing their uniqueness and making them feel valued, important and respected.*

SHABBOS STORIES FOR BEHA'ALOSCHA

Explaining a Tragedy By Rabbi Sholom DovBer Avtzon

Last month, we were all pained from the horrific tragedy that befell Klal Yisroel, in Meron. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai who symbolizes life, and whose name has the numerical equivalent of mechayeh hameisim (bringing life to the dead), and on his day of celebration, at his burial site, such an unimaginable event can occur.

When I replied to those who reached out to me for an explanation, that we have to have faith, and it is something that can't be explained, some of them replied, Rabbi, sorry to say but that is somewhat of a cop out. I will now try to explain why it is an answer and not a cop out.

This week, someone forwarded to me the following story.

There was an Israeli Jew who was completely non-religious. For some reason he "happened" to be in New York for Tishrei and his host was the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Binyomin Klein.

Although he never kept Yom Kippur, out of respect for his host, he refrained from eating or drinking, and came into the shul to see what religious people do on this solemn day. Being that he was an Israeli, and fluent in Hebrew, he had a machzor with him, and was following the prayers.

When the chazzan came to the repetition of the Musaf tefilah, and began chanting the story of the Ten Martyrs, he couldn't contain himself, and demanded from those next to him to explain the answer that G-d Almighty gave the angels.

The angels protested. Is this the appropriate reward for those who devoted their entire life and essence to learn and teach Your Torah?! Hashem replied, be quiet and accept it, or else I will revert the world to nothingness! What type of answer is this, the man inquired? Finally, an entity has the courage to ask, but where is the answer?

Most people replied to him, we don't understand it, but we have faith that Hashem who is our Creator understands better than we. However, the person was not placated by this explanation, he demanded an answer.

So the people around him, pointed to an elder chossid, Reb Zushe Wilomovsky , and said, ask him.

Hearing the question Reb Zushe replied:

There was a king that was making a wedding for his only child. Everyone understands that in general everything in the palace is always on the highest standards of excellence and beauty, but in honor of this momentous occasion, the king demanded that it be elevated to even higher levels, a step higher.

Only the tastiest foods will be served, the servants should seek out the most exotic animals, fish, fowl, and produce. The best musicians would be assembled from the entire country, and so on.



The king also ordered the finest silk and material for the clothing the royal family would be wearing, and then search for an experienced tailor to custom-make them. The kings' offer was a generous one, If you make the clothing to my liking, you will be paid enough to live comfortable for the remainder of your life. However, if I am disappointed for whatever reason, you will be thrown into prison and languish there for the rest of your life.

Understandably, almost all the tailors in the town were hesitant to accept such a challenging condition, however, there were a few tailors who were extremely confidant in their expertise who came forward. The King chose a Jewish tailor who had an impressive reputation. This infuriated his advisors, and they said to the king, the Jews are thieves, even if he makes a most exquisite garment and receives the king's generous payment, that is not enough for him. He is going to steal some of the excess material. After all the material has golden threads and small precious stones in it.

So the king added another condition to the contract, if you are accused by eye witnesses that you stole any amount of the material, you will be killed.

Knowing that he has never held on to any excess material, the Jew agreed

Two months later, the tailor brought all the garments and the king and Queen were raving about its luster and beauty, it was beyond

their expectations. Even the advisors admitted that they were a masterpiece. The king instructed the royal treasurer to fill up the bags that the garments were brought in with coins and precious stones, as payment to the tailor. - But then one of the advisors said, your majesty, we were told that the tailor held on to two yards of material.

Hearing this, the king was fuming with rage and according to the agreement the tailor was to be put to death. Knowing that declaring his innocence wouldn't help him, the doomed man simply asked for the garments and a pair of scissors as his final wish.

The king was aghast, the tailor wants to stick it to me. But it wouldn't look nice if he didn't grant the man's final wish, so they were given to the tailor.

When it was brought to him, he began with great care to undo all the stitches and placed the pieces next to each other unfolding all the folds and opening up all the hems. While the king was aghast that the garments were now destroyed, he saw that all the material was accounted for nothing was stolen and spared his life.

Turning to the tailor, the king asked why did you have to undo the stitches, and destroy two months of labour?

That was the only way to answer His majesty's accusation, replied the tailor. Any other answer I would have given would have been rejected by the so called "eye-witnesses." But, yes, sorry to say, now there is no garment.

Turning to this Jew, Reb Zushe concluded, Hashem was telling the angels, if you want the answer, I can give it to you, but the only way to do so, is to turn the world into nothingness. Accept the fact that there is a reason.

May Hashem comfort all the families and indeed all of Israel that they should only experience revealed kindness.

Every Drop of Water Makes a Difference

At a Hakhel Shiur, **Rabbi Jonathan Rietti, shlita**, beautifully explained what he believed to be Rebbi Akiva's greatest legacy to us: Looking back, what was it that turned around Rebbi Akiva's life from being an am ha'aretz (ignoramus) who wanted to bite Talmidei Chachomim (Torah scholar) to a Talmid Chochom of such massive and world-changing proportions.

Rabbi Rietti teaches that when Rebbi Akiva saw the water dripping on the rock, and the cavity that had been dug by the drips, he came to the great realization that every drop-every single drop-made a perhaps unnoticeable, but real difference. No drop was insignificant.

Although one could not tell what any particular drop had accomplished, nor the difference between one drop and another, it was clear that without every single drop, the large hole in that mighty rock would not have been carved out. As a result of what he saw and understood, Chazal teach: MiYad Chazar Lilmod Torah-he immediately decided to leave his status as an am ha'aretz and go to study Torah.



From the powerful sight and through his powerful vision, Rebbi Akiva understood for himself and taught the world forever after that every effort makes a difference, and that $1 million is not a gross number--but one million times one. While a person in a real depression would say that nothing he ever does makes a difference, that nothing he ever does counts -- Rebbi Akiva understood that to be the opposite of the real truth -- for it all counts.

One should never, ever give up – for there is no such thing as a wasted smile, a wasted good word, or a wasted effort. As we take leave of the Sefira period and will soon even conclude the Shivas Yemei Tashlumin after Shavuos -- let us remember this great teaching of Rebbi Akiva -- and drive ourselves forward with every additional Pasuk, every additional Mishna, every additional Dvar Torah, so that we can reach the depths of the wonderful and powerful natural spring within us--drop by drop by drop!

Rav Shach and the Shul Seat



Rav Elazar Shach, O"BM, once entered a shul and sat in a seat towards the back, and, while waiting for the minyan to begin, Rav Shach began to study Torah. Suddenly a man approached him, hands on his hips, and began shouting at him.

"Don't you know that you're sitting in my seat?" the irate man yelled. "Who are you to come here and just sit down, without asking permission?"

Rav Shach quickly stood up and embraced the man. He hugged him lovingly as he begged the man for forgiveness. He agreed to the irate man's every point. "I am so sorry for taking your seat even if it was for a few moments," he pleaded. Please forgive me. I must have absent-mindedly sat down there. Please forgive me. The man was taken aback at the Rosh Yeshiva's humility, and immediately apologized for his rude behavior. "

After the davening, students of Rav Shach approached him and asked why he so readily accepted blame and begged forgiveness for

what surely was not a misdeed. After all, why should he not be able to sit down in the seat.

Rav Shach explained, "If Torah is all that one aspires to have, then everything else in this world, all the items one would normally squabble about has no significance. When one is immersed in Torah, a seat is meaningless, a place is meaningless. Surely a material object is not worth getting upset over, surely no less are they worth fighting over. Why shouldn't I apologize?"

The Rav and the Bar Mitzvah Boy



Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky once attended a bar mitzvah where the bar mitzvah boy had a difficult time with the Torah reading. In the middle of the reading, for a personal reason Rav Yaakov had to briefly leave the shul.

When Rav Yaakov returned, he was asked if he wanted the portion to be read again from the point where he had left. Rav Yaakov declined this offer, explaining that he was concerned that the bar mitzvah boy would think that the portion was being read again because he had read poorly.

Rav Yaakov continued: Krias Hatorah (the public Torah reading) is a Rabbinic mitzvah, but the requirement that we not cause hurt or embarrassment to our fellow Jew is mandated by the Torah. It would be wrong to violate a Torah mitzvah in order to fulfill a rabbinical mitzvah.

Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky – Add "Achashverosh" to The Patient's Name By Naama Green



In the name of Rabbi Yehudah Yosefi, it is told that a young man recently approached Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky for a blessing. The rabbi asked the young man for his name, and the young man replied: "Nimrod."

In response, the rabbi said to him: "Nimrod? No, not Nimrod, rather "Shaltiel".

Those who heard, raised an eyebrow, knowing Rabbi Kanievsky's sensitivity to the name "Nimrod": Why did the rabbi choose to call the young man such a rare biblical name, "Shaltiel"?

The young man returned home and informed his parents that from now on his name would be Shaltiel. His mother said to him: "Not from today...already from the day of your circumcision, that's what we called you, but later we thought it was too old-fashioned so we changed to Nimrod."

Another story tells Rabbi Yosefi: A Jew came to Rabbi Kanievsky and told him about his father who was very sick, and asked him whether to add him a name as a *segulah* for a complete recovery. Rabbi Kanievsky's answer was: "Call him Antiochus."

When the questioner expressed his amazement, the rabbi replied: "Then Achashverosh". The questioner returned to his father and told him the Rabbi's response. The bed-ridden father burst into tears and admitted that he had converted without circumcision.

Such conversion is not valid, and therefore, in fact he is a complete non-Jew…

Another story is told by Rabbi Reuven Reich, the son-in-law of the Lakewood Rosh Yeshiva. Decades ago a young boy who liked to photograph the holy *Tzaddikim* of the generation, came to the home of Rabbi Kanievsky.

He went into the rabbi's home and took a rare picture of the rabbi feeding a cat who came looking for food. After the photo was taken by the young man, Rabbi Kanievsky asked him to stop filming, but the young man continued to take more pictures. In response, Rabbi Kanievsky got upset and said, "that's rude", "I'm telling you to stop filming!" At this point the boy panicked, he opened the film (for those who remember what a film was ...) and burned all the pictures.

Twenty-five years passed since then, the young man had already raised a family and was blessed with a bunch of boys. Before the Bar Mitzvah of one of his children he came to Rabbi Kanievsky's house and when he entered the rabbi's room, the rabbi looked at him and immediately said: "I've been searching for you for 25 years. You are the boy who photographed me feeding the cat; I wanted to ask forgiveness for getting angry with you".

How special is the fear of sin and the power of perception of such a great Sage, immersed in non-stop Torah learning the vast majority of the day.

"A person must recognize his own greatness, for he was created in the image of Hashem. This awareness does not lead to arrogance, but to responsibility.

One who knows his worth will not act in a manner beneath it." ~ Alter of Slabodka (Madregas HaAdam).

A Time for Mesiras Nefesh



In 1919, the Novardok Yeshivah was besieged by Bolshevik soldiers. The Rosh Yeshivah, the Alter of Novardok, was away at the time, but a short while earlier he had responded with a telegram to his student's request for guidance in the face of the Bolshevik threats that they stop learning Torah.

The telegram had only two words in it: "Av HaRachamim", Father of Mercy, the opening words of the Tefilah which we recite on Shabbos morning for the martyrs of our people, for those who have died just for being Jewish.

The message was clear, that they should be prepared to die, if necessary, rather than give in to the Bolshevik demands to stop learning.

The commanding Bolshevik officer led his soldiers into the Bais Medrash, marched straight to the Rabbi in charge, and demanded that the Yeshivah close its doors immediately.

The young Rabbi, instead of responding, stood up, unbuttoned his shirt, calmly and fully composed, he said, "Shoot me." The rest of the students then lined up behind him, unbuttoned their shirts as well, and stood there, ready to accept a bullet.

The officer and his men were completely thrown off by this display of spiritual strength, and they just turned around and left the Yeshivah alone!

Whoever is happy will make others happy.

It Saved My Life - By Rabbi Sholom DovBer Avtzon



My name is Eugene and I wish to share with you the story of these tefillin that I am wearing. I grew up in a small village in Czechoslovakia. We were a very traditional Jewish home in a small village which had a handful of Jewish families. There were similar villages in the area, all with their handful of Jewish families.

None of the villages had a shul or a *minyan*. So Shabbat services rotated from village to village. Each Friday afternoon the families from the villages would travel to the designated village of that week and would stay with the few families in that village. This way we were able to make a minyan.

We had no rabbi, but in Europe most Jews were well versed in reading Hebrew and knew basic tenets of the customs, traditions and Jewish law, so we could organize our services without a rabbi.

When the Nazis came to our village and ordered me to follow them, they allowed me a few minutes to part with my mother. The parting words she told me were, to wrap my Tefillin each morning and she said that will help you stay alive. Throughout the four years that I was a prisoner in the various concentration camps, I kept her command, wrapping the tefillin on my hand and placing it on my head.

Boys you understand that I couldn't do it in public; it would have been taken away from me. So often it was put on in the most extreme conditions. I had to wake up much earlier than everyone else. I

always wonder how they never found it or caught me. Indeed Hashem was watching over me.

Toward the end of the war as the German war machine was collapsing, and the guards were trying to save themselves, I managed to escape from the camp I was in. As I was walking on the road, I saw a dead German soldier and I changed into that cursed German army uniform. I felt it was safer to walk in that uniform than in the clothing we wore in the camps.

One day as I was walking, I came upon a field and saw a large assemblage of German soldiers standing with their arms up. I realized that they were prisoners of an advance Russian unit. I stood there contemplating my next move. Obviously, I too would be taken as a prisoner, but perhaps when the Russians interrogate me and will see the prisoner number tattooed on my arm, they will take care of me.

I hesitantly and apprehensively began walking towards them, and barely had I taken a few steps when I was spotted. I was stopped by a Russian soldier who ordered me to hand over my knapsack. He rifled through it and pulled out my tefillin bag. He looked at me (in the German uniform) in astonishment and shaking his head, he said, 'Ivri (Hebrew/Jew)?'

I nodded. The Russian soldier pointed to the forest, and I realized that I need to leave right away and as fast as possible. I ran toward the forest to safety and a few moments later, I heard the rattle of machine gun fire behind me, as all the German soldiers who were being held as prisoners in that field, were gunned down by the Russians. At that point I realized that the Russian soldier was a fellow Jew and he realized that I was a Jew who was wearing a German uniform to survive.

He realized this only because he saw my tefillin, the tefillin that I held on to so persistently and with a resolve that I and them will never part. Yes, doing this mitzvah saved my life!

Children, with Hashem's kindness you are living in a beautiful country, where we pray that these or similar atrocities never happen again. It is not dangerous to put on tefillin, or some other mitzvah and declare that you are a proud Jew.

But sometimes, when things are going easy, people become lax thinking it is ok if I don't put it on every day. So, I want you to remember my mothers' words, One day this or some other mitzvah may protect and save your life as it did mine.

Yes, each and every mitzvah we do, is an extra protection for us.

Divorcing Because Of a Delicious Kugel



A husband and a wife came to **Rabbi Israel of Koznitz (also known as the "Koznitzer Maggid,")** They had a big fight and wanted a divorce.

"My wife," complained the man, "every week she makes a delicious kugel (potato cake for Shabbos). I love that kugel! All week I work and shlep, just for that kugel! When I just think of that kugel, my mouth starts watering…

"But what does this foolish woman do to me? She torments me! After I recite the kiddush, do I get the kugel? No-o-o-o. First she serves the gefilte fish, then the soup, then the chicken and the potatoes. Then, a couple of other dishes, and then I'm full - I can't possibly take one more bite. Only then she brings in the kugel! Now, shouldn't I divorce her?"

The wife explained that in her parents' home it was always done this way. She wouldn't budge.

The Koznitzer Maggid thought for a few moments and said, "I hear you both and I have a solution that I think will appease each of you." He addressed the wife: "From now on, you should make two kugels - one to be eaten right after kiddush, and one to serve during the main course. The couple smiled at the solution and left, reconciled.

From that day on, the Koznitzer Maggid also always had two kugels at his Shabbat table—one right after kiddush, and another one after the main course. This is how the Shalom Bayis Kugel ("harmony in the home kugel") was born.

Not only should we be careful in our own home to preserve harmony with our spouses, we should actively promote Shalom between others, always praising a wife to her husband and husband to his wife.

The Sensitivity of Respecting a Jew Who Has Gratitude for a Dog by Rabbi Simon Jacobson



I was giving a class on the topic of unconditional love. Conditional love is driven by ulterior motives and is therefore subject to change: If the motive is no longer fulfilled, the love wanes in direct proportion. Unconditional love, by contrast, is unwavering because it is not determined by mercurial factors.

As I was speaking, a gentleman sitting to my right began to mutter. "Absolutely right," he said. "The only unconditional love is the love you get from your pet dog." His voice got louder and more aggressive. "Human love can never be

trusted. People will always disappoint you, but your dog will always love you, unconditionally. When you come home after a hard day, your dog will greet you at the door, lick you and always accept you. Human love is unpredictable, always changing, always with strings attached."

The man became increasingly passionate, to the point that he was almost frothing at the mouth. 'Yes," he raved on, "humans can never be trusted. The only love that is unconditional is the one from your pet." Clearly, the issue touched a deep chord in this gentleman.

The rest of the class, however, was quite annoyed. People tried to silence him. Some snickered, others laughed, while others got angry. One woman spoke out at him, with a dismissive voice, "We didn't come to hear you talk about your dog. We came to hear the Rabbi. Why don't you just shut up with this dog nonsense. Stop raving like a lunatic."

I'll never forget the look in his eyes, as he glared at her and hissed with an anguished, trembling voice: "You… You are so shallow…"

The entire class looked at me waiting, watching how I would respond. I could have easily dismissed the individual. It would even have been possible to get a good laugh at his expense. But I instantly remembered something that took place many years ago, when I wore a younger (and slimmer) man's clothes.

A man came to see me and told me his life story, which included the horrible abuse that his alcoholic father would subject him to. To avoid the blows of a baseball bat, the young boy would run outside and sleep near the doghouse, where he would be comforted by the love of his pet dog…

The man told me, "I learned love from… a dog. That was the first true love I ever experienced."

I was utterly stunned. It was the first time I had ever heard about real abuse. I just couldn't believe it. But I never forgot the story. So now, when this gentleman was carrying on about the unconditional

love of a dog, I said to myself, "you never know where people find love. Never, ever judge anyone especially when it come to the emotional realm."

So I calmly said to the man at the class: "Listen, this week we're talking about human love. We'll designate another time to discuss canine love." Everyone was surprised that the man responded with respect, "Thank you. I understand."

After the class, another attendee, slipped me a handwritten note, which I read after I returned home. "I have been coming to your class for two years," she wrote. "I have learned many things and been very inspired. But tonight I learned the most important lesson of all: The respect one must show to other people, no matter how strange they may behave. You have healed me tonight from my greatest wound: The lack of trust in human dignity."

A few months later, the gentleman called me as well, and said that he wants to thank me for not dismissing him. "Your validation of me has given me strength to deal with some very difficult challenges I am facing.

Over the years, I have always been dismissed as weird when I would strongly react, in my own bizarre way, to issues around love. That night something changed. The fact that you did not invalidate me, that you allowed me to be strange, opened some significant doors. I now believe in some new possibilities."



Choosing Not to Listen

"The essential trait to master is the ability to not want to hear anything about other people that is not necessary for you to know." ~ The Chofetz Chaim zt"l.



Chess History: Samuel Reshevsky By Jonathan Zalman



In 1920 the 'infant prodigy,' who never played on Shabbos, defeated twenty 'graybeards' in Paris.

Samuel Reshevky, one of the best chess players in U.S. history, began playing at the age of 4. Born in 1911 in Ozorkow, Poland, Reshevky moved to the U.S. when he was 8. By that time he was so good that he had begun to play in simultaneous exhibitions during which he'd compete against a number of strong players at once.

On May 17, 1920, Reshevky faced 20 players in a simul in Paris. The New York *Times* covered it then, and posted a picture of the match, with a quote from the article, on its Instagram page yesterday. The article is both a treasured relic of chess history, and a reminder about the how beautifully journalists—and their allowing editors—once wrote.

Here's the lead paragraph from the article, which includes a ***70-word*** second sentence:

Twenty graybeards sitting in a square played chess yesterday in Paris against a very small 8-year-old boy, and he beat them all. Among the graybeards were some of the best players in France, and one at least, whose boast it is that he drew with Capablanca, the Pan-American chess champion, but all their reputation availed them nothing against a frail child with a pale, thoughtful face who moved quietly from one board to another, reducing their most skillful plans and wiles to nothingness and mating them and mating them when they least expected it.

Reshevksy, an Orthodox Jew, would become an International Grandmaster at the age of 39, and defeated seven world champions in his lifetime. His main profession, however, was that of an accountant.

Michael Winner



Every morning, we start off with a list of brachos, in which we thank Hashem for all the different types of chesed that He gives us every day. Each bracha is in the present tense: "Who spreads out the land over the waters, Who girds Israel with strength, etc."

However, there is one, and possibly a second, bracha that is in the past tense. The first, is "Who provided me with all my needs." Several commentators also have the text, "Who prepared the steps of man," rather than what we have "Who prepares the steps of man."

So, the big question is, why are all these important brachos in the present while one, and according to some, two brachos are in the past?

Many of the commentators explain that the reason the brachos are in the present is because these are things that Hashem is constantly doing--every day, every moment. In fact, Hashem is constantly "recreating the world." Therefore, we keep the brachos in the present tense.

So, what's different about "Who provided me with all my needs" and according to some, "Who prepared the steps of man"?

(Please note: Most of today's siddurim have only one bracha in the past "Who provided me with all my needs. However, some, including, I saw, the Frankfurt Siddur, has also "Who prepared the steps of man" in the past. I'll attempt to answer both, since they are related to each other.)

As mentioned, all of the brachos that we say in this section, are giving thanks to Hashem for different goods that He gives us every day. However, these two could be looked at in a different light. They are a bit more general, and represent not specific goods, but rather represent how we look at the day ahead. How so?

The first: Who prepared for all my needs. When we begin the day, instead of worrying about how we are going to feed ourselves or afford our mortgage or rent, or this or that, we need to understand that Hashem has already taken care of that. What will be will be. Whatever physical actions we take to attain those goods are only "a show." While we do our work, we know that in the end, we only receive what He gives. Therefore, we need to look at our income as "already taken care of" as we begin each day. No need to worry about what is or will be, since it's already been taken care of.

The second bracha, which according to some is: "Who prepared the steps of man" is looked at in a similar way. We don't necessarily control all that happens in life. Many times, Hashem has a plan and has already planned out your day for you. He wants you at a certain place to experience something, and you WILL end up there. He has ALREADY prepared it. While we don't always have free choice on

what occurs to us, we DO have free choice on how we handle it (which is itself a source of growth). Therefore, according to those who have this bracha in the past, we are acknowledging that Hashem has already planned out our day, and sometimes we have to "go with the flow," see where He takes us, and learn and grow from the experience.

So, perhaps, this might explain why at least one bracha is in the past tense. Not to say that Hashem created the world and left it at that, but perhaps to teach us that sometimes we need to accept that we are not always in the driver's seat and Hashem has already taken care of whatever physical and spiritual needs that we need.

Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

The Correct Way to Earn Parnassah

The Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabba* 15:6) associates the *pasuk*, **בהעלתך את הנרות** - "When you will light the lamps of the menorah…" with the *pasuk* (*Tehillim* 34:10), **יראו את ה' קדושיו כי אין מחסור ליראיו** - "Fear Hashem, His holy ones because those who fear Him lack nothing." What is the connection between these two *pesukim*?



The Tiferes Shmuel of Alexander *zt'l* explains that some people steal, cheat, and commit other *aveiros* in their quest to earn their *parnassah*. Others don't learn Torah every day or don't daven in shul because they feel

that they need every moment of their time to earn *parnassah*. The *pasuk* urges us, **יראו את ה'** fear Hashem. Conduct your business with honesty and set aside time for Torah and tefillah. Don't be afraid that you won't earn enough money, because **אין מחסור ליראיו** - those who fear Him lack nothing. Your *parnassah* won't suffer due to your set times of Torah and tefillah.

We learn this from the **נר מערבי** - the western lamp of the menorah. This lamp had the same amount of oil as all the other six lamps, and yet, every day, this western lamp remained lit for many hours longer than the others. How was this possible? Because it was Hashem's will. Hashem decides how long oil burns and how much money one earns; the number of hours invested in work is irrelevant. He can work less and earn the same amount. The menorah teaches us that we can work fewer hours, and our *parnassah* won't be negatively affected.

Regarding the *mon*, it states (11:8), **שטו העם ולקטו וטחנו... ובשלו** "The nation went out, gathered, ground…and cooked the *mon*."

The *Zohar* (vol.2 62-63) explains that **שטו** comes from the word **שטותא**, foolishness. The people in the desert worked hard to gather and prepare the *mon*, but it was foolish. Had they worked less, the *mon* would have fallen at their doorpost, and they would have *mon* ready to eat. Similarly, it states in this week's *parashah* **היד ה' תקצר** "Do you think that Hashem's strength is limited?" 11:23. Hashem has the strength to sustain us, and we must not doubt that.

It has been tried and tested by thousands of people. *Parnassah* comes from Hashem, so working less doesn't necessarily mean you will earn less money. Devoting time for Torah and tefillah brings *brachah*, and you can earn the same amount in less time and with less effort.

Fascinating Insights by Rabbi Yehoshua Alt

Many say **ברוך הוא וברוך שמו** when Brachos are being recited. The Gra didn't answer **ברוך הוא וברוך שמו** because he was afraid he would miss an Amen. He said there are two Amens that people forget to say: One is to **המחזיר שכינתו לציון** , Who restores His Presence to Zion where people may respond with **מודים דרבנן** without answering Amen to the Bracha.

The other is **הפורש סכת שלום עלינו...ועל ירושלים**, Who spreads the shelter of peace upon us…and upon Yerushalayim, which we say in **השכיבנו** prior to Shemoneh Esrei on Friday night, where people may say **ושמרו** without responding with Amen. So, these Amens are to Zion and Yerushalayim. These Amens are so precious that maybe it is preventing the Geula.

Here is another interesting insight concerning **ברוך הוא וברוך שמו**.



The followers of the false Moshiach Shabbtai Tzvi (1626-1676) would make a special point of proclaiming ברוך הוא **ברוך** שמו when reciting Brachos because the Gematria of this phrase, 814, is identical to that of the name of their leader, **שבתי צבי**. They wanted to remember him in their prayers. For this reason, a number of great Jewish leaders and Torah sages refrained from using this formula in order to distance themselves from the falsifiers and said ברוך הוא **וברוך** שמו. Although it was the custom to say **ברוך הוא וברוך שמו** for hundreds of years prior to Shabbtai Tzvi, the Shabbateans apparently adapted the phrase ברוך הוא **ברוך** שמו omitting the **ו**, in order to produce the Gematria they wanted. Those who respond today with **ברוך הוא וברוך שמו** when hearing a Bracha should be careful to vocalize the conjunctive **ו**.

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld *Rosh Hayeshiva Yeshivas Beis Dovid*

Everybody wants a good life. And that is when we look to the Torah to give us some guidance.

In this week's parsha, the Torah tells us something incredible. We are dealing over here with the greatest generation that was to ever walk planet Earth. They left Mitzrayim, they saw the ten makkos, they saw kriyas Yam Suf, they saw the biggest miracles ever to be performed. And yet, the same klal Yisrael said the following, 11:4-5 **" וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יַאֲכִלֵנוּ בָּשָׂר** - *"But the multitude among them began to have strong cravings. Then even the children of Israel once again began to cry, and they said, "Who will feed us meat?"*



They had *Taavos*, and they were crying, "who is going to give us the steaks?: **זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם אֵת הַקִּשֻּׁאִים וְאֶת הָאֲבַטִּחִים וְאֶת־הֶחָצִיר וְאֶת־הַבְּצָלִים וְאֶת־הַשּׁוּמִים** We remember the fish, the cucumbers and the beautiful water melons, the onions and the garlic." "Oh, that's what we remember, those were the good times in Egypt".

You left Mitzraim for a very good reason. You are in the *midbar* and you are complaining? That's what you want, to remember the good times? Is it all about an onion or a cucumber?

What is going on? Yes, it started with the *Erev Rav*, but klal Yisrael got influenced from them. They complained to Moishe Rabeinu, and Hashem was not very happy. So, Hashem gave it to them – Oh boy, did He give it to them! They had so much meat, that it was coming

out of their noses! They had so much, that they died from it – death by gluttony! That's why it was called קִבְרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה - *Graves of Craving*. They got everything that they desired, and more.

There is a person called Malcome Forbes, publisher of the Forbes magazine. He once made a birthday party for himself. A 70th birthday party. It wasn't just a regular party by our standards. He didn't even make it in America where he lived. He just flew 800 guests to Mexico. The biggest celebrities, the richest people. The estimated cost for this highly ostentatious birthday bash was well over $2 million! What an incredible thing. Everybody went crazy, asking, how could he spend so much money.

When klal Yisrael were collecting the treasures from the Mitzryim, Moishe Rabeinu didn't join in. He was busy collecting Yoseph's bones from mitzrayim.

Says the medrash, look at this. When klal Yisrael are getting money, what is Moishe Rabeinu doing? Torah, Mitzvos and Maasim Tovim.

We sometimes lose track of the true goal in life. We look for what gives us pleasure. We look at what advertising tells us is good. You know, that it has been said, that if one keeps looking for one's desires to be fulfilled, it will often be met with disappointment. The American dream – life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is just about the chase, because, one will never find it. If happiness is outside of a person, you can only pursue it, but never reach it. It has got to be internal.

