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BE GREAT

Rabbi Paysach Krohn

Since 2003, I've taken trips around the world where Yiddishkeit has flourished. I've been to Poland several times with others, where together we visit many of the holy sites, including grave sites of many tzaddikim and, of course, the concentration camps. But there is one place which changes the whole essence of the trip.

I take the group to Warsaw, where there is a location called the Umschlagplatz, which refers to the holding area, or meeting place, next to the train stations in Poland where Jews were gathered together from ghettos for the purpose of being deported to the death camps. From the train station in Warsaw, 300,000 Jews were deported daily and deported to the camp in Treblinka.

Today, the Polish government doesn't want that train station to be around, so they've placed a memorial there instead. When I go there, I gather the group around this memorial and tell them the following.

When I wrote my first book for Artscroll about Bris Milah, one of the most moving parts was the section about names. When you give your child a name, that is one of the most important decisions you make. The Gemara (Berachos 7b) tells us that sh'ma garim, a person's name influences their life. This is why we only give names to our children after good people. We don't name our children Eisav or Korach.

I tell the group that when I was writing this section about names, I saw something which Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk says. Your neshama is forever connected to the neshama of the person you are named after. If you were named after a grandfather, grandmother, uncle or tzaddik, you are connected forever to that person. This is why it is important to give your child a name after a good person.

When I was writing this in the 1908s, I didn't have a computer, but only a typewriter. I took out the page to write down the word neshama, and when I wrote it down, I couldn't believe it. The two middle letters of the word neshama are shem (shin and mem), the word for name. Reb Elimelech's point that a person's name connects their neshama to the neshama of the person they are named after is all explained within the very word of neshama itself.

The nun and hei at the beginning and end of the word refer to the words Nishmas Hashem, in reference to the Pasuk, "Ner Hashem nishmas adam – The spark of Hashem is the soul of a person" (Mishlei 20:27).

The memorial made in Warsaw where the train station used to be is a long wall. The Germans, who were so exact, kept impeccable records of the Jews and what they did with each of them. And on that memorial wall is the name of every person who was on that train. (While there may have been many people with the same name, that name is written on the memorial only once). The wall expands from A to Z, and is comprised of just names. Endless names.

I ask each person on the trip to look through the wall and find their name on the wall. Every single person who has ever been there, except one or two, have found their name, whether it be their Yiddish or Hebrew name. I ask everyone, "What gives you the right to be here as a tourist, alive here today, and they're on the wall!" We are connected to them, because our neshamos are connected to those who carry the same name.

And then I tell them one more story. Reb Michael Ber Weissmandel zt"l lost his wife and five children during the war. He came to America, to Mount Kisco, following the war and remarried and had five children. At the bris of his fifth child, he said something, which brought tears to the Satmar Rav when he heard it.

"I had five children," he said, "and they died al kiddush Hashem. I hope that these five children who I have here will live al kiddush Hashem."

"Now," he continued, "I have a new understanding of the words we in Kedusha. We say, 'Nekadesh et shimcha ba'olam k'shem she'makdishim oto bish'mei marom – We sanctify Your Name in this world, just like they (those who gave up their life for Hashem) sanctify Your name in the Heavens.' Those who gave up their life because they were Jewish are called Kedoshim, and they are in the Heavens. "V'kara zeh el zeh v'amar – And this one calls out to that one and says..." This means that while we call those who gave up their lives and are now in Heaven kedoshim, those same kedoshim look at us and also call us kedoshim, because we live our lives in that way, sanctifying G-d's name."

We call them holy, and they call us holy.

How do we become people of holiness? The Torah tells us, "And you shall build for me a Sanctuary and I will dwell in them" (Shemos 25:8). What does it mean 'I will dwell in them'? The Malbim explains that Hashem will dwell in the people. "Everyone is supposed to build a Beis Hamikdash in the chambers of his heart. You should be a sanctuary for Hashem, so Hashem can live in you. Your head has a brain, which encapsulates your intelligence and mind. The holy Aron, which housed the Luchos, was the greatest embodiment of wisdom. Just as the Aron housed the Torah, our minds hold the wisdom of Torah within.

Our heart which gives us life mirrors the Lechem Hapanim, which gives us food and sustenance, without which we would be unable to survive. And our stomach mirrors the Mizbeach, which consumed the sacrifices placed upon it."

When we look at it this way, we realize that our body is a walking, talking Beis Hamikdash. Our head is the Aron, where our minds study and retain words of Torah. We must be holy in the way we think, talk, eat, act and do for others. Imagine you are standing right next to the Aron Kodesh; would you be able to talk badly about someone? You are walking with



an Aron in your head, attached to your body. If your heart is the holy Lechem Hapanim, would you harbor hatred in your heart for someone? To the contrary, your heart will be caring and thoughtful of others. Think about ways you can live al kiddush Hashem. When you daven, have an index card where you list the people you know he need a Refuah Sheleimah and mention each name. Be the caring, thoughtful person you can be.

Rav Shimon Schwab quotes the Zohar which states that the remedy for a person in this world is reading Shema properly. This is especially true during difficult times. Rav Schwab adds that the Pasuk of Shema has six words – Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad. Baruch Shem, the next verse recited right after, also contains six words. In the land of Israel, there were six Arei Miklat, cities of refuge, where an accidental murder could run to and seek refuge. This is what Rav Schwab means. When you say Shem Yisroel, you can feel secure.

Let me add to this.

My father z"l passed away when I was 21 years old. My father learned at Ner Yisroel in Baltimore and studied under Rav Schwab. When my father got sick, my brother and I asked Rav Schwab if we could stay with him over Shabbos, as he lived close to the hospital where my father was in Washington Heights.

After we davened Mussaf, my brother and I went to visit our father, after which we returned to have the Shabbos meal with Rav Schwab and his Rebbetzin. Rav Schwab knew how sick my father was, and he asked me how he was doing. "I have bitachon that he'll be well," I said. Rav Schwab grew stern and strict and said to me, "Bitachon does not mean that your father is going to get well." I was frightened by Rav Schwab's tone and words, but it taught me a lesson for life. "Bitachon means that Hashem has a master plan," he said, "and hopefully one day you will understand it."

This sometimes does happen. A person loses a job and wonders how they will ever manage. A few weeks later they have an interview and get a job that is better than they had before. Or someone is going out with another for a shidduch and thinks that if they don't get married, they never will, and then they find someone else later that is far better for them.

Rav Schwab explains, in light of the above, how to read the Shema. We know that Hashem

There were no holidays as joyous for the Jewish People as the fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur ..." (Mishnah, Taanit)

Nowadays, on the Fifteenth of Av, we observe a partial holiday; we don't say "Tachanun," a daily plea for Divine mercy, on the day itself, nor even in the Afternoon Service of the day preceding the fifteenth, similar to a full-scale holiday. Bride and groom also do not fast if the fifteenth is the day of their marriage.

These customs commemorate many happy events which occurred at various times over the history of the Jewish People. Some of these events were associated with the Temple; in the present temporary absence of the Temple, the degree of observance is (temporarily) somewhat diminished. A partial listing follows:

The last Mishnah in Massechet Taanit says, "There were no holidays so joyous for the Jewish People as the Fifteenth of Av and Yom HaKippurim, for on those days, daughters of Yerushalayim would go out dressed in borrowed white clothing (so that they would all look the same).

The King's daughters would borrow from those of the High Priest. Daughters of the High Priest would borrow from the Assistant High Priest's daughters; daughters of the Assistant would borrow from the daughters of the Priest designated to lead the People in times of War, the Kohen Anointed for War's daughters would borrow from the daughters of the Ordinary Priest. And the daughters of the rest of the Jewish People would borrow from each other, so as not to embarrass those who didn't have."

"And the daughters of Jerusalem would go out and dance in the vineyards located on the outskirts of the city. And everyone who didn't have a wife would go there." (Notice the relative

lack of concern about controlling the situation when the opposite sexes are mixed, perhaps because the recent fast (in the case of Tu B'Av) and the fast on that very day in the case of Yom Kippur, have triggered a sense of self-control, which would not ordinarily necessarily be present.)

"And what would they say?"

