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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

KEDOSHIM

5th IYAR 5776

Shabbat begins: 20:29

Shabbat ends: 21:42

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Lelluy Nishmat Yedidya Ben
Chorshit Z'L. Tiyyeh Nishmato
Betsurat Hachaim



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Revenge!

Your child is playing on the beach with his friend making a sand castle. He makes the most magnificent edifice with four towers, a moat of water and great structures. After four hours of hard work, he runs to tell you about it. As you both stare at the wonderful sand castle, his 'friend' goes over and by mistake steps on it crushing it down. It's left in ruins and your son yells out a cry of anguish.

What is your reaction to your son? You feel for him, but at the end of the day, the castle wasn't going to last forever. These things come and go, and anyway, before long you would be going back to your home leaving it all behind. But the child doesn't understand that. He thinks he has been wronged. He is furious at his friend and won't let it go.

In this week's Parasha we are taught: "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge against the members of your

people; you shall love your fellow as yourself -- I am Hashem" (19:18).

How do you view revenge?

There is a famous story recounting the words of an American politician, Senator Henry Clay, made to his antagonist Virginia's John Randolph, right before their infamous duel in April of 1826.

The two were walking towards each other on a narrow footpath with little room to pass. One would have to give way. "I never make room for scoundrels," sneered Randolph. "I always do," Clay smiled as he stepped off the paved path to let Randolph pass!

Of course there is a lot more to learn here.



What does the Torah mean, "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge," what is the difference?

Rashi explains: If Moshe says to David "Lend me your sickle", and David replies, "No!", and the next day David says to Moshe, "Lend me your hatchet", and Moshe retorts, "I am not going to lend it to you, just as you refused to lend me your sickle" - this is **avenging**; and what is "bearing a grudge"? Rashi continues. "If Moshe says to David, "Lend me your hatchet", and David replies

"No!" and on the next day David says to Moshe "Lend me your sickle", and Moshe replies "Here it is; I am not like you, because you would not lend me your hatchet" - this is called "bearing a grudge" because he retains enmity in his heart although he does not actually avenge himself."

Both revenge and bearing a grudge are Torah prohibitions.

But the Kli Yakar asks, why does the Torah specify **Amecha** -one is not allowed to do this to his people - i.e. specifically to another Jew. This implies that to a non-Jew this would be permitted? Is that really the case?

The Kli Yakar explains that we are not allowed to take revenge or bear a grudge on anyone. However the Torah is highlighting that when someone comes against you in a non-Jewish form and attacks your Neshama (soul) then you are allowed to and should bear a grudge. You have to feel the affront and defend your spirituality.

On physical matters, however, one should not feel an affront (Yuma 22b)...

The Kli Yakar brings the beautiful idea mentioned above of a child building; there is no point getting upset, after all, it's only a temporary building.

Everything in the world is temporary, thus if someone acts unwittingly against another, they should not bear a grudge, they should realise everything is from Hashem, take it on their chest and move on.

How can someone be on such a level that although they are hurt physically, they don't bare a grudge? Perhaps the



Living with Mitzvos

1. How many mitzvos are there in the parsha?
2. How many mitzvos from this parsha can you think of that have to do with helping poor people?
3. How many of the mitzvos in Parshas Kedoshim do we come across in day to day living?
4. What mitzva in Parshas Kedoshim is counted as a mitzva without knowingly doing any action?
5. What is the connection between Parshas Acharei-Mos and Parshas Kedoshim?
6. What is a mitzvah in Parshas Kedoshim that stands out as being more central than others?
7. What mitzvos with regards to a shul nowadays are seen in Parshas Kedoshim?

Answers On Page 3

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answer lies within the story of the Kli Yakar himself.

Ephraim son of Aaron was born in the city of Luntschitz in what is today central Poland, around the year 1550. He studied under the famed Maharshal (Rabbi Shlomo Luria) and became Rabbi of the city of Lvov where he served for 25 years.

From an early age he was recognized as a star orator and was renowned for his fiery sermons. In 1601, Rabbi Ephraim became deathly ill. During the course of his illness he added the name Shlomo to his name and thereafter signed his name Shlomo Ephraim. He also vowed that if he survived his illness he would compose a commentary to the Pentateuch.

Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim survived his illness and the very next year wrote and published his commentary, named Kli Yakar. The commentary became immediately popular throughout the Jewish world and was his most famous publication, to the point that he is now known simply as the Kli Yakar. More than 400 years later the Kli Yakar remains popular and is printed alongside the commentary of Rashi and many others in Chumashim.

The year after the Kli Yakar's publication, he was appointed Chief Rabbi of the great city of Prague, where he also served as Rosh Yeshiva and Head of the Beit Din. Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim passed away in 1619. His son and other descendents followed in his

footsteps, also holding the esteemed position of the Chief Rabbi of Prague. Amongst his most famous students was Rabbi Yom Tov Lipman Heller, also known as Tosfot Yom Tov.

The Kli Yakar's father Aharon was once in trouble with the local count. He rented a place from him and had come across hard times, unable to pay the rent. He assured the count that by the end of the month he would be able to repay all his bills and more, but the count hated the Jews and took this as a good excuse to punish Aharon. He was thrown into an underground pit (cell) with his pregnant wife. They were left there without any food and immediately yelled to Hashem for help. Their prayers were answered shortly afterwards as one of the counts' men, Yohan, had pity on them and fed them secretly.

Time passed by and the wife's pregnancy advanced. She started to complain to her husband. What were they going to do? She begged her husband. But Aharon surprisingly put on a happy face and started to sing.

"We are going to die and you are singing?" she said.

Aharon replied, "I have faith in Hashem, all will be ok. He is with us even here in the low pit, everything is from Hashem."

"Yes but I am about to give birth, and probably the baby will die, and maybe even me!" she exclaimed.

Aharon was troubled on the inside, but his faith prevailed and he prayed vehemently for their health and a good baby. He prayed hard and kept singing with faith that Hashem was in charge.

A few weeks later amazingly a healthy baby boy was born. The mother survived the terrible ordeal, and when Yohan was passing by he heard the screams of the baby. He was touched and approached the count to have mercy on them.

The count agreed, let them free, but took the baby for himself.

The child was raised in his house and he reached the age of 13 he started hearing voices at night – "you are a Jew run away." At first he tried to ignore them. Then one day he went to Prague escorted as usual by two guards. He managed to lose them, and went to visit the Maharal of Prague. The Maharal of Prague took the child under his wing and this child grew up to be the Kli Yakar!

We can now understand where the Kli Yakar got his Peshat (understanding) in the above mentioned Pasuk.

His father had such faith in Hashem, he saw Hashem everywhere and in full control of events, realising that all that happens to us is from Him. With that kind of outlook we can understand the Torah's command not to take revenge.

Everything in this world withers away, all the tough things thrown at us come from Hashem so what room is there for revenge?



RABBI AMOS AZIZOF
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Veahavata Le Reacha Kamocha, A Deeper Meaning!

One of my favourite Torah lessons is found in this week's Parasha, *Kedoshim*. In one of the most important and extremely popular verses of Torah we are commanded "*Ve'ahavta lere'acha komocha*" — "Love your friend as yourself." Undoubtedly, this command is all-inclusive and is not limited to any particular segment of the Jewish people. Though the term "*rei'acha*" is used, it doesn't apply only to a friend with whom you have an ongoing

relationship and friendship but it includes every Jew, even one you never met.

Reb Levi Yitzchak asks the following simple question: The word "*kamocha*" — "as yourself" — seems superfluous. It could have simply said "*ve'ahavta lere'acha*" — "love your friend?"

Reb Levi Yitzchak explains that the Torah is not instructing how much a person should love his friend, or putting any limit that it be *kamocha* — as yourself — and not more or less. In fact, according to him there is no restriction on how much to love another Jew, and it is permissive and even encouraged to love another Jew even more than oneself.

The Torah is, however, conveying advice for achieving the noble trait of loving another Jew. Torah knows that it is human nature not to see one's own faults. Even a person with many failings will, due to self-love, not readily condemn himself. This is substantiated by King Shlomo's statement, "Love covers all offenses", and what greater love is there than self-love?

Nevertheless, it is human nature to see and recognize the faults and wrongdoings of others and even to condemn, admonish and ridicule them for it.

Hence, the Torah is teaching that you should love your fellow "*kamocha*" — "as yourself" — just as you love yourself. Just as you overlook your own faults, you should act precisely the same way concerning your friend.

