

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This week's Parasha is sponsored by Roy and Monica Hanouka wishing Mazal Tov to their son Sam on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah.

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR TAL



PARASHA INSIGHTS

Money is hard to come by nowadays, the economy is tight and business seems lacking.

Imagine arriving at a cash machine and asking to take out £100. The cash machine proceeds to give you £200. You are confused, and check your balance and note that the balance has only been reduced by £100. Wow. You try again, and again you are granted double the money free.

This in fact was the case a few years ago in the affluent village of Milford-on-Sea.

Hundreds of people cashed in after an ATM machine began paying out double - and a bank said they could keep the unexpected windfall. Some customers walked away thousands of pounds better off after the cash bonanza story, rapidly spread.

When there is free money around, all are happy to take advantage of the situation.

It is startling to note that in this week's Parasha, there appears to be a lot of

free money around, yet the people seem to have to been pleaded with in order for them to take advantage of the free money.

"Daber Na B'Ozanei Ha'Am, V'Yishalu Klei Kesef U'Klei Zahav..."

Hashem tells Moshe Rabbeinu "Please speak into the ears of (i.e., make it very clear to) the Jewish people that they should borrow/seek Gold and silver vessels from the Egyptians". (Shemot 11:2)

Please? Why does Hashem have to ask Moshe with the word please? Surely, everyone would be excited at such a mitzvah as getting wealthy?

Rashi explains quoting the Yalkut Shimoni: Many years earlier at the Brit Ben Habetarim, Avraham was told that his future generations would be in a foreign land and subject to harsh servitude. Hashem promised Avraham that they would eventually leave with great wealth.

Hence, now the time had come to command them to leave, Hashem emphasised to Moshe - "Please ask them to take from the Egyptians, so that the ancient Tsadik (Avraham Avinu) won't accuse (Hashem) of keeping only half of the Pasuk - "and they shall work exceedingly hard and suffer", but not the half "and they shall leave Egypt with vast wealth". ▶

SHEVAT 5th 5780

SHABBAT BEGINS: 4:33 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 5:39 PM



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions."

> MAZAL TOV

Mazal Tov to Roy and Monica Hanouka on the occasion of their son Sam's Bar Mitzvah.

Mazal Tov to Jonathan and Rivka Thabaut on the birth of their baby boy

> UPCOMING EVENTS

▶ **9th Feb Children Tu Bishvat Event**

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DVAR TORAH

Parasha Insights
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

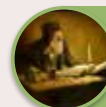
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Thus, Hashem did not want Avraham to just witness the harsh servitude; He wanted him to see that the Bnei Yisrael would leave with extra wealth as promised.

This in itself seems strange. Why would Avraham question Hashem? Furthermore, this still does not answer the question as to why Hashem needs to plead with the Bnei Yisrael to take the gold and silver. Surely a normal command would have done, why the 'please'?

In order to understand let us take a deeper look at the way we perform Mitzvot.

Our Sages state Zerizim Makdimim Lemitsvot – there is an urgency to perform Mitzvot as quick as possible. For example, the best time for a Brit Mila is in the early morning (after sunrise).

When we have the ability to perform a mitzvah we should run towards it and without delay.

There is a question raised amongst the sages as to what happens when delaying the Mitzvah might be beneficial in that it would add to its honour. For example, we have a mitzvah to recite Hallel.

However, shall we recite it early after the Shacharit prayer, or shall we wait a bit until there are many more people in the synagogue and the mit.

■ Shabbat Shalom

RABBI AHARON GABBAY- KOLLEL OHR HATORAH, JERUSALEM



NOT JUST AN EXODUS

"And they should be a sign...that with a mighty hand Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim". The Parsha is referring to the Tefillin that we wear everyday. Contained within them is a sign for the Jewish people that we should remember that Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim. In fact, it is evident that while performing many Mitzvot we refer to Yetziat Mitzrayim: Shabbat, Yom Tov, Mezuzah. Leaving Mitzrayim may be a very eventful time for the Jewish people, but there are seemingly more appropriate events to refer to: the giving of the Torah, entering Israel - the promised land, or even creation itself. It would appear that there are other events that take precedence over Yetziat Mitzrayim. Furthermore, earlier in the Parashah, the Bnei Yisrael say "because of this, Hashem did for me in the going out of Egypt" the Bnei Yisrael are referring to the Mitzvah of eating the matsa and Korban Pesach. How can it be that all the agony, pain and death that was experienced in Egypt is worth a matsa shawarma sandwich!

The Ramban explains that at that period of time there was much controversy as to whether there was one being who ruled

the world. Some suggested that there was no existence of G-d, while others insisted that despite the fact that G-d does exist, he plays no intervention in our lives. So Hashem showed wonders and miracles giving first class proof of complete rule and intervention. Yetziat Mitzrayim was testimony to this. All nations of the world heard and felt Hashem's might and rule and it was clear that he is the source of all power that ever was and ever will be. The Ramban continues that Hashem does not need to perform major miracles every several generations in order to prove the point, however, it is necessary to install into the Jewish people a "זכר" - remembrance, that links us back to this one event and so in many Mitzvot we implant the words "זכר ליציאת מצרים" to serve as a reminder of the greatness and oneness of Hashem. Such an idea is fundamentally important and a foundation in our religion that we must rehearse it frequently more than any other event in history.

However, there is more to the event of the exodus.

The Gemara in Shabbat (89b) says that when Moshe Rabenu went to receive the Torah the angels challenged him and said to Hashem "for 974 generations before the world was created you've had the Torah on display in a showcase and now your going to give it to man!". The Torah had been around for centuries before the sun even burst into existence. The famous words of the Zohar are

"Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world". This means that the written Torah, as we have it today, was used as a blueprint to manufacture the world. Rav Yerucham Levovitz explains that, contrary to popular belief, the way Hashem created the world was that it was written in his Torah a Mitzvah and so Hashem created based on that mitzvah. For example, there is a mitzvah of respecting one's father and mother, and so Hashem fabricated a system that the creation should have a father and mother. Based on this, our complete makeup is completely Torah orientated and everything we are and do is projected through Hashem's Torah and Mitzvot. When the Bnei Yisrael said "because of this, Hashem did for me in the going out of Egypt", Rashi explains that they were referring to Matsa and Korban Pesach which are classic examples of mitzvot. The Bnei Yisrael were saying because of Hashem's Mitzvot, which are the fundamental blueprints of the world, that is why we came out of Egypt.

Yetziat Mitzrayim leaves a mark in the heart of the Jewish people. There are many lessons that can be brought out of significant events in Jewish history. However, the exodus is for sure one of the main organs that keep the Jews alive. It dictates the importance of Hashem and his Torah in order for it to be implanted into us for many generations to come.

■ Shabbat shalom

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI ELIJAHU LOPIAN · "THE GREATEST MUSSAR FIGURE IN OUR GENERATION"

Three times a day we pray in the Shemoneh Esrei for G-d's mercy to be "upon the righteous, upon the pious, upon the elders of Your people, the House of Israel, and upon the remnant of their sages." Have you ever asked yourself just who are the "remnant of their sages"? These are the Sages – the Sages of the Torah – that G-d left from former generations in order to tell us of their predecessors, and to reflect the character of Torah greats of previous generations. One of these Sages, a man left over from the Great Assembly, was Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian. On Elul 20, 5370 (1970), at the age of nearly 100, he passed away in Eretz Israel at the approach of Rosh Hashanah.

Rabbi Eliyahu was born to Rabbi Yaakov in the city of Graibe (near Lomza) around the year 5632 (1872). He studied in the Lomza yeshiva, which was founded was Rabbi Eliezer Shulevitz, one of Rabbi Israel Salanter's young disciples.

Rabbi Eliyahu married the daughter of Rabbi Yitzchak David Weinmacher ("the winemaker"), a famous Tzaddik from Lomza. Under the influence of his father-in-law and Rabbi Eliezer Shulevitz, Rabbi Eliyahu left for Kelm, the residence of Rabbi Simcha Zissel, the man of Mussar who founded the great "Talmud Torah" from which the most renowned Mussar figures of the previous generations emerged. He stayed many years in Kelm and devoted himself to the Mussar of his great Rav, which he spread everywhere he went. At first this was in the small city of Kelm, then in England, and finally in Eretz Israel during the latter part of his life.

Rabbi Eliyahu founded a yeshiva in Kelm for the young, and there he educated many students in Torah and Mussar. Even until today, his remaining students evoke his name with great reverence. One of his first students, who is now an elderly man, recounted that to this day the melody of his Rav's voice still echoes in his ears when he sings the verse, "By David, a michtam, when he fled from Saul in the cave" (Psalms 57:1). Verses such as these from the Book of Psalms, which Rabbi Eliyahu recited with sighs and tears, have accompanied him his entire life.

For various reasons, Rabbi Eliyahu left Kelm and went to live in England. He founded Etz Chaim yeshiva in London and there, as in Kelm, he never ceased his study of Mussar. He strived with all his might to educate a generation of youngsters in England according to his approach. Jews who came to the British capital would often visit the yeshiva, but when their feet crossed its threshold they forgot all the commotion that rang out from the great city, and instead felt that they were in Kelm. Also in London as in Kelm, Rabbi Eliyahu's home was open to all who wished to enter. The students of the yeshiva often ate at his table, to the extent that they stayed in the presence of their Rav's shadow for a large part of the day. Rabbi Eliyahu remained

in England for 24 years, educating an amazing generation in Torah and Mussar.

Near the end of his life, Rabbi Eliyahu departed for Eretz Israel, where he spent the remainder of his days in the Knesset Chizkiyahu yeshiva in the rural city of Kfar Chassidim. There he accomplished amazing things, taking special care to get closer to those youngsters who were far from his path and approach. He devoted himself intensely to the Tzabarim, who spoke Hebrew and wore knitted kippot, and exerted a great influence on them through the purity of his mind and his method of Mussar. Many of these youngsters left their life of comfort in their parents' homes to follow their elderly Rav and warm themselves by the light of his Torah.

One story has it that a young student from a yeshiva in Jerusalem came to visit him in Kfar Chassidim. After prayers he approached Rabbi Eliyahu and said "Shalom Aleichem," and in the ensuing conversation the young man explained to Rabbi Eliyahu that he had come from Jerusalem with the intention of staying until Thursday. On Friday morning as Rabbi Eliyahu went to pray, he saw that the young man was still at the yeshiva. He invited him to his home, and there he asked him what his intentions were with respect to Shabbat. The young man replied, "I made some friends here and found the atmosphere very enjoyable, so I've decided to stay until after Shabbat." Upon hearing this, Rabbi Eliyahu got up, went towards his closet, and took out a clean, white undershirt. He then said to him, "You didn't plan on staying for Shabbat, so you certainly didn't bring a change of clothes with you. Take this undershirt and some undergarments for Shabbat."

Another story has it that Rabbi Eliyahu once went to see the Gaon Rabbi Yitzchak Zev of Brisk in Jerusalem. He sat down and gazed into the Brisker Rav's face, with the Brisker Rav looking at him as well, and they exchanged a few words. When Rabbi Eliyahu left, the Gaon of Brisk said to his sons and students, "Did you see him? That was Rabbi Israel Salanter's intention when he founded the Mussar movement."

When Rabbi Eliyahu traveled to the United States, all the yeshivot invited him to speak to their students. His words made a profound impression on them, for they emanated from a pure heart and thus entered into the hearts of his listeners. He was an amazing speaker who knew how to inspire his audiences.

Rabbi Eliyahu lived almost 100 years. Multitudes of Jews followed his funeral procession, and the greatest Roshei Yeshiva of Eretz Israel gave eulogies for him. His grave was dug at the summit of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. With the passing of Rabbi Eliyahu, a powerful figure disappeared from our ranks, a leftover from the Great Assembly and the last of his kind in our generation. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

THE SEQUENCE OF BERACHOT WHEN EATING CAKE WITH COFFEE

*The Rabbi Jacob S. Kassin Memorial Halacha Series
Authored by Rabbi Eli J. Mansour (1/17/2020)*

When one eats cake with coffee, he of course recites two Berachot: "Mezonot" over the cake, and "She'ha'kol" over the coffee. (This assumes he drinks the coffee separately; if he dips the cake into the coffee, and does not drink the coffee on its own, then he recites only "Mezonot" over the cake, and this covers the coffee absorbed by the cake.) According to the standard rules governing the sequence of Berachot, a person in this case should first recite "Mezonot" and take a bite of the cake before reciting "She'ha'kol" and sipping the coffee. Given the rule that more specific Berachot precede less specific Berachot, it would certainly appear that the cake should precede the coffee in such a case, and this is, indeed, the ruling of Hacham Ovadia Yosef in his Yabia Omer.

However, Hacham Ovadia's son, Hacham David, in Halacha Berura, posits a novel theory – that in such a case one should first recite "She'ha'kol" and sip the coffee before reciting "Mezonot" and taking a bite of cake. He explains that there is a minority view among the Poskim that when one drinks coffee with cake, the coffee is considered "Tafel" ("secondary," or "subordinate") to the cake, such that the coffee is covered by the Beracha recited over the cake. According to this view, since one's primary intent is to eat, and the coffee is drunk only because the cake is dry, the coffee does not require its own Beracha, and it is included in the Beracha recited over the cake. Although Halacha does not follow this opinion, Hacham David asserts that it is preferable to avoid this Halachic dispute by first reciting a Beracha over the coffee and taking a sip, before reciting the Beracha over the cake. And although "Mezonot" always precedes "She'ha'kol," Hacham David notes the position taken by the Ritba (Rav Yom Tob of Seville, Spain, d. 1320), in a recently-published manuscript, that this rule applies only when one eats two foods requiring these two different Berachot, but not when one eats a food and drinks a beverage. In the latter case, according to the Ritba, there is no preferred sequence, and one may either partake first of the food or first drink the beverage. In light of this position, Hacham David reasons, it is preferable when eating cake with coffee to first recite "She'ha'kol" over the coffee and then recite "Mezonot" over the cake. Hacham David asserts that if his father had seen this position of the Ritba, he would have reached this same conclusion.

Of course, this is not the conventional opinion. Regardless, as for the practical Halacha, both views are valid, and one may choose which one to follow.

Summary: When one eats cake with coffee, the conventional practice is to first recite "Mezonot" and eat some cake, and then recite "She'ha'kol" and take a sip of coffee. According to one opinion, however, one should reverse the order, and first recite "She'ha'kol" and sip some coffee before reciting "Mezonot" and partaking of the cake. Both opinions are valid. ■

Kids Time



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TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- 1 What was Pharaoh's excuse for not releasing the Jewish children?
- 2 How did the locusts in the time of Moshe differ from those in the days of Yoel?
- 3 How did the first three days of darkness differ from the last three?
- 4 When the Jews asked the Egyptians for gold and silver vessels, the Egyptians were unable to deny ownership of such vessels. Why?
- 5 Makat bechorot took place at exactly midnight. Why did Moshe say it would take place at approximately midnight?

Answer

1 Since children don't bring sacrifices there was no need for them to go. 2 The plague brought by Moshe was composed of one species of locust, whereas the plague in the days of Yoel was composed of many species. 3 During the first three days the Egyptians couldn't see. During the last three days they couldn't move. 4 During the plague of darkness the Jews could see and they searched and found the Egyptians' vessels. 5 If Moshe said the plague would begin exactly at midnight, the Egyptians might miscalculate and accuse Moshe of being a fake.



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