

Kedoshim | Iyar 1 - 7 | May 9 - 15

Pesach at Ohr Chaim
Three pages of pictures inside!
Starts on page 7

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Zmanim by our incredible Gabbaim

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Tzvi Blech



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
at מנחה גדולה and every 15 minutes from 1:45pm-5:00pm

7:45pm Candle lighting	7:30pm Mincha in tent א	7:55pm Chabad Mincha	8:03pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

5:02am <small>Vasikin, followed by 2 Daf Yomi Shiur 20↑</small>	8:00am Shachris 2 18 main	9:15am Shachris 3 Tent א	10:00am Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20↑	10:00am Shachris 5 18 main
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2:00pm Pirchei	7:45pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	8:04pm Shkiya	8:44pm Maariv 1	8:49pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
9:30 pm – 11:30pm | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of May 12-18

Shacharis — 20 min. before Neitz
Mincha & Maariv — 12 min. before Plag and more (see posted times)

	Neitz	Shma Magen Avraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	5:41am	8:27am	9:16am	10:28am	12:52pm	6:35pm	8:05pm
Monday	5:40am	8:27am	9:16am	10:28am	12:52pm	6:35pm	8:06pm
Tuesday	5:39am	8:26am	9:15am	10:28am	12:52pm	6:36pm	8:07pm
Wednesday	5:38am	8:25am	9:15am	10:27am	12:52pm	6:37pm	8:08pm
Thursday	5:37am	8:24am	9:14am	10:27am	12:52pm	6:38pm	8:09pm
Friday	5:36am	8:24am	9:14am	10:27am	12:53pm	6:39pm	8:10pm
Shabbos	5:36am	8:23am	9:14am	10:27am	12:53pm	6:39pm	8:11pm

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The Great Misconception, We Are in Control

Yeshaya Hanavi Ch. 40: "Why does Yaakov say, 'My path is concealed from Hashem, and my judgment eludes Him'? This desperate plea is based on the tight control the nations exercise over the Jewish people during their seemingly endless years of exile. They exclaim in bewilderment, "If Hashem really cares, how could He allow the world to continue on its present course!? Where is the Jewish nation's reward for their perseverance throughout the ages? Why doesn't Hashem respond to the nations' cruelty and deliver to them their well-deserved catastrophic blows?" These emphatic cries reflect the Jewish people's deep-seated feelings of pain and anguish during their difficult moments in exile.

Yet, this similar perspective is shared by the mighty powers of the world who perceive themselves in total control. They see Hashem as aloof from His world and incapable – Heaven forbid – of interfering with their vicious hatred towards His devout children. Hashem responds to the Jewish nation's plea and calls the world's mighty powers to task. Through Yeshaya Hanavi, Hashem engages them in a fierce dialogue and invites them to defend their audacious position about Him. Hashem says, "Be silent, distant nations and mighty powers recharge you. Draw near and speak; come together for judgment. Who inspired the (dweller) of the east to proclaim my righteousness with his every step; delivered nations into his hands and gave him the control over the kings? Who transformed dirt into his sword and chaff into his bow? ... It is I, Hashem, who declares the generations from the beginning. I am the first and I will remain with the final ones." (41: 1,2,4)

Has anything really changed in the past 3000 or 4000 years? The nations of the world seem to have the upper hand and always at the last moment Hashem saves us. It is from the beginning of time that we experience this confusion; we don't see Hashem in our everyday lives and people claim that He is not there.

What gives us *chizuk* are events and stories of *hashgacha pratit* illustrating how things work out for the best. We believe Hashem allows certain things to happen because it is all part of the greater picture. When Moshe Rabeinu asked Hashem to reveal His face, Hashem said "You can see me from behind and not from the front." If a man would see Hashem from the front, he would surely die. To see Hashem from behind means that after the events have passed and all the dust has settled, only then can we understand why and how Hashem had planned things. Only then can it make sense to us. May we be zoche to see Hashem's hand in the world with clarity. Amen.



The Students of Rabbi Akiva

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

Rabbi Akiva taught that loving another Jew is a great principle of the Torah. I don't know if there is proof that Rabbi Akiva teaching was taught before his 24 thousand students died or after; however, the question arises how was it possible that the students of Rabbi Akiva died because they didn't honor each other? Furthermore, the punishment for not honoring another Jew doesn't seem to have a real source, certainly not a death penalty. And lastly, the timing of the death of students which was between Pesach and Shavuot also can't be a coincidence

I think the answer lies in the new students that Rabbi Akiva restarted his yeshiva with. The students like Rav Meir and Rav Shimon exemplify the qualities that are needed in order to continue the link to *Matan Torah*. As an example, Rav Shimon is quoted in *Masechet Gittin* as saying *שנו מידותי* learn my *middos*. Rav Shimon was *Moser Nefesh* for Torah and was also the one about whom the Gemara in *Sukka* says would be able to save the world with his merits. Rav Meir teaches in *Avos* the importance of learning *Torah Lishma* – Torah learning has to be done for pure motives, not selfish motives. These are just small examples of the giants that continued the legacy of Rabbi Akiva who taught that if you don't have love for another Jew, you're missing a basic principle. Rabbi Akiva was also the ultimate example of dedication to learning Torah even if it might be embarrassing at first as he began learning Alef Bais when he was 40 years old; with incredible fortitude spent 24 years of continuous learning to become the great Rabbi Akiva that he was destined to be.

When we speak about giving *kavod* to each other, the first step is to define what we mean by *kavod*. I heard from Rav Noach z"l, who use to say that the root of the word is *כבד* which means something heavy, or as in the translation of this word in Gemara *אלו מציאות*, *kavod* means *יקר* precious. When we see another Jew. and especially a *Talmid Chacham* it's an opportunity to appreciate greatness – the greatness of a Jew because he has a *neschama Elohis* and especially someone who learns Torah; this person is precious, and just as we would handle a precious diamond with care, we need to treat this person the same way and even more so.

Perhaps the students of Rabbi Akiva were lacking this lesson on their level, and since this idea is crucial for the continuation and the existence of Torah, Hashem punished them with death. The heavy punishment was given to a generation that bore the responsibility to carry over the Torah. and lacking appreciation for each other made it impossible for them to be that continuation.

This lesson is timely because during the weeks of *sefirah* one of the main objectives is to develop a better appreciation for each other and for the Torah. Building this appreciation allows us to be the receivers of the Torah and gives us the *zechus* to be the continuation of Torah to the next generation

May we merit to refine ourselves and to appreciate each other and the precious Torah that Hashem desires to bestow upon us.

