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Rabbi YY Jacobson
will be in town
for Shabbos

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845-356-2273
77 Route 59, Monsey, NY
In front of Evergreen Shopping Center

חזק חזק ונתחזק



PIRKEI AVOT CH 1, MISHNA 2.

Questions for Discussion:

שמעון הצדיק היה משיירי כנסת הגדולה על שלושה דברים העולם עומד, על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים. הוא היה אומר:

"Shimon the Righteous was among the last surviving members of the Great assembly. He would say: The world stands on three things: Torah, the service of G-d, and deeds of kindness."

1) Shimon the righteous was among the last surviving member of the Great Assembly, why is it important to know he was the last? If it is a message that only pertained to then and not now, why is it necessary? If it pertained to now as do all the lessons of Perki Avot, how does this detail enhance the meaning of this message? Is he different than the rest of the members of the great assembly? If so why did he change the message? The term Members of the Great Assembly was special because they were many that came as one. Being the last individual of the Great Assembly doesn't give him a special title. Being a Kohen Gadol and a great person in his own merit would be a proper title, rather than a title that does not belong to an individual.

2) In Mishna 18 "Rabbi Shimon the son of Gamliel would say: By three things is the world sustained: law, truth and peace." As is stated (Zachariah 8:16), "Truth, and a judgement of peace, you should administer at your [city] gates." The last Mishna in the chapter speaks of 3 things the world sustained and here the Mishna speaks 3 things the world stands upon. What is the difference between standing and sustaining? Why is there different ways of supporting the world? If one of the 3 is correct why do we need the other? And if we really need six items to hold up the world then isn't both of the Mishnayot incorrect?

3) The term Gemilat Chasadim doesn't fit in, why not just say Chesed? When the Mishna states Torah and Avoda it doesn't say the study of Torah or describes the action of Avoda? The Torah uses the term "Oseh Chesed Le'alafim" and not the term "Gomel Chesed" so why use it here? What does the term Gomel mean?

4) What is the difference Between Tzadaka and Chesed? Hashem chose the descendants of Avraham because of they will follow the ways of Tzadaka and not because of Chesed. Here we see that the world won't stand without Chesed so why did Hashem not choose us because of our ability to do chesed?

5) There seems to be many messages connecting to three things. What is the significance to the number three?

6) The Mishna selected three things the world stands. Why wasn't the mitzvah of Brit Mila included as it is written (Yirmiya 33-25 and the Talmud in Nedarim 31a) "the greatness of Brit Mila that if not for it Hashem would not of created this world." Every Mitzvah is important but the creation of the world and Brit Mila are bounded together. Why is Brit not part of the three items the world cannot stand without?

Shabbat Shalom
Aaron Lankry



NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY

1:29, 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, 3:30

PLAG EREV SHABBOS 6:35 (SHITTAS HAGEONIM)
THE SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 263:4) WRITES THAT ONE MAY LIGHT Candles AND ACCEPT SHABBOS STARTING AT PLAG HAMINCHA

SHABBOS ZMANIM

CANDLE LIGHTING	7:46 ^{PM}
MINCHA ^{ALEF TENT}	7:00 ^{PM}
MINCHA ^{BAIS CHABAD}	7:56 ^{PM}
SHKIYA	8:04 ^{PM}
SHACHRIS ^{VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR}	5:09 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS ^{ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN}	8:00 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN ^{18 TENT}	9:15 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS ^{20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD}	10:00 ^{AM}
NEW SHACHRIS ^{18 FORSHAY}	NEW 10:15 ^{AM}
PIRCHEI	2:00 ^{PM}
PIRKEI AVOS PEREK HEH	
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	7:45 ^{PM}
SHKIYA	8:05 ^{PM}
MARRIV	8:45 ^{PM} ^{18 TENT} , 8:50 ^{PM}

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS

20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ

S 5:19 M 5:18 T 5:17 W 5:16 T 5:16 F 5:15

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 6:23 M 6:24 T 6:25 W 6:26 T 6:26

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 7:53 M 7:54 T 7:55 W 7:56 T 7:57

MAY 14 - MAY 19

NEITZ IS 5:39 - 5:35

PELAG IS 6:35 - 6:38

SHKIA IS 8:05 - 8:09

MAGEN AVRAHAM

8:40 - 8:38 AM

GRA- BAAL HATANYA

9:16 - 9:14 AM

Rabbi Aaron Lankry
Marah D'asra

305-332-3311 | alankry@yahoo.com

Rabbi Daniel Coren

דובני'ג - מנודי שיעור

914-645-4199 | rabbidac@gmail.com

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

Rabbinic Coordinator,
Rosh Kollel, Kollel Boker & Night Kollel

845-587-3462 | rabbisheiner@18forshay.com

Shmuelie Fruchter

Manager

845-587-3462 ext 4 | manager@18forshay.com



RABBI COREN

PARSHAS BEHAR BECHUKOSAI

A Lesson In Kiddush Hashem

One of the greatest lessons I learned from Rav Noach Weinberg z"l is the importance of defining our terms. If we are unable to define what Kiddush Hashem means, we are probably not going to harness the opportunity of this great and sometimes grave Mitzva.

In this week's Parsha, the Torah instructs us to redeem our 'brother' especially by a non-Jew. Rashi explains that when the Torah directs us to make a calculation with a non-Jew based on the number of years remaining until the Yovel, we must always be honest. In fact, Rashi emphasizes that in every situation that we do business with a non-Jew, we must be upright and trustworthy. Otherwise, it's a Chilul Hashem.

Let's try to better understand this concept as it pertains to many situations in life which we may not be aware of because of important information we are not familiar with.

