

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים  
תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂיךָ  
וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי  
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## Shabbos Zmanim CANDLE LIGHTING 5:10 PM

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### SHABBOS

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<b>MINCHA/MAARIV</b>	Pirchei <b>2:00 PM</b>	18 Main Mincha <b>5:10 PM</b>	Shkiya <b>5:29 PM</b>	Tent א Maariv :40 <b>6:09 PM</b>	18 Main Maariv :50 <b>6:19 PM</b>

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**12 MIN.** before shkia

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## Receiving the Torah with Love: From Creation to Purim

At the conclusion of *Parshas Mishpatim*, the Torah describes the completion of *Matan Torah* and states:

וְאֵל אֶצִּילִי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא שָׁלַח יָדוֹ

“And He did not send His hand to the great men of Israel.”

This puzzling verse is the subject of a fundamental dispute among the *Rishonim*.

Rashi explains that the verse refers to Nadav and Avihu together with the Elders, who erred by eating and drinking during *Matan Torah*, an inappropriate act at such a sacred moment. Hashem did not punish them immediately, but judgment was delayed.

Onkelos and the Ramban, however, understand the verse in precisely the opposite way. They explain that the Elders acted properly. They ate holy food from the *shelamim* as an expression of *simcha* and celebration at receiving the Torah. According to this view, no sin occurred at all.

A fascinating resolution to this question appears in a *teshuvah* of the *Ksav Sofer* (*Orach Chaim* §141). While discussing an unrelated halachic issue—whether *mishloach manos* may be given anonymously, a question that hinges on the famous dispute between the *Manos HaLevi* and the *Terumas HaDeshen* regarding the purpose of *mishloach manos*—the *Ksav Sofer* returns to our verse and raises a penetrating question:

According to the Ramban, if the Elders acted correctly, why does the Torah emphasize that Hashem “did not send His hand” against them? What danger was avoided?

His answer is remarkable. Chazal teach in *Maseches Shabbos* that at Sinai, Hashem held the mountain over the Jewish people and compelled them to accept the Torah, כַּפָּה עֲלֵיהֶם הָר כְּגִיטָה. This coercion distinguished *Matan Torah* from the later acceptance of the Torah in the days of Purim, when the Jews accepted it willingly and joyfully, as the verse says, קָיְמוּ וְקִבְּלוּ בְּהַוָּדוּת.

The *Ksav Sofer* explains that the “great men of Israel” were different. They did not require coercion. For them, Hash-

em did not need to “send His hand,” that is, to force acceptance. Their relationship to Torah was already one of love and willingness.

This insight strikes at the very heart of what *Matan Torah*, and indeed creation itself, was meant to be about.

### CREATION, PLEASURE, AND THE SIN OF ADAM

This idea takes us back to the very beginning of history. On Tu BiShvat this year, we held a Tu BiShvat seder in our shul and explored the deeper meaning of this day. Tu BiShvat comes thirty days after Purim, and this connection is not coincidental.

The *Meshech Chochmah* offers a striking insight into the sin of Adam HaRishon. Adam’s failure was not merely that he ate from the Tree of Knowledge. Rather, his deeper mistake was that he did not convey to Chava the positive commandment to enjoy all the permitted fruits of Gan Eden. Had he emphasized abundance, pleasure, and gratitude, Chava might have been protected from sin. The failure was not desire but the failure to frame mitzvah as joy.

The Tu BiShvat seder is a conscious *tikkun* of that mistake. Through eating fruits divided into three categories—those with inedible outer peels, those with inedible pits, and those whose seeds are fully edible—and through the fragrance of the esrog, corresponding to the four worlds of *asiyah*, *yetzirah*, *beriah*, and *atzilus*, together with four cups of wine, we strive to elevate ourselves. We transform the *klipah* into growth and rediscover the holiness embedded in physical enjoyment.

### ADAM, HAMAN, AND MORDECHAI

Rav Aharon Kotler deepens this theme through a famous teaching on the Gemara in *Chullin* (139b), which links Haman to Adam HaRishon through the words הָבֵן הָעֵץ.

Adam had everything, yet he fixated on the one fruit that was forbidden. Haman likewise had everything—honor, power, wealth—yet because one Jew, Mordechai, refused to bow, all of it meant nothing to him. In both cases, the inability to focus on abundance led to total loss.

But the Gemara there also alludes to Mordechai, tracing his name to the spic-

es of the *shemen hamishchah*, מֵר דָּרוֹר, which Onkelos translates as מְקִי דְכִי. This hints to Mordechai as the antidote and *tikkun* to Haman.

A beautiful explanation brings this full circle. Fragrance is unique among the senses. It gives pleasure to others without diminishing itself. One who spreads a good scent loses nothing. Mordechai represents the Jew who lives to give, to influence, and to inspire others. He is willing to sacrifice personal comfort for the sake of the *klal*, confident that giving does not diminish him—it elevates him.

### FRAGRANCE AT SINAI AND THE MISSION OF TORAH

Chazal teach that with each commandment at Sinai, Hashem filled the world with fragrance. This was not incidental. It was a message.

Torah is not a burden, it is an expression of Divine love. Hashem, infinite and lacking nothing, gives without loss. The more we expand our vessels, the more Divine light can flow into the world.

So too, Torah is not diminished when it is taught or shared. Wisdom, like fragrance, increases through giving. And finally, fragrance represents influence, the quiet but powerful ability to affect others. This is our mission as a people: to be a light unto the nations.

### TU BISHVAT, PURIM, AND THE FUTURE REDEMPTION

Tu BiShvat is about roots, hidden growth, and potential. Purim is about revealed fruit, joy, and influence outward. On Purim, not only did the Jewish people accept the Torah with love, but many from the nations of the world sought to join them.