"Young man, lift up your eyes and choose wisely. Don't look only at physical beauty – look rather at the family – 'For charm is false, and beauty is vanity. A G-d – fearing woman is the one to be praised...' ("Mishlei"/ Proverbs 31:30)"

This focus on women and on marriage in the celebration of the day is based on two enactments which were made on the Fifteenth of Av, in favor of women:

The Torah tells us in Parshat Pinchas of the complaint to Moshe of the daughters of one Tzelafchad regarding the seeming inequality in Jewish Law, in the case where a man dies without sons, that his daughters seem to be bypassed in the chain of inheritance with regard to acquiring property in the Land of Israel (Some commentators suggest, based on this complaint, that if the "Meraglim" (Male Spies) had been "Meraglot" (Female Spies) there would have been no problem, because women have a greater love for the Land of Israel than men, and would never have slandered it). Hashem "steps in," so to speak, and informs Moshe that the daughters should not be excluded in favor of the sons, but that the daughters must be required to marry within their tribe.

This limitation on the marital prospects of Jewish woman was lifted once the Jewish People actually were settled in Israel; and it was lifted on the Fifteenth of Av.

Another case where a limitation on Jewish women was lifted on the Fifteenth of Av came in the Period of

the Judges, in the wake of a punishment directed against the Tribe of Benjamin. The last chapters of the Book of Judges, which deals with the period of time approximately 1395 B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) – 1060 B.C.E.), the earliest period in the settlement of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel, described in that Book as basically a period of weak central control, when "there was not yet a king in Israel" (Shoftim 19:1), and "a person would and could do whatever he wanted to do," tell the story.

An account is found there of the Tribe of Benjamin acting in accordance with the description assigned it by the father Yaakov as a "wolf which tears its prey" (Bereshit 49:7; this is certainly not a complete description of the characteristics of that Tribe, because it was in their section of the Land of Israel (along with the Tribe of Yehudah) where the Holy Temple would be built). In any case, a man and a woman traveling in the area of Benjamin were taken in as a neighborly gesture by an elderly man. The Binyaminites acted in a manner indistinguishable from the residents of Sodom greeted the guests of Lot, (Bereshit 19:1-10) except that in this case, the victims were defenseless human beings and not angels, with super-powers. In short, the woman was abused and killed by the men of the Tribe of Benjamin.

The reaction of the other Tribes was to make Civil War against Benjamin, and to enact that none of their daughters would be allowed to marry a man from that tribe.

But the enactment which prohibited a Jewish girl from marrying a man from the Tribe of Binyamin, like the earlier enactment against the orphan daughter of a man who died without sons marrying outside her own tribe, was cancelled at a later time, on the Fifteenth of Av.

has many names, each of which has a different meaning. Hashem's four-letter name is His name of kindness. Every one of us has so much goodness in life. Some of us have wonderful spouses, wonderful jobs, beautiful grandchildren, nachas from children, comfortable homes. When we close our eyes and say Shema Yisroel, we are emphasizing that each of us has goodness in our lives and we are the beneficiaries of kindness – mirroring the name of Hashem, His name of kindness. But then we come to the next word, Elokeinu, which is the Name of Hashem which refers to His attribute of judgment. But both the chesed and din, the kindness and judgment, come from Hashem – Hashem echad.

Someone told me that this is what the Gemara means when it says that R' Akiva's soul left his body with the words, "Echad." The simple meaning is that the Romans killed him as he was saying the Shema, and he concluded his life with these words. But it also means that R' Akiva realized at that point, as his soul was leaving his body, that it all came from Hashem. There was a reason why Hashem was doing what he was doing and R' Akiva accepted that wholeheartedly.

When you read Shema, don't be broken. Know that Shema Yisroel Hashem – Hashem does a lot of good for you. Elokeinu, there are a lot of difficulties. But Hashem Echad, at the end, it will all make sense. Hang in there. Don't give up. We can make, and we will make it.

There is a fabulous Midrash in Eicha (introduction to chapter 24). The Midrash says that at the time the Beis Hamikdash was burning, Hashem was crying and saying, "Woe is to My home! My children, where are you? Where are My kohanim? My beloved, where are you? What should I do? I warned you, I sent you the prophets and told them to give them mussar, but you didn't listen." Hashem sent Yirmiyahu HaNavi to call out to our great ancestors on behalf of the Jewish people. Avraham Avinu called out, "Please, Hashem, stop burning the Beis Hamikdash. I was ready to give up my son at the Akeidah, isn't that good enough to stop the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash? Hashem replied that it is not good enough. Yitzchak then says, "What about me, I myself was ready to give up my life!" but that too was not good enough. Yaakov's plea that he had so many problems with his children and Eisav and Lavan, and that he gave up his life to build the future of Klal Yisroel was neither good enough. Moshe Rabbeinu's prayer that he gave up everything he had to lead the Jewish people was neither accepted.

Until the Yiddishe Mama, Rachel Imeinu, told Hashem, "Hashem, how could you be jealous and angry that the Jewish people are serving idols? I wasn't jealous of my sister. I was supposed to marry Yaakov Avinu, and I handed over the signs to my sister Leah and I wasn't jealous." Immediately, Hashem's compassion turned over, and He said, "Because of you, I am going to bring the Jewish people back to Israel and return to them the Beis Hamikdash." What Rachel did that was so special was that she was the giver.

In reflecting on Tisha B'av, we must take to heart that we live as kedoshim, and walk and talk as a Beis Hamikdash. And also, let us be like Rachel. Let us be giving people and show care and concern for others.

If we can do this, we are paving the way for redemption.



NACHAMU NACHAMU AMI

In the past three parshiot the haftarah consisted of warnings on the upcoming destruction of the Bais Hamikdash. Then came the actual destruction. Now we enter a period of 7 weeks of consolation. It's called the Shiva Denechamta beginning the Shabat after the 9th of Av and ending before Rosh Hashana.

The opening statement starts with the words Nachamu Nachamu Ami. The double language indicates that there are two opportunities for Nechama. Option #1 is if we merit it, the redemption will come even before its time. Option #2 is even if we don't deserve the redemption it has a date that it will come regardless.

The haftarah continues, "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her time of exile has been fulfilled, that her iniquity has been conciliated, for she has received from the hand of Hashem double for all her sins,"

What does this verse mean-the heart of Jerusalem? Does the stones of Jerusalem feel pain? Is

it the millions of men, women and children displaced, starving and dying in foreign lands that need consolation? Hashem should speak to the heart of the people and not to Jerusalem. How does Jerusalem pay double for its sins? And if it does, is that justice? Furthermore, if "her time is fulfilled", why are we not back in Yerushalayim? Why is Jerusalem responsible for anything, it's just a land in which to live?

What is obvious is that Jerusalem is not an ordinary place but it is dynamic and alive and has a direct effect on the Jewish nation. When I was a teenager living in Brooklyn, New York quite often I would see Harav Avigdor Miller taking a walk down Kings Highway. I was shy but I wanted to ask the gadol a question. I summoned the guts and approached him one day. I asked what is the meaning of the word or the name Yerushalayim. We all know that the name of something defines its essence, my question actually was, what is the essence of Yerushalayim?

Rabbi Miller stopped his walk and gave me all the time in the world. He explained that Yerushalayim is a combination of two words. Yeru is a city, Shalem is peace or complete; it is the city of perfec-

tion. That is the land's responsibility and that is what's expected from it.

I recall driving up the hills of Jerusalem with my grandfather and he would marvel at the mountains. I asked him what is so amazing, we have seen it a thousand times before? He quoted King David " Jerusalem mountains surround you just like Hashem surrounds his nation." My grandfather explained that every bird builds a nest to protect its young, Jerusalem is Hashem's nest and we are his young. A bird every year returns to its nest to bring forth more children, Jerusalem is our nest where Hashem will return and rest upon us again.

Hashem empowered Yerushalayim to help our nation reach its spiritual potential in every aspect. It is also our nest to protect us physically. When Yerushalayim does not provide us with this spiritual enhancement and physical protection, it is also liable. Jerusalem therefore was destroyed and was subsequently ashamed and embarrassed.

I would suggest that the first level of Nechama in the seven week of consolation, is that the destruction is not entirely our fault. Jerusalem

shares some of the responsibility.

May we all be zoche to the Nechmas Tzion and the building of Yerushalayim. Amen.