Good Shabbos.

Judge Favorably



Rabbi YY Jacobson

This week's Torah portion, *Kedoshim*, contains a commandment, which we often do not think about as such: "You shall judge your fellow man with justice."

The Talmud gives two different interpretations of this verse. According to one opinion, this verse is giving direction to Judges. When a person comes to a Judgment in a civil case according to Torah law the judge must treat the litigants equally. He is not allowed to have one litigant stand and the other one sit, one speak at length and the other urged to speak briefly, and so forth. However, according to a second interpretation in the Talmud, the injunction in this verse is directed at every Jew. Its intent is that we must "judge our fellow with justice," as the Talmud puts it, "Judge your fellow man to the side of merit."

A similar expression we find in the Ethics of the Fathers: "Judge every person to the side of merit."

But what does this mean?

Changing the Instinct to Condemn

On the most basic level, it cautions us to give people the benefit of the doubt. If we see a person doing something that apparently seems to be an act that he or she should not be doing, there is a full-fledged Biblical command to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Upon observing another person doing or saying something we perceive as undesirable or destructive, many of us instinctively assume that negative motives are compelling these acts and words. We naturally believe that the person is aware of the damage he is creating, and despite this he is doing it for his own benefit or some agenda. This attitude has plagued us for millennia and has caused untold harm and divisiveness in communities. Learn to judge people favorably, to attribute positive, or at least neutral, motives to people's acts and words. Say to yourself, "His (or her) behavior might appear wrong; but in his own mind and heart he really thinks he is doing the right thing."

This approach of condemning the behavior, but not the person is counterintuitive, but it is tremendously beneficial for two reasons:

A) When you are able to alter your attitude, you will not become resentful. When you attribute evil motives to a person performing a negative act, your brain instinctively swells with negative energy. On the other hand, if you train yourself to view the person, unlike his behavior, in a positive light, you save your heart from being consumed by ire.

B) You will be in a much better position to communicate your feelings to this person without compelling him to construct defense mechanisms and reciprocate your

rebuke with stubbornness and anger. When he feels that inside your heart you don't view him as a "bad guy" who craves destruction, only as a "good guy" who made an error, your criticism will most likely be more effective.

Think about yourself. If someone approaches you and criticizes your behavior, when is he more likely to be successful? When he attributes negative motives to you, or positive ones to you? The answer is more than obvious. This means that if you are truly bothered by what this person did, the best way to eliminate such behavior in the future is to judge him or her favorably.

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:30am (18 Main)
Chassidus Shiur **Monday & Thursday** 7:45am (18 Main)
Shabbos: Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)
Morning 8:40 (20 Upstairs) | After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)
Please Note: Rabbi Jacobson's Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 am, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 am.



UFARATZTA

Tzedaka Hastens the Geula

... Our Sages greatly extolled the virtue of *tzedaka*, declaring it equal to all other *mitzvos* together. In the *Talmud Yerushalmi*, *tzedaka* is called simply "The *mitzva*."

... because *tzedaka* is the core of all the active *mitzvos*, and surpasses them all.

... All other *mitzvos*, only one faculty of the vital soul [The soul that is the life force of the physical body] is involved while performing the *mitzvah*. In the case of *tzedaka*, however, which one gives from the proceeds of the toil of his hands, all the strength of his vital soul is involved in the effort of his labor or in any other occupation by which he earned this money which he now distributes for charity. Thus, when he gives to charity, this money, to which he applied all the strength of his vital soul, his entire vital soul is elevated to Hashem. Hence the superiority of *tzedaka* over other *mitzvos*.

Even if one does not earn his livelihood from work, nevertheless, since he could have purchased, with this money that he gave for charity, sustenance for the life of his vital soul, he is actually giving his soul's life to G-d in the form of *tzedaka*, and therefore elevates more energy of his vital soul than any other *mitzvah*.

This is why *Chazal* said that *tzedaka* hastens the *geula*. For with one act of *tzedaka*, one elevates a great deal of the vital soul, more of its faculties and powers, than he might elevate through many other active *mitzvos* [combined].

==== Tanya – Likutei Amarim Perek 37.





We previously discussed that there is a *machlokes Rishonim* if the *mitzvah* of *sefiras ha'omer* today – when we do not bring the *korban omer* – is *Min HaTorah* or *midrabanan*. We saw numerous *nafka minos*: in regards to counting before nightfall, reciting *likayeim mitzvas asej, kemo shekasuv baTorah,*” and if *kavanah* is a requirement to fulfill the *mitzvah*. I would like to discuss some more differences:

Having the proper kavanah

Since there is a *machlokes* if *sefira* is a *mitzvah min haTorah* or *midirabbanan*, we seemingly have a problem. The *Rambam* writes that if someone performs a *mitzvah dirabanan*, and has in mind that he is performing a *mitzvah min haTorah*, this may be a transgression of the *issur* of *bal tosif*. That being the case, if *sefira* is a *mitzvah midirabbanan*, it may be *asur* to have in mind that it is a *mitzvah min haTtorah*.

On the other hand, if the *mitzvah* of *sefira* is *min haTorah*, and the person only had *kavanah* to perform a *mitzvah midirabbanan*, that may also be lacking in the proper *kavanah*. The *Chelkas Yoav* rules that if one does a *mitzvah min haTorah* and mistakenly thought that it is only *dirabanan* and had in mind that he is doing a *mitzvah dirabbanan* he is *yotzei*. However, others maintain that when performing a *mitzvah min haTorah*, having in mind that he is doing a *mitzvah dirabanan* is not sufficient.

The best option is therefore for a person to just have in mind that he is doing a *mitzvah*, without being specific if it is a *mitzvah min haTorah* or a *mitzvah dirabanan*.

Bentching or Sefira – Which One Is First?

Another interesting difference would be for one who made an early Shabbos, with *Maariv* finishing too early to count *sefira*. By the time he finishes the meal and is ready to *bentch*, it is already after nightfall, when it is already possible to count *sefira*. What comes first: *bentching* or *sefira*? At first glance it may depend on this *machlokes* if *sefira* is *min haTorah* or *midirabanan*. If *sefira* is *min haTorah*, then they are both of equal level, and either one can be done first. But if *sefira* is *midirabanan*, *bentching* should take precedence, since *bentching* is *min haTorah*. This is indeed the opinion of the *Noda B'Yehuda*, in his

sefer, Tzelach.

