

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This weeks Parasha is sponsored Lirfuat Rav Yona Ben Chava Betoch Shaar Cholei Yisrael

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



IMAGINATION!

Blessings are great, but curses, well no one wants to hear those. This weeks Parsha sets out the blessings that will occur when we do the Will of our Creator, and Chas Ve Shalom the curses that will occur if we don't.

One of the curses although bad, could seem worse. Venastem V'eiRodef – and you shall flee when no one will pursue you (26:17). We will feel as if the enemy is chasing after us and we will flee out of fear, whilst in actual fact they won't even be chasing us. This is a curse but wouldn't it be worse were they to really be chasing after us? Surely it's not so bad if at the end of the day there is no enemy really behind us?

The Rambam was the doctor of the Sultan of Egypt.

He held a great position in the country and many of the other Sultans advisers were jealous. Eventually they came to the Sultan asking him to get rid of the Rambam, and place a better Arab Doctor in his stead.

The Sultan called the Rambam and the Arab Doctor and proposed a test to them. Each one was known to be a great physician and had knowledge in medicines and cures. He told them that he would give each one, a week to nurture up a poison that would be able to kill the other. Each one would also have at their disposal any

medicines they wished. Whoever would die, would be the loser and the one who lived through the experience would stay on as the Sultans doctor.

The Arab doctor went home and started to nurture up an amazing poison, one that would be impossible to cure.

The Rambam on the other hand didn't wish to waste his time, trying to make a poison that could kill. He had much more important things to do. He kept to his daily routine of attending to the long queue of patients waiting outside his house, and concentrating on his torah teachings. The final day came and the two doctors stood in front of the king. The Arab doctor gave over the poison to the Rambam. The Rambam examined it and before swallowing it made a medicine he deemed right to cure the poison. He then consumed the poison followed by the medicine. It seemed to work, but no one could be sure, as the poison might take a few hours to ware of on him.

Now it was the Arabs turn to consume the Rambams poison. But the Rambam had no interest in killing the Arab and merely gave him a cocktail of some food he had nurtured for the occasion. Looking at it with great focus the Arab Doctor couldn't define which "poison" it was. Perhaps the Rambam had managed to make some kind of super poison, one whose cure did not yet exist. After a few minutes of examination, he too made a concoction of medicine to counter the "poison". He consumed both the food and the medicine. He saw that nothing happened to him and he was amazed. He was happy with his medicine, but he didn't underestimate the Rambam. He started to think that perhaps the Rambams poison only takes effect when a person eats meat. He decided not to eat meat. ►

26TH Iyar 5779

SHABBAT BEGINS: 8:49 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 10:19 PM

> MAZAL TOV

Lina and Yisrael Isaacs
on the birth of a baby boy



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"We can't control what other people do; we can only control what we do"

> UPCOMING EVENTS

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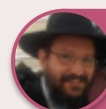
- 3rd JUNE
Monday Night Series with Rabbi Hill
- 8th JUNE
June Shavuot Learning Program
- 16th JUNE
Football Tournament
- 17th JUNE
Monday Night Series with Rabbi Hill



DVAR TORAH

Imagination!
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

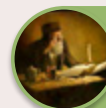
P1



DVAR TORAH

"In truth, there is nothing but blessings".
RABBI MENAHEM M. JUNIK

P2



OUR CHACHAMIM

RAV HUNA

P3



HALACHOT

Shabbat – Cutting a Cake with Letters...
RABBI ELI MANSOUR

P3



Q&A & CARTOON

P4

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After a few hours he saw that the poison still hadn't reached its climax. He said perhaps its not to do with meat, perhaps it's to do with eating wheat. He decided not to eat wheat.

He stayed like this for a few days, until one day the Rambam met him in the street. The Rambam was concerned to see the Doctor looking so pale and started to ask him how he was doing and feeling. Then the Rambam asked him how he felt after he drank milk. The Arabs face turned red, and he thought that the Rambam meant that with milk the poison was supposed to take full effect. He had just drank a glass of milk, and was so concerned that due to his weak status he had a heart attack and died.

The king heard that the other doctor had died, and called for the Rambam to be brought to him. Wow, I knew you were a great physician, but I didn't realise you knew how to make poison last for so many days before working and killing the man. The Rambam answered the king and told

him that he was no killer. Rather the man had died due to his own weakness and anxiety.

Is imagination good or bad? It depends – if we use our imagination to form worlds to create our ideas and fulfil our destiny it is an awesome act. If however we use it to fool us, to convince ourselves of a false world and to place importance in the wrong direction – it could be a curse.

The Torah states that one of the worst curses is to run when no one is really chasing. To imagine people are there, and they really are not. To live in constant fear when there is no need too. Sometimes we find ourselves in a situation where our business affairs, and the outside world pretend to chase us, our imagination is let loose and we charge great importance to these.