בס"ד

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Late Maariv Motzai Shabbos

Fifteen min, Half hour, One hour, One and Half hours,
Two hours
Rabeinu Taam

18 Main Bais Medrash

דברים	9:35	9:50	10:20	10:50	11:20
ואתחנן	9:25	9:40	10:10	10:40	11:10
עקב	9:15	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
ראה	9:05	9:20	9:50	10:20	10:50
שופטים	8:55	9:10	9:40	10:10	10:40
כי תצא	8:40	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
כי תבא	8:30	8:45	9:15	9:45	10:15

NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY
1:37, 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, 3:30, 4:00

SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLIEST KABBALAS SHABBOS	6:32 ^{PM}
CANDLE LIGHTING	7:41 ^{PM}
MINCHA 18 TENT	7:00 ^{PM}
MINCHA BAIS CHABAD	7:51 ^{PM}
SHKIYA	7:59 ^{PM}
SHACHRIS VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR	5:24 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN	8:00 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS - YOUTH 18 UPSTAIRS	9:30 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN 18 TENT	9:15 ^{AM}
SHACHRIS 20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD	10:00 ^{AM}
NEW SHACHRIS 18 MAIN	NEW 10:15 ^{AM}
MINCHA	1:45 ^{PM}
PIRCHEI	2:00 ^{PM}
MINCHA	6:00 ^{PM}
PIRKEI AVOS SHIUR 3	7:10 ^{PM}
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	7:40 ^{PM}
SHKIYA	7:57 ^{PM}
MARRIV	8:37 ^{PM} 18 TENT, 8:42 ^{PM}

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS

20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ 30 ON YOM TOV

S 5:45 M 5:46 T 5:47 W 5:48 T 5:49 F 5:50

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 6:17 M 6:16 T 6:15 W 6:13 T 6:12

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 7:43 M 7:42 T 7:41 W 7:39 T 7:39

AUGUST 14- AUGUST 19

NEITZ IS 6:05 - 6:10
PELAG IS 6:29 - 6:24
SHKIA IS 7:55 - 7:50

MAGEN AVRAHAM
8:57 AM - 8:59
GRA- BAAL HATANYA
9:33 AM - 9:35

Summer
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קיץ
תשפ"ב

SHACHARIS MINYANIM

כתיקין	20 Forshay ↑	Brochos 30 min/Neuda 20 min before Neitz
כתיקין	18 Main Sefardi Minyan with Birchas Kohanim	
6:15AM	Tent א	
6:30	Tent ג	
6:45	Tent ד	
7:00	Tent א	
7:15	Tent ב	
7:30	Tent ג	
7:45	Tent ד	
8:00	Tent א	
8:15	Tent ב	
8:30	Tent ג	
8:45	Tent ד	
9:00	Tent א	
9:15	Tent ב	
9:30	Tent ג	
9:45	Tent ד	
10:00	Tent א	
10:15	Tent ב	
10:30	Tent ג	
10:45	Tent ד	
11:00	Tent א	
11:15	Tent ב	
11:30	Tent ג	
11:45	Tent ד	
12:00PM	Tent א	

Tent א - 18 Tent
Tent ב - 20 Tent
Tent ג - 22 Tent
Tent ד - New Tent

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MINCHA 6:25 PLAG 6:45



SHABBAS NACHAMU

The word nechama is used on various occasions but it is not always understood properly. For example, a person going to console a friend who is sitting Shiva for his relative will say, "I'm going to be 'menachem avel.'" But what does this mean? And what is the proper usage of the word menachem?

When it refers to Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, we can quote the Lubavitcher Rebbe who in several of the letters he addressed the reason we use only Av for the month when writing a get but when writing a kesuva we use Menachem Av. We can add to the Rebbe's beautiful words an idea based on a Rashi for the pasuk in Braishis וינחם השם. Rashi explains that the word nechama means thinking differently than the way we thought before. When it comes to comforting mourners, it's important from Halachik and emotional concerns to prepare what we plan to say. And indeed, there are times when we don't have something smart to say and we would be smarter to just sit for a few minutes saying nothing.

If we deepen our understanding of the word nechama we will better appreciate Shabbas Nachamu. The name is derived from the words of the Haftara read on that day. The term is expressing the essence of this Shabbas which always follows Tishav Beav. An obvious question is, "Where is the nechama?" We cried and lamented over the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash and we were hoping that Mashiach would arrive but he didn't so would it not be more appropriate to call this Shabbas - Shabbas disappointment- שבת אכזבה?

Based on our definition of nechama the explanation is simple. Each Tisha Beav we hope to gain a better glimpse and understanding of Hashem. What are the days of Mashiach all about? On a simplistic level these are the days when all the tzaros that plagued us - mental challenges, parnessa, shalom bayis, troubled teens, accidents and life terminating illnesses will disappear. We are so used to our current reality that its hard to imagine a life of only good but this state of being is the preferred one. Hashem didn't create us just for the ultimate time where bad won't exist. He created us for the supreme experience of pleasure--knowing and connecting to Hashem. We merit this experience by delving into the significance of nechama which we do by immersing ourselves in Torah learning, speaking aloud to Hashem and engaging in the offer of Korbanos.

This brings to mind one of the most fundamental concepts mentioned in the beginning of the Parsha ומי גוי גדול אשר לו אלוקים קרובים . Which other nation has this special closeness where we can reach out anytime and connect to Hashem.

The topic of tefilla, as the Gemara informs us in Brachos, is very deep and unfortunately misused and misinterpreted. Hopefully next week we will elaborate more on this topic. For now, may we feel true nechama this Shabbas and make our tefilos a little more meaningful.

Good Shabbas



MIDDOS TREE

BY RABBI COREN



Many years ago I was learning from a sefer called Bilvavi Mishkan in which it stated that one who talks on his cell phone while riding on a public bus suffers from brazenness. While I was reading this topic I was actually on a public bus and someone nearby was speaking very loudly on her phone about very personal topics, as if she was in her private room! Besides the disturbance and uncomfortable feeling that one causes others when speaking loudly on the phone, the speaker is developing the negative middah of brazenness in himself.

Of course, there are plenty of exceptions and situations where we have no choice but to speak on the phone in public, but try speaking in a refined manner. Brazenness can be defined as "chutzpah", or that we pay little care to how our disrespectful actions affect others. As is the case with all middos, it actually can sometimes be very beneficial and positive to be brazen. The Tur quotes the mishna in Pirkei Avos that one should be bold like a leopard and not worry about the scoffers who make fun of his Avodas Hashem. Please make sure that when we are on a plane or a bus and need to speak on the phone, it is done with proper middos in mind.

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Rabbi YY Jacobson

Are You a Jealous Person?

Why Envy is Ignorance

The tenth and final of the Ten Commandments recorded in this week's portion (Vaeschanan) reads: "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; you shall not covet your neighbor's house, nor his field, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, and anything that belongs to your neighbor." (Deuteronomy 5:17; Exodus 20:14).

The structure of the verse seems strange. In the beginning, the Bible specifies seven things we should not covet: "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; you shall not covet your neighbor's home, nor his field, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey." But then, at the conclusion of the verse, the Bible states: "And anything that belongs to your neighbor." Why the unnecessary redundancy? Why not just state at the onset "You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor," which would include all of the specifics? And if the Torah does not want to rely on generalizations and wishes to specify details, why does it specify only a few items and then anyhow revert to a generalization, "And anything that belongs to your neighbor?"

A Holistic Story

In Hebrew, the word employed for "anything" and "everything" is identical, "Kol." Hence, the above verse can also be translated as, "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; you shall not covet your neighbor's house, nor his field, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, and everything that belongs to your neighbor." By concluding the verse with these words, the Torah is not just instructing us not to covet anything of our neighbor, but also helping us achieve this difficult state of consciousness.

How could you demand from a person not to be jealous? When I walk into your home and observe your living conditions, your cars, your bank accounts, and your general life style, how could I not become envious?

The answer is, "Do not covet **everything** that belongs to your neighbor." What the Torah is intimating is that it is indeed easy to envy the home and spouse of your neighbor, his servants, his ox and donkey; yet the question you have to ask yourself is, do you covet "everything that belongs to your neighbor?" Are you prepared to assume his or her life completely? To actually become him?

