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**ASARA B'TEVES
TUESDAY DECEMBER 18**

בית מדרש אור חיים

BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM
COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER
18 FORSHAY ROAD, MONSEY, NEW YORK 10952
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RABBI AARON LANKRY

**ZMANIM ON PAGE
8**



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Shabbos Morning MINYAN STARTING AT 8:00^{AM} 18 FORSHAY RD. **MAIN SHUL ASHKNAZ**

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RABBI LANKRY

DEAR KEHILLA,

PARASHOT VAYEGASH HAFTORAH

In the year 2964 - 797 b.c.e, following the death of Shlomo Hamelech, the nation was divided between Rechavam ben Shlomo and Yiravam ben Nivat. Rechavam ruled over Yehudah and Binyamin, and Yiravam ruled over the other 10 Tribes. Rechavam was a direct descendant of Dovid Hamelech, and Yiravam was a descendent of Ephrayim. In this week's Haftorah, Yichezkel Hanavi prophesied the time when the divided kingdom's of Yehudah and Yisroel would unite beneath the single banner of the family of King David. Yechezkel is instructed to take two pieces of wood and inscribe them with names of the Jewish kingdoms, Yehuda and Yosef. Hashem then said, "Bring them near one another to appear as one and they shall unite in your hands." Radak

interprets this to mean that Yechezkel should hold the pieces alongside each other and they will miraculously unite into one solid piece of wood. He explains that this refers to the future miraculous unification of the Jewish kingdom. The individual pieces of wood represent the individual kingdoms of Israel. Although Hashem unconditionally granted Dovid Hamelech's dynasty the kingdom of Israel this did not preclude fragmentation. In fact, soon after Shlomo Hamelech's passing the kingdom suffered a severe split. Yiravam ben Nivat, a descendent of the tribe of Yosef led a powerful rebellion against the Judean dynasty and gained control over most of the Jewish nation. The split was so intense that the seceding camp of Yosef totally severed ties with its brothers never to return to them. Yechezkel prophesied that these kingdoms will eventually reunite and form one inseparable unit. The unification will be so perfect

that it will leave no trace of any previous dissension. The entire nation's sense of kinship will be so pronounced that it will be likened to one solid piece of wood, void of all factions and fragmentation.

It is quite clear that the success of Am Yisrael is dependent upon total Achdut- unity. But can this be accomplished?

During Chanuka we expressed our Hallel and Hodah- praise and recognition to Hashem. We need to understand the difference between those two concepts. Hallel is the expression of "WOW", praise to Hashem on him being awesome. It's an uplifting experience to experience a miracle or when we see Hashem succeed our ambitions that we know would not have worked out on our own efforts alone. Hodah is a humbling experience when we feel indebted to Hashem and understand that we owe Him (big time!). Though we put these two expressions together, they are totally different emotions and

experiences.

Hallel comes from when you are down and out and then become removed from the depths of negativity. Very much like the life of Joseph who was sold and enslaved, then imprisoned and finally rose to become second to king or grand visor of Egypt. Hodah is the name of Yehuda which begins at a high point and then you are lowered to a real perspective just as Yehuda had said "Tzadka Memeni" by the story of Tamar. It gives a person a painful reality check, but if they are strong they can grow so much from it. The two personalities meet in the middle and become one; Yehuda is lowered and Joseph is lifted. May we all be granted a life filled with Hallel and Hodah, Amen.



Zmanim by our incredible Gabbi
EPHRAIM YUROWITZ

SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLY MINYAN FRIDAY 12:30 & 2:30

CANDLE LIGHTING	4:11 ^{PM}
MINCHA TENT	4:20 ^{PM}
SHKIYA	4:29 ^{PM}
MINCHA 20 FORSHAY	4:15 ^{PM}
SHACHRIS VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR	6:43 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS	8:00 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS YOUTH MINYAN 18+	9:15 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS	9:15 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS 20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD	9:45 ^{AM}
MINCHA	1:45 ^{PM}
PIRCHEI	2:00 ^{PM}
DAF YOMI	3:30 ^{PM}
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	4:11 ^{PM}
SHKIYA	4:29 ^{PM}
MARRIV	5:09 ^{PM} & 5:14 ^{PM} & 6:29 ^{PM}

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS

20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ 30 ON YOM TOV

S 6:55 M 6:55 T 6:56 W 6:57 T 6:57 F 6:58

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 3:19 M 3:19 T 3:10 W 3:20 T 3:20

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 4:16 M 4:17 T 4:05 W 4:17 T 4:18

DECEMBER 16 - DECEMBER 21

NEITZ IS 7:15 - 7:18
PELAG IS 3:31 PM - 3:32 PM
SHKIA IS 4:28 PM - 4:30 PM
MAGEN AVRAHAM
8:58 AM - 9:00 AM
GRA- BAAL HATANYA
9:34 AM - 9:36 AM

Winter
2018/19



תשע"ט חורף

WEEKDAY MINYANIM

שחרית

כתיבה	20 Forshay ↑	Before Neitz
6:15AM	18 Forshay ↓	Mon-Fri
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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10:00	20 Tent	
10:15	18 ↓	
10:30	18 Tent	
10:45	20 ↓	
11:00	20 Tent	

מנחה

12:30	3:15
1:00	3:30
1:30	3:45
2:00	4:00
2:30	4:15
3:00	4:30

↑ Upstairs
↓ Main Floor

מנחה ומעריב

12 MIN. מעריב	18 ↓
AT שחרית	18 Tent
20 MIN. מעריב	18 ↓
50 MIN. מעריב	18 ↓

מעריב

AT פול	18 ↓
שקיעה AT	18 ↓
10 MIN. מעריב	18 Tent
30 MIN. מעריב	18 ↓
60 MIN. מעריב	18 ↓
6:30	18 ↓
6:45	18 ↓
7:00	18 ↓
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7:45	18 Tent
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11:45	18 ↓
12:00	18 ↓
12:15	18 ↓
12:30	18 ↓
12:45	18 ↓

Repeat Krias Shma after nightfall

FOR MORE INFO: www.18forshay.com // ohrchaim18@gmail.com

BLUEBERRY HILL ZMANIM

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

MINCHA	3:10	PLAG	3:30
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RABBI COREN

PARSHAS MIKETZ AND VAYIGASH : THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

There is an astounding statement by Rabienu Bachye, one of several often quoted Rishonim, who points out that never do we find in these parshiyos a full mechila by Yosef to his brothers. There does seem to be what we call in Halacha piyus – appeasement-- but the level of mechila which is required in order to do full teshuva is missing and this ends up being the source of grave results for Klal Yisrael later on.

