

TAL TorahActionLife

COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

This week's edition is sponsored
Lehatslachat Raaya Bat Liora
Yehudit Vechol Mishpachta

NITZAVIM

27th ELLUL 5776

Shabbat begins: 18:24

Shabbat ends: 19:27



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Are You Thirsty?

Cognitive dissonance is a kind of armour that we build up to ward off information that we don't want to hear. According to cognitive dissonance theory, we seek consistency among our beliefs. When there is dissonance between belief and behaviour, we change something to eliminate the dissonance. We could change our behaviour to accord with our beliefs, but usually, we change our attitude to accommodate our behaviour. It's much less work!

For example: You buy an expensive car and take it for a drive to Manchester. Even though the car looked great in the showroom and handled well in town, you discover that on long drives, it's about as comfortable as a wooden bench.

Dissonance exists between your beliefs that you have a) bought a good car, and b) that a good car should be comfortable. Dissonance could be eliminated by deciding that it doesn't matter since the car is mainly used for short trips (reducing the importance of the dissonant belief) or focusing on the cars

strengths such as safety, appearance, handling (thereby adding more consonant beliefs). The dissonance could also be eliminated by getting rid of the car – but that's a lot harder than changing our beliefs.

Changing beliefs, working on ourselves, changing our character for the best all require a great deal of effort. The question is, are we ready to work on ourselves? Do we see this as important, or are we going to continue our robotic path in life.

The story is told of Morris, who goes to the rabbi and says, "I committed a sin and I want to know what I can do to repent."
"What was the sin?" the rabbi asked.



"It happened just once," Morris assures him. "I didn't wash my hands and recite the blessing before eating bread."

"Nu, if it really only happened once," the rabbi said, "that's not so terrible. Nonetheless, why did you neglect to wash your hands and recite the blessing?"

"I felt awkward Rabbi," said Morris. "You see, I was in an un-kosher restaurant."

The rabbi's eyebrows arch. "And why were you eating in an un-kosher restaurant?"

"I had no choice," Morris said. "All the kosher restaurants were closed."

"And why were all the kosher restaurants closed?" the rabbi asked.

Morris replied, "It was Yom Kippur."

Sometimes we are not very truthful with ourselves, we start with one small request, perhaps a small lust to do a sin, and we convince ourselves that such a small sin won't hurt anyone. Then slowly, slowly one thing leads to another and before we know it we find ourselves performing a major sin. What happened?

In this weeks Parsha the Torah states that anyone who thinks that all the curses mentioned in the Torah will not apply to him, is mistaken. "And it will be that when he hears the words of this curse, he will bless himself in his heart, saying, 'Peace will be with me...to compound the moist with the thirsty' " (29:18)

Hashem emphatically states that no one is immune from punishment. There are no excuses. If a person knows the rules, he has learnt the Torah and nevertheless thinks that Shalom Yihyeh Li – I will be ok, this doesn't apply to me, it applies to *everyone else* – then he is mistaken. We have to stop looking at the bad in others and also realise that there exists some bad in us. The way forward is to inspect ourselves. But there is a more important lesson to be learned from the above mentioned Pasuk. Let us take a deeper look. The Ramban asks what is meant by the words "in order to compound the moist (Rava) with the thirsty (Tseme'ah)", what is it telling us?

The soul of man is pure. We are created with a content soul, but due to our body being physical our desires are physical. There is a constant battle between our soul

Living with Mitzvos

1. When does Parshas Nitzovim take place during Moshe's lifetime?
2. How is this bris, covenant, different to all the previous ones? Why the need for an additional bris?
3. Why is Parshas Nitzovim always read as the last week of the year preceding Rosh Hashana?
4. At the end of each parsha it says the number of pesukim and a word as a siman. What is it by Parshas Netzovim?
5. Are curses actually a bad thing?
6. What was the point of also bringing the children to hear Parshas Nitzovim?
7. Which letter is different in Parshas Nitzovim from the others and why?