You cannot see life as myriads of disjointed events and experiences. You can't pluck out one aspect of somebody's life and state "I wish I could have had his (or her) marriage, his home, his career, his money..." Life is a holistic and integrated experience. Each life, with its blessings and challenges, with its obstacles and opportunities, constitutes a single story, a narrative that begins with birth and ends with death. Every experience in our life represents one chapter of our singular, unique story and we do not have the luxury to pluck out a chapter from someone's story without embracing their entire life-journey.

When you isolate one or a few aspects of someone else's life, it is natural to become envious. But when you become aware of "everything that belongs to your neighbor," your perception is altered. Do you really want to acquire everything that is going on in his or her life?

So the next time you feel yourself coveting the life of the other, ask yourself if you really want to become them.

Ralph Waldo Emerson was correct when he observed that "envy is ignorance."



Rabbi Reisman

A THOUGHT FOR SHABBOS NACHAMU.

The Chida mentions that we find in Sefer Daniel that there are Arba'a Malchios, there are 4 kingdoms of our Galus. They are; 1) Bavel who destroyed the first Bais Hamikdash, followed by 2) Paras Umadai, which was the time of the Galus, followed by 3) Yavan the Greeks in the beginning of the Bayis Sheini, followed by 4) Edom, our present Galus.

Why isn't Mitzrayim one of the Malchios of our Galus. After all, didn't we go to Galus in Mitzrayim first? The Chida says that Mitzrayim is the Maasei Avos Siman L'banim for all the Galusin. Beraishis 46:8 (וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים) (מִצְרַיִם). The word (בָּאִים) are the initials of the 4 Galusin, Bavel, Edom, Yavan, and Madai. There is more. Klal Yisrael went to Mitzrayim 4 times. The Shevatim went down first as it says in Beraishis beginning of Perek 42 (כִּי-יֵשׁוּב) (שָׁבַר בְּמִצְרַיִם) to try to get food, then they went a second time together with Binyamin. Then Yosef revealed himself. The third time they went down as it says in Beraishis 46:27 (כָּל-הַנֶּפֶשׁ לְבֵית-יַעֲקֹב הַבָּאָה מִצְרַיִם, שְׁבַעִים). The 4th time is after Yaakov Avinu is buried and they came back to Mitzrayim. So the Shevatim arrived in Mitzrayim 4 times.

The Chida says that those 4 times are K'neged the 4 Galuiois. The first of (שְׁבַר בְּמִצְרַיִם) when they went to Mitzrayim to try to find some type of rescue during a time of Tzarah is Galus Bavel when a Yid went to Bavel and there was something there, that Klal Yisrael could regroup.

The second is the Galus of Madai, that is when they went down with Binyamin. It started off very bitterly but during that Galus, Yosef revealed himself. The same thing of the Galus of the 70 years the time of Madai. During that time Reshus was given to build the Bais Hamildash. During that time the miracle of Purim took place, during the Galus. That is the second time they went down. When they went down the second time you remember from Chumash the Shevatim drank wine together with Yosef. A Remez to the drinking of wine on Purim. They brought down Binaymin, a Remez to Mordechai Hayemini from Sheivet Binyamin.

The third Galus when they went down with the (שְׁבַעִים נִפְשׁוֹת) is a symbol for Galus Yavan. A time of danger of assimilation. We find that Yaakov was afraid when they would come down that Mitzrayim was greeting them happily and eagerly. There was a danger of assimilation. The Misyavnim, the third Galus.

Of course the 4th Galus our present Galus, is the longest and the most difficult. The 4th time the Shevatim went down was by Kevuras Yaakov. After Yaakov was buried they went back down and then the Kushi Hashibud began shortly thereafter. That is a difficulty of this Galus, the most difficult of all. But of course in every Maaseh Avos Siman L'banim there is a lesson of Nechama here as well. Just as in Mitzrayim Klal Yisrael called to the Ribbono Shel Olam and as the Posuk says in Shemos 2:25 (וַיִּדַע, אֱלֹהִים) He brought the Galus to the end. As long as they resisted the Lo Shinu Es Shemam, Lo Shinu Es Lishonam, as long as they resisted the assimilation, they had the Geula. So too, we find Nechama in the hope for a Geula and the Yetziya from the 4th Galus like the Yetzia from Mitzrayim, like the Yetzia from that 4th Galus, one full of miracles and joy. So a thought for Shabbos Nachamu.

These shiurim have been transcribed from an actual drasha. As speed is of the essence, spelling and grammar may be compromised



בס"ד

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DOUBLE DOUBLE

PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN
A FREE GIFT

ואתחנן אל ד' בעת ההיא לאמר

"And Moshe implored Hashem at that time, saying." The days of Moshe's life on this world are coming to an end, and Moshe beseeched Hakodosh Boruch Hu to enter the Land of Eretz Yisroel. Rashi tells us that Moshe made his request by asking for a free gift, meaning that it was not owed to him, yet he was asking Hakodosh Boruch Hu to grant him a free gift. If Moshe Rabbeinu knew that Hakodosh Boruch Hu did not want him to enter Eretz Yisroel, why was he Mispalel for it?

Moshe was facing a different predicament here than he had ever faced, and different than what we generally see in the Torah. When one is Mispalel, due to the great Chesed and Rachamim of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, he has a chance of annulling any evil decrees, and achieving that which he is Mispalel for. Moshe Davened that Klal Yisroel should achieve an atonement for their sin of the Eigel, and they did. Yaakov Avinu Davened that he should be saved from the hands of the wicked Eisav, and he was saved. Klal Yisroel Davened to Hashem to be saved from Mitzrayim, and they were. However, here, it appeared that there was a hopeless situation. Was it proper for Moshe Rabbeinu to be Mispalel to Hakodosh Boruch Hu to allow him to enter Eretz Yisroel, when he had been told by Hashem Himself that his fate was that he would not enter Eretz Yisroel?

There is a great lesson for us to learn from the way Moshe acted here. Although it was clear that he would not enter Eretz Yisroel, nonetheless, he beseeched Hakodosh Boruch Hu to allow him to enter the Land. Even when it appears that what will happen is a foregone conclusion, and there is nothing to do, even in such a situation, one is not to despair, and should be Mispalel to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. The Medrash Tanchuma says that one should never say, "My illness is terminal, my will has been finalized, and my property has been designated to my heirs. What is there left to be Mispalel for?" Even in this situation, he can and should Daven to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, for Hakodosh Boruch Hu does not discount the Tefilos of any human being. While we may learn from Moshe that even when things look very bleak one should still be Mispalel, we do not learn that in this situation one can be saved from his predicament, for Moshe was ultimately not allowed to enter the Land of Eretz Yisroel, to perform the Mitzvos of the Land, and to fulfill the great desire he had to do so. Brochos 10a - Yeshaya went to king Chizkiyah to let him know that he should arrange his affairs for he was going to die in the near future. Chizkiyah mentioned to Yeshaya that he hoped that he would be able to overturn the

decrees against him. Yeshaya told him not to even bother trying, for it was a foregone conclusion that he was going to die soon, and there was nothing he could do about it. Chizkiyah responded with great defiance to Yeshaya and said, "I have the following tradition from my grandfather's house: Even when a sharp sword has been placed on one's neck, he must not despair from eliciting Hashem's mercy." Chizkiyah did not reference Moshe Rabbeinu here, for while Moshe Rabbeinu was Mispalel although the situation seemed hopeless, and he was not answered. Instead, Chizkiyah was referencing his ancestor, Dovid Hamelech, who was Mispalel and was answered. Dovid was informed by Nosson Hanavi that he had been sentenced to die because of the episode with Bas Sheva. Dovid Hamelech did not let the news that he had already been sentenced deter him from being Mispalel with all his heart - from the depth of his heart. It was deemed as if Dovid Hamelech recreated himself, and that the decree of death was not upon him, but another being, one that had vanished being that Dovid was now a new person. We learn from this that no matter what the situation, one must always beseech Hakodosh Boruch Hu for Rachamim, and no matter how dire the strait, one can always be saved. (פרי צדיק)

Moshe was not coming to Hakodosh Boruch Hu with the attitude that he knew better than Hashem, and that Hashem should listen to him. Rather, he was coming with great humility, and requesting a free gift. A gift is something which is good for the person. Moshe Rabbeinu knew that everything that Hakodosh Boruch Hu does is for the good. Nonetheless, that does not mean that when one is in a time of Tzarah תצרה he should not be Mispalel to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, for everything is good. Rather, in times of Tzarah Hakodosh Boruch Hu is looking for our Tefilos. Our Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu will bring us closer to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, as we have full faith in Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

The Tzaddikim are Mispalel for a free gift, for they are saying to Hakodosh Boruch Hu - it is a time of Tzarah for me here in this world, I think that something is good for me and I want it, so I will Daven for it. However, I understand completely that everything You do is for my good, and I therefore request it as a "free gift" - which means that if it is not good for me, then I am happy not to receive it. This week is Shabbos Nachamu, the Shabbos after Tisha Ba'av. We must beseech Hakodosh Boruch Hu for a free gift - to be Zoche to the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash. It is what Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants from us. At the same time, we must not despair, and understand that as long as it is not here, it is not good for us. We need to do our part, and this will bring us closer to Hashem. May we be Zoche to the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash, במהרה בימינו אמן!