The *Shaagas Aryeh*, however, writes that a *mitzvah min haTorah* does not take precedence over a *mitzvah midirabanan*. He proves this from the fact that we say *borei pri hagafen* in *kiddush*, and only then recite the *brocha* of *kiddush*, even though *borei pri hagafen* is *midirabbanan* and the *brocha* of *kiddush* is *min haTorah*. The *Shaagas Aryeh* proves from here that a *mitzvah min haTorah* does not take precedence over a *mitzvah midrabanan*. According to the *Shaagas Aryeh*, even if *sefira* is *midrabanan*, *bentching* would not take precedence.

The *Tzelach*, however, addresses this, and suggests that this is not sufficient proof. Perhaps the *Gemara* that requires reciting *borei pri hagafen* first is in a normal case, when a person already davened *Maariv*, and was *yotzei* the *mitzvah* of *kiddush min haTorah* in *Maariv*. Then the *kiddush* being recited is also only *midrabanan*, and *borei pri hagafen* can be first. But a *mitzvah min haTorah* comes before a *mitzvah midirabbanan*. According to the *Tzelach*, *bentching* should be first.

Thus, even if *sefira* is *midirabbanan*, there would be a *machlokes* between the *Shaagas Aryeh* and the *Noda B'Yehuda* if *bentching* should be recited before *sefira*.

SUMMARY

Since there is a *machlokes* if *sefira* today is *min haTorah* or *midrabanan*, a person should have in mind that he is doing a *mitzvah*, without being specific if it is a *mitzvah min haTorah* or a *mitzvah midirabbanan*. Even if *sefira* is *midrabanan*, there is a *machlokes* if *bentching* should be recited before *sefira*.

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

מוהל מומחה

CELL: 845-499-6354



Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

- Chavrusa learning - Gemara
- Currently: מסכת פסחים, פרק ערבי פסחים
- Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics

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The Secret of How to Become a Gadol

19:18 “לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך ואהבת לרעך כמוך, אני ד”

“You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge against the members of your people; you shall love your fellow as yourself – I am Hashem.” We are told that we must love our fellow man just as we love ourselves. What is the reason for the mitzvah, and how can one actually accomplish this?

Chazal say that this is a great law of the Torah. How so? Chazal say that because of *Sinas Chinam*, hatred amongst *Klal Yisroel*, the *Bais Hamikdash* was destroyed. Had *Klal Yisroel* heeded this mitzvah of loving properly, the *Bais Hamikdash* would not have been destroyed. Now that we do not have the *Bais Hamikdash*, there is no greater *Bitul Torah* than that, as it says in *Maseches Chagigah*, because there was no peace, the *Bais Hamikdash* was destroyed, and the *Bais Hamikdash* was what brought peace between *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* and *Klal Yisroel*. (בסא דוד)

Regarding these words, it says in *Yerushalmi, Nedarim 9:4* – “אמר רבי עקיבא זה כלל גדול בתורה” – “Rebbe Akiva says that this is a great rule of the Torah.” The words of Rebbe Akiva can be explained with what was written in the *Sefer Mendeber Meteneh* – “בן פרת יוסף” – If one makes himself like a *midbar* (ממדבר), then the Torah is given to him as a gift (מתנה). The Torah is only acquired with *sholom*, peace, and peace can only be attained by he who is humble. If

one makes himself like a *midbar*, meaning that he is humble, then he will receive the Torah as a gift. The meaning of the words of Rebbe Akiva is that loving your fellow *Yid* is a great rule of the Torah – one who is humble will be at peace with his friends, and because he is humble, he will be *zoche* to receive the Torah as a gift. (רוח חיים)

Rashi – זה כלל גדול בתורה – This means that *ahavas Yisroel*, love of *Klal Yisroel*, is the rule for one who is a *gadol baTorah*. Greater than the fact that he is a *gadol baTorah*, is that he sees his own faults and sees the positive *middos* in others. That is how he is able to be *mekayeim* the mitzvah of loving his fellow *Yid*. (The only way one can truly become a *gadol baTorah* is if he has these *middos*, for only he who is humble can have a true *kinyan* in the Torah). (דברי ישראל)

We can learn this *posuk* that one should love his friend, and that he should love his *neschama*. How can one love his friend? It is only one who is humble, and not self-centered, who can have love for his friend. By being humble, one can have a connection to the Torah, and to *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*. One needs to love his friend, so that he protects his *neschama*, and can become close to *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*. By working on the mitzvah of loving his friend, for that is the command of Hashem, he is in actuality working on coming close to Hashem. May we be *zoche* to fulfill this mitzvah properly, and truly be close to *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*.

The Importance of Individuality

Pesach concluded only a few short weeks ago but its lessons abound. One of the most important lessons learned from *Kriyas Yam Suf* was that each of us has a unique gift to share with the world:

וישם את הים לחרבה ויבקעו המים (יד, בא)
The waters of the sea were parted and the nation of Israel walked through on dry land.

We’ve talked about it here in this column before. *Yiddishkeit* today can hardly be accused of encouraging too much originality. Our *Yeshivas* and *Bais Yaakov’s* stay comfortably within the box, being “different” is not a plus. Current trends and fashions spread like wildfire with multitudes of followers only too happy to conform. It’s scary to think that we might go down in history as the “cookie cutter generation.”

Torah is growing, *chesed* is unprecedented, but does all this come at the cost of the loss of our own individual identity? What is the cost of this conformity? And more importantly does Hashem really want us to constantly look to one another rather than develop our own unique personality? As our tradition teaches, the Red Sea parted into 12 different paths, when it was split. This was done to teach an important lesson. Each tribe was given a different path, in recognition of their special qualities.

The *Mechilta* goes one step further and tells us based on the words in the *shira- Ata forrarta b’zzcha yam*, that the sea was split into many small paths - *pirurin*. There were more than six hundred thousand paths! One for each Jew that crossed on dry land. The symbolism engendered by this thought is amazing.

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



Every Jew counts. Every person was worthy of the entire sea splitting for him! Each person had the merit of carrying his whole nation, should the need arrive.

Harav Shimshon Pincus zt”l picks up on this thought (*Tiferes Shimshon Bamidbar*) and brings it home. Every Jew, R’ Pincus tells us, has one quality, one strength by which he is stronger than anyone in his generation! And furthermore – Hashem does not look at each individual as only being part of a nation... Hashem looks at every single Jew with a specialness, as a parent would look at a *ben yachid*, his only son. Everyone has something unique to contribute to this world. We must try and find out what our special strength is for without our contribution, this world is missing an important and vital dimension - our talent!