This is why Purim will never be nullified. It represents Torah as it was always meant to be received. And it points forward to the ultimate redemption, when the world itself will accept Divine truth not through coercion, but through love, joy, and recognition of Hashem’s goodness.

May we merit to live that reality soon, speedily, and in our days.

SHIUR  
SCHEDULE

SEMICHAS CHAVER SHIUR  
in R’ Coren’s office  
every Sunday at 8:00 PM



## Your Enemy's Donkey

*"If you see the donkey of someone you hate crouching under its burden, and you might refrain from helping him, you shall surely help him."*

The language seems superfluous. Why was it necessary to discuss the possible thought that you may not wish to help your enemy, "and you might refrain from helping him," rather than stating the law succinctly: "If you see the donkey of someone you hate crouching under its burden, you shall surely help him."?

The answer is simple. The Bible is making a point of acknowledging the instinct to refrain from helping one's enemy's donkey as legitimate and human. It is perfectly normal to feel that you care not to assist the person you loathe, even if his animal is suffering.

Yet notwithstanding this natural emotion, the Bible is calling on us to challenge our instinct and assist our enemy's donkey regardless. This perfectly human instinct of loathing an enemy need not dictate our actions.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT VS. DOMINATION

There are two significant lessons here, pertinent particularly for an age dedicated to the dissecting of one's emotional persona. For one, the Torah does not believe in denying and repressing negative emotions, to make believe that they do not exist. Simultaneously with its insistence that we assist the animal of the one we hate, the Torah makes a special point of mentioning the fact that we may harbor a feeling to desist from extend-

ing a hand to the burdened donkey of our enemy.

The fact that our emotions are not always in sync with our ideals and values does not reduce us to moral failures. Eight hundred and fifty years ago, the great medieval Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides captured this truth in his code of Jewish law:

When one person wrongs another, the latter should not suppress his resentment and remain silent... rather he is commanded to let him know [his feelings] and ask him: 'Why did you do this to me? Why did you wrong me regarding this matter?'... The Torah warns us against hating in our hearts.

On the other hand, the Bible is informing us that not every emotion is holy. When someone's animal is suffering, you must extend your hand, notwithstanding your negative emotions toward the owner of the donkey.

One of the problems unique to our age is that, for many of us, emotions have become the sole barometers that determine right from wrong. We have turned our emotions into deities, worshiping them as though they embodied absolute, timeless truths—a new G-d. To suggest to somebody that they might overlook an emotion, subdue a feeling, disregard a mood is a form of heresy. Our emotions have become gods, and we must obey them at all costs, even if this may be detrimental for our relationships, our marriages, our children, and our long-term visions. In the Biblical ethos, there is a critical distinction that must be made between acknowledging your emotions vs. allowing

them to dictate your behavior.

### HOW TO TREAT YOUR INNER CHILDREN

In the Kabbalistic literature, our faculties of cognition are commonly referred to as "parents," while our faculties of emotions are described as "children." The significance of this metaphor is vital. The relationship between the mind and the heart, it suggests, must reflect a healthy relationship between parents and children. When your child begins to holler, you must acknowledge their predicament and examine the cause of their outburst. Yet you cannot run to call the ambulance based on the screams of a child alone without examining the situation on your own first.

A clear distinction must be made between delegitimizing your child's tears, which is cruel, and allowing these tears to dictate your home and life, which would result in chaos.

A similar relationship must exist between the mind and the heart. Emotions, instincts, moods, and feelings are 'children.' They are cute, spontaneous, vibrant, immature, and wild. Sometimes, they are on to something very real and serious; other times, they exaggerate or distort reality. We ought not to delegitimize, suppress, or deny them. We must be keenly aware of their existence within us. Just like children, we must attempt to educate and refine them. Yet we ought not to worship them and allow them the exclusive right to define our lives.

As valuable as emotions are, the moral sense of right and wrong must be given precedence over "I do not feel up to it."

### SHIUR SCHEDULE

**MONDAY & THURSDAY** Chassidus Shiur 7:45 AM (18 Main) • **TUESDAY** Womens Shiur 9:30 AM (84 Viola Rd)  
**SHABBOS** Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs) • **Morning 8:40 AM** (20 Upstairs) | **After Davening 12:00 PM** (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.

## CHOFETZ CHAIM HERITAGE FOUNDATION

### A Good Word

Shammai, a nineteen-year-old *bachur* suffering from a debilitating illness, knew he didn't have long to live. One day, Shammai told his father, "If I don't make it, I don't want anyone to give a *hesped* at my *levayah* except my ninth-grade rebbi." A few weeks passed, and Shammai was weaker. He called his father close and said, "Remember what I said about a *hesped*. If my rebbi doesn't understand why I want him to speak, give him this paper. It's only for him to read."

Sadly, Shammai passed away. His father went to the rebbi's house and made the request. As expected, the rebbi wondered, "Why *davka* me?" So, Shammai's father gave him the folded paper. The rebbi opened it and, as he looked at the writing inside, began to smile.

"This brings back such memories!" he said. "Shammai's class was tough. There was a lot of fighting, and I was at my wits' end. One day, I gave out twenty sheets of paper, each with the name of a *talmid* on the top. I told the boys to write down the positive qualities they saw in that boy and what they thought he would become.

"Each boy had a chance to add to each of his classmates' lists. Then, I gave each boy the sheet with his name on top. The boys discovered the wonderful things their classmates thought about them. The fighting stopped, and the boys became friends. Shammai once told me that his life changed because of that paper."

When some of Shammai's classmates came to be *menachem avei*, they showed Shammai's father that they, too, kept those sheets folded up in their wallets. A good word really can change everything.

# RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER



## Mishloach Manos Through a Shaliach

As we welcome Rosh Chodesh Adar in this week, this is an opportune time to discuss the mitzvah that we do on Purim of *mishloach manos*, sending presents to a friend. This is based on the words of the Megillah (9:19): "ומשלוח מנות איש לרעהו" – sending presents from a man to his friend." Does the word "*mishloach*" mean that one must actually send it with a *shaliach*, an emissary, or is that just a convenient way to send a package?