During Chanuka we spoke about the fact that the holiday is the last chance to do teshuva (based on the Zohar) and as we all know teshuva isn't easily accomplished especially among Jews. Yet the lack of it is what affects everything in life especially the delay of the final redemption for which we so desperately await. Anti-Semitism rapidly fills the air throughout the world and people continue to suffer from tzaros and tragedies. Redemption is our only hope and although reaching this goal is challenging, it remains in our hands.

On Chanuka I suggested that the least we can do is forgive in our heart and to truly mean the words when we recite "I am mochel everyone that angered me etc" before going to sleep. The Pele Yoetz and others point out that one should not say these words if he/she doesn't believe them so we better make every effort to really recognize them as true.

I hope I can convince you with two arguments.

The first is based on the words of Chazal which I pointed out is better than all the segulos that people read and quote. Chazal say that anyone that is maavir al midosav which means that they let things go, let things pass –that is, they forgive and move on and not hold a grudge, then Hashem does the same. Moreover, He removes all our sins even the ones that we did in a rebellious manner. If you have a clean slate can you imagine how powerful your tefilos could be?

There a second argument I used when I tried to convince a husband who was having a tough time with his "difficult wife." I told him that most times when a husband wants to teach his wife a lesson or get back at her or win the argument, it's all about a worldly false pleasure in this world and he gains nothing in the eternal world. We are here in this world for few years and they pass by so quickly; afterwards it's either eternal bliss or chas veshalom eternal suffering which could entail losing out on the heavenly reward that we could have gained. So why in the world would we hold a grudge if there are options for much better results? The answer is that we're simply not thinking it through to the end.

Although we can't judge Yosef Hatzadik, we can certainly learn from his mistakes based on the Rishonim and we can extract the gravity of not being mochel especially when it comes to brothers and sisters. It is mindboggling how many siblings remain in a relationship of strife and anger for years over money, Hashem Yerachem.

The amazing thing is that sometimes all it takes is a phone call, a text or an email and years of anguish can turn into a happy and spiritual reconciliation that brings so much bracha and yeshua both personally and globally to all the parties involved.

May Hashem bless us all with Shalom

Shabbat shalom

THE DEVOTED NAZI WITH THREE JEWISH GRANDSONS

One Shabbat, there was a man who came to the synagogue of Rabbi Berel Wein, in the Rechavia section of Jerusalem, accompanied by his three young sons, whom it turned out were of the ages 9, 7 and 5. Even with their long peiyot, they didn't look Jewish with their stunning blond Aryan hair and shining blue eyes. Additionally, the boys were unusually well behaved, not running out of their seats and around the shul like many little children do.

After prayers, Rabbi Wein, a famous Jewish historian and educator, greeted the father and asked him where he was from. The guest said he was from Rechovot [a city near Tel Aviv]. When Rabbi Wein next asked where his family originally came from, the man became uncomfortable. Rabbi Wein apologized, and asked if he was perhaps a baal teshuva, a returnee to Torah-observant Judaism.

The man explained that he was really a Gior, a convert to Judaism, and that he had been born in Germany. With that off his chest, he continued to tell of how he embarked on his unusual and fascinating spiritual journey to Yiddishkeit. Not only was he a German, but his father was a dedicated Nazi and war criminal who had spent 10 years in prison after the Second World War.

The son went to study microbiology in a college in the United States and there he for the first time met and became friendly with many Jews. In Germany he had learned about that sordid chapter of his nation's history in which his people brutally mistreated the Jews, and he could never understand why people like his father could so hate the Jews who in his eyes were such nice good people.

After graduating from college in America, he enrolled in Hebrew University in Jerusalem, seeking post-graduate degrees and to pursue his interest in Judaism. He earned a doctorate degree in microbiology, and subsequently became involved in researching many life-saving cures. At the same time he studied with some rabbis and converted to Judaism, breaking all contact with his father who as an officer of an SS Storm Troopers brigade had been responsible for the murder of many thousands of Jews.

Shortly before he met Rabbi Wein, the man had received a phone call from his mother informing him that his father was dying and that he should come and see him one last time. The convert spoke to his rabbis and they told him that one had to have a sense of gratitude to his biological father, even if he was a despicable Nazi war criminal.

So he boarded a plane with his three young sons and landed in Germany. He went to the hospital where his father was being treated. His father could barely look at his beautiful offspring because they all looked so Jewish and religious. After exchanging greetings and some small talk, the son, unable to control himself, declared firmly: "Clearly you must have done some good deed that you merited three such wonderful grandchildren. What is it that you did?" he asked his father.


The grandfather at first was unable to think of any good action of his that might have resulted in what happened. Finally he recalled that once he led a group of murderous SS troops into a Catholic orphanage in Warsaw Poland in 1942. They were looking for Jewish children hiding as Catholics.

At first the grandfather was unable to detect any such children. But then towards the end of inspection he noticed three boys whom he was positive were Jewish. And for some strange reason which he himself to the end of his life could not understand, he felt a sense of pity for them and turned his eyes as they quickly escaped from the danger he represented.

The son shouted, "Father, why couldn't you have found a fourth or fifth child to save? Neither my wife nor I have infertility problems, yet since the birth of our youngest child five years ago we haven't been able to conceive and bear any more children. I now realize that the three sons we are blessed with are due to that one sole good deed you did!"

When Rabbi Lazar Brody, the renowned Torah orator and translator of "Garden of Emunah," told this story in the Flatbush shul of the Sephardic Lebanese Congregation, he drew the following lesson: G-d has gratitude and doesn't deny the reward owed to a person, even if that individual is a despicable Nazi war criminal! So if a Nazi can get such a reward as having three righteous grandsons, can we even imagine just what He will give as a reward to those of us who have served Him all of our lives with all of our strength?

THE MEANING OF ACHDUS



In this week's parsha, Horav Yisroel Reisman Shlita has an amazing insight into the true meaning of Achdus which is worth seeing in its entirety.

The Haftarah is perhaps one of the most beautiful and memorable Haftorahs. It is a Haftarah where Yechezkel has a Nevua regarding the Yemos Hamashiach. It has a beautiful beginning where it talks about the Achdus of Klal Yisrael. There, Yechezkel was told to take two sticks, one representing Sheivet Yehuda and the Shevatim that align themselves with Yehuda and one representing Ephraim and those who affiliated themselves with Ephraim and taking these two sticks that represent the ten Shevatim and the two Shevatim and joining them together as one stick. The Yemos Hamashiach the Shevatim will come together as one and bang you have a fertile place for a discussion of Achdus of Klal Yisrael. Hurray! Everybody loves Achdus!