Why does the Navi Yeshaya use the lashon of Nachamu twice? Rabbeinu Bachya explains the reason is because everything is midda kneged midda. The Jews sinned double and were punished double, therefore they receive double consolation. Rav Dovid Cohen, the Chevroner Rosh Yeshiva, explains it a little differently. Before we get to the explanation, we need to double our questions.

The Gemara at the end of Makkos brings down a story of Rabbi Akiva and the Chachamim where the Chachamim cried, and Rabbi Akiva laughed twice. First they saw the city of Yerushalayim destroyed and then they saw a fox coming out of the heichal. When Rabbi Akiva was asked why he was laughing, he responded that the nevuah of the geulah of the Navi Zecharya could not happen until he saw the nevuah of Uria about the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash. The question is could it be Rabbi Akiva did not believe it without seeing the destruction - one must believe in the yud gimmel ikrim? They answered Akiva nichamtonu Akiva nichamtanu - why the double lashon?

The Gemara in Yuma says that when the Romans destroyed the Bais Hamikdash, they saw the Kruvim on the Aron hugging each other. The question is that the kruvim hugged each other only during the time the Jews did what Hashem commanded them and when they went against Hashem's will the kruvim were facing away from each other. How is it possible that during the churban the kruvim were hugging each other, isn't that in contradiction of what they were supposed to do?

We find that in hilchos aveilus, the beginning of aveilus is toughest and then it eases up. On the first day of aveilus one doesn't put on tefilin. During the first three days there is no greeting another. Then after shiva there is sheloshim and with each time frame the aveilus gets more and more lenient. In contrast to that, when it comes to the aveilus of Tisha B'Av, the closer we get to Tisha B'Av the tougher the aveilus gets. Why the difference?

According to the above calculation, the toughest part of the Aveilus should be during Mincha of Tisha B'Av since that is when the Bais Hamikdash was actually burning, yet we find that we put on tefilin and we say nachem during Mincha.

The answer to all the above questions lies in the fact that at the apex of the churban, Hashem planted a nechama. As the Gra explains, the lowest form of falling is the beginning of the process of getting up. The geulah can't come until we are in the lowest form of nefillah. Therefore, Rabbi Akiva said that the prophecy of geulah can't come before we have the prophecy of the churban. Only when we are in the lowest matzav of churban will the geulah arise. That is why the Chachamim said twice, "Akiva nichamtunu Akiva nichamtonu" because only when they saw the beginning of nechama were they truly able to see the nechama. The double lashon of nachamu nachamu is for the same reason. We need to see the nechama in the height of our galus. From within the height of churban we can look forward to the final nechama. That is also the reason the kruvim were hugging, because at the apex of the churban begins the nechama.

The Gra explains that the passuk of vehoyu zaracha - ka'afar haaretz is contingent upon the next part of passuk ufaratzta yoma - vakeidma etc.



Rabbi Efram Goldberg

SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH, NOT JUST THE PROBLEM OF THE ULTRA-ORTHODOX

Last month, over two consecutive nights, almost 50,000 women gathered at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey with an overflow crowd watching via a live hookup in a nearby hall. Why did they gather, and what brought them together?

The events were hosted by Technology Awareness Group (TAG), an organization that educates about the challenges of technology and offers a service to install filters on computers, tablets, and phones.

The events were referred to as the “Nekadesh (let us make holy) rallies,” and organizers spent millions of dollars, not only to rent the arena but to offer hundreds of buses from communities around the New York metro area. The rallies, one in English and the other in Yiddish, featured prominent Rabbis and Rebbetzins and included collective singing.

While the overall message was intense and strident in raising objections to and concerns with technology, it was reported that the gatherings didn’t call for a blanket, wholesale rejection of technology, but rather for a far more selective, scaled down, cautious and judicious approach, including not participating in social media.

Among those who not only listened carefully but acted immediately was Shaindy Braun, who over nine years had amassed 40,000 followers to her sheitel business, Sary Wigs, on Instagram. Following the rally, she announced her departure right before deleting her profile: “I choose to leave this world of likes, followers and filters. I will be leaving Instagram to live in the real world. I want to focus on curating my real life, filtering my thoughts and speech and sending love and likes to the important people in my life...I am making this choice to close this page in order to make space for something higher. I want more and more in my life and by extension for all of you my dear followers.”

While many were moved and inspired by the unprecedented rallies, others found them objectionable and even offensive and disturbing. The event was organized by and marketed to what many call the ultra-orthodox community. Some of the public criticism came from members of that community but much of it was from those outside of it who cynically saw the gatherings as misogyny on the part of the rabbis who participated, or part of a larger, methodical attempt to isolate, cut off, and disadvantage women.

I didn’t hear the speeches and don’t know the entirety of what was said at the event. I have no doubt there were messages and themes conveyed that I wholeheartedly agree with and would echo, and other messages or messaging that I may not agree with entirely.

But as I read about reactions and criticisms of the gathering, I was struck by a thought. If you don’t like the way this particular group is talking about technology, why not do it better. If you think this group is extreme, go do it with moderation. If you are offended because you believe it shouldn’t only be directed at women, organize rallies for men too.

While many are quick to criticize, perhaps legitimately, are they leading an alternative effort to raise awareness of the dangers of technology and to promote healthier and safer practices?

Being mindful of the minefield that is technology and aware of the issues with social media is not a “frum” thing or a problem confined to the “ultra-orthodox.” The challenges and dangers don’t care what type of yarmulka you wear or don’t wear, what level of kashrus you keep, or where you send your children to school.

We are currently experiencing a mental health crisis of drastic proportions, with almost every measure of mental health getting worse for every teenage demographic, and it’s happening all across the country. The CDC reported that from 2009 to 2021, American high school students who say they feel “persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness” rose from 26 percent to 44 percent. Even before the pandemic, depression among adolescents had doubled.

What is the cause of this crisis, what explains this phenomenon? Experts say technology and social media are the culprit. Last year, researchers at Instagram itself published disturbing findings. “Thirty-two percent of teen girls said that when they felt bad about their bodies, Instagram made them feel worse...They often feel ‘addicted’ and know that what they’re seeing is bad for their mental health but feel unable to stop themselves.”

Facebook, which owns Instagram, also investigated the app’s effects on its users, and found, “We make body image issues worse for one in three teen girls. Teens who struggle with mental health say Instagram makes it worse.”

Researchers from NYU, Stanford, and Microsoft published a paper with the title “Digital Addiction.” In their conclusion they reported that “self-control problems cause 31 percent of social media use.” In other words, one in three minutes spent on social media is time we neither hoped to use beforehand nor feel good about afterwards. What is the impact on our mental health?

A recent Gallup poll shows that 58% of U.S. adults believe they’re using their smartphones “too much.” In response to a new question this year, 64% say they check their smartphone as soon as they wake up in the morning. Research shows we receive a dopamine rush, not unlike the one provided by drugs, when our phone rings or buzzes or when we get a like, friend, or follow. I recently deleted (again) social media apps from my phone and I can personally testify that the impact can be felt immediately, not only on time

wasted, but on clarity and presence.

