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## COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

This week's edition is sponsored  
Lehatslachat Moshe Ben Rav  
Yitschak Hakohen Vechol Mishpachto

**VAYEISHEV**  
SHABBAT MEVARCHIN  
23<sup>rd</sup> KISLEV 5777  
Shabbat begins: 15:39  
Shabbat ends: 16:50



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
DIRECTOR, TAL

Who Are You?

It wasn't long ago that the most popular figure in the news was none other than the 45<sup>th</sup> American President Donald Trump.

A few months ago he went on a campaigning trail in Miami. He entered an old age home and met with a 92 year old lady. As he approached her he said "Lady, do you know who I am?" She answered, "No, who are you?" He was shocked. "You don't know who I am?"

"Look at me. I am tall, handsome, great hair do, energetic, intelligent, making America great again. Look at me. Who am I?"

The old lady responded bewildered. "Sorry son, I don't know who you are." Then he went into a fit.

"You don't know who I am? Everyone in the world knows I am. Tell me who I am?"

"Sorry sir, I don't know." She quietly replied.

Another old lady, 89 years old came over to him, tapped him on his back and said,

"Sir, Relax, Relax! I will call in the head nurse.....*She* .....will tell you who you are!"

She smiled towards Donald and said "This happens very often around here, people forget who they are."

Donald Trump, the outsider against all odds, polls and predictions was elected to become the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States.

What many people don't know is what instigated him to make such a bold move from businessman to president. According to a widely shared New York Times article what clinched his decision to run for president came about in April 2011.



There was an annual Whitehouse correspondence dinner where media correspondence and business personalities gathered to enjoy an evening with President Obama. Traditionally the President gives a humorous address.

Mr Trump a successful businessman at the time attended the dinner.

The President arose to speak and began to target Mr Trump in his first joke. He continued to relate joke after

joke regarding Mr Trump. At first Mr Trump laughed them away, but as it started to grind in, surrounded by 1000 top correspondence and world media, his posture showed that he was not having an enjoyable evening.

According to the article it was at the end of this evening that Mr Trump thought to himself that he would teach everyone a lesson. As if to say, "there will be a day that they will not be laughing at me anymore – I will be the next president of the United States."

Despite violating every political standard and mocking the media, his drive led him to the Presidency.

How did it happen?

The honest answer could be somebody shamed him in public. We as Jews know it.

The Talmud (Gittin 56) tells of a man who wanted to throw a party for all his friends, so he drew up a guest list and instructed his servant to send out the invitations. One of the men on the guest list was named "Kamtza," but the servant made a mistake and invited "Bar Kamtza" instead. Unfortunately Bar Kamtza was actually a sworn enemy of the host!

When Bar Kamtza received his invitation, he was very grateful to think that the host had finally made amends. But when Bar Kamtza showed up at the party, the host took one look at him and told his servant to immediately eject Bar Kamtza from the premises.

When asked to leave, Bar Kamtza pleaded with the host not to publicly disgrace him and offered to pay for the entire party. He was rebuffed. Disgraced and embarrassed he left the



1. Whose is the only birthday mentioned in the Torah and what happened then?

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party and angrily headed towards the Romans encouraging them to eventually destroy the Bet Hamikdash (Temple).

Embarrassment and not respecting others led to the destruction of the Holy Temple.

The Mishna Pirkei Avot (5:1) states "the world was created with ten utterances." Our Sages explain that G-d wanted to instil in us the importance of words. Through words we can build and through words we can destroy worlds.

That's the power Tamar understood thousands of years ago.

In our Parasha in the middle of the narration of the story of Yosef and his brothers, the Torah interjects with the story of Yehuda and Tamar [Ch. 38]. Yehuda had 3 sons, the first son – Er – was married to a woman named Tamar. Er died and then the second brother – Onan – married Tamar. When Onan also died, Yehuda did not want to allow his third son Shelah to marry Tamar. Tamar disguised herself and tricked Yehuda into performing a form of levirate marriage with her. When she became noticeably pregnant, Yehuda accused her of being unfaithful to his family. Rather

than embarrassing him and announcing that he made her pregnant, she merely ambiguously said that she was pregnant from the person who gave her certain items as a security pledge.