The Nevua of Yechezkel is much deeper than that. Having spent some time studying this Haftarah, I would like to introduce you to a short Nekuda which is a Nekuda of the Haftarah. Know, that Yehuda and Ephraim are two paths in serving Hashem. Rachel and Leah are two paths in serving Hashem. If you want to pursue it, the Michtam Eliyahu in the second volume discusses it at length. The point I want to make is that the joining of the sticks is not Stam an Achdus of a people that are divided and people fight. There are fights within families and fights within Shuls, Achdus is wonderful. It is not that. It is something much deeper. It is the fact that there are many paths in serving Hashem, many ways in serving Hashem.

The Yemos Hamashiach are in Achdus, a coming together, a joining together of all the paths of serving Hashem. All the Mehalchim. We tend to say about ourselves that our level of Frumkeit is such and such, we are comfortable with it. There are people who do more, there are people who stay up late to learn, there are people who Daven Vasikin, there are people who go for Yarchei Kallah, I am the middle of the road. The middle of the road is comfortable. I am not them, I am not someone who doesn't learn at all, I am somewhere in the middle. It is a comfortable place to be.

Nebach! How sad! What do you mean that it is a comfortable place to be? If something is better you go for something better, you go for something more. You don't say I am this Sheivet they are that Sheivet. No! You need something more, something better. The joining together of the sticks is not an Achdus as opposed to fighting. It is an Achdus of seeking the same excellence in serving the Ribbono Shel Olam. That is the Yemos Hamashiach. That is what we dream. We dream to come to a point of pursuit of excellence in serving Hashem. May it be our will that we strive to reach for a little more. The joining together of the sticks, the people who learn more hours than you, be one with them. You can do it also.

YOU BE THE JUDGE



RABBI BERACH STEINFELD

In Bereishis, Perek Mem Vov, posuk chof vov, the posuk tells us that Yaakov sent Yehuda ahead to build a yeshiva in the land of Goshen. Why did Yaakov choose Yehuda for this task? The Midrash Tanchuma in Vayigash, siman tes says that

Yaakov thought that Yehuda had killed Yosef. Yehuda was the one who brought the bloody Kesones Pasim to Yaakov. As a result of that Yaakov recognized the tunic and said that a wild animal attacked Yosef, referring to the lion, to which Yehuda was compared. In other words, Yaakov thought that Yehuda killed Yosef. This was so, up to the point when Yosef revealed himself to his brothers. Yehuda was in the clear as soon as Yosef revealed himself, therefore Yaakov sent him to show that he is really innocent and worthy of this job of setting up a yeshiva in Goshen.

A din Torah was once brought before Reb Chaim Volozhiner between a talmid chochom and a simple Jew. Reb Chaim paskened that the simple Jew was in the right. The talmid chochom accepted the psak. Reb Chaim felt that there was an underlying tarumos (complaint) in that talmid chochom's heart against Reb Chaim. A while later Reb Chaim approached this talmid chochom with a request. Reb Chaim said he had to leave town that day but there was a din Torah that came before him. Reb Chaim requested that the talmid chochom take his place and pasken the din Torah instead of him. When Reb Chaim came back, the talmid chochom said that he realizes that Reb Chaim paskened correctly regarding his own din Torah since this din Torah was very similar and he went through the sugya and saw that Reb Chaim's psak was correct. After Reb Chaim Volozhiner was niftar this talmid chochom approached the plaintiff that he had found guilty and asked him, "Did you follow through with the psak?" The plaintiff responded, "I don't understand what happened here." The day before the din Torah Reb Chaim called both plaintiffs into his room and asked them to be part of a mock din Torah the next day. He taught each side their taanos and even gave them the money in question to be used. He had told the two plaintiffs not to reveal this charade. The plaintiff said, "Now that he is no longer alive, I am sure he would not mind my revealing this."

We learn a wonderful way of judging someone favorably from this story. If someone has a complaint against somebody else, it is best that the person try to put himself in the other person's position and figure out ways to develop the other person's view. Reb Chaim was able to put the talmid chochom in an objective position to truly see that the psak given against him was correct. Frequently, we judge people and don't perceive it from their view causing us to judge others unfavorably. The Chofetz Chaim in Assin Gimmel says that the requirement to judge lekaf zechus is dependent on three types of people. 1. One must judge a person favorably who is muchzak to be a tzaddik, even if it is very far fetched. 2. One must judge an average person favorably if it is fifty/fifty, but it is recommended, not a chiyuv if it is far fetched. 3. There is no chiyuv to be dan lekaf z'chus if a person is known to be a bad person.

May we all judge and be judged favorably.



RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

ROSH KOLLEL

HOW CAN WE PERFORM A BRIS ON SHABBOS?

As a mohel, the topic of milah is always something appropriate. This is especially true, as we just finished celebrating the yom tov of Chanuka, where the mitzvah of milah was under attack. I would like to therefore continue with some more highlights of a shiur that I gave on the topic of milah on Shabbos.

We previously discussed the question posed by the Rishonim why there is no concern that one who is not knowledgeable in the mitzvah of milah may need guidance and in his haste, he may forget and carry – either the baby or the milah knife – through a public domain to an expert to learn how to perform the bris.

WE MENTIONED A NUMBER OF ANSWERS:

The mitzvah of milah is of such great importance that the Chachamim did not wish to push off the mitzvah, even for one day.

Since bris milah is performed by a mohel, who is an expert and will guide the person properly, there is no concern.

The mitzvah of milah on Shabbos is just being done by this one specific person and if he starts getting ready to carry the baby, others will realize and catch him before he desecrates the Shabbos.

SOMETHING THAT THE TORAH

ALLOWS, CHAZAL DID NOT FORBID

There is another famous explanation that is given by the Taz (O”C 586:5). He posits that the Chazal would not go and stop the performance of a mitzvah that is explicitly allowed by the Torah. In regards to the other mitzvos mentioned previously, we do not find a specific mandate to perform them on Shabbos. However, in regards to the mitzvah of milah, the Torah tells us that it should be performed even on Shabbos; in such a case the Chazal will not stop its performance. We find this notion mentioned in Tosfos (Bava Metzia 64b) regarding the rules of ribis: something that the Torah allows, the Chazal did not want to forbid. The Torah Temimah also quotes this explanation.

The Ozoraver Rav (in his glosses on the sefer Torah Temimah, who also quotes this explanation) asks: Inasmuch as the allowance of performing a bris on Shabbos is not spelled out, but deduced from an extra word, why should this be considered written explicitly?

The Pri Megadim (Pesicha Kolleles I:15), in fact, discusses this very question: does this notion of the Taz apply only when it is written explicitly in the Torah or does it apply even when it is learned from a drasha? The Pri Megadim points out that this would seem to be a dispute between the aforementioned Rishonim and the Taz. The Rishonim who ask the question, why there is no concern for carrying the baby, seem to hold that the Chazal would prohibit something which is learned from a drasha. The Taz, on the other hand, may hold that even something learned from a drasha, would not be forbidden by Chazal.