Life brings many hardships and disappointments; times of trials and tribulations, and moments when one wants to blame another.

The Torah advises us that before offering criticism or condemnation, remember the apparently superfluous word "*kamocha*" as interpreted by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev.

Stop and think, "Am I looking at my friend, *kamocha* — the same as I would look at myself or am I perceiving my friend the same as I would perceive any other stranger?"

If every human being would always bear in mind the beautiful interpretation of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, many friendships and marriages would be prolonged and much agony would be spared to so many people and families!

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STORIES OF OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI HAIM PINTO

Rabbi Haim Pinto the Great was born in Agadir, Morocco on Tammuz 15, 5509 (July 1, 1749), on the Hilloula of Rabbi Haim Ben Attar.

He was the son of the saintly and venerated Rabbi Shlomo Pinto Zatzal, the descendant of Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto, known by the name of the Rif of Ein Yaakov.

Rabbi Shlomo Pinto Zatzal instructed Torah to his son, Rabbi Haim Pinto, when he was very young. Unfortunately, Rabbi Shlomo Pinto passed away in 1761, leaving behind him an orphan barely 12

years old. That same year, an earthquake completely destroyed Agadir, and numerous Jews fled and settled in Mogador (Essaouira). Rabbi Haim Pinto was to be found among the refugees.

Rabbi Haim Pinto studied Torah along with Rabbi David Ben Hazan at the yeshiva of Rabbi Yaakov Bibas, the Dayan of the city. Rabbi Haim Pinto's reputation was so great that all Morocco resonated with accounts of his miracles and wonders, and this from his most early years.

His teacher, Rabbi Yaakov Bibas, died in 1769, and the community of the city turned to Rabbi Haim Pinto to accept the heavy responsibility of Dayan. Being but 20 years old, he finally accepted this responsibility in association with his friend, Rabbi David Ben Hazan. Rabbi Haim Pinto carried out his mandate as Head of the Rabbinic Court in an extremely firm manner, and when necessary he knew how to be very strict. Never did he allow someone to act incorrectly, exercising this function for more than 70 years. The greatest Chachamim of the generation esteemed him with fear and respect, and Jews and Muslims alike venerated him. His fame spread throughout Morocco, across the

Middle East, and reached all the way to Europe. Eliyahu Hanavi revealed himself regularly to Rabbi Haim Pinto and studied with him, which explains why Rabbi Haim Pinto participated in all the Brit Milahs that took place in Mogador.

Among the many stories about Rabbi Haim Pinto z"l, the following account has been gathered from the book on him entitled *The Light of the Righteous*.

Rabbi Haim Pinto awoke every night to recite prayers and to make "requests of G-d". Afterwards, he would study Torah until dawn. One day his daughter Mazal entered into his room in the middle of the night and saw him studying with a man. In the morning, he scolded her and said, "Why did you come into my room without knocking?" She was not in a position to see Eliyahu Hanavi. "Now you deserve a punishment, meaning that on the day of your marriage you will become blind." His daughter, who was a great saint, accepted the decree.

A few years later, the grandson of Rabbi Khalifa Malka came from Agadir to Mogador and went directly to Rabbi Haim Pinto's home. When he saw Mazal, she found grace in his eyes, and so

