

AUG 1 - AUG 7 2019

מטות - מסעי

# BET

BRINGING EVERYONE TOGETHER

בית מדרש אור החיים  
BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM



OUR BELOVED RABBI  
SOKAVA REBBE

והורשתם את הארץ  
וישבתם בה פי לפם  
נתתי את הארץ  
לרשת אתה



JORDAN RIVER

## NEW

**PAS SHACHRIT  
BREAKFAST & LUNCH CAFÉ  
IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS.**

20 FORSHAY RD.  
(Near the Ke'Ilim Mikva)  
SUNDAY - FRIDAY  
6 AM - 2 PM



**RABBI YY JACOBSON**

**SHABBOS  
NO  
CLASSES**

NEW  
LOCATION

**TUESDAY**

9:30 - 10:30 AM SHARP  
11 FORSHAY RD TENT  
FOR WOMEN ONLY



**MONSEY  
URGENT CARE**

77 ROUTE 59, MONSEY, NY 10952  
845-356-CARE

Shabbos Morning MINYAN STARTING AT 8:00<sup>AM</sup> 18 FORSHAY RD. **MAIN SHUL ASHKNAZ**





RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

MY BELOVED ZEIDE

HARAV REUVEN SCHEINER ZT"l

As the shiva of my special grandfather, Harav Reuvain Scheiner zt"l comes to a close, I would like to share some memories of a veteran Marbitz Torah, who was so great and at the same time so warm and accessible to all. My grandfather was zoche – as a rebbi in Yeshiva Torah Vadaas – to teach Torah and touch the hearts of both bochorim and yungerleit, for over half a century.

Our shul, Ohr Chaim, held a special place in his heart. Whenever he was visiting his children, here in Monsey, he would use the opportunity to participate in one of our many shiurim, including the Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim – both during Sukkos and Pesach, joining a whole morning of learning. He would even listen to shiurim given by magidei shiur decades younger than him – speakers, who were often family members or talmidim.

When trying to portray the great excitement my grandfather had when learning, I am reminded of the words of the Midrash:

”וַיִּדְגּוּ לָרֵב בְּקָרֵב הָאָרֶץ - מֵה דָגִים הִלְלוּ גְדֻלַּת בְּמִים כִּיּוֹן שְׂיֹרֶדֶת טַפָּה אַחַת מִלְמַעְלָה מְקַבְּלִין אוֹתָהּ בְּצִמְאון כְּמִי שְׁלֹא טָעַמוּ טַעַם מֵיִם מִימֵיהוּן, כִּךָּ הֵן יִשְׂרָאֵל גְּדֻלַּת בְּמִים בְּתוֹרָה, כִּיּוֹן שְׁהוּן שׁוֹמְעִין דְּבַר תְּדֻשׁ מִן הַתּוֹרָה הֵן מְקַבְּלִין אוֹתוֹ בְּצִמְאון כְּמִי שְׁלֹא שָׁמְעוּ דְּבַר תּוֹרָה מִימֵיהוּן.”

“They [Klal Yisroel] will flourish in the land like fish: Although the fish live in water, when new drops of water arrive on top, they receive it with a great thirst, as if they never drank water in their lives. Similarly, Klal Yisroel live with Torah, yet when they hear a new dvar torah, they drink it up with thirst, as if they never heard a dvar torah in their entire life.”

The Midrash is teaching us something fascinating about the true qualities of the Jewish nation. Although the fish are literally swimming in water, they never seem to have enough and are always excited by a new sprinkling. In the same vein, a Torah-true Jew – even if he is swimming in Torah – is never satisfied with what he has, and is always eager to get more.

What a sight it was to behold, how my grandfather – the great gadol that he was – would thirst for yet another word of Torah. Whenever hearing a chidush in any branch of the Torah – be it Gemara, Halacha, Lumdus, or Drush – his excitement was obvious, even if it was something that he already knew. Wherever he went he was always learning. His love for torah was remarkable, leading him to buy new sefarim, thus constantly adding to his already large sefarim collection.



His excitement in learning – with the enthusiasm of a young bachur – left an indelible impression on all those who merited the opportunity to witness it. On a personal note, whenever I would talk to him about what I was learning, I would be amazed by his excitement, and how he would express a keen interest in what I was learning, listening attentively to the details, although he was well acquainted with the entire sugya.

In his later years he had problem with his eyesight, but since he enjoyed learning so much he would do whatever it took to learn, including using a magnifying glass, or an enlarged Gemara. In fact, when he once went to the eye doctor to see if they can help his vision, he had to fill out a form, to explain the purpose of his visit to the doctor. He unabashedly responded that his vision is so important because he needs it so that he can see the Talmud.

My grandfather was born almost 90 years ago and grew up in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Yet he was able to connect and draw from his venerated rebbeim in Mesivta Torah Vadaas, such as his



## כולל חצות

סניף מאנסי יע"א

### אלה ראשי בית אבותם בני ראובן

עטופי אבל אנו בפטירתו של האי גברא רבא הגאון המפורסם נודע בשערים לשם ולתפארה, שזכה להרב'ץ תורה לתלמידים רבות בשנים בשפה ברורה, המאור הגדול לממשלת התורה, דלה והשקה מבית אבותיו ורבותיו להמשך המסורה, הגה בתורת ה' בשקידה נפלאה לילות וימים פה המתגבר בגבורה, השפיע מאור תורתו וזיוו זרח לישרים אורה, להחזיר בלבבם אהבת ה' ויראה טהורה, רב האי גאון וחסיד שהתחסד עם קונו בקלה כחמורה, כש"ת

### הרה"ג מוה"ר ראובן שיינער ז"ל

בן מוה"ר שמואל יו"ט זכרונו לברכה  
ר"מ ומרביץ תורה בישיבה "תורה ודעת" רבות בשנים

וילך ראובן לעולמו לחיי עד, בהשאירו אחריו דור ישרים יבורך שרונים באבל כבד, המבכים מרה את פטירתו בבכי ובמספד ביום כ' תמוז ה'תש"א - לראובן לב תלמידיו ומכיריו

תנחומינו ישעשו נפשות כל מטה ראובן בני משפחתו החשובה, ובמיוחד כבוד בזה כוס תנחומין בשם כל בני החבורה מעוקם הלב ברוח נדיבה, אל מעלת כבוד בני יקירו יבלחט"א ידידנו עוז וידיד נפש כל בית ישראל באהבה, הרבני הנגיד המרומם ותיק וחסיד גדול מרובה, עושה חסד אלפים על כל הטובה, לבו עד ופתוח כאולם למען הרמת קרן התורה ובוטע באש להבה, בונה ומקים אהלי תורה ומפלה קמה וגם נצבה, מקדיש כל עתותיו להגות באמרי שפר לארצה ולרחבה, ה"ה

### כש"ת הרב אליעזר שיינער שליט"א

בן משק ביתו הוא ד"ר ד"ר אליעזר

הלא הוא הגבר שזכה להיות פותח שערים, להבעיר אש התורה בעירנו, ועשה את ביתו בית וועד להכמים, להאי מגדל אור פנת יקרת "כולל חצות" להקדיש לה' לילות כימים

מוחילי התורה שלוחה בזה מיטב ברכות התנחומין, המוקדם ניוחם אהבה שראו אבלי ציון וירושלים, עדי נוכח במהרה ליעור הקרא יזיקצו וירבנו עפר בביאת גואל צדיק במהרה רדין אמן.