### PREFERABLE TO USE A SHALIACH

The *Aruch Laner*, in his *teshuvos Binyan Tzion*, discusses this. He ends off that it is definitely not a requirement to send with a *shaliach*, but it may be preferable. The *Dvar Avraham* quotes others who suggest that this is actually the opinion of the *Ran*. The Gemara tells of two *Amoraim* who were very poor and were only able to fulfill the mitzvah of *mishloach manos* by each one giving whatever they had to the other. When the *Ran* quotes this story, he adds that they sent what they had to each other. This seems to imply that simply handing it over was not enough, but it was actually necessary to send it with someone else. However, the *Dvar Avraham* himself does not agree that this wording is a proof.

The *Mahari Asad* suggests that the expression of the *pasuk* is not a proof that a *shaliach* is required. Rather, it was just meant as a better way of doing the mitzvah since it adds to the prestige of the present, but not that it is a must.

The *Mikor Chaim* adds that sending with a *shaliach* is the preferred option because it adds to the *pirsumei nisa*, the publicizing of the miracle.

## REQUIREMENT TO USE A SHALIACH

The *Mishna Berurah* takes this notion a step further and entertains the possibility that sending it with a *shaliach* is actually a requirement, and without the use of an emissary, the mitzvah is not fulfilled.

### NO NEED TO USE A SHALIACH

On the other hand, the *Eishel Avraham* rules that the *pasuk* is not telling us that one must or should send the *mishloach manos* with a *shaliach*. On the contrary, doing it yourself is better, but the Torah is telling us that one is allowed to send it with a *shaliach*. The *Salmas Chaim* also understands that the point is that one is allowed to use a *shaliach*. He explains that usually the rule is that one should do a mitzvah himself – *mitzvah bo yoser m'bshlucho*. However, in this case, although one is allowed to do it himself, if he has to run around delivering the *mishloach manos*, he may not have enough time to fulfill the mitzvah of *simcha* properly. That is why the Megillah gave an allowance to send it with someone else instead. The *Kaf Hachaim* also rules that there is no need to send it with a *shaliach*, and he takes issue with the entire premise. He proves from many *pesukim* in Tanach that the word "*mishloach*" does not necessarily mean sending something with someone else.

### SUMMARY OF THE OPINIONS

Some hold that sending with a *shaliach* is obligatory. Some say it is better to do so, and some say that it is unnecessary.

### HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

Most *poskim*, including the Chazon Ish, the Brisker Rav, and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, rule that it is unnecessary to send *mishloach manos* with a *shaliach*.

## SHIUR SCHEDULE

### KOLLEL BOKER 7:00-8:00AM

Chavrusa learning - Gemara  
Currently: מסכת יומא  
Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei  
Dyoma and relevant topics

### NIGHT KOLLEL 8:15-9:45PM

Chavrusa learning - Halacha  
Currently : הלכות צדקה

### SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

Daf Yomi | 8:45-9:45 PM

Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00 PM

Zera Shimshon Shiur | 8:15-9:00 PM

Maharal Shiur | 9:15-9:45

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# UFARATZTA RABBI SHALOM BER MUNITZ



## Azov Ta'azov Imo

*Ki sir'eh chamor sona'acha rovetz tachas maso'oy* – Perhaps you see the donkey of your enemy lying under its burden.

*Sona'acha*, your enemy, is your *yetzer hara*. *Chamor* can also allude to the word *chumrius*, which means, of course, *gashmius*; when your *yetzer hara*, animal soul, is being burdened by Yiddishkeit and instead is into *ta'avas gashmius*.

*V'chadalto may'azov lo* – will you refrain from helping him?

*Azov ta'azov imo* – you shall surely help him. Learn Torah and teach him the beauty of Torah and mitzvos, connecting with the real thing, Hashem.

It used to be that people would fast and go into self-imposed exile to break their body and animal soul. The Baal Shem Tov taught: *ozov ta'azov imo* – help him along. Keep

your body healthy and teach your animal soul the beauty of Yiddishkeit.

==== The Baal Shem Tov

The Rebbe would advise people who wanted to fast for *teshuva* reasons to add *shuirim* in Torah instead.

Note: Today, just keeping your body healthy by eating right is a great *avodas Hashem*.

## Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

מוהל מומחה

CELL: 845-499-6354

## RABBI NACHUM WINKLER



### Shekalim and Purim

The special *haftarah* selection that is read for *Shabbat Shekalim* tells the story of King Yehoash, the story of the king's campaign to raise the funds for the repair of the Bet HaMikdash. Because the *haftarah* tells the story of donating shekels, it was selected as the *haftarah* for *Shabbat Shekalim*.

The mitzvah of "*machatzit hashekel*" is connected specifically to this Shabbat of the year because, as the Mishna explains, the collection of the one-half shekel was observed in the month of Adar. Hence, the Shabbat before (or of) Rosh Chodesh Adar was designated as *Shabbat Shekalim*.

This, the first of the four special *maftir* readings that precede Pesach, was established because the funds that were raised during this time were used for the communal offerings in the Bet Mikdash as well as for the repair of the roads leading to Yerushalayim, thus aiding the pilgrims in their travel to the Holy Temple for the upcoming *chag* of Pesach.

I would suggest, however, that this theme of "shekel" also teaches us a lesson about Purim that we hope to be celebrating in a few weeks. Purim is the time of "*V'nahafoch hu*," a celebration of a "topsy-turvy" story in which what should have occurred and what WAS expected to happen DID NOT, and what was NOT expected and should NOT have occurred DID! The unexpected happened and saved the Jews.

It is a story of change, unexpected change.