All this helps us understand a well-known *chazal* (*Sanhedrin 37a*)- “Each person must tell himself- the world was created just for me- “*Beshvili nivra ha’olam*”. The word “*beshvili*” means - with my path, Rav Pincus says this famous *chazal* is making reference to our *Mechilta*; the paths on the Red sea that Hashem cleared for each one of us. He did this to show us how important we all are!

We were all born with tremendous talents from our Creator. We must encourage and develop our own unique talents and sense of self! Becoming proud and passionate in our *Avodas Hashem*. The world is waiting for our symphony!!

HAGALAS KEILIM



THE BUSY KEILIM MIKVEH



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The Torah in *Parashat Kedoshim* presents a large number of *mitzvot*, covering a very wide range of topics. This Parasha begins with G-d instructing Moshe to present these commands "*El kol adat b'nai Yisrael*" – "to the entire congregation of the Children of Israel." Rashi, based on the Midrash, explains this to mean that this section was given "*BeHakhel*" – at an assembly of the entire nation. These laws needed to be presented to everyone all together, because, Rashi explains, "*Rov gufai Torah teluyin bah*" – loosely translated, this section contains most of the essential principles of the Torah.

We might, however, suggest a deeper interpretation of Rashi's comment.

The *Gemara* in *Masechet Hulin* (7) states: "Yisrael are all holy. There are those who want but do not have, and there are those who have but do not want." Some people yearn to perform and dispense kindness, but lack the resources to do so, whereas others have the resources, but lack the desire. Surprisingly, the *Gemara* introduces this observation by stating, "*Kol Yisrael kedoshim*" – all Jews are holy. How could the *Gemara* make such a comment before noting that there are those among us who have the ability to perform *mitzvot* but do not? How can they also be holy?

Tosafot explains that the people mentioned by the *Gemara* do not want to give, but because they are ashamed, they bring the needy into their homes and feed them. Therefore, even they are "holy," because they give charity, albeit for less than pure motives.

The Slonimer Rebbe (Rav Shalom Noah Berezovsky, 1911-2000) explains the *Gemara* differently. He writes that for a *mitzvah* to be complete, it must be performed to perfection, and also accompanied by a genuine desire to serve G-d. Very often, however, people have only one without the other. Some people have the sincere desire to perform *mitzvot*, but are unable to perform them properly, whereas others have the ability to perform *mitzvot*, and indeed perform *mitzvot*, but without zeal and passion for *mitzvot*.

The Slonimer Rebbe observed that in the generation of the Holocaust, there were Jews who desperately wanted to perform *mitzvot*, but were unable to do so. They wanted so badly to eat *matza*, eat in a *Sukka*, light Hanukkah candles, wear *tefillin*, and so on, but were denied these opportunities. In the generations after the Holocaust, the opposite is true. We have the opportunity to perform *mitzvot*, and we do perform *mitzvot*, but we lack the kind of desire and passion that *mitzvot* deserve. The Slonimer Rebbe proceeded to teach that when we come together in heart and spirit with the previous generations, we form complete *mitzvot*. Our practical observance of the *mitzvot* combines with the desire and yearning for *mitzvot* felt by our predecessors, and then we all together are credited with the performance of perfect *mitzvot*.

With this in mind, we could perhaps suggest an explanation of Rashi's comment regarding parshat *Kedoshim*. Rashi writes that this parsha contains "*Rov gufeai Torah*" – many *mitzvah* actions which must be performed. The word "*guf*" ("body") refers to bodily actions, and thus Rashi speaks here of the practical aspect of *mitzvot*. In order for these actions to be complete, they need the required emotion and feeling, which not everyone is capable of experiencing. And therefore, this *Parasha* had to be taught "*Be'hak'hel*," with everyone together. Hashem wanted to show the people that they need to come together in order to complement one another, such that each person contributes his or her portion. Some will be able to perform the actions, while

others will be unable to perform the actions, but will be able to supply the thoughts and feelings.

We are all different. We each have very different strengths, weaknesses, skills, resources and limitations. When we harmoniously blend together, with mutual respect and unity, we complement one another and are then able to create the kind of perfect, sacred nation that we are to create. Let us strive to get along with and respect all our fellow Jews, even those who are very different from us, so we complement one another and together become the nation that Hashem wants us to be.

SHMIRAS HALASHON

The Value of Vague

You made the wrong move – you sold something to one customer when another customer had already reserved it. If you accept the blame for failing to honor your word to the first customer, may you mention the name of the person who ultimately bought the item?

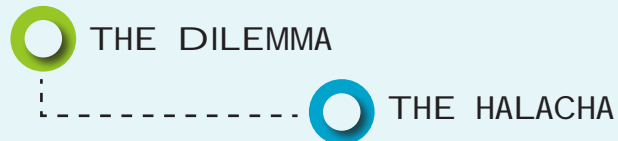
Gedalia Glick sold good quality secondhand furniture. His neighbor Nachum was expecting four branches of his extended family for Pesach, and he needed to buy more chairs. He stopped by Gedalia's store to check out the merchandise and spotted six comfortable, matching chairs that suited his needs perfectly. "I'm going to take these chairs," Nachum told Gedalia. "I'll come back tomorrow with my neighbor's cargo van to pay for them and pick them up." "Great!" said Gedalia. "Don't worry. The chairs aren't going anywhere."

However, a while later, Reuven showed up. "Wow! They're still here!" he said to Gedalia, pointing to the chairs Nachum wanted. "I saw them a couple of days ago and I really liked them. I'm glad no one else took them. I even brought a pick-up truck, so I can bring them straight from here to my house!"

Gedalia couldn't bear to deflate Reuven's enthusiasm. "These things happen in business," he reasoned silently. "Nachum will understand."

Nachum did not understand. "You're 100 percent right!" Gedalia told him. "I should have told Reuven that someone else had claimed the merchandise. He didn't mean to do anything wrong. He didn't even know!"

In taking the blame, has Gedalia prevented the story from becoming lashon hara?



Gedalia has not succeeded because Nachum is bound to have negative feelings about Reuven despite Gedalia's acceptance of the blame. Instead, Gedalia should have explained with a vague statement like, "I made a mistake and sold them to someone else."