הלא כה דברי מוקדרי ערכו, המשתתפים בעצרו - חברי ורבני הכולל סניף מאנסי הרב בערל וידוע - הרב אברהם יוחזק לונגער - הרב בנימין אלימלך געללער - הרב מרדכי דוד אונגאר - הרב יעקב יוסף שטרנטיק - הרב שלמה מאיר וועטשטיין - הרב נתן גוטנברג - הרב יעקב זאב יאקוב - הרב העניך שעבאלג - הרב אפרים דואק - הרב חיים שטיינער - הרב מרדכי שפערן - הרב ישראל חיים קיש - הרב מנחם שמואל האס - הרב חיים שלמה טרינבער - הרב זלמן לייב פרידמאן

ב"א מצטרף: הרב נחמיה האמאן, מגדולי מייסדי "כולל חצות" לעולמי

Rebbi Muvhak, Rav Reuvain Grozovsky – the son-in-law of the Birchas Shmuel, Rav Elya Chazan, Rav Gedalya Schorr, Rav Shachna Zohn. He was zoche to eventually join the staff, as a maggid shiur, giving shiurim in the yeshiva for over half a century. In this capacity, he built a bridge that connected the future generations – talmidim, as well as children and grandchildren – to the great Gedolim of the previous era.

May he be a Mailitz Yosher for his entire family – and the entire Ohr Chaim community – who were so close to his heart.

If anyone has any anecdotes to share please reach out to me, and I will bezras hashem include them in a future article.

## השליך משמים ארץ תפארת ישראל

IT IS WITH THE DEEPEST LOVE AND DEVOTION THAT THE RABBONIM, STAFF AND MISPALELIM OF BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM OFFER THEIR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE EXTENDED SCHEINER FAMILY ON THE LOSS OF

הרה"ג מזה"ר **ראובן שיינער** זצ"ל

בן מזה"ר שמואל יו"ט ז"ל

MAY HIS CHOSHEVA REBBETZIN YB"LC AND ALL OF HIS CHILDREN FIND CONSOLATION IN KNOWING THAT THE LIFE LESSONS HE ESPOUSED AND THE LEGACY HE SHAPED, HAS BORNE AN ABUNDANCE OF SUCCESS. REB REUVEN HAS INFLUENCED THOUSANDS OF TALMIDIM AND NONE MORE SO THEN HIS OWN FAMILY. EVERY ONE OF HIS CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN LIMUD HATORAH, HARBOTZAS HOTORAH & HACHZAKAS HATORAH.

**REB REUVEN CAN PROUDLY LOOK BACK AT HIS LIFE AND PROCLAIM IN A LOUD CLEAR VOICE "MISSION ACCOMPLISHED".**

BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM, IS A PROUD LINK IN THE INCREDIBLE CHAIN OF TORAH CRAFTED BY THIS EXTRAORDINARY MAN.

FOUNDED BY OUR PATRON  
**REB LAZER SCHEINER** עמו"ש

THE BAIS MEDRASH OFFERS MORE THAN 80 MINYANIM A DAY, AS WELL AS A MORNING & EVENING KOLLEL, ALL ADMINISTERED WITH EXCEPTIONAL DEDICATION BY RABBI SCHEINERS GRANDSON, REB NACHUM SCHEINER. THE BAIS MEDRASH OFFERS A FULL TIME CHASSIDESHE DAY KOLLEL UNDER THE AUSPICES OF REB YITZCHOK SILBER SHLITA AS WELL AS NUMEROUS COMMUNITY SPEAKERS AND EVENTS. THIS BASTION OF TORAH & TEFILA IS INFUSED BY REB LAZER WITH AN UNCOMMON LOVE FOR EVERY SINGLE JEWISH SOUL. THIS IS WHAT MAKES OUR BAIS MEDRASH SO SPECIAL.

ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR AND WELL ATTENDED MINYANIM IN THE BAIS MEDRASH IS OUR NEITZ MINYAN, WHICH HAS BEEN RUN WITH ENDLESS DEVOTION SINCE ITS INCEPTION, BY REB MOSHE SHIA SCHEINER.

THE NAME "SCHEINER SHUL" IS SYNONYMOUS WITH ACCEPTANCE, COMPASSION AND RESPECT FOR EVERY NESHOMA THAT GRACES US WITH THEIR PRESENCE.

HARAV REUVEN SCHEINER LED AN EXEMPLARY LIFE AND HAS MERITED THE FULFILMENT OF THE BRACHA

**יהי רצון שיהיו צאצאי מעיך כמותך**

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון זי"ד וירושלים  
ולא תוסיפו לדאבה עוד





# RABBI LANKRY DEAR KEHILLA,

## BET PARASHAT MASAY 5779

A story takes place in a faraway land that many of us have never seen though we have surely heard of. It is the famous city of Pressburg the home of the Chatam Sofer, one of the great Torah leaders of Am Yisrael. In the year 1809, 205 years ago, Russia and France were at war and the city of Pressburg was the battle ground. It was very dangerous as cannonballs fell all over the city and the citizens of Pressburg huddled in their basements for weeks. We all heard of the great French general Napoleon Bonaparte and it was his goal to advance the French culture. The Chatam Sofer had to leave at one point, for a short while to regain his sanity. One day it was all over and thankfully there were no buildings destroyed and no loss of civilian life. Life returned to normal; all that remained was the memory of the great inconvenience of being trapped in the basement for safety. The Chatam Sofer was bothered with the obvious question; what did Hashem want from us? What is the midah keneged midah that can be the message to us?

The Chatam Sofer explained that cannons that don't do any physical damage but only emotional havoc is compared to Lashon Harah. Once you say something you shoot it out and there is no way to get it back or control it. So too the rockets cannot be retrieved after it is sent off and though it did not do physical damage it definitely caused emotional strain. It seems it may be a result of the great sin

of Lashon Harah, which separates the nation.