If others organized an Asifa, would they have the courage to ask ourselves hard questions (and would anyone show up, let alone 50,000 people)? And what would those questions be? Certainly as a starting point we need to be careful and conservative as to when children should be getting devices, and then, when they do get them, filtering the devices and monitoring the time and activity spent on them, but what else? What about encouraging adults to be mindful of the time they are spending on social media, even if the content is completely appropriate? Does the anonymity or superficial barrier offered by certain parts of the internet work in our favor, or do we take advantage of these things to talk and act in a way that is inconsistent with how we present ourselves in “real life”? Are we capable of having an honest conversation about the effects social media is having on our self-esteem, our relationships, our anxiety, our spiritual well-being, or our overall mental health? And most importantly, are we creating a culture that believes in appropriate and healthy internet and social media use and putting up boundaries, and backing up those beliefs with real action?

Thinking these questions are only asked by the ultra-orthodox, a community you may not identify with, is a cop-out, an excuse. In fact, these questions are being asked regularly by people around the globe, many of whom are struggling with these issues, some of whom are comfortable proposing what might seem like radical responses, such as regulating social media, much like drugs or alcohol.

There is not only a lot to consider from the “consumer” perspective, but from the producers as well. Are Jewish “influencers” contributing to these statistics and to the damaging results? Are we being thoughtful and intentional with who we and our children choose to be “influenced” by, about what, and how often? Even if Jewish influencers are contributing meaningful and positive content, are they a gateway “drug” into other parts of social media and the internet that are far less valuable and far more pernicious?

There aren’t clear answers, and most certainly different communities and different individuals will come to different conclusions, but these questions deserve to be asked, these topics need to be tackled. Awareness about these dangerous statistics and trends needs to be promoted and healthy policies and practices need to be strengthened.

So while you may not agree with the Nekadesh rallies, you should be impressed by how many attended and left at least thinking about and talking about the role of technology in their lives. There is no denying that there is a lot to talk about, no matter which community you identify with, so instead of only being critical about one approach, offer an alternative, and see if 50,000 people can be more thoughtful in this area.

PARSHAS VAESCHANAN

Can you figure out what each picture has to do with the parsha?



Rabbi Dani Staum

stamtora@gmail.com

Key to Parshas Vaeschanan – Pix

Man davening – The name of the parsha is “*Vaeschanan* – I supplicated/prayed”. Moshe Rabbeinu recounts that he prayed 515 prayers to be allowed into Eretz Yisroel until Hashem told him to stop praying – 3:23

Aseres Hadibros – Moshe Rabbeinu reviews the 10 commandments – 4:6

Boy saying Shema – The first parsha/paragraph of Shema is in the parsha – 6:4

Not all idols are made of gold – The Torah warns against making any idols, in the shape of a male, female, animal or bird – 4:16-17

Teshuva – Torah says that when Jewish nation will find themselves in times of difficulty, they will repent - 4:30

Man performing hagbaha (lifting Sefer Torah) - The pasuk customarily recited by the congregation when the Torah is lifted – 4:44 (see *Kli Yakar* for a beautiful explanation about why that pasuk appears here)

Yetzias Mitzrayim – Moshe Rabbeinu repeatedly reminds the nation about the exodus and the responsibility of the nation to live up to their lofty mission/destiny as that is why they were taken out - 4:34, 5:6, 5:15, 6:12, 6:20, 7:8

Ir Miklat (City of Refuge) – Moshe Rabbeinu set aside the three Cities of Refuge in Transjordan (the other three were set up later in Eretz Yisroel proper after the nation entered and conquered the Land) – 4:41

The Wise son – The question of the wise son referenced in the Haggadah is in parshas Vaeschanan – 6:20

Rav Shmuel Salant's Advice to the Old Man Neglected by His Children & Grandchildren By Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss

I want to share with my dear readers a sobering true story that warns us about one of the more base sides of the human psyche. There was a man who had a very hard time making a living. He decided to move to Jerusalem and opened a small grocery in the Old City of Yerushalyim. Business took off and by the sweat of his brow he eked out a living and raised, together with his wife, a beautiful family of seven children. All his life he worked very hard and saw his children and grandchildren flourish. To help support his growing family, he continued to work full-time until he was seventy years old.

After the passing of his wife, his strength began to ebb and he could no longer work. He spent his days going to shul, saying Tehillim, and listening to shiurim. But, his golden years were marred by a powerful bitterness. His children and grandchildren, for whom he slaved all his life, barely spent any time with him. They were all wrapped-up in their own lives and hardly came to visit. They would pop in, give a sniff to see whether he was still alive, and disappear.

Finally, when he got so fed up with their disappointing behavior, he went to the great sage, Rav Shmuel Salant, Zt”l, Zy”a, to pour out his heart. Rav Salant listened carefully and told him the following instruction. “Go to a blacksmith and buy an expensive, heavy safe. Bring it home and put it in a very noticeable place.” When the man asked Rav Salant how this would help, the Rav said, “Just leave it to me.” Mystified, he followed the Rav’s instructions and waited to see what would happen.

The next time his first-born popped in for a quick visit, he noticed the safe right away. Curious, he asked “Totty, what’s in the safe?” His father answered noncommittally, “Oh, just some things I’ve saved over the years.” His son told his siblings, “You know, our father has an expensive safe! I tried to move it and it was quite heavy. He must have saved up all of those years he was working.”

Like wildfire, news traveled through the whole *mishpacha* and practically overnight, things started to change. He would get regular Sunday visits with the grandchildren in tow, his daughters in-law suddenly started offering to cook meals, his granddaughters came over to clean the house while his grandsons came to show him their report cards. For the next ten years, he enjoyed his *nachas* immensely.

One night, he peacefully passed away in his sleep. After the funeral, his children came to divide the estate. They immediately went to the safe and started looking for the key – which was nowhere to be found. Finally, after looking through his papers, they found a letter that said, “My Dear Children, The key to the safe is with Rav Shmuel Salant.” Quickly, they went to the Rav who gave them the key with a smile upon his lips. Hurriedly, they returned back to the home and excitedly opened the safe. To their shock and dismay, they found it full of odds and ends with no value at all.

They got very angry. Their father duped them all of these years. They ran back to Rav Salant to complain about their father’s behavior. Rav Salant smiled at them. “Don’t be angry at your father. It was my idea. He bitterly complained to me that none of you were visiting him. I told him that you needed some incentive so I created an imaginary pot of gold and you took the bait, hook, line, and sinker. Don’t be disappointed. Although it wasn’t sincere, you still benefitted greatly from doing ten years of *kivud av v’eim*.”

What a chilling story about what drives humanity. There is a grim saying: “Hakesef yaneh es hakol – Money is the answer to everything.” As our parents grow older, let’s make sure that we honor them and spend time with them, not because of what they have to offer but out of a sense of *hakoros hatov*, lifelong gratitude to them, and in fulfillment of the Fifth Commandment to honor our father and our mother. But, this is not only true in regards to *kivud av v’eim*. It pertains to friendships as well. They should not hinge on whether there is money or not. Nor, should the quality of a *shidduch* be based on one’s latest IRS 1040 tax return form.

In the merit of being sincere in our responsibilities, may Hashem bless us with long life, good health, and everything wonderful.

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A Debt Repaid

By Rabbi Dovid Hoffman

RABBI
BENTZION SNEH



ADAPTED FOR ENGLISH FROM
THE WRITING OF RABBI SNEH

THE FRUITS OF HELPING OTHERS

Chazal say- Yesh Koneh Olamo B' Shaah Echad. One may merit great merit, beyond our comprehension, simply by a small act of chesed.

Eikev Tishme'un, the Parsha starts... if you will hear.. if you will listen- is written in the plural tense to show us that our individual actions have a bearing on the Klal.

Our society is driven to achieve success at all costs. Sometimes this focus on oneself makes it hard for us to think of others.

Askonus, devoting a portion of our time to helping the community may be viewed by some as being a lost art. There are so many causes, true, but we must contribute both our time and our money- for the rewards are not only great. They are eternal.

Rabbi Sneh brings the following story showing the incredible ripple effect of one act of chesed with the hope that it will motivate us to be more concerned with every member of our community.

The Rosh Yeshivas shiur was once a week. It was widely attended by way over two hundred talmidim. The topic was noted beforehand and many of the brightest students delved into the sources and were prepared. Others came with a desire to learn and were totally present taking in all that was explored through the in depth lecture.

There was a third group of students that could not concentrate and could not follow. They remained quiet but their minds were elsewhere.