Vashti WAS the queen, but that unexpectedly changed. Esther WAS a young orphan but unexpectedly became the queen. King Achashverosh decreed that the Jews be attacked, but surprisingly became their protector. Mordechai mourned and publicly dressed in sackcloth, but later was publicly marched through the streets in royal garments. And, of course, Haman was raised to the highest post by the king's decree, but ended his life hanging from the highest post by the king's decree. Change, change, change.

But I would suggest that it was more than change; it was "repair." And that is what the *machatzit hashekel* was for as well. Consider: The mitzvah was given to the Jews in the desert to repair their relationship with G-d after they sinned with the *egel hazahav*, the Golden Calf. Similarly, the shekels raised by King Yehoash were used to repair the Holy Bet Mikdash, which had fallen into disrepair after over 100 years, as described in this week's *haftarah*, and the shekel did the same in Shushan. The decree that was to doom the Jewish community of Persia was signed after the promise of 10,000 shekels to be added to the king's coffers. And those 10,000 shekels not only sealed the king's deal with Haman but also created a unity within the Jewish community that had been divided. There was a change! There was a repair! In the beginning of the story, the Jews were described as being "*mefuzar um'forad*," scattered and separated, but after the shekels were promised and the decree was passed, the Jews banded together, fasted with Esther, and eventually, joined together, "*nikhalu*," to defend themselves. You see, the shekel again led to repair, repair of a divided community that learned that they indeed are one nation and share the same fate.

Perhaps that is why it is said that G-d commanded each Jew to donate one-half of a shekel. By joining with another Jew, one is complete. He is repaired.

## RABBI DAVID SILVERBERG

### The Pierced Ear

*Parashat Mishpatim* begins with the laws of *eved Ivri*, an indentured servant, who is to be released from service after six years, but has the option of remaining beyond six years. If he decides that he prefers the life of a servant and wishes to stay with his master, a special ritual is performed whereby his ear is pierced as a symbol of his status of permanent servitude (21:6). Rashi famously cites the Gemara's comment (*Kiddushin* 22b) that the piercing of the servant's ear is done as a punishment, of sorts, either for his having stolen, on account of which he was forced to sell himself into servitude (to earn the money to repay what he stole), or for voluntarily extending his undesirable state of servitude.

The *Chizkuni*, after citing and discussing Rashi's comments, adds a different explanation for why the servant's ear is pierced, noting that it serves to distinguish him from non-Jewish servants. Whereas Jewish servants must be offered to be released after six years, non-Jewish servants remain permanently in the master's service unless the master is physically abusive. Therefore, *Chizkuni* comments, after a Jewish servant chooses to remain permanently in his master's control, people who see him serving the master beyond six years might mistake him for a non-Jewish servant. For this reason, the Torah requires making a permanent, visible sign on his body that will make it clear to one and all that he is a full-fledged member of the Jewish Nation, despite his state of permanent servitude.

While at first glance, it seems that this approach disagrees with Chazal's explanation cited by Rashi, the Tolna Rebbe suggests that they in truth go hand-in-hand. Even as the servant is punished, he is given a very public reminder that he is still to be regarded as part of *Am Yisrael*. Although he has done something wrong warranting a painful, punitive measure, nevertheless, he should not be disrespected. Despite his wrong decision and his lowly status, we must nevertheless ensure to treat him with respect and not as an outsider.

The Rebbe added that the *Chizkuni*'s comments remind us about the need to preserve a child's or student's dignity and self-respect even when punitive measures or harsh criticism is warranted. When a child's "ear" requires "piercing" due to misconduct, he must be reassured that he will still continue to be loved and embraced. Even as he is censured or punished, he must be reminded that he will never be treated as an outsider, that he is still forever cherished and respected. Just as the servant is given a sign of his membership in G-d's cherished nation at the very moment he is punished, we, too, must give children reassurance, encouragement, and love even when disciplinary measures become necessary.



# RABBI YAKOV YOSEF SCHECHTER

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“And Moshe came in the midst of the cloud and ascended the mountain, and Moshe was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.” **Generally speaking, a day includes a night. Thus, had the Torah said, “forty days,” the assumption would be that it was forty days with forty nights. Why does the posuk have to say, “ארבעים לילה,” “And forty nights”?**

“And Hashem said to Moshe: Ascend to Me, to the mountain, and be there.” It appears that the words “והיה שם,” “And be there” are extra, as if Moshe will ascend the mountain to Hashem, then he will be there. If one is in a room where his rebbe is giving a *shiur*, but his thoughts are completely elsewhere, while he may be physically in that room, he is not there. This is what the Torah is stressing here, that the command was to ascend to the heavens to learn the *Torah Hakdasha*, and “to be there”! **It is known that the Ba'al Shem Tov used to say that where a person's thoughts are, that is where he really is.** (דברי ישראל)

There are so many days that we just traverse; we go through them, the days and the nights. We don't focus on what we need to do; we just go through life. There is an important message that the Torah is giving us here, that we must take with us throughout our entire lives. Every moment that we are on this world is a gift from Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and we must utilize it to its fullest. The Torah tells us that there are days and there are nights. There are twenty-four hours to the day, sixty minutes to the hour, and sixty seconds to the minute. We must seek to utilize all of them.

We are human beings and have many physical needs that have to be attended to. However, the main question is what is one's focus. Is his focus on *avodas Hashem*, doing what he needs to, and can't wait to get back to the *bais hamedrash*, or is his focus on when he will get to enjoy all the *gashmiyos* of this world? There are times that one can do the proper thing and be in the *bais medrash*, but he is not really in the *bais medrash*. His mind is elsewhere, and he is not focused on the Torah he should be learning or the mitzvos he should be performing.