What we have to learn, and what the Torah is telling us, is that we shouldn't think about what used to be. Before **Corona**, I remember this, I remember that. Right now, the Riboino Shel Olam wants us to live today- right now – Hayom. Whatever we have and whatever situation we find ourselves, is what the Riboino Shel Olam wants from us. - ***I want to wish everyone a great Shabbos!***

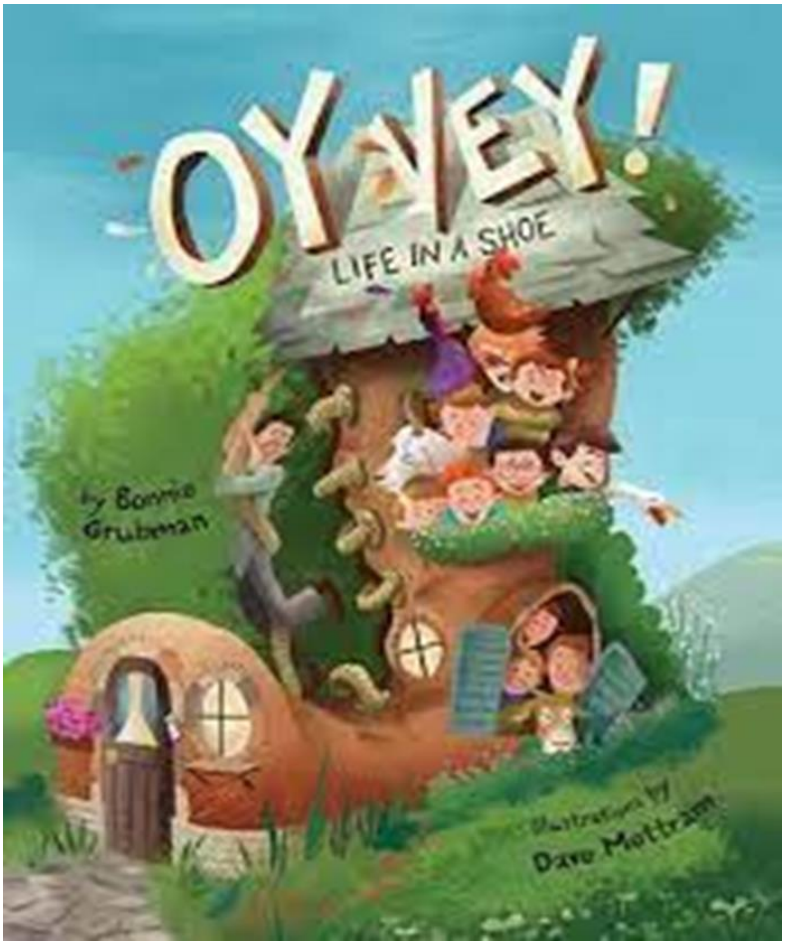
The Necessity of Humility



One of the prerequisites for Torah is humility. In the year 1812 the **Chassam Sofer's** wife (He was married three times in his life, after his wives passed away.) passed away. After some time passed, many shiduchim were posed to him, especially from wealthy and prominent people.

R' Mayer Leitersdorf, who was very wealthy, had just one daughter and was willing to give his wealth for the Chassam Sofer to be his son-in-law. At that time, a letter arrived from R' Akiva Eiger saying his son-in-law Avraham Moshe just died, leaving his daughter a widow.

Since he knew that the Chassam Sofer had many connections, he requested to find someone suitable for his daughter. The Chassam Sofer gave the letter to R' Daniel Prossnitz (1749-1846), who was the Rosh Beis Din of Pressburg and the closest colleague and confidant of the Chasam Sofer, to find someone for the daughter of **R' Akiva Eiger**. When R' Prossnitz saw the letter, he thought the Chassam Sofer himself would be the perfect match. After the shiduch was suggested the Chassam Sofer spoke to R' Akiva Eiger about his daughter. He said what a great person she is but ended off with a caveat. Chazal say that one should marry the daughter of a Torah scholar and I am not a Torah scholar. The Chassam Sofer humbly replied I also have to confess that I am not a Torah scholar and the Gemara says one should take a Torah scholar for his daughter in marriage. The shidduch went through and the Chassam Sofer married R' Akiva Eiger's daughter.



Be Happy with Your Portion

We must be satisfied with the place Hashem puts us in. Sometimes, we don't like the location, and sometimes we think it will be better for our spirituality to be elsewhere, but when Hashem wants us to be there (and due to the circumstances, we can't change that), we believe that it is for our best.

We can take this a step further and add that this doesn't only apply to locations. It also applies to situations. We must be **שמח בחלקו** and trust that Hashem gave us the situation that best suits our needs.

Sometimes, people want another job, more money, better friends, more *nachas*, improved health, etc. Life isn't as they hoped it would be. Nevertheless, they must be **שמח בחלקו**, happy with their portion, because they believe that this is the life Hashem chose for them. Think: "I have everything I need. The proof is that if I needed something else, Hashem would have given it to me. So, I can be happy with my portion because nothing is lacking in my life."

It states (11:4), **והאספסוף אשר בקרבו התאוו תאוה**, and Rashi writes that the **ערב רב** craved meat. **The Ropshitzer Rav *zt'l*** (*Zera Kodesh*) writes, "Only the *erev rav* craved meat, not the Jewish nation. This is because the Jewish nation believed in Hashem, and those who believe in Hashem, don't lack anything. When they don't have something, they say, 'Apparently, I don't need it."

The Ropshitzer Rav elaborates: Every morning we say the brachah **העושה לי כל צרכי** - "Hashem gives me all my needs." This means, if I need something, Hashem will give it to me. And if He doesn't, then obviously I don't need it. So why should I be upset? Why should I cry for meat?

It states **והאספסף אשר בקרבו התאוו תאוה וישבו ויבכו גם בני ישראל** this means that the *erev rav* craved meat, and Bnei Yisrael were also crying. Why did they cry?

The Baal Shem Tov *zt'l* taught that when a person sees people committing an *aveirah*, it means that he is also associated with that *aveirah* – in some way. Otherwise, Heaven wouldn't have shown it to him. The Ropshitzer Rav explains that when Bnei Yisrael saw the *erev rav* complaining that they wanted meat, the Jewish nation thought to themselves, "Why don't they realize that if they needed meat, Hashem would have given it to them. And if they don't have meat, they obviously don't need it? Where is their *emunah*?"

And then the nation had another thought. They said to themselves, "When I see people with a low level of *emunah* that means I also need *chizuk* in *emunah*. **וישבו ויבכו** means the nation was crying, doing *teshuvah*, and they were strengthening themselves with emunah, because they witnessed the low level of *emunah* of the *erev rav*.

The Shlah HaKadosh teaches that we should always say **אם ירצה ה'** or **בעזרת ה'**, because we can't do anything without Hashem. This is hinted at in the pasuk (9:20), **על פי ה' יסעו ועל פי ה' יחנו** , the ability to travel and to camp is only, **על פי ה'** , if Hashem decrees it. we can't do anything on our own.

"True Bitachon is not the absence of challenges, but the unwavering belief that Hashem is with us in every challenge." – Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsburgh.

העושה לי כל צרכי , "Hashem gives me all my needs."



We mentioned above that this is what the **Ropshitzer** said. However, in most siddurim the nusach is to say **שעשה לי כל צרכי** in the past tense. How do we reconcile this? [If anyone has anything to add, I would be happy to hear it.]

I did a little research into this with help from my good chaver- Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Coleman, and found the following:

The Biala siddur does indeed have the nusach **העושה לי כל צרכי**. [Do you know of any others?]

Rabeinu Manoach says that this bracha is based on the Pasuk in parshas Eikev **כֹּחִי וְעֹצֶם יָדִי עָשָׂה לִי אֶת־הַחַיִל הַזֶּה** 8:17. Perhaps because it is based on this Pasuk, Chazal were reluctant to change the tense.

Actually, the Rashba asks why do we say this particular bracha in the past tense when all the others are not?

The Machatzitz Hashekel brought in Anaf Yosef says that although this bracha should be written in the present tense in line with the other brachos, we do not change the nusach because it is sourced from the Gemarah. The Gemarah says, Brachos 60b that when you tie your shoes, one should say - **כִּי סַיֵּים מְסָאנֵיהּ, לֵימָא: "בָּרוּךְ ... שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כָּל צָרְכִּי" [הספר מסכת של תפילה]**

העושה לי כל צרכי

The nuance regarding the nusach (text) of the bracha **שעשה לי כל צרכי** (He who has provided me my every need) touches on a classic intersection of Halacha, grammar, and liturgy. Here is some additional context to help reconcile the variation I found.

1. The Grammatical & Conceptual Conflict

Most brachos follow the Hafala structure (e.g., Ha-motzi, Ha-nosein), which uses the present participle to denote Hashem's continuous, ongoing providence. The use of the past tense, She-asah, is indeed an outlier.

The Avudraham Perspective: He explains that the past tense reflects the specific moment of putting on shoes. By the time you finish tying them, the "need" of being shod is already fulfilled for that moment.

The Rashba / Ran view: Many commentaries suggest that the past tense acknowledges that Hashem prepared the leather and the craft long before you were even born. Unlike food, which is created daily, your "needs" (shoes/garments) often involve a process of creation that is already complete.

2. Reconciliation of the Tense

The tension between the Ropshitzer's preference (Ha-oseh - present) and the standard Siddur (She-asah - past) can be understood through two different spiritual lenses:

The She-asah (Past) Approach: Emphasizes Gratitude for the Finished Product. It acknowledges the established order of the world—the fact that the world was created with the capacity to provide for our needs.

The Ha-oseh (Present) Approach: Emphasizes Ongoing Providence (Hashgacha Pratis). The Ropshitzer and other Chassidic masters often preferred present tense verbs in prayer to reinforce the

belief that Hashem is actively and constantly recreating the world and our specific situation at this very second.

3. Other Sources and Variations

Other Siddurim or sources that utilize the present tense.

Siddur Avodas HaLev: While it maintains the standard She-asah, it provides commentary noting the Chassidic preference for the present tense in their private nuschaos to emphasize the renewal of creation.

Likutei Mahariach: He discusses the variations in Birchos HaShachar and notes that while the Talmudic text is definitive, various minhagim reflect the underlying philosophical leaning of the specific community toward either "Continuity" (Present) or "Covenantal History" (Past).

Siddur Ha-Ari (Nusach Arizal): While most Nusach Sefard and Ari Siddurim strictly adhere to the Gemara's She-asah, many early Chassidic prayer books edited by the students of the Baal Shem Tov include notes acknowledging the Ha-oseh variation as a "kavanah" (intention) rather than a required textual change.

Conclusion: The Machatzitz Hashekel is the strongest halachic justification for the past tense: "One does not change the text of the Sages."

If you are looking to reconcile the two, the best approach is to treat the "She-asah" as the Halachic text (the requirement) and the "Ha-oseh" as a Meditative intention (the internal experience). One says the words of the Sages while maintaining the internal mindset that Hashem is currently providing these needs as one laces the shoes.

בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־הַנֵּרֹת - The word בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ ("when you raise up") implies that the leader's job is to elevate the people. ~ Sfas Emes.

"Educate a Lad According to his Way"

We discussed above that each person has his unique talents, and each person needs to find his individual path and mission in *avodas Hashem*. When it comes to **חינוך הבנים** - educating children, we must also find the child's unique talents and specialties, which can be developed for Hashem's service.

It states **שם האחד גרשום... ושם האחד אליעזר** "The name of one [of Moshe's children] was Gershom… The name of one was Eliezer." [The pasuk doesn't call the second child **השני**, to remind us that each child is **אחד** - one and unique in his own way.



Another explanation is that a parent should treat each of his children as though he was **אחד** , your only child.

In the *Hagadah shel Pesach* we say, **כנגד ארבע בנים דברה תורה אחד חכם ואחד רשע ואחד תם ואחד שאינו יודע לשאול**, "The Torah speaks about four children: One is wise, one is a *rasha*, one is a simpleton, and one is the child who doesn't know how to ask questions."

The word **אחד** is repeated four times here to remind parents to consider each child like an only child.]

Both children are called **אחד** because each one was unique, unlike anybody else, with their mission in life.

Someone has one hundred keys, and he knows that one of them can open up the locked door. He tried ninety-nine keys, but none of them opened up the door. He loses his patience and breaks down the door. Why did he do that? If he had been patient, he would find the right key that opens up the door.

The same is with *chinuch*. If you failed in opening the child's heart, that's because you didn't find the right key yet. But don't give up. Think about the nature of the child and try to find the key that will work for him.

A father once asked a *rosh yeshiva*, "Who is the best *bachur* of the yeshiva? I want to know because I want the best *bachur* of the yeshiva to be my son-in-law." The *rosh yeshiva* replied, "I have seventy best *bachurim*." There were seventy *bachurim* in his yeshiva, and each one was best in his own way.

This is how parents should value each one of their children. They should consider each child their best child since each child is great in his own way.

Living Jewish

כִּי־ה׳ דִּבֶּר־טוֹב עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל For G-d has spoken good upon Israel 10:29

The words "spoken good" occur only twice in our Scriptures, here and in Megilat Esther, where we find the phrase "spoken good for the king." According to our commentators this is an allusion to G-d:

When a person speaks well of his fellow Jew, it is considered as if he spoke well of the Master of the world. *(The Rebbe Reshab)*

"In times of trouble, strengthen your heart... Wounded lions still know how to roar." ~ Shmuel HaNagid (933-1056).

Vechol Maaminim -With Wisdom, He Opens the Gates

Shabbos Parashas Beha'alosecha is the yahrtzeit of the Mashgiach, **Harav Yeruchem Halevi Levovitz, zt"l**.



In one of his shmuessen, he spoke about the words of Chazal (Shabbos 119b) "*Anyone who answers amen with all his might – has the gates of Gan Eden opened for him.*" He said: Naturally, even one who is strict about answering amen does not think that he deserves to have the gates opened because of this, because this is not an action that requires much effort.

A person can easily merit to be strict about answering amen. But that is not the case. A person must believe the words of Chazal about the great virtue of amen. Just like the nature of water is to extinguish the fire, even though we do not understand why, likewise, the power of answering of amen is that it opens the gates in this world and in Olam Haba. "In every situation, he will certainly follow his path – by answering amen, he opens the gates." (*Ma'amarei Hamashgiach*)

"A person should not rely on moments of inspiration, for inspiration comes and goes. Rather, he should accustom himself to steady, consistent service, even without feeling.

Small acts done regularly are more precious than great acts done rarely. Hashem desires the heart that is loyal, not the heart that burns briefly and then fades." ~ Pele Yoetz – (Zerizus).

The Brocho of Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld By Rabbi David Bibi



It was a beautiful day in Jerusalem as the legendary **Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld zt"l** strolled down the street for a walk. The day was filled with the beauty of life and the beauty of G-d's world. But such a mesmerizing reality came to a halt as soon as Rav Sonnenfeld noticed a little four-year-old girl crying in front of a school.

Seeing that she was clearly perturbed, he approached her. "Is everything alright?" Rav Sonnenfeld gently whispered to the girl. As it turned out, today was the first day of school, and the little girl's mother was critically ill in the hospital. The doctors' prognosis was dismal. With no one to therefore pick up the girl from school, she was left alone in tears.

Rav Sonnenfeld did not waste any time. He proceeded to obtain the girl's home address and walk her home. The story could have ended here and it would have been a beautiful demonstration of Rav Sonnenfeld's care and concern for others. But it didn't.

When Rav Sonnenfeld shortly thereafter entered the little girl's home, he was met by total disarray. The house was not exactly organized and put together, but there was good reason for it. Yet, as Rav Sonnenfeld stepped further inside and extended his warm greetings to the family members, he said, "I just want you all to know two things. Firstly, the mother is going to have a complete recovery.

Secondly, the mother is going to walk this four-year-old girl down to her chuppa." And so it was.

In an inexplicable change of circumstances, the mother underwent a total recovery. It came as an incredulous shock to all the medical staff, yet everyone graciously accepted such news. Now it came time for fulfilment of the second part of Rav Sonnenfeld's blessing.

The four-year-old girl had grown up and she was now seventeen. Although young, names of prospective shidduchim (matches) were coming her way, yet one after another, she turned them down. She was now twenty, and her younger siblings began getting to the age to marry. Although still unmarried herself, she encouragingly and happily let them go ahead. And indeed, it happened. Three years later, her younger brother got married. And another three years later, two more of her siblings had gotten married. All the while, she received names of some wonderful boys who seemed quite suitable for her. But she just didn't go along with Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld any of them. It seemed as if she was extremely picky. By her 32nd birthday, the last of her siblings was finally married.

Within a number of months, the four-year-old girl who was now 32, finally got engaged and then married. It was an unbelievably joyous occasion for all of the family. And like Rav Sonnenfeld had said, her mother walked her down to the chuppa. As the next morning rolled around and everyone began to get up for another day, the mother did not. And that was not because she was tired. Rather, in fact, she had passed away in her sleep. The newly married girl of 32 would be going to her mother's funeral.

As is the custom in Jerusalem, children ask forgiveness from their parents before they are lowered down to the earth for their repose. The kallah of just barely 12 hours had difficulty speaking, but went on to say: "Ma, I want to ask mechillah from you. For fifteen years, I appeared to be overly picky in the many shidduch offers I received, and it brought much heartache to you. I am sorry, and I

am asking for mechillah. But I just want you to know why I was so picky. It was because I wanted all of my younger siblings to also benefit from Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld's blessing to have you at their chuppa. Only after every one of them had gotten married and you walked them down to their chuppas was I ready… Please be mochel me…"

All along, it may have seemed like the girl was being picky for herself. It was about her finding the perfect boy. But, in reality, nothing could have been further from the truth. It was all about her siblings and her beloved mother. It was about affording her brothers and sisters the opportunity to have their mother dance at their weddings, and about her mother having the chance to reap the nachas of seeing her children's most joyous moments where they would begin building the family's future and legacy.

That is what it means to lead a selfless existence. That is what it means to care for others outside of yourself.

Rav Avigdor Miller on Post Shavuos Avodas Hashem



Q: Now that we finished counting the Omer and we had Shavuos and we already received the Torah, so what should be the focus of our service of Hashem from after Shavuos until Rosh Hashana?

A: Now rabosai, I'm going to tell you something that I always say: The happiest season of the year is the summertime; yes, the good old summertime. And so, let's learn to enjoy life right now. There's nothing like summertime. In the summertime if you're a homeowner, you don't spend any money on heating the building. Think of all the money you save on the fuel bills! That's happiness. You think it's silly? It's not silly at all.

Summertime, there are no colds! Unless you sit in front of the air conditioner all the time and you drink only cold drinks – watch out for that! But otherwise, you won't catch a cold. Respiratory illnesses? Not in the summertime! No coughing, no sneezing! The summertime is a pleasure! What a great blessing it is!



In the summertime you get vitamins free of charge. Walk out in the street and the sun is showering vitamins on you; the sun is a vitamin dispensary. In wintertime there are clouds, and you don't always get the vitamins you need. Sometimes you have to take extra vitamin pills. In the summertime, you get all you want. And so, boruch Hashem for the summertime.

In the summertime fruits are plentiful. That's when the apples are coming. Ah! Red apples and luscious cherries and plums and peaches; they're plentiful in the summer and the prices go down in all the fruit stores. Now you're living!

Look how much there is to enjoy in the summertime. When you walk out in the street, don't complain, "Oh, it's a hot day." Don't be a fool! Hakodosh Boruch Hu is giving you so much energy from the sun and it's free of charge. Millions of tons of horsepower energy are pouring onto this earth free of charge in the summertime; it's causing the earth to become enriched and the fruits to develop.

And it doesn't cost you a penny to get all that energy from the sun. So when you walk out into the street you have to say, "Boruch atah Hashem yotzer ha'meoros." Don't say Hashem's name of course. But *something* you must say! You have to thank Hashem for the summertime.

So, this person asks: What's the service of Hashem from Shavuos until Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur? The service is singing to Hashem. Learn how to sing to Hashem. And don't think it's a small thing. *Tov lehodos laHashem* – Do you know what's good in this world? To sing to Hashem and to thank Him. That's what's good. It's the only good there is.

What do you think was the avodas Hashem that we were *mekabel* when we accepted the Torah on Har Sinai? The most important service of Hashem is gratitude to Hashem! So now you know that from Shavuous until Rosh Hashanah we're busy singing and thanking Hashem for the manifold benefits He's giving to us; and we'll never do it enough. We'll never thank You enough!

That's the very great service in the summertime. It doesn't mean you have to stop learning. We can continue learning and doing Torah and mitzvos. Nevertheless, the avodah of gratitude for the summertime, the happiness of the summertime and thankfulness for the summertime is a very important avodah to be busy with.

Zera Shimshon

התאוו תאוה וגו' מי יאכלנו בשר Who will feed us meat? (11:4)

The generation of the desert was not allowed to eat meat unless it was part of a Korban. To simply slaughter an animal and eat the meat was not allowed. This is what they were complaining about.

The Zera Shimshon gives two reasons for this prohibition. The Mishna in Avos (2:7) says, "More meat - more worms." Plainly, this means the more flesh one has - the more he is consumed by worms when he passes away. The Zera Shimshon understands these words more literally - the more one eats meat, the more the worms will have to eat when he passes away. Since the Jews of that generation merits hearing Hashem's voice at Har Sinai, it is unbefitting that their bodies should be eaten by worms. As such, they were not

allowed to eat meat which, according the Zera Shimshon's explanation of the mishna in Avos, is the cause for worms after death. Meat that is part of a korban however, is different, since the sefarim teach write that any food that is consumed as part of a mitzva or on Shabbos does not turn into worms after death. Therefore, the consumption of korban meat was allowed.

Another reason for the generation of the desert not being allowed to eat meat other than that from korbanos is based on the Gemara (Brachos 32a) that say, "A lion only roars from a container of meat". This is a metaphor for the Yetzer Hara. When a person indulges in pleasures (container of meat), he is susceptible to be influenced by the Yetzer Hara (roaring lion).

The Jews in the desert had reached a very high level of connection to Hashem at Har Sinai and Hashem did not want them to lose that level. Had they been permitted to indulge in meat other than that sanctified as a korban, they would have become vulnerable to the Yetzer Hara and lost this connection.

In fact, the medrash (Yalkut §733) says that the Jews that complained about not having meat were in reality looking for a way to stray from Hashem. This is why they demanded meat. They knew the reason behind the prohibition and purposely wanted the exact food that would sever this connection.

With this idea the Zera Shimshon explains the passuk that says (Tehillim 22:27), יֹאכְלוּ עֲנָוִים וְיִשְׂבָּעוּ *"Eat! Humble one and be satiated."* As explained when one eats, especially when one indulges in food, he is in danger of forgetting Hashem and sinning (see Devarim 8:12 and Brachos 32a). However, one who is humble rules over his Yetzer Hara. Therefore, to such an individual exclusively the passuk says, *"Eat! Humble one and be satiated"*, since he can eat and at the same time rule over his evil inclination.

Zera Shimshon

וְעַתָּה נַפְשֵׁנוּ יְבֵשָׁה אֵין כֹּל כל *And now our soul is dry* (11:6)



The Zera Shimshon explains this complaint against the Monn as follows. The Gemara (Shabbos 129a) says that after one does bloodletting, he should eat meat and drink red wine. Red wine specifically had natural properties that are beneficial for the blood. The Jews complaint about the Monn was that although it tasted like whatever they wanted it to, it lacked the natural benefits of the food they had in mind, pointing to the fact that Monn was white (Devarim 1:1).

This though, was a fundamental mistake in their understanding of the real natural properties of the Monn. The Gemara (Kesubos 111b) that one who 'whitens his teeth' at his friend (smiles at him) gives him more by doing so, than had he given him a glass of milk. Meaning that although milk is healthy and a smile does not contain the natural health benefits of milk, nevertheless, one profits more from receiving a smile than a glass of milk.

The Zera Shimshon writes that the Monn was 'a smile' from Hashem and therefore, although it may have seemed to lack certain natural properties beneficial for health, this was 'Hashem's smile' and therefore contained a lot more in it than any food!

"Generosity is a reflection of our connection to The Divine – for Hashem is the ultimate giver." – Rabbi Nachman of Breslov.



Rashi says that the Torah specifically praises Aharon HaKohen for doing the avodah of lighting the Menorah and not altering a single thing.

And why would we think that Aharon would alter anything? The answer, says **Rav Shloime Halberstam *zt"l***, is that the flames that Aharon lit on the Menorah mystically represent the neshamos of Klal Yisroel, and by kindling these souls, Aharon was demonstrating his love for every one of them by bringing them closer to the service of **'אביהם שבשמים'** - their Father in Heaven. In this respect, Aharon worked equally for every member of Klal Yisroel, never showing any favouritism or extra love to his own children. This is the praise of Aharon **'שלא שינה'** - he didn't alter a thing!

Vedibarta Bam - A Compilation of Torah Insights in Question & Answer Format By Moshe Bogomilsky

ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה נרתיה כאשר צוה ה' את משה
"And Aharon did so; toward the face of the menorah he kindled its lamps, as G-d had commanded Moshe." (8:3)

QUESTION: Rashi explains that the Torah emphasizes that "Aharon did so" to declare Aharon's praise — *"shelo shinah"* — that he did not act differently.

Would anyone suspect that Aharon would deviate from Hashem's command?

ANSWER: Aharon, as *Kohen Gadol,* kindled the *menorah* the entire 40 years that the *Mishkan* was in the wilderness. A person naturally does something the first time with more dedication and excitement than after he has done it for several years. In his praise, the Torah says that Aharon did not change: Even after kindling the *menorah* for many years, he continued to do so with the same

dedication, fervour, and excitement as the first time. (**לקוטי בתר לקוטי**)

Alternatively, Aharon was an "*oheiv shalom verodeif shalom*" — "lover of peace and pursuer of peace" (*Pirkei Avot* 1:12) — and was therefore loved by every Jew. An ordinary citizen is often affable and involved with people and their needs. However, a person who is appointed to a high office may become conceited and distant.

Aharon's greatness is that even when he became *Kohen Gadol*, holding the second highest position in the Jewish community, "*lo shinah*" — he did not change toward his fellow man — he still remained the same "*oheiv shalom verodeif shalom*" — "lover and pursuer of peace." (**ר' מאיר זצ"ל מפרעמישלאן**)

"על פי ה' יסעו בני ישראל ועל פי ה' יחנו" ***"According to the word of G-d the Children of Israel would journey, and according to the word of the G-d they would encamp."*** **(9:18)**

QUESTION: Why are the words "*al pi Hashem*" — "according to the word of G-d" — repeated six times over a span of five *pesukim* which discuss the journeying and encampment of the Jewish people?

ANSWER: This teaches us that it is imperative for a Jew to constantly state that his planned activities will take place "*im yirtzeh Hashem*" — "G-d willing" — or "*be'ezrat Hashem*" — "with G-d's help."

For instance, a traveller should say, "I am travelling *be'ezrat Hashem* on such and such a day and I hope to arrive there, *im yirtzeh Hashem*, on such and such a day." When he arrives he should say, "I arrived *be'ezrat Hashem* and hope to leave, *im yirtzeh Hashem* on such and such a day." (**של"ה**)

"עשה לך שתי חצוצרת כסף מקשה תעשה אתם" *"Make for yourself two silver trumpets — make them hammered out."* (10:2)



QUESTION: Why were the trumpets, the *cheruvim* on top of the Ark (*Shemot* 25:18), and the *menorah* (*Shemot* 25:31) all made *"mikshah"* — hammered out of one piece?

ANSWER: The word **מקשה** stems from the word **קשה** — "difficult." Hammering something out from one piece is quite difficult and laborious.

The *cheruvim* were images of children (see *Shemot* 25:18, Rashi). The *menorah* represents Torah and *mitzvot,* as stated: "For a *mitzvah* is a lamp and Torah is light" (Proverbs 6:23). The trumpets were used to gather together and unite *K'lal Yisrael*.

Raising children successfully, progressing in Torah and *mitzvot,* and uniting *K'lal Yisrael* are all not easy tasks. On the contrary, each one is *"kashah"* — "very difficult" — and each requires *"mikshah"* — "hammering" — much effort.

"ואם באחת יתקעו ונועדו אליך הנשיאים ראשי אלפי ישראל" *"If they sound a long blast with one, the leaders shall assemble to you, the heads of Israel's thousands."* (10:4)

QUESTION: Why was one trumpet blast a signal to summon the heads of the tribes?

ANSWER: Though everybody agrees on the importance of *achdut* — unity among the Jewish people — the means to accomplish it are often elusive. Unfortunately, many people preach unity, but everyone

wants it on his own terms. Therefore, the Torah advises **וְאִם־בְּאַחַת** - If the call of the hour will be to achieve unity - **וְנוֹעֲדוּ אֵלֶיךָ יִתְקָעוּ הַנְּשִׂיאִים** - the heads and leaders of the community should first work out their differences and achieve unity; automatically the rest of the community will follow suit." (**עוללות אפרים**)

Among the most difficult aspects of arranging a conference between leaders are the formalities as to who should be invited, who should be called first, the seating arrangement, etc. In order to avoid problems, the heads of the tribes were summoned together through the sounding of the trumpet. Thus, potential jealousy as to why one was called second and not first was eliminated. (**לקוטי בתר לקוטי**)

"ויהי בנסע הארן.....שובה ה' רבבות אלפי ישראל" ***"And it came to pass when the Ark set forward... Return, O G-d, to the myriad of thousands of Israel"*** **(10:35-36)**

QUESTION: Why are these *pesukim* marked off by *nunin hakufin* — inverted "*nuns*"?



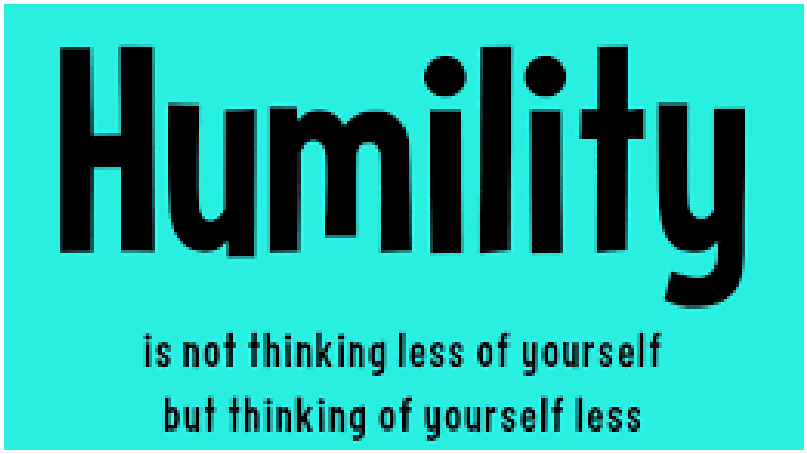
ANSWER: When Hashem offered the Torah to the Jewish people they immediately responded with two words each starting with a "נ": **נַעשה ונִשמע** — "We will do and we listen (study)." Though logically they should have said "***N**ishma ve**n**a'aseh*" — "We will study and afterwards when we understand it, we will do" — they reversed the order of the "*nunin*" to emphasize that preeminent in their relationship with Hashem was "*Kabbalat ol malchut shamayim*" — absolute submission to the yoke of Hashem. (**ספר נעשה ונשמע**)

"זכרנו את הדגה אשר נאכל במצרים חנם את הקשאים ואת האבטחים"
***"We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt gratis, the cucumbers and the melons."* (11:5)**

QUESTION: The Egyptians were very unsympathetic to their Jewish slaves and did not even give them straw required to make the bricks (*Shemot* 5:7). Did they give them free fish?

ANSWER: In Egypt it rained very little and the country would rely on the Nile river for irrigation. When the water would rise and flow into the fields, it would contain fish, and when the water would subside, the fish remained on the ground. Thus, the Jewish slaves who worked the fields for their masters would take home fish together with vegetables from the fields.(חזקוני)

"והאיש משה ענו מאד" ***"The man Moshe was exceedingly humble."* (12:3)**



QUESTION: Why is the world *"anav"* spelled without a י?