Living with Mitzvos

1. Parshas Kedoshim, according to the Sefer Hachinuch, has fifty-one mitzvos. These consist of thirteen positive mitzvos and thirty-eight negative mitzvos. Forty of them apply nowadays and the majority of them equally apply to women.
2. Poor people usually are left to their own devices in society. However, the Torah requires every Jew to feel responsible to assist their poor brethren. This is seen elsewhere with the requirement of Maaser money, a tenth of one's income to be given to the poor. We find in Parshas Kedoshim caring for the poor in different ways. This is found by the farmer when collecting his produce. (The first three years he must leave alone the produce, known as Orla (ibid, 19:23) and the fourth year takes it to be eaten in Yerushalayim (ibid, 19:23-24). He must not have grafted any produce (ibid, 19:19).) The farmer must leave a corner of his field and vineyard for the poor (ibid, 19:9-10). When cutting the produce and some fall down, if it is one or two stalks of produce, or one or two grapes, then he must leave it for the poor (ibid, 19:9-10), while if it is three or more the owner can take them for himself. All these come with a positive and negative mitzva.
3. On a day to day basis we come across lots of mitzvos mentioned in Parshas Kedoshim. For those with parents, there is the positive mitzva to fear them (Vayikra, 19:3) and not curse them (ibid. 20:9). When shopping or somewhere other than your house, to resist the temptation of stealing (ibid. 19:11) or extorting (ibid. 19:13). When asked for advice, to not intentionally give bad advice or assist a friend doing a sin (ibid. 19:14). Instead a real friend will rebuke him gently and not embarrass anyone (ibid. 19:17). Be careful not to take revenge or even bear inside a grudge (ibid. 19:18) or speak badly about other people (ibid. 19:16) but instead be *Don Lekaf Zechus*, judge them favourably (ibid, 19:15). Also, not to hate them (ibid. 19:17) but instead to love every other Jew (ibid. 19:18). Not to be badly influenced by the gentile environment and follow their customs (ibid. 20:23). To stand up respectfully for elderly and scholarly people (ibid, 19:32).
4. This is the mitzva of *Shekcha* whereby simply forgetting the bundle in the field already changes ownership from the field owner to the poor people!
5. Rabbeiny BeChai says that after saying the forbidden relationships Parshas Kedoshim starts of saying to be careful to do what is allowed and this will result in kedusha, holiness.
6. Rashi (19:18) brings that Rabbi Akiva says that the mitzvah of "Loving your friend like yourself" is a rule in the Torah.
7. Every time you enter a shul you can do the mitzva of *Mikdoshi Tiraoo*, to fear the Beis Hamikdash (Kedoishim, 19:30) since shuls are called a *Mikdash Miat*. (Chofetz Chaim, Sefer Hamitzvos Hakotzer, Asai 18.) It is also there that you are most likely to encounter elderly people and talmidei chachomim and can then do the mitzva of (ibid, 19:32) *Mipnei Saiva Tokum*, standing up for older and greater people.

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he asked Rabbi Haim Pinto to give his daughter to him in marriage, but the Rabbi refused. He insisted, but Rabbi Haim Pinto absolutely refused. The grandson of Rabbi Khalifa Malka returned to Agadir saddened and hurt because the Rabbi had refused to give him his daughter as a wife.

Later, Rabbi Haim Pinto had a dream in which he saw Rabbi Khalifa Malka, who told him, "I sent you my grandson happy, and you sent him back to me sad." Rabbi Haim Pinto responded, "Your honor knows that my daughter Mazal saw Eliyahu Hanavi and a decree has been given: On the day of her marriage, she will become blind. This is why I refused her to your grandson." Rabbi Khalifa replied that his grandson would accept this decree as is. All of this occurred during the dream.