Last week in Parshas Emor where the main source of the mitzva of Kiddush Hashem is quoted, I mentioned a very interesting insight brought down by Reb Baruch Eliyahu Finkel Z"L. Rav Finkel posits that when one finds himself with the opportunity to die al Kiddush Hashem he should first recite the blessing Asher kideshanu.....lekadesh Shem shamayim barabim. He adds an interesting point. If the Jew, for whatever reason, changes his mind he doesn't have to worry that a bracha levatala has been uttered. The mitzvah is not 'to die al Kiddush Hashem' but rather to 'give oneself over' to die Al Kiddush Hashem.

This concept of Kiddush Hashem isn't very far from our daily life. The Gemara in Sota 34 tells us that Yosef Hatzadik was mekadash Hashem when he didn't sin in Egypt with the wife of Potifar. The Rambam in Yesodai Hatrah based on this Gemara writes that anytime a person is about to do an aveira or a mitzva and has in mind to do or not to do the action not for an ulterior motive, but rather because this is what Hashem wants, he has not been Mekadesh Hashem. It dawned on me that as a life application, every time we are presented with the challenge to transgress or to do a mitzva we should think about reciting the Bracha quoted above because as the Rambam informs us, by doing so, we would actually be performing a Makadesh Hashem. It may not be in front of ten Jews but It's still considered a Kiddush Hashem.

Perhaps the best definition of Kiddush Hashem is that it is the act of designating a time, place or person for a greater awareness of Hashem.

What then is the greatest expression and fulfillment of Kiddush Hashem? I think this fulfillment emerges when we try to be like Hashem by emulating His ways and following His instructions as written in the Torah, especially those that validate themselves in the perfection of our middos. Whenever we are slower to respond to a situation or person with anger or we offer extra kindness, we are performing an act of Kiddush Hashem.

Based on the above, we can understand why every opportunity we encounter to interact with non-Jews is an opportunity of Kiddush Hashem.

Have a good Shabbas



RABBI STEINFELD

Neviim and Mitzvos

The Torah tells us in Vayikra 27:34 that these are the mitzvos that Moshe commanded Bnei Yisroel on Har Sinai. The Gemara in Shabbos 104a and Megillah 2b tells us that Chazal learn out from the above posuk that a Navi is not able to command any new mitzvos. All the mitzvos were given to Moshe Rabbeinu and anything thereafter is not one of the mitzvos. A Navi is unable to be mechadesh any new mitzvos.

The Rambam in Hilchos Melachim 3:8 paskens that if a Jew rebels against a Jewish king, the king has a right to kill him. We learn this from the posuk in Yehoshua 1:18 that says that any person who will rebel against Yehoshua shall be put to death. If you analyze the posuk it sounds like this is something that Klal Yisroel were mekabel upon themselves. In the Sefer Hamitzvos of the Rambam, mitzvah 173 the Rambam says that if one is over on the command of the king, it is proper and permissible for the king to kill him. This sounds like it is not a command, but rather something the Yidden accepted upon themselves.

In the Shailos U'tshuvos Chasam Sofer 208 the Chasam Sofer says that we do not find it stated anywhere in all five sefarim of the Torah that a king is allowed to kill someone. Yet Yehoshua uses the words, "Al pi Hashem" when he writes that someone rebelling can be put to death. How could a navi make a new mitzvah? The Chasam Sofer ends off that this question requires a lot of deep thought, but he does provide an answer.

One could try to answer the question by saying that we find many times in Shas that the Gemara asks the question how could a navi be mechadesh something? The Gemara answers in many places that there were many halachos and different things that the Yidden forgot during the time they mourned for Moshe Rabbeinu and the navi re-established it. We find this concerning a lot of hilchos kehuna that we learn from the Sefer Yechezkel. We say that it was

forgotten and then re-established by the Navi Yechezkel. Here too, we might say that it was forgotten and re-established by Yehoshua.

We could argue and differentiate that anything told by the navi in a commanding way is probably a mitzvah in the Torah that was forgotten and the navi re-established it. In the event that the navi says it in story form and not in a commanding form, then we won't say that it was forgotten and re-established. This is the reason why the Chasam Sofer asked the question since what Yehoshua said was not a command, but rather something said in story form that the Jews accepted upon themselves about a king being able to kill someone who rebels. This is why the question applies; how could the Navi be mechadesh something like that?

We could answer that the fact that the king could kill someone is not a new mitzvah or an addition to a mitzvah since in that case it would be forbidden for a navi to make a new mitzvah. In the case where the Torah says something but does not explain it, then the navi is able to explain what the Torah meant. An example of this would be that we find that the Torah uses the word "veshinantam" (it should be clear) regarding the mitzvah of learning Torah. The Navi Yehoshua explains this as meaning "vehagisa," you shall be busy with-it day and night. This is even though Min Hatorah if one just says Shema in the morning and night one is yetzei the mitzvah of Talmud Torah. We see that the navi was able to explain what the Torah meant. The same concept applies regarding a king. The laws of the melech are brought in Sefer Shmuel; we don't say that the Navi is mechadesh, it is just explaining what the Torah did not say fully in Parshas Shoftim. Here too, we say Yehoshua is not saying something new, but rather elaborating what the Torah meant with the appointment of a king.

May we be zocheh to see the "Melech Moshiach" speedily in our days.



RABBI REISMAN

The Brochos of Shemittah Today

In the Ayeles Hashachar on page # 199, Rav Shteinman writes the following. There is a promise in the Parsha that if one keeps the Shemittah he will have a crop which is abundant to cover the Shemittah year. The SMA in Choshen Mishpat Siman 67:2 writes that this applies only when Shemittah was D'oraissa. But Bizman Hazeah that Shemittah is D'rabbanan this promise does not apply.