ANSWER: The final words respectively of the five *Chumashim* are **סיני, מסעיהם, במצרים, ישראל, ירחו**. The last letter of each of these words together add up to one hundred and twenty-six, which is also the numerical value of the word **ענו** without a **י**.

The Torah is telling us that though Moshe knew the entire Torah till the very last letter; nevertheless, he was not conceited, and he remained forever "the humblest of all people." (פענח רזא)

"והענן סר מעל האהל והנה מרים מצרעת כשלג"
***"The cloud had departed from atop the Tent, and behold Miriam was leprous, as white as snow."* (12:10)**

QUESTION: What is the connection between the removal of the cloud and Miriam's leprosy?



ANSWER: There are certain conditions that must be met before a person can be declared a leper. Since it is necessary to ascertain the precise colour of the leprosy, the *Mishnah (Nega'im* 2:2) says: **אֵין רוֹאִין הַנְּגָעִים... בְּיוֹם הַמְּעֻנָּן** - "The decision regarding leprosy cannot be made on a cloudy day" — because it is difficult to distinguish between different shades of the colour white, not all of which are impure.

It was therefore necessary to remove the hovering cloud, and only then, in plain daylight, were they able to see that Miriam was stricken with leprosy.

"ויצעק משה אל ה' לאמר א-ל נא רפא נא לה" **"*Moshe cried out to G-d, saying, 'Please, G-d, heal her now.' "* (12:13)**

QUESTION: Why didn't Moshe mention the name of the stricken person (Miriam) and her mother (Yocheved), as is customary when praying for a sick person?

ANSWER: The words **רפא נא** have the numerical value of 332, which is exactly the same numerical value as the names **מרים** and **יוכבד** combined. (**דגל מחנה אפרים**)

Besamei HaTorah - R' Shmuel Winzelberg

ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה נרתיה כאשר צוה ה' את משה.

And Aharon did so, towards the face of the Menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe. (8:3) - *Rashi*, quoting the *Sifri*, explains our *pasuk*, **להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה** , *to tell the praise of Aharon that he did not deviate*. The obvious question is why did the Torah need to praise Aharon for lighting the *Menorah*, *'as Hashem commanded Moshe'*? Would it ever enter anyone's mind to think that a *tzaddik* as righteous as Aharon would do anything other than what was commanded by Hashem?

Rebbe Yehuda Leib from Gur, the author of the ***Sfas Emes*** explains this as the normal tendency of people. When someone does a mitzvah there is a certain excitement that one feels for doing it for the first time. However, as time goes on and the person does this mitzvah again and again, the initial excitement wears off, and doing the mitzvah can actually become rote.

This was the praise of Aharon – for 39 years he lit the *Menorah* every day with the same excitement and enthusiasm as he did on the very first day. Not once did his excitement diminish so that the lighting of the *Menorah* was done by rote, as would be the normal tendency. This is indeed praiseworthy. (*Parperaos LaTorah*)

Rabbeinu Bachya (Chovos HaLevavos – Shaar HaBitachon)

"One who truly trusts in Hashem does not become shaken by what he lacks, nor overly attached to what he has. His heart rests securely, because he knows that no benefit or harm can reach him except by Divine decree. Such trust frees a person from constant anxiety and allows him to serve Hashem with a whole heart."

Besamei HaTorah …Beneath the Surface - R' Shmuel Winzelberg

(ח:ו) קח את הלויים מתוך בני ישראל ***Take the Leviim from the midst of the Children of Israel* (8:6)**

The *Gr"a* finds a beautiful *remez* (hint) in the word **ישראל**, when you spell the word in its **מילוי** —its completeness / fullness. This means that each letter is spelled out phonetically. For example the letter **י** is spelled **י - ו - ד** - Thus, the word **ישראל** is spelled:

י – ו – ד

ש – י – נ

ר – י – ש

א – ל – פ

ל – מ – ד

The middle row, when the letters are rearranged, will spell out the word **לויים** . **The *Chasam Sofer*** points out that the middle letter of the word **ישראל** is a **ר**. When spelled **במילוי** it becomes **ר – י – ש** . When these letters are rearranged, they spell the word **שיר** - song, which alludes to the Service of Song of the *Leviim*. (*Chaim shel Torah*)

Parshah Thoughts - by Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

Perek 11 discusses the *Bnei Yisroel's* request for food and the *Mann*, which came each day. The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 76) explains that the reason they received only daily portions of *Mann* and not bulk amounts was to keep them focused on the concept that everything comes from Hashem, the All-Giving.

R' Nachum Zev Ziv of Kelm expounds on this further. The generation of those who travelled in the Wilderness was constantly experiencing miracles, yet they still needed a reminder as to Who

was providing them with sustenance. We, who live in seemingly natural circumstances, must try so much harder to remember that Hashem is the Source of everything.

Shabbos Treasures - The Precious Gift of Shabbos



Once a king went to a town and stayed there for a short time. The townsfolk honoured the king greatly and showed much respect to him the entire time. They made great feasts for him when he arrived and throughout his visit. When it was time for the king to leave, all the people gathered to escort him out of town. He turned to the loyal townspeople and asked them to request something from him. "After all the honour you have shown me," said the king, "whatever you ask of me I will grant!"

So it is with *Klal Yisroel*. We welcome and honour Hashem's Shabbos with nice clothes, festive meals and learning Torah. When Shabbos leaves, we make a special *seudah* to honour it as well— *Melaveh Malkah*. Just like the king in the *mashal*, when we escort Shabbos, we too can make any request we like from our King, Hashem! We can ask anything from Hashem at this time, because it is a special time between Hashem and the Jewish people. (*Devarim Niflaim al Shabbos Kodsheinu*, p. 219)

Parshah Thoughts - by Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

Aharon *HaKohein* is instructed about lighting the *Menorah* of the *Mishkan* (8:2). The *Menorah* had seven branches— one central branch and three side branches. *Rashi* explains that the six outer flames of each side were facing the middle flame.



The *Chasam Sofer* expounds on this point, and states that the Torah is stressing a deeper message here. The seven branches of the *Menorah* represent the seven days of the week, and just as the six lights focused on the centre flame, so too, the six weekdays should be focused around Shabbos!

Middos

Rav Yaakov Galinsky, *zt"l*, comments that it is important for us to always retain a focus on who we are, from whom we have descended, what we represent, and our future legacy. We must constantly infuse in our minds and in the minds of our children that we, the Jewish people, have a glorious past. True, we have suffered persecution and misery, but we are still here, and our persecutors are not. They have been replaced with our present tormentors, but that is all a part of Hashem's Divine Plan. When we connect with our past, we should be filled with pride in filling the role that Hashem has chosen for us.

Rav Galinsky relates a powerful story which left a lasting impression on him, and taught him a powerful lesson about how one can endure even under the most trying situations. The episode took place in a Siberian slave labour camp where Rav Galinsky and so many others suffered unbearable pain and misery.



After a full day's work, the men would trudge back to their barracks to lay down on their wooden bunks and attempt to fall asleep. Every night at approximately 2:00 AM, one of the Polish prisoners would arise from his 'bed' and remove a bag that was hidden underneath it. He would quickly take out what appeared to be some kind of a uniform, put it on, view himself in the mirror, and then quickly take it off, return it to the bag, and go back to sleep. This went on every night.

While Rav Galinsky was used to strange things occurring in prison, this man's actions were very puzzling. Sleep was very important to the prisoner's well-being. To force himself to arise in the middle of the night just to put on a suit seemed irrational. There had to be an explanation that would shed light on this man's strange behaviour.

One day, when they were alone, Rav Galinsky asked the man to explain what he was doing, and asked, "Why do you arise in the middle of the night to put on your suit and view yourself in the mirror? Do you not value your sleep?" The man replied, "Yes, Rabbi, my sleep is very important to me, but so are my sanity and dignity. Prior to being taken captive by our Russian tormentors, I was a distinguished general in the Polish army. I had the respect of thousands of soldiers. Suddenly, our army was vanquished and I became a prisoner. In my opinion, the degradation and mistreatment they subject us to is a greater danger than the physical blows they deal to us on an almost constant basis. At all costs, I had to prevent them from getting into my mind and destroying it.

Therefore, every night when everybody is fast asleep, I risk removing my general's uniform which I was able to keep with me. I put on the uniform and look in the mirror, and for two minutes, I see before my eyes my true self, my prior position, and my status. I do not see a broken down, frail prisoner. I see a general in the Polish army! This is how I am able to maintain my sanity."

Rav Galinsky says that this idea applies to us as well. We— the Jewish people— are the descendants of a noble lineage with a compelling legacy for the future. If we visualize ourselves in our true uniforms, a uniform which exemplifies the Jewish essence and spirit, we will be able to transcend the society in which we live!

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

When the *Tallis* belonging to the ***Taz*** became old, the members of the *Taz's Shul* in Lvov decided that it was unacceptable for such a *Gadol* to wear it, and the Jewish community purchased a new *Tallis* for him. However, he absolutely refused to use it. He thanked them, but he said, "My old *Tallis* can testify before the *Bais Din Shel Ma'alah*, the Heavenly Court, that I *Davened* with a pure mind and had no stray thoughts during *Shemoneh Esrei*. Therefore, I would like to continue using my old *Tallis*!"



"Another person's physical needs are my spiritual responsibility." ~ Rabbi Yisrael Salanter.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages



Rav Avraham Yaakov *HaKohein* Pam, *zt"l*, said of his mother that she never spoke *Lashon Hara*. However, it was not because she studied the *Halachos* of *Sh'miras HaLashon*. It was because she never saw anything bad in anyone else! Therefore, there was never a temptation to speak *Lashon Hara* about anyone!

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages



Rav Shlomo Freifeld, *zt"l*, was once on a fundraising trip, and he ate dinner at the home of a friend. For one of the courses, the hostess served eggplant, not knowing that Rav Shlomo was allergic to eggplant and could not tolerate it, as he would break out in a rash if he ate it. However, Rav Shlomo calmly ate the eggplant that was served to him, as if there was nothing wrong for him to eat it.

The student that was accompanying him was shocked to see Rav Shlomo eating it, and later on, he asked his *Rebbe* about it. Rav Shlomo explained, "That kind woman prepared the dish in my honor, and her whole self-worth was dependent on my enjoying it." Then Rav Shlomo laughed. He said, "If you eat something that a hostess makes for you, even if it kills you, it's called dying by *Kiddush Hashem*!"

Besamei HaTorah - R' Shmuel Winzelberg

וכי תבאו מלחמה בארצכם על הצר הצרר אתכם When you go to wage war in your land against an enemy who oppresses you (10:9)

The *Sh"lah Ha'kadosh* remarked on this *Posuk*: With the expression of *'an enemy who oppresses you'*, the intent is not only for an external enemy who wages war on Israel, but also hints to an internal enemy that is within each and every Jew. That is, the Evil Inclination - **יצר הרע** who instigates and seduces us towards sin. Because of this, the *Posuk* does not say 'when you -singular, **תבוא** (go to wage war in your land', but rather, 'when you - plural, **תבואו** go to wage war'.

This is because the war that a person wages against his own Evil Inclination, is a constant battle that never lets up until the end of his life in this world. (*Parperaos LaTorah*)



The Wonky Streimel

A yungerman came to **Reb Shlomo Zalman Aurbach *zt'l*** with a shalom bayis problem.

He told Reb Shlomo Zalman that as a bachur, he departed from the traditional Yerushalmi garb (where even bachurim wear a streimel), choosing to wear European-style clothing. But when he began shidduchim, he understood that he won't find a regular shidduch dressed as he did, so he put back on the Yerushalmi clothes. Nevertheless, he continued to go without a streimel. He got married, lived a Jewish life in Yerushalayim, but still didn't wear a streimel.

One day, he came home with a $2,000 *shtreimel*. He thought his wife would be pleased, but she wasn't. She said, "I am used to you without a *shtreimel*. I don't need the *shtreimel*."

"But I paid two thousand dollars for it!"

Two thousand dollars was a lot of money for them, and he was upset that he spent so much on a s streimel that he didn't need.

Their *shalom bayis* began to waver over the *shtreimel*, and this is the reason he came to Reb Shlomo Zalman Aurbach *zt'l* for advice. Reb Shlomo Zalman replied, "You have a good wife. In her merit, you improved your ways. You shouldn't allow two thousand dollars to ruin your *shalom bayis*."

"But what should I do about this loss of money?"

Reb Shlomo Zalman said, "I want to buy your streimel for myself," and he gave the yungerman two thousand dollars.

The streimel didn't fit perfectly on Reb Shlomo Zalman, and his rebbetzin said, "It is very good that you helped this couple with their *shalom bayis*, but why must you embarrass yourself by wearing a wonky *shtreimel* that is too big for you?"

He replied, "I am very happy with this *shtreimel*. I would even have wanted to be buried with it because buying it restored the *shalom bayis* between a couple!"

Simchas Chasan v'Kalah

Reb Yaakov Emdin was planning his four hundredth *siyum* on *Shas*, and at the *seudah*, he planned to say **שהשמחה במעונו** - "the joy is in heaven," because what could be a greater joy than finishing *Shas* four hundred times?

His father, the **Chacham Tzvi *zt'l*** came to him in a dream and cautioned him that, **שהשמחה במעונו** should only be said at a wedding.

The *simchah* of Torah is enormous — especially the joy of learning *Shas* four hundred times – nevertheless, the term **שהשמחה במעונו** is reserved solely for a wedding because the joy of a *chasunah* is unique. We are extremely happy at a chasunah, and Hashem in heaven rejoices with us.

The first Rebbe of Slonim Rabbi Avraham Weinberg (1804–1883) ***zt'l*** said: When a *goy* makes a wedding, he is also very happy. But his joy doesn't compare to a Yid's happiness at a *chasunah*. A Yid is happy that Hashem is happy **שהשמחה במעונו**, and this joy brings *berachos* to all Yidden.

The mother of **Rebbe Elimelech of Rudnick *zt'l*** was lying on her deathbed. Rebbe Elimelech went to a wedding hall and brought back ten people who were celebrating *simchas chassan and kallah*, so there would be a minyan at her passing.

In honour of the *chassan*, Rebbe Elimelech began to dance happily before the *chassan*, and his mother started feeling better!

Rebbe Elimelech of Rudnick exclaimed, "Today's *yungerleit* don't realize the power of *simchas chassan* and *kallah*. **שהשמחה במעונו**, the joy that is in heaven means that it can bring *techiyas hameisim*, resurrection, literally."

Etz Hachaim – R' CT Blau - Shalom Bayis

It was known that **Rav Shlomo Heiman's** wife made exceptionally delicious cakes. It was also known that the **שלום בית** that they had was unparalleled. One day, Rav Shlomo Heiman told his wife an amazing and very original compliment, "Your shiur (referring to her cakes) is better than my shiur, my shiur they can "shlug up" (dispute) however, your shiur (cakes) nobody can "shlug up!"

Rav Elya Lopian told over the following story. When he was back in Kelm, he always remembered **R' Simcha Zissel m'Kelm's** unbelievable diligence. R' Elya always wondered how R' Simcha Zissel's wife

managed the entire house, non-stop, enabling him to learn uninterrupted, until R' Elya ate a Friday night **סעודה** at R' Simcha Zissel s home. R ' Simcha Zissel made **המוציא**, and after eating his while it was still silent in the room, R' Simcha Zissel turned to his Rebbetzin and said, "My dear Rebbetzin, you caused me a **שאלה** of a **ברכה לבטלה**."

Everyone was a little taken aback, and the Rebbetzin asked what the Rov meant. R' Simcha Zissel replied, "Your **חלה** is so delicious, it is like cake, perhaps I should have made a **ברכה מזונות** !!" R ' Elya said, **אכן נודע הדבר** - then I understood where the Rebbetzin got her unbelievable energy. It was R' Simcha Zissel's constant encouragement and compliments.

Etz Hachaim – R' CT Blau - Shalom Bayis



Rebbetzin ruchama shain **ע״ה** arrived at her apartment building after undergoing knee surgery. Rebbetzin Ruchama and her husband, who would get very claustrophobic, entered the tiny elevator together with another person and a cart, on 2 Panim Meiros. Instead of going upward, the elevator sank downward and got stuck. People outside the elevator tried helping, yet it took over an hour for them to solve the problem.

Meanwhile, Rebbetzin Shain, who had just had knee surgery, and her husband, were standing in the elevator and just waiting.

When the elevator finally released it's captives, they were greeted with a beautiful array of fruits, and drinks from their kind and relieved neighbours. As they were taking something to eat, Rebbetzin Shain's husband turned to her and asked, "How did you manage to stand for so long just after your knee surgery?"

Rebbetzin Shain responded, "I don't know, I was just so nervous for you the whole time since I know you that you are claustrophobic, I was worried about how you would manage, and I didn't notice the pain in my legs. But how did you manage being in a closed, small, and hot elevator with your claustrophobia?"

Her husband replied, "You're right I don't know. The entire time I was just thinking about y ou and how much pain your feet must be in, that I did not even think about it."

A divorced woman standing nearby overheard this amazing conversation and commented, "If only I would have had that attitude when I had been married I never would have gotten divorced!"

In staten island there was an old gentile couple who had exceptional **שלום בית** . Rav Moshe Meir of Staten Island asked the husband what the secret to their amazing harmony was. The man answered, "Rabbi, it is one word; **flexibility** !"

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld - Always Waiting

A husband once decided to travel away for some time from his wife and children in order to generate a source of income to provide for them all. Monthly, the wife would pick up the money and return home.

Once, she had returned home, only to realize that she must have dropped it at the store. She knew that there was little chance that she would find it, and she was down and despondent. Running back to the store nonetheless, she began looking around, but to no avail. What would she tell her children?

The next day, she returned to the store and heard a crowd of people murmuring amongst themselves. "What's going on?" she asked. "There was a bunch of money here," they said, "and Yaakov the shoemaker found it." The crowd was both surprised an excited for Yaakov, who struggled financially himself. "That's my money!" the wife exclaimed. "I was here yesterday and dropped it."

The woman located Yaakov and informed him that she believed it was her money. She described a few details about how the money was folded, indicating that it was indeed hers, But Yaakov was aware of Jewish law, and knew that under these circumstances of having the money dropped in an area primarily populated by non-Jews, the money did not need to be returned. Accepting his argument, the woman returned home, again disappointed.

But the woman's neighbours, learning what had happened, felt for her and approached the local rabbi to see if anything could be done. "In fact," the rabbi said, "the money should be returned to her. That was money which her husband worked hard for, and the *halacha* - that money does not need to be returned in an area where non-Jews are - only applies if the person who dropped the money is the owner of the money itself. Here, the husband earned this money and it really belongs to him. So the money should be given back to her."

Rav Elchonon Wasserman hy"d offered a profound insight, in relation to this story. Our body and soul have been given to us by Hashem. And therefore, true, we may fall and falter and make mistakes. But the concept of *yei'ush*, giving up hope, doesn't apply when the item does not belong to you. You can only give up hope when you have ownership of it. Hashem, however, infused our soul into us, and He is the ultimate One who has given it to us from Himself.

And Hashem never gives up hope. He never gives up on us. And therefore, we can never get lost forever. We will always find our way back.



Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

דַּבֵּר אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת הַנֵּרֹת אֶל מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יָאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת Speak to Aharon and say to him, "**When you light the lamps**, the seven lamps should cast their light toward the face of the menorah." (8:2)

When the Torah discusses the various tasks and functions that took place in the Mishkan, it is easy to "switch off" from searching how to apply these duties to *our* daily lives. After all, we do not have a Mishkan, we do not even have a Beis HaMikdash, and we may not even be Kohanim! Yet, the Torah's eternality does not simply mean that the Torah will always be *generally* relevant, it means that it will always be *specifically* relevant to every aspect of our lives, during every moment of every day.

On this verse, for instance, **Rav Pincus** would recall the Gemara which discusses that one who takes care of lighting will merit children who will become great Torah scholars. Rav Pincus would say that this does not merely refer to Aharon in the Mishkan, and it does not only refer to those who light Shabbos or Chanuka candles, but every "mitzvah lighting".

For instance, the Medrash relates that Shaul merited to become king of Israel *because* his grandfather would concern himself about the public's safety and light dark alleyways and dangerous places. By bringing *physical* light to people surrounded in darkness, Shaul's grandfather merited a grandson who brought *spiritual* light to the masses through his mitzvos and leadership.

When we take a moment to consider the Torah's timeless messages and commit to apply them to our lives, we too will undoubtedly light up the world with our own greatness.

Torah Tavlin

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה הַמְקַנֵּא אַתָּה לִי .... מִי־יִתֵּן ה' אֶת־רוּחוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם 11:29

One of the most notable business tycoons of the twenty-first century is a man famously known as Bill Gates. His immense monetary value is well documented, as well as his strict principles and structures regarding life. One day, a journalist interviewed Mr. Gates about his life and the principles that have brought about his tremendous success.



The interview was off to a good start and the conversation was a rather pleasant one, until the reporter asked, "Sir, tell me, what is the secret of your success?" Instead of answering, Bill Gates handed him a cheque and told him to write down any amount he wanted. The journalist smiled sheepishly. "That's not what I'm referring to, sir," said the journalist quietly, and he proceeded to repeat the same question in another way. Bill Gates again gave him the same answer and handed him the cheque again.

The man protested. "No Sir, you don't seem to understand what I'm implying. I am not referring to your money," the journalist retorted. Once again, he tried to explain what he was asking with one last attempt to get his question across. Mr. Gates looked at the man for a long moment. Then, he took back the cheque and tore it up. Standing up, as if to indicate that the interview was done, he looked the journalist right in the eye and said, "The secret of my success is that I don't miss any opportunities - like you have just done now. Think about it. With a little courage and mettle, you could have been the richest journalist in the world!"

Moshe Rabbeinu was tasked with the duty of inspiring the Jewish Nation to grow spiritually. Hence, when he saw Eldad and Meidad, his two half-brothers, who had seized the unique opportunity to reach greater heights in prophecy by continuing to prophesize, he rejoiced over them rather than attempt to suppress them. This was his life's mission after all.

The Way of Emunah – R' Meir Isamar Rosenbaum

Hashem Rules The World



Sefer Ohr Haganuz quotes **Rav Avrohom Dov of Chmelnik zy"a** as saying the following: Many people say that Hashem rules the world. However, they first want to try to do whatever they can on their own, and afterwards, when they see that they need help and do not have the ability to do it themselves, they have no choice but to turn to Hashem and ask for assistance.

But, as for me, I turn to Him for help right away, without trying to do anything on my own, because I know that only He has any power in this world.

"When we encounter challenges, let us not despair, but turn to Hashem in prayer. He is our source of strength and comfort, and He will guide us through every difficulty." – Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler.

Retaining The Original Enthusiasm

וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מוּל ׀ פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה הֶעֱלָה נֵרֹתֶיהָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה׳ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה

And Aharon did so; he lit the lamps toward the face of the Menorah, as Hashem had commanded Moshe. (8:3)



Rashi says that this teaches us the praise of Aharon for not changing anything. Many have asked why Rashi needs to tell us this. Would anyone think that the great Aharon Hakohen would change and do something differently than what he had been commanded by Hashem?

The Maharsham of Brezhan zt"l (in his Sefer Techeiles Mordechai) answers this question by quoting Rashi on the verse (Devarim 11:13): *"And it will be, if you hear My commandments that I command you today."*

Rashi says that this teaches us that we should consider the Torah to be new every day. Each day, we should look at it as if the Torah was given "today". The reason for this is because people tend to be enthusiastic and excited about new things, but they get bored and unexcited about old things. When things get old, they become habit, and are done without feeling or emotion.

This is what the Torah is telling us about Aharon. Although he lit the Menorah every single day, he never changed from the first day. He did the mitzvah each day with the same enthusiasm and excitement as he had the first time he did it.

After Teshuva, It Is as If He Never Sinned

Sefer Maaseh Hatzadikim relates the following incredible story: A group of chasidim was once travelling by wagon to spend time in the presence of the **Sar Shalom of Belz zy"a**.



As they were moving at high speed, the bottom of the coat of one of men that was hanging out of wagon got stuck in a wheel and tore. When the others saw this, they took a needle and thread and sewed the torn piece back onto the bottom of the coat. As they sewed, they began to think about how the corner had been part of the coat until it tore. Now that it was sewn back together, it once again was connected to the coat; however, it could easily be seen that it had been sewn on. It was obvious that it had been torn off at one point and reconnected.

They thought that this was symbolic of a Yid's connection to Hashem. If one sins, he breaks the connection, and even if he does teshuva, the sign of the sin is still visible and is can still be seen that he was once disconnected. When they shared this thought with the Sar Shalom, he screamed at them that they were wrong. He said, "Chas Veshalom! If a person does teshuva, everything is fixed as if it never happened. No sign of the aveirah remains at all!"

He used this concept to explain the pasuk about Aharon lighting the Menorah. He noted that when it says that Aharon is commanded to light the Menorah, the word "neiros" is written without a "vav", but when it says that Menorah will cast light, the same word is written

with vav. He explained that a Yid's neshama is compared to light (Mishlei 20:27).

When Hashem told Moshe to command Aharon to light the neiros, it was a hint to lighting up and uplifting the neshamos of Yidden who are found lacking and need to be fixed and improved. This is indicated by the fact that the word is written lacking a vav. It then says that the neiros will cast light. This time, the word is written completely, because Hashem will enlighten them and make them whole, as if they had never sinned.

The pasuk then says: "And Aharon did this." Rashi says that it is a praise for Aharon that he did not change anything. This can be understood to mean that he fixed all of the neshamos to be exactly the same as they were before they sinned, with no change at all from the way they were originally created.

One Who Understands The Importance Finds it Hard to Make a Decision

וְזֶה מַּעֲשֵׂה הַמְּנֹרָה מִקְשָׁה זָהָב עַד־יְרֵכָהּ עַד־פִּרְחָהּ This was the form of the menorah: hammered work of gold, from its base to its flower...(8:14)

Rashi says that Moshe found was unable to understand how to make the Menorah, so Hashem showed him an image of it and pointed to it with his finger to show him. That is why it says "this" was the form of the Menorah – Hashem pointed to it and said it is "this".

Sefer Mashmia Yeshua (Os 187) writes in the name of **Rav Dovid Weisbord zt"l** that there was a hospital in Warsaw known as "Soloveitchik Hospital". A prominent Jewish doctor worked there. The daughter of the **Imrei Emes of Ger zy"a** was once brought to this doctor, and he had to decide if she needed an operation or not.

Before making his decision, he travelled to Ger to speak with the Rebbe. The Imrei Emes asked him, "If this would be your daughter,

what would you do?" The doctor told him, "If it was my daughter, I would do the exact same thing. I would travel to Ger to ask the Rebbe for advice."

The Rebbe did not respond, and the doctor ultimately did do the surgery and it was successful. The Imrei Emes later explained what occurred with a mashal: A precious stone in the king's crown broke. He gave it to the expert workers in the palace to fix but they lacked the ability to do so. He then brought it to a simple labourer in the city. He didn't tell him where the gem had come from. He just told him to fix it. And the man fixed it right away.

The palace workers knew how precious the stone was and they didn't feel that they were up to the job of fixing it. The simple worker, however, didn't know its value. He just treated it like a regular stone, so he had no problem fixing it. So too, this doctor made life and death decisions every day. The only reason he couldn't decide in this case was because he knew whose daughter the girl was.

With this in mind, the sefer explains the Medrash (Bamidbor Rabbah 15:10) that says that even after Hashem showed Moshe the image of the Menorah, he still could not make it – so Hashem told Betzalel to make it instead. Moshe knew the value and importance of the Menorah. He knew that the entire world depended on it. Therefore, he couldn't figure out the best way to make it. Betzalel, however, wasn't on Moshe's level – so he was able to simply make it.

Free will is given to every person, and with it comes responsibility. No one is forced toward righteousness or sin; rather, each choice shapes who a person becomes. When one lives with this awareness, life is no longer random, but a continuous opportunity to choose closeness to Hashem. ~ Rambam (Hilchos Teshuvah).

Learning Mishnayos - Purifying The Air

The Riyat"z of Lubavitch zy"a (quoted in Sefer Hayom Yom) said the following regarding learning Mishnayos by heart: "The air in the world needs to be purified. The air can only be cleaned with words of Torah. The letters of the Torah are a protection both for the entire nation and for each individual. Dividing up and learning the six books of Mishnayos (by heart) is a fulfilment of 'b'lechtecha baderech' (learning while on the road). One can review the Mishnah wherever he is and whenever he does so, he will strengthen the connection between Klal Yisroel and Hashem.



'Mishnah' is the same letters as 'neshama'. It is very hard to find the right words to describe its great protection one has if he regularly reviews Mishnayos. It isn't possible to describe the pleasure that Hashem derives from this."

When the Riyat"z arrived in America and settled in Crown Heights, he said that he couldn't stand the impurity of the air in this country. Therefore, he told the young men to learn Mishnayos by heart in the streets of Crown Heights in the morning in order to purify the air.

Let's think about this: If learning Mishnayos can purify the air of the dirty streets, it certainly can purify a person's heart and soul and raise him to great levels of holiness.

"Today will never happen again. But one good deed can make it last forever."

Bowing Comfortably

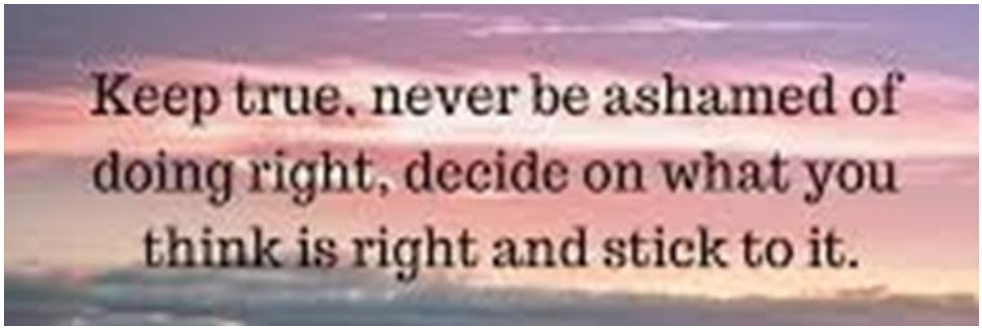
וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה And the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person on the face of the earth. (12:3)

The Mishnah (Zevachim 5:5) says that when the people in the Bais Hamikdosh stood, they were crowded. But when they bowed, there was enough room for everyone to bend over comfortably.