The Parasha reviews all the travels that Am Yisrael journeyed throughout the dessert. It seems to be insignificant to reminisce over all the various travels, why indeed to we list the journeys? It must be that each location there was a different experience that helped in the total development of the nation. Each journey and each destination contributed towards the growth and maturity of the people culminating in their lofty status upon entering the land of Yisrael.

Which Jew has not experienced many wanderings in his existence? Whatever the challenges being encountered we must always go forward. So too today as we await the final redemption and suffer the pains of galus, we don't know Hashems ways but we do know how we got here. Sinat Chinam and Lashon Harah has landed our nation in this distressful state.

B"H, in our Kehila we excel at Ahavat Chinam but we can all make a difference with a concerted effort to refrain and distance ourselves from Lashon Harah. This will, according to Chazal, at least minimize the damage that could occur from falling rockets and will prevent any harm or destruction.

One day, we will understand clearly the 40 years of wanderings in the desert and even more so, the 2,000 plus years of our painful galus. Until that wondrous day, we can only aim to improve ourselves and correct the wrongs of the past.

## BRING IN THIS SHABBOS NACHAMU WITH SPIRIT AND SONG!

THURSDAY NIGHT AUG. 15<sup>th</sup> @9PM  
20 FORSHAY (UPSTAIRS)

LED BY:

# yosoleh



Bring your own instrument



Zmanim by our incredible Gabbi  
**EPHRAIM YUROWITZ**

## SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLY MINYAN FRIDAY 1:35 & 3:30

CANDLE LIGHTING	7:54 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>TENT</sup>	7:00 <sup>PM</sup>
SHKIYA	8:12 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>18 FORSHAY</sup>	7:30 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>20 FORSHAY</sup>	8:00 <sup>PM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>VASIKIN - DAF YOMI SHIUR</sup>	5:14 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS	8:00 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>YOUTH MINYAN 18</sup>	9:15 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>*</sup>	9:15 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD</sup>	9:45 <sup>AM</sup>
MINCHA	1:45 <sup>PM</sup>
PIRCHEI	2:00 <sup>PM</sup>
PIRKEI AVOS 2	7:20 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>DAF YOMI</sup>	6:00 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>SHALOSH SEUDOS</sup>	7:50 <sup>PM</sup>
SHKIYA	8:11 <sup>PM</sup>
MARRIV	8:51 <sup>PM</sup> , 8:56 <sup>PM</sup>

## WEEKDAY ZMANIM

### SHACHRIS

20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ 30 ON YOM TOV

S 5:34 M 5:35 T 5:36 W 5:37 T 5:38 F 5:39

### MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 6:28 M 6:27 T 6:26 W 6:25 T 6:24

### MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 7:57 M 7:56 T 7:55 W 7:53 T 7:52

### AUGUST 04 - AUGUST 09

NEITZ IS 5:54 - 5:59

PELAG IS 6:40 - 6:36

SHKIA IS 8:09 - 8:04 PM

MAGEN AVRAHAM

8:52 AM - 8:55 AM

GRA- BAAL HATANYA

9:28 AM- 9:31 AM

Summer  
2019



ק"צ  
תשע"ט

## WEEKDAY MINYANIM

### שחרית

כותלין	20 Forshay ↑
6:15AM	18 Forshay ↓
6:30	Coming soon
6:45	Coming soon
7:00	20 Tent
7:15	18 ↓
7:30	18 Tent
7:45	20 ↓
8:00	20 Tent
8:15	18 ↓
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8:45	20 ↓
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10:45	20 ↓
11:00	20 Tent
11:15	18 ↓
11:30	18 Tent
11:45	20 ↓
12:00	20 Tent

### מנחה

12 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
12 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
AT פלג	20 Tent
10 MIN. אחרון	20 Small Tent
20 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
30 MIN. אחרון	20 Tent
40 MIN. אחרון	20 Small Tent
50 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
60 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
9:00	18 Tent
9:15	18 Tent
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11:30	18 ↓
11:45	18 ↓
12:00	18 ↓

### מזריב

AT פלג	18 Tent
* סקינדע זא	18 Tent
10 MIN. אחרון	20 Tent
20 MIN. אחרון	20 Small Tent
30 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
40 MIN. אחרון	20 Tent
50 MIN. אחרון	20 Small Tent
60 MIN. אחרון	18 Tent
9:00	18 Tent
9:15	18 Tent
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12:45	18 ↓

### מנחה גדולה

30 min after chatzos	
1:30 3:30	5:00 7:00
2:00 4:00	5:15 7:15
2:30 4:30	5:30 7:30
3:00 4:45	5:45 7:45

FOR MORE INFO: [www.18forshay.com](http://www.18forshay.com) // [ohrchain18@gmail.com](mailto:ohrchain18@gmail.com)

## BLUEBERRY HILL ZMANIM

EREV SHABBOS PLAG MINYAN 30 Dr. Frank Rd. Entrance on Humbert

MINCHA 6:35 PLAG 6:53



↑ Upstairs  
↓ Main Floor

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RABBI COREN

## THE THREE WEEKS PINCHUS AND KADDISH

On our daily watsap we had mentioned how to turn the three weeks from being a time that we try to just get by especially the nine days as being days of not showering and wearing clothing that has not been freshly laundered - to special days with unique opportunity for growth and spirituality. We based this on the sefer Divrai Haam by a Rebbe by the name of Rav Yakov Mier Hakohen who shows that these 21 days meaning the week days are equal to the holiness of the other shabbasos of the year and the Shabbos of these three weeks are the highest than all the shabbasos of the Year. R Yakov Meir beautifully bring out this insight based on the pasuk *אך את שבתותי תשמורו* the word *אך* hinting to the 21 days and the hidden chizuk that Hashem gave Moshe Rabeinu that when the Jewish people will go into Galus and not have the divine revelation that they had with the Mishkan they will still have these 21 days where the potential of revelation will be available like the time of the Mishkan. He brilliantly shows how in the words of Rashi regarding the building of the Mishkan *שתהיו רדופים זריזים* the word *רדופים* hints to the Pasuk *כל רדפיה השיגוה בין המצרים* and as the Koznitze maggid explained the word *רדפיה* can be broken up to *רדף ייה* those that are running to get close to Hashem can do so during the three week.