Life is busy, we need to get to work on time, send the right emails out, check our phones, check our bills, speak to the right people at the right times. We are living in a manic world. Yet are we setting aside time for the real things in life;

-those that matter to us most. Have we sat down with our spouses and had a good chat like we did in our early days of marriage life.

Through the current financial down turn, many companies are taking extra time out to evaluate their past present and future. They are cutting down where things least matter and concentrating on the real issues at hand. Perhaps we should apply this to the really important things in life, re-evaluate our standing amongst our children, husbands and wives. Take some extra time to give them the attention they deserve.

Let us utilise our imagination for the good, let us not get fooled by all the false publicity and outside yearnings, let us stay focused on our real goals and use our imagination to form our great destiny.

■ **Shabbat Shalom**

RABBI MENACHEM M. JUNIK - BEIS GAVRIEL LUBAVITCH, FEDARATION



"IN TRUTH, THERE IS NOTHING BUT BLESSINGS".

In Parshas Bechukosai, the final Parsha of Sefer Vayikra, and a Parsha the Chazal ensured we read before Shavous every year, we read of the Brachos given to the Jewish people when they fulfill Hashem's commandment, as well the consequences for failing to observe the Mitzvos. We read this Parsha before Shavous, to inspire the minds and hearts of the Jewish people promptly before receiving the Torah anew, to refresh and rededicate ourselves to the ways of Torah and Mitzvos.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the Baal HaTanya, when describing the 49 consequences, uses the above term; "In truth, there are nothing but blessings". With this statement, he encapsulates an inner dimension to Torah, and a fundamental approach to every word and every happening in Torah. While on the surface, these Pesukim speak of the opposite of Bracha, the failure of observing the Mitzvos properly, beneath the surface, there exists a deeper dimension, a

dimension and element of Torah where we read only blessings.

In the Gemoro, Moed Katan 9a-9b, there brings an episode where Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai sent his son, Reb Elazar, to request a Bracho from two chachomim of that time – Reb Yonasan ben Asmai and Reb Yehuda ben Gairim. The chachomim proceeded to reap Reb Elazar with a series, of what appeared to be, quite the opposite of a Bracho; "May it be G-D's will that you will not sow and reap. That what you bring in will not go out, and what you take out will not come in. That your house will be empty, and your temporary lodging inhabited. That your table will be disturbed, and that you will not see a new year". Not quite the blessing he bargained for.

When Reb Elazar returned back to his father and reported the so called 'beautiful terms' that were bestowed upon him, Rabbi Shimon replied; "These are all blessings! "You will not sow and reap", means you will have children and they will not die. "What you bring in will not go out", this means that you will bring in wives for your sons, and they will never be parted from your sons. "What you take out will not come in", you will marry off your daughters and their husbands will not die, so your daughters need not come back. "Your house will be empty, and your temporary lodging inhabited", this world is referred to as a temporary lodging, with the next world being referred to as the "house". "Your table will be

disturbed", by your children. "You will not see a new year", this means that your wife will not die, and you will need not find a new wife.

We take lesson from Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, whose passing and teachings we recently celebrated, to see, that through studying and connecting to Hashem on a deeper, more sublime level, we can become in touch with the most inner dimensions of the Torah. We can connect to Hashem with such a unity, that our physical and intellectual eyes immediately see how everything is positive at the core, and everything in Torah is full of life and goodness. We can get past the disguise of what seems to be negative consequences, and realize the Brachos that are encapsulated, that lie beneath the surface of these words. Brachos so great, that they could not be expressed in a forward manner, rather they had to be hidden within a form that seems to connote the opposite.

May we merit the time, when all of these Brachos, will be revealed and expressed in a way that is apparent to every human being. "B'tov Hanirah V'Hanigla" – that the goodness and kindness of Hashem should be an open and revealed goodness to everyone, with the coming of Moshiach, now, Amen.

■ **Shabbat shalom**

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RAV HUNA

Rav Huna belonged to the second generation of Babylonian Amoraim, and he was named Rosh Yeshiva of the academy at Sura after the death of Rav.

Despite his greatness, the Talmud does not say who his parents were, and only in one place is it stated that he was related to the family of the Exilarch.

Besides his considerable wisdom, what was remarkable about Rav Huna was his great qualities, particularly his generosity. With him, riches and the greatness of Torah went together as a pair. He also possessed abilities that characterize a leader of Israel. Early on, when Rav Huna was a student of Rav, he was extremely poor, and so he began farming. He worked the ground himself, irrigated it by his own means, and allowed only the flocks to graze on it. Obviously, he felt no shame in performing all these tasks, and he allowed no one to do it for him. One day, the Gemara says, he was walking with some farm equipment on his shoulder when a Talmid Chacham by the name of Chanah bar Chanilai met him and wanted to carry his load. Rav Huna told him, "If you are accustomed to carrying this type of equipment in your town, then you can do so here if you wish. But if not, do you think that I would allow myself to embarrass you so that I could derive personal honor from it?"

During this time Rav Huna's poverty was so great that