**Klal Yisroel were commanded to give a half shekel so that they should think about what they are doing. Where is the other half? Why are they only giving a half? It is to remind us that we are not complete. No matter what one accomplishes in this world in coming close to Hashem, there is always more to do. One gives half a shekel to the Mishkan and remembers that he must constantly seek to give the “other half.”** May we be *zoche* to utilize our days and nights and serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu *lishma*, for His sake, and not for any ulterior motives.

# הרב בן ציון סנה



בפרשת השבוע, הבורא מספר לבני ישראל שהם לא יירשו את ארץ כנען מיד, אלא שכיבוש הארץ המובטחת יהיה איטי והדרגתי. ייקח זמן ליישב את הארץ בהצלחה, ואלוקים אומר להם להתאזר בסבלנות. “לא אגרשנו מפניך בשנה אחת פן תהיה הארץ שממה ורבה עליך חייית השדה. מעט מעט אגרשנו מפניך עד אשר תפרה ונחלת את הארץ.” (שמות כג, כט-ל).

סנסציות המתרחשות בן-לילה, לרוב כשמן כן הן: הן לא מחזיקות מעמד זמן רב. לאט ובטחה, צעד אחר צעד, הגישה ההדרגתית לרוב מאריכה ימים ונחלת הצלחה בת-קיימא. לכל יהודי יש חלק בארץ המובטחת – לא רק מבחינה גיאוגרפית אלא גם מבחינה רוחנית. בתוך כל אחד ואחת מאיתנו קיימת פיסה של ירושלים. בכלום טמונה היכולת לחיות חיים רוחניים, חדורי קודש וקדושה. אך לפעמים אנו עשויים לאבד כבר בהתחלה את האומץ לצאת למסענו לארץ המובטחת האישית שלנו, כי הדרך נראית ארוכה וקשה מדי.

כאן יכולים לבוא לעזרתנו דבריו של אלוקים אל בני ישראל. אל תצפו לניסים שיתרחשו בן-לילה. אל תאמרו, “עליי לכבוש ארץ שלמה! איך אעשה זאת?” אלא אמרו, “היכן עלי להתחיל היום?” אל תביטו בסוף הדרך, אלא בצעדים הראשונים שעליכם לעשות ממש עכשיו. מחר תעשו עוד כמה צעדים, ומחרתיים עוד כמה צעדים, ולא ירחק היום שבו כל הארץ המובטחת תהיה שלכם. אילו הייתם שואלים יזם אופטימי העסוק בהקמת הפרויקט העסקי הראשון שלו, “אתה מיליונר?” יכול להיות שהוא יגיד לכם, “לא”, אך סביר יותר שישב “עדיין לא, אבל אני עובד על זה!” – זוהי גם הגישה שעלינו לפתח ביחס למסעותינו האישיים בתחום היהדות.

פרנץ רזנצווייג (1881-1929) היה פילוסוף יהודי-גרמני, שכשהיה איש צעיר שקל למעשה לעזוב את היהדות לחלוטין. אבל נטייתו האינטלקטואלית אילצה אותו לפחות לבחון קודם כל היטב את היהדות בטרם ייטוש אותה כליל. הוא הלך לבית כנסת, ושם הוא חווה טרנספורמציה רוחנית. הוא המשיך ללמוד והפך לתלמיד רציני בתחום היהדות. מספרים שכאשר שאלו את רזנצווייג, “אתה מניח תפילין?” הוא השיב “עדיין לא”. לא “לא”, אלא “עדיין לא” – וקיים הבדל משמעותי מאוד בין שתי התשובות הללו. “לא” פירושו שאני לא עושה זאת כעת וגם אין לי כל כוונות לעשות זאת בעתיד הנראה לעין. “עדיין לא” פירושו שאמנם אני לא שם כרגע, אבל אני עדיין פתוח לאפשרות הזאת, בתקווה שבקרוב יגיע הזמן שבו אהיה מוכן להפוך את הנחת התפילין לחלק מקיום המצוות היומיומי שלי. גישת ה“עדיין לא” היא גישה טובה. אין אדם שמצליח לעשות את הכול.

לכולנו יש מקום לצמוח ולהתפתח בו. כולנו צריכים לשאוף להגיע גבוה יותר. אם איננו עושים מעשה טוב מסוים היום, אין כל סיבה שלא נוכל להתחיל לעשותו בעתיד הקרוב. הבה נשתדל לא להתיימש לעולם מאורכו של המסע. בואו נתחיל בצעדים הראשונים ונמשיך ללכת. יתכן שזה יהיה מסע איטי, אך כל עוד אנו צומחים ומתפתחים כל הזמן, אנו נגיע ליעדנו.

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1:30 pm	Tent ב
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3:00 pm	20 Upstairs
3:30 pm	Tent ב
4:00 pm	20 Upstairs
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### Sorry Does Help

“An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth...” (21:24)

The Torah records that if two men come to blows and accidentally cause bodily injury to a third individual, the assailant is held completely responsible: “An eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, hand for a hand, foot for a foot.” The Talmud states emphatically that the verse is not to be taken literally. Rather, according to the Oral Tradition, the responsible party must pay the monetary value of the limb he destroyed in restitution for his actions. The Talmud proves this assertion by stating that it would be impossible to inflict an equitable injury upon the assailant, for no two human beings are physically or emotionally alike. Why then does the Torah couch the restitution in terms which, if taken literally, indicate that the assailant is subject to physical injury?

In *The Laws of Damages and Injuries*, the Rambam records the various compensatory requirements that must be made for injuring a human being. Contrasting the restitution required for bodily injury to that of property damages, the Rambam states that when a human being has been injured, forgiveness is necessary for complete restitution. Why does the Rambam deem it necessary to include the requirement to seek forgiveness in the laws of financial compensation? Furthermore, the Rambam also includes this requirement in the Laws of Repentance. He adds that even if a person has made full financial restitution, he is not forgiven unless he appeases the person he damaged. If the injured party has been compensated, why is it necessary to appease him? What is the Rambam’s source for this ruling?