Answers On Page 3

elias
LONDON'S PREMIER DRY CLEANER
www.eliascleaners.co.uk

B.R.E.
BRAMPTON REAL ESTATE
SALES - RENTALS - MANAGEMENT
Tel: 020 7101 3737
www.bramptonrealestate.co.uk
Shommer Shabbat
PROUD SPONSORS OF TAL

020 8806 2528 Proud Sponsors of TAL
SHALOM MOTORS
EST 1967
TAKING CARE OF YOUR MOTORING NEEDS.
Icons: car, motorcycle, van, truck, car wash, car lift.

which seeks closeness to Hashem and our body which seeks physicality's. A content soul is called Rava. Its desires are satiated. A lustful person however, is called Tseme'ah –thirsty – they desire more and more. The Ramban explains that in the beginning a sin can seem far away, a persons lust can be controlled, but then a person opens the door – just once. He gives in to temptation. From then on its an upward battle because

once he has tasted the lust he desires more, and the urge gets greater. The Torah teaches us that a person shouldn't think Shalom Yihyeh li – all we be fine, its ok I will only do the sin once and then I will be good, because the Torah understand the psyche of man, and once you start the lust grows until eventually there is a massive thirst. The smell of Rosh Hashanah is in the air, the cooking has started and the buying new

cloths and preparation for the big day is in full swing. That is the physical side. How is our spiritual preparation, are we focusing on ourselves and are we building fences around those sins that we are prone too? Wishing you all a Gemar VeChatima Tova, may we all be written in the book of Life health and happiness with the coming of Mashiach speedily in our days Amen.



ELI GABAY
Miracles -
What's The Point?

The Ramban states that Moshe performed greater miracles than any other prophet. Nevertheless, it is not because of miracles that we believe his revelation, but because Hashem himself bore witness that Moshe was the bearer of his word, and three million Jews clearly witnessed the communication between Hashem and Moshe. We then trust that all the Jewish leaders from the time of Moshe Rabbenu until the present, transmitted the Torah faithfully.

The reason why we must not believe in the Torah based upon miracles is because a belief based upon miracles can be overturned by subsequent miracles performed by a false prophet.

So my question is: Why is the Tanach replete with miracles? Is there an additional fundamental principle of belief that we learn from miracles?

We say a verse (Ata Horeta...) upon the opening of the ark on Shabbat "You have been shown [this] to know that Hashem, he is the G-d! There is none beside him!" (Devarim 4:35). The preceding verses in the Torah that lead up to this statement relate the many miracles performed for the Jewish people. Rabbi Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra, comments "all these [miracles] were shown

to you by G-d in order that [you reach the point] of knowing that he is the only God [power]."

In his characteristically concise manner, Ibn Ezra is explaining the reason for the miracles that the Jewish people experienced in the wilderness. They clearly witnessed that Hashem had given them the Torah, but that didn't exclude a concurrent belief that there were also other powers in the universe. Maybe there was another power that ruled over another part of the world or another aspect of nature? He states that there are actually 55 constellations that exert influence over the world, but we are required to realise that they are all under Hashem's control.

Let us not forget that the Jewish people had been exposed to hundreds of years of idolatrous thinking in Egypt, which would have prevented them emotionally from accepting Hashem as the only power in the universe, despite them having witnessed the revelation at Mount Sinai.

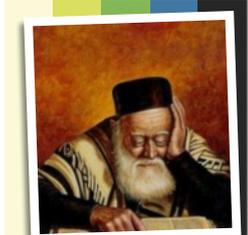
Ibn Ezra supports his view by his explanation in Shemot of the meaning of the name "Elohim." This name is also used for judges and angels, and he therefore posits that it is not a personal name of Hashem, but is rather used to describe any being that has a position of power. He adds that the Rabbis forbade us to treat the name "Elohim" with disrespect, only because they were worried that it would mislead ignorant people into treating God's other genuine names with disrespect.

So the verse "ata horeta" accepts Hashem's existence as irrefutable, but the miracles

were performed to demonstrate that Hashem is "The Power", above all else. Each miracle's manifestation showcased Hashem's mastery over a different part of the universe. Maybe one would think that the sun or sea were independent powers, or a king with a fearsome army? So the Jews had to go through a lengthy process of miraculous experiences to emotionally convince them that Hashem was the sole power. The cumulative effect of each miracle was complete belief in Hashem alone, and no fear that any being or power could harm them. They were then ready to go to war with the nations of Canaan and would have no fear of their armies.

There is another reason for miracles that were performed by later prophets, and that was to gain the attention of the people in order that they would heed the prophet's message. Rav Aryeh Kaplan in his "Handbook of Jewish Thought", writes that in later generations, when a prophet was sent to deliver a public message, he was given a sign, often a miraculous suspension of the laws of nature, to demonstrate that he was bearing a message from Hashem. However, the prophet was not performing the miracle by stretching forth his hand, but was merely giving a sign that he had prophetic knowledge that Hashem was about to perform a miracle (Moreh Nevuchim 2:29 & Tosefot Yom Tov, Avot 5:6).