Sefer Ohr Haganuz quotes **Rav Shloim'ke of Savran zy"a** as explaining that when a person stands tall – meaning that he is haughty – he always feels pressured and crowded. But when a person bends down and humbles himself, he feels comfortable and at peace.

Saying Of the Week with Rabbi Menachem Lomner

"It's praiseworthy to do a Mitzvah that you get embarrassed doing."



Our Parsha speaks about how Levi'im were initiated to their service in the Mishkan. During the process, Aharon picked them up and waved them like a korban is waved. This infuriated and deeply embarrassed Korach. Yet, the Torah says that "*as Hashem said, so they did*".

Rashi says this highlights the praise for the Leviim that they did exactly as they were told; no one prevented themselves from being waved. In some cases where we feel embarrassed doing something we know we are supposed to do, we should know that the praise will come if we follow through.



Rav Avigdor Miller - The Happiness Plan

Q: ***What should a person do in order to always be happy?***



A: In order to be always happy a person must first choose one thing and concentrate on it until it makes him happy. You have to work on that one thing. After a while you'll be happy with that one thing. Then add another thing. And work on that. After a while work on something else. After a while you'll have so many things that you'll be a rich man. You'll actually feel a happiness about so many things.

So, start out as follows. Say, "I'm happy that I have something to eat." Learn how to be happy that you have food. Work on that. It takes some effort. Practice that for a while without any weakening of your resolve.

Next, you went to the bathroom. Everything worked? Learn how to be happy with that. You hear that?! Learn how to be happy with that. You don't think about it?! When you'll be eighty years old, you'll start thinking about it. Trust me, you'll think about it. And you'll long for those days of happiness when everything worked so well. So, start thinking about it now. Work on being happy that you can go to the bathroom.

Little by little, add. It takes work. It takes time. Like I said before, it doesn't come by itself. Little by little, you'll add. And after a while you'll have forty, fifty things. And that's nothing yet because there's

so much more than that. But you'll be happy with forty things, and you'll be a rich man. You'll be a rich man already. And if you're a young man yet – even a young man of sixty – you'll keep on this path, on this career, until you're in your nineties and you'll be a very wealthy person.

But you have to do it, though. Just hearing me say it, is not enough. You have to make up your mind that you're going to pursue this career of happiness and that you'll always be saying, "I thank You Hashem." Always, "I thank You Hashem for giving me this breakfast." "I thank you Hashem for being able to go to the bathroom." And don't rely on the brachos you make. You must say it with your mouth in your own language. Always. And **המחשבה נמשכת אחר הדיבור** – your mind will be transformed because of your speech and you will become a happy man. You will become happy with the so many wonderful things that you have always taken for granted. And you will become a servant of Hashem and a great man. Not only will you become a happy person, but you will become a great person.

Shalom Bayis, to What Degree?



It is important to have peace in the household, but to what degree? How far can one go to preserve the peace?

There was once a man who called **Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein** with a question. He explained that his wife tends to do things with care, though very slowly, and when he gets back from *kollel*, he has to wait a long time for lunch. At times, the hunger is quite intense, and on this particular day, he was so hungry, that he went to a meat restaurant, simply unable to wait to eat.

"Today, of all days, when I got home, my wife says to me, 'Dear husband, I made a surprise for you,' and on the table is a plate of cheese blintzes, which I love." The man added he was not supposed to eat in a restaurant, knowing his wife was preparing him lunch, and on top of that, not eating the blintzes would lead to his wife being even more upset. He called Rav Zilberstein asking for a *heter—halachic allowance* to eat the dairy blintzes citing *shalom bayit*.

The Rav responded, "For *shalom bayit* you could tell her that you ate meat at a *Pidyon Haben*, even though there was no *Pidyon*. However, permitting dairy after meat is out of the question. A small white lie for *shalom bayit* is okay, but transgressing other prohibitions is not acceptable. We must be very careful not to take advantage and use "keeping the peace" as an excuse for serious transgressions."

L'Maaseh - R' Yisroel Besser

A contemporary doctor related a story about a woman who moved into a Williamsburg apartment building. Having recently become religious, she didn't have any close family or friends in the neighbourhood. Along with being alone, and somewhat shy, she suffered from a severe disfigurement in her face, which made it difficult to look at her.

Some families stayed away from her, but one family, residents of the same building, drew her close. They invited her for a Shabbos meal, and before she came, the mother cautioned her children not to react to the guest's unusual appearance. The children agreed, and one of them, 10-year-old Chani, seemed to really connect with the guest, and chatted with her like she was with an old friend.

Over the next few weeks, Chani would often visit this neighbour in her apartment, and once, with childlike simplicity, she asked why the woman wouldn't have the deformity repaired. The woman sighed and admitted that there was a plastic surgeon who could help her, but

the procedure wasn't covered by insurance, and she was slowly saving up money to pay for the surgery.

The next day, Chani circled the halls of her school, knocked on each door, and asked for permission to address the other students. Speaking with confidence and clarity, she told the girls about her neighbor who wanted so badly to look normal, and she asked for money to help this woman.

She ran home from school and told her new friend that she had raised the money to help her. "Take me to your doctor," she said. "I am off from school on Friday, let's go together."

Bewildered, the woman allowed Chani to join her, and they took the subway to the doctor's office. Chani saw the doctor in the waiting room and approached him. In a matter-of-fact manner, she explained that she was there to take care of the surgery for her friend, and she was ready to pay for it.

Busy as he was, the doctor was intrigued, and he fit in a quick consultation for this woman in between his patients. He was convinced that he could help her, and he escorted Chani to the financial office.

After Chani gave him the money she had collected, the woman was scheduled for surgery at the hospital where he was employed.

Within a few months, the procedure was done, and Baruch Hashem, the disfigurement was corrected, with the patient looking and feeling like a new person. Chani had never mentioned a word about this campaign to her parents, and only once it became obvious that the neighbour had undergone surgery did Chani share the story at home.

Her mother couldn't understand how she had raised sufficient funds to pay for this type of surgery. "How much money did you have?" she asked her daughter. Chani proudly replied, "Fifty-three dollars!"

Chani's mother said to her that they had to go speak with the doctor about this. She took Chani by the hand and led her back to the surgeon, where they sat in the waiting room, once again without an appointment. Eventually, they were admitted in to see the doctor, and Chani's mother began to speak.

"My daughter told me the whole story. I know that there's no way that you perform that type of surgery for $53. I want to pay you what it costs, although I don't have all of it now. Please put me on a payment plan, and I will raise the money for you."

The doctor laughed. He said, "How often does a person have a chance to actually give another human being a gift like this? I'll take care of the hospital fees, and my own fee is waived, but I do have one condition."

The mother held her breath waiting to hear what he would ask. The doctor reached into his pocket and pulled out a tattered envelope. He shook out a pile of crumpled and folded bills, some ones and fives, and a few tens, which added up to $53 in all. He said, "I keep this with me wherever I am, and whenever I'm having a rough day, I take it out. It reminds me that there are some good people out there. I want to keep this!"

There are times in our life, and in many places in Davening, where we would like to thank and praise Hashem. However, we are very inadequate in this task. We cannot "pay" the full price of what we owe in thanks and praise to Hashem.

It's immeasurable! But perhaps, that is exactly why Hashem finds our efforts so meaningful, because they are genuine and pure, and it is the best that we can do. And that makes them especially precious!

"Truth is not determined by how many agree with it, but by whether it is אמת." ~ Rav Moshe Feinstein.

whY I Matter - R' Yedidye Hirtenfeld

The Gerrer Rebbe and Rav Avraham Kook





R' Avraham Mordechai Alter z"l (1866-1948; Gerrer Rebbe, known as the "Imrei Emes") visited the home of **R' Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook z"l (1865-1935; first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisrael)**, the latter directed his distinguished guest to sit at the head of the table.

The Gerrer Rebbe refused, saying that that was the host's place. R' Kook responded: "Whatever the master of the house tells you to do, you must do!"

"Except for leave!" responded the Gerrer Rebbe. "And Pirkei Avot teaches that one of the things that causes a person to leave this world is honour!"

A person is judged not only for what he says, but for what he could have said and chose not to." ~ Chofetz Chaim.

Bedside Vigil



About a year before he passed away, **the Bobover Rebbe, Rav Shlomo Halberstam, zs"l**, became so ill that the rumour spread that he had already passed away. The Rebbe's physician, who was a religious Jew, spent many hours at his bedside. He tried everything medically possible to cure the Rebbe, but to no avail. As he walked out of the sickroom to where the Hasidim anxiously waited for news of their Rebbe's condition, he was disheartened.

The doctor told them that he regretted to inform them that he had tried everything in his power to heal the Rebbe but unfortunately did not see any chance of recovery. The Hasidim refused to give up hope, however, and continued praying outside the Rebbe's room, waiting for any updated reports of the Rebbe's condition.

Later that evening, a second doctor who was also treating the Rebbe emerged from the Rebbe's room and spoke to the Hasidim who were still keeping vigil. "It is hard to believe," the doctor told them, "but the Rebbe is getting better. He is expected to pull through this crisis and survive."

Needless to say, there was great joy and relief when the Hasidim heard this wonderful news. The first doctor who had seen the Rebbe earlier that day was present when the announcement was made of the Rebbe's improvement. Immediately, the Hasidim surrounded him and asked, "How is it possible that you told us just this morning that there was no hope for the Rebbe's recovery and now he is expected to live?"

The first doctor replied, "How can you compare my visit with the second doctor's visit? I went in to try to heal the Rebbe early in the morning, while the other doctor went in many hours later. Do you know how many prayers and chapters of Tehillim were said for the Rebbe's recovery between our two visits? Had I been the doctor to see the Rebbe after all those prayers were said, I could have been the messenger to help heal the Rebbe!"

We all know that the power of healing comes from Hashem and that doctors are only His messengers. But what we sometimes fail to realize is that we, with our heartfelt prayers, can help effect miraculous recoveries.



Rabbi Eliezer Papo (1785–1828) was the rabbi of the community of Silistra in Bulgaria (then part of the Ottoman Empire). He is famous for writing the *Pele Yoetz*, a work of musar (ethical) literature which gives advice on how to behave as a Jew in many aspects of life.

This book of musar (ethics) is not limited to abstract ethical precepts and esoteric concepts; but rather it encompasses all aspects and phases of day-to-day Jewish living, the ritual as well as the ethical, the mundane as well as the sublime.

The book offers advice on human interrelationships such as between parent and child, husband and wife, employer and employee. It speaks to the heart as well as the mind. It goes beyond abstract ethics concepts and presents a guide to Jewish living.

Pele Yoetz is a classical moral treatise and compilation of essential Jewish concepts organized according to topics following the order of the Hebrew alphabet.

הבטחה עט:א - Assurance / Trust

Trust is a blessed trait: it brings joy to the body and calm to the soul. - The meaning of trust is not that a person relies on Hashem to

fulfill all his needs exactly as he wishes, nor that no harm will ever come to him. For if that were the case, his trust would sometimes be disappointed — for we see many righteous people who suffer greatly, afflicted with harsh and painful trials, hunger, and many troubles and hardships that befall the world.

Rather, the essence of trust is that a person trusts in the Name of Hashem, knowing that -***everything that is done from Heaven is for good***, and that before Heaven it is revealed what is truly good for him, and it is done accordingly. For a human being sees only with his limited vision, seeing imperfectly, and may call evil good and good evil. But Hashem knows what is truly good for a person — for the service of Hashem, and for the rectification of his soul, spirit, and higher soul.

Therefore, a person should accept everything that comes upon him with willingness, joy, and a good heart, being confident that **שאין דבר רע יורד מן השמים רק טוב** - ***nothing evil descends from Heaven — only good***. He should cast his burden upon Hashem and lift his soul toward Him. He should not exhaust himself in vain trying to force outcomes according to his own will, nor push the moment before its time. He should not be constantly troubled with endless calculations about his situation, nor distress himself over the events of time.

Rather, he should believe with complete faith that **שהכל בידי שמים** - ***everything is in the hands of Heaven***, and that whatever Hashem desires, He does for the person's ultimate good. There is no one who can rescue from His hand, and no limitation before Hashem — whether to save through much or through little. He is the One who grants strength to succeed, and He fulfills the will of those who fear Him — without their calculations, without their anxiety, without their toil.



Parsha Potpourri by R' Ozer Alport

ויאמרו האנשים ההמה אליו אנחנו טמאים לנפש אדם למה נגרע לבלתי הקריב את קרבן ד׳ במעדו בתוך בני ישראל 9:7

Rav Yissocher Frand notes that at the time of the offering of the Korban Pesach in the wilderness, there was a group of men who were unable to participate because they had become tamei through contact with a dead body.

Instead of passively accepting their fate, they approached Moshe and challenged him, "Why should we be deprived of the chance to offer the Korban Pesach with the rest of the nation?" Moshe consulted Hashem to receive a reply to their argument, and he was instructed to respond by teaching the mitzvah of Pesach Sheini, which is a make-up opportunity for those who were tamei or too far away to participate in offering the Korban Pesach.

Rav Frand points out that these men were legitimately exempt from the Korban Pesach due to their impure status. As such, they were rightfully excused from the mitzvah and had absolutely no obligation to take part in it, nor was there any logical reason to be upset about it. However, the **Sifri** tells us that these were not ordinary Jews. They were righteous men who were **חרדים על המצות** – they trembled and yearned to do mitzvos – so they challenged Moshe, "Why should we be deprived?" Instead of viewing mitzvos as obligations or burdens, their saw them as opportunities, and their philosophy was that missing out on a mitzvah is a form of deprivation to be avoided.

Unfortunately, Rav Frand notes that while some pious individuals become distraught when they are unable to perform a mitzvah, there are other people who become depressed over far more mundane matters, such as when their stock portfolio takes a hit, or when their favourite sports team is mired in a losing streak. Along these lines, later in Parshas Beha'aloscha, we find another group of people who were depressed, but not about their inability to perform a mitzvah. They felt deprived because they missed the delectable

cucumbers and watermelons that they used to eat in Egypt, and they were disturbed by the monotonous menu in the wilderness (11:4-6).

Abraham Lincoln once remarked, "You can tell the greatness of a man by what makes him angry." Small people get worked up about trivial matters, while distinguished individuals only get upset by truly significant issues.

Paraphrasing Lincoln, Rav Frand suggests that Parshas Beha'aloscha teaches us to examine what makes us happy and what makes us depressed, which will reveal our priorities in life. Do we follow in the footsteps of the impure men and view ourselves as unfairly deprived whenever a mitzvah opportunity does not pan out as we had hoped, or do we elect to complain about the food we are served?

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What did the tamei men hope to gain by their request, as they would still be unable to fulfil any of the actual mitzvos related to the Korban Pesach?

Rav Moshe Feinstein derives from here that a person should love the mitzvos to the point that even if forces beyond his control prevent him from fulfilling his literal obligation, he should attempt to participate in them to whatever extent is physically possible.

He writes that somebody who is unable to dwell in a Sukkah should at least make one, and somebody who cannot eat the prescribed amount of maror at the Passover seder should at least eat a little (although he cannot make a blessing on doing so).

He cites several examples of mitzvos that contain loopholes by which a person can exempt himself. Nevertheless, Hashem gave them in this manner confident that the Jewish people would love performing the commandments and would not seek to free themselves from doing them.

Hama'ayan by R' Shlomo Katz

עַל־מַצּוֹת וּמְרֹרִים יֹאכְלֵהוּ ***"With matzos and bitter herbs they shall eat it."*** (9:11)



R' Moshe Sherer z"l writes: Compared to the symbols of the other holidays, matzah is rather low-key. On Rosh Hashanah, the shofar is blown loudly. On Sukkot, we parade with the lulav standing tall. On Chanukah, we light menorahs in our windows. On Simchat Torah and Purim, we also celebrate conspicuously.

Why is it, then, that throughout history, it was Pesach which seemed to enrage our gentile neighbours the most? Why was it typically at Pesach time that Jews suffered from blood libels and pogroms?

Certainly, writes R' Sherer, this was the work of the sitra achra (loosely translated: the angel who is the guardian of all evil forces) himself. Matzah represents too much for us to be allowed to eat it in peace.

What does matzah represent? It reminds us of Hashem's strong hand and of the eternity of the Jewish people. Even when our ancestors in Egypt fell perilously close to spiritual oblivion, Hashem saved them. Also, matzah represents the transmission of our heritage and beliefs from generation to generation, as it is written (Shmot 13:8), "And you shall relate to your son . . ." Over the matzah, we tell our children of the many empires that forced our ancestors to eat matzah in secret and of the fact that we outlived those empires.

From matzah, we also can learn how to fight those empires, R' Sherer writes. The gemara states that matzah which is made in direct sunlight is unfit for Pesach. So, too, our activism must be low-key. Matzah also may not contain food colouring. So, too, our activism must be free of foreign, non-Torah influences.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn – Project Mesorah



Rabbi Henoch Leibowitz, Rosh Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim always used to tell his talmiddim the following:

We find at the end of the sedra, that Hashem was upset with Aaron and Miraiam because they spoke *lashon horah* about Moishe Rabeinu. It says in the Pasuk that Hashem says to Aaron and Miriam- : וַיֹּאמֶר שִׁמְעוּ־נָא דְּבָרָי *"Please listen to My words."[see Rashi]*

Why is Hashem saying 'Please' He can speak as harshly as He likes?

Rashi and the Sifsei Chachamim tells us that He used the word 'Please' because **דיבור עמהם בנחת** – He spoke to the calmly and kindly, even though He was giving them mussar. Because, if Hashem would have gotten angry with them, His words would have not been listened to.

The Sifsei Chachamim tells us that we learn from here a kal vochomer- How much more so when human beings have to criticize or admonish somebody, it must be done with kindness and softness, because otherwise, they will hate you for it.

Short Vort: Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

דַּבֵּר אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו **בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת הַנֵּרֹת** אֶל מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יָאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת *Speak to Aharon and say to him, "**When you light the lamps**, the seven lamps should cast their light toward the face of the menorah."* (8:2)



When the Torah discusses the various tasks and functions that took place in the Mishkan, it is easy to "switch off" from searching how to apply these duties to *our* daily lives. After all, we do not have a Mishkan, we do not even have a Beis HaMikdash, and we may not even be Kohanim! Yet, the Torah's eternality does not simply mean that the Torah will always be *generally* relevant, it means that it will always be *specifically* relevant to every aspect of our lives, during every moment of every day.

On this verse, for instance, **Rav Pincus** would recall the Gemara which discusses that one who takes care of lighting will merit children who will become great Torah scholars. Rav Pincus would say that this does not merely refer to Aharon in the Mishkan, and it does not only refer to those who light Shabbos or Chanuka candles, but every "mitzvah lighting".

For instance, the Medrash relates that Shaul merited to become king of Israel *because* his grandfather would concern himself about the public's safety and light dark alleyways and dangerous places. By bringing *physical* light to people surrounded in darkness, Shaul's grandfather merited a grandson who brought *spiritual* light to the

masses through his mitzvos and leadership. Interestingly, the Medrash relates that Shaul's grandfather is referred to as "Ner — lamp" for his defining act of kindness to others (see *Divrei HaYamim* 1:8:33). **וְנֵר הוֹלִיד אֶת־קִישׁ וְקִישׁ הוֹלִיד אֶת־שָׁאוּל**

When we take a moment to consider the Torah's timeless messages and commit to apply them to our lives, we too will undoubtedly light up the world with our own greatness.

A Legendary Mechanech and Tzaddik: Rav Menachem Yechiel Dovid Trenk zt"l [27th Sivan] 2019 - He was 77 years old.



"Larger than life," "a legend," "pure heart" and "the real thing" are just some of the many ways Rav Trenk is remembered by *talmidim* and admirers worldwide.

Rav Trenk was an energetic, inspiring, superhuman *oveid Hashem* and *mechanech* who shaped so many lives and saved so many souls in ways that one cannot begin to fathom.

A son of Rabbi and Mrs. Avrohom Yehoshua Heshel (Shea) and Basheva Trenk, Rav Dovid was a devoted *talmid* of Mirrer Yeshiva in Brooklyn, where he grew close to the *roshei yeshiva* and *rabbeim*. Later, he used his love for people, his remarkable *yiras Shomayim*, and his *chinuch* talents at Adelphia Yeshiva, his own *yeshiva* Moreshes Yehoshua, Camp Munk, and wherever he found himself.

Many lovingly called him "*rebbi*," and the enormous adoration everyone shared for him is impossible to put into words.

If you ever witnessed Rav Trenk enthusiastically interact with people, you became a changed person. He treated every person with the same boundless love and affection, a love born out of his association with his *rebbi*, the Kapytschnitzer Rebbe *zt"l*, who influenced him in his youth.

Rav Trenk was the original trailblazer in *chinuch*. Decades before there was an Our Place, Minyan Shelanu, The Living Room, Waterbury Yeshiva, and other such *mosdos*, Rav Dovid was out on the front lines, recruiting and inspiring boys, often those shunned or disappointed by others or society.

He demonstrated unconditional support, encouragement, understanding and love that created a unique connection and bond with Hashem, his Torah and *Klal Yisroel*. That was "the Trenk method."

Rav Dovid looked for the talent and *kishronos* in each child and found a way to build up his self-esteem.

Some would say that Rav Trenk was the greatest flight instructor in history, for he made everyone believe that they could fly.

The following words are adapted by *Matzav.com* from a tribute by a *talmid*, Rabbi Yechiel Spero:

When Rav Gad'l Eisner was appointed the principal of the Yeshivah Chiddushei Harim in Tel Aviv, a friend of his asked him to define his role. He said, "I still don't know. It depends on what the students need. If they need me to be a mashgiach, then I will be a mashgiach. If they need me to teach a class, then I will teach a class. And if they need me to serve the food in the kitchen, then I will do that. But most important, if the boys need me to be a friend, then I will be their friend."

Every child has different needs, and great teachers are able to accommodate their students. They may not always have the answers but love for a student overrides all else.

A dormitory counsellor was frustrated with the behaviour of the boys in his charge, and he decided that he had had enough. When he went to hand in his resignation, the Rosh yeshiva asked him what he was planning on doing instead. He responded that his grandfather had been a sofer, and he planned to follow in his footsteps.

Reb Dovid complimented him on his choice, but then he told him that there is one difference between the two jobs. A sofer, even if he is writing Sifrei Torah, is writing on parchment – dead animal skin. But a teacher writes on the hearts of Jewish children, an imprint that will last forever.

The boy stayed on as a dorm counsellor and went on to become a great rebbi.

No story describes you better, Reb Dovid. You have left your indelible mark on the hearts of thousands. You have given them a reason to believe in themselves, thus writing on countless hearts. Sensing the needs of every talmid, you set aside your own kavod and give the young man your heart and soul, for nothing is beneath your dignity.

If they needed a teacher, you taught them.

If they needed mussar, you chided them.

But most of all, if they needed a friend, you befriended them – and loved them.

And that is something they will never forget.

You delved into the depths of the Yiddishe neshamah. Where others saw imperfection, you perceived beauty. Where others found weakness, you uncovered strength. Where others noticed only failure, you discovered triumph.

And that is what makes you so beloved in the eyes of so many, but, most of all, in the eyes of the Ribbono Shel Olam. In you, the Melamed Torah Le'amo Yisroel sees a non-judgmental, loving melamed, the quintessential rebbi, who has never and will never quit on a talmid. Your warm and loving embrace engulfs the child inside us all. Your unfailing efforts and burning desire to see the goodness in others humbles the greatest educators. And every time you refused to give up, we were able to see the beauty you perceived inside us. That's why we treasure the opportunity to be called your talmidim.

The talmidim of Moreshes Yehoshua are the latest links in a legacy of talmidim who owe their lives to you. Today, they look like great success stories. But where would they be without you? Their families, until the end of time, owe you a debt that cannot be repaid.

Aside from the time spent in the classroom, you have influenced talmidim in camp, as well. Over the summers of the past half a century in Camp Munk, your ability to connect has reached even the most challenging neshamos, who respond to your purity and approachability, forming an eternal bond.

So, on behalf of your talmidim of the past 50 years, we say thank you. Thank you for showing the world what a Rebbi is meant to be. You have touched our lives more than we ever thought possible.

Today, the heart that pulsated with boundless *ahavas Yisroel* and unbelievable *ahavas Hashem* ceased to beat. And *Klal Yisroel* remains bereft.

Yehi zichro boruch.



Once Reb Dovid went to comfort someone who was sitting shiva for a tragedy.. well-meaning friends tried to offer well-meaning words of encouragement and hope, but very little of it resonated. Rabbi Trenk didn't offer elaborate divrei torah or stories - he said just three words.

He quoted words written by Dovid HaMelech in Tehilim שַׂמְּחֵנוּ כִּימוֹת עִנִּיתָנוּ -"***Grant us joy in proportion to our suffering***." 90:15

With those words, he expressed his true sympathy, how he felt the bitter pain, and his hope for better, brighter days.

One of rabbi Trenks favourite divrei Torah was from his rebbes sefer – sefer zichron Shmuel.

צַדִּיק כַּתָּמָר יִפְרָח כְּאֶרֶז בַּלְּבָנוֹן יִשְׂגֶּה – '***The Tzadik flourishes like a date-palm tree, like a ceder in Lebanon, he grows***.' Tehilim 92:13

Why is the Tzadik compared to two different trees?

Reb Shmuel Brudny answered that each of the trees listed has its unique characteristic i.e Tamar, palm tree, doesn't grow as tall as the cedar, but while the cedar rises higher, it does not bear fruits.

It's the fruit borne by the palm tree that prevents it from soaring, since the fruits take nutrients from the tree itself: the cedar tree, which doesn't bear fruit, soars into the sky.

Reb Shmuel explained that the Tzadik grows like a tamar, a date-palm, which gives of itself, of its own nutrients, to spawn and raise others. So too the Tzadik, devoted to children and talmidim- But.. this doesn't prevent him from growing. Like a cedar tree, he grows, rising higher and higher even as he shares with others.

There was one talmid who challenged Rabbi Trenk repeatedly. "But there was one thing I couldn't get my rebbi to do," he recalls, "and that was give up on me. I tried, repeatedly. I pushed him, but he wouldn't give up on me, and eventually he won. He waited me out, and his love beat my anger!"

Reb Mattisyahu Salamon referred to him as - 'a lamed vav'nik.'

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch

"Torah was not given to remove a person from the world, but to teach him how to live within it with sanctity. Every interaction, responsibility, and struggle is an opportunity to reveal Hashem's will through action."

SEFAS TAMIM
FOUNDATION • Emphasizing Everyday Emes

Chizuk – Inspiration

Rav Shmuel Ben Nosson

Ha-Levi Kahlin (c. 1720–1806) was a Rosh Yeshiva and Posaik known for his absolute honesty. He is most famous for his authorship of the Machatzis HaShekel commentary on the Shulchan Aruch. He lived in Boskovice, Moravia which was then part of the AustroHungarian Empire.

Tragically, in Boskovice, allegations of a blood libel were made against the Jews. They had claimed that a gentile child was murdered to take his blood and bake Passover Matzah with it. It was further rumoured that the knife that was adjacent to the body of the child had belonged to the Rabbi of the town – Rav Kahlin himself! Rav Kahlin was placed in jail until the trial.



When Rav Kahlin was put on the witness stand, he was asked whether the knife was his. Against his lawyer's advice, he responded that the murder weapon was his knife, but that he had no idea who had murdered the child. His lawyer then quit. Others tried to persuade him to deny ownership of the knife but he refused.

The judge gave him another opportunity to retract but to no avail. Rav Kahlin would not lie. He remained adamant that it was his knife. The judge then turned to those gathered in his courthouse and said, "There is no question that this is an innocent man because his honesty is what is placing him in jeopardy."

The prosecutor then arose and claimed that he had yet another witness. The witness for the prosecution testified, "I have been in

the Rabbi's home many times and I am entirely familiar with all of the knives in the Rabbi's home. I can state with absolute certainty that the knife used to commit the murder has a very thin cavity above the upper hole of the knife and I saw that very weapon in the Rabbi's house!"

The judge looked at the knife and confirmed that the knife was just as the witness described. The Jews in the courtroom were horrified. The judge asked Rav Kahlin, "What have you to say now?"

The Rav responded, "I wish to now change my previous testimony." The judge said, "Do you wish to make a mockery of this courtroom?? You cannot change it!!"

The Rav answered, "I still state that the knife is, in fact, mine. But previously, I stated that I had no idea who had murdered the child. Now I believe I do have an idea." He pointed to the witness. "Anyone can come to my home and recognize the type of knives that I have. But only one knife, the one found here has that peculiar cavity that the alleged witness described. I believe that the only possible manner in which this witness could have known about the cavity above the upper hole of the knife is if he had handled it himself," the Rabbi continued. After this, the witness admitted to the murder of the child.

If Rav Kahlin would have lied and said the knife was not his, he would have been suspected of lying when the witness was able to positively identify the knife and say it was Rav Kahlin's. Then Rav Kahlin would likely not have been believed when he subsequently accused the witness of the murder.

No harm can come from telling the truth. In this case, we see that when Rav Kahlin told the truth, not only was he not harmed – but the true murderer was found.

Fascinating INSIGHTS

Wedding With Musical Instruments

A student of the **Maharil** (1365-1427) related the following in the name of his Rebbe: The female ruler of the country passed away and for the sake of her honour, the current ruler ordered that there should be no playing music with musical instruments in the entire country for that year.

This edict interfered with the Jewish wedding that was scheduled to take place within that year in a certain city in that country. The Mahari Segel (i.e., Maharil) was asked if the wedding should take place without musical instruments. He ruled not to make the wedding without musical instruments because that is the main simcha of a Chosson and Kalla...



He instructed that if it was not possible to do it in that city, then they should move the wedding to a place where it would be possible to play with musical instruments. And that is what they did. They travelled three *parsaos* (around 12 kilometers) to the city of Mainz (Germany) and had the wedding with musical instruments.

The Ra'avya (1140-1225) wrote regarding a wedding that took place on Shabbos that it is permitted to tell a non-Jew to play musical

instruments on Shabbos for Simchas Chosson V'kalla. This was because there is no Simchas Chosson V'kalla without musical instruments.

והעם לא נסע עד האסף מרים ***And the people did not journey until Miriam was brought in****. (12:15)*

Rashi teaches that Hashem instructed the entire Jewish nation to wait for Miriam *Ha'Neviah* to be healed before He allowed them to move on to their next encampment. This was her reward for the extra moments she spent at the river to keep an eye on her baby brother, Moshe.

What did she really do that was worthy of such extraordinary reward, that an entire nation waited for her?

She did very little, and, after all, it was for her brother. Such devotion is to be expected. Yet, Hashem recorded those moments, because "little" things, simple actions, are what define greatness and, thus, deserve distinction.



Chesed, be it personal or organisational, has become a favourite commodity of people who want to do good, to better the lives of those who are either not as fortunate or do not realise how fortunate they really are. Some undergo challenging circumstances, and some have convinced themselves that their lives are miserable. In any event, certain people and organisations are prepared to help.