Rav Moshe Feinstein, in Igros Moshe (O”C I:134), however, suggests that the Taz can hold that this case is equivalent to being written explicitly. Since the pasuk in Parshas Tazria: וּמִוֹל בְּשׂוֹר עֲרָלְתּוֹ is an extra pasuk, and is written in order to

teach us that the bris can be performed on Shabbos, it is as if was written explicitly and, hence, the Taz holds that the Chazal would not stop its performance.

IN CONCLUSION

There are a number of reasons given as to why we allow milah on Shabbos and we are not concerned that it will cause one to carry the baby or the milah knife:

Because of the greatness of the mitzvah of milah.

Bris milah is done by a mohel who will guide the person properly.

Milah is just being done by one specific person and others will catch him before he desecrates the Shabbos.

Since the Torah tells us that the mitzvah of milah should be performed even on Shabbos, Chazal did not stop its performance.

RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER
MONSEY, NY

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RABBI YY JACOBSON

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CHILDREN WILL YOU KVETCH OR LEAD?

TRANSFORMATION OF A BROTHER

Joseph could not contain his tears, nor can we, when we read each year the story of how after a feud and separation that endured for twenty-two years, the Prime Minister of Egypt, Joseph, reveals his true identity to his brothers who once attempted to kill him and sold him into slavery.

No less moving is the speech—nay, ballad—presented by Judah, compelling Joseph to reveal himself to his brothers.

We are all familiar with the story: After having his silver goblet placed in his brother Benjamin’s saddlebag, Joseph accuses him of theft, and claims Benjamin the “thief” as his slave. Judah, approaches the viceroy of Egypt, unknowing that this was Joseph, and explains to him that there was no way he could return to his aging father Jacob without young Benjamin.

The Bible transcribes Judah’s exact presentation: “And now if I come to your servant, my father, and the lad [Benjamin] is not with us, and his soul is so bound up with his soul, when he will see that the lad is gone, he will die. And your servants will have brought down the hoariness of your servant our father in sorrow to the grave.

“Because your servant [Judah] took responsibility for the lad [Benjamin] from my father, saying, ‘If I do not bring him to you, then I will have sinned to my father, for all time.’

“Now, please let your servant [Judah] remain in place of the lad as a servant to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers...”

Twenty-two years earlier, the same Judah said to his brothers, “What will we gain if we kill our brother [Joseph] and cover his blood? Let’s sell him to the Arabs and not harm him with our own hands.” The brothers consented. Joseph was sold and brought to Egypt as a slave, where, years later, he rose to become the viceroy of the country. Now, when Joseph’s younger brother Benjamin is about to be taken as a slave, Judah offers himself instead. A metamorphosis has occurred. The time is fertile

for reconciliation and renewal. Joseph reunites with his family.

But there is more.

THE GIFT OF ROYALTY

Tradition has it that royalty in the Jewish nation belongs primarily to the descendants of Judah. Of course, there were many Monarchs who descended from other tribes of Israel, like King Saul from the tribe of Benjamin, or Yeravaam from the tribe of Joseph. The Hasmoneyan dynasty, responsible for the Chanukah festival, was from the Levite tribe. Yet, as Jacob tells his son Judah on his deathbed, the gift of royalty was specifically conferred upon him and his descendants; the quality of leadership was imbued in the very psychological and spiritual chemistry of Judah’s descendants, producing over the generations numerous leaders and kings, from the monarchs of the Davidic dynasty to Moshiach (Messiah) who will also be a descendant of David, the great-great-grandchild of Judah.

Buy why? What did Judah do to deserve this? Was it because he was the one who ultimately saved Joseph from dying in a pit by selling him as a slave (3)? Was it because of his courage to confess publicly that he was the person who impregnated Tamar?

Certainly, but there was something else, we may suggest. It was Judah’s declaration in this week’s portion, Vayigash, “Because your servant took responsibility for the lad,” that perhaps more than all demonstrated that the gift of leadership belonged to this man’s soul. You see, notwithstanding his unwavering promise to his father to bring back Benjamin, Judah could have returned without the lad with a book filled with great excuses. “There was no way we could have fought the viceroy of Egypt, the superpower of the world;” “I know I promised to bring him back, but our dear brother decided to steal the silver majestic goblet from the second to the most powerful person in the world... so what was I supposed to do?” Or, “G-d apparently wanted Benjamin to remain there, after all the viceroy’s goblet did ‘miraculously’ end up in Benjamin’s bag;” “being a slave by Egypt’s viceroy—our brother Shimon can report to us—is not that bad, he treats his workers with enormous dignity.” “Yes it’s terrible, but what should I have done? Self-sacrifice can help you jump from the roof to the ground, not jump from the ground to the roof!”

These are part of the excuses Judah could have given, and he would have been (at least

partially) correct. There is little one can do to battle reality. They did find the goblet of the Prime Minister in Benjamin’s bag and Judah was not the culprit.

But Judah was a leader. He had it in his bones to take absolute and total responsibility for a situation and never pass the buck to others, not even to what can be perceived as “reality.” As a genuine leader Judah stood up and proclaimed: “Because your servant took responsibility for the lad!” Yes, I can find many way how to vindicate myself, but the job will not get done. This is not about me—my innocence or guilt, my merit or fault; it is accomplishing the mission: Benjamin must return to his father.

And that is what makes a leader.

EXCUSES VS. ACTION

Today, too, we desperately need the leadership that will not only search for causes but will implement solutions to ensure the safety of our loved ones. The most important solution might be a paradigm shift in our schools, where character development and values assume the centerpiece of all education.

CONTINUITY

This holds true also on the concerns facing our own people. We live in a generation when many good excuses have been given for our bleak demographics and for Jewish continuity becoming an endangered species. Many a sociologist has, over the course of the past half-century, explained some of the causes for mass assimilation, intermarriage, ignorance, sexual impropriety, apathy, and strife within the Jewish and general community. The Holocaust, secularism, modernity, failure of institutionalized religion, anti-Semitism, hypocrisy of religious leaders, monotony of ritual, and of course, the extraordinarily successful integration of Jews into the mainstream of American life. The walls of the ghetto, physical and conceptual, have at last crumbled.

As a frequent traveler to Jewish conventions and retreats





Can We Fool Ourselves Forever?

