

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



LONDON'S LEADING PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

This week's Parasha is sponsored Lirfuat Rav Yona Ben Chava Betoch Shaar Cholei Yisrael

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



### WHERE DO I FIND A RABBI?

Without a teacher, we don't learn. If we don't learn, we don't grow. Teachers inspire us. They help us become our best selves. They mirror to us our potential. In fact, they show us what we can – or do – know.

We go through school and have our fair amount of likeable teachers. Yet as we grow older we realise how important it is to attach ourselves to real mentors, and people that not only inspire us, but will guide us along the path of life.

In Pirkei Avot (Ch 1:6) we read, the advice of Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Perachya; "Make for yourself a teacher/Rabbi and acquire for yourself a friend, and judge each person favourably."

Wise words of assistance that will help us throughout our life.

A Rabbi does not necessarily know everything. This is why Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Perachya tells us to "make" a Rabbi, and not to merely "have" one. Finding a Rabbi doesn't necessarily come naturally. You may have to go out of your way to find (make) one. Or you may have found one who is good but limited in some way. Nevertheless, "make" him your Rabbi because you need someone who can guide you and give you perspective. Although he may be lacking in some way, he still has something you don't: perspective on your problem. He is objective where you are subjective. And he has a combination of Torah

knowledge and experience enough to lead you across the "very narrow bridge" of life.

At the end of Parshat Mishpatim, we read how Moshe set out towards Har Sinai to receive the Torah.

"Moshe and his aid Yehoshua set out. Moshe went up on G-d's Mountain..." (24:12-14)

Rashi comments "I don't know why Yehoshua is here, but maybe he is serving the role of "student who accompanies the teacher."

Let's take a deeper look at who Yehoshua was and why he merited being Moshe's student.

Explaining Yehoshua's sudden presence, the Ramban says he was one of the elders.

In Parshat Shlach Lecha the Torah lists out the names of the spies (Meraglim) who went to spy out the land of Israel. The Ramban there notes that the Torah does not list them in order of their tribes nor in order of their ages, but rather in order of their greatness. Yehoshua is listed as number five, meaning that there were four other Meraglim greater than him.

If so why was Yehoshua the one chosen to lead Klal Yisrael after Moshe, why not one of the other Meraglim who were listed as being greater than Yehoshua?

To understand this, we come back to our Parasha.

Yehoshua was known as the "aid" or student of Moshe. He followed Moshe, his teacher and Rabbi all the way to Har Sinai until they arrived at the bottom of the mountain where Yehoshua was no longer allowed to accompany Moshe any further. At this point Moshe ascended the mountain to Hashem for forty days where he would learn the entire Torah and prepare himself to give it over to Klal Yisrael.

Yehoshua knew that Moshe would be forty days, nevertheless, rather than return to the camp, he pitched his tent at the bottom of the mountain and waited there for forty days. ▶

**SHEVAT 26<sup>th</sup> 5780**

**SHABBAT BEGINS: 5:11 PM**

**SHABBAT ENDS: 6:15 PM**



### THE WEEKLY QUOTE

*"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."*

### > MAZAL TOV

Erez and Honey Nounou  
on the birth of a baby boy

Ilana Khadhouri and Aviezer Katz  
on their engagement

### > UPCOMING EVENTS

- ▶ 28<sup>th</sup> February Friday Night Dinner
- ▶ 3<sup>rd</sup> March Monday Nights Wisdom & Knowledge
- ▶ 25<sup>th</sup> March Busy in Brooklyn

For our upcoming events check our website [www.torahactionlife.com](http://www.torahactionlife.com)

### Sponsor the Torah Parasha Sheet

and share your simcha with thousands in your community,  
call 07759 550 102 or email [info@torahactionlife.com](mailto:info@torahactionlife.com)



### DVAR TORAH

Where do I find a Rabbi?  
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

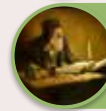
P1



### DVAR TORAH

The Lessons We Can Learn From an Ox  
RABBI D. SCHOCHET

P2



### OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI RAPHAEL PINTO

P3



### HALACHOT

Does the Beracha of "Gefen" Cover...?  
RABBI ELI MANSOUR

P3



### Q&A & CARTOON

P4

This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Shemot - Please dispose of accordingly



### EverywhereK

'UK's largest online  
Jewish community'

EverywhereK.com | 020 3006 2351



סופר סותים

כתיבה | בריקה | תיקון

Certified Scribe

020 8455 7700

3 Russell Parade  
Golders Green Road, NW11

benaroch@soferstancos.co.uk  
[www.sofersancos.co.uk](http://www.sofersancos.co.uk)

COMPUTER CHECKING AVAILABLE

✓ Supply  
✓ Check  
✓ Repair

Specialists in  
תקנת מסמכים

Call No 0800 777 777

As far as Yehoshua was concerned, the Torah was his number one priority, it was so important to him and he wanted it so much, he was afraid that if he would return to the camp and his day to day routine and then go back to greet Moshe at the end of the 40 days, perhaps he would get held up or delayed. He could possibly miss the first minute of his Kabbalat Hatorah, and it wasn't worth taking the risk. For this reason Yehoshua decided not to return to his family but rather pitch his tent at the bottom of the mountain, this way being guaranteed to be present to be the first to receive the Torah from his mentor Moshe.

In fact when Moshe eventually emerged (Ch 32) the first person he met was Yehoshua!

That is a real student, someone thirsty to learn from his teacher, someone who appreciates what is being taught.

But what about us, are we expected to be on that level? How can we achieve the ability of "Making ourselves a Rabbi".

Rabbi Aharon Leib Shteinman, zt"l, points out that the total period of time during which Yehoshua served and learned from Moshe was actually quite short.

The Mishnah in Eduyot (2:10) teaches that the entire punishment and judgment of the Egyptians spanned a period of 12 months, prior to which Moshe was living in Midian, and the Torah was given only seven weeks after the Exodus. At this point, Yehoshua had known Moshe for at most a little more than one year, yet he was already considered Moshe's primary disciple. Rabbi Shteinman suggests that this teaches us that the depth of the connection between a Rabbi and his student is not a function of the amount of time that they spend together, but rather of the student's dedication and commitment to learn from his Rabbi and emulate his ways.

Similarly, Rabbi Chaim Vital is considered the primary disciple of the Arizal, and most of the reliable teachings of the Arizal that we have today are found in the writings of Rabbi Chaim Vital. However, they spent only 20 months together before the Arizal tragically passed away at the age of 38. Nevertheless, Rabbi Chaim Vital was so devoted to his Rabbi that this short period of time was sufficient for him to imbibe the Arizal's wisdom and preserve it for future generations, as the depth of the relationship is far more important than its length.

The best type of Rabbi is a mentor who can turn you into a mentor yourself, teaching you to think for yourself -- with perspective.

If we change the inflection of the Mishnah in Pirkei Avot slightly then Yehoshua ben Perachiyah's aphorism can read: Asei lach rav -- "Make yourself into a Rabbi," i.e. your Rabbi should be someone who helps you to grow into a person who can be a Rabbi/mentor/teacher to others. That's a real mentor. That was the relationship between our leader Moshe and his eventual successor Yehoshua.

We might think that becoming a student or acquiring a Rabbi is a lifetime endeavour. However from the Torah it is clear, what makes a person in to your Rabbi doesn't have to take years, it depends on your seriousness and commitment. If you are committed like Yehoshua, and show your desire, this can be achieved in a relatively short time. Of course you will need to keep up the connection, but "making" the Rabbi, the initial step, doesn't have to be so daunting. Having a Rabbi will lead to disseminating any doubt, guidance for life and will help you build a rich Jewish connection. So what are you waiting for, make yourself a Rabbi! ■ **Shabbat Shalom**

## RABBI D. SCHOCHET - RABBI AT HASMONEAN HIGH SCHOOL



### THE LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM AN OX

"And if an ox were to gore three times..." (Shemos 21:29)

Our Parasha informs us of the laws related to an ox that causes damages to others and differentiates between two types of cases:

- 1) The ox that causes damages by happenstance
- 2) The ox that causes damage habitually

This "ox" not only refers to the physical animal itself but to our animal souls inside of us and just like an animal is not inherently evil, so too the animals

within us has no inherent drive to go against its creator, on the contrary it can be a force driven for the good as well.

There are two types of people corresponding to the two cases of the ox:

- 1) Those who are temporarily overcome by their animal soul
- 2) Those who are driven by their animal soul

For the Jew that fell into sin, this can be easily rectified by doing teshuvah. However, for the Jew driven by sin, this has become his second nature and thus making it that much more difficult for his teshuvah to be effective. How does such a Jew who habitually sins, free himself from the shackles of his animal soul?

The Rambam rules that the test to see if an ox is no longer a habitual threat is by placing it in an environment where it is prone to causing damage. If the ox resists, then it can retain its former

status as one that only causes damage by happenstance. So too with a Jew driven by his animal soul, if he has reached a level that if he were to be placed in front of the same temptation that made him sin yet resisted, then his teshuvah is complete.

Nevertheless, this is no easy feat. Therefore, there is a second option provided. The Rambam rules that another way for an ox to lose its status as one that habitually causes damage is by being transferred to a new owner. Similarly, a Jew who transfers his domain from one of impurity to purity, from sin to total devotion to Tefillah and Torah, will likewise relinquish the rule his animal soul has over him, until such an extent that not only will his drive to sin be severely weakened but his animalistic soul will have a drive to do good. ■ **Shabbat shalom**

**WHITE HOUSE HENDON**  
is proud **Supporter**  
of **TAL**

**phonecity**

90 Golders Green Road, London NW11 8LN  
02087318887

Get in touch  
0207 561 6600  
michael@cityprinting.co.uk

**CityPrinting**  
LTD

City Printing Ltd  
City House  
171-173 Hornsey Road  
London N7 6RA

Providing a service  
to the Jewish  
community

City Printing

do for you?



## OUR CHACHAMIM

### RABBI YOSSE BEN HALAFTA

Rabbi Yossi ben Halafta lived during a dark time of our history, an era of persecution and danger. He was one of the four disciples whom Rabbi Yehudah ben Bava ordained at the risk of his life (Sanhedrin 13b). It was the time of the cruel decrees of Emperor Hadrian, who after the fall of Betar tried by all means possible to destroy Judaism at its very foundation: He prohibited the study of Torah study, the ordination (smicha) of Torah instructors, the recital of Shema, circumcision, etc. It was also the era in which nascent Christianity tried to become popular among our ranks.

Persecution subsided after the death of Emperor Hadrian, but these cruel decrees were still not revoked.

Rabbi Yossi was one of the best-known teachers of the Mishnah. His name is cited hundreds of times in Halachic discussions. According to an ancient tradition, he was the descendant of the famous Jehonadab son of Rehab (see II Kings 10:15), who himself was a descendant of Jethro. Rabbi Yossi thus descended from the Rachabites, who were cited by the prophet Jeremiah for their loyalty to Hashem and tradition. He was a descendant of this illustrious family, and in the Mishnah he calls upon us to honor the Torah.

"The one who honors Torah is honored by men." Rabbi Yossi lived in the Galilee, in the town

of Sepphoris. According to a passage in the Jerusalem Talmud, the inhabitants of that town "were hard-hearted and scarcely honored the teachers of Torah" (Ta'anith 3-4). On the other hand they were very sensitive, like most Galileans, to their honor. It was thus in this setting, the one in which Rabbi Yossi lived, that the words of the Sage cited in the Mishnah found particular resonance and brought those who had previously been indifferent to Torah close to it. "The one who honors Torah is honored by men." Rabbi Yossi made use, as it were, of their ambitions – of their need to feel honored – by putting these ambitions into the service of Torah. And this lesson, of course, is valid for all ages.

The honor due to Torah is a great thing. Sometimes Rabbi Yossi made an appeal to the feelings of the believer, and sometimes he appealed to his intelligence and reasoning. In all cases, this effort to honor Torah will drive the believer to better honor and respect Hashem Himself. This honor is due first to the Sefer Torah, to holy books in general. Yet it does not only consist of treating them with respect. To study sacred texts – to get close to them – this is completely our way, and it is a way that should always be replete with respect. Rabbi Yossi teaches us, therefore, that one who honors Torah, by showing respect both to books and to those who instruct it, will be honored by men. ■



## HALACHOT

### RABBI ELI MANSOUR

#### RECITING A BERACHA BEFORE SMELLING INCENSE OR FRAGRANT OIL

Before smelling rosemary or jasmine, one recites the Beracha of "Boreh Aseh Besamim."

It was customary in ancient times to place spices over burning coals after a meal, in order to produce a fragrant incense. If one smells incense, he must recite a Beracha, but the Beracha must be made at a very specific point in the process – namely, it must be recited after the scent has begun to waft through the air, but before he smells the scent. If one recites the Beracha before the scent has begun to spread, then he recites the Beracha too early, and if he had already smelled the fragrance, then it is too late to recite the Beracha.

The specific Beracha recited over incense depends on the spice used to produce the scent. If the spice was taken from a tree, then the Beracha is "Boreh Aseh Besamim," and if the spice comes from the ground, then the Beracha is "Boreh Asbeh Besamim." If one uses a regular perfume, then the Beracha is "Boreh Mineh Besamim."

If spices or fragrant substances are placed in oil to produce a fragrant oil, then one recites a Beracha before smelling the oil only if some of the substance is still present in the oil. In such a case, the Beracha depends on the substance – if there are roses in the oil, for example, then the Beracha is "Boreh Aseh Besamim," whereas if there is mint in the oil, then the Beracha is "Boreh Asbeh Besamim." However, if the oil was filtered, such that none of the fragrant substance remains in the oil, then no Beracha is recited, even though the oil has a pleasing scent. This is a situation of "Re'ah She'en Bo Ikar" – a scent without a source, as the source is no longer present. As the Halachic authorities debate the question of whether one recites a Beracha over such a fragrance, we follow the rule of "Safek Berachot Le'hakel" – that a Beracha is not recited when it is subject to uncertainty – and therefore, if the fragrant oil had been filtered, no Beracha is recited.

Summary: If one smells incense – spices or other fragrant substances placed over coals to produce a fragrant smoke – he recites the Beracha that would be required over smelling the fragrant substance itself (either "Boreh Aseh Besamim," "Boreh Asbeh Besamim," or "Boreh Mineh Besamim"). He must recite the Beracha after the scent has begun to waft through the air, but before he smells it. One recites a Beracha before smelling fragrant oil only if some of the substance used to produce the scent – such as roses or mint – is still present in the oil, in which case he recites the Beracha that would be required before smelling that substance itself. If the oil was filtered, such that the source of the fragrance is no longer present, then no Beracha is recited. ■



## TU BISHVAT

Fabulous afternoon, great activities for the kids, huge success. Well done to the TAL team on putting on a great event.

Emma Abramson

### Upcoming EVENTS & Lectures

CHANIE APFELBAUM IS COMING TO GET

# BUSY IN TAL



WED 25th  
MARCH  
8PM



NORTH  
LONDON  
LOCATION



1 TICKET £30  
4 TICKETS £100  
offer ends 1st March

## MEGILAT ESTHER OFFER IN FULL COLOURS

in book type £ 5.00  
in scroll type £ 18.00

If collected from HEICHAL LEAH,  
62 Brent st, NW4 2ES

February Sundays to Thursdays  
after Arbit till 8 March.

OTHERWISE, pls ADD £ 4.90  
for P&P any mixed quantities.

PLS post cheques to MEGILAT ESTHER OFFER,  
12 Ferrydale lodge, 48 Church road, NW4 4EW  
Email us at mchitayat@gmail.com

Have  
your own  
Sefer Torah  
in honour or  
in memory of  
your choice  
and take it to  
the Yeshiva or  
Synagogue  
of your  
choice



## TAL TorahActionLife SEFER TORAH RAFFLE

YOUR CHANCE TO REALISE THE DREAM OF A LIFETIME!  
TO FULFILL THIS UNIQUE MITZVAH OF WRITING/  
OWNING YOUR VERY OWN SEFER TORAH

1  
FOR  
£360

3  
FOR  
£1000

6  
FOR  
£1800

ONLY **613**

TICKETS

BEING SOLD - RAFFLE WILL  
BE DRAWN AS SOON AS ALL  
TICKETS ARE SOLD

SEFER TORAH INCLUDES: - MEHUDAR SEFER TORAH  
- CHOICE OF SEMI-CUSTOM CASE  
- APPROX £40,000 VALUE

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE ONLINE FROM OUR WEBSITE [WWW.TORAHACTIONLIFE.COM](http://WWW.TORAHACTIONLIFE.COM)