This amazing potential was also a source for a new chidush that we developed during the vasikin Kidush in shul. I was relating the discussion that the Sefer Elef Hamagen has regarding the name Pinchas and how the yud in Pinchas besides being pronounced differently also meant the midas Hadin being the Gimatria of Yitzchok which represent Yirah and Gevura 208

We added the wonderful explanation of Rav Gedalya Shor that what it meant was that Pinchas had to create midas Hadin in the world which represent Yiras Shamayim. - Since Hashem did the Jewish people a favor of not getting angry even for that small moment that he would get angry each day. Rav

Shor z"l explains that this "appointment" that Hashem has to get angry each day was the idea of showing in the world that this world cant leave with out middas Hadin - as we know to well that when there is only love and chesed it can be too much too dangerous and lead to Erva and znus this is why the word Chesed is written with the Issur of Marrying ones Sister

Therefore Pinchas with the letter yud had to act with the middas Hadin and stop the Znus that occurred because of the lack of yirah in the world. (parenthetically we mentioned the idea that I once heard from my aunt in the name of her father Rav Baruch Kuntshtat Z"l who would tell people that there is only three times a day when you have an appointment to be angry or upset or complain etc that is during the three times a day of davenning other than that no anxiousness and worry are allowed just like Hashem has his allotted time of being upset)

We took this idea even higher. That based on the above anytime you see the letter Yud it represent middas Hadin which like the Arizal represent the time of Mashiach where Hashem name will change from yud kay vav kay to yud kay yud kay when his name will be totally one and his glory with once again be revealed fully. I was thinking this is hinted too in the word Bris Shalom where the vav is unusually broken making the vav of this world to yud of the next and as we know Pinchas received the gift of living forever - this is fascinating and needs to be futhere developed regardless when I was sharing these words in Vasikin my dear Friend Rav Aron Spivak said now we understand why the name Pinchas of the two sons of Eli Hakohen was written with out a Yud since he was missing the Yira needed to avoid Znus and this is why Chazal and the Psukim describe Pinchas and Chofni as lying with the ladies who brought Korbanos to the Bais Hamikdash. a Beautiful Chidush

All of the Above I think connest to the power of Kadish that we began to develop in Memory of Rav Reuven Scheiner Z"l. I had mentioned that in the Kadish the word Nechama comfort is mentioned regarding Hashem it seems a bit out of place. we explained that Hashem also needs Nechama after all the Bais Hamikdash was destroyed and even though the Second Temple was built it was missing aspects of Hashem glory and revelation this is why the Kadish was

developed its a powerful prayer to have once again Hashem name revealed in the coming days of Gog Umago and Mashiach times but in the meantime Hashem needs comfort too. I thought this also might be an idea of Hashem beign comforted together with the mourners being comforted (in fact it reminded me of the story of Rav Gustman Z"l who when comforting professor Auman who lost his son in 1982 as a Jewish soldier during the Lebanon war. Rav Gustman joined the Professor while explaining that he Rav Gustman never sat for his son Mier who was mudured by the Natzis yimach shmam)

We connected the above Nechama to an idea that I Saw in a Sefer by Rav Pinson who explained beautifully that part of the purpose of Kadish is parying for more Glory of Hashem to be revealed since with the passing of a Tzelem Elokim there is less Elokus Godliness in the world so we pray that more shall be revealed and this is the comfort that Hashem gets comforted with the Mourners Kadish.

I will end off with the beginning of Matos which speaks about *לא יחל דברו* the power of a human being is in his mouth especially a Jew who has the ability to create Kedusha which means to create reality where Hashems is present is in the world this is the expression of Kadish

May we merit to bring more kedusha - more reality of Hashems name and revelation in the world and merit seeing Mashiach before Tisha Beav this year

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**Daf Yomi Shiurim**

**Daily Daf Yomi Shiurim**

**6:00-6:55am**  
**Rabbi Zalman Heller**  
 18 Upstairs – Office  
 Shacharis at 7:00

**6:45-7:30am (Yiddish)**  
**Rabbi Yitzchok Y. Klein**  
 18 Main floor back room

**9:00-9:45am**  
**Rabbi Shea Stern**  
 18 Upstairs - Office

**8:45-9:45pm**  
**Rabbi Yanky Model**  
 20 Main Bais Medrash- Downstairs

# CHAZAK



When one finishes a sefer of the Chamisha Chumshei Torah there is a minhag that the tzibbur says “Chazak Chazak Venischazeik.”

The Rema in the end of siman kuf lamed tes says, “We have the minhag to say to the one ending the Torah, Chazak.” It would seem from this Rema that other people say it to the one reading in the Torah. The reason for this would be that it would be a hefsek if the Oleh LaTorah says Chazak since he is speaking between the kriya and the bracha. Similarly, the oleh can’t answer yasher koach until after the bracha for the same reason, that it would be considered a hefsek. The Steipler is quoted in Orchas Rabbeinu, Chelek Bais, siman shin yud gimmel saying that the Oleh LaTorah himself also says, “Chazak.” This needs some explanation.

It is mashma from the above Rema that saying Chazak is not just for when one finishes a sefer of the Chamisha Chumshei Torah, but rather it should be said at the end of every aliyah. That is why he uses the terminology “bechol paam.” He also quotes this halacha in the kriyah of the weekday where we never finish one of the Chumashim. It would therefore seem that our minhag of saying Chazak is not from the above Rema. The Avudraham says that in Sfarad they only said Chazak at the end of a chumash.

The Bikkurei Yaakov in siman taf resh samech tes, seif koton yud bais discusses the aliyah of Chosson Kol Hanearim where right after thekriyah, the pesukim of Hamalach Hagoel is said before the bracha. This would seem to be a hefsek. The Bikurei Yaakov explains that since these are pesukim in the Torah, it is a continuation of the reading of the Torah so it would not be a hefsek. The fact that we say Hamalach baal peh is not a problem as we find on Yom Kippur the

Kohein Gadol also leined baal peh. In our scenario where saying Chazak is not a posuk, we would still need to understand why it is not a hefsek.

The Shaarei Efraim in siman shin zayin, ois lamed gimmel discusses that a person may still say the bracha in the following scenario. Right after the kriyah, before he said the last bracha, the person went ahead and recited kaddish. We see from this that b’dieved it is not a hefsiek. The question here is; why does the oleh make a hefsek lekatchila when he says, “Chazak”?

There is a machlokes between the Levush and the Taz in siman taf tzadik daled regarding the reciting of Akdamus on Shavuot. The Taz holds that Akdamus is recited before the bracha, so it is not a hefsek. In contrast, Levush says it is recited after the first posuk of the kriyah. The Levush is of the opinion that Akdamus is a chelek of the praise to Hashem that he chose the Jews to receive the Torah. According to the Levushit would make sense that the Oleh says Chazak since he is praising Hashem for giving us the Torah. According to the Taz, we would still need an explanation.