Love Your Neighbor

Rabbi Shalom Rosner

In this week's parsha, we find one of the most famous commandments, "v'ahavta l'reacha kamocho", to love your neighbor as you love yourself. This is quite a difficult task. We can understand being obligated to respect someone else, but how can one be forced to love someone else? How are we to understand this obligation? We will offer a few explanations:

Rav Levi Yitzhak M'Bardichiv highlights that the imperative is to love another like you love yourself. Each of us is aware of our shortfalls. Even though we are not perfect, we are able to overlook our faults in order to be satisfied with ourselves. Similarly, we must strive to overlook the imperfections of others and to accept them.

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch focuses on the use of the term "l'reacha" to explain the imperative. It is interesting to note that the pasuk does not state "v'ahavta et reacha" – which would be translated as love your neighbor. Rather the Torah uses the term l'reacha (with the letter lamid). Perhaps this is to underscore that one is not obligated to love their neighbor, but to act lovingly towards their neighbor. Emotions cannot be forced upon us, but actions can be. As the Chinuch states in several places, we are obligated to act in a certain manner as our actions eventually affect our emotions. Whether or not we like another, we are required to treat them respectfully and eventually that would lead to deeper feelings of affection. If I may add, we sometimes state that we need to avoid *sinat chinam* (translated as hatred for no reason) and replace it with *ahavat chinam* (love for no reason). Truthfully, we should avoid *ahavat chinam* as well. Love someone for no reason? We should be able to find even something small to love about another. If we cannot find a reason to appreciate another, then we have a problem.

Rav Elchanan Wasserman offers an alternative explanation. If I am alive, it is due to the will of God. There is a purpose

for my existence, and I am to fulfill a certain *shlichut* (task). If that is true with respect to ourselves, it is true with respect to others as well. Therefore, I must take care in how I treat others, because they were placed on this earth by God to fulfill a purpose as well.

Rav Elchanan's explanation resolves another related question. There is a well-known story in the Talmud (Shabbat 31), whereby a convert asks Hillel to teach him all of the Torah in an abbreviated manner. Hillel responds with the statement "do not treat others in a way in which you would despise being treated by others," essentially a statement that is very similar to our pasuk of *v'ahavta l'reacha kamocho*. From Hillel's response, one could potentially derive *mitzvot bein adam lechavero* – how to act to one another, but how could one deduce the *mitzvot bein adam lamakom* – commandments between man and God?

Based on Rav Elchanan's explanation we can comprehend Hillel's intention. If I understand that I am to respect others because God placed them in this world and they each serve a purpose, I am testifying as to God's dominion over the world and his hashgacha pratit.

Another way of understanding Hillel's statement as being inclusive of *mitzvot bein adam l'chavero* is as follows. Once we appreciate others and perform acts of *chesed* for each other, we come to understand that there is someone who is performing amazing acts of *chesed* on our behalf. Someone Who created the world and Who provides us with all our needs. Avraham and Ruth were both tremendous *ba'ale chesed* through which they each came to recognize God. Through *mitzvot bein adam l'chavero*, they achieved an appreciation of *mitzvot bein adam l'makom*.

May we be able to overlook the faults of others, appreciate their attributes and through our acts of loving kindness be worthy of a *geula shlema bimhera b'yamenu*.

Hakaras Hatov

Rabbi Yisroel Reisman

You may have noticed that we were just counting *sefira* 1, 2, 3, 4... we are already counting 21, 22, 23, 24. Before you know it, we will be at 41, 42, 43, 44. One at a time, the time goes. We were *bar mitzvah bochurim*, we are *zoche* to get a little older, *zoche* to get married, *Zoche* to have a family. HKB"H gives us the opportunity that we are *zoche* to have homes and a few dollars in the bank. The years follow one from the other. Before you know it, you are at the end of the *sefiras ha'omer*. Oy, what a *mussar*!

the three weeks. You can make a *shehecheyanu* as it is a reawakening of the bracha of *shehecheyanu* which for many of us is something that we don't do.

The *Rama* in 223:1 says that people don't make *shehecheyanu* every time they should. The *Magen Avraham* in *s'ifkotton aleph* says that people don't make this *bracha*, but they are wrong. You should say it. You see, *shehecheyanu* depends on *simchas halev*, on appreciating the things that you have, appreciating the things that HKB"H gives you. If you have more and you can afford more, does that mean that you should appreciate it less?

A piece of furniture that you buy needs a *beracha* of *hatov vehameitiv*. A vehicle that you buy needs a *beracha* as well. *Hatov vehameitiv* is the plural of a *shehecheyanu*. A *shehecheyanu* is for a suit (i.e. something used by one person) and *hatov v'hameitiv* is the same *beracha* but made on something like a couch or a car which is something used by many. The point is an appreciation of the things that HKB"H gives us.

A) We have to realize where we are headed but B) we should realize a *hakara*, a recognition of what HKB"H has given us. We go day to day and we take things for granted. Even during *sefira*, you can make a *shehecheyanu*, however, not during



Existing Through Holiness Rabbi Mordechai Willig

"*Kedoshim tihyu*" (Vayikra 19:2) is rendered, "you shall be holy." The *Medrash Tanchuma* (9), as understood by the *Yefe To'ar*, notes that the phrase is inverted - it should have read, as in the translation, "*Heyu Kedoshim* - be holy" (see *Shemos* 19:15). The *Tanchuma* links this phrase to a *pasuk* recited daily: "May He send your help from *Kodesh*, and support you from *Tzion*" (*Tehillim* 20:3). *Kodesh* is not interpreted as geographical, referring to the *Mikdash* in *Tziyon-Yerushalayim*. Rather, it means "from the holiness of your actions - *mek'dushas ma'asim shebach*."

The *Medrash* continues that people need help and support, as David said in the verse cited above. The *Yefe To'ar* explains in light of the previous *pasuk*: "May Hashem answer you on a day of crisis, may the Name of Yaakov's G-d save you" (ibid 20:2). Once Hashem saves us, why is the help of others needed? The *Medrash* concludes that even though Hashem helps us, we need the additional help of others to strengthen us over our enemies. This help can be logistical and military, but can also refer to the holy actions mentioned earlier in the *Medrash*. *Kedoshim tihyu* thus means that through the holiness of your deeds you will exist in this world, despite your enemies' attempts to destroy you.