This is all very good. How many are prepared to do the little things, such as smiling to someone or greeting them with a resounding: "Good morning"; "Have a great day"; "How are you feeling today"?

Chesed is not only about the exotic situations for which one receives accolades. At times, that simple smile can change a person's life and

engender him with feelings of self-worth and esteem, which are often lacking.

A smile costs nothing and is simple to produce. Yet, some people find it hard to smile. It enriches others with the memory that someone cares. Everybody, regardless of his/her station in life, needs (and craves) a smile. It validates without extracting a major toll on the individual who smiles.

I present a quote (attributed to an unknown author) that should guide us, "***Nobody needs a smile as much as those who have none left to give***." At times, the "little" things are superior and last longer than those we perceive to be monumental.

Rabbi's Musings – Rabbi Dani Staum

Not all limitations are constricting. In building a marriage we willingly constrict ourselves because we recognize that through the marriage and its limitations, we can accomplish far greater things and become far greater people than we could have without those limitations.

It is no less regarding our relationship with the divine. In accepting the Torah, we willingly and lovingly accepted the limitations that doing so would entail.

One Who Trusts in Hashem is a King

Sefer Ohr Haganuz quotes the pasuk (Tehillim 21:8) that says: "For the king trusts in Hashem." It quotes **Rav Meir of Kaminka zy"a** as explaining that one who trusts in Hashem is considered a king. Just like a king can do whatever he wants, and no one can stand in his way, so too one who trusts in Hashem has the power to cancel decrees and bring Heavenly mercy and kindness to himself.

Parsha Thoughts by Mordechai Sapoznick

The Pasuk says וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה "***And the man Moshe was very humble***"



Humble and haughty are opposite middos. The question may be asked: Is it ok for someone not to be a big shot, but he also doesn't want to show that he is humble?

The answer can be found in the word **ענו** – humble. These letters also spell the word **עון** – sin. A person who does not have the middah of humbleness, will end up being haughty and sin! [sefer kol Dodi]

Horav Shraga Feivel Mendelowitz Zt'l was very humble and did not like to be called anything other than Mr. Mendelowitz.

Once at a dinner, the chairman called him up to speak as Horav Mendelowitz. Rav Shraga Feivel did not get up to speak. He said, "There must be a mistake, because I am Mr. Mendelowitz, not Horav Mendelowitz!"

One Who Feels Bad for His Friend Brings His Salvation:

Sefer M'Zekenim Esbonen quotes the **Sar Shalom of Belz zy"a** as saying that when people approach him and ask him to daven for a sick person, he feels bad and davens. At this time, Hashem says that if a human being feels so bad for a sick person, He certainly must feel bad and provide the cure.

We can learn from this that even a simple person can help his friend simply by feeling bad for him. If he does this, Hashem will help.



וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה *Now the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any other person on the face of the earth. (12:3)*

How should we understand the concept of *anivus*, humility? Should a person ignore his positive attributes? Should he hide his successes?

The *Baalei Mussar*, Ethicists, explain that one who ignores the reality of his wisdom, scholarship, positive character traits, is sorely lacking in the commodity of *seichel*, common sense. It is similar to a body builder, strong man, ignoring the fact that he can bench press four-hundred pounds. Reality is reality.



Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, offers a powerful insight into how one should relate to his strengths, while concomitantly not having a deleterious effect on his humility. He should view himself as if he were looking at a mirror.

A mirror is basically clear glass with a coating of mercury. If, for example, one who is a *gaon v'kadosh,* saintly scholar, were to view himself in a mirror, he would see a carbon copy of himself.

Now, let us imagine that the mirror would come alive and think of "itself" as a brilliant, saintly scholar; it would be utter foolishness, since the mirror is only a reflection of the person who stands before it. The "mirror" would surely have no reason to arrogate itself, since

essentially it is nothing more than a reflection. If the mercury were to be removed, it would be nothing more than a pane of glass.

Likewise, with regard to a person who possesses positive attributes. He is a mirror who reflects – but who essentially is nothing. What should he be arrogant about? Everything that he has, is a reflection, a gift from Hashem. What one sees is a reflection of Hashem's kindness to this person. Thus, he is no different from the mirror which replicates the image that stands before it.

This is what Moshe *Rabbeinu* meant when he declared, "וְנַחְנוּ מָה" "And what are we?" (*Shemos* 16:7). Surely, our greatest leader was aware of his attributes and success. However, he knew that it was nothing more than a reflection of Hashem's *chesed*, kindness, towards him.

Rav Pincus takes the mirror analogy one step further.

Imagine that the mirror no longer wants to merely serve as a reflector, but, instead, desires a self-image of what *it* is. It will go and smear various paints over itself, so that it establishes its own identity. Since the mercury is now covered, the mirror is self-transformed into a piece of glass.

This is the essence of humility. As long as a person maintains his meekness, he reflects the qualities that he possesses, which are *chasdei Hashem*. When he decides to boldly assert himself, he turns into a piece of glass that has little to no value.

A man came to **Rav Aryeh Levin** a day before *Rosh Hashanah* and asked for a *brachah* for the coming year. The *tzaddik* replied, "Who am I that I should bless you? Since you are already here, however, it would be to your advantage to visit my neighbour, ***Horav Chaikel Miletzki***. I, myself, seek his blessing. He is a man who has suffered greatly (one of his feet had been amputated) and achieved distinction in Torah scholarship."

Not only did *Rav* Aryeh refuse to accept accolades, he instead, gave them to someone else.

A soldier in charge of the helicopter squad, who, together with his men, would continually fly his helicopter into the range of enemy fire in order to rescue wounded soldiers, petitioned *Rav* Aryeh for his blessing.

Rav Aryeh looked at the young man and asked, "Why would you come to me? Who am I to bless you? I truly believe that your merit before Hashem is greater than mine!"

Rav Aryeh did have a touch of pride.

He took joy in the upholstered chair in the *yeshivah* (*Eitz Chaim*) where he worked. It was the very same chair upon which ***Horav Yehoshua Leib Diskin, zl***, sat years ago. The *Tallis* in his house was the very one ***Horav Shmuel Salanter, zl***, the acknowledged head of the religious community of Yerushalayim, had worn.

It was *Rav* Salanter who conferred *semichah*, ordination, on *Rav* Aryeh. His was no ordinary *semichah*. In his deep humility, *Rav* Aryeh tore up the certificate, lest someone see the praises that were accorded to him!

This is what is meant by humility as the root of one's character.

The Ish Moshe Was Humbler Than Any Adam

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד 12:3

The Torah testifies: "***And the 'Ish' Moshe was extremely humble, more so than any 'Adam' on the face of the earth***"

In Lashon HaKodesh, the word "**אִישׁ**" (literally – 'man') always connotes a distinguished individual, a person who has accomplished something important in his life. The word Adam (also meaning 'man') connotes any human being.

Rav Nissan Alpert, zt"l, points out that this pasuk apparently lacks symmetry. Rather than comparing the 'Ish' Moshe with any 'Adam',

the pasuk should have used the plural of the word 'Ish' (Anashim) and state that the Ish Moshe was humbler than any Anashim on the face of the earth.

Rav Nissan Alpert explains that the pasuk is telling us that Moshe Rabbeinu was haIsh Moshe—the most accomplished person in the world, an Ish haElokim. He had what to be haughty about! And yet, he was humbler than even the simplest unaccomplished Adam anywhere in the world!

The Gemara (Sotah 5a) says that a person should learn a lesson from his Creator. The Holy One Blessed be He abandoned all the higher peaks in the world and had His Presence descend onto a relatively lowly mountain upon which He gave His Torah (i.e. – Mt. Sinai).

The Kotzker Rebbe once asked, if the Almighty wanted to teach us humility, why didn't He give the Torah in a valley? The answer is that true humility occurs when someone has something to brag about and nevertheless remains humble. Hashem gave the Torah on a mountain. If someone is a nothing (e.g. – a valley) and does not act haughty about it, that is no big deal.

However, when a person has what to be gayvedik about (for example, a mountain) and nevertheless remains humble, that is a big deal! Therefore, the Almighty gave the Torah on a mountain, but on a humble mountain.

Similarly, that is why there is a principle that the Divine spirit of prophecy descends upon people who are strong, wealthy, wise, and tall. What is the reason for that? It is because the Ribono shel Olam wants people to remain humble, despite having qualities that can legitimately cause them to be proud, or even haughty. [*Rav Frand]*

"When we give to others, we open the door to blessings flowing into our own lives." – The Chofetz Chaim

From the Haftarah

כִּי־הִנְנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־עַבְדִּי צֶמַח A Growing Plant, " ... *behold I will bring My servant Tzemach"* (Zechariah 3:8).

The Malbim explains why Mashi'ach is called 'Tzemach' (which means a plant).

It is because even if nowadays there is no evidence of Malchus Beis-David, giving the impression that it no longer exists, it is compared to a tree. At the beginning of its existence, a tree is invisible, yet it exists, hidden below the surface of the ground, and it is only a matter of time before it appears and develops into a large fruit tree.

Malchus Beis-David too exists, and it is only a matter of time before it appears and develops into the Mashi'ach.

Long Life

ומבן חמשים שנה ישוב מצבא העבודה ולא יעבוד עוד – *"From the age of fifty he shall retire from the service of the work, and do no more work"* (*Bamidbar* 8:25).



Rashi comments: **עבודת משא בכתף אבל חוזר הוא לנעילת שערים לשיר ולטעון עגלות – *"The work of carrying on the shoulders; however, he can return to locking the gates, singing, and loading the wagons"*.**

Why does Rashi refer to the work of locking the gates, and not opening them?

We can understand this on the basis of a statement made by the ***Chofetz Chaim***, who said that anyone who has reached the age of

fifty has to slacken his interest in worldly matters to some extent, and prepare himself for the world that is completely good (in addition to "locking," *ne'ilah* also means "closing"). Hence, Rashi's reference to locking the gates may be understood as an allusion to the work that we should intensify as we reach the age of fifty and enter the closing stage of our lives.

Fifty is the age at which a person gives advice to others (*Avos* 5:24). The *Chofetz Chaim* says that if others come to receive advice from him, then all the more should he consult with *himself* about his final destination in life and prepare provisions for his final resting place.

Doing this is also a *segulah* [remedy] for long life, because if someone is busy intensifying his *avodas* Hashem and preparing for his eternal future, Hashem is more likely to have pity on him and grant him long life in order to facilitate his desire to delve into Torah and *avodas* Hashem.

On the other hand, if he wastes his time on vanities, he risks his whole future, because Hashem may not deem it fit to prolong his life. (**R' Moshe Sternbuch**)

Timeless Truths – Rabbi Moshe Bamberger



"I have no doubt that if all Jews would join together as one and set a date to go out and greet Moshiach, he couldn't refuse. – He would come!

The problem is that to get all Jews to gather in unity – only Moshiach can accomplish such a feat – after he arrives…"

Reb Shmuel Donn- Remez לעילוי נשמת יהושע ע"ה בן ברוך הלוי נ"י

בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־הַנֵּרֹת אֶל־מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יָאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת - *"When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah."* (8:2)

The Gemarah tells us in mesechta Menachos (28b), that the Menorah stood at a height of 18 tefachim.

In most places throughout the Torah, the word **מְנֹרָה** is written without a **ו**. There are 3 places where is written with a **ו**.

1. Here in our pasuk - **בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־הַנֵּרֹת אֶל־מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה**
2. Again in the next pasuk - **אֶל־מוּל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה**
3. In Parshas Terumah (Shemos 25:31) - **תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה**

Says the **Rabeinu Ephraim**, that these 3 additional **ו**'s add up to 18, and is a hint as to the exact height of the Menorah – 18 tefachim!

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series



The Power of Music

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף - *Make yourself two silver trumpets* 10:2

The **חֲצֹצְרֹת** were used to call meetings of the **נְשִׂיאִים**. They were blown to call gatherings of Klal Yisrael. They were blown in the Beis Hamikdash at times of simcha. They were blown at the time of bringing korbonos- **ותקעתם בחצוצרות על עולותיכם ועל זבחי שלמיכם**. They were also a rallying call, in case of war.

The Sefer Ha'Chinuch speaks about this mitzvah of **חֲצֹוצְרֹת** in Mitzvah **שפד**. He describes the importance of music – as far as the Torah is concerned.

The reason for this commandment is - **לכון דעתם יפה** that it would properly focus their attention to have the correct kavanos when bringing korbanos. And also, at the time of trouble, a person needs great focus in his supplication before his Creator, that He should have mercy upon him and save him from his trouble; we are therefore commanded to blow the trumpets at these times.

So we require these blowings to assist us in our tefillos. Why?

ואין דבר יעוררהו כמו קולות הנגון, ידוע הדבר, וכל שכן קול החצוצרות, שהוא הקול הגדול שבכל כלי נגון - Because, the way of nature is to stand asleep, and there is nothing as inspiring as the ***sounds of music***, [as is] well-known — and all the more so, the sounds of trumpets, which is the greatest sound of all musical instruments.

And there is also another purpose, aside from arousal to focusing attention, that is realized through the sound of the trumpet; and that is that the sound of the trumpets removes all other worldly concerns from the heart of the listener, such that at that time he will only [direct] his heart to the matter of the sacrifice.

The Vilna Gaon himself said [heard from **R' Moshe Aaron Stern**],





"***The greatest חָכְמָה outside of חכמת התורה is ניגון – And one can't even begin to understand the תִּיקוּנֵי זוֹהַר (the corrections***

of the Zohar) let alone the Zohar itself, without having first mastered music!"

The Chasam Sofer says that **קַח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְטִהַרְתָּ אֹתָם- *Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them. 8:6***

The centre letter of **יִשְׂרָאֵל** is a **'ר'** - **ריש** – if you invert this word, it spells **שיר** - 'song'!

The Kli Yakar wrote about himself, that when he was a young child, he was kidnapped by the *poritz* of the village. He was brought up in his house with no attachment to Yiddishkeit at all.

After a period of time, he managed to escape and run away. He attempted to learn Torah, but as much as he tried, he was unable to learn. People tried to assist him, but the Torah would not penetrate his heart.

Until one time when he came to shul on Yom Kippur night, and he heard the nigun of 'Kol Nidrei' – this melody enabled him to a **תשובה שלימה**.

Thus we see the power of **ניגון**. The use of music to get closer to Hashem, is a very powerful tool. As the Chinuch says - **ואין דבר יעוררהו כמו קולות הנגון** – '***there is nothing as inspiring as the sounds of music.***'

Rabbi Yehuda HaChassid (*Sefer Chassidim*)

"A person is tested not only in great challenges, but in small moments that pass unnoticed. One who is careful with what others dismiss as insignificant builds a soul of integrity. Heaven treasures quiet righteousness more than dramatic displays."

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

וְקַח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְטִהַרְתָּ אֹתָם- Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them. 8:6

There was a purification process required for the induction of the Levyim. [Reb Moshe Ha'Darshan]

If you spell out the word **יִשְׂרָאֵל** in full - לַמֶד – אַלַף – רַיש – שִׁין – יוּד – **לוּיִם**. So, we have **לְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**.

The Short Journey



An elderly woman got on a bus and sat down. At the next stop, a grumpy young lady got on the bus and sat down next to her, hitting her with her numerous bags. When she saw that the elderly woman remained silent, she asked her, "Why didn't you complain when I hit you with my bags?"

The elderly woman replied with a smile, "There is no need to be rude or to discuss something that is so insignificant, as our journey together is so short, and I am going to get off at the next stop."

This answer deserves to be written in gold letters.

There is no need to discuss something so insignificant – because our journey together is too short.

Each of us must understand that our time in this world is so short. And darkening it with useless arguments, jealousy or not forgiving

others, discontentment and bad attitudes are a ridiculous waste of time and energy.

Did someone break your heart? Stay calm – the trip is too short.

Did someone betray, intimidate, cheat or humiliate you? Relax, don't stress - the trip is too short.

Did someone insult you without reason? Shake it off, ignore it – the trip is too short.

Did a neighbour make a comment that you didn't like? Take a deep breath. Ignore him/her, forgive and forget it– the trip is too short.

Whatever problem someone has brought us, remember that our journey together is too short. No one knows the length of our trip! Nobody knows when it will arrive at its stop! Our trip together is short!



Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

Parnassah

In the desert, the Yidden didn't travel or camp where and when they wanted. With the **ענני כבוד**, clouds of glory, Hashem showed them when to travel and where to camp.

The Shlah Hakodesh teaches that this continues to occur to this day. Therefore, although we don't have the **ענני הכבוד** guiding us, where and when we go is still in Hashem's hands.

This applies to everything we do, such as the shidduchim we choose, the parnassah we work in, and millions of other details -We are in Hashem's hands.

The Shlah Hakadosh's lesson applies to all aspects of life. One will only succeed with Hashem's will and aid.

Reb Kopel Chosid zy"a (a student of the Baal Shem Tov) was called by his fellow merchants "*Reb Kopel Shevisi'nig*" because he repeatedly said (Tehillim 16:8) **שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד** , "*I have placed Hashem before me constantly.*"

He owned the most accurate scale in the market, and all the Jewish, G-d fearing merchants used his scale to sell their merchandise according to halachah. When Reb Kopel didn't come to the market, the merchants would say, "When *Shevisi* isn't here, we can't do business."

Their intention was twofold: (1) *Reb Kopel Shevisi'nig* is absent, and we don't have accurate scales, so we can't do business. (2) Without **שויתי**, without placing Hashem before our eyes, we can't do business because one must always remember that success in business is only with Hashem's help.

Bitachon



It states (Tehillim 32:10) **והבוטח בד' חסד יסובבנו**, "*For him who trusts in Hashem - Hashem's kindness will encompass him.*" The Midrash says on this pasuk, "Even if a person is a rasha if he trusts in Hashem, he will be enveloped in Hashem's kindness."

It states (Koheles 7:20) **כי אדם אין צדיק בארץ אשר יעשה טוב ולא יחטא** "For there is no righteous man on earth who does good and sins not." The pasuk is saying that everyone has aveiros.

Reb Elchanan Wasserman zt'l proves from this pasuk that bitachon is for everyone. If one needs to be perfect to be worthy of

Hashem's kindness, no one could have bitachon. So, it must be that regardless of our deeds, we can trust in Hashem and benefit from His kindness.

Feel Your Fellow Man's Pain and Joy

At the end of the *parashah*, Aharon and Miriam spoke *lashon hara*, but only Miriam received *tzaraas*, not Aharon. Why?

The Kedushas Tzion (Rebbe Ben Tzion of Bobov *zt'l hy'd*) answers that Aharon excelled in *ahavas Yisrael*. When his fellow man had a problem, Aharon felt it as though it were his own problem.

Therefore, Aharon felt Miriam's *tzaraas* as though he was also ill, so he didn't need to have *tzaraas*.

Chesed

Doing chesed should be a top priority. Time, effort, money, honor, and all other calculations shouldn't prevent us from doing chesed for a Yid.

Rebbe Moshe of Kobrin zt'l says, "***A day that you don't do a chesed is a dead day***." Every day, we should seek opportunities to help others in need.

A chassid came to the **Imrei Emes of Gur** and expressed his financial worries. "I used to buy hides from a large Jewish company in Berlin and earned nicely from it. However, they recently wrote me that starting next month, they are stopping to do business with me."

The Rebbe asked, "Is there anything I can do to help you?"

The man didn't answer, so the Rebbe said, "Soon, I will be traveling with my brother-in-law and *mechuten*, the **Rav of Bendin**, to the Marienbad vacation resort. Enroute, we pass Berlin. Ask my brother-in-law if he agrees to make a stopover in Berlin. If he agrees, we can

try to speak with these people who used to do business with you. Perhaps we can help in some way."

The chassid asked the Rav of Bendin, who agreed to the detour. So, these two tzaddikim came to the tannery in Berlin.

The owner of the tannery was immediately impressed by the appearance of his two distinguished guests. The Imrei Emes introduced himself: "I am Avraham Mordechai Alter, and in Poland, people call me the Rebbe of Gur. And this is my brother-in-law, the Rav of Bendin. We are also *mechutanim*…"

The owner jumped from excitement and asked the rebbe to repeat his words. - The rebbe repeated, "I am the rebbe of Gur, and this is my brother-in-law and *mechutan*, the Rav of Bendin."

For some reason, these words made him very happy, and he called for his business partner to come downstairs to hear what these two tzaddikim were saying. He then asked the Imrei Emes to repeat his words a third time.

The Rebbe repeated his words, and the two partners danced with joy. They explained, "We are also brothers-in-law, and we both have children of marriageable age. We wanted our children to marry one another, but we weren't certain if it was proper for brothers-in-law to be *mechutanim*. But now that we hear that you are both *mechutanim* and brothers-in-law, we understand it can be done. We dance in honor of the *shidduch*. This is like the *vort*. Our children can marry one another."

After rejoicing with them and wishing them mazal tov, the Imrei Emes told them about the chassid who was worried about his parnassah.

"You wrote to him that you won't be selling to him anymore."

The owners replied, "Rebbe, we will continue working with him. There is no problem anymore."

They explained, "For a long time, we were undecided whether to do the shidduch or not, and this created much tension between us. The atmosphere was very uncomfortable in the workplace, so we decided to close shop and sell out. We told the chassid he couldn't buy from us anymore because we thought our business would close. But now that you taught us that brothers-in-law could be *mechutanim*, we can make the *shidduch* that we both desired, and we will be able to work together. You can tell your chassid we will do business with him as before."

The Imrei Emes said, "See the wonders of Hashem!

He had a chassid complain about his *parnassah*, which brought us to Berlin to enable a *shidduch* to be finalized."

There are several lessons that we can take from this story. First, it is a story of shidduchim, how Hashem arranges all the necessary steps so a shidduch will occur.

But this story is also a lesson in chessed. When the businessman came to the Imrei Emes and told him his problem, the Imrei Emes could have given him a brachah and left it at that. But he and his brother-in-law went out of their way to help their fellow man.

Through their attempts, they helped the businessman and the partners in Berlin continue their parnassah and helped finalize a shidduch.

This story is often repeated to show how Hashem arranged a *shidduch* and *parnassah* in a wonderous way. Presently, we are using this story to remind us of the importance of doing *chessed*. The Imrei Emes and the Rav of Bendin devotedly tried to help a fellow yid, resulting in a *shidduch* and *parnassah*.

Our life's mission is to help our fellow man in any way we can. When we dedicate ourselves to this goal, we will accomplish much more than we can imagine.

Beis Aharon

The 17th of Sivan is the *yahrtzeit* of **Reb Aharon of Karlin *zt'l***, the Beis Aharon. One of his outstanding traits was simchah.

The Rebbe of Kozmir called him the *freilechen* tzaddik because he was always happy. People thought he was a happy person by nature, but the **Yesod HaAvodah of Slonim** said that his happiness was the result of *hischazkus*. (He was naturally prone to negative thoughts but trained himself to be happy.)

Once, the Beis Aharon rebuked his son for not being happy. His son asked, "Why do you rebuke me specifically for this? I have other faults, and you never rebuke me over those matters!"

The Beis Aharon, replied, "I know that you have yiras Shamayim, and on your own, you will try to improve the areas that need improvement. However, you mistakenly think that being sad isn't so terrible. That's why I must speak to you about always being happy."



In this week's parsha, Moshe prays for Miriam's refuah. - You probably know that besides tefilla, just visiting a sick person brings him a little bit of refuah. But did you know that a certain condition needs to be fulfilled in order for that refuah to come?

This Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 34:1) explains it: *Rav Huna said: "Anyone who visits the sick causes the Heavens to reduce one sixtieth of his illness....[And] sixty men can cause the sick person to become completely healed, but on one condition: all of them should love him as they love themselves."*

This Midrash is teaching us how incredible is the power of Ahavas Yisroel!

Sparks of Shabbos

The gemara (Shabbos 118b) teaches us that even if a person worships idols he will be forgiven if he observes Shabbos properly.

The Taz questions what this means for if he repents, teshuva should work anyway and if he doesn't how does Shabbos help?

He answers that it refers to one who repented, but nevertheless, his neshama is tarnished from his sins and he still needs atonement. Properly observing Shabbos has the power to wipe away these blemishes and marks without atonements.

The Steipler expands on this and explains when one's soul is sullied, he is confused and often misled which will cause him to sin further. When Shabbos comes, if he properly observes it, his mind will become clear, and he will aspire to greater closeness to Hashem.

This, explains **Rav Matisyahu Solomon**, is the 'great gift' which Hashem instructed Moshe to teach us about.

Thoughts that Count for Our Parsha

***זָכַרְנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חִנָּם We remember the fish, which we ate in Egypt for nothing* (11:5)**

The world was created in such a way that whatever is associated with the "side of holiness" requires hard work and effort. By contrast, the spiritual emanations of the "other side" come easily.

In Egypt, a place of moral depravity, the Jewish people had grown accustomed to receiving abundance "for nothing," without any effort on their part. When they left Egypt and realized that they would have to work to receive G-d's blessing, they rose up in protest. (**Siddur Im Divrei Elokim Chaim**)

From our Sages

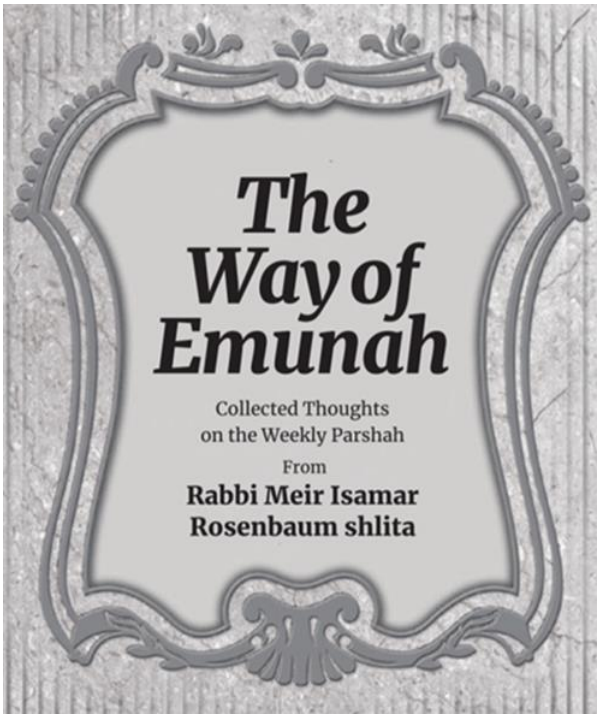
הֲאָנֹכִי הָרִיתִי אֶת כָּל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אִם־אָנֹכִי יְלִדְתִּיהוּ - *Have I conceived all these people? Have I given birth to them?* (11:12)

Moshe said to Hashem: "*I'm not the one who must suffer because of the Jews. You are responsible.*"

A parent must share the suffering of his children and have mercy on them, for good and for bad. (**Rabbi Simcha Bunim**)

רָנִּי וְשִׂמְחִי בַּת־צִיּוֹן כִּי הִנְנִי־בָא וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכֵךְ - *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for behold I come…* (Haftorah, Zech. 2:14)

Our Sages taught that the Divine Presence only rests upon someone who is joyful. G-d therefore advises the Jewish people to rejoice, as preparation for His presence among them. (**Ma'ora Shel Torah**)



Know What to Answer

Rashi says that the word "b'ha'aloscha" implies going up. The chochomim learn from this that there was a step in front of the Menorah that the kohen would stand on when he lit the neiros.

The Mekor Boruch of Seret zy"a related that he heard from his father-in-law, **Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz zy"a**, that his grandfather, **the Sar Shalom of Belz zy"a**, related the following story:

The Apta Rov zy"a had a chasid named R' Shmuel, who was a simple man who possessed some wealth and would donate a considerable sum

to tzedakah. The Rebbe once saw R' Shmuel looking into a Chumash with a look of great wonder on his face.

He asked him, "What do you see that is so amazing to you?"

R' Shmuel replied, "On the first page of the Chumash, there is an illustration of Moshe and Aharon. In the picture, Moshe is tall and skinny and Aharon is short and stout. I was wondering how the illustrator knew that they looked like this."



The Rebbe told him, "If you would learn, you would know the answer. It says that Moshe was ten amos tall. It also says that Aharon needed a step to reach the Menorah, which means that he was short. But it also says that Moshe and Aharon were 'equal.' How could they have been of equal size? It must be that Moshe was tall and skinny, while Aharon was short and plump!"

The Belzer Rebbe added, "It is certain that the Apta Rov's words contained Divine and holy secrets. But we can learn from this story that one needs to know how to answer a person's question on that person's level, even if the man is unlearned."

The Mekor Boruch related that whenever the Belzer Rebbe would relate this story, it would make him very happy.

"Do not underestimate a small act done consistently. The Yetzer Hara fears steady service more than great inspiration, because steady service builds a person into someone new." ~ Pele Yoetz.

Creating a New Mitzvah

אֲנַחְנוּ טְמֵאִים לְנֶפֶשׁ אָדָם לָמָּה נִגָּרַע לְבִלְתִּי הַקְרִיב אֶת־קָרְבַּן ה׳ בְּמֹעֲדוֹ



We are tamei to a dead body. Why should we lose out and be unable to bring close a korban to Hashem in its appointed time? (9:7)

The Chidushei Harim zy"a asks what these people meant when they asked why they should have to lose out. They were exempt from this mitzvah because they were tamei and were in the category of "oines". If so, they weren't losing anything, so what was their complaint?

He answers that they had such a strong desire to bring a Korban Pesach that their hearts were broken, and they felt like they were losing something precious. And, as a result of this desire, a new mitzvah of Pesach Sheini was created for them.

Thoughts that Count for Our Parsha

וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יַאֲכִלֵנוּ בָּשָׂר ***And the people of Israel also wept and said: Who shall give us meat to eat?*** (11:4)

In truth, the Yidden had plenty of meat to eat in the desert, supplied by the sacrifices that were brought in the Tabernacle; the only restriction was on meat that had not been offered as a sacrifice. The meat of the sacrifices was permitted to be eaten within two days; thus, even while travelling the Jews had a two-day supply. - It wasn't until the third day of the journey that they began to complain, as they were still in transit and unable to erect the Mishkan. (**Rabbi Shaul of Amsterdam**)

More Thoughts that Count for Our Parsha

"When we have Emunah, we can approach Hashem with confidence, knowing that He listens to our prayers, and desires our spiritual growth." – Sefer Tomer Devorah.

Rabbi Shimon Kaplin

וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יַאֲכִלֵנוּ בָּשָׂר 'The rabble that was among them cultivated a craving, and the children of **ישראל** also turned, and they wept, and said, who will feed us meat?' (11:4)



Chazal teach us that this "**האספסף**" refer to the **ערב רב**, they were the ones who began this rabble, complaining about their **מן** and insisting that they should be eating meat. Then unfortunately the rest of **כלל ישראל** joined in, they too complained asking for meat.