When Yosef revealed himself to his brothers- they were stunned beyond words.. But why? Did they not at one time justify their behavior to themselves? How were they able to live with their actions til now and why was it not enough of an excuse to use at that moment? The Dubno Maggid explains by way of a parable. Moshe was in debt to the king for years of back taxes. Given a strict deadline to comply, he borrowed cash and contracts from friends and relatives. Reviewing the bills and contracts with his son, the night before, they found some of the cash was counterfeit and the contracts were either expired or not convertible yet. Unable to secure more aid at this point, Moshe told

his well meaning son, don't worry- mixed among all the other financial instruments they will never be found! His son was wary.. But the father was disturbed by his son's reaction.. "Don't I have enough problems - have confidence in me, they will pass!.. He said with irritation. The next day in front of the king- Moshe gasped as they picked out the expired documents and the false currency, one by one. "Do you know what the penalty for paying the king with a false note is? They asked Moshe.....death by the kings hangman.." Thoughts stormed through his mind- why was I not prepared? What happened to me? Just last night I was able to answer my son with confidence and determination? The Maggid explains...we all go through life with a false sense of security. Our actions?... no problem.. When the time comes we will explain, when we need to. We have done so many mitzvos - so many

good things.. Have no worries, we assure ourselves, everything will pass through. Not so- the Maggid explains. Now is the time for us to fix up our actions. One at a time- we must not overlook, for nothing will be overlooked. We cannot hide behind flimsy excuses and denial- for they will surely lead us down the path of embarrassment. No one is perfect. But we need to accept our imperfections and improve now.. Little steps are acceptable, in fact preferable. Lev Yodaiya Maras Nafsho- everyone knows instinctively what they need to improve. Our behaviors at home, our half hearted mitzvos. Let's put our right feet forward again and get to work. Fooling ourselves is not a plan that will succeed. Fueled by the fires of the Chanukah lights, we must set out to fix - while the light still burns...inside of us. Have a wonderful Shabbos!

»»»»» around the globe, I am privy to hear lectures and workshops analyzing the unique challenges of our times and the various crises that threaten our future. They all make good and sound points. Yet I also had the privilege of seeing a "Judah," who a number of years after the incomprehensible destruction of Auschwitz and Treblinka, rose and declared: "Your servant took responsibility for the lad." I, your servant, have taken personal responsibility for the collective Jewish community and for every individual Jewish lad. For the following four decades this man, a biological scion of Judah, would not sleep nor allow anyone else to sleep. Single handedly he empowered thousands upon thousands to stop passing the buck, or relieve their conscience by merely making a contribution to a noble cause. He inspired them to take personal responsibility for the welfare, continuity and eternity of the Jewish people. Do not allow "reality," he always taught, to decide the future of the Jewish people. Take responsibility for the lad! Do not rest until every Jewish child the world over is given the opportunity to be liberated from spiritual slavery, from his (or her) subjugation to forces alien to his essence, and, just like Benjamin, to be able to return to his father in heaven. Each year on this Sabbath when I hear the words "Your servant took responsibility

for the lad" read aloud from the Torah scroll, my eyes swell up in tears. In my imagination I still see my Rebbe, his face aglow, teaching for hours, but always culminating with this resounding message: "You and I must take responsibility for the lad!" Do not lament, kvetch, sigh and write a check. Do not organize conferences to analyze all of the problems. Instead, go out of your comfort zone and touch the heart of another person. Build communities, schools, synagogues and yeshivos. Get involved and make a difference in people's lives. Give every Jewish child the gift of a Torah education. Help people get in touch with their Jewish souls and spiritual inheritance. Most of all, care about the other as though he or she was your own brother. "You may have good excuses for your inaction," he would always say, and nobody will blame you." But the bottom line is that after all of your rationalization, the child, Benjamin, will remain enslaved to Egypt and its culture. In our times, often leaderless and aimless, we must make Judah's call our own. "Your servant took responsibility for the lad." So shall we.

KEEP FIGHTING

Rabbi Yechiel Spero

R' Avraham Alter ran a Yeshiva in Chicago for many years. He worked together with Baalei Teshuva. There was one fellow who was straddling the fence for a number of years. R' Avraham very much wanted this fellow to make a commitment. And he told the fellow, "You got to do something. You can't keep wavering." The fellow made a commitment to keep kosher, but he needed one more Superdog. "Superdog" is Nathan's of Chicago. It's the premier hotdog establishment and it's wildly popular. The fellow sat down with his final Superdog, slathered in mustard, covered in sauerkraut. He's about to take a bite and a man in a suit sits down next to him. They start talking. It turns out their kids go to the same school. Our fellow eats his Superdog. As he's eating it, the other guy asks him, "Do you like Superdog?" The fellow says, "Love Superdog. But interestingly, it is my last Superdog." "Really? Why!?" He says, "Because it's financially difficult for me to be able to afford it. Constant hotdogs are taking a toll on my family." And even though it sounded a little bit ridiculous, he didn't want to disclose that he's not going to eat Superdogs because he's starting to keep kosher. Well, the other guy looks at him and says, "That breaks my heart. Here is what I want to do for you. It bothers me that somebody should stop eating Superdogs because of financial considerations. After all, I own Superdog." And he pulls out of his pocket a card. The card says: "This card entitles you to a lifetime supply of free Superdogs."

The fellow runs back to Avraham Alter and says, "What is God trying to tell me? I'm ready to keep kosher and now this?" So R' Alter says to him, "God is trying to tell you that the Yezter Horah is never going to give up. You made a commitment. Well, that commitment is not going to come easy. The Yezter Horah is going to constantly fight with you. All Hashem wants is for you to keep fighting."

The fellow made the commitment and soon kept all Torah and Mitzvos. Today, hanging in his dining room is a framed picture of that card. "Free lifetime supply of Superdog." He knows: every day is a battle, but that is all the Ribono Shel Olam wants from us - to keep on fighting.

Why do We Fast On Asara B'Teves



Tuesday Dec. 18

The fast of Asara b'Teves ("the 10th of Teves") is unique when compared to the other fast days that are mentioned in the Prophets. For example, exclusive to this fast is that it is the only one that we do actually observe as a fast on a Friday. Next time this happens is in 2020). Even Tisha B'Av, which commemorates the actual destructions of our Batei HaMikdash, gets pushed off. Another unique distinction is that when it comes to Asara b'Teves there is the unique opinion brought down by the Avudraham that even if Asara b'Teves would fall on Shabbas we would observe the fast on that day just as we would for Yom Kippur (see Beis Yosef, Orach Chaim 550). The reason for this is because the pasuk in Yechezkel (24:2) that describes Asara b'Teves says "b'etzem hayom hazeh," on this very day, indicating that an integral component of the fast is that it occurs on this very day. What is it about the fast of the tenth of Teves that sets it apart from the other fast days?