The Chazon Ish in Sefer Chazon Ish disagrees and he says that it applies today as well. Rav Shteinman writes that although in all likelihood the Halacha should be like this SMA, today we see that farmers do have an extra Beracha when they keep the Shemittah. Why is that so? Says Rav Shteinman it is because of the promise of the Chazon Ish, the Gizaira of the Chazon Ish. Even if we hold like the SMA and the Parsha is only referring to Shemitta D'oraissa but because the Chazon Ish held that it applied to Shemitta D'rabbanan too, Min Hashamayim it applies to Shemittah D'rabbanan.

It reminds one of Rav Hutner's Vort. He said that the Rambam says that Shaidim don't exist. Of course Shaidim exist like most Rishonim hold. But once the Rambam Paskens that Shaidim doesn't exist so the Shaidim make like they don't exist. What a sharp Vort! Something to give us an insight into K'vod Talmidei Chachamim.

Understanding the blessing of Shemittah

We find in Parshas Bichukosai before the Tochacha words of Chizuk the wonderful things that will take place as it says in 26:3 (אם-בהקתיו, תלכו; ואת-מצורתי תשקרו) We find in reference to Shemittah as well a promise of good things happening as it says in 26:5 (ואכלתם להמכם לשבע) In the case of Shemittah many Meforshim ask the following question. Rashi says on (ואכלתם להמכם לשבע) that

(והוא מתברך במעיו) that there will be a blessing that you will eat a little and you will be satisfied.

The Meforshim question why is this Beracha necessary as after all we were already promised that if we keep the Shemittah that there will be an abundance of Tevua. There will be enough Tevua for 3 years. If so, why do we need (אוכל) (קמעא והוא מתברך במעיו) that we will eat a little and be satisfied, we will be wealthy and will have plenty of Tevua?

I would like to share with you a Teretz from the Igros Moshe. Rav Moshe in the Igros Moshe in Yoreh Dai'a Cheilek 3 Siman 71 offers an explanation. The question was if you are already going to be blessed with plenty then why is it necessary to be blessed with (אוכל) (קמעא והוא מתברך במעיו). Rav Moshe makes a very important remark. He says that even if a person is wealthy he is better off not changing his lifestyle, still living in a simple life. (אוכל קמעא והוא מתברך במעיו). Even though the person will have plenty of Tevua, he will not need to spend that extra plenty. The small amount that he spends when he wasn't wealthy will be adequate for him. This is a very important Beracha. We live in a generation where more and more people have more and more assets and become wealthier and wealthier and they don't become happier. This is because as they become wealthier their lifestyle and needs change. Says Rav Moshe, even if you have plenty still (אוכל קמעא והוא מתברך במעיו) eat a small amount that you had until now and be satisfied and that is a true blessing. It is a challenge. When you find yourself saying that now I can afford this let me move up and get a fancier car or a fancier vacation, don't let it happen to you it is a trap. It is a quicksand trap. A trap into which a person sinks and strangely enough as he makes more and more money he finds that the money he has is less and less adequate for his needs. Be an Ochel Kim'a Umisbarach B'maiaiv.

What We Do,

We do for Ourselves

By now, we're all familiar with the "Gig Economy."

Our community got there years ago- it's making a living doing Amazon, being the master of your own fate, setting your own schedule- a business owner, genY style.

B"H, Ten o'clock Shachris everywhere has long been filled with these types.

We relish, of course, being the masters of our own fate, if we can, in our daily grind and family situations. Continually striving to find a balance, to be great parents and productive members of society, is the dream of anyone who has ever worked. We "work" on ourselves as well, our middos, our relationship. We all live pressured lives. It's an avodah to uncover the feelings of our children (How was your day? good.) getting them to share seems daunting - but are they to blame. They lead both overexposed and overdriven lives.

The kings and queens of our castle, we sometimes need to take some time off. Hey, money's not everything. We must connect, share and love. If not now, when?

Shmuel was an accomplished tradesman, a master carpenter, working long days for good. Personable and intelligent, his company held on to him, with two hands. He was an employee worth his proverbial weight in gold.

Shmuel was bothered by the fact that life was passing him by and what's more he didn't see an end to it.

One day he decided, enough of this. After careful discussion with his wife, it was figured out that they could live well enough on their savings and investments, for a long time.

Shmuel's boss was understanding enough..he saw that there was no convincing him, though he tried mightily.

"I just have one more request, it's a big job, take you a long time, it's tedious but I need you to take it on for me.

It's out of town, in a beautiful section...it'll take you a while

to get there but.. Please."

Shmuel was downright peeved.. C'mon, that's what they give me when I give them notice after so many faithful years!!

Begrudgingly, he took the job.. But the days turned into nights and the weeks to months.. And Shmuel did something he never did before, he cut corners, They looked for shortcuts.. Shortcuts that were sorely lacking in quality and even safety.

At the end of the project Shmuel's bosses revealed their true intentions.

"You worked so hard for us, so faithfully all these years, we want to thank you. The beautiful house that you built- we want to give it to you and your family as a token of our appreciation!!

So many times in the day we have a choice to make. Should we do the responsible thing at work, in our homes.. In our religious practices.

Oy, if we only knew that all that we are doing here in this life will help us, not only in this world but in the world to come. Would we not change our actions?

They say it's getting harder and harder to find good employees. This is the age of instant gratification and overnight millionaires- and everybody wants in.