The pasuk (10) then tells us **וַיִּחַר־אַף ה' מְאֹד וּבְעֵינֵי מֹשֶׁה רָע** - *'Hashem became very angry, and Moshe considered it evil.' And Hashem struck a very mighty blow against the people.*

On face value, the **פרשה** seems rather interesting. **כלל ישראל** complain for some meat. Immediately, Hashem's anger flared, and no sooner or later, Hashem struck a very mighty blow against His people. It was a terrible and extremely severe punishment.

The question is very simple: What exactly was the **עבירה**? What did they do so wrong asking by asking for meat? They were not asking

for **טריפה** meat, on the contrary, they wanted kosher meat! All they wanted was something extra to supplement their diet of the **מן**?

We find many-a-time throughout the **תורה** that when **כלל ישראל** sinned, they received their punishment immediately without any delay. For example, by the Eigel, with the **מחלוקת** of **קרח ועדתו** Likewise, after the **מרגלים** said their evil report on **ארץ ישראל** They weren't given time to repent and they weren't given time to rectify their mistake, but rather immediately they were punished. There was no time for correcting and no time for apologising.

When **כלל ישראל** were living in the **מדבר** they didn't live the way we live today, they didn't have a "**בחירה חפשית**". They were basically forced to go in the way of Hashem, they didn't have much choice. If they wouldn't go in the way of Hashem, they knew they would be receiving sever punishments immediately. They didn't have "free choice" like we have it.

The **ספרים הקדושים** explain: The purpose for this was to get them used to keeping the true **רצון ה'**. The **מדבר** was the birth process, to begin as young children into becoming great **עובדי ה'**. After forty years having gotten used to doing **רצון ה'**, they would then be able to be **עובד ה'** properly without this strict **הנהגה**. When they came into **ארץ ישראל** they acquired this free choice, and Hashem didn't punish them straight away. Hashem would wait many, many years with tremendous patience until He punished them. Just like a child in **חדר**, at first it starts off with the Rebbe being strict, but as the year moves on the Rebbe can relax and no longer be so strict.

The Gemara in Yumah teaches: One **פסוק** tells us the **מן** fell **המחנה על** -implying that the **מן** fell in the camp nearby, another **פסוק** states, **ויצא העם ולקטו** -the people would go out to gather, indicating that the people would have to go outside their camp to gather, and another **פסוק** relates, **שטו העם ולקטו**, the people had to travel to a distant place to collect their portion of **מן**.

The **גמרא** explains, the **צדיקים** received their portion of **מן** on their doorstep, whereas the **בינונים** had to go outside of the **מחנה** and the **רשעים** had to travel far away to a distant place to receive their **מן**. Aside from the bother of the exertion of receiving the food, if you were a **רשע** this was a tremendous embarrassment! It was noticed on everyone what **מדריגה** in **רוחניות** they were on!

Furthermore, the **תורה** describes the **מן** sometimes as **לחם** – "baked bread", sometimes as **עוגות** – "raw dough", and sometimes as **ברחיים טחנו** – "wheat" which requires grinding. Sometimes, the **מן** was ready baked, sometimes it was raw – ready to go into the oven and sometimes the **מן** was wheat, still requiring a long process until it could be eaten.

The **גמרא** continues to explain: The **צדיקים** received baked bread, the **בינונים** received dough and the **רשעים** received grain who would then have to grind it and bake it. Every person received their **מן** in a different form depending on their **מדריגה**. One person would receive fresh hot bread – he could eat it straight away, while the other person a **רשע** could only eat his bread late into the afternoon once he ground and eventually baked his bread.

From day to day, if an individual in **כלל ישראל** sinned, it would be displayed to all, the next day he didn't receive baked bread, people will see him grinding his wheat and baking it in the oven! -What an embarrassment!

The **צדיקים** are eating their fresh hot bread and the **רשע** is seen by all, grinding his bread and putting it into the oven! It's a tremendous **ביזיון**. The children will know that when their father comes home with grain, he obviously sinned the night before!

In fact, the **גמרא** in **יומא** teaches: Just like a **נביא** could tell a person where he is holding in **רוחניות**, the **מן** in the **מדבר** would tell a person where he is holding in **רוחניות**. The **מן** would teach a person what **מדריגה** he really was on, and it would be public knowledge. The **מן** revealed the truth.

We can imagine the pressure which those who did not want to keep **תורה** and **מצוות** suffered. People were too scared to sin; they knew the entire **מחנה** would find out about it the next day. It was a tremendous **לחץ**. Now, this didn't just happen as a one off, every day was the same situation. It wasn't for a week, and it wasn't for a month. For forty years they lived with such a pressure! It was every single day. And if a person fell in his **רוחניות** he barely had time to repent, because by the next morning, his punishment would already arrive, his **בושה** would reach him by the morning.

With this in mind, we can answer our question: People didn't like this pressure, the people wanted freedom, they wanted to be exempt from eating the **מן**. They no longer wanted to live with such a pressure, they therefore asked for meat and like this nobody would know where they are standing in **רוחניות**.

A person must remember to fit himself into society, and to remember that a person has obligations and responsibilities. The stress and pressure that people feel is because they do not accept upon themselves to do what they are supposed to do. They aren't creating discipline in their life. They aren't creating a goal in their life; they don't know where they are heading. They want freedom and they think about freedom all day, deciding "how I want and when I want!"

Since they ultimately cannot fulfil this "freedom" this creates a tremendous stress and pressure. This was their sin – they desired freedom. They wanted to go on their own free path of life without anyone disturbing or interrupting them.

Of course, Hashem and Moshe knew exactly where they were coming from, and what their true complaint was. However, this is not the way a **איד** must live his life. A person shouldn't live his life with a desire of freedom without any discipline, obligations or responsibilities. This is why **ויחר אף ה' מאד** – Hashem became extremely angry, because such an attitude undermines the purpose

of creation, the purpose of **מתן תורה** and the person of being a **איד**. Such an attitude demands severe punishments.

The **פסוק** in **פרשת עקב** states, **כלל ישראל - ויענך וירעבך** - were starved in the desert!

When were they starved in the **מדבר**? The **אבן עזרא** there explains: Sometimes in they starved themselves! They wanted freedom and they would pretend that they received their **מן** at their doorstep. They didn't want to be seen outside the camp collecting their **מן**!

The pressure and stress we feel is often as a result of that desire of freedom we feel which doesn't fit into our obligations and responsibilities. That conflict then causes tremendous pressure. However, if a person accepts upon himself the **עול מלכות שמים** he no longer feels any pressure or any stress.

This is very **נוגע** nowadays during the present situation where we mustn't get used to this new life of "freedom." A person can very easily become accustomed to a life a of freedom, to do that what he wants, when he wants and how he wants. Waking up when we want. Davening when we want. We can listen to shiur when we want!

We must be very careful and work very hard in this matzev with being perfectly disciplined. We must try our best not to let go of our obligations and responsibilities. We must discipline ourselves to be able to accomplish what must be done during these times. We must be aware of the danger of going day after day without a discipline. We must plan what we are going to do and stick to it!

This was the **חטא** of the ones who desired meat. It was a desire for freedom which Hashem does not accept. And we must understand that this is one of the messages of the **פרשה**, Yiddishkeit is about discipline, about keeping to our obligations and responsibilities.

Jewish Education Program Queens [JEP] - Hurdle to Greatness!



יֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה הֶעָנָן מֵעֶרֶב עַד־בֹּקֶר וְנַעֲלָה הֶעָנָן בַּבֹּקֶר וְנָסָעוּ אֹו יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה וְנַעֲלָה הֶעָנָן וְנָסָעוּ

"It sometimes happened that the Cloud was [there] [but] from evening until morning, and then the Cloud rose in the morning, and they travelled; or [the Cloud was there] for a day and a night and the Cloud was lifted, and they travelled." (Bamidbar 9:21)

A student of the ***Chozeh of Lublin*** *once davened to Hashem, asking that he earn his weekly livelihood early in the week. Then he would have the peace of mind to learn Torah the rest of the week. The Chozeh told him that, of course Hashem could provide his livelihood earlier in the week. However, that may not be what Hashem wanted. Hashem wanted this student to be able to learn Torah and do mitzvos under less than desirable conditions. His Torah learning and his mitzvos, when done under the trying conditions, were more holy and more pleasing to Hashem. "Maybe Hashem has more satisfaction in how you overcome your burdens and create light in the midst of darkness."* (The Pirkei Avos Treasury by Rabbi Moshe Lieber)

After leaving Egypt, the Jewish People traversed the desert. Hashem guided them with a Pillar of Cloud during the day and a Pillar of Fire at night. Whenever the Cloud rose from the Mishkan, it indicated that it was time to leave. Then the Jews packed their belongings and left.

The **Bekhor Shor** says that Hashem did not inconvenience the people by making them break camp at night. However, sometimes the Cloud signalled to the Jews to leave after one day, sometimes after a month, and sometimes after a year.

The **Sforno** says that it was impossible to predict with any degree of probability how long they would stay in one location. Sometimes the Jewish People arrived at a location, unpacked, and then had to leave hours later.

The **Ramban** says that sometimes they arrived at an unpleasant place to camp. They wanted to leave right away but the Pillar of Cloud did not move for a long time. Other times, they came to a beautiful site. They wanted to remain there for a long time. They would unpack and settle in. However, the very next morning, the Pillar of Cloud rose, indicating that they had to leave. They had to repack all their belongings and continue travelling. The **Ramban** says that this was very bothersome.

What was Hashem's purpose in doing this? Why was the trip through the desert so difficult, as the Jewish People never knew how long they would be remaining in one place?

Rav Eliyahu Dessler zt"l in Michtav m'Eliyahu explains that Hashem may have done this to teach the Jewish People a very important lesson. ***Learning Torah and doing mitzvos should not depend on external conditions.***

One is apt to say, "**If Only**". "If I only had a little-more free time, then I would learn Torah. If only I didn't have to go to my job early in the morning, then I would be able to daven with a minyan or then I would be able to daven slower, with more concentration. Or if only I didn't have to work so hard to earn a living, worry so much about my children, be busy with homework, be busy with shidduchim, or be busy with medical troubles, then I would do so much more."

Life is never perfect. It is full of disturbances and challenges.

That is what Hashem was teaching us with the unpredictable travels in the desert. Life in the desert was not easy at times. However, Jewish life does not depend on conditions improving. A Jew must learn Torah and do mitzvos under all conditions, even difficult ones. One can't wait until he gets comfortable before learning Torah or doing other mitzvos. (based on Rabbi Yissocher Frand, Rabbi Frand on the Parasha)

It says in **Pirkei Avos** (2:4), **וְאַל תֹּאמַר לִכְשֶׁאִפָּנֶה אֶשְׁנֶה, שֶׁמָּא לֹא תִפָּנֶה** – "***Don't say 'When I am free then I will learn', for perhaps you will not become free.***"

One should never postpone learning Torah to a more opportune moment, for that moment may never come.

A Jew must learn Torah and do mitzvos under all conditions, even difficult ones. Mitzvos done in trying circumstances give Hashem even more pleasure than those done when all is calm. We have the opportunity, to achieve greatness and holiness when we do mitzvos despite our challenges.



From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

הֲאָנֹכִי הָרִיתִי אֶת כָּל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אִם־אָנֹכִי יְלִדְתִּיהוּ כִּי־תֹאמַר אֵלַי שָׂאֵהוּ בְחֵיקֶךָ 11:12

It would appear at this juncture, that Moshe Rabbeinu feels somewhat "overwhelmed" and "unqualified" to take care of the myriad needs of Klal Yisroel. He tells Hashem: "Did I give birth to this nation?"

Rashi quotes the Sifri here that Hashem told Moshe back in Mitzrayim, that he must lead the people "even if they stone or insult you." Now, Moshe tells Hashem that he doesn't know what more he can do to help the Nation and care for them.

The Seforno comments that we see from Moshe's words a great principle. A father is the master of his home and family, even when his children are completely different from one another, because they all know that he loves them equally and only wants what is best for each one.

Moshe Rabbeinu, too, wished that the Nation would see him as a father figure and trust him implicitly because he truly cared for them all. But this special relationship - this NATURAL love and trust - is reserved for a parent. No matter what a child will do, a parent will always love his/her child. This natural bond is very important for the health and emotional development of a child who needs the security that comes with the feeling, "My mother and my father truly love and care about me." Without it, a child can feel deprived, unworthy, unloved and worthless.

Although this is a NATURAL feeling, parents today are so busy and overwhelmed, overtired and overburdened, that often our children do not feel loved even though if you would ask their parents if they love them, they would surely say they do. We, as parents must not only love our children, but we must make sure that our children FEEL our love.

It is true that it is very difficult to be a parent these days, but I would venture to say that it is a lot harder being a kid! Let us take out the time every day to tell our children with words, and show them with actions and deeds, how much we love and care about them. In this way we will tighten the natural bond that is in the heart of every parent.





How far do you have to go for shalom?

You have to go to the end of the world for shalom. You must do everything for shalom because shalom means you're making your character perfect.

All the things in this world were made as tests for man. A wife tests a husband, and a husband tests a wife. They're made to test each other. Of course, you shouldn't look for a woman that will test you too much. You shouldn't look for a husband that will give you too much of a test.

Once you're married, however, make up your mind that's your mitzvah, that's your test. That's your Olam Hazeh and Olam Habo. And you will not lose out. A person who doesn't get excited will live longer. Make up your mind no matter what, you're married to this meshugene now and that's it. Now, don't tell him that, don't tell her that, but that's it. All your life, do your best to get along with that person. You're both meshugeh.

That's the truth; both are meshugeh. He thinks he deceived her. But she also deceived him. They deceived each other when they married. And therefore, all your life, try to deceive your wife. Make her think you're a nice fellow. Make your husband think you're a nice person. Try your best to deceive each other all your life.

More than Just a Journey - Rav Moshe On Chumash



'It was in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month, the cloud was lifted from upon the Tabernacle of the Testimony. The Children of Yisrael journeyed on their journeys from the Wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud rested in the Wilderness of Paran. They journeyed for the first time at the bidding of Hashem through Moshe.' (10:11-13).

What does the third pasuk — They journeyed for the first time at the bidding of Hashem through Moshe — add to the earlier pesukim?

The Sages observe (Kiddushin 40b) that Torah study is more important than mitzvah performance, "because Torah study leads one to action" — performing mitzvos.

How are we to understand this? A craftsman may study his trade for many years, but no one would suggest that his training is more important than the masterpiece he produces. If the purpose of study is to teach a person how to do the mitzvos, can the preparation be more important than the goal?

Mitzvah performance is fundamentally different than a craft. For it to be truly considered a mitzvah, one must do it because he learned that the Torah commands it; doing something without knowing that it is a mitzvah is not fulfillment of a mitzvah.

Indeed, Rashi explains the Gemara to mean that when one studies the laws of a mitzvah and then performs it, he has gained both the study and the mitzvah; this implies that without the study, he has neither. Additionally, we are told (Menachos 110a) that, in the absence of the Beis HaMikdash, one who studies the laws of the offerings is considered to have actually brought them.

In this way, Torah study "brings one to perform mitzvos" — for through his study, he is rewarded as if he had actually performed the mitzvah. The third pasuk here is teaching us that the Jews did not merely travel. They moved at the bidding of Hashem through Moshe. Because Hashem had commanded it, they were fulfilling His will.

Change Someone's Life By Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein



All the struggles we go through in life cause us hardship and heartache. There is no question about that, and no difficulty should ever be minimized. And yet with it, we must also recognize the place that leaves us and the responsibility that charges us with. Having gone through that struggle, you can help others.

There's a reason you went through it, which may not be apparent to you and may never be known to you. However, one thing you do know is that with it, you can help others. You can be a living role model, through your actions and discussions with them.

Don't turn away. Don't say that you don't have anything to offer. However big or small, you have something to help others with. Step out of your zone into someone else's world and help change their life.

This is no hyperbole. You can change someone's life by using your struggle to help them and be there for them. Do it. Today… tonight. Don't wait. Don't wait to touch the heart of someone else and change their life and their future. Because you really can.

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series - The Menorah Represents the Torah.



At the beginning of the parsha, we have the mitzva of the Menorah. The backdrop of this is, that Aaron saw in last week's parsha the beauty of the korbonos brought by each Nasi/shevet, which the Torah describes each one in its entirety.

Aaron understood that the root of the word *Korban* is *Koreiv* – to become close. Each shevet became closer to Hakadosh Baruch Hu by virtue of the fact that each nasi was becoming niskarev to Hashem through the korban.

He was distressed and despondent that he didn't have a part in this. He desired that he and his shevet also had something to come closer to Hashem.

This desire to not miss out and to have something to become closer to Hashem resulted in Aaron being given the mitzva of the menorah. **שֶׁכְּשָׁרָאָה אַהֲרֹן חֲנֻכַּת הַנְּשִׂיאִים חָלְשָׁה אָז דַּעְתּוֹ, שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה עִמָּהֶם בַּחֲנֻכָּה לֹא הוּא וְלֹא שִׁבְטוֹ, אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא חַייֶיךָ שֶׁלְּךָ גְּדוֹלָה מִשֶּׁלָּהֶם, שֶׁאַתָּה מַדְלִיק וּמֵטִיב אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת** – [Rashi]. You are going to prepare and light the menorah every day. This is something that will continue throughout the generations. There will even be a memory of this

mitzva when Klal Yisrael light the menorah on Chanukah and the Shabbos lights every week.

The menorah in the Beis Hamikdash was the symbol and resemblance of 'Chochmas HaTorah', which has been a constant that has kept us going through the ages- **כִּי לֹא תִשָּׁכַח מִפִּי זַרְעוֹ** - *'for it will never be forgotten'*.

This is hinted to in the menorah. Just like the menorah and its light is a constant – the Torah HaKedosha will also be a constant. This gives us access to Torah.



The Vilna Gaon,the B'nei Yisaschar and the Remah say that there are 5 Sifrei Torah that we Have - **חמישה חומשי תורה**. The first pasuk in each of those seforim, hints to the menorah in the following way:

The first pasuk in sefer Beraishis has 7 words corresponding to the **שבעת קני המנורה** – the 7 branches of the menorah. The first pasuk in Shemos has 11 words corresponding to the 11 **כפתורים** (Knobs) of the menorah. The first pasuk in Vayikra has 9 words, corresponding to the 9 **פרחים** (flowers) on the menorah. The first pasuk in Bamidbar has 17 words, corresponding to the height of the menorah – which was more than 17 tefachim (18). The first pasuk in Devarim has 22 words, corresponding to the 22 **גְּבִעִים** (decorative cups) on the menorah.

This is very nice, but there is something more significant hinted to in our parsha. In pasuk 8:19 the words **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** are mentioned 5 times in this one pasuk! וָאֶתְּנָה אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם נְתֻנִים לְאַהֲרֹן וּלְבָנָיו מִתּוֹךְ **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת **בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל** בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּלְכַפֵּר עַל־**בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** וְלֹא יִהְיֶה **בִּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** נֶגֶף בְּגֶשֶׁת **בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל** אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ

Rashi brings from the Medrash Rabah - **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** is mentioned uniquely five times in this verse, thus declaring the love and affection Hashem has for them, for their mention is repeated in one verse corresponding to the **חמישה חומשי תורה**.

Klal Yisrael are integrally connected to the Torah. This was a gift from Hashem that only belonged to Klal Yisrael.

Aaron HaKohen wasn't just given the mitzvah of the menorah – He was given the key to the entire secret of the **תורה הקדושה**.

It is no surprise then, that when the Torah talks about Aaron HaKohen, The Medrash Rabah says in parshas Emor – (Vayikra 21:10) **וְהַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל מֵאֶחָיו** – What makes Aaron stand over and above the rest of the kohanim? : **שהוא גדול בחמישה דברים בחכמה, בכח, בנוי, בעושר ובשנים** - These five attributes appear to be a remez to the **חמישה חומשי תורה** which was a loving gift from The Ribboino Shel Olam.

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series



Right at the end of the parsha, after Moshe Rabeinu had lashon horah spoken about him, and Hashem came to his defense, the pasuk (12:3) says - **וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה** - '***Now this man Moses was exceedingly humble, more so than any person on the face of the earth***'.

Chazal tell us about three **גדולי עולם** who were the architype *anavim*: Avraham Avinu, Moshe Rabeinu and Dovid HaMelech.

Avraham Avinu says about himself - **וְאָנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵפֶר** '***I am but dust and ashes***'. (Beraishis 18:27). **Dovid HaMelech** says about himself

(Tehilim 22:7) - וְאָנֹכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא־אִישׁ '***But I am a worm and not a man***.' **Moshe Rabeinu** said about himself and **Aaron HaKohen** (Shemos 16:7)- וְנַחְנוּ מָה '***What are we, we are nothing***.'

The Chida says that of the three, Moshe Rabeinu was the greatest anav, because whereas Avrom and Dovid both valued themselves as something – However, Moshe Rabeinu said, "We are absolutely nothing!"

The Chida says that this is hinted to in our pasuk - וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד – The roshei teivos of **מאד** is **דוד – אברהם – משה**! Out of these three, Moshe was the biggest anav!

Moshe Rabeinu said, "***Nothing that I have is mine – they are gifts from Hakadosh Baruch Hu***."

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

The sedra relates that Klal Yisrael were in the Midbar, just under a year after having come out of Mitzrayim. There were some people who had been unable to bring the Korban Pesach due to having been tamei from burying the dead. (Yosef Hatzaddik and his brothers).

וַיְהִי אֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ טְמֵאִים לְנֶפֶשׁ אָדָם וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ לַעֲשֹׂת הַפֶּסַח בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּקְרְבוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וְלִפְנֵי אַהֲרֹן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא '*There were men who were ritually unclean [because of contact with] a dead person, and therefore could not make the Passover sacrifice on that day. So they approached Moses and Aaron on that day*'. (9:6)

They came to Moshe Rabeinu and said, לָמָּה נִגָּרַע לְבִלְתִּי הַקְרִיב אֶת־קָרְבַּן ה' בְּמֹעֲדוֹ בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל '*why should we be excluded so as not to bring the offering of Hashem in its appointed time, with all the children of Israel?'(9:7)*

אָמְרוּ לוֹ יִזָּרֵק הַדָּם עָלֵינוּ בְּכֹהֲנִים טְהוֹרִים וְיֹאכַל הַבָּשָׂר לִטְהוֹרִים "*Let ritually clean kohanim sprinkle the blood for us, and let ritually clean people eat the flesh*." (Rashi) - We understand that we can't actually

partake in the korban Pesach, but is there no way that we can at least prepare the korban, so that it will ascribed to us? We really appreciate the value of mitzvos.

So, Moshe says **עִמְדוּ וְאֶשְׁמְעָה מַה־יְצַוֶּה ה׳ לָכֶם** "*Wait, and I will hear what Hashem instructs concerning you.*"(9:8)

»To understand what was going on over here, I will bring a story: One of the tzadikim and chachamim of Georgian descent, was a man called R' Moshe Darbarshvili. He had been a talmid of the **Chofetz Chaim** in Radin.

He related, that one leil shishi, he would spend longer time learning than usual. When he was overcome with fatigue, and he could no longer learn, he made his home to his hosts. His host was actually the sister of the Chofetz Chaim.

It was a bitterly cold, snowy winter night. As he was walking on the path in the small hours of the night, he saw a figure of a man pacing back and forth. Seeing this man lurking around made him feel very uncomfortable and scared about his own safety.

As he got closer to the man, he suddenly realised who the stranger was – it was his beloved Rosh Yeshiva, the Heilige Chofetz Chaim!

When the Chofetz Chaim noticed him, he said, "*Bocheral, vos tis du do, is gor kalt*?" And the Chofetz Chaim told him to go straight home to bed.

The next morning when he got up to leave for yeshiva, he said, "Good morning" to his hostess. He said to her, "I saw the Rosh Yeshiva roaming around outside last night in the freezing cold in the middle of the night – is everything ok?"

She said, "Nu – for the last three nights, this is what he has been doing. He has been searching for the moon to make **קידוש הלבנה**!"

He was **פטור** because **אונס רחמנא פטריה**. However, the Chofetz Chaim highly valued every single mitzva, and would go to extraordinary

lengths to perform them. He also understood that mitzvos are the medium which connect us and brings us closer to Hashem.<<

We had here people in the midbar, who would have been perfectly justified to say **עוסק במצוה פטור מן המצוה**. But they also understood that every korban brings a person closer to Hashem – This is what they desired and requested Moshe for.



Incredibly, because of this genuine desire for mitzvos and to get closer to Him, Hashem facilitated and created a new mitzva for these people. It was called - **פסח שני**!

There is even one point of view in the Yerushalmi that says that if Moshiach would come between Pesach and Pesach Sheini, he would be delayed until all the Yidden had brought their korban!

If we would only appreciate what every single mitzva does for us, and how every mitzva brings us closer to Hakadosh Boruch Hu -we would grab every opportunity! Just like a person enjoys pleasant smells and tastes, and makes a bracha on these – similarly, carrying out mitzvos and keeping the Torah is pleasant – We should taste this beautiful thing called - **טעמי המצוות**.

Chazal say we are not even told who these people were! The Torah just calls them **וַיְהִי אֲנָשִׁים** '*There were men*'. It is irrelevant who they actually were – they were Yidden, normal (extraordinary) people! We just have to have the same desire for mitzvos.

"Do the best you can. No one can do more than that."



For the Shabbos Table

אֲנַחְנוּ טְמֵאִים לְנֶפֶשׁ אָדָם לָמָּה נִגָּרַע לְבִלְתִּי הַקְרִיב אֶת־קָרְבַּן ***Although we were impure through a corpse why should we be worse off and left out from bringing the korban [pesach]***" (Bamidbar 9:7)

Rashi explains that those who were unable to bring the korban pesach complained that they should have been allowed to sponsor a korban and have it sacrificed and eaten by those who were pure.

The question is obvious; a sacrifice brought in such a manner does not fulfil the mitzvah of korban pesach. If so, what was the point in making this request of Moshe?

Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l explains that we learn from here that even if one is unable to fulfil a mitzvah in its fullest way, he should nevertheless involve himself in the mitzvah, thereby attaching himself to the mitzvah.

For instance, even if one won't be able to sit in the succah, he should nevertheless be involved in the building of a succah. Although they would not fulfil the mitzvah of Korban Pesach through this suggested act, they sought to participate in some aspect of this mitzvah.

Rav Moshe explains that we bless a child that he should grow into "Torah, chuppah, and ma'asim tovim". Rav Moshe explains that "ma'asim tovim", good deeds, refer to such acts which aren't necessarily fulfilment of a Torah obligation, but rather are deeds that one engages in out of love and reverence for mitzvos.



Humility Wins

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד מִכֹּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה The man Moshe was very humble. (*Bemidbar* 12:3)

Moshe Rabbeinu was the one who somehow managed to ascend to Heaven, learn the Torah, and bring it down to earth. Not only that, but it is called ***Toras Moshe***, implying that Moshe actually acquired the Torah as his own.

How did accomplish this astounding feat, which seems to be so far beyond the realm of any human being?

Said R. Yehoshua ben Levi: When Moshe descended from standing before *Hakadosh Baruch Hu,* after receiving the Torah, the *Satan* came and said to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu,* "Master of the World, where is the Torah?"

Hakadosh Baruch Hu replied, "I gave it to the Earth." The *Satan* went to the Earth, and said, "Where is the Torah?" It replied, "Only G-d knows." The *Satan* went to the Sea, and was told, "It is not with me." The *Satan* went to the Depths, and was told, "It is not within me." The *Satan* went back to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* and said, "Master of the World, I searched all over the world and I did not find the Torah."

Hakadosh Baruch Hu replied, "Go to the son of Amram."

The *Satan* went to Moshe, and said, "The Torah that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* gave you, where is it?"

Moshe replied, "Who am I, that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* should give me the Torah?"

Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe, "Moshe, are you making things up?"

Moshe replied, "Master of the World, You have a hidden treasure that You take pleasure in every day. Should I consider myself worthy of it?!"

Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe, "Since you made yourself small, the Torah will be called by your name, as it says, **זִכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי** – "***Remember the Torah of Moshe, My servant***. (Malach 3:22)

If someone would ask us how *Moshe Rabbeinu* merited having the Torah called by his name, as it says, "Remember the Torah of Moshe," we would probably say it is because he worked so hard for Torah and toiled over it so greatly. But we see from the above-quoted *Chazal* that just exerting oneself is not enough. Moshe had a deeper virtue than that: "Since you made yourself small." And so it says in *Sefer Nefesh Hachayim,* that Moshe merited receiving the Torah because of his humility.

When *Hashem* gave the Torah to His people Yisrael, Moshe was the one who received it, but he minimized himself. He said, so to speak: This is not my Torah. Who am I, that the Torah should be given through me?

At that moment, the Torah became *Toras Moshe.*

If Moshe would have said, even for a moment, "I received the Torah," it would not have been *Toras Moshe.* Only by saying, "Who am I, that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* should give me the Torah?" did the Torah become his.

Why was diminishing himself so crucial?

Torah is the very peak of bestowing goodness. And one can bestow goodness on such a level only by resembling *Hashem*. And the

Ramchal writes in *Derech Hashem* that *Hashem's* Will is only to bestow goodness.

Accordingly, if Moshe would have felt when he received the Torah that now he has the Torah, if he would have focused on himself and what he has [he would not have been a proper receptacle for bestowing the ultimate goodness of the Torah. Because Torah is not just something you have for yourself. It is the highest level of bestowing goodness on others.]

Consequently, it would not have been his Torah. But when he said that it is not his Torah, when he expressed humility, it became his Torah, it became ***Toras Moshe***.

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi - Why Complain?

In the Torah, on the occasions the Jewish people complained, the Torah informs us what they complained about. At one time, it was meat, water another time. But in our Parsha, the Torah states, **וַיְהִי הָעָם כְּמִתְאֲנְנִים** "***And the people were like complainers***..." (Bamidbar 11:1) and doesn't continue with any description as to what the complaint was about. It's strange. Why doesn't the Pasuk tell us what they were complaining about? Why does the Torah leave it unclear?

The answer is that it was inconsequential what they were complaining about. It can be with a child or an adult; oftentimes, adults are just big children. We can easily come up with reasons why we don't like something or someone. We made a decision and that's that. What is said subsequently or if an alternative perspective is provided is not accounted for.

I remember once giving several back-to-back speeches in London, and for one of them, as I was heading to the podium, I noticed a man asleep right in the very front and snoring. I proceeded to deliver my speech, sprinkled with various insights, stories and jokes. But none of it, at all, awoke the man. Only at the very, very end, after I had

finished with everything, and the crowd let out a applaud did the man awake.