What is this Fast about

The reason given for fasting on Asarah B'Teves is that it is the day that the wicked Babylonian king Nevuchadnetzar started his siege of Yerushalayim, signifying the beginning of the end of the first Beis Hamikdash, which culminated with its destruction on Tisha B'Av several years later. Therefore, Chazal declared it a public fast, one of four public fast days that memorialize different aspects of the catastrophes and national tragedies associated with the destruction of both Batei HaMikdash.

Three Day Fast?

According to the special Selichos prayers said on the fast, a unique aspect of Asarah B'Teves is that we are actually fasting for two other days of tragedy as well; the 8th and 9th of Teves. In fact, both the Tur and Shulchan Aruch declare that if possible one should try to fast on all three days..

The 8th of Teves

On the 8th of Teves, King Ptolemy II (285 - 246 B.C.E.) forced 72 sages separately to translate the Torah into Greek (the Septuagint). Although miracles guided their work and all of the sages made the same slight but necessary modifications, nevertheless this work is described as "darkness descending on the world for three days", and the world was dark for three days" (SA OC 480:2 from Megillat Taanit). Another source states that the day that Ptolemy first had the Torah translated into Greek was as harsh to Israel as the day the Golden Calf was made (Soferim 1:7, Sefer Torah 1:6) The reason for this is that it was now possible for the uneducated to possess a superficial, and frequently flawed understanding of the Torah, as well as providing the masses with a mistaken interpretation of true morality.

The 9th of Teves

Many sources, including the Kol Bo and the Selichos recited on Asarah B'Teves, as well as many later authorities, explain that this is the day on which Ezra HaSofer (as well as possibly his partner Nechemiah) died. Ezra, the Gadol HaDor at the beginning of the time of the Second Beis HaMikdash, had a tremendous impact upon the returning Jewish community of Eretz Yisrael. He drastically improved the spiritual state of the Jewish people and established many halachic takanos, many of which still apply today. With his passing, the community started descending from the great spiritual heights Ezra had led them. Additionally, since Ezra was the last of the prophets, his passing signified the end of prophecy.

The Sefer HaToda'ah suggests that it's possible that "the darkness descended on the world for three days" alludes to the triple afflictions of these three days: the 8th, 9th, and 10th of Teves.

The Chasam Sofer (Toras Moshe, drasha l'zayin Adar) says that historically, on Asara b'Teves, the bes din shel ma'alah, the Heavenly court, was adjudicating the matter

regarding the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. It was on this day that the final verdict of its destruction was agreed upon, and it was then that the siege surrounding Yerushalayim began. However, this wasn't a one-time event. Every year on the tenth of Teves the Heavenly court reassembles and reassesses whether the Beit Hamikdash will be destroyed, as we are told that every generation in which the Beit Hamikdash is not rebuilt is as if it was destroyed in that generation (Yerushalmi, Yoma 1:1).

He adds, that, conversely, a proper fast on Asarah B'Teves has the potential to avert future Churbanos. We are not fasting exclusively due to past calamities, but rather, similar to a Taanis Chalom, a fast for a dream, to help prevent a tragedy from occurring. [He even refers to such a fast as an oneg, a delight.] That is why the fast of Asarah B'Teves, even though it is considered a minor fast, nonetheless has the potential to possibly override Shabbos. These explanations would also certainly elucidate why we would fast on a Friday for Asarah B'Teves.

The Rambam says: There are days on which all Jews fast because of the calamities that befell them. This is in order to awaken the hearts and open the ways of repentance, and to serve as a reminder of our evil deeds and the evil deeds of our fathers that were similar to our deeds that caused them and us those calamities. Through this reminder we will repent and fix our ways.

In this merit may the words of the Navi Zechariah, "The Fast of the Fourth (month, 17th of Tamuz), the Fast of the Fifth (month, Tisha B'Av), the Fast of the Seventh (month, Tzom Gedalyah), and the Fast of the Tenth (month, Asarah B'Teves) shall be (changed over) for celebration and joy for the household of Yehuda" be fulfilled speedily and in our days.

Fast Begins

5:47 AM dawn 16.1 degrees
or at 6:04 AM dawn fixed 72 minutes
Eating of a settled character
עֵשֶׂה אֲכִילָה קֶבֶע
be started during the half hour immediately preceding dawn.
Please consult your Rabbi for details.

Plag Mincha 3:10
Pelag Hamincha 3:31:52
Shkiah Mincha 4:05
Shkiah (Sunset) 4:29:27

Fast Ends

R' Tukaccinsky

The fast ends no later than the emergence of
ג' כוכבים בנינום at -5:04 PM

R' Moshe Feinstein

One who finds fasting difficult may eat at 5:08 PM
One who does not find fasting difficult should wait until the time for מוצאי שבת at - 5:16 PM

60 Minutes after Shkiah 5:30
72 Minutes after Shkiah 5:42

Excellence in Davening



Shragi Newhouse



PARENTS LOVE CHILDREN

MORE THAN CHILDREN LOVE PARENTS

Rabbi Yissocher Frand

The Shaloh Hakodesh writes a concept (which is also found in secular circles): One parent can take care of ten children but ten children cannot take care of one parent. The Chiddushei HaRim finds a source for this idea in this week's parsha. When Yehudah made his impassioned plea to the Viceroy in Egypt (who he did not yet realize was his brother Yosef) to release Binyamin, he made the argument — "How can you not let him go? If his father finds out that he did not return, he will not be able to survive!" The Chiddushei HaRim points out that at that time, Binyamin had 10 children. Why did Yehudah not use the argument — how can you not let Binyamin go, you will leave 10 orphans, they will not be able to survive without their father? Apparently, says Chiddushei HaRim, 10 children can somehow manage without a father, but a father cannot manage without one of 10 remaining sons.

This concept that a father's attachment to his children is stronger than the children's attachment to their father is the source for the Shaloh's comment and for the similar concept that circulates in the world at large.

This may be an upsetting idea to all of us who are parents, but that is the truth. Our children love us and respect us, etc., but it is not the same

as our love for them. I once saw a very interesting explanation for this phenomenon. Every single human emotion that exists is something we received from Adam, the first human being. Adam had children and therefore he had in him the emotion of a parent's love for his children. However, Adam did not have a father. He is the only person in the history of the world who did not have parents. Consequently, the emotion of love of child for parent was something he did not possess. It was an acquired skill developed in later generations, but it never had the strong genetically passed down roots that existed in the emotion of love towards children, which is innate in our personalities.

For this reason, Yehudah recognized that the stronger argument for the release of Binyamin would be "his father can't survive his loss" rather than "his children will not be able to survive his loss."