It was over 40 years ago in Yerushalayim and the atmosphere was a bit on the strict side. Before the age of cellphones there was an attentiveness that we can no longer replicate.

It was most of the way through the discourse and someone from the hardly attentive group was folding a piece of paper into the shape of an airplane. He really only intended to toss it to his friend who sat opposite him. But as soon as it went mobile a small gust of air took it all the way to the distinguished Rosh Yeshivas desk where it landed on his Gemara.

Amidst laughter, the Rosh Yeshiva became incensed and openly demanded for the bochur who engaged

in this chutzpadik act to leave the room.

After waiting and requesting a few more times..he made one last plea for the perpetrator to kindly exit.

No student moved from his seat. The Rosh Yeshiva refused to continue. Perhaps he was too strict, but he would not tolerate this brazen act.

Suddenly a bochur Nachman Galinsky, rose from his seat all red faced and left the room. Unable to regain composure, the shiur went on for a few minutes more but then ended.

After the shiur, the Rosh Yeshiva called Nachman into his office and they spoke for a while. Exiting the office, everyone fully expected Nachman, an average student, to be asked to leave the yeshiva. But after a few days the incident was forgotten.

Flash forward 30 years later. R' Nachman had raised a beautiful family and was successful in business. He was known to all as a baal chesed who was also an accomplished talmud chacham.

Unfortunately, R' Nachman came down with a serious illness and within weeks his neshama departed from this world.

During the shivah a young Rosh Yeshiva from Bnei Brak came to be menachem avel with seventy talmidim. R Nachmans family wondered- did their father donate to this yeshiva?

After a little while the Rosh Yeshiva spoke and told R' Nachmans children the story of the paper plane and the shiur klali. How R' Nachman was not the one who threw the airplane- he merely intervened to save me from being thrown out of the Yeshiva.

You see, he said, I was not a good student at all and my situation in the yeshiva was tenuous at best. After your father saved me, I went on to become much more serious and I devoted myself to my studies and today here are my students.

These students are really your father's students as well.

This is what it means to go out of your way for another person. This is what Askonus is all about.

Good Shabbos!

Translated by Rabbi Reich

to Italy in 1943.

The Kavilios eventually made it back safely to Sarajevo after the war and Zejneba gave them back the jewels they had left with her. They embarked on a ship going to Israel, where they started a new life, but never forgot their Muslim friends during those terrible years of the Holocaust.

In 1984, the Kavilios petitioned for Yad Vashem to recognize the Hardaga family as "Righteous Among the Nations." A year later, Zejneba Hardaga came to Israel to accept the honor, plant a tree in her family's name, and be recognized as the first Muslim ever to hold that title.

Obviously, she had no idea that a few years later, the irony of history would indeed come full circle to save her own family's life. In 1992, while Yugoslavia was in the midst of a bloody civil war between Croats and Serb nationalists, Zejneba's family was in mortal danger due to the numerous bombings and attacks in their Sarajevo neighborhood.

Yosef Kavilio's children worked tirelessly to save their saviors. They obtained special authorization directly from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin to bring the entire Hardaga family to Israel, along with members of the Jewish community of Sarajevo.

In February 1994, Zejneba, her daughter, along with her husband and child arrived in Israel and were welcomed by government officials, representatives of Yad Vashem, and the Kavilios. The Hardagas had sheltered a Jewish family during the darkest period in Jewish history. It was now the Kavilios and the Land of Israel that paid back the debt and helped the Hardagas in their time of distress.

Zejneba's daughter Aida received a revelation upon entering Jerusalem. "It is only natural that I should want to become Jewish. It is an honor for me to belong to these people," she explained. She then converted to Judaism and was renamed Sarah. She added that, until her death in October 1994, her mother Zejneba was very supportive of her decision to become Jewish.

Reprinted from the July 26, 2016 email of the Queens Jewish Link

and exterior aspects vanish — until they completely evaporate.

With this approach, surely, all trials and imagined difficulties will dissipate. You will consequently, very quickly, find your zivug...

==== Igros Kodesh, V1, P53.

UFARATZTA



In the Land of Israel there lives a Jewish woman by the name of Sarah Pecanac. She came to Israel in 1994 together with her mother, and lives in Jerusalem with her beautiful family, while working in the museum at Yad Vashem. Her daughter, Esther, is an officer in the Israeli Air Force. What is remarkable about Sarah is that she is a convert to Judaism and that she was once an observant Muslim. The story of how this all came about is truly startling.

In April 1941, the German Wehrmacht invaded the defenseless country of Yugoslavia. Sarajevo, the capital, was bombed into submission from the air. The home of a Jewish family by the name of Kavilio was destroyed and they were forced to flee to the hills.

As they were walking to seek refuge at the family factory, they met Mustafa Hardaga, a Muslim friend who was the owner of the factory building. He immediately offered them to stay at his house.

The Hardagas were religious Muslims. Yet, they were friendly and kind and when they heard the plight of the Kavilio family they reached out. "You are our brothers. Our home is your home," they said, and to demonstrate this point, the women were not obliged to cover their faces in the presence of Yosef Kavilio, since he was now a member of the family.

The Kavilio family stayed with the Hardagas for a short while until Yosef Kavilio was able to move his wife and children to an area under Italian control, where Jews were relatively safe. Yosef himself stayed behind to liquidate his business and eventually he was arrested and imprisoned by the Ustasa, the puppet government that carried out the bidding of the Nazi S.S.

Undisturbed by the danger, Zejneba Hardaga, Mustafa's wife, began visiting him every day, bringing food and clothing for him and other prisoners. After a few weeks, though, she felt she needed to do more. Taking a huge risk, she went directly to the Gestapo chief in Sarajevo and pleaded for Yosef Kavilio's release.

He was obviously very surprised that a Muslim woman would risk so much to save the life of a Jew. It took a generous bribe, but, in the end, she obtained Yosef's freedom and he escaped safely

Tu B'av Shidduch

KNOW WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU

... Regarding shidduchin: Your emphasis should be on the most important factors of the person that you are meeting. Then all external and minor factors will dissipate. It is known that the more the internal and inner aspects are revealed, the more the external

JOKES

THE RABBI'S TEETH

A Rabbi had all of his remaining teeth pulled out. New dentures were being made. The first Shabbos, he only spoke for 10 minutes. The second Shabbos, he spoke only 20 minutes. On the third Shabbos, he spoke 1 hour 25 minutes. When asked about this by some of the congregation, he responded this way: "The first Shabbos, my gums were so sore it hurt to talk. The second Shabbos, my new dentures were hurting me a lot. The third Shabbos, I accidentally grabbed my wife's dentures...and I couldn't stop talking."

CRIME OF SILENCE

A friend of mine got kidnapped by a group of mimes...
They did unspeakable things to him!

LIFE CAN BE SO CONFUSING.

Life can be so confusing. It was only after purchasing a dolphin made of glass that I had any clarity of porpoise.

LESSONS FOR LANDLORDS

A man called up a bird store the other day and said, "Send me 30,000 cockroaches at once!"

"What in heaven's name do you want with 30,000 cockroaches?"

"Well," replied the householder, "I am moving today and my lease says I must leave the premises here in exactly the same condition in which I found them."

GROCERY SHOPPING DANGER

Last week at the grocery store, I saw a man slipping celery into other people's shopping carts...

I believe he was a stalker.

TWO ROACHES

Two roaches were munching on garbage in an alley.

"I was in that new restaurant across the street," said one. "It's so clean! The kitchen

is spotless, the floors are gleaming white. It's so sanitary the whole place shines." "Please," said the other roach, frowning. "Not while I'm eating!"

CONFUCIUS SAY

"Women who put detergent on top shelf, jump for Joy!"

"Never argue with fool...he may be doing the same thing."

"Best time to buy new mattress, at first sign of spring."

"People who have gift of gab, not know how to wrap it up."

"Time flies like arrow. Fruit flies like bananas."