The man who had invited me to speak had been sitting behind the man who slept through my speech. Light-heartedly, he leaned over to the man in front and asked, "So what did you think about the rabbi's speech?" The man turned back and said, "Eh, he didn't do it for me." I remember growing into a wide smile and laughing. The man had no idea who I was. I didn't even have the opportunity to put him to sleep during my speech because he was never awake!

When the Torah says that the Jews were "like complainers" and doesn't fill us in as to what they were complaining about, that is the very point. It makes no difference. Some people just want to complain in life, and whether they have something real and justified to complain about or not makes no difference. They'll still complain. They will do what they can to find something wrong.

I once had someone come up to me and ask if I could suggest a shidduch for his daughter. Although I generally don't involve myself with shidduchim, having been asked, I gave it some thought and mentioned to the father something I had in mind. "Actually," I said, "from your description of what your daughter is looking for, it sounds like you're describing someone from our beit k'nesset. What do you think about this guy?" The father shook his head. "Not for my daughter… Not for her." "Okay," I replied, thinking further about it. "What about this other guy?" It was a friend of the first boy, and he also fit the description of what the father was explaining. But again, the father wasn't interested. "Not for my daughter," he said again. "He's a great guy," I made clear. But the father was adamant. "Not for my daughter," he repeated. I then gave it some more thought and mentioned a few more names. But none of them appealed to the father at all.

Eventually I realized. Who was for his daughter? No one. "Can I ask you something?" I said. "You said that your daughter has been

waiting for a shidduch for a while?" "Yeah," replied the father. "Does anyone get suggested to your daughter not through you?" He had his answer ready. "No, everything has to come through me." It then clicked for me. "Your daughter's problem," I said, "is not that she cannot find a shidduch; she can't find a shadchan (matchmaker). Your daughter is not the problem, and these young men are not the problem; you're the problem. You're deciding before anyone comes into the picture that they are not suitable. Nothing ever gets started."

The Jewish people were like complainers. But what were they complaining about? That is irrelevant. They decided that they were in a complaining mood. How practical is this to us today? Very. We all can identify with times when we complain about our life's situation.

I'll never forget the time it happened. I went to a hotel in Israel, and there was a fellow there yelling and screaming. I thought the worst had happened. It was horrible. It sounded like a verbal nuclear bomb, and hearing it, I stayed away.

In the meantime, I myself started looking for the mashgiach to run a few food-related questions by. I was directed toward the front desk, and lo and behold, who appears right there after me? The nuclear guy. Now he was screaming near the front desk at someone. It seemed like he was going everywhere and angry at everyone. Now wondering what actually happened to this man, I inched myself closer. Were all of his belongings stolen? Or worse, G-d forbid, did something happen to one of his children?

Who was he yelling at now? The chef. And what was he yelling about? The oatmeal was not hot enough. It was hot, but not hot enough. Evidently, the way you know it's hot enough is if you stick your finger in it. Realizing this, I went ahead with a little test of my own. I headed into the breakfast area and began counting how many different types of breakfast items were there. How many cheeses,

bourekas, pancakes, cereals, eggs, granola, muffins, breads… on and on. The total? 145 items.

And this man was losing his mind because one of them was not hot enough.

I had the opportunity to see the moment when the chef brough his oatmeal and it was hot enough. (I'm not sure what he used to heat it up; perhaps the fires of Gehinnom). The man sat down, stuck his finger in it, and pulled his finger out. Now it was hot enough.

He took a bite, and then pushed aside the dish.

He didn't like the way it tasted now.

This story is laughable. The production it took to prepare the oatmeal hot enough was well beyond, and now what is the problem? He doesn't like how it tastes. Now why, before he turned the world upside down, couldn't he decide if he likes the way it tastes? Also, what about the other 144 breakfast items? What does this man see? The one item that is not to his liking.

Every person is given a choice in the morning when they wake up. And that is: what is today going to be like? Is today going to be a good day, a miserable day or an amazing day? We think that it will depend on what it's going to be. But, in fact, what it's going to be depends on what you're going to be. You look out the window in the morning and it seems like it's going to rain. You think, "Oh, it's done." At that point, you've already made up your time how you wish for your day to be.

When we wake up in the morning and say "Modeh Ani," we thank Hashem not for any other fact than He returned to us our Neshama and gave us another day of life. That enough is reason for us to bless Hashem. There are those who have trained themselves to find all the positive things in life. When they approach things this way, life is entirely different.

The Torah makes mention that when the Jews came to Marah and found no water, Hashem showed Moshe a tree, from which Moshe threw it into the waters and they turned sweet (Shemos 15:25). Why was this location called Marah? The Torah states: "Because they were bitter" (ibid. v. 23). Who are the "they" in this Pasuk? According to some commentaries (Baal Shem Tov), it refers to the Jewish people. They were bitter, and what they saw was therefore bitter too. We see the world the way we are.

The tree that Hashem showed Moshe, what type of tree was it? We'd expect it to be sweet, something along the lines of sugar cane. But what in fact was it? It was a bitter tree itself. What then happened? Moshe threw the bitter tree into the bitter waters and the waters became sweet. But that is so strange. How can something bitter turn something sweet?

The story is told of the Baal Shem Tov and man who came to complain that he, his wife and his children had no room in their house. The Baal Shem Tov said, "I have an idea. Bring a chicken into your home. It is a segulah, auspicious practice, to have more room in your home." The man followed the advice.

The man soon returned to the Baal Shem Tov. "Rebbe, now we are more squished." Listening intently to the man, the Baal Shem Tov went on. "Okay… the next thing you need to do if you are squished is to bring all the goats into your home." "But Rebbe, there isn't enough room already as it is!" "Bring in the goats!" insisted the Baal Shem Tov. He did just that.

Now, there were chickens and goats running around, creating even more mayhem. "I get what you're going through," said the Baal Shem Tov. "I think the cows need to brought in. That will do the trick." Bringing in the cows, now the family was squished wall to wall with livestock. The family could barely move, the stench was terrible and the noise was unbearable. Returning to the Baal Shem Tov, the man

expressed they he couldn't take it anymore. "Take everything out!" he told the man.

The man removed the cows, goats and chicken. Suddenly, the wife turned to her husband. "Wow, we have so much room!"

This story is the story of Marah.

Imagine someone is not making as much money as they want. Then, G-d forbid, their child gets sick. Wouldn't that person yearn for the previous days? Imagine the man was told, "Your child will get better, but unfortunately, you'll be making the same amount of money as you were before." The man would take that offer in a minute. Hashem showed that Jewish people that He will bring them to bitter waters and then He will show them a tree, and the tree will also be bitter. And what then happened? All of a sudden, the water became sweet. How did this happen? Because now, instead of having two bitter things, the Jews looked back at the water and were able to see the water as sweet. They were able to appreciate, "At least when I only had the bitter waters, I didn't have the bitter tree."

But it's not just when you have more problems, you yearn for less problems. But rather, when you thought you couldn't manage, that it was too much and that you didn't have it in you… you now realize otherwise. When you now have two children, you realize that one child was a breeze. You are suddenly able to see your old situation with new eyes.

The question is not do you have a good life or a bad life, but how are you? How are you looking at your life? Have you decided that today will be a good day? If today will be a good day in your eyes, then everything that happens today will be seen through that lens. That is the question. Do we want to be the nation of complainers or the nation of blessers?

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

One of the miracles of the Mon was that it could taste like almost anything you could imagine. We say almost, because there were some foods it did not taste like. This was the complaint of some of the rabblerousers when they said, "We remember the fish we ate for free in Egypt, and the melons, and leeks, and onions and garlic."

Rashi quotes: "Says R' Shimon, why did the Mon taste like everything but these items? Because they are harmful to nursing mothers, as we tell them, "Don't eat onions or garlic because of the baby.""

Rashi's underlying question, according to the **Lubavitcher Rebbe zt"l**, was why the entire nation had to be deprived because of this minority. Surely Hashem could have allowed everyone else to taste these, and just not nursing mothers?

To hint to an answer, Rashi begins by saying, "R' Shimon says." R' Shimon was famous for saying "I (with my merits) can release the entire world from judgment." (Sukka 45b) Since he felt he could do that, he was keenly aware of the power of each individual, not just himself.

Therefore, R' Shimon was the one who said and felt that the entire congregation would rightly be deprived of the taste of these foods, out of concern for the minority, those nursing mothers for whom it would be dangerous. Such is the power and importance of each and every person.

The Last Word A One-Liner Worth Remembering

"The gift of free will is the ability to choose something you DON'T want." ~ Rav Mattisyahu Salomon

Do The Trumpets Send a Mixed Message? by Rav Yissochor Frand



This week's parsha contains the mitzvah of the silver trumpets. The trumpets were to be blown in war time: "*When you go to wage war in your land against an enemy who oppresses you, you shall sound short blasts of the trumpets…*" [10:9].

The trumpets are also blown on happy occasions: "*On a day of your gladness, and on your festivals, and on your new moons, you shall sound the trumpets over your olah-offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; and they shall be for a remembrance for you before your G-d…*" [Bamidbar 10:10].

This appears to be a contradiction. What is the nature of the trumpets? Are they like a fire alarm? If so, we understand that the "fire alarm" is pulled when there is a danger. But we do not pull the "fire alarm" when we have a Yom Tov! Sirens announce danger – be careful! How can the same trumpet be blown for tragic occasions, for dangerous occasions, AND for joyous occasions?

The answer is to be found in the Mishneh Torah. The Rambam writes: "*There is a positive Biblical command to cry out and to blow the trumpets for any tragedy that comes upon the community… And this matter is part of the ways of repentance, for when trouble comes and everyone cries out and they blow the blasts then everyone will recognize that because of their evil ways this calamity has befallen them…*" [Hilchos Tanis 1:1-2]

The trumpets' blast proclaims that this trouble comes from the Almighty. "Do not think that this is a land grab, an oil grab, a money

grab. Do not think this is global politics. If the enemy attacks, you should know that the Almighty is behind it. G-d is saying he wants you to be attacked." Blow the trumpets as a reminder of the nature of the calamity. This is precisely why, when a person has a simcha, a festival, a joyous occasion, we are called upon to blow these same trumpets. We should remember that this too comes from the Almighty. Both our troubles and our celebrations come from Hashem. When bad times occur, our tendency is often to ask "Why is G-d doing this to me?" However, when the good times occur, we think "We are lucky, smart, and successful."

The Torah commands us to blow the trumpets when good things happen as well, to remind us that this too is the Hand of G-d in our lives. Perhaps, suggests the Shemen HaTov, if we remember — when the good times happen — that this is from G-d, then there won't be a need to blow "when the enemy attacks," because the enemy will not attack. If we remember when the good times happen that "from the L-rd this event transpired" [Tehillim 118:23], then there will be no need for the Almighty to have to "set us straight" with some kind of crises situation.

Don't mix in - Rabbi Shimon Kaplin

שאין תלמיד רשאי לומר דבר לפני רבו "***A תלמיד shouldn't tell his Rebbe what to do or give unsolicited advice***."

When **ר' מתתיהו סולומן שליט"א** had almost decided to leave Gateshead **ישיבה** and go to America, there were a few – **בחורים** who I remember would take each *schmooze* so seriously, who went to the Gateshead Rov **זצ"ל** and they asked the Gateshead Rov, "What should we do? Should we write to a letter that he should stay? We need him here in Gateshead! Or perhaps we should follow him? What should we do?"

The Gateshead Rov stood up and said to them , *"Farvos misht etz arine!"* Why are you mixing in?! He repeated himself again and then told them straight away to leave!

They came back shocked, they felt this was the right thing to do, they wanted to show him that they want him to stay, they want to hear his **תורה** , they wanted to *shtieg* from **ר' מתתיהו** , but the Gateshead Rov had answered them with this **מדרש**, what are you giving an opinion for? Even **לכבוד רבך** why are you saying your opinion if you weren't asked to give one?

We see how far the **תורה** goes with **כבוד רבו**.

ר' משה אהרן שטערן זצ"ל would say, "I heard from **דיין אברמסקי** that when he was young in Russia, when a person went to ask a Rov a **שאלה** he would put on **בגדי שבת**!"

ר' יהודה סילבער שליט"א would say over that when he was in **כפר חסידים** - the **ישיבה** where **ר' אליה לאפיון זצ"ל** was **משגיח** , a few months after he arrived a **בחור** who had become a **חתן** was leaving. This **בחור** told **ר' יהודה** who at the time had just come from America, "I'm giving you a present which you will never get again in your life!

What is the present?

I have the **חזקה** of the place next to **ר' אליה** during **מוסר סדר** , I'm giving you that place."

ר' יהודה זילבער would say, "I sat there for four years… I didn't need to open a **מוסר ספר** …" Just listening to **ר' אליה** learn **מוסר** was the greatest **מוסר ספר** !

ר' חיים מוואלאז'ין זצ"ל was once asked by his young son if he could go with him to the **ווילנא גאון** . His son writes, "When my father came and turned into the street of the **גאון** his face lost his colour. When he went up to path which led to the **גאון** 's house he went completely white. When I saw my father go into the **גאון** he started shaking!"

ר׳ חיים מוואלאז׳ין was a **תלמיד מובהק** of the **גאון** , he would go in everyday, but he never let himself lose the respect he had to have for his Rebbe and he retained that throughout his life!

חז״ל tell us, every **דור** has their **רבנים** and their **מנהיגים** even if they are not as great as previous **דורות** they are to be respected the same as in previous generations.

"Grab And Eat" - Rabbi Shimon Kaplin

The **גמרא** in **עירובין** (54) teaches, **האי עלמא לבי הילולא דמיא** , ***Life in this world is like a wedding*** - **חטוף ואכול חטוף ואכול**, '***grab and eat, grab and eat***'.

רש״י at the beginning of the **פרשה** brings from Chazal: **הנשיאים למה נסמכה פרשת המנורה לפרשת** , *Why was the passage dealing with the* **מנורה** *put next to the passage dealing with the* **קרבנות** *of the* **נשיאים**?

לפי כשראה אהרן חלשה דעתו, *When* **אהרן הכהן** *saw the* **קרבנות** *of the* **נשיאים** *he had* **חלישת הדעת** – *he felt bad about it.*

אמר לו הקב״ה Hashem *said to him, 'I swear,* **חייך שלך גדולה משלהם** , *that your role is greater than theirs,* **ומטיב שאתה מדליק את הנרות**, *for you kindle and prepare the lamps.*

Many of the **מפרשים** ask: Why did he have **חלישת הדעת** ? What was he worried about? He had so many other things! **אהרן הכהן** had so many other **עבודות** every day of the year, there were times such as the **ימי מילואים** where he brought his own **קרבנות** when nobody else was bringing **קרבנות** . Why did he look at the **נשיאים** and say, "Oy! I haven't got the **קרבנות** which they are bringing!"?

ר׳ יחזקאל לוויטשטיין זצ״ל explains: Of course, he had many other **קרבנות** which other people didn't have, but he wanted more, he wanted every single **קרבן** , he wanted every single **מצוה** , he wanted to *chap-a-rine* everything he possibly could! Every single **קרבן** he

wanted, every **נחת רוח** he could make for the **רבש״ע** -every **מצוה** , every **תיקון** for the world. The **קרבן** the **נשיאים** brought he wanted as well, he wasn't happy with just what he had, he wanted more and more - **חטוף ואכול חטוף ואכול**.

Chap-a-rine! Chap-a-rine! Every extra **מצוה** is another world!

"Even on **שושן פורים***"* - Rabbi Shimon Kaplin

ר׳ משה פיינשטיין זצ״ל was **נפטר** on **פורים**. At his **לויה** in **ירושלים** on **שושן פורים** there was a person who began to suffer terrible headaches, he couldn't think, couldn't move – he suffered tremendous pain. He went to many doctors and took many brain scans, but to no avail, no one knew a cure to his illness.

After giving up hope on the doctors, he went to a **גדול בישראל** to ask for his advice. He told the **גדול** what had been happening, "… since the **לויה** of **ר׳ משה פיינשטיין זצ״ל** I began to suffer terrible headaches…"

The **גדול** asked, "Did you ever speak against **ר׳ משה**?"

"No," the man replied, "I never spoke against him, and neither was I ever **פוגע** in his **כבוד** …"

It was then when the **גדול** decided to make a **גורל הגר״א**. Lo and behold, the פסוק he reached was this **פסוק** in this weeks **סדרה מדוע** - **לא יראתם לדבר בעבדי במשה**?" - *Why did you not fear to speak about My servant, about* **משה** *?*

Said the **גדול** , "There must have been something… something you must have said against **ר׳ משה זצ״ל** …"

The **איד** suddenly turned white, he got the shock of his life – completely shell-shocked. "At the time of the **לויה** ," he said, "there were many **הספדים** , it was going on and on, so as a joke I said to my friends around me, *'Come on! It's* **שושן פורים** *… taka… he was a* **גדול הדור** *… but a four-hour* **לויה** *on* **שושן פורים** *?!'*

The **גדול** told the **איד** that he must do the procedure, brought down in **שולחן ערוך**, how one asks **מחילה** from a **מת** at his **קבר**.

וכך הוה – he went with a **מנין** to **הר מנוחות** to the **קבר** of **ר׳ משה זצ״ל** and asked for **מחילה** , and soon after the headaches went away as quickly as they came.



A Short Tefillah

This week's parsha ends with Miriam getting tzaraas. While the entire nation waited for Miriam, her brother Moshe davened. What was his tefillah? Just five words - **קֵל נָא רְפָא נָא לָהּ** - ***I beseech you, Hashem, please heal her.***"

He davened a short tefillah because he knew that so many people were waiting.

We learn from this that tefillah, chesed, tzedakah and spiritual growth are important, but should not be done at the expense of others. Yes, it's nice to take on extra levels in our Yiddishkeit, but we need to be considerate of those around us, and make sure that our growth isn't causing others discomfort.

While doing chesed is a big mitzvah, we need to ensure that our own families aren't losing out because of it. May we be able to find the right balance while we are growing and doing good, so that we are happy, and those closest to us remain happy as well.

"Every moment not used for Torah is a moment lost forever — but every moment returned to Torah is eternal." ~ Vilna Gaon.

The Thank You That Gave Him His Life Back by Rabbi YY Jacobson



Yosef Kabiliv served as a soldier in the Israeli army. One day in the early 1970s, he was patrolling the Golan Heights. The Golan Heights, Ramat HaGolan, had been taken back from Syria by Israel during the Six Day War in 1967. It became home to many Jewish communities and settlements in the north of Eretz Yisrael.

While Yosef was patrolling in his jeep, he unknowingly drove over a land mine. The explosion was devastating. He was rushed to the hospital. When he regained consciousness in the Rambam Hospital in Haifa, he felt unbearable pain in his legs. But the discovery that followed was even more horrifying than the pain itself. He lifted the sheet. Both of his legs had been amputated. His right leg was removed at the knee. His left leg was removed at mid-thigh. The blast had crushed them so severely that the doctors had no choice but to amputate in order to save his life.

The months and years that followed were emotionally crushing. He returned home, but he could not move or function like an ordinary

person. His mother cried all day. His father was silent. Friends who came to visit did not know what to say. They would sit, look around awkwardly, avoid eye contact, and leave as soon as they politely could.

Yosef felt abandoned. He felt anger — anger at his friends, anger at his family, and especially anger at the country for which he had sacrificed so much. He had given everything for his nation, and now, when he needed emotional support, he felt utterly alone. His life became bitter, cynical, and dark.

A few years later, in the summer of 1976 (Tov Shin Lamed Vav), a group of wounded IDF soldiers came on a sponsored visit to the United States. Someone organizing the trip suggested that they visit 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn. About 150 wounded soldiers in wheelchairs were brought into the shul. The wheelchairs lined the entire side of the room. The Rebbe came down to greet them. He addressed them in Hebrew and spoke words that pierced through Yosef's heart.

The Rebbe said: By a Jew, the body is important. But the body is only an extension of the soul. The body exists to serve the neshamah. The soul does not exist to serve the body.

He continued: Even when the body has limitations, the soul remains as powerful as ever. And when something is missing in the body, it means Hashem has given extra strength to the soul to compensate.

Then the Rebbe said something unusual. The common term used in Israel for wounded soldiers is Nechei Tzahal — the "invalids" of the IDF. The Rebbe said: I suggest changing the name. You are not Nechei Tzahal. You are Metzuyanei Tzahal — the exceptional ones of Tzahal. Not as a compliment. Not to make them feel good. But because it is true.

Then the Rebbe said he wanted to give each soldier a dollar for tzedakah. Instead of having them come to him, the Rebbe stepped

down from the platform and walked to each wheelchair. He looked every soldier in the eyes. He gave each one a dollar. And he said something personal to each one.

When the Rebbe reached Yosef Kabiliv, he did something different. He took Yosef's hands into his own holy hands. He held them tightly and warmly. He looked him straight in the eyes. And he said two words. "Thank you." In Hebrew: "Toda. Toda raba." Thank you for what you gave. Thank you for what you sacrificed. Thank you for what you did for the Jewish people.

Yosef later said: "That's what I was waiting for. I was waiting for someone to look me in the eyes and say thank you." Yosef said that those two words brought him back to life. They brought him back to Israel with a new spirit. They gave him a new perspective.

He rebuilt himself. He became a successful real estate developer. He rebuilt his emotional world. And he said: Every morning when I wake up and I look at my body, and I feel that my life is over, that I cannot do what a regular person can do — I remember the Rebbe's gaze. I remember the words "Thank you." And that gives me new vitality and strength to live another day.

The Baba Sali and The Man in A Coma

Rabbi Yirmiyahu Cohen shared a very powerful story that he heard from Rav Guetta, one of the speakers on Hidabroot. Rav Guetta had related this story about eight months earlier, and Rabbi Cohen heard it recently. The story took place many years ago.

There was a chiloni, non-religious man named Shimon who lived in Tel Aviv with his wife and daughter. One day Shimon began feeling unwell. He went to his doctor, who could not find anything wrong and sent him home. But the symptoms did not go away. He returned to the doctor, still complaining of dizziness and pain. The doctor sent him to a specialist in the hospital. After a full battery of tests, the

doctors told Shimon and his wife to return in a few days for the results.



When they came back, they were ushered into the office of the head doctor. The doctor looked very serious. He said, "We found a very rare disease inside you. It will slowly paralyze you and eventually kill you." - The shock was overwhelming.

The doctor explained that they did not have the proper facilities in Israel to treat this illness, but they were contacting a top hospital in America. The American hospital reviewed the scans and replied that they could not help. Shimon was told that he would soon become paralyzed and die.

As time passed, he began losing control of his arms and legs. Eventually he was hospitalized. His wife and daughter visited him daily, trying to give him chizuk, but they were not religious and did not know how to offer true comfort.

One day the wife received a call from the hospital: "Come immediately with your daughter. Don't ask questions." They rushed to the hospital. The doctors told them, "Your husband, your father, is in a coma. Today is his last day. Go say goodbye." - They entered the room crying and said farewell.

A friend heard what had happened and said to the wife, "Why don't you go to the Baba Sali?"

She didn't understand. "What can he do?"

"Just go," the friend insisted.

The wife and daughter traveled from Tel Aviv to Netivot to ask for a blessing from the Baba Sali. The Baba Sali did not see women, but they wrote a note and handed it to the gabbai. The Baba Sali read the note and said, "Let them come in." They stood behind a mechitza.

The Baba Sali asked, "What is the problem?"

"Our husband and father is in a coma. The doctors say today is his last day."

The Baba Sali responded sharply: "Who said today is his last day?"

"The doctors."

Again he asked, "Who said?"

"The doctors."

The Baba Sali lowered his head into deep thought for several minutes. Then he asked them, "Are you tzanua? Do you dress with modesty?" - They did not even know what that meant.

The gabbai explained: long sleeves, long skirts, covered hair for a married woman, no pants. The Baba Sali said, "If you want your husband and father to live long, you must take on tzniut."

The daughter protested, "But this is Tel Aviv! How can we dress like that?"

The Baba Sali said simply, "You want a yeshuah? Take on tzniut. Otherwise, I cannot help."

They agreed. They left Netivot and drove straight to Bnei Brak. They entered a clothing store and bought an entirely new wardrobe. They changed their clothes on the spot. They entered as if they had come from the beach. They left dressed like they had come from Meah Shearim.

They went straight to the hospital. The head doctor did not recognize them. "Who are you?"

"We are his wife and daughter."

"What happened to you?" Then he added casually, "By the way, your husband woke up." They rushed into the room. Shimon was semi-conscious. They told him what the Baba Sali had said. The Baba Sali had promised: by tomorrow he will be walking, and within a month he will leave the hospital. - And so it was. The next day he was walking. Four weeks later he left the hospital.

They went back to Netivot to thank the Baba Sali. This time the Baba Sali said, "I only need to see the husband."

Shimon entered. The Baba Sali asked him, "Tell me what happened above."

Shimon was silent. He had not told anyone. He said that while in the coma, he had been brought before a Heavenly Court. A black angel presented a massive scroll of his sins. A white angel had only a small list of his merits. The verdict was about to be passed when suddenly a great, majestic figure burst in and said, "I overrule the verdict. This man will live." - The court froze in fear.

The Baba Sali asked, "Do you know who that was?"

"No."

"That was Shlomo HaMelech."

"Do you know who sent him? I did."

The Baba Sali explained: When the wife told him the doctors said it was his last day, he searched the Torah to find where this idea appears. He found it in Eshet Chayil, written by Shlomo HaMelech: עֹז־וְהָדָר לְבוּשָׁהּ; וַתִּשְׂחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרוֹן - "She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs at the last day." - If she dresses with dignity and modesty, she can laugh at the day the doctors say is the last day.

That gave the Baba Sali the power to summon Shlomo HaMelech to intervene. And that power, he said, came from one thing: Shmirat

Einayim — guarding the eyes. Because one who guards his eyes creates powerful angels of merit. And with that power, yeshuot can be triggered.

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Faith in turbulent times

קַח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְטִהַרְתָּ אֹתָם - *"Take the Leviyim from among the B'nei Yisroel and cleanse them"* (8:6)

The *Midrash Tanchuma* says that the tribe of Levi exhibited self-sacrifice to sanctify the name of Hashem so that the Torah should not be revoked, because when the Jews were in Egypt they neglected the Torah and circumcision, and served idols, but the tribe of Levi were all righteous and kept the Torah. Immediately Hashem said "and the Leviyim shall be for Me." In other words, they were the only tribe that kept the Torah, thereby ensuring that the Torah would not be revoked from the nation.

Rav Sternbuch recalls how in the middle of World War II, when the Holocaust was taking place, his Rosh Yeshiva, **Rav Moshe Schneider** read out this *midrash* and said that by believing in Hashem during a time when such terrible calamities are taken place, and people are blaspheming, asking questions about where Hashem is, our faith in and of itself constitutes a sanctification of the Divine Name, and Hashem holds the small group of *b'nei Torah* who declare His name in the highest esteem.

In our time too about 80% of the nation has shed the yoke of Torah, and only a small portion of Torah-true Jews remain. The winds of heresy and immorality abound, and people forget about Hashem, hanging on to various idols and powers in the expectation that they will save them. When we lead a life of Torah and *mitzvos* and turn only to our Father in Heaven to save us, we thereby observe the *mitzvah* of sanctifying Hashem's Name. All the more so, when we

publicize our faith in public, because we are then *m'kadesh shem shamayim b'rabbim.*

Picture Perfect By Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.



Rabbi Yosef Rosen of Rogachov was more than a Torah genius. He was a phenomenon.

At a conclave of the great leaders of European Jewry, a photographer circulated to take pictures of these awesome men. This was in the days prior to the candid camera, and in order to take a picture, one had to set up the apparatus on a tripod. Anyone who did not wish his picture taken could easily avoid it. Rabbi Rosen was one such person, and he repeatedly turned away from the camera.

Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin, although many years his junior, disapproved of this behavior, and boldly approached the Sage. "Permit me to suggest that the great *Gaon* has overlooked a *Midrash*," he pointed out with reverence.

"What *Midrash*?" Rabbi Rosen asked, startled at the notion that his renowned, breathtaking erudition was in question.

"The *Midrash* states that Hashem engraved the features of the Patriarch Ya'akob on the Divine throne. Why? Because Hashem knew that one day there will be no one left who will have a true Jewish appearance, and when he would long to see what a Jew looks like, he would look at Ya'akob's image.

"Listen to me, Rogachover *Gaon*," Rabbi Meir pleaded, sincerely. "There will come a time when no one will remember what a

true Jew should look like. Allow them to record your image for posterity."

Rabbi Rosen yielded to the younger Rabbi's wisdom, and this is why we have his photograph today.

The Great Desire to Daven Mincha



Rav Boruch Brull relates a story. "Shmuel Yehuda Lefkowitz was a nineteen-year-old student at Yeshivas Ner Yisroel in Baltimore, who also attended the University of Baltimore Law School in the evening.

As he drove to college late one afternoon, he circled the area many times before finding a parking spot several blocks away from the law school. Walking quickly through the streets of downtown Baltimore to get to his class on time, Shmuel Yehuda noticed the sun was beginning to set, which signaled that time was running out for him to daven Minchah.

He searched for a secluded area where he would be able to daven without being disturbed. This was not easy, as downtown Baltimore is a crowded and busy area full of professionals and tourists, as well as homeless people.

As the sky began to darken, Shmuel Yehuda was happy to discover a vacant building. After checking it quickly for anyone who might be hiding there, Shmuel Yehuda decided that it looked like a safe place where he could daven. He found himself a quiet corner, closed his eyes, put his feet together, and began davening Shemoneh Esrei.

After a few moments, he sensed someone had approached behind him. Shmuel Yehuda did not flinch. He stood, immersed in his Tefilah, and concentrated on the meaning of each and every word. Suddenly, Shmuel Yehuda felt the stranger's hand groping around in his back pocket and then taking his wallet! The stranger then turned and ran from the deserted building.

Unfazed and deep in prayer, Shmuel Yehuda calmly completed his Shemoneh Esrei. The moment he finished davening Shmuel Yehuda took off at high speed and chased the pickpocket robber. A strong and muscular young man, Shmuel Yehuda was also fearless. He spotted a man running out of the building. He quickly caught up to him, tackled him to the ground, and without hesitation, he took back his stolen wallet from the man's hands.

As Shmuel Yehuda began to walk away, he turned to take one quick glance at the man before him. As he looked into the man's face, Shmuel Yehuda's anger disappeared and was replaced with pity. The man lying before him was poor, hungry, and crushed.

In Shmuel Yehuda's eyes, there was only one thing left to do. He put his hand into his wallet, removed all the money it contained, and handed it to his attacker. He then hurried on to college, leaving the pickpocket with a stunned look of disbelief on his face.