The Shailos U’Tshuvos Mahara Mintz, at the end of siman peh heh, writes that our minhag to scream out Chazak after we finish a chumash of the five chumashim is similar to one saying hadran when he finishes a mesechta. The reason for this is that when a person finishes a mesechta it looks like he is done with it, so we say hadran alach and start a new mesechta right away to show that we are never finished. Here too, by saying Chazak, he is showing he is not finished and will continue. The reason we don’t start the next chumash is because we are reliant on the kriyah of Mincha which will start the next chumash. This is a reason why it is not a hefsek, but rather a chizuk in the kriyah.

May we all be zocheh to continuously make siyumim in Torah and gemara and all sifrei Kodesh! Chazak Chazak Venischazeik!

## HALACHOS FOR A TISHA B’AV NIDCHEH (DEFERRED)

*(with the permission of Rabbi Doniel Coren Shlita)*

This year the 9th of Av falls on Shabbos. Because we don’t fast on Shabbos, other than Yom Kippur, the fast is delayed and begins at sundown on Shabbos day. It is observed through Sunday, the 10th of Av.

On Shabbos it is forbidden to show open signs of mourning. Consequently, there is no seudah ha’mafsekes, the meal of egg, bread, and ashes, on this Shabbos. And because of the fast, there is also no Havdalah on Saturday night — rather it is recited on Sunday night, except the blessing on the flame which is recited in shul before Eichah or at home depending on your custom.

### CHANGES IN DAVENING

When we read the Torah we recite Moshe Rabbeinu’s lamentation of “How can I bear alone your burdens, troubles, and tasks,” to the tune of Eichah as we do for the Haftorah.. We do not say Pirkei Avos this week, nor do we say the Tzidkascha Tzedek during Minchah.

Shalosh Seudos: It is very important to finish Shalosh Seudos before Shkia (sunset)

It is a time to avoid excess socializing or going for walks etc (there are those who do not permit going for a pleasure walk the entire day when the 9th of Av is on Shabbos). Zemiros, meat, and wine are permitted for all three meals.

### TORAH LEARNING

What about the daf yomi? One can learn Torah before chatzos on Shabbos but afterward it is a bit of a debate. After chatzos, many opinions permit learning Torah, however if a person can limit himself to the topics that are permitted on Tisha B’Av, it is praiseworthy. One may, however, fulfill the mitzvah of reading the parashah twice in Hebrew and once in Targum.

### SHALOSH SEUDOS

One can drink wine, eat meat, and bentch with a mezuman. One must stop eating and drinking before shekiyah. Mayim acharonim should also be done before sundown.

It is permitted to take pills on Shabbos that will make your fast easier but only if they are mixed with a food or drink . One should preferably prepare the mixture before Shabbos. One may take them without water even on Tisha B’av, unless they are pleasant tasting.

### AFTER SUNDOWN

It is still permitted to wear shoes and sit on chairs after sundown. But once the Borchu of Ma’ariv is recited, these two prohibitions begin as well. There is no melaveh malkah.

### SUNDAY NIGHT

**IMPORTANT:** *Everyone should say ברוך המבדיל בין קודש לחול at nightfall.*

If necessary, one may drink water before Sunday night Havdalah, *but one may not eat. Meat, wine (except for Havdalah), and music are forbidden until Monday morning.* Haircuts, laundry and bathing are permitted on Sunday night.

*In the case of a seudas Mitzvah it is permitted to drink wine & eat meat on Sunday night*

When Havdallah is recited on Sunday night, neither the spices nor the Havdalah candle is used. Only the beracha on wine is recited, followed by the beracha of “HaMavdil Bein Kodesh P’chol.”

*As this fast is a Nidche (deferred from Shabbos) there are differing opinions as to when a person is permitted to break their fast during the taanis (i.e pregnant or nursing women). For general guidance prior to the fast or specific situations during the fast a Rav should be consulted.*

When Tisha B’Av is observed on Sunday, one who must eat recites Havdallah over beer, coffee or tea prior to eating

*Our Shul Posek Harav Doniel Coren can be reached on or before Tisha B’av by text @ 914-645-4199.*



## Why Did G-d Cause Me to Get Stuck in Teveria for Shabbos?

Rav Elimelech Biderman writes that we know that Hashem is leading the world and directs all events. Most of this takes place ‘behind the scenes’, where we aren’t even aware of what is happening, but sometimes Hashem gives us a glimpse to let us see how he is involved and ‘pulling all the strings’. Even when matters aren’t the way we would want them to be, if we look closely, we will see how everything is being run by Hashem, and everything is for the good.

Levi was an Israeli Yeshivah Bachur learning in Eretz Yisroel, and he had a slight problem. An ‘off Shabbos’ was coming up for his Yeshivah and his parents were not going to be home for that Shabbos. It wasn’t an option to stay in Yeshivah for Shabbos, and he needed a place to go.

Levi asked his friend Shimon if he would like to go to Tzfas for Shabbos, and Shimon agreed. That Friday, they boarded the last bus to Tzfas, but the bus got stuck in traffic several times along the way. As the sun was starting to set and they saw it would soon be Shabbos, they realized they could not be on the bus anymore. They were only near Teveria, and they had at least a half hour ride to go until they would reach Tzfas. Levi and Shimon realized that they must get off the bus quickly, because it was only a few moments before Shabbos. The bus driver opened the door for them, and they began their trek to Teveria.

Levi and Shimon were very disap-



pointed. They had planned to be in Tzfas for Shabbos and now they will be in Teveria, and they had no idea of where they could stay. As they walked, they blamed everything they could.

Levi wondered, “Why couldn’t he



have just gone home for Shabbos? Why did the Yeshivah have an ‘off Shabbos’ specifically this week? Why couldn’t he at least have stayed in Yeshivah?”

Shimon was also filled with anxiety. He said to Levi, “Why did you convince me to go with you? I could have gone home, peacefully.”

When they reached Teveria, it was almost dark. They were hungry, tired, and depressed. They walked up to the first house they saw with a Mezuzah, and decided to try their luck. The first thing they noticed when they reached the front door was a child’s sign hanging which said, ‘The Cohen’s Practice Hachnosas Orchim’, but Levi and Shimon were still anxious and thought, ‘Maybe they won’t let us in, despite the generous sign that one of their children apparently made in kindergarten?’

Furthermore, how can we know that we can trust their level of Kashrus? Also, maybe there won’t be enough food for us, since they certainly weren’t expecting us to come for Shabbos?” But they knew they didn’t have a choice because they had nowhere else to go. They lightly knocked on the door. Mr. Cohen opened the door and greeted them. He was noticeably overjoyed to see the two boys, and he graciously invited them in to be his guests for Shabbos.

Shimon and Levi were happy to discover that Mr. Cohen was a Ben Torah, and they knew that they could trust his level of Kashrus. Shimon and Levi Davened in the house since all the Shuls had finished Davening by that time, and then they came to the table, to join Mr. and Mrs. Cohen’s Shabbos Seudah. It seemed that somehow the Cohen’s expected some sort of company because there was plenty of food.