The Shemen HaTov uses this concept to interpret a Rashi in our parsha. The last part of Pasuk 29 in Perek 46 is very ambiguous. The pasuk reads: "Yosef harnessed his chariot and went up to meet Yisrael his father to Goshen; and he appeared to him, fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively." Who appeared to whom? Rashi says that Yosef is the subject and Yaakov is the object in this sentence. Yosef appeared to Yaakov. How does Rashi know this? Why was Rashi so sure that the interpretation is not that Yaakov appeared to Yosef?

The Shemen HaTov explains, based on the earlier stated concept, that the emotion of Yosef appearing to Yaakov was far more dramatic and powerful than the emotion of Yaakov appearing to Yosef. The love of parent to child is much deeper, much more profound, much more intense and innate than the reverse relationship. Therefore, the Torah emphasizes the more dramatic of the two relationships in this reunion: Yosef appeared to his father.

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WHEN IN PRINT IT IS FOR GENERATIONS



7 Menachem Av 5707 - 1947
To conclude with the words of [our] master:
 My revered father-in-law*,
 the Rebbe Shlita, writes

in one of his letters: "The Tzemach Tzedek states: 'A word spoken is public knowledge; in writing, it is for generations upon generations....'"

==== Rebbe letter addressed to the Chassid in charge of printing Sifrei Chassidus in Germany after WWII.

* The Rebbe, referring to his father-in-law, the Rebbe RaYyatz, 6th Chabad Rebbe.

Hey Teves DIDAN NATZACH! When the Judge proclaimed that the Seforim belong to Agudas-Chasisei-Chabad -5 Teves 5747 -1987.

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ונוב"י תנינא אר"ח (סי' ע"ו) שנימא אעל"מ ואמאי לוקה? י) וחולין בעזרה וקדשים בחוץ נימא אעל"מ וצ"ב?
 ג.) והמלך בסוגיא זאת מגדולי האחרונים ג.) הג"ר אלחנן בקו"ה (סי' ע"ד), שר"ל שכל הדין דאעל"מ היינו דווקא אם עצם האיסור נמי בעצם חלות כמו כהן שנשא גרושה וכדומה, אבל גבי שחיטה באיסור ומלאכת שבת שהקפידה רק בעצם חפצא דמעשה, ל"א האי כללא דאעל"מ. ולפי"ז מיושב רוב הקושיות, גבי שוחט בשבת, וכן בשוחט בסכין של ע"ז, ואתו את בנן, ושוחט בחוץ, וכן חולין בעזרה, וכן מוכר בשבת, וכן קורע בשבת, וכן בשוחט במחשבת פיגול, כל אלו עצם האיסור הוא במעשה גופא, ולא בחלות וממילא ל"א אעל"מ וא"ש.

ה.) אבל קושיה ט') מבי"ב ובי"ב במעשה קנין ה.) עוד צ"ב? וכן קושיה ו') עוד צ"ב בהולכת זה ובעזרת החונן לאדם דעת אשתדל ליישב ראשון ראשון. וזה קושיה הבית אפרים בהא דפסק הר"מ (פ"א מהל' חו"מ פ"ג) שהגם שכשיש לו חמץ בבית עובר בב"י וב"י, אבל להתחייב מלקות צריך דווקא שיעשה מעשה קנין וע"ז הקשה לפי רבא שיעשה מעשה קנין לקי הא איעביד ל"מ, ולא יחול עצם מעשה הקנין? ונ"ל בזה להקדים ע"פ עוד קושיה בדעת הר"מ, דהא ילפינן מלא תחסום דדווקא לאו שיש בו מעשה לוקין היינו אם עצם המימרא דרחמנא היא לא לעשות מעשה מסויים אבל אם יש בזה מין הכשיר לאו, אי"ז נחשב לאו שיש בו מעשה היא וצ"ב? וע"ז בי' מו"ר הג"ר צבי פרצוביץ ע"פ מה שידוע מאביו הג"ר נחום פרצוביץ זצוק"ל, שחוץ ממה שהלאו דב"י וב"י הוא דין שלא יהיה לו חמץ, כלול בזה נמי שיש איסור קיום חמץ והיי' שהתורה נתנה דין ד"תשבייתו, ואם לאו יעבור על ב"י וב"י ולפי"ז, יוצא שמהות הלאו דב"י וב"י נובע מהאי השבתה, אע"כ י"ל נמי בדעת הר"מ שמצד מה שהוא עושה מעשה קנין עובר בקו"ע על לאו דב"י וב"י ע"י האי השבתה, וע"כ ס"ל לרמב"ם שלוקה. ה.) ולפי"ז מובן נמי מה שהיקשו על הר"מ ה.) (פ"א הל' חגיגה ה"א) וכן (מפ"ז הל' גניבה ה"ג) ולנ"ל א"ש שחלוק בעצם אופן האיסור וא"ש. ונחזור לקושיה הבית אפרים דנימא אעל"מ, ולנ"ל הגם שיש ריח איסור בעצם מעשה שהוא עושה שעובר באי השבתה, אעפ"כ יש עוד נקודה וזה דכל הדין דאעל"מ דווקא אם יש בזה מילתא דאמר רחמנא, והכא ליכא ממי' ל"א האי כללא דאעל"מ וא"ש. ואגב לפי"ז יישבתי בספרי אש דוד ח"א ענין אה"נ קושיה נוב"י תנינא (סי' ע"ו) מדעת המ"מ (פי"ג שכירות ה"ב) בהא דפסק הר"מ לא תחסום בקול לוקין, והא הי לאו שאין בו מעשה, וע"ז בי' כל ששייך ע"י מעשה נמי לוקין וא"כ אמאי צריך מעשה קנין? ולנ"ל א"ש דזהו דווקא אם הזלבה (אותו) איסור עובר ע"י מעשה וממי' כל שלא ציוותה התורה בעצם מעשה דלא אמר תורה "לא תקנה" ל"א האי כללא וא"ש.



ראש ישיבה

בדין שוחט בשבת ויום הכיפורים

א.) תנן השוחט בשבת וביום הכיפורים אע"פ א. [שמתחייב בנפשו שחיטתו כשרה עכ"ל המשנה. והקשו בזה גדולי האחרונים דמ"ט לא פסלינן השחיטה מטעם אעל"מ, כיון שנעשה באיסור שבת, ולשיטת הרמב"ם ספירוש המשניות דמיירי בשוגג ניחא, והרבה תירוצים נאמרו ע"ז עכ"ל המהרצ"ח.
 ב.) קודם שנקדים להסביר יסודות בסוגיא ב.) דאעל"מ, נראה להקדים עוד כמה קושיות שהעירו בזה רבותינו, א) הא דשוחט בשבת כשר נימא אעל"מ? ב) אמאי בעי קרא למיפסל שוחט במחשבת פיגול נימא אעל"מ? ג) השוחט חולין בעזרה נימא אעל"מ? ד) שוחט אותו ואת בנו נימא אעל"מ? ה) לפי הרא"ש והש"ך שבדיעבד מועיל שוחט בסכין של ע"ז בהמה מסוכנת והא נימא אעל"מ? ו) היקשה רע"א זבחים (טו): שבעי קרא למעוטי הולכת זר והא נימא אעל"מ? ז) הא דשו"ט בב"ק (ע): אם עושה מכירה ומחלל שבת שיפטר מדין קלב"מ הא נימא אעל"מ? ח) וכן הקורע מדין אבילותו בשבת נימא אעל"מ ויקרע שנית? ט) הר"מ (פ"א מהל' חו"מ ה"ג) פסק שקונה חמץ בפסח לוקה משום ב"י וב"י, והקשו בשו"ת בית אפרים חאו"ח (סי' מ"א)