Shmuel Yehuda's parents repeat this story with pride. Their son's compassion for a homeless person, even someone who robbed him, took over all his other emotions. All that remained was his desire to help a downtrodden individual!"



וַיְהִי הָעָם כְּמִתְאֲנְנִים - *"They did not actually lack for anything; they lacked the desire to be satisfied. When a person fixes their heart on what they do not have, they become blind to the miracles they are currently experiencing." ~ Ramban.*



The Way of Emunah: Rabbi Meir Isamar Rosenbaum.

The Merits of the Baal Teshuva



Rabbi Dr. Chaim Dovid Bernhard of Pietrekov (1770s - 1858).

My father, the Kretchnifer Rebbe shlita (Gilyon Divrei Torah 5773) states that this pasuk is hinting to the power of teshuva and how it can turn darkness into light. As is well-known, Rav Dovid of Lelov zy"a brought the famous Dr. Bernard back to Yiddishkeit. Dr. Bernard did teshuva and eventually became a rebbe and renowned tzadik and was known as Rav Chaim Dovid Doctor of Pietrikov zy"a.

At the end of his life, he became sick and the Tiferes Shlomo of Radomsk zy"a came to visit him. The Radomsker Rebbe heard him sigh, and he was certain that he sighing about his early years, before he did teshuva. In order to comfort him, he said, " **הַיָּמִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים יִפֹּלוּ** -The early days will fall away."

Rav Chaim Dovid said, "Heaven forbid, the early days should remain forever because when one does teshuva out of love, his intentional sins are transformed into merits. Furthermore, now that they are mitzvos, they lead to other mitzvos, as on mitzvah leads to another."

וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנָיו מְאֹד - ***"Moshe was not humble because he was unaware of his own greatness or his proximity to Hashem. He was humble because he realized that every gift he possessed was a direct loan from the Almighty. He understood that if a donkey had been given his wisdom, it would have performed even better than he did." ~ The Chiddushei HaRim.***

The Mitzvah That Saved His Life by Rabbi Shlomo Landau



Reb Mendel worked in a large commercial kitchen that prepared food for needy families before Shabbos. The work was demanding, involving huge industrial pots, massive quantities of food, long hours, and constant pressure to ensure everything was ready on time. Like most, Reb Mendel had a routine: he woke up, got his children ready, dropped his son at the babysitter, and headed straight to work.

One particular Sunday morning was different. For reasons he could not explain, Reb Mendel took a route he almost never used. As he walked, he noticed a fellow from his shul limping badly, his face showing discomfort. The man explained he had a serious infection in his leg that had kept him home for days, preventing him from his daily routine of collecting *tzedakah* for poor families. He asked Reb Mendel if he would be willing to do it for him that day.

The request caught Reb Mendel off guard. He was on his way to work and had a busy day ahead; the idea of spending an hour going from shul to shul felt impossible. Instead, he reached into his pocket, gave the man fifty shekels, wished him a speedy recovery, and continued on his way.

At work, Reb Mendel followed his usual routine, listening to a Torah *shiur* as he chopped vegetables and stirred pots. In the middle of the *shiur*, the speaker said: "Sometimes Hashem wants to send a person a *brachah* or a *yeshuah*, but first He places a *mitzvah* directly in that person's path. The challenge is recognizing the opportunity and not allowing it to pass by."

The words pierced his heart. He realized the unusual route, the limping man, and the request might not have been a coincidence. By the time the *shiur* ended, he decided: tomorrow, no matter what, he would take the hour off and collect the *tzedakah*.

The next morning, Reb Mendel began his work. One of his first tasks involved a massive industrial pressure cooker. Normally, at that exact time, he stood right next to the cooker frying onions while it prepared beans. But today, he had a mission. He left the kitchen, headed to local shuls, and spent an hour collecting *tzedakah* as requested.

When he returned, the kitchen was a disaster. Water covered the floor, beans were everywhere, and the massive pressure cooker had exploded. The gigantic iron vessel had been blown off the stove, and metal fragments were scattered throughout the room, smashing against the walls.

Reb Mendel stood speechless. He realized that had he followed his normal routine, he would have been standing directly in the path of the explosion. The boiling water and flying metal would have caused catastrophic, life-changing injuries, or worse.

None of it was random. Every detail had been orchestrated by Hashem. The *mitzvah* was not just an act of kindness; it was a vehicle for salvation. Hashem wanted him out of the kitchen and away from danger, and He used the *mitzvah* to get him there.

Later that day, when Reb Mendel returned the collected money to the man, the man thanked him. Reb Mendel shook his head and told

him the entire story of the pressure cooker. When he finished, he said, "You think I did you a favor, but the truth is that you saved my life."

Sometimes a *mitzvah* seems inconvenient, or it arrives at the worst possible moment. We never know what Hashem is accomplishing behind the scenes. A *mitzvah* is never just a *mitzvah;* sometimes it is the very tool through which Hashem sends a person's *yeshuah*, and the opportunity we almost missed turns out to be the very thing that saves our lives.



102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar - One Who Exerts Himself for Hashem's Honor

A few years ago, Palestinians were shooting missiles toward Eretz Yisrael, and one missile landed directly on the house of a large family in Ashdod. The entire family was saved by a miracle, but the house was completely destroyed. They needed about nine weeks of renovations to make it liveable.

The family looked for a temporary apartment. They received a call from a man in Tzfas. He informed them that he had an apartment for rent in Tzfas, and he'd been looking unsuccessfully for a renter for the past year.

"What a pity to leave the apartment empty," he told them. "Go live there for free, and while you're there, you can recover from the trauma you went through in the calming atmosphere of Tzfas." He did stipulate that if he found a renter during that time, they'd have to vacate the apartment immediately.

They went to Tzfas, got settled in the apartment, and after two days, a renter appeared. He wanted to sign a lease for two years and promised to pay the entire amount in cash, so long as he could move into the apartment immediately.

"Can you wait at least seven weeks?" asked the owner. The potential renter refused. He needed an apartment the next day, and if not, he wasn't interested at all.

The owner felt bad, but he didn't think he had a choice. He reminded the family from Ashdod about their agreement and told them he'd found a renter and needed them to move out by the next day.

The family sighed. They'd finally found a roof over their heads, and now they had to vacate the apartment at a moment's notice. The man was close to Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, and he sent the details of their situation to Rav Chaim.

Rav Chaim said, "Tell the owner that if he lets you stay in the apartment, he'll gain much more than he'll gain from this renter."

The landlord had emunas chachamim. Although he had been searching unsuccessfully for a renter for an entire year, and he now had an excellent offer, he followed Rav Chaim's advice and didn't rent out the apartment.

A month passed, and the landlord received a check for seventy-five thousand shekels. What happened? Years before, there had been a windstorm in Tzfas, and his property was damaged. He'd submitted a claim to his insurance company, but they'd disclaimed liability, saying that because it wasn't a natural disaster, they were not obligated to pay. He'd filed an appeal, which was dismissed. He'd reappealed, but at that point, lawyers advised him to give up and drop the claim. They made it clear to him that there was no chance that the insurance company would reverse its decision.

And suddenly, a check appeared! The check was accompanied by a brief letter stating that his claim was reexamined, and it was decided to send him compensation of seventy-five thousand shekels.

When did all that happen? When he listened to the advice of Rav Chaim and rejected someone's offer to rent his apartment for two years, although the apartment had been empty for an entire year.

This story can be found in the sefer Toras Chaim by Rav Wallach shlita. It shows us that when a person strengthens his emunas chachamim and fights to keep the mitzvos, Hashem is with him. One who invests in Hashem is not turned away emptyhanded.

Tick Tock, Tick Tock

A woman had become the millionth customer at the local grocery chain. Her prize was that she was given 15 minutes of free shopping. Anything that she could grab and put in a cart would be hers. On the day that she was told to come, she came prepared. She wore special running shoes and had a map of the store and aisles attached to a cap on her head. She planned her route and planned how she would utilize multiple shopping carts. Every second counted and she wanted to maximize her time to the fullest.



Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org) brings a an idea from our parsha. The leviim were given tasks to assist the kohanim in the Mishkan and in the Beis HaMikdash. The Torah says that the leviim were tasked, …"from the age of twenty-five years and above." At the age of 50, the leviim retired from their more difficult tasks and only continued the easier ones (see Rashi pasuk 25).

Rashi is bothered by a question. This pasuk infers that the leviim started working at age 25. Whereas in an earlier pasuk (Bamidbar 4:3) it says that they started at the age of 30. Isn't that contradictory?

Rashi answers that from the age of 25, the leviim learned the laws of what they were supposed to do. At the age of 30, they started doing the actual work.

Rabbi Frand quotes an interesting question from the Shemen HaTov (volume 5). A kohain's service in the Bais Hamikdash is seemingly much more intricate and involved than a levi's service. Yet, the Torah does not mention that the kohanim have a training period to learn the laws before they do the different services. Why do the leviim have a 5-year training period whereas the kohanim have no training period?

The Shemen HaTov answers that a kohain can perform the Avodah, service, from the time that he is bar mitzvah until the time that he dies. He could be serving in the Bais Hamikdash for about sixty or seventy years. A levi's service is only for twenty years. So Hashem gave him the training period in advance.

When someone has such limited time to do the Avodah, he needs to know immediately what he needs to do. He needs to be totally prepared and ready to start promptly. However, a kohain has potentially sixty or seventy years of service. Accordingly, Hashem incorporated the training period for the kohain within his years of service. The levi had a limited time to do the Avodah. Thus, he needed five years of preparation so that when he began his service at age 30, he would know exactly what to do immediately.

We, too, have limited time in this world. We need to be careful with the limited time that is available to us and maximize that time to do that which Hashem wants from us.

This is an important message for all who are privileged to learn Torah.

Rabbi Frand says that however much time a day one can devote to learning, he should use productively. He should not waste that time.

He should learn to his maximum potential for the maximum time that he has to learn.

Tick tock, tick tock. The clock that represents the years of our lives is ticking. We have a limited lifetime. We should choose to live productive and not wasteful lives. Hashem tells us that our main focus should be to learn Torah and perform mitzvos. The less time that we spend on distractions and the more time and energy that we invest into learning Torah and doing mitzvos, the more eternal reward we will receive and the happier we will feel.



In this dvar Torah, the Chafetz Chaim presents the case. (This story was related by Horav Elya Lopian.)

An elterer bachur, an older student (age 25), lived in Yeshivas Radin. It appeared that he was uninterested in getting married, since he had responded negatively to the various names presented to him. The Chafetz Chaim asked if he had a problem. The young man said no, it was just that he wanted to learn after the wedding without having any financial worries on his mind.

To this end, he wanted a girl whose father would support him for five years. Poland in those days did not have many affluent families. This fellow was prepared to wait –and it might be a while.

The Chafetz Chaim countered, "How long do you think you will live?" The bachur answered, ***"The days of our lives are seventy years and eighty (if one reaches gevuros).*** The Chafetz Chaim continued, "So, until you are thirty years old, your father-in-law will support you. What about the next fifty years until you reach eighty?" The bachur replied, "I believe in Hashem. He will support me."

The Chafetz Chaim looked at the fellow incredulously and said, "Listen to what you are saying. You rely on Hashem for fifty years, but for the next five you do not."

It sounds funny, but it is true. We rely on Hashem as a "default mechanism" when nothing else works. We forget that even those five years that the father-in-law is supporting him is only because Hashem provides him with the means.

This is the meaning of ketanei emunah, small believers. We believe what is convenient, or when we have no other alternative. Otherwise, we default to the father-in-law.

The Butterfly by Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld



A young rabbi and his wife had spent several months away on a mission in Costa Rica. Finally, after being away from home for an extended period, they landed back in Eretz Yisrael.

Tired from the long journey, they gathered their luggage and headed outside Ben Gurion Airport to find transportation home. Like many travelers arriving in Israel, they approached one of the sherut drivers waiting outside the terminal.

The dispatcher asked where they were headed and then pointed them toward a particular van.

"Go with that driver," he said. "He'll take you to your destination."

The couple dragged their heavy suitcases across the parking area and began loading them into the sherut. The driver looked at them and asked where they were going. They explained the neighborhood where their apartment was located.

The driver immediately shook his head.

"I'm not going there."

The rabbi thought he must have misunderstood.

"What do you mean?"

"I'm not going there. It's not in my direction. Find another driver."

The couple unloaded everything and returned to the dispatcher. The dispatcher insisted they go back. Eventually, they sat inside the sherut waiting to leave.

A young bochur from Barcelona sat down nearby and asked the rabbi, "Tell me a dvar Torah."

The rabbi began speaking about Eretz Yisrael and the special Hashgachah Pratis one can see there.

The bochur interrupted.

"Rabbi, I disagree with everything you're saying."

He explained that his best friend had been killed in a terrorist attack and that he struggled to understand how people could speak about Hashgachah Pratis after such tragedies.

The rabbi listened carefully and then shared a story.

Years earlier, his wife had gone to be menachem a family whose son had been killed in a terrorist attack. During shivah, the victim's older brother related that on the very day his younger brother was killed, he had fallen asleep on a bus and dreamed that his brother appeared dressed completely in white.

"My dear brother," he said, "I am about to leave this world. I need you to take care of Ima. And I want you to know that during the seven days of shivah, I will return as a butterfly."

The dream ended. - A short time later, he learned the devastating truth that his younger brother had been killed.

During shivah, a butterfly entered the house. It landed on a picture hanging on the wall and remained there throughout the entire seven days. Visitors came and went, yet the butterfly barely moved.

On the final day of shivah, the butterfly flew upstairs into the boy's bedroom, remained there briefly, then flew out the window and was never seen again.

When the rabbi finished the story, he looked at the bochur and said, "Isn't that incredible Hashgachah Pratis?"

The young man began crying.

Then he said, "Rabbi, that boy was my best friend.

"I knew he was killed. But I never heard the rest of the story. I never heard about the dream. I never heard about the butterfly."

For years, he had carried pain and questions. Now, sitting in a sherut outside Ben Gurion Airport, he was hearing exactly the story he needed to hear.

The rabbi sat there amazed. Had the driver not refused them... Had they not unloaded their luggage... Had they not been forced back into that exact sherut... - They never would have met this young man. And he never would have heard the story that brought him comfort.

What seemed like an inconvenience was actually a carefully orchestrated act of Hashgachah Pratis. Hashem had arranged every detail.

A stubborn driver. A delayed departure. A chance conversation. A broken-hearted bochur. - And a butterfly.

All so that one Jewish soul could receive the comfort and clarity he had been searching for.

Sometimes the greatest acts of Hashgachah Pratis are hidden inside the frustrations we least understand. And only later do we realize that Hashem was guiding every step the entire time.

Gematria Sparks

אֵ-ל נָא רְפָא נָא לָהּ = אֱמוּנָה בְּהַשֵּׁם = 449 (במדבר יב:יג)
"O G-d, please heal her" = Faith in Hashem
Faith in Hashem is the cure itself—when a person turns to Him with a whole heart and says, "O G-d, please," he opens the channel to complete healing.

אִשָּׁה כֻּשִׁית = זהו בת יתרו = 1036 (במדבר יב:א) (ספר ברכת פרץ)
A Cushite woman = This is Yisro's daughter

להעלות = ישראל = 541
Bring up = Israel = 541
Israel's role is to bring light into the world—by engaging in Torah study and mitzvos, as it is written (Proverbs 6:23), "A mitzva is a lamp, and the Torah is light."

Parsha Potpourri by Rav Ozer Alport

הֲאָנֹכִי הָרִיתִי אֶת כָּל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אִם־אָנֹכִי יְלִדְתִּיהוּ ... מֵאַיִן לִי בָּשָׂר לָתֵת לְכָל־הָעָם הַזֶּה - Did I conceive this entire people? Did I give birth to them... Where can I get meat to give all these people?

The Sfas Emes was once approached by the son of one of his close chassidim, who came to complain to the Rebbe that his father was uninterested in his financial difficulties and was not doing anything to assist him. The next time he encountered the man's father, the sagacious Sfas Emes called him over to ask him for an explanation of his unwillingness to help his struggling son. The father expressed concern for his son's well-being but explained that he was simply unable to provide any material assistance.

The Rebbe replied by asking him why Moshe, in his complaints to Hashem, began by asking whether he had conceived and given birth to the Jewish nation, and only subsequently continued to express his inability to supply them with the tremendous amount of meat necessary to meet their desires. If Moshe knew that he lacked the means to provide them with their request, why was it relevant whether he gave birth to them?

The father remained silent. The Rebbe continued, explaining that we derive from here that only because Moshe did not conceive the Jewish nation was he able to excuse himself with the argument that he was incapable of meeting their demands. However, if somebody did give birth to another person, a claim of a lack of means to assist and support them is completely invalid.

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein - Retire to Eternity

The Torah tells us regarding the *Levi'im*: "When he reaches the age of fifty, he shall retire from the service and no longer perform the labor" (*Bamidbar* 8:24-26).

The Chofetz Chaim sees in these words a lesson, one that is no less relevant today than it was a century ago. What does it mean that at fifty a person retires? Does it mean he should spend the rest of his days relaxing?... - Not exactly.

The Chofetz Chaim writes: **אֶלָּא כָּל אֶחָד יְזָרֵז עַצְמוֹ בְּיוֹתֵר לְתוֹרָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים.** – *"A person should strengthen himself in Torah and good deeds so that he is prepared for the day that is entirely Shabbos, the World to Come."*

If someone plans to retire and use the extra time to learn more Torah, daven more, perform more *chesed*, spend more time helping others, then retirement can be a beautiful thing. But if retirement means spending another six hours doing things that do not matter, then he should ask his employer for more hours and keep working.

Work is generally good for a person. Human beings need purpose, responsibility and structure. Too much idle time is often unhealthy. The Chofetz Chaim was speaking to people who possessed values and intended to replace one meaningful activity with another even more meaningful activity. His point was not that one should stop being productive, but that there comes a stage in life when productivity should increasingly be directed toward eternal investments.

The Mishnah says: **בֶּן אַרְבָּעִים לַבִּינָה, בֶּן חֲמִשִּׁים לָעֵצָה** —*At forty, [one attains] understanding. At fifty, [one becomes capable of giving] advice"* (*Avos* 5:25). How does that happen?

The Chofetz Chaim explains that understanding develops gradually. At forty, a person begins to see life differently. The lessons, failures, successes, and experiences of decades begin to crystallize into wisdom. By fifty, that wisdom matures. Now he is no longer merely living life, but he is capable of guiding others through it. He becomes a *ba'al eitzah*, someone whose judgment carries weight.

But then the Chofetz Chaim says something remarkable. If you are capable of giving advice to others, then first and foremost you should be giving advice to yourself. **צָרִיךְ לְהִתְיָעֵץ בְּעַצְמוֹ** - A person should sit down and ask: what am I preparing for? Where am I headed? What provisions am I packing for the final journey?

We spend decades preparing for retirement. We save money, invest, build portfolios and think about where we will live. But how much time do we spend preparing for eternity?

The Chofetz Chaim's message is not that one should stop working. It is that eventually a person must begin shifting some of his energy away from accumulating possessions and toward accumulating merits for eternity and becoming the person he was created to be.

There comes a point in life when the most important advice you can receive is the advice you give yourself. And that advice is simple: start preparing for the journey of eternity.

"The light of the Menorah symbolizes the light of Torah. When Aharon kindles it, he awakens the inner light that already exists within every Jew." ~ Ramban.

Chizuk - Inspiration

During World War II, the Germans established a factory in the Lodz ghetto to manufacture boots for soldiers fighting the Russians in bitter winter conditions. Because they needed boots that were both warm and durable, they demanded only highly skilled shoemakers. Anyone discovered to have lied about such qualifications would be executed on the spot.



The Germans took over a warehouse for the factory and stationed teams of shoemakers throughout the building. Each team consisted of ten men under a foreman and was responsible for the entire process of making a boot from beginning to end.

Rav Yisrael Zev Shkop knew nothing of shoemaking. Yet he understood that entry into one of these groups might mean the difference between life and death. He approached a foreman and asked to be taken on. When asked whether he had any experience, he answered truthfully that he did not, and the foreman sent him away. He tried again with four or five other groups, and each time he was asked he gave the same honest reply. Fearful for their own lives, none of the foremen would risk accepting a man who lacked the required shoemaking experience.

As his options ran out, Rav Yisrael Zev decided to try one more group and answer honestly. If that failed, he would consider claiming shoemaking experience to the next group. He approached another foreman with clear urgency. When asked, "Do you have experience with shoes?" he again told the truth. But instead of turning him away, the foreman said, "Listen, young man, here is a bucket of black dye. We need someone to keep stirring it so it does not harden. Sit here, put your hands in the dye, and keep mixing." Rav Yisrael Zev began stirring the dye with his hands—just in time.

Moments later, a Nazi stormed into the room in search of an impostor, someone who had falsely claimed to be a shoemaker. Rav Yisrael Zev realized that the soldier might be looking for him, and it seemed that death was only seconds away. Then the foreman spoke: "The man you are likely looking for is here in my group. However, you have been misinformed, look at his hands covered in black dye—he is an excellent shoemaker." The guard examined him, accepted the explanation, and left as suddenly as he had entered.

Later, Rav Yisrael Zev was asked, "Why did you not tell the first foreman that you were a shoemaker? Why did you not say the same to the others, instead of only considering it when you felt you had no other choice?"

His answer was brief, but it revealed the depth of his honesty and character: "Because I am not a shoemaker."

Rabbi Avigdor Miller zt"l, was once walking on Ocean Parkway, when a car pulled up near him. The windows rolled down, and from inside some hoodlums began to shout, "Jew! Dirty Jew! Cursed Jew!"

Rabbi Miller turned to beam at them. "Yes, I am," he said delightedly. "Thank you for reminding me."

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף - 10:1-2



Hashem commanded Moshe to fashion silver trumpets which would be used for numerous reasons. They would summon groups of people and initiate the breaking of camp and beginning of traveling. They would also be sounded on festivals as an accompaniment to the offerings.

We know that in modern times trumpets add pomp and circumstance to royal gatherings, and it seems it was similar then. However, this posuk seems somewhat different. It says that when we are in danger, we are to blow these trumpets so we are remembered by Hashem and He will save us.

Does Hashem need horns to awaken Him or to jog His memory? Certainly not. What, then, is the message of these trumpets?

The Ibn Ezra says that because you have done what Hashem told you to do, i.e., create these trumpets, you will be remembered well for having heeded His command. Additionally, the wailing sound of the trumpet would arouse the people to cry out to Hashem. Those two will stand in our merit and enable our salvation.

The Bechor Shor disagrees on what is remembered. He follows the order of the verses and the one after this speaks of blowing on festivals, with korbanos. Therefore, the merit recalled is that of

the sacrifices we offer to Hashem. According to him, it is still possible that we also need to call out to Hashem, despite having a merit.

We'd like to suggest that the main criterion for being saved is crying out to Hashem and appealing to His mercy. That may very well be part of the original mitzva, so we have a reminder where our salvation comes from. Here, though, we have merits. Either the merit of listening to Hashem and making the trumpets, or the merits of bringing sacrifices and doing Hashem's will in that fashion.

Despite this, we are to appeal to Hashem to save us not because we deserve it, but because He is merciful and kind. The wailing sound of the trumpet, the Teruah, is broken. It serves to remind us that none of us are consistently good and unwavering in our service of Hashem. We have our ups and downs and our moments of challenge. This reminds us to pray to Hashem to save us because He is merciful, and because of this, we are answered and saved.

One of the strongest tools in our arsenal against our enemies is the knowledge that we are powerless to protect ourselves, be it from enemies, or from the Yetzer Hara. Instead, we turn to Hashem with the recognition that we are helpless, and Hashem steps in as our Protector and rescues us from harm.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

Rav Avraham Yaakov HaKohein Pam, zt"l, said of his mother that she never spoke Lashon Hara. However, it was not because she studied the Halachos of Sh'miras HaLashon. It was because she never saw anything bad in anyone else. Therefore, there was never a temptation to speak Lashon Hara about anyone!

Parsha Reflections for the Shabbos Table - Dayan Yehoshua Posen

At the end of this week's **פרשה, מרים הנביאה** has **צרעת** and she has to go out of the camp. The **פסוק** records that **כלל ישראל** waited for her for seven days. **רש"י** quotes the **גמרא** which **תוס** explains to mean that since **מרים הנביאה** waited twenty minutes when **משה רבינו** was in the Nile as a baby, she merited to a reward which was five hundred times the amount; **ישראל כלל** waited seven days for her.

The question must be asked: If **מרים** was entitled to such a great reward, why did **הקב"ה** wait eighty years to give it to her? In other words, why was she granted her reward at this specific moment?

The **גמרא** in (: **נדרים (סד** tells us that a **מצורע** is one of the people who is considered like a dead person. **Rav Chaim Shmulevitz** explains that a **מצורע** has to go out of the camp and be alone; a person who is alone is almost as if they have died. **מרים הנביאה** waited for **רבינו משה** in his moment of need, she was **נושא בעול** , she was there for him. Because of this, she erited that in her moment of need, when she felt alone and would otherwise have been alone, **כלל ישראל** empathized with her and were there with her in a show of unity.

We see from here how difficult it is for a person who feels alone, and how incredibly important it is for us to help them feel that we are there for them and the huge reward which comes with that.

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh (Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar) The parshah opens with the command to Aaron to kindle the Menorah. The Ohr HaChaim notes the literal translation, "When you raise up the lamps," (Bamidbar 8:2) and interprets these words as an instruction to elevate and kindle the inner, spiritual light within every Jewish soul.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn – Project Mesorah

א גוטע ערב שבת, my dear friends of Project **מסורה**. This is your friend, Rabbi **פסח קרון**, speaking to you **ערב שבת פרשת בהעלותך**. In **בהעלותך**, we have one of the most famous **רש"י'ס**.

It talks about **אהרן הכהן** who lit the **מנורה**, he did it for thirty-nine years, and the **פסוק** tells us right in the beginning, **ויעש כן אהרן בלמדך שלא שינה**, that he didn't change.

Why in the world would **אהרן** change anything that **משה רבינו** told him in the name of **השם**?

And I believe that the answer is in **ישעיה כ"ט פסוק י"ג**. It says that **השם** is upset when people just do things with lip service and not with their heart, and they do it **מצוות אנשים מלומדה**. They do it as a habit or by rote, and that's what we have to be so careful.

There are many things that we do every single day. For example, you **בענטש** every day, you make a **ברכה** before you eat every day, you say **אשר יצר**, you **דאוון** the same things, whether it's **יגדל, אדון עולם, מה טובו**. You have to be sure every single thing that you do, you do with excitement and enthusiasm.

So let us make sure that from now on, everything that we do, even if we do it every single day, we do it with excitement and we do it with a **לעבעדיקייט**.

And so to the men I say **ישימך אלקים כאפרים וכמנשה**, to the women **ישימך אלקים כשרה רבקה רחל ולאה**. And to everyone **יברכך השם וישמרך, יאר השם פניו אליך ויחנך, ישא השם פניו אליך וישם לך שלום**

Have a **פרייליכן שבת** and a **ליכטיגע שבת**, and let's do things with excitement and elevation, and we become **העכערע יידן**. And that's how **השם** will appreciate us and love us even more. And hopefully through that the **גלות אדום** will finally end and there'll be **שלום** all over the world. Have a **גוטע שבת**.



Torah Gems

על פי ה' יסעו בני ישראל ועל פי ה' יחנו וכו' (ט-יח)

In this Parshah, we find three **פסוקים** next to one another, each one stating the words " **על פי ה**'" twice.

The Shelah Hakodosh explains that the Torah means to emphasize that a person should never make any move in his life, whether traveling or not, without saying "**אם ירצה ה**'" - If it pleases G-d, or "**בעזרת ה**'" - With the help of Hashem.

We find this **רמז** in Mishlei, "**ועצת ה' היא תקום**" – The counsel of Hashem that shall stand. The word **היא** when reversed, is the **ראשי תיבות** of the words "**אם ירצה ה**'".

The Torah testifies that when man gives up a blessing to Hashem before each and every deed that he is about to enact, his actions are assured to be accompanied by the help of Hashem.

Torah Gems

וישמע משה את העם בוכה למשפחותיו וכו' (יא-י)

For a better understanding of this Possuk, we must bear in mind that although every Jew must reconcile himself with his lot and humbly accept whatever befalls him, he has the duty to lament his fellow Jew's misfortune and feel sorry for him.

The Chasam Sofer, R' Moshe Sofer ZT"L writes, that whenever Bnei Yisroel grumbled during their sojourn in the desert and wilderness, each one could ostensibly claim, "Personally, I don't mind the lack of food and water - I will gladly endure all the deprivations for the glory of Hashem. But I just cannot bear to see my neighbor suffer and that is the reason why I raise my voice in protest!"

Everyone who complained, did so ostensibly on behalf of their fellow brother. However, when they murmured on this occasion, the Torah tells us that they did so "**למשפחותיו**" - for their families. This time they did not even pretend to protest their neighbor's suffering. They bemoaned the restrictions that had been placed on their very own unbridled lust.



מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

והאיש משה ענו מאד מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה וגו' (יב-ג)

The story is told of a young man who came to his Rebbe and complained, "Rebbe, what can I do about my pride? I simply just can't overcome it!" The Rebbe told him, "Sit by my side today, and just remain quiet until I speak to you."

Soon, a man came in to the Rebbe with a request. "Rebbe, help me," he said, "My daughter has the chance of marrying an exceptional young man, but I need money for her dowry. Without that money, the Shidduch will be called off."

The Rebbe turned to the young man at his side. "Would you by any chance have a few thousand Ruble to lend this man?" "Rebbe, I'm destitute," said the young man, "There is no way I could lend such a sum." The Rebbe then lent the man money.

A short while later, a butcher came in. "Rebbe," he said, "I have just shechted a bull and I found some questionable marks on the lungs. Is the meat kosher or not?" "Young man," said the Rebbe, "You've seen the lungs. What is your decision?"

"Rebbe," replied the young man, "I don't know enough to render a verdict on this matter."

Later, one of the leading merchants of the city came in. "Rebbe," he begged, "You've got to help me. I entered into a business deal with

the local baron, and I don't know what to do. Please advise me on how to deal with this situation."

Once again, the Rebbe turned to the young man. "So, what would you suggest?" The young man was aghast. "Rebbe, I have no idea. I've never been in business in my life!"

After the merchant left, the Rebbe looked at the young man again and said to him, "My son, I really don't understand you. You don't have any money to your name, you don't know the first thing about Halachah, and you have no inkling about business. What can you possibly find about yourself to be proud of?"



"True humility is not thinking less of oneself, but recognizing that one's strengths are tools entrusted by Heaven for the sake of others." ~ Rav Yerucham Levovitz — Daas Torah, Bamidbar.