The world is full of daily miracles which we can see if we only open our eyes, and the more we practice noticing G-d's hand in the world, the more we will internalise that "there is none besides him."



STORIES OF OUR CHACHAMIM

Rabbi Shalom Hacohen

Rabbi Shalom Hacohen had the joy of having a son born in a miraculous way. On the day of the boy's brit, an enormous crowd gathered in order to partake in his joy. The prevailing custom dictated that the person who had delayed in having children

should "sell" his newborn. Rabbi Shalom Hacohen therefore symbolically "sold" his son for a few dollars to Rabbi Moshe Idan (a very great Sage and renowned Kabbalist) in order that he be considered as his son. The child received the name of Moshe Akiva Reuven, and his mother added the name Kalfon for a reason that only she was privy to.

From his earliest age one could recognize his extraordinary sanctity, a person in whom the thirst for Torah knew no bounds. His father sent him to study under Rav Yosef Berrebi, and at the age of 10 he began to

study the laws of Shechita. It didn't take long for him to be made responsible for Shechita in the town of Zarzis.

The conditions under which Shechita was carried out in that town were very difficult at the time. There was still no slaughterhouse to use, and the slaughter of fowl (as well as cattle) was performed in the fields under the hot sun.

Rabbi Moshe Kalfon was not up to the challenge of this work, and so he fell gravely ill and was forced to stay in bed for several months. Unfortunately, his eyes had



S. EXPRESS
24 HOUR CARS, MPV's & COURIERS נסיעות
Edgware 020 8952 4444
Hendon 020 8203 4444
Golders Green 020 8458 4444

TAL is sponsored by
mojo 020 8458 1234
THE BUILDING AGENCY

been affected by his illness and he lost some of his sight. Upon returning to his native town of Jerba, he could no longer study his books, suffering greatly as a result. He therefore traveled in search of a cure for his eyesight.

Upon his return at the age of 21, he married and plunged himself into his cherished studies. It is surprising to note, despite the urgings of his doctors, just how many books and articles he wrote; the light of the Torah had illuminated his sick eyes. He was still quite young when asked to sit upon the Rabbinical Court of Jerba. He had trouble taking upon himself such responsibility, preferring instead to discretely study Torah. One day, he dreamed of a hand that was pointing to him and ordered that he leave the Beth Midrash and join his future colleagues on the Rabbinical Court.

Never did he look for wealth or honor, and what's more is that he only accepted a very small salary. Everyone, including Muslims, would sing his praises. Everywhere, people would recount just how much he loved peace and how true and fair his judgments always were.

We tell of many stories regarding people who wanted to disobey or show disrespect towards him: They would unfortunately be struck or warned in a dream, then come back to him trembling and asking for forgiveness.

One day a man who had been declared guilty displayed an arrogant disposition towards him. He had barely turned his back on Rabbi Moshe when he was hit by blindness and had great difficulty getting back home. "Woe to me," he sighed, "that I

acted arrogantly towards Rabbi Moshe!" From that time on, the man learned to respect the Chachamim. A few years later, this same man was again summoned before Rabbi Moshe. This time he again had difficulty accepting the verdict. Rabbi Moshe attempted to settle things as best he could, but the man persisted in his views and didn't change his position.

"No, my son. Don't continue to rebel," Rabbi Moshe told him. "I advise that you not refuse in any way. Know that it's your good that I want."

"Certainly Rabbi," the man responded. "In my bones I still feel the punishment that you inflicted on me a few years ago when I disobeyed you."

"G-d help me!" Rabbi Moshe cried. "I have no power to punish! Who gives man his speech, and Who gives him his sight? Let's not try to understand Divine decrees!"

"But Rabbi," the man replied, "my eyesight completely died out when I left this place!"

In 1943, the state of the Jews in Tunisia was very difficult. The Nazis had invaded northern Africa and wanted to apply the "final solution" there as they had in conquered parts of Europe. Thousands of Jews were saved because of the efficient action of Rabbi Moshe Kalfon Hachohen. The end of the war was approaching and the city of Jerba was still besieged. The Jewish population of the city suffered terribly. The Passover holiday was approaching and wheat had been rationed. It was forbidden to purchase it directly from farmers, and it could only be gotten in quantities that had

been fixed by the government. How were people going to buy flour to make matzot?

Hashem never abandons the Children of Israel. Even before this problem arose, G-d had already cleared the way for a happy solution. At that time, Rabbi Levy Yitzchak Rabinovitch was serving as the Jewish military chaplain in the French garrison at Jerba (Tunisia was at that time a French colony), and he took a great liking to Rabbi Moshe Kalfon.