The Talmud teaches that although “*nekamah*,” “revenge,” is generally not an acceptable form of behavior, it acknowledges that there are occasions when “*nekamah*” is permitted. The root of the word *nekamah* is “*kam*,” “to restore,” for *nekamah* restores the dignity and self-esteem of the slighted party. The injury inflicted upon the victim is not solely of a financial nature, but a blow to his self-esteem as well, for the assailant has exercised physical dominance over him. By recording the restitution in terms indicating that the assailant is subject to physical injury, the Torah is acknowledging that the only way to truly restore the victim’s self-esteem would be to inflict upon the perpetrator the same damage that he caused. Through the Oral Tradition, we understand that such restitution is not possible, and financial compensation is offered instead. However, money does not restore a person’s shattered self-esteem. Therefore, the assailant must beg forgiveness from his victim. His seeking appeasement offers the injured party some.

It emerges that appeasement is an integral component of the restitution and, therefore, is recorded by the Rambam in *The Laws of Damages and Injuries*. One cannot achieve atonement for taking something away from another unless the stolen item is returned. Therefore, appeasement is a prerequisite for receiving atonement, since it helps restore that which was taken away. Consequently, the Rambam records this ruling in *The Laws of Repentance*. He derives his source for this law from the fact that the Torah acknowledges that complete restitution cannot be attained through financial means alone.

### What Is a True Chassid?

In *Shemos* 21:21, the Torah tells us the law of retaliation, the principle that a person who injured another person is to be penalized to a similar degree, inflicting punishment such as an eye for an eye and a burn for a burn.

The Mishna in *Bava Kama* 26a says that a person is responsible for his actions under all circumstances, whether he caused damage intentionally or accidentally, and whether he caused damage while he was awake or asleep. The Gemara says that the source for this is the fact that the Torah first says that when one wounds his friend, he gets the same wound as a punishment. Subsequently, the Torah says all different scenarios: an eye for an eye, a wound for a wound, a burn for a burn, etc. Having the Torah repeat this fact teaches us that one is responsible for any damages that one perpetrates, whether he does so knowingly or unknowingly.

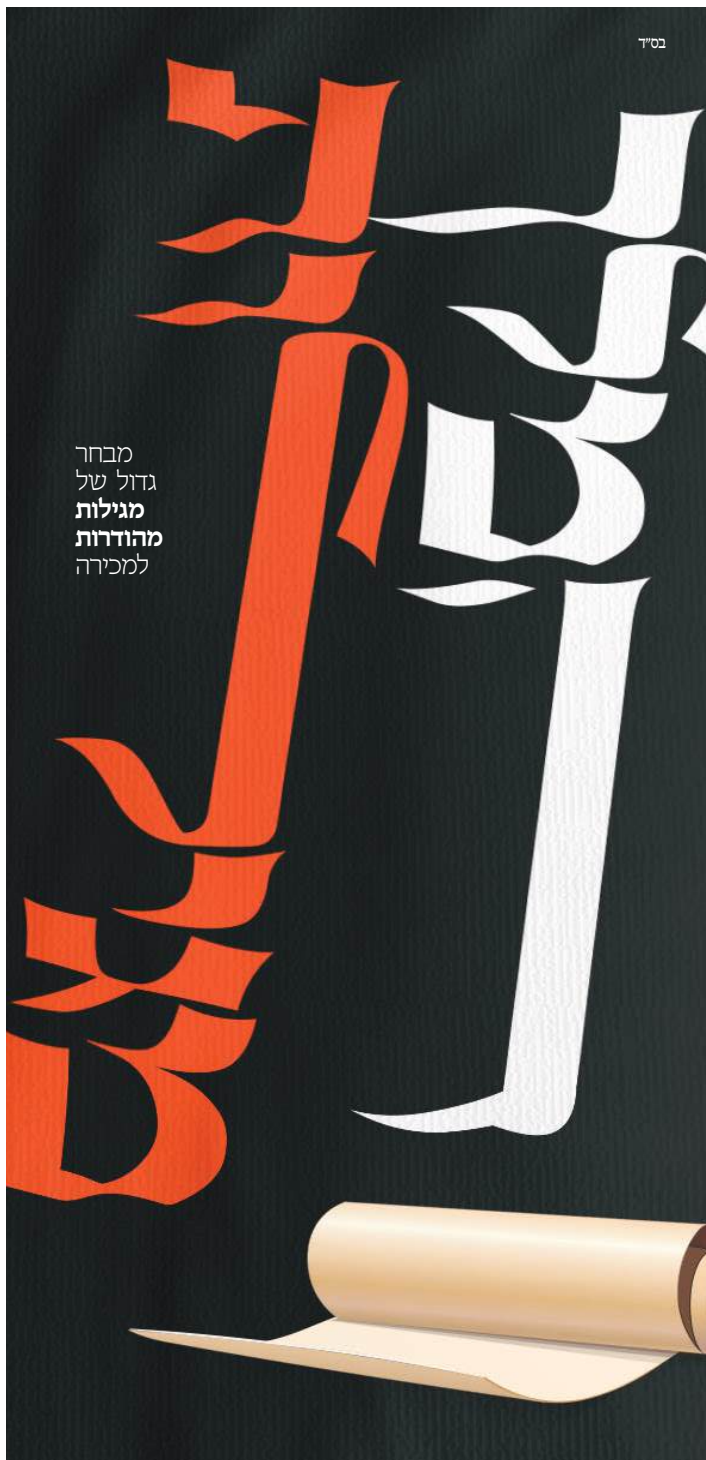
The Gemara in *Bava Kama* 30a says that Reb Yehuda says one who wants to be a chassid should learn and be *mekayem* the halachos of *nezikin*, “damages.” Why would someone be called a chassid if he does not damage his friend? Isn’t that basic halacha? The sefer *Yismach Yisrael, Likutim* page 84, explains that regarding *nezikin*, it is much more difficult not to be *oveir* since a person is responsible even if the act is unintentional or done when one is asleep. In other areas, one is only *chayev* if he actually has in mind to do the *issur*, but he is not *chayev* if the act was done without thinking. Similarly, in a case of someone eating something that is *assur*, the person has to actually derive benefit from eating that food. The Gemara is teaching us that if one keeps all of Torah the way he has to watch himself not to be *oveir* on *nezikin*, he would be a chassid. One who watches himself not to be *oveir* any *issur*, even if perpetrated during his sleep, is called a chassid.