Mr. Cohen noticed that the boys were surprised by the abundance of food, so he explained that he and his wife had just returned earlier that Friday morning from a trip to Europe, and neighbors prepared the Shabbos food for them. “They thought that our children would be home, so they prepared for the children as well, however, we sent our children to their grandparents in Bnei Brak for Shabbos. So it seems that all the food was prepared especially just for you!”

Levi and Shimon enjoyed a very uplifting Shabbos. They sang Zemiros for hours, and Levi, a young Talmid Chacham, offered many beautiful and clever Divrei Torah. The Cohen’s were very impressed by Levi’s Middos, his Yiras Shamayim, and the Divrei Torah that he said over, and they thought that he would be a good match for their daughter. Immediately after Shabbos they called a Shadchan to arrange the Shidduch, and soon afterwards, they started dating and eventually they became engaged! Levi and Shimon thought that being stranded in Teveria was a problem, but it proved to be that Hashem did it for their great benefit!



RABBI YY JACOBSON

## TWO ROADS DIVERGED IN THE WOOD OF JEWISH HISTORY

*Two errors we have made in trying to  
bridge the old and the new*

“Moses wrote their departures according to their journeys ... and these were their journeys according to their departures.” -- Numbers 33:2, this week’s Torah portion, Maasei.

“While the reasonable man adapts himself to the world, the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man.” -- George Bernard Shaw

The concluding portion of the Book of Numbers (Maasei), read this week the world over, begins by offering a summation of the Israelites’ forty-year journey through the wilderness, as they ventured toward the Promise Land. This odyssey across the Sinai Peninsula was comprised of forty-two segments, ultimately leading the young nation along the eastern coast of the Jordan River as they prepared to enter the Land of Canaan through the city of Jericho.

The Torah, before documenting the specific route of their journey, notes that “Moses wrote their departures according to their journeys... and these were their journeys according to their departures.”

This diction is as strange as it is perplexing. Three questions come to mind.

First, what is the actual meaning of “departures according to their journeys,” and “journeys according to their departures?”

Second, why is the verse redundant? What is the difference between “departures according to their journeys,” and “journeys according to their departures?”

Third, why does the Torah flip the sequence of terms, first mentioning “departures” followed by “journeys,” and then in the second half of the verse switching the order, referring first to “journeys” and then to “departures?”

Here we shall discover how these slight “errors” capture timeless truths of history and identity.

### PAST & FUTURE

Two divergent roads define the voyage of Jewish history. There are the Jews who ascribe

to the “departure” paradigm, and the Jews who embrace the “journey” paradigm.

The “journeying” Jews focus on the constant changes in history: the fluctuating trends, the cultural developments, the novel inventions, and the newly discovered wisdom. These Jews are sensitive to the winds of progression, to the alterations in the human climate, and to the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead. They aspire to define Judaism – or a philosophy of life -- that would be relevant to the contemporary conversation of humanity in its journey toward its own self-defined “promised land.”

Yet, in their zeal to embrace the future, they often abandon the past. In their passion to remain relevant today, they forfeit the power of yesterday. In their yearning to capture the individual “your,” they neglect the depth of the “yore.” In their ambition to grow tall, they detach from the roots that have given them their original sap.

“By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he’s wrong,” Charles Wadsworth once said. The youth, fresh in spirit, creative in ideas, often seeks to chart a new path, to take the road never traveled by. There is something monotonous about traveling in the footsteps of your ancestors, and there is something intoxicating about developing a path you can call your own.

In many ways, it was this perspective which gave birth to the contemporary Jewish world. As the winds of modernity swept Europe, as enlightenment and emancipation cast their glowing promise on a downtrodden nation in the 18th century, millions of Jews felt that clinging to the life style and traditions of their ancestors would impede their bright journey to a new world order. In the process, they bid farewell to the old to embrace the new; they said goodbye to the yore to embrace the “your.”

As we know today, their good intentions were met with profound disappointment. On one hand, enlightenment in Europe and socialism in Russia turned against the Jews, and on the other hand, the descendants of the Jews who embraced them have been lost to our people. In their passion to journey ahead, to revolutionize the past, they failed to realize the power of eternity imbedded in their tradition and faith.

Then there are the “departure” Jews – those who are always looking back to the past, to their point of departure. Their primary focus is on the unchangeable truths of history. Life, in their vision, is not linear, but cyclical. Tradition, ritual, custom, law, faith do not change just because Voltaire gave us Enlightenment, Nietzsche taught us about the will for power, Tocqueville explained to us democracy, Freud uncovered the subcon-

scious, and Barak Obama called for change. “What was good for my great-great grandfather is good for me,” these Jews rooted in tradition exclaim.

Yet in their attempt to hold on to the sacred past, they often stifle the ability to utilize and actualize the new energy of today, to discern the voice of G-d not only in the ancient, but also in the present, not only in the world that was, but also in the world that is. In their hope to continue the chain of history by adding their identically matching link, they fail to create space for freshness, for creativity, for authentic self-expression. In their genuine zeal to protect the “piano” of Judaism, they scoff at any new composition, failing to realize that the very same piano keys allow for infinite compositions. The word of G-d, articulated in the Torah, can and must serve as a blueprint for the challenges of today, not only for the dialogue of the past.

### THE TREE & THE ROOTS

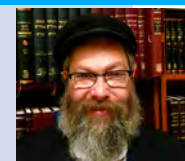
So “Moses wrote their departures according to their journeys ... and these were their journeys according to their departures.” The majesty and magic of Jewish history, the Bible is intimating to us, is based on the synthesis between “departures” and “journeys.” The departures – the points of reference that have always defined Judaism – ought to serve as catalysts for the journeys of the future, invigorating growth and inspiring expansiveness. Conversely, the journeys toward new horizons ought to be “according to their departures,” founded and inspired on the timeless values of our faith and our Torah.

Just as Moses wrote the first chapter of Jewish history, we all are summoned to write our own. Let the tree grow taller and taller, but let it never fail its roots. Rather, let the roots exclaim, “Look how beautiful and tall my tree has grown.”

\* My thanks to R. Shmuel Kuperman who shared the nucleus of this idea with me, as he heard from Rabbi Israel Meir Lau. Thank you to Yaakov Shlomo for his assistance in writing this essay.