המשך יבוא

JOKES

Airline Security Drawings

As I'm standing at the airport security line , I see they have a little sign with pictures of things you are not allowed to bring on the plane. And they have, like, little drawings: circle, line through it, No! One of the things you can't bring on the plane anymore is a bomb -- no, no, they had a picture, can't do it. And it was the classic cartoon bomb, like the bowling ball with the little sparky whip coming out of it. And then you might think, Oh, I got a way around that. Uh-uh, not so fast -- they also had a picture of the bundle of dynamite with the clock

Only 25 cents!

One night a man was walking homewards when a thief jumped on him all of a sudden. Man and the thief were caught in a terrific tussle. They rolled about on the ground, and the man put up a tremendous fight, until at last the thief managed to get the better of him and pinned him to the ground. The thief then went through the man's pockets and searched him all over. There was only a 25-cents coin he could lay

his hands on.

The thief was so surprised at this that he asked the man why he had bothered to fight so hard just for a 25-cents.

"Was that all you wanted?" said the man, "I thought you were after the five-hundred dollars I've got in my shoe!"

"Driving with one headlight isn't very bright."

English School

Donald MacDonald from Scotland went to study at an English university and was living in the hall of residence with all the other students there. After he had been there a month, his mother came to visit him

"And how do you find the English students, Donald?" she asked.

"Mother," he replied, "they're such terrible, noisy people. The one on that side keeps banging his head on the wall and won't stop. The one on the other side screams and screams all night."

"Oh Donald! How do you manage to put up

with these awful noisy English neighbors?"

"Mother, I do nothing. I just ignore them. I just stay here quietly, playing my bagpipes."

Japanese Food

An American businessman goes to Japan on a business trip, but he hates Japanese food, so he asks the concierge at his hotel if there's any place around where he can get American food. The concierge tells him he's in luck, there's a pizza place that just opened, and they deliver. The concierge gives the businessman the phone number, and he goes back to his room and orders a pizza.

Thirty minutes later, the delivery guy shows up to the door with the pizza. The businessman takes the pizza, and starts sneezing uncontrollably. He asks the delivery man, "What the Heck did you put on this pizza?" The delivery man bows deeply and says, "We put on the pizza what you ordered, pepper only."



~Night Kolloel~

RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

USING CHANUKAH CANDLES THAT CONTAIN BASAR B'CHOLOV

Using Chanukah candles that contain basar b'cholov

As we bid farewell to the yom tov of Chanukah, I would like to wrap up the shiur that I gave at the night kolloel, on the topic: "Using Chanukah candles that contain basar b'cholov."

We discussed that there is a machlokes if candles which have in them basar b'cholov can be used to light on Chanukah. The reason not to is because of the halachic concept of kesusei michtas shiurei. This means that something that is supposed to be burnt, to some extent is already considered halachically burnt and does not have the proper shiur.

However, the Aruch Hashulchan (673:5) allows it to be used. He explains that the concept of kesusei michtas shiurei is only in regards to something which has to be a certain size, such as a lulav. If it is burnt into ashes, it is no longer the proper size needed for the mitzvah. However, in regards to the candle or the oil, there is no halachah that it needs to be all together as one unit, and therefore the fact that is burnt will not be an issue.

"COOKING" A CANDLE WITH BASAR B'CHOLOV

There is another question discussed by the Acharonim. Besides the issue of deriving benefit, it should be forbidden for another reason. As we already discussed, it is forbidden to cook basar b'cholov, even if one has no intention to consume the food or even derive from it any benefit. That being the case, maybe it should be forbidden to use such a candle, because when lighting the candle, he is burning the basar b'cholov – which is in essence a form of bishul.

The Acharonim explain that this is not an issue for a number of reasons:

EIN BISHUL ACHAR BISHUL

Since the candle was already cooked,

burning it – which is equivalent to cooking it again – is allowed according to many poskim, because of the halachic concept, known as "ein bishul achar bishul," once something is cooked it cannot be cooked again. However, others rule that even this is not allowed.

FRYING

Even if there is a problem of bishul achar bishul, burning a candle does not have the halachic status of cooking, rather of frying, which is only asur midrabanan. Rama (Y"D 87:1) writes that Chazal only did not allow the consumption of meat and milk that were fried together. However, there is no issur to derive benefit from the mixture. In addition, Rav Akiva Eiger (Y"D 87:3) points out that they did not even forbid frying meat and milk. Hence, there is no issue with frying a candle of basar b'cholov.

BURNED

The Shaarei Teshuva (673:1) mentions another reason. He quotes the Shevus Yaakov (1:38), who writes that the issur of cooking basar b'cholov is the cooked meat and milk can be eaten. However, if it is burned and destroyed there is no issur.

MUTAR BIFICHA

There is one more issue to discuss in regards to a candle or oil that is not kosher for consumption. There is a halacha when it comes to tefillin, that it must be made from a kosher animal's hide – something that is mutar bificha – kosher for consumption. This is based on a pasuk "bificha," mentioned in regards to tefillin.

Is this a halacha only for tefilin or does it apply to other mitzvos, as well? In Hilchos Shofar, the Shulchan Aruch writes that one must use a horn from a kosher animal. The Mishna Berura, there writes that it is not so simple and others rule that it is allowed.

What about for Chanukah? This is in fact a machlokes. The Maharsham in a teshuva

and in his sefer Daas Torah writes that it is allowed. He explains that this is because when it comes to something which is only asur m'dirabanan, there is no rule of mutar bificha. However, Rav Shlomo Kluger rules that it is a problem even by an issur dirabanan.

So we have a machlokes if one can use these candles. Bidi'eved – if one did use it, the Pri megadim (Pesicha) and the Maharsham rule that one has fulfilled the mitzvah.

SUMMARY

Candles of basar b'cholov cannot be used for light throughout the year. On Chanukah it is a machlokes. And it is not considered cooking the candle.

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RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

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ב"ט

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Gemarah Pesachim
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