With this point, we can understand a Gemara in *Brachos* 20a. The Gemara says that the reason the previous generations had miracles happen to them and later generations did not can’t be because they were more learned, because they only knew *Seder Nezikin*, and the later generations knew all six volumes of the Mishna. The reason is that the previous generations were *moser nefesh*, while the later generations were not. The question arises: What does it mean that the previous generations only knew *Nezikin*? What happened with the other basic halachos of *Moed*, etc.? We can answer with the above point of the *Yismach Yisrael* that, of course, they knew all volumes of Mishnayos. However, they practiced it the same way as *Nezikin*, training themselves to do it even in their sleep. This was their great *mesiras nefesh*. That is why they merited that miracles would happen to them, such as when Rav Yehuda would take off one shoe, and the rains would come immediately.

May we be *zocheh* to be *moser nefesh* for the Torah like the previous generations.

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## RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY



### When the Majority Does Not Rule

Rav Yonasan Eibeschitz was approached by someone with a challenging question. We learn in *Parshas Mishpatim* that we are supposed to follow the majority opinion in deciding the outcome of a court case. If so, why do we continue to observe Torah and mitzvos? Most of the world doesn't follow Torah and mitzvos; why should we? Rav Yonasan Eibeschitz responded that the question assumed a misunderstanding of the principle of following the majority. There are many times when we reach a *halachic* conclusion based on following a majority. One famous application is a case where it is unclear if a piece of meat came from a kosher or non-kosher store. Following certain *halachic* parameters, the meat is permissible if the majority of the possible stores that it came from are kosher. We are able to follow the majority because we have a doubt. However, if we know for sure that the meat came from a non-kosher store, then it would be absurd to permit it based on the majority of kosher stores. Similarly, we have absolutely no doubt as to the truth of the Torah. The concept of following the majority opinion is only relevant for one who does not

personally know the truth. We are absolutely certain about the truth of Hashem's Torah and therefore, even if we are in the minority, we remain confident in our knowledge of the truth.

Rav Elchanan Wasserman commented on this sharp response of Rav Yonasan Eibeschitz that, although it is certainly correct, one can suggest another approach for why we shouldn't be swayed by the majority opinion of the world around us. We are taught in *Parshas Mishpatim* that one who receives a bribe is disqualified to serve as a judge. Once one receives a bribe, his opinion can never be trusted. Similarly, in matters of belief, one whose judgment has been clouded can no longer be trusted to arrive at truthful conclusions. The bribery in this area that disqualifies one's opinion is the indulgence in this world and the pursuit of honor and materialistic wealth. Thus, argued Rav Elchanan Wasserman, the only ones who can be trusted to express an "opinion" about the truth of Torah are those whose vision has not been tainted. The unanimous view amongst such untainted people is the obvious conclusion, i.e., that Hashem and His Torah are true.

Both Rav Yonasan Eibeschitz and Rav Elchanan Wasserman's answers to the challenge of why we don't follow the majority of

the world in its philosophy and values are reaffirmed twice daily in *Shema*. In the third *parsha* of *Shema*, we are commanded not to be led astray by our hearts or our eyes. Chazal comment that following our heart refers to matters of faith, and following our eyes refers to matters of physical indulgence. The challenge of our hearts is the challenge of uncertainty.

We are warned not to succumb to doubts in our faith in Hashem and His Torah. Notwithstanding the fact that world around us doesn't believe in these truths, we wholeheartedly affirm that they are in fact true and that the basic tenants of the Torah are correct beyond the shadow of a doubt. Since we are not in doubt, the concept of following the majority is not relevant, and there is no reason to be swayed by those around us who do not believe in these truths.

We are also commanded to not be influenced by the temptations of this world. To remain true believers in the Torah, we have to make sure our vision is not clouded by the "bribery" of indulgence. It is through our adherence to the message of Rav Elchanan Wasserman that we can remain certain of the truth of Torah and thereby not follow the majority of the rest of the world.

## RABBI SHRAGA FREEDMAN



### Reflecting His Middos Is the Key to All Goodness

Dayan Aharon Dunner of London recently shared the following remarkable story.

A Yid happened to be in England on Erev Pesach and needed to pay seven hundred pounds for matzos. He went to the bank to withdraw the money. By mistake, the clerk entered the transaction incorrectly. Instead of recording that the man had withdrawn seven hundred pounds, the system showed that he had *deposited* seven hundred pounds. In other words, the bank's records reflected a fourteen-hundred-pound error. They failed to register the withdrawal and also credited his account with an additional seven hundred pounds.

When the man came home and reviewed his statement, he immediately realized something was wrong. A few weeks later, he returned to the bank and told the clerk, "There is a mistake in my account."

The clerk looked at him and said, "Don't be silly. Keep the money. There is nothing we can do about it."

He answered firmly, "I am not taking money that does not belong to me."

The clerk called the manager. The manager tried to dismiss it. "We cannot fix this. Leave us alone."

After a great deal of back and forth, they finally corrected the account. He left without one penny more than he was entitled to.

Two or three years later, that same man needed to borrow eighty-six-thousand pounds. He returned to the same bank and asked for a loan.