QUALITY OF  
MASHIACH

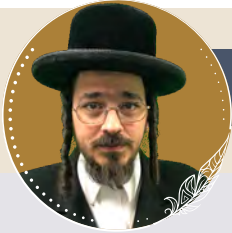
UFARATZTAH



**The unique quality of Mashiach is that he will be humble. Though he will be the ultimate in greatness, for he will teach Torah to the Avos and to Moshe Rabeinu, still he will be the ultimate in humility, as he will also teach simple folk.**

===Hayom Yom Av 1





## PARSHAS MATOS- MASEI

### What Message Are We Giving Our Children?

We can try and hide from that which bring us pain. We can cut major pieces from our lives in order to make things seem rosier- but death's honesty has a way of changing the landscape.

Let us look deeper into the message of our Parsha which deals parenthetically with the laws of inheritance.

וידבר משה אל ראשי המטות לבני ישראל

Moses began speaking to the heads of the Matos (literally chief of Staff's – editors note-perhaps this is where the phrase chief of staff-comes from; as Matos means staff).

The question has been asked- why the word Matos- .. why the characterizations of these leaders as Roshei Matos- Chief of staff's?

Couldn't they have been referred to as Rosh Hashfotim - heads of the Tribes, instead?

There must be something important symbolized by the word -Mateh- the wooden staff.

Let's look at our generation...

Our Religious communities have Bli"EH excelled in their religiosity.

But in our quest to have little to do with the outside world- we have placed ourselves in self imposed ghettos. Going from Shul, to work, to learn- to our families.. and back again..doing the same things or many of the same things – day in and day out.

All this we call building a connection to Hashem- with piety.. we are sure that our behaviors will keep us pure.

It may be true- this behavior might keep us pure but it will also lessen the impact we have on the world around us. We were sent here with a purpose- each and every one of us and this purpose involves interacting with the world- for it is surely Hashem's world..all of it.

This subdued way of living also brings us to mediocrity. An enhanced ability to create new things, bring forth new idea's, can never come from

a mind that follows a maze faithfully. To be sure, G-d wants us all to be creative and vibrant in our Yiddishkeit and be full of creativity and innovation-but what has happened?

Look around -Our children are confused by what they see-but the answer is clear, only the flame of excitement can light the spiritual torch for a new generation and that flame is wavering becoming weaker day by day in today's black and white, copycat generation. Individualism has been sacrificed at the alter of spiritual conformity.

Let's see what lessons can be gleaned from the "Mateh" – the wooden staff.

First, the Mateh is a living thing, this piece of carved wood- we must be growing people, not stagnant, not stubborn as steel .

Each staff had the individual seal of a tribe- we all have different but important qualities to develop in ourselves- we are NOT all the same.

Each wooden rod has been nurtured as a sapling- We must learn -nurture our children and help them grow. Just as our parents before have nurtured us.

Let us not forget that we have many important life lessons to impart to our children. Ethical lessons, moral lessons.. We must teach by example- the correct to interact and treat one another.

These lesson's will iy "H be imparted by our children to their children. Even if (as it sometimes happens)- our children choose a slightly different path for themselves- they will still have us in mind by choosing not to do as we did. All of this must accepted and respected and we must embrace our differences with love. In the matters of spiritual inheritance we would do ourselves a big favor by preparing ourselves with the answers to some of the following questions.

What life lessons would we most want to impart to our children?

What would we like to be remembered for by our family and those closest to us, after our sojourn here?

What would we like to bequeath to our generation? What can we leave over to the world after 120 years as our eternal contribution to society?

Once we start thinking in this direction- we are well on our way to living a fulfilled life- our Creator wants us to be creative, vibrant and special in everything we do!

Good Shabbos!

## פרשת מטות-מסעי

וזה על אף עבודתם בכל רמ"ח שס"ה היה שקוע בתורה ועבודה לא היה מילה ששגור על פיהם שלא היה מהתורה, ועדיין מרוב גדלותם עדיין היו נורמלה מענטשין ממש.

והנה גדלות זאת היא נובעת לא פחות ולא יותר מהצורה עצמה שהיא מלמדת לנו הדרך אשר ילכו בה, והתורה מנווטת לנו את המהלך המחשבה ואת מציאות של הדיבור ואופניו, ועוד יותר מה שמשתייכים לדרך שהורנו רז"ל יותר משתייכים למציאות להיות נורמל ולא להיחשב שאנחנו דור חדש שחייבים להשתנות, כמו שידוע ממרן החתם סופר זיע"א שלכל יצר הרע יש שם ובדור שלו אמר שהשם של היצר הרע זה היה שנשנתנו העיתים וזהו שמנים אחרים, או שהדור חלש ח"ו, הקב"ה שותל לנו אנשים גדולים בכל דור ללמדנו שהו לא יכול להיות מניעה וליפול באלו מכמורות היצר.

הרב הגאון הגדול ר' ראובן שיינר זצוק"ל זיע"א שהיה מרביץ תורה מעל יובל שנים היה דמות של נורמלקיט דמות של מי שלא נכנע לשיגעון שנקרא הדור חלש כל כולו היה מסורה ודבוק בתורת רבותיו, הוא היה מהדור הישן אבל חי בינינו, ורואים בחוש שהיה המשיך של דורות של בני תורה ובעלי חסד וירא השם, תנצבה ויהיה זכרו ברוך.

ובלע המות לנצח ומחה ה' דמעה מעל כל פנים אכ"ר

דוד יהודה פיירסטון

בכתובות י"ז. איתא לעולם יהיה דעתו של אדם מעורב אם הבריאות, פירש רש"י ז"ל שיעשה לאיש ואיש כרצונו ע"כ והגר"א אריאלי שליט"א הוסיף בדברי רש"י שכלול בזה גם להגיד לכל איש ואיש מה שהוא רוצה לשמוע, זהו מה שחז"ל אמרו לנו שנהיה לעולם מעורב בבריאות.

יש ברבינו יונה (שער א' פרק לא') הרחבה ביסוד הדין של מש"א שלמה המלך "תאווה יבקש נפרד" והיינו מי שמבקש ללך אך ורק אחר תאוותיו כולם נפרדים ממנו ואין לו אה וריע, אולם ההולך אחר שכלו אזי כולם מתחברים עליו ורוצים להיות בחברותו עייש.

הנה ידועים שיש בהרבה ישיבות הליטאים סגנונות מסויימים במה הם משונים בצורת מהות עבודתם, יש ישיבות שעבודתם זה עבודת הרציניות ויש המעלה זה הכשרוני המבריק, ויש עובדים בענין התפילה אולם יש עוד הגדרה שבשייבות מסויימים זהו העבודה וזה הנקרא "נורמלקיט" זה שומע כזה הגדרה יחשוב שלא מדובר במשהו שיש בו מין עבודה מיוחדת שלכאורה זהו הפשטות, אולם למתבונן להיות נורמל זהו עבודה גדולה ואבאה.