"In each and every generation they attempt to destroy us, but Hashem saves us from their hands" (*Hagada shel Pesach*). From a lone gunman in Poway to hundreds of murderous rockets fired in Eretz Yisrael, Jewish blood has been spilled since we recited those words. How should we respond?

We must intensify our prayers to Hashem for peace and security for Jews everywhere in this time of crisis (*Tehillim* 20:2). But we must also help (*Tehillim* 20:3) in other ways: logistically, by heightened security awareness and appropriate precautions; financially, by contributing to increased security when necessary and by *tzedaka*, - charity, which saves from death (*Mishlei* 10:2); spiritually, by holy actions which, as the *Medrash* teaches, ensure our existence; and by the study of Torah, especially in *shuls* and *batei medrash*, for when the voice of Yaakov is heard there, the hands of Eisav are neutralized (*Bereishis Raba* 65:20).

The *Rambam* (*Hilchos Ta'anuyos* 1:2,3) rules that when a

communal crisis occurs, we must do *teshuva*, realizing that punishment results from sinful deeds, and, as a result, praying and repenting will remove the crisis. Attributing the crisis to chance, and failing to pray and repent, is cruel since it causes continued sins and worse crises. "If you attribute your crisis to chance (see *Rashi Vayikra* 26:21), I will respond with fury (ibid 26:27,28)."

As we read *Parshas Kedoshim*, Jews worldwide mark the horrific holocaust and the miraculous *medina*. Since these seminal events, of biblical proportions and foreseen in the Bible and its commentators, the Jewish people have changed in ways unimaginable seven decades ago.

The positive change is that the *kol Yaakov* in *shuls* and *yeshivos* has grown exponentially, in both Eretz Yisrael and in America. This affords a measure of protection against constant attacks by *Eisav* (which includes *Yishmael*, see *Malbim* to Daniel 7:8) in the Holy Land. This unprecedented growth should be assisted by our participation and support.

The negative changes, however, are that intermarriage in America is staggeringly rampant, the degenerate practices of Egypt and Canaan (*Vayikra* 18:3, see *Ramban*) have gained acceptance in American society, including among liberal Jews. In stark contrast to "*Kedoshim Tihyu*" (see *Rashi* 19:2), the *parsha* closes by warning us to avoid immorality which causes expulsion from the Holy Land (*Vayikra* 20:22). These problems exist today, unfortunately, in Eretz Yisrael as well. The penultimate *passuk* of *Parshas Kedoshim* reads, "You shall be holy for Me...I have separated you from the nations to be Mine." We must reaffirm the immutability and morality of Hashem's Torah, and remain separate and not assimilate the postmodern values which are antithetical to Torah.

Only Hashem knows the reasons for the recent attacks on Jews here and in Eretz Yisrael and only He can save us. "If Hashem will not guard the city the watchman guards in vain" (*Tehillim* 127:1). Yet, even as we pray to Hashem to save us we must do our share to help, both logistically and spiritually, as the *Medrash* teaches. May our *teshuva*, *tefillah*, *tzedaka*, and *talmud Torah* protect Jews from harm, as our holy deeds ensure our continued existence.

A Heated Argument Torah Tavlin



לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך ואהבת לרעך כמוך (ויט"ח)

Throughout Jewish history, we find tales of great *tzaddikim* who placed exceedingly rigid demands upon themselves, to the point that they underwent a self-imposed penance of exile for what they felt were their spiritual shortcomings. R' Aryeh Leib Ginsburg ZT"l, better known as the *Sha'agas Aryeh* from the title of his monumental halachic work, undertook such a voluntary exile as part of compensation for his sins.

In one community, while not recognized as the great man that he was, R' Aryeh Leib was invited as a *Shabbos* guest by the local rabbi, who himself was an accomplished Torah scholar. The two entered into a discussion on a variety of topics – Talmudic law and halachic issues found in the *gemarah* – and, as tends to happen, this eventually escalated from a lively dialogue to a heated exchange, with the two *talmidei chachomim* defending opposite sides of the issues. Each tried to bolster his line of reasoning by recourse to opinions of accepted halachic authorities. *Sefer* after

sefer was brought out and quoted in the hope of proving the point at hand, until a large pile had accumulated on the table.

As may happen in an argument where one feels his position is challenged by the other side, one may take things personally and verbally lash out against his opponent. The local rabbi was carried away by the fervor of his argument and directed some insulting remarks at R' Aryeh Leib, calling him among other things, a boor and an ignoramus. R' Aryeh Leib, however, stood his ground and was not swayed in his arguments, nor shaken at the assault on his character.

The local rabbi was exasperated. "I'll prove to you that I am right," he exclaimed with an air of finality. He then ran to the bookcase and withdrew a *sefer*. Hurriedly turning pages, he waved it emphatically, "Here, come see for yourself! Even the great *Sha'agas Aryeh* supports my position!"

The author of the *Sha'agas Aryeh* smiled wearily. "Isn't that strange?" quipped R' Aryeh Leib to a person sitting nearby, "when the *Sha'agas Aryeh* stands in the bookcase among the other *seforim*, he is respected; however, when he stands on his own two feet, he is insulted!"

SIBLING LOVE, DISGRACE, AND QUARRELS

Rabbi Rafi Wolfe

**ואיש אשר-יקח את-אחתו בת-אביו או בת-אמו
וראה את-ערותה והיא תראה את ערותו חסד
הוא וכרתו לעיני בני עמם ערות אחתו גלה
עונו ישא**

A man who will take his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother, and will see her nakedness, and she will see his nakedness, it is chesed, and they will be cut off from before the eyes of the nation. For he has uncovered his sister's nakedness, and he shall carry his sin.

The Torah, in its list of the forbidden relationships, gives the incestuous relationship with one's sister a special descriptor. The union is referred to as *chesed*. Normally, this word refers to loving kindness. It seems highly out of place in this context. Rashi therefore says that in this context it's the Aramaic word for disgrace. Such a union is a disgrace to both parties. However, why did the Torah use this unusual word, instead of the normal Hebrew word for disgrace? Rashi therefore brings the homiletic interpretation, that this verse is alluding to the answer to an age-old question.

Hashem created Adam and Eve, the first humans. Together they had two sons, Kayin and Hevel. Chazal inform us that Kayin was born together with a sister, and Hevel with two sisters. To ensure the perpetuation of mankind, Kayin and Hevel married their twin sisters. If incest with one's sister is forbidden, how could Kayin and Hevel marry their sisters? The answer is that Hashem performed *chesed* for humanity and temporarily permitted this union. Hashem's act of loving kindness ensured the continuity of mankind. To allude to this fact, the Torah uses the word *chesed* when it lists the forbidden union of a man and his sister.