One day, the chaplain sensed that Rabbi Moshe was beset by a heavy heart.

"What's the matter Rabbi," he asked. "I get the feeling that your worries never leave you."

Rabbi Moshe shared his anguish with him: "Passover is near and the faithful don't have enough flour for the holiday."

"I'll think it over," the chaplain replied. "Perhaps I can convince the French government to be generous."

Rabbi Moshe blessed the chaplain and wished him success in his endeavor. Rabbi Levy quickly arrived at the military camp and presented his request to the governor. He explained that the Jews would soon be celebrating Passover, and that to do so they needed a large amount of wheat.

"Fine," responded the governor. "But I wish that the Rabbi would come here himself, and I will give him the necessary authorization."

Rabbi Moshe learned of the news with great joy and didn't delay in arriving at the military camp. That year, the Jews of Jerba didn't lack any matzot.

Living with Mitzvos

1. Rashi (29:9) brings that Parshas Nitzovim was said on the day of Moshe's death – namely the 7th of Adar.
2. The Ohr Hachaim (29:11) brings that this additional bris of Nitzovim was in order to bring the idea of Arvus. Not only is everyone liable for their own actions but now they are also responsible for each others' actions.
3. Perhaps this is because we are required to hear the toichocho of Parshas Ki Sovoi before Rosh Hashana to end the curses with the year (Gemora Megilla 31b). Yet, we have another parsha of Nitzovim before Rosh Hashana? Rashi (29:12) brings Midrash Agada that the Jews were scared when they heard this rebuke and therefore Moshe with Parshas Nitzovim came to comfort them (before the end of the year).
4. There are forty pesukim and the siman is levovoi. Perhaps this is to allude to this time of year where we have the forty days of Yimei Rotzoin, from Rosh Chodes Elul until Yom Kippur, when Moshe went up to the mountain to get the second Luchos. Levovoi meaning his heart alludes to the cause of sin is found in the heart and all this needs to be rectified. (This is why we hit our hearts when we say that we have sinned.)
5. When the curses happen they look bad. However, they really are for our benefit. The mere threat itself can help prevent people sinning and even if people do sin then these curses come as an atonement. Ultimately they are for the good and for our benefit.
6. The Ramban brings that (like Hakhel) it was in order to give a reward to the parents for bringing their children. It is also so that they should be present by this bris that was for all future generations.
7. It is the letter Lamed in (29:27) from the word *vayishlachem*. The Lamed has the gematria of thirty and alludes to that after thirty generations they will be "thrown out", meaning they would go into Golus, exile. There were fifteen generations from Avrohom until King Shlomo and then another fifteen generations until King Tzidkiyohu. This word is also missing the letter Yud alluding to the exile of the ten tribes.

www.livingwithmitzvos.com

Golders Green

PHONE CITY
 Proud sponsors of TAL
 90 Golders Green Road, London NW11 8LN

 **THE WORLD REMOVAL**
 SHIPPING TO ISRAEL
020 8338 3999
www.kingsremoval.com

WHITE HOUSE
 express
ISOLA BELLA
 CAFÉ - RESTAURANT
 Proud sponsors of TAL

Please Pray For
Refuah Shelaima of:

Mordechai Ben Musha Yeta | Aharon ben Leah | Pinchas ben Tamar | Rivkah bat Sarah | Pesach Simcha ben Feigle
Yona bat Esther | Shira Ilana bat Susan Shoshana Farha | Tova bat Sara Blima | Naomi bat Mazal | Sarah Chaya
bat Blima Freida Myriam



HEICHAL LEAH, OD YOSEF HAI,
HGS SEPHARDI & TAL

PRESENTS

**UNITED SEPHARDI COMMUNAL SELICHOT
AT HEICHAL LEAH**

(Before Rosh Hashanah)

1st OCTOBER

WITH INSPIRING SPEAKERS

DAYAN A DAVID

**RABBIS YOSSI DAVID, ASSAF PORTAL & DORON ACHIEL &
JONATHAN TAWIL**

TASTY HOT FOOD SERVED FOR

YOUTH MALAVA MALKA @ 11.45PM

FOLLOWED BY SELICHOT @ 12:30AM



Heichal Leah 62 Brent St, London NW4 2E5



 **020 8381 4080**
www.mypita.co.uk
f i g+
HUMOUSFALAFEL 98 Golders Green Rd London NW11 8HB

 **HUMOLOGY**
NOW YOU'RE TALKING
020 3815 7575 humology.com