היו גדולי עולם שממש היו שקועים משיכמם ומעלה ולא ידעו צורת מטבע, אולם היו גדולי עולם על אף שראשם היה מגיע השמימה עדיין היו בבחינת הסולם מוצב ארצה,

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**QUIET PLEASE**

Every ten years, the monks in the monastery are allowed to break their vow of silence to speak two words. Ten years go by and it's one monk's first chance. He thinks for a second before saying, "Food bad."

Ten years later, he says, "Bed hard."

It's the big day, a decade later. He gives the head monk a long stare and says, "I quit."

"I'm not surprised," the head monk says. "You've been complaining ever since you got here"

**STEREOTYPING**

A ventriloquist is performing with his dummy on his lap. He's telling a Chelm joke portraying people from Chelm as less than intelligent.. An indignant Chelmer stands up "What gives you the right to stereotype people from Chelm that way?" he demands. "What does the city where I live have to do with my worth as a human being?" Embarrassed, the ventriloquist begins to stammer out an apology. "You keep out of this!" he yells at the ventriloquist.

"I'm talking to that little shrimp on your knee!"

**FAST CAR**

A citizen of Chelm bought the fastest and newest car ever created. He entered the car and turned on the radio; He heard on the radio: "This Is London!"

The Chelmer said: WOW this thing is FAST!

**THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

A Polish man married a Canadian girl after he had been in Canada a year or so, and although his English was far from perfect, the couple got on very well. One day, though, he rushed into a lawyer's office and asked if he could arrange a divorce for him, "Very quick!" The lawyer explained that the speed of getting a divorce would depend on the circumstances, and asked these questions:

**LAWYER:** "Have you any grounds?"

**POLE:** "An acre and half, and a nice 3 bedroom house."

**LAWYER:** "No, I mean what is the

foundation of the case?"

**POLE:** "It is made of concrete, bricks & mortar."

**LAWYER:** "Does either of you have a real grudge?"

**POLE:** "No, we have a carport and don't need a grudge."

**LAWYER:** do you get along well with your wife

**POLE:** "We have faucet in kitchen no need well"

**LAWYER:** "No, I mean does your wife beat you up?"

**POLE:** "No, I'm always up before her."

**LAWYER:** "Why do you want this divorce?"

**POLE:** "She going to kill me!"

**LAWYER:** "What makes you think that?"

**POLE:** "I got proof."

**LAWYER:** "What kind of proof?"

**POLE:** "She going to poison me. She buy bottle at drug store and I read label. It say Polish Remover."

**Fact:** Five out of six people agree that Russian roulette is safe

JOKES





# ~Night Kollel~

## RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

### CHUKOS HAGOI – COPYING THE NON-JEWS PART III

We previously discussed the machlokes between the Magen Avraham and the Gra. The Magen Avraham allows the minhag of putting trees out on Shavuos, whereas the Gra abolished the custom. Since the non-Jews made it into idol worship, and it is only a minhag, we are required to stop. The Magen Avraham is not concerned with this, because we were first, or because it is not done exactly the same way as the non-Jews.

If there is a rationale behind the custom it is allowed

The Maharsham offers another explanation for why the Magen Avraham was not concerned with chukos hagoi, based on the Rivash. The Rivash discusses a custom that some had to go to the cemetery during the shivah. He was asked if this constitutes following non-Jewish customs, since this was a custom of the non-Jews, namely the Arabs, who would visit the cemetery after their relatives died. The Rivash replied that this is not a problem, since this is not just following their custom blindly, but we are doing it for a reason. Since the purpose of going to the cemetery is to show honor to the deceased it is not considered following a non-Jewish custom.

This is similar to the opinion of the Maharik, who rules that whenever something is being done with a purpose it is not a problem of chukos hagoi. The same idea will be true for putting trees in the shul. Since we are doing it for a reason – to remind ourselves to daven for the fruits – it will not pose a problem of chukos hagoi.

The Shoel Umaishiv takes this a step further. He points out that this is not being done by them either blindly which would be a cause for concern that it is based on idol worship – but rather for a specific reason. He writes that he asked the non-Jews why they have this custom of putting trees, and they

told him that it is for decorative purposes. Since both they and we are doing it for a specific reason – the non-Jews to decorate, and the Jews to serve as a reminder of the judgment of the fruits – there is no issue of chukos hagoi.

However, the Gra, in fact argues on this premise of the Maharik, as he writes in Shulchan Aruch (Y”D 188:6), and opines that even if there is a reason for their custom, it is still forbidden for us to do the same. That is why he did not allow putting the trees, even though we do it for a different reason than the non-Jews.

### HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

In Igros Moshe, Rav Moshe Feinstein maintains that we should follow the Gra, and not put trees. The sefer Hilchos Chag B’chag quotes rav Elyashiv, who ruled that – in Eretz Yisroel, where the non-Jews are mostly Moslems, and do not put trees – one is allowed to put trees, or at least greenery. So everyone should follow their minhag, and it is worthwhile to end with a fascinating story, about the importance of beautifying the shul, according to that minhag.

The sefer Chut Hameshulash writes that in the shul of the Chasam Sofer it was the custom to decorate the shul before Shavuos, with tree branches, and other greenery, which added a breathtaking aroma throughout the shul. In addition, on top of the Chasam Sofer’s place they would put a special canopy made from tree branches, and flowers. One year, the gabai decided that they were going to put a stop to this custom. When the Chasam Sofer arrived in shul at the beginning of yom tov and noticed the change, he was very upset at the gabai for diminishing the honor and décor that had always been in place. Unfortunately, the gabai was punished from Heaven for his misdeed

### SUMMARY

The Rama writes about the custom of putting greenery, and the Magen Avraham adds about putting trees. The Gra did not allow trees – and some say he did not allow greenery, as well – because of chukos hagoi.

The Magen Avraham does allow it because:

1. We were first.
2. It is only a problem if it is exactly the same.
3. If there is a rationale for the custom, it is allowed.

### COMMUNITY KOLLEL NEWS:

I gave a shiur last week, on the topic: “Davening by Kivrei Tzadikim – what to have in mind.” This was in connection to the limud of the Night Kollel, to clarify the various opinions if and when there is a concern of “doreish el hameisim.” Highlights of the shiur will be featured in a future article, b’zras Hashem.

As always, these shiurim are available on the shul’s website, 18Forshay.com, on MP3 in the shul, and on Torahanytime.com. We are also now on Kol Halashon. To receive updates of upcoming shiurim, or to access any of Ohr Chaim’s previous shiurim, please send a request to Secretary@18forshay.com, or follow the prompts on the website to get a link to the shiurim, or to enroll in our WhatsApp group for shiurim.

Wishing you a Wonderful Shabbos and a Chodesh Tov,

### RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER



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