However, this solution to perpetuating humanity seems unnecessary. Wouldn't it have been simpler to create multiple families of humans? They could each marry each other's children, avoiding any incest whatsoever. Why did Hashem create a single Man, to then divide him into husband and wife, such that their kids would have to marry each other? This approach requires temporarily lifting the prohibition on marrying one's sister. The answer is that Hashem created Man alone to teach us the importance and significance of a single human

being. When someone saves the life of an individual, it's as if they have saved an entire world, and when they destroy a life, it's as if they have destroyed an entire world. As well, it avoids unnecessary quarreling about who has a greater ancestor. We all come from the same source. It was a tremendous *chesed* then that Hashem created mankind in a way that He'd have to permit a brother to marry his sister, just to teach us this lesson, and to maintain peace.

With this, we can also get a deeper understanding of Hashem's rebuke of Kayin after he killed his brother Hevel. Hashem told Kayin: "Behold, the voice of your brother's blood calls out to Me". Rashi explains that this refers to the blood of Hevel, as well as all his potential descendants. Why did Hashem introduce his rebuke with "behold"? It sounds like He's trying to point something out that Kayin wasn't noticing.

Why did Kayin kill his brother Hevel? The verse is very vague. It just says that they went out into the field, and they had a discussion about something. What was it about? *Chazal* interpret that they were arguing about their twin sisters. Kayin was telling his brother Hevel that Hashem abhors incestuous relationships. Despite that knowledge, they were in an impossible situation. The only way to continue the human race was to marry their sisters. Kayin suggested to Hevel that to decrease the impropriety as much as possible, Hevel should take the sister that was born with Kayin, and Kayin should take the sisters who were born with Hevel. Hevel however wasn't interested in this proposition. As a result, Kayin killed his brother Hevel.

Hashem's rebuke to Kayin was to point out his hypocrisy. If a man marrying his sister is so abhorrent to Hashem, why did He create the world in such a way that it was the only way to perpetuate the human race? The only reason is as said before, to teach us that a single person is an entire world, and someone who destroys a life is as if they have destroyed an entire world. If so, why did Kayin kill his own brother? He had no answer. Hashem told him that the blood of his brother Hevel was crying out. This was his blood and the blood of all his potential offspring. This single person was like an entire world.



Embracing Life's Hardships

Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

"You shall love your fellow as yourself" – 19:18). Rav Nachman of Breslav (*Likutei Moharan*, 1:165) offers a remarkable interpretation of this pasuk, suggesting reading the word רעך to mean "your evil," the רע in a person's life, the hardships and challenges that a person endures. We are to "love," to accept and embrace, not only the countless blessings that we enjoy, but also the רע, the difficulties that we face. This *pasuk* concludes אני השם "I am Hashem," using the name *Havaya* which connotes God's quality of mercy and compassion. Even the רע in our lives is a manifestation of Hashem's kindness.

When we surrender entirely to the divine will, and fully place our trust in God, then we will be able to embrace even רעך life's hardships and struggles. Rav Nachman explains the word כמורך to mean that the hardships we endure are for us, precisely what Hashem decided that we need to experience in order to get to where we need to go, to achieve what we are to achieve, and to become the people that we are supposed to become. As difficult as it may be to realize while we are struggling, while we are going through whatever ordeal we are dealing with, the challenges we face help build us and facilitate our growth.

ואהבת לרעך כמוך We are to embrace life's challenges because they are precisely what we need to realize our potential. Rav Nachman here teaches us to try to "love" even that which is painful in our lives, to recognize the value of life's challenges, and appreciate the important role they play in bringing us to where we need to go. The more we reinforce our faith that everything that happens is, ultimately, a manifestation of Hashem's unlimited kindness, the more we will be able to embrace and love life's hardships, as we will firmly believe that they, no less than our blessings and good fortune, are a critical part of our lives and of the process of becoming the great people that we are meant to become.

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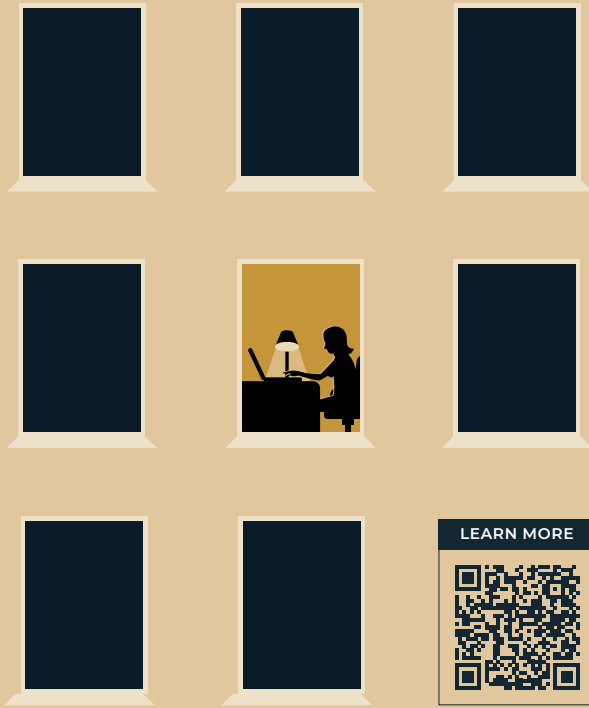


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- ☑ MIDLIFE
- ☑ EMPTY NEST
- ☑ AGING

JOKES

Happy Anniversary

Josh is mega-rich and is always lavishing expensive presents on his wife, Naomi. But today, Josh is in big trouble. He has forgotten that it's their wedding anniversary. Oy vey!

Shoshana looks him in his eyes and says, in a very serious manner, "Tomorrow, Josh, there had better be something for me outside our garage that goes from 0 to 200 in next to no time at all, or else..."

Naomi gets up early next morning, opens her front door, and finds a small package outside the garage. She opens it and finds, of all things, a brand new scale for her bathroom.

Advantages and Disadvantages

"I want you to know something," Chaim Cohen, a New York real estate agent said to some potential clients. "I've been studying with my Rabbi and he's given me some guidelines about what I can and can't say when I am showing a house. He said that I have to be completely honest so I have to disclose a home's negatives, but I can also highlight the positives."