The clerk asked, "What collateral do you have?"

He said, "None."

"A house?"

"No."

"A guarantor?"

"No."

The clerk said, "Then it is impossible."

He replied, "I need the money." They called the manager. When the manager came in, he looked at the man and said, "You? You are the only person in the history of this bank who ever came back to return money that we mistakenly

gave him. You can have the eighty-six-thousand pounds. No collateral, no guarantor, nothing."

They even lowered the interest rate.

The man said, "But I will only be able to repay very slowly. It may take many years."

The manager answered, "No problem at all."

The *Sefer HaChinuch* (Mitzvah 74) explains that since *emes* is Hashem's primary *middah* (His *chosam* seal), every person has a built-in sensitivity and attraction to truth.

It's embedded in the *neshama*, a reflection of the Divine spark within.

The *Chinuch* adds that anyone who connects himself to Hashem's *middah* of *emes* connects himself to Hashem's *brachah*, the source of all goodness.

The same is true with all of Hashem's *middos*. One who practices *chessed*, compassion, and truthfulness draws *brachah* and *simcha* into his life.

But one who distances himself from Hashem's *middos* brings upon himself the opposite: worry, strife, and pain instead of peace and joy.

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## JOKES

My wife is on a tropical fruit diet; the house is full of stuff. It is enough to make a mango crazy.

How do you make a lemon drop?

*Just let it fall!*

A friend of mine only eats almonds.

*That's just nuts!*

Moshe had serious hearing problems for several years. He went to the doctor, and the doctor was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids that allowed him to hear 100%.

He went back to the doctor a month later, and the doctor said, "Moshe, your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

To which Moshe replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"

An elderly woman was nervous about making her first flight in an airplane, so before takeoff, she went to speak to the captain about her fears.

"You will bring me down safely, won't you?" she inquired anxiously.

"Don't worry, madam," was his friendly reply. "I haven't left anyone up there yet."



Brought to you by Uncle Benjy, author of *Laughter is the best medicine: Kosher and Jewish jokes for the whole family*, volumes one and two, and *Jewish Joke Book for Kids*, volumes one and two, available on Amazon.

## ZERA SHIMSHON

### Merit and Mazal

ועדתם את ה' וגו' וברך את לחמך ואת מימך וגו' לא תהיה משכלה ועקרה בארץ  
את מספר ימך אמלא (כג', כה-כו')

*You shall serve Hashem, and He will bless your bread and water, etc. There will be no woman who miscarries or is barren. I shall fill the number of your days (23:25-26).*

These three blessings, children, health, and wealth, are in reality the three things that the Gemara teaches (*Mo'ed Katan* 21b) are not merit-based but are rather dependent on one's *mazal*, predestined fate.

The *Zera Shimshon* asks that the *pesukim* seem to imply that these things are indeed based on one's merits. And even according to *Tosafos* (*Shabbos* 156a), which says that with a very large merit, one can indeed change one's fate, still, this *pasuk* does not seem to be talking about someone with a very large merit. It is speaking about when the Jewish people serve Hashem as they should. How then does the Gemara reconcile these *pesukim*?

The *Zera Shimshon* explains that these blessings can take place even without one's *mazal* being changed. For example, if, based on the *mazal*, someone is supposed to be poor and live on bread and water, this *pasuk* says that Hashem will bless that bread and water with a special blessing of satiation. Thus, his *mazal* will not change, but whatever he brings in will be blessed, and he will feel no different than the one who has much. This is why the *pasuk* singles out that the bread and water will be blessed and doesn't mention riches.

The same is true about the blessing "*I shall fill the number of your days.*" This means that the person will live out the days allotted to him and not die before his time. Thus, his *mazal* will not change to live longer; however, he will be blessed that he will live out the days allotted to him.

The *Zera Shimshon* asks that this blessing seems to be superfluous, since if a person didn't sin, why would he need such a blessing? The *Zera Shimshon* explains that nevertheless, there in fact remains a good reason for this blessing. This is because a person encounters numerous scenarios where he is in danger or has unhealthy habits that can technically make him ill. Here, the Torah is saying that if a person serves Hashem, he will be watched over to live out his days even if he is unknowingly in a dangerous situation.

Until now, the *Zera Shimshon* explains that these *pesukim* do not contradict the Gemara. The Gemara is discussing if through merits, a person can actually change his fate. The Gemara says that one cannot, upon which *Tosafos* comments that through a great merit, one can indeed change his predestined *mazal*. Whereas these *pesukim*, although they say that through keeping Hashem's commandment as one should brings a person blessing, it comes in ways that are restricted by his *mazal* but still overrides it in a way, as explained.

Regarding the blessing of bearing children and not miscarrying, this, the *Zera Shimshon* says is in fact a changing of one's fate. However, the *pasuk* clearly writes that is a blessing that applies only בארץ, in Eretz Yisroel. The great merit of living in Eretz Yisroel changes one's *mazal* specifically in this regard. The reason for this is that since one who lives in Eretz Yisroel does so to connect to the *Shechinah* (see *Kesubos* 110b), and having children brings the *Shechinah* to this world (see *Yevamos* 64a), *middah keneged middah*, he merits children.

SHIUR  
SCHEDULE

ZERA SHIMSHON SHIUR  
BY RABBI SIMCHA BUNIM BURGER  
THURSDAY 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM (20 Upstairs)  
Please scan to join Zera Shimshon Whatsapp Group  
Followed by Maharash Shiur 9:15-9:45PM



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# RABBI NOSSON KAISER

Editor in chief, Bais HaVaad Halacha Journal, Lakewood

## ANTI-SEMITISM REVISITED:

### What If What We Think We Know About Sinat Yisroel Is Wrong?



יום ב' פרשת תרומה  
Monday, February 16th

10:00 AM

18 Main Bais Medrash