But accountability; watching our actions, responsibility; making sure we work hard- completing all tasks 100%, not 90% and ownership; owning up to our mistakes and working as if we owned the company, seem to be forgotten traits.

Successful people will tell you that they got where they did, by working hard.. Period.

The mitzvos we do, we do for ourselves.

Let's not fall into the trap of not taking our lives seriously.

Good Shabbos!

Weekly article written by R' Avrohom Hillel Reich based on a lesson and a story by Harav Ben Tziyon Sneh



PARSHAS BEHAR BECHUKOSAI

What is the Connection Between Shemita and Shabbos?

"וידבר ד' אל משה בהר סיני לאמר" 25:1

"Hakodosh Boruch Hu spoke to Moshe on Har Sinai", regarding the laws of Shemita. Rashi - What is the connection between Shemita and Har Sinai? We learn from this that just as all of the general rules and details of Shemita were stated at Har Sinai, so too with all of the Mitzvos, its general laws and details were all stated on Har Sinai. Why did the Torah choose the Mitzvah of Shemita to teach this to us? The Torah could have used a different Mitzvah and said "on Har Sinai" and we would have learned this rule from that Mitzvah.

The reason for the Mitzvah of Shemita is so that Klal Yisroel should learn Torah. The other six years they need to work their vineyards and their fields. In the seventh year, they put aside all of their worries of providing sustenance and learn Torah full time. They have full Bitachon that Hakodosh Boruch Hu will provide for them. (מגלה עמוקות)

Shammai Hazaken would eat every day L'kovod Shabbos. If he came across a superior animal, he would say this is for Shabbos. If he would then come across one of even greater quality, he would eat the first one during the week and set aside the better one for Shabbos. Hillel Hazaken, on the other hand, acted differently. All of his actions were L'shem Shomayim. He did not put away for Shabbos. He had Bitachon that Hashem would provide for him on Shabbos as well as during the week. Why didn't Hillel put away for Shabbos Kodesh? Hillel's whole week was L'shem Shomayim. When Shabbos came, it was a Shabbos of the highest level. By elevating his

Shabbos, he elevated his week so that he kept the Neshama Yeseira of Shabbos. It was because he had this Neshama Yeseira even during the week, that he ate whatever Hakodosh Boruch Hu provided him for that day. His whole week was a week of Kedusha. (שו"ת יד אליהו)

Shemita and Shabbos are times for Klal Yisroel to focus on the Torah Hakdosha. Shabbos must be utilized for Ruchniyos. We must work the whole week in anticipation of Shabbos. If we treat Shabbos properly, Shabbos can be part of our lives every day of the week. Shemita, like Shabbos, is a time to dedicate to the Ribbono Shel Olam. We may not have a lot of time to learn Torah, however we need to make the time that we learn the Torah Hakdosha the most important part of our lives. By putting aside all of our other responsibilities and learning the Torah, we are demonstrating that the Ribbono Shel Olam runs the world, and all that we have is from Him. The reason that the Torah chose the Mitzvah of Shemita to teach us about all other Mitzvos is because that is the way to perform all Mitzvos. When one stops his work for Shabbos and Shemita, he does not worry about his needs in this world. He relies on Hakodosh Boruch Hu. So too by all Mitzvos, we must not be concerned about external factors that we may perceive as a negative side effect of doing a Mitzvah. If we follow the will of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, He will take care of us. Moreover, we see from Shemita and Shabbos that not only will we be "taken care of" by the Ribbono Shel Olam for the amount of effort that we put into the Mitzvah, the Mitzvos that we perform will give us in return more than our efforts



RABBI BEN ZION SNEH

פרשת בהר בחוקתי.

היה היה נגר מבוגר שהחליט לפרוש מעבודתו. הוא פנה למעסיק שלו, ותיאר תוכניותיו לפרוש מעסקי בניית הבתים במטרה ליהנות ולבלות במחיצת אשתו ומשפחתו המורחבת. למרות הצער הכרוך בהפסד הכנסה, הוא הסביר כי זה הצעד הנכון עבורו. המעסיק שהצטער מאד למשמע בקשת העובד המצטיין שלו, ביקש ממנו כטובה אישית לבנות רק עוד בית אחד נוסף. הנגר הסכים, אך לא היה קשה להבחין, הוא שליבו יוצא אל החופש והוא לא מרוכז בעבודה. הוא השתמש בחומרים פשוטים והעבודה בכללותה היתה באיכות נמוכה. זו בפירוש לא הייתה הדרך לחתום קריירה של מצוינות. כאשר סיים הנגר את מלאכתו, הגיע המעסיק אל הבית, העניק לנגר מפתח לדלת הכניסה ואמר לו: "זהה הבית שלך, זו המתנה שאני נותן לך".

הנגר המזועזע אמר בקול שקט: "לו רק הייתי יודע שהבית הזה מיועד לי הייתי עושה הכל בצורה אחרת".

זה לא משנה ילמי אנו בונים את הבית, תמיד חשוב לעשות או לדבר לאחרים הכי טוב שאפשר וכפי שהיינו רוצים שינהגו כלפנו. לפעמים אנחנו עושים טעויות בחיים. ועל טעויות משלמים. אנחנו יאוכלים את הדיישה שבישלנו וחשוב שניקח אחריות ונלמד את הלקח. ואהבת לרעך כמוך. תנו לאנשים אחרים את היחס שהייתם מצפים שייתנו לכם. כי אנו בונים את חיינו יום אחר יום ולעיתים אנו לא משקיעים את הטוב ביותר שאנו יכולים עבור אחרים. וברגע של משבר... אנו מבינים שאנו צריכים לחיות בבית שבנינו.

פרשה זו עוסקת בדיני שנת שמיטה, בדיני אדם שירד מנכסיו ובפירוט של הברכות והקללות, בתיאור השכר והעונש שיהיו לבני ישראל אם ישמרו את מצוות התורה או אם לא ישמרו אותן. בפרשה זו גם נאמר "ולא תונו איש את עמיתו ויראת מאלוקיך, כי אני הי אלוקים" לא להונות ולרמות אחד את השני כי אונאת דברים הוא איסור לצער אדם בדיבור או במעשה ולפגוע בו מעבר לעובדה שזה יכול גם לחזור אלינו.

אדם שאומר ועושה את מה שהוא חושב ומרגיש. הוא אדם ישר כי הפה והלב שלו אותו דבר. והאמת והכנות הזו מתחילה בעצמנו. החיים הם "פרויקט עשה זאת בעצמך", הגישות והחלטות שאנו עושים היום, "בונים" את ה"בית" בו נחיה מחר והגלגל כל הזמן מסתובב.

ANI HASHEM ROFECHA: AGORAPHOBIA [FEAR OF CROWDS]

A. She should Relate to her situation in an easy fashion.
1, Know that many people suffer from this and live calm and serene lives.

2, when she needs to go to a hall or Shul, on Yom Kippur etc. if it comes easy, do it. If not, she should not fight and force herself. Daven at home at the same time the congregation is davening, and don't fuss about it.

B. She should be more frum than until now, this will strengthen her Bitochon in Hashem and will

lessen her worries as Hashem watches over her, including her situation. I will mention her at the Tzion -[Ohel.]
==== Rebbe to someone asking an eitzah and brachah for his wife that could not get herself to go into the packed shul in 770 on Rosh Hashana.

UFARATZTA





RABBI EFREM GOLDBERG

FAILING TO RECOGNIZE FAILURE - *What Giannis And Frum Influencers Got Wrong*

Last week, the Milwaukee Bucks, who finished with the best record in the NBA regular season, were eliminated from the playoffs by the Miami Heat, the 8th seed who barely snuck in. The Bucks' star player, Giannis Antetokounmpo was asked following the game whether he viewed the season as a "failure." His refreshingly raw answer went instantly viral and was celebrated not only by secular media and sports fans but received a substantial amount of attention and promotion from frum Jews on social media and "Jewish influencers," several of whom who labeled it "great mussar." A rebbe in a yeshiva even played it for the boys in his shiur.

Giannis' full answer to the reporter:

Do you get a promotion every year on your job? No, right? So, every year you work is a failure? Yes or no? No. Every year you work, you work toward something—toward a goal, right?—which is to get a promotion, to be able to take care of your family, to be able to ... provide a house for them or take care of your parents. You work toward a goal. It's not a failure. It's steps to success. There's always steps to it. Michael Jordan played 15 years. Won six championships. The other nine years was a failure? ... Exactly, so why do you ask me that question. It's the wrong question.

There's no failure in sports. There's good days, bad days, some days you are able to be successful, some days you are not, some days it is your turn, some days it's not your turn. That's what sports is about. You don't always win. Some other group is gonna win and this year someone else is gonna win. Simple as that. We're gonna come back next year and try to be better, try to build good habits, try to play better ... and hopefully we can win a championship. So, 50 years from 1971 to 2021 [the Bucks] didn't win a championship, it was 50 years of failure? No it was not. There were steps to it. And we were able to win one and

hopefully we can win another one."

While I admire and appreciate Giannis's sentiment and understand the power and attraction to his encouragement, I believe his failure to label his season a failure is more than semantics: it is significant, even damaging.

Failures needn't define us. The most accomplished and greatest people of our sacred history were not perfect and not above failure. They became who they were because they learned how to fail forward, how to see the particular moment, event, decision or act as a failure while not seeing themselves as failures.

Nevertheless, failing forward begins by recognizing and admitting failure. Failures are steps to success only if we pause to honestly assess them as failures, address how they occurred, ask what we can learn from them, and determine how we can avoid them happening again. Failures generate success when we take responsibility for them, hold ourselves accountable for them, and use them to motivate ourselves.

When we whitewash them, downplay them, minimize them, fail to take responsibility for them, we cannot fix them or avoid them. Minimizing and diluting failures by refusing to acknowledge them and instead describing them as part of a process, as steps on a journey, constitutes a failure to be honest, accurate, or accountable.

To be clear, Giannis's life has been anything but a failure. He was born in Greece to Nigerian immigrants, overcame incredible obstacles including poverty, and against all odds, got drafted into the NBA at a young age. He doesn't only compete, he has emerged to be one of the best players in the NBA and someone described by his peers as a not only a great ball player, but a great person.

The question from the reporter wasn't, you were eliminated from the playoffs, is your life a failure. It was, you have been eliminated from the playoffs, would you call this season a failure. His comments are understandable taken in the greater context of his remarkable life story, but they are still wrong regarding the specific question about the season.

The Bucks had the best record in the NBA this season. When the playoffs started they were given the best odds to win the championship, and they were overwhelming favorites to beat the Heat. The city, owners and fans expected the team to do much more than have fun, do their best, and just win one game in the playoffs. The players, coaches and management were paid to win, to take home a championship, certainly to get past the first round. Anything short of these goals was, objectively, a failure.

Identifying something as a failure doesn't mean beating ourselves up, being debilitated by guilt or shame, or staying stuck in the past. It means being honest with ourselves, taking ownership, and holding ourselves accountable.

Teshuva, repentance, repair, and reproach begin with Viduy, an admission of what went wrong and a declaration of a commitment to improve. Rav Soloveitchik said before we can approach the Mizbeiach, the place of forgiveness and growth, we must pass the kiyor, look in the copper base that is made of mirrors, stare into our reflection, and be honest with ourselves.

We live in a time where there is growing intolerance for pain, discomfort, or failure. Giving everyone a participation trophy can't and won't inoculate them from the harsh reality that life will teach them one way or another that in competition, there are winners and there are those crowned champions. There will come a time they may not get into the yeshiva or seminary they want, they may not get the job they want or

the “other side” of a shidduch may say no. When we give all children a literal or metaphorical participation trophy, when we try to protect and save them from feelings of failure, pain, disappointment, we stifle their growth, squash their drive, and set them up for unrealistic expectations of how life and the real world will treat them.

The Gemara in Berachos and Bava Basra says “luchos v’shivrei luchos munachin ba’aron.” When Moshe came down from the mountain, saw the people worshipping the calf and smashed the luchos, the broken and shattered pieces were gathered, collected, and carefully placed in the Aron to sit beside the unbroken, complete, second set of tablets. The broken pieces are saved to remind us that our failures and mistakes are not to be discarded, eliminated, and forgotten from our memories. We can only succeed when we remember the broken experiences and use the lessons learned as springboards to success.

A healthier and more Torah-based approach to the question Giannis was posed might have sounded something like: “Yes, given our record, our talent, and our potential, being eliminated in the first round makes this season a failure. We are sorry to the fans and the owners, but we assure you, we won’t be defined by this loss or elimination. Life is a journey, it is made up of many seasons, and while they include failures, we are committed more than ever to learning what went wrong, to working harder than ever to improve, and we hope and plan to come back and succeed in our goal of bringing this city another championship.”

Giannis rhetorically asked if the nine seasons Michael Jordan didn’t win a championship were a failure. We don’t have to speculate how Jordan would answer. In a famous commercial from years ago, Jordan said the following monologue about his career: “I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I’ve been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

Rabbi Yitzchok Hutner wrote a beautiful letter to a student who was very discouraged:

A failing many of us suffer from is that when we consider the aspects of perfection of our sages, we focus on the ultimate level of their attainments, while omitting mention of the inner struggles that had previously raged within them. A listener would get the impression that these individuals came out of the hand of their Creator in full-blown form. Everyone is awed at the purity of speech of the Chofetz Chaim, z.t.l., considering it a miraculous phenomenon. But who knows of the battles, struggles and obstacles, the slumps and regressions that the Chofetz Chaim encountered in his war with the yetzer hara (evil inclination)? There are many such examples, to which a discerning individual such as yourself can certainly apply the rule. The English expression, ‘Lose a battle and win a war’ applies. Certainly you have stumbled, and will stumble and in many battles you will fall lame. I promise you, though, that after those losing campaigns you will emerge from the war with the laurels of victory upon your head. Lose battles but win wars.

Several years ago, I had the privilege to interview Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt”l. I asked him:

When we look at your life and productivity, whether the trajectory of ascending to the chief rabbinate, publishing 30 books, 17 honorary degrees, being named a Lord, etc., it just seems that you have had success after success, triumph after triumph. Have you ever experienced failure? Have you ever had any challenges that you couldn’t overcome and what gave you the tenacity to persevere?

He was taken aback, even amused by my question, and this was his response:

Ha! Have I ever experienced failure?! My goodness me! Oooh! [Laughter.] I nearly failed my first year in university. I nearly failed my second year in university. I was turned down for virtually every job that I applied for. Since I was a kid, I wanted to write a book. I started when I was 20 and I gave it every minute of spare time that I had. Even when Elaine and I went to a concert I would be writing notes during intervals or between movements during a symphony. Yet, I failed for 20 years! From 20 to 40 I had a whole huge file

cabinet of books I started and never finished.

What changed is I happened to be reading the preface to “Plays Unpleasant” by George Bernard Shaw. It opens by saying that if you’re going to write a book, write it by the time you’re 40 or forget it. I thought it was Min Hashamayim. Someone is telling me something because I had no idea why I happened to read that passage by that writer at that time. I thought to myself that it was my last chance. So, I wrote my first book at 40 and then I wrote a book a year ever since.

Winston Churchill put it beautifully: “Success is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.” The secret was marrying someone who believes in you and then to just keep going. Never stop! All of the things that came much later, most of them unexpected – very moving but not the ikkar – it’s just “keeping on going” day after day.

That wonderful Medrash in hakdama of Ein Yaakov asks what is the main pasuk in the Torah? One [Tanna] said that it’s loving your fellow man, ואהבת לרעך כמוך. A second said שמע ישראל, it’s about accepting the yoke of Heaven. Then, Ben Pazzi says את הכבש אחד תעשה בבקר... bringing the daily sacrifice in the morning and in the evening. It’s about Shacharis, Mincha, Maariv. That’s life! You keep hammering away and eventually you’ll get there.

The only thing that is absolutely necessary is that you have to key into your mental satellite navigation system, your destination. Because if you don’t know where you’re trying to get to, you’ll never get there. I knew I wanted to write a book. It took 20 years of failure until I finally succeeded in the twenty-first year.

It is not a failure to acknowledge, recognize, and call out failure by its name. Giannis is objectively wrong: there are failures in sports, just like there are failures in life. Not all failures are bad, and we shouldn’t be afraid to experience them or to name them. On the contrary, by properly naming them, owning them, and learning from them, we can use them to propel ourselves to greater successes than we ever thought possible.



RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER
ROSH KOLLEL

Taanios Behab – the MiShebeirach

Part III

Why only after Pesach and Sukkos

We previously discussed some of the reasons for fasting and reciting selichos after Pesach and Sukkos. As we approach the yom tov of Shavuos, I would like to wrap up this topic, by discussing why we do not do the same after Shavuos.

The reasons we have seen are as follows:

- 1) Improper interaction between men and women
- 2) Days of merriment can cause sin:
- 3) A concern that one did not keep the laws properly
- 4) Change of weather
- 5) For rain

Why is there no fast after Shavuos?

According to the last 2 reasons – because of the change of weather or for the rain and harvest – it is not a question at all, since the fast is only something which is applicable at this time of the year. But, the first three reasons – due to the sins that may occur on yom tov – is something seemingly appropriate for Shavuos, as well. So, why is there no fast and selichos recited after Shavuos?

The Levush explains that they did not institute to fast after Shavuos. Since it is only 1 or 2 days and there is not such a long stretch of merriment, they were not so concerned that people will come to sin, and they did not deem it necessary to institute a fast.

The Levush takes this a step further to explain why we don't have a fast after Chanuka. Although Chanuka is an 8-day long holiday, since it is a regular work day and people are busy with the regular schedule, we are not concerned of people coming to sin. Additionally, since Chanuka was not established as days of mishta v'simcha, extensive partying; but days of li'hodos u'lihalel, expressing thanks to Hashem, there is not such great levels of merriment, like on yom tov, and we are not so concerned of people coming to sin.

Why on Monday and Thursday?

One last point: why do we fast specifically on Monday and Thursday? The reason is based on Tosfos in Bava Kama 82a, who discusses a similar question: why we have krias hatorah, specifically on Monday and Thursday?

Tosfos quotes a Midrash that Moshe Rabeinu went up to receive the luchos on a Thursday and came down with the luchos on a Monday. Since these days were when Hashem forgave the Jewish people for the sin of the Egel, Mondays and Thursdays became yemei ratzon, auspicious days, and were established to read the Torah. Tosfos adds that this is also the reason we fast on Mondays and Thursdays.

Similarly, the Shulchan Aruch (580:3) writes that some people fast every Monday and Thursday for the churban and the pother tragedies that befell the Jewish nation. This is also the reason why we recite the special V'hu Rachum prayer every Monday and Thursday, because it is an auspicious time to daven for the redemption.

Comments and questions are welcome and can be sent to: RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com.

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Rabbi Scheiner

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By

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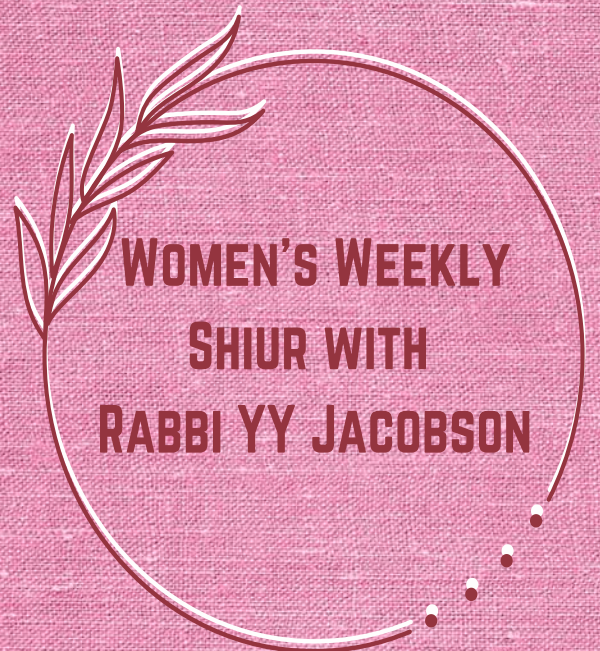
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RABBI YY JACOBSON

WORDS CAN SAVE

Some time ago I was at a Shabbaton when a young man came over to me and shared what a difficult time he had growing up in the school system. By the time he was fourteen years old, he had been expelled from eight yeshivas. Why so many?

“Everybody wanted me,” he said. “I like the attitude,” I shot back. The truth... nobody could deal with him. At home, his father was even harsher than the principals. He would come home and his father would punish him, double the amount, because of what happened in school. Instead of feeling the safety and the embrace of his father, he was given distance and apathy. When he turned fourteen, his father put him on a plane to Israel. “Even he couldn’t stand me,” the man said.

When I arrived, I started going to one Slonimer shul in Bnei Brak. I had no other place to go. Every day, there stood a ninety-five-year-old man, whom I later learned was Asher Arkovitch. He had been a Partisan in the Second World War and survived. He got married, but for the past ten years, his wife had been ill, and he had taken care of her. Recently, she had passed away, leaving Reb Asher, at age 95, alone. But even with his loss, Reb Asher davened as if he was truly talking to G-d. It was a real, bona fide conversation. You could feel his words in the room.

One morning, after everyone had filed out of the shul, those who remained were the boy and Reb Asher. With just the two of them, Reb Asher turned to him and said, “I haven’t seen you around before. What are you doing here?” The boy told him exactly the situation. “I haven’t had luck in any school system. I was expelled from eight schools, and my father sent me here to Israel.” Reb Asher looked the boy in the eye and gently said, “You know, we say every day in the prayer of Ashrei, ‘Le’hodia livnei ha’adam gevurosav ... - To inform mankind of Your [G-d’s] greatness.’ Literally, it means that G-d wants us to spread recognition about His strength and royalty. But the Maggid of Lechevitch provided another interpretation. You know why we talk so much about G-d’s infinity and majesty? To inform each and every person of their own greatness.

With every person you meet, draw out their strength and let them know about it. Show them their own beauty,

their own glory, their own profundity, their own holiness. We talk about G-d’s greatness, not because He needs our compliments, but because we need to do the same to others. If G-d is great, that means He didn’t make a mistake when He created you. If G-d is omniscient and omnipresent, that means that when He created you, He was making the statement that the world is incomplete without your contribution. Make others cognizant of their own power, of their own fortitude, of their own majesty, of their own creativity, of their own inner, infinite dignity and light and gift.

“Rabbi Jacobson,” said this man, now an adult, standing in front of me, “I got into another yeshiva in Israel, and six months later, I was expelled. I then got into a tenth school a half a year later, until the principal said, “You’re not for us.”

Here I was, 15 years old with a record of ten schools expelling me. I had nobody to turn to. I didn’t have a father to call. I was so lost in the world that I decided I can’t live any longer. The pain was just too deep. The loneliness, the solitariness was just too profound. One morning I walked to the roof of a tall building. It was 11 o’clock in the morning. I began pacing at the edge of the roof, about to jump and take myself out of my agony. And suddenly, I had a flashback of that conversation I had one year ago when this old Jew, Asher Arkovitch found me and told me, ‘Whatever happens, never forget about your strength.’ And there and then, on that rooftop, I told myself, ‘You know, before I jump, I first have to become aware of my strengths and then I’ll make a decision.’ I walked back. I went down. I got my life together, and here I am today, married with three beautiful children and an extraordinary wife. And I built a successful business.

I looked at the man who had tears streaming down his eyes. My eyes also moistened. Would Reb Asher ever have known the impact his words had on that morning in a Slonimer Shul in Bnei Brak to a fourteen-year-old boy? Could he have imagined the life-altering influence? They literally saved a life from suicide.

Don’t be stingy with words. Don’t be stingy with gestures. Don’t be stingy with hugs. Don’t be stingy with embraces. Don’t be stingy with letting every person you meet know about their strengths, their beauty.

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JOKES

TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE

There are two kinds of people. Those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," and those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, it's morning."

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW

Matt: "It's times like this that I wish I'd listened to what my Dad always said."

Jake: "What did he say?"

"I don't know, I wasn't listening."

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

A fire started on some grasslands near a farm. The county fire department was called to put out the fire. The fire was more than the county fire department could handle. Someone suggested that a nearby volunteer bunch be called. Despite some doubt that the volunteer outfit would be of any assistance, the call was made.

The volunteers arrived in a dilapidated old fire truck. They rumbled straight towards the fire, drove right into the middle of the flames and stopped! The firemen jumped off the truck and frantically started spraying water in all directions. Soon they had snuffed out the center of the fire, breaking the blaze into two easily-controlled parts.

Watching all this, the farmer was so impressed with the volunteer fire department's work and was so grateful that his farm had been spared, that right there on the spot he

presented the volunteers with a check for \$1,000. A local news reporter asked the volunteer fire captain what the department planned to do with the funds.

"That ought to be obvious," he responded, wiping ashes off his coat. "The first thing we're gonna do is get the brakes fixed on our fire truck!"

FAMILY FRIENDS

An elderly couple who were family friends had married & settled down in their old neighborhood.

To celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary they walk down to their old homes.

On their way back home, a bag of money falls out of an armored car practically at their feet. She quickly picks it up, & they don't know what to do with it so they take it home.

There, she counts the money, & its fifty-thousand dollars. The husband says: "We've got to give it back".

She says, "Finders keepers" & puts the money back in the bag & hides it up in their attic.

The next day, two policemen are going from door-to-door in the neighborhood looking for the money show up at their home.

One knocks on the door & says: "Pardon me, but did either of you find any money that fell out of an armored car yesterday?"

She says: "No" ..

The husband says: "She's lying. She hid it up in the attic."

She says: "Don't believe him, he's getting senile."

But the policemen sit the man down & begin to question him.

One says: "Tell us the story from the beginning."

The old man says: "Well, when Sally & I went on our first date ..."

At this, the policeman looks at his partner & says: "We're outta here ..."

RELIGIOUS BATTLE GOLF

The Pope met with the College of Cardinals to discuss a proposal from Shimon Peres, the former leader of Israel.

"Eminence," said one of the Cardinals, "Mr. Peres wants to determine whether Jews or Catholics are superior, by challenging you to a golf match." The Pope was greatly disturbed, as he had never held a golf club in his life.

"Not to worry," said the Cardinal, "we'll call America and talk to Jack Nicklaus. We'll make him a Cardinal, he can play Shimon Peres... We can't lose!" Everyone agreed it was a good idea. The call was made and, of course, Jack was honored and agreed to play.

The day after the match, Nicklaus reported to the Vatican to inform the Pope of his success in the match. "I came in second, sir," said Nicklaus.

"Second?!!" exclaimed the surprised Pope. "You came in second to Shimon Peres?!!"

"No," said Nicklaus, "second to Rabbi Woods."

TEAM SPIRIT

At one point during a game, the coach said to one of his young players, "Do you understand what cooperation is? What a team is?"

The little boy nodded in the affirmative.

"Do you understand that what matters is whether we win together as a team?"

The little boy nodded yes.

"So," the coach continued, "when a strike is called, or you're out at first, you don't argue or scream at or attack the umpire. Do you understand all that?"

Again the little boy nodded.

"Good," said the coach.

"Now go over there and explain it to your mother."



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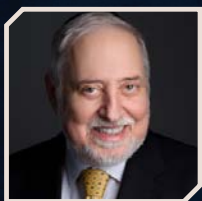
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Ari J. Zaltz, Esq.

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