"OK..." said the prospective buyer.

"So in this home", continued Chaim, "the disadvantages are that there is a chemical plant one block south and a slaughterhouse a block north."

"What are the advantages!?" inquired the prospective buyer.

"The advantage is that you can always tell which way the wind is blowing."

Ain't no Angel

Rivkah Epstein was at work when she received a phone call that her daughter was very sick with a fever. She left her work and stopped by the pharmacy to get some medication. She got back to her car and found that she had locked her keys in the car.

She didn't know what to do, so she called home and told the babysitter what had happened. The babysitter told her that the fever was getting worse. She said, "You need to get back here immediately with that medication. Do whatever you have to, to get in your car."

The woman looked around and found an old rusty coat hanger on the ground. She tried to use it to open her car door but exasperated, admitted, "I don't know how to use this."

So Rivkah bowed her head and asked Hashem to send her some help. Within five minutes an old rusty car pulled up, with a greasy, bearded man who was wearing an old biker skull rag on his head. The woman thought, "Hashem, this is what You sent to help me?"

The man got out of his car and asked her if he could help. She said, "Yes, my daughter is very sick. I stopped to get her some medication and I locked my keys in my car. I must get home to her. Please, can you use this hanger to unlock my car?"

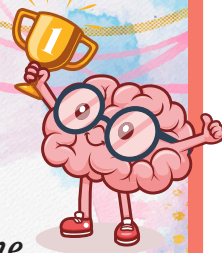
He said, "Sure". He walked over to the car, and in less than a minute the car was opened. In tears she said, "Thank you so much! You are an angel!"

The man replied, "I ain't no angel lady. I just got out of prison today. For car theft, actually."

Rivkah looked heavenward and cried out loud, "Oh, Thank you Hashem! I'm sorry I questioned You. Not only did You answer my prayers and send me help, You even sent me a professional!"



BRAIN TEASERS



1. Two U.S. coins add up to 30 cents. If one of them is not a nickel, what are the two coins?

2. Make one word from all the following jumbled letters: o r e n o d w

3. An explorer found a silver coin marked 7 BC. He was told it was a forgery. Why?

4. I have only nickels, dimes, and quarters and have at least one of each type of coin. The total number of coins I have is fifteen and the total value of all the coins is \$1.00. How many of each coin do I have?

ANSWERS
1. A quarter and a nickel (Be careful of what the wording says: One is not a nickel, but the OTHER one is!) 2. The letters spell "one word" 3. The label BC only could have come into usage after 0 BC. 4. Thirteen nickels, one dime, and one quarter.

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שחרית

כותיקין 20 Upstairs	8:15 Tent ב	10:45 Tent ד
כותיקין Sefardi 18 Main	8:30 Tent ג	11:00 Tent א
- Birkas Kohanim	8:45 Tent ד	11:15 Tent ב
6:15 Tent א	9:00 Tent א	11:30 Tent ג
6:30 Tent ג	9:15 Tent ב	11:45 Tent ד
6:45 Tent ד	9:30 Tent ג	12:00 Tent א
7:00 Tent א	9:45 Tent ד	12:15 Tent ב
7:15 Tent ב	10:00 Tent א	12:30 Tent ג
7:30 Tent ג	10:15 Tent ב	Minyan before
7:45 Tent ד	10:30 Tent ג	Chatzos Tent א
8:00 Tent א		

מנחה

מנחה גדולה 18 Main	5:45 pm 18 Main	8:25 pm Tent ד
1:30 pm 18 Main	6:00 pm 18 Main	*8:30 pm **Tent א
1:45 pm 18 Main	6:15 pm 18 Main	8:35 pm Tent ב
2:00 pm 18 Main	6:30 pm 18 Main	8:40 pm Tent ב
2:15 pm 18 Main	6:45 pm 18 Main	8:45 pm Tent ג
2:30 pm 18 Main	7:00 pm 18 Main	8:50 pm Tent ה
2:45 pm 18 Main	7:15 pm 18 Main	8:55 pm Tent ד
3:00 pm 18 Main	7:30 pm Tent א	9:00 pm Tent א
3:15 pm 18 Main	7:35 pm Tent ב	*9:05 pm Tent ב
3:30 pm 18 Main	7:40 pm Tent ב	*9:10 pm Tent ב
3:45 pm 18 Main	7:45 pm Tent ג	*9:15 pm Tent ג
4:00 pm 18 Main	7:50 pm Tent ה	*9:20 pm Tent ה
4:15 pm 18 Main	7:55 pm Tent ד	*9:25 pm Tent ד
4:30 pm 18 Main	*8:00 pm **Tent א	*9:30 pm **Tent א
4:45 pm 18 Main	8:05 pm Tent ב	*9:35 pm Tent ב
5:00 pm 18 Main	8:10 pm Tent ב	
5:15 pm 18 Main	8:15 pm Tent ג	
5:30 pm 18 Main	8:20 pm Tent ה	

* Subject to change based on תם רבינו or שקיעה **If נשים עזרת will be in תם רבינו are at this time
Please note Tent ב will be split into 1 & 2

מעריב

*8:00 pm Tent ה	9:10 pm Tent א	10:50 pm Tent א
*8:05 pm Tent ד	9:15 pm Tent ב	11:00 pm 18 Main
*8:10 pm **Tent א	9:20 pm Tent ב	11:15 pm 18 Main
*8:15 pm Tent ב	9:25 pm Tent ג	11:30 pm 18 Main
*8:20 pm Tent ב	9:30 pm Tent ה	11:45 pm 18 Main
*8:25 pm Tent ג	9:35 pm Tent ד	12:00 am 18 Main
*8:30 pm Tent ה	9:40 pm Tent א	12:15 am 18 Main
8:35 pm Tent ד	9:45 pm 18 Main	12:30 am 18 Main
8:40 pm Tent א	9:50 pm Tent א	12:45 am 18 Main
8:45 pm Tent ב	10:00 pm Tent ב	1:00 am 18 Main
8:50 pm Tent ב	10:10 pm Tent א	1:15 am 18 Main
8:55 pm Tent ג	10:20 pm Tent ב	1:30 am 18 Main
9:00 pm Tent ה	10:30 pm Tent א	1:45 am 18 Main
9:05 pm Tent ד	10:40 pm Tent ב	2:00 am 18 Main

* Subject to change based on שקיעה **If נשים עזרת will be in תם רבינו are at this time the
minyan will be in תם רבינו