Yehuda recognized the items as his own. Rather than deny the fact that he was indeed the one who lived with her, he admitted that he was the father of her children. In fact, one of the two sons born to Yehuda and Tamar (Peretz) eventually became the ancestor of King David and the Davidic dynasty.

From the fact that Tamar didn't want to publicly embarrass Yehuda, even though her life was at stake, our Sages derive: "It is better that a person throw himself into a fiery furnace than shame his neighbour in public" (Baba Metzia 59a).

The rabbis were acutely sensitive to humiliation. They said, "Whoever shames his neighbour in public, is as if he shed his blood" and "One who publicly humiliates another, forfeits his place in the World-to-Come" (Baba Metzia 58b-59a).

Rabbi Tanchuma taught: "Know whom you shame; if you shame your

neighbour [you shame G-d himself, for it is written], 'In the image of G-d, He made man'" (Bereishit Rabah 24:7). Shame is the first emotion mentioned in Torah: Adam and Chava felt healthy shame for disobeying G-d's commandment. After Kayin killed Hevel, Kayin's initial lack of shame was so problematic that he had to go through a long cleansing period to awaken him. Yosef's brothers were lacking shame until they got a huge dose of it 22 years later, when Yosef revealed himself to them. And Yosef himself had to endure many shameful experiences for his own growth.

Both the story of Kamza and Bar Kamza over two thousand years ago and this year's Whitehouse correspondence dinner highlight a clear message. Psychological injury may be no less harmful, and is often more so, than physical injury. Hence the rule: never humiliate, never put to shame, never take refuge in the excuse that they were only words, that no physical harm was done. Words are powerful, double check before speaking and pressing the button of no return!



Eli Gabay

Where Is The Holy Place?

We commonly assume that the Hebrew word "*Kadosh*" means "holy." However, the Torah calls a harlot "*Kedeshah*" (Gen. 38:15, 21), even though such a person doesn't exactly fit anyone's definition of holy. The commentators explain that "*Kadosh*" means separate, set aside or wholly

designated for a specific purpose. So a "*Kedeshah*" refers to a woman who has separated herself from moral behaviour and has designated herself to immorality.

When we recite *Kedusha* during the repetition of the *Amidah*, we are expressing the fact that Hashem is entirely separate from the mundane world, as we attempt to raise ourselves out of materialism and cleave to Him (raising ourselves on our toes being a physical expression of this).

This week's Parasha is full of advice as to how to keep our souls holy. Yehuda sends his servant to pay the harlot that he had encountered (all the while unaware that she was his daughter-in-law, Tamar) and retrieve his items he had pledged. The servant asks the

passers-by "where is the *Kedeshah* (harlot) that was at the Enayim (crossroads)," (Gen. 38:21) but he is unable to find her.

The Yeshuot Malko expounds the verse as a lesson to those who wish to be holy and become close to Hashem. The verse is stating "Where is the place to draw upon oneself a spirit of holiness and purity, or G-d forbid, to draw upon oneself a spirit of impurity – [only] the eyes!"

When a person guards his eyes from seeing sights that are contrary to Jewish standards of modesty, he draws a spirit of holiness upon himself. When he looks at forbidden things, he draws impurity upon himself and breaks his connection with



2. How could Paro appoint a **slave** as second-in-command? Surely this does not make sense?

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Hashem. The *Neshama* gives life to the entire body, but it has a direct link and interaction with the physical world through the eyes. Other stimuli that are taken in through the other senses such as hearing, are processed by the body before they reach the *Neshama* and so have less power to bring bad or good upon a person.

Yosef Hatzadik excelled in this behaviour as he fought against the temptations, pressure and threats of Zulaicha, the wife of Potiphar. Since he would not succumb, she tried to get him to compromise. So the Kli Yakar explains the verse "to lie beside her, to be with her," that she asked him just to lie down in the same room during the day, but he refused. "...To be with her," Rashbam explains that he would not enter the house when she was alone and the Ibn Ezra explains that he would not even talk to her. Rashi adds that he was afraid of "being with her" in *Gehinam* (hell) in the next world.

This is taught in Pirke Avot "do not speak excessively with the wife. Regarding one's own wife they said this, how much more careful should one be with another man's wife. ...and whoever speaks excessively...causes

damage to himself, wastes Torah learning time, and enters *Gehinam*."

When Yaakov is brought the blood stained coat of Yosef, he exclaims "a wild beast ate him!...I must go down to my son to Sheol (the grave)." Rashi explains that Yaakov is in fact hinting that his son is at risk from Zulaicha, whom he calls the "wild beast," and that Yaakov would have to send down his mystical image to the impure "grave" of Egypt, in order to help his son. The Ben Ish Hai says that a man cannot be 100% successful in defeating his Yetzer Hara unless he is married, so we can suggest that Yosef needed the miracle of seeing an image of his father appear to him in order to miraculously aid him in defeating this challenge.

Sforno says that he also had to run out of the house rather than walk, in order to have the energy to defeat the temptation. Running could have made him look foolish or even guilty, but he followed the dictum of Chazal "better to look a fool in the eyes of man your entire life than to be evil in Hashem's eyes for even a second."

Yosef's reward for succeeding in his challenge was that he became the

King/Viceroy of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. The Kli Yakar explains that this "escape" from Zulaicha caused him to escape his bad Mazal and henceforth rule over his Mazal. The commentators teach that all men who guard their eyes are rewarded with the character traits that Kingship requires.

The Gemara Ketubot 30a states that even though we have no death penalties since the destruction of the temple, an adulterer, for example, will meet his end by drowning or choking (strangulation being the relevant penalty in temple times). Hence we see that the immoral generation of the flood were drowned in Noah's time.

The Kli Yakar learns that Yosef's purity created the opposite response to drowning when the Sea of Reeds split. The verse says "the sea fled," when it sensed the coffin of Yosef being carried through the sea as the Jews entered. This was his reward for fleeing from Zulaicha. Conversely, as the immoral Egyptians entered the sea, they received the relevant punishment of drowning for their behaviour.



STORIES OF OUR  
CHACHAMIM

### The Baal Shem Tov

All the people of the land obviously recognize their king. But when the king goes out to war, he is

accustomed to disguising himself so as to not be recognized by anyone. Even at such a time, the ministers and close company of the king who are constantly in his presence are familiar with his every movement, and even if he should change his attire, they will nevertheless recognize him with ease. There is one way, though, that even the general populace can figure out where the king is located. Let them simply observe where there is the highest concentration of security that is where the king can be found! When an individual prepares

himself to pray, said R' Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov, the yetzer hara immediately intervenes in an attempt to disturb his kavanah and break his concentration. A person must know, however, that the obstacle that he faces clearly indicates that this is where the King is found! The fact that kavanah is so hard shows that "security" is heaviest there since Hashem is close to all who call upon Him sincerely. It is incumbent upon one who prays to try with all his might to overcome the obstacle and reach the King.



3. Yosef was eventually sold to Potifar the "Sar Hatabochim". What was his job?

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1. It was Paro at the end of the parsha (40:20). It is perceived as a special day and was celebrated by a feast where prisoners were reviewed and some were granted pardons. In this case it was the butler who was freed from prison. (We find this idea of birthdays being a time for celebration in the Mishna and Gemora Avoda Zora 8a.)
2. The Gemora (Sota 36b) says that the advisers asked this and were told that Paro saw in Yosef kingship. When asked for proof he tested him with the seventy languages that he spoke. The Angel Gavriel taught him and then Hashem helped Yosef know these seventy languages and he was then appointed.
3. Rashi learns it means he was the chief butcher. The Chizkuni learns that he was the chief in charge of killing the people sentenced to die. It comes out that both agree the word "taboch" means "slaughter". The argument is if it means the slaughter of animals or of people.



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