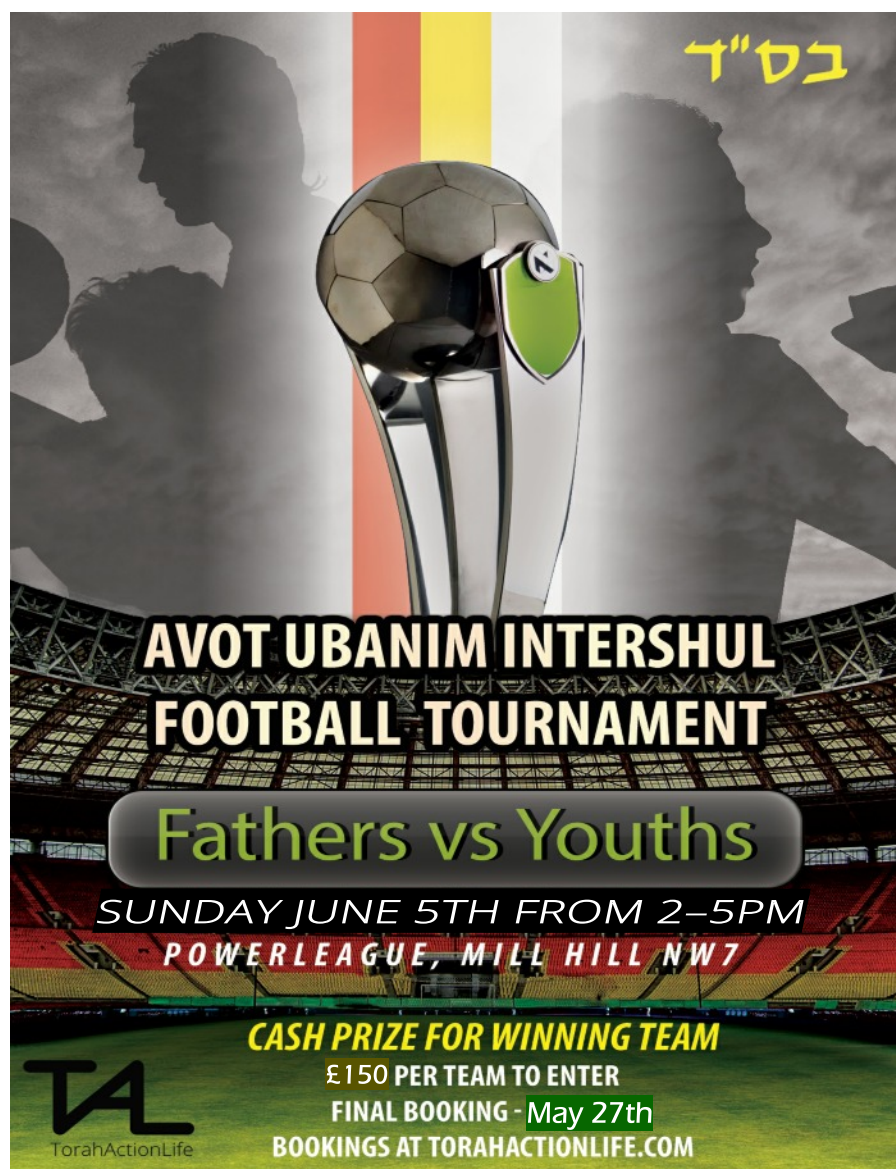
The next day, Rabbi Haim Pinto sent a special messenger to Agadir to bring the grandson of Rabbi Khalifa Malka to him. When Rabbi Haim Pinto saw him, he explained what would happen to his daughter on the day of her wedding, and he agreed. However, thanks to their merit and uprightness, this cruel decree was annulled and they had children and lived a great many years. They passed away in the same week.

When Rabbi Haim Pinto would arise every night to study Torah, his Shamash (assistant) Rabbi Aaron Ben Haim, would also arise and prepare him a cup of coffee. Once, the Shamash awoke a little late and therefore hurried to prepare a cup of coffee for the Rabbi, when suddenly he heard two voices coming from his room. He then went and prepared an additional cup for the unexpected guest. In the morning, Rabbi Haim Pinto asked his Shamash, "Why did you prepare two cups of coffee during the night?" The Shamash responded, "I heard two voices and I thought to prepare a second cup for the guest." The Rabbi told him, "Happy are you, my son, you who had the merit to hear the voice of Eliyahu Hanavi. However I decree that you repeat this secret to no one." After the death of Rabbi Haim Pinto, the Shamash recounted this incident to the inhabitants of the city.

Rabbi Maklouf Ben Lisha came to the home of Rabbi Haim Pinto concerning matters of importance for the community of Mogador. Because of the fact that this was a serious matter, he went directly to Rabbi Haim Pinto in the middle of the night. He entered into his room and saw the Rabbi, whose face was "illuminated", and someone else who resembled an angel. He wanted to come a little closer, but he was seized with such great fear and fright that he fled to his home. The next day the Rabbi told him, "Very happy are you, my son, who had the merit of seeing the face of Eliyahu Hanavi." Rabbi Maklouf lived a long time, to the age of 110, and he described this incident in his prayer book.

Rabbi Haim Pinto of blessed memory had four sons: Rabbi Yehudah (known as Rabbi Hadane), Rabbi Yossef, Rabbi Yoshiyahu, and Rabbi Yaakov. All were great Tzaddikim, devoted to Torah and to Klal Israel.

Rabbi Haim Pinto of blessed memory left this world on Elul 26, 5605 (September 28, 1845) at the age of 96. On the day of his passing, he promised his disciples that those who would invoke his name on the day of his Hilloula would see their prayers answered. May his merit protect us. Amen.



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