Man who run behind car soon get exhausted

Even the greatest of whales is helpless in middle of desert

Man who crosses the ocean twice without washing is a dirty double crosser

Man who put head on Railroad track to listen for train likely to wake up with splitting headache

He who thinks only of number one must realize that this number is next to nothing

Behind every successful man is good woman and very surprised mother-in-law

Man who fall in molten glass make spectacle of himself

Work to become, not to acquire

A man who has bird in hand finds it hard to blow nose

Man with one chopstick go hungry

Man who leaps off cliff jumps to conclusion

THE MAIDS REVENGE

Just after the maid had been fired. She took five bucks from her purse, she threw it to Fido, the family dog. When asked why by her former employer, she answered, "I never forget a friend. This was for helping me clean the dishes all the time!"

ANYONE WHO EATS FISH AND CHIPS

Anyone who eats fish and chips every day is a creature of halibut.



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RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

ROSH KOLLEL

SPOTLIGHT -- TISHA B'AV 2022 AT 18FORSHAY

There were many different programs and presentations, as well as shiurim and lectures, for both men and women, of all ages, giving everyone an opportunity to connect to the mourning of Tisha B'Av, and be inspired on this day.

We would like to express our tremendous appreciation to our dedicated and devoted staff, who worked tirelessly – both before and during Tisha B'Av, above and beyond the call of duty – to ensure the seamless flow of events.

CHODESH AV

Starting from Rosh Chodesh Av, there was a daily minyan for tikun chatzos at 1pm, as brought in the sefarim hakedoshim, who extol the importance of reciting tikun chatzos during these days.

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner gave a number of shiurim, in regards to this year's halachos of Tisha B'Av. One shiur discussed the topic: "When Tishah B'Av Falls on Shabbos – Step By Step, Halochos from Erev Shabbos until Monday Morning. Another shiur discussed: "Significance of Rosh Chodesh Av – Halochos when Falling on Erev Shabbos." He also gave a shiur on the topic: "Tisha B'Av on Shabbos – Understanding the Concept of a Nidcheh."

As in the past, these shiurim are available on the shul's website 18Forshay.com, Torahanytime, and on MP3 in the shul

THE NIGHT OF TISHA B'AV

There were many minyanim for Maariv and Kinos. The two main minyanim on Motzaei Shabbos, for Maariv and Kinos were led by our rabbis. Our Mara D'asra, Rabbi Lankry, led the minyan in Tent Beis and Rabbi Coren was in Tent Aleph. Before the reading of Eicha, Rabbi Coren spoke some

words of inspiration followed by a kumtitz, with songs of longing for the redemption. This electrified atmosphere was then followed by Rabbi Coren's reading of Eicha with great emotion, giving everyone in the packed tent a true feeling of Tisha B'Av.

Reb Shmuel Beller – "Destruction, Survival and Rebirth" holocaust survivor and renowned lecturer, spoke once again at night after kinos, in Tent Aleph. His horrifying experiences in the concentration camps for six years kept the overflowing audience electrified. He talked about the Klausenberger Rebbe zt"l, who rose like a lion to encourage the survivors to remain strong, even after the great calamities they endured. Many people stayed afterwards for a long time, asking him questions and hearing about his heartrending experiences.

TIKUN CHATZOS MINYAN

The daily minyan for Tikun Chatzos continued both at night of Tisha B'Av at 1am, as well as by day, at 1pm.

TISHA B'AV MORNING

Once again, the main minyan in the morning was led by Rabbi Eliezer Abish – Lecturer and Author of "Portraits of Prayer" – who led the program of Select Kinnot. The program began with a special guest, Rabbi Chevrone, Rosh Yeshiva of Chevron, as well as the Mara D'asra, Rabbi Lankry, who started off the morning, setting the tone, and giving a deeper understanding to the mourning of Tisha B'Av.

As in previous years, Rabbi Abish led the kinos the entire morning, until chatzos, with explanations, insights, as well as fascinating stories. He shared insights and stories to a standing room only crowd of both men and women. Rabbi Abish has become a yearly highlight, with a full house audience, as well as enjoyed by thousands of streamline viewers, enabling many thousands of people to acquire a deeper feeling for what

Tisha B'Av is all about.

Some of his topics were:

"What are we missing and why do we yearn for the Bais Hamikdash?"

"Can I really shed a tear after so many years in Galus?"

"How can we miss something we never experienced?"

- Can this Tisha B'Av finally be our last one?

Many listeners commented that hearing Rabbi Abish turned the Churban from a thing of the past, into something relevant to us all. To quote the words of one participant: "I never had such an inspiring Kinnot! I never understood the words I was reciting. This was their first time that I ever felt a real connection to the Churban Bais Hamikdash and Tisha B'Av. There are such hard words, such hard concepts, and I suddenly realized what we are saying. Rabbi Abish opened up new horizons for us. This is a real zechus for all those who made this happen."

There was also a special beis midrash designated in tent Gimel for those wishing to reciting kinos slowly and with kavanah, and there was a very big crowd there as well.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Kids Program with Rabbi Reuvain Hoff – Once again, Rabbi Hoff, in his expert fashion kept the children busy all morning, giving the children the opportunity to connect to this wonderful day, on their level. This took place in 18 upstairs, with standing room only, and some of the crowd overflowing into the hallway. There was also a speech by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, followed by Words of Inspiration given by Rabbi Serebrowski, as well as a Children's Video.

LIVE TOUR

This year, we also had a live tour of the Kosel, given live from the Makom Hamikdash, giving everyone an opportunity to experience the pain of the Churban, with noted guide and lecturer Rabbi Yehoshua Yankelewitz.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER
7:00-8:00am

Chavrusa learning Gemara
Currently: מסכת ביצה

Friday - *Shiurim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics*

NIGHT KOLLEL
8:15-9:45pm

CHAVRUSALEARNING - HALACHA

Currently: הלכות חול המועד

SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

- Daf Yomi
8:45-9:45

- Mishna Yomis
8:45-9:00

- ZERA SHIMSHON SHIUR
8:15-9:00 Thursday Nights

ADDITIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS:

- *Yarchei Kallah / Shiurim on Legal Holidays - by acclaimed Guest Speakers*
- *Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim*

- *Yeshivas Kiyumu v'Kiblu / Purim Shushan Purim*

- *Shovevim Program / Early Friday morning learning b'retzifus. o Evening Shiurim in Halacha and Hashkafa by prominent Morei Horah*

~Night Kollel~

TISHA B'AV AFTERNOON

As is customary, before chatzos, when the reciting of the kinnos was over, Rabbi Coren gave a shiur on the Gemara of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza.

There was also another Holocaust survivor, developer, and philanthropist, Edward Mosberg, who came in the afternoon. He spoke for both men and women in tent Gimmel, wearing the clothes he wore in the camps, and also showed a sefer torah that was disgraced.

Later in the afternoon, Rabbi Nachum Scheiner spoke, in 18 Forshay upstairs, on the topic: "Nacheim – Rays of Hope –The Nechama following Aveilus – How are we Consoled as the Galus Continues?"

Rabbi YY Jacobson – spoke to a packed crowd of both men and women, in the afternoon from 2:30 – 4:00. His topic: "Tisha B'Av – Lessons from History."

We also had a Bais Hamikdash 3D experience, with 3 different virtual showings, throughout the afternoon, bringing alive the avodah of the Bais Hamikdash, and giving a profound feeling of longing for the return of the avodah to the Bais Hamikdash.

Women's program – Mrs. Chani Juravel LCSW, noted lecturer and therapist, spoke in the afternoon from 4:45-5:45. Her topic was: "Making Tisha Bav work for Us & G-d."

Both at night and in the morning, there were many minyanim – including the Vasikin Minayn for Shachris, as well as the many minyanim – Shachris and Mincha – that took place throughout the day. Many of the programs were full to

capacity, and all in all, there were many thousands who walked through the doors of Ohr Chaim, besides the many others who were able to join on live stream – benefiting from the events that went on throughout the day. And this is besides the many more thousands of viewers who took part in the various programs which were streamlined.

So although Moshiach isn't here yet, Ohr Chaim helped many thousands of people experience a deeper and more meaningful Tisha B'av. Each tear that was shed, each feeling of longing experienced by the multitudes, who walked through the door of 18 Forshay, walking out uplifted and inspired, will no doubt bring us one giant step closer to the Final Redemption!

RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER



picture credit: Suzy Grama

Pictures of Reb Shmuel Beller, Holocaust Survivor and speaker at Ohr Chaim Tisha B'av program. He is seen giving brachos.



picture credit: Suzy Grama



picture credit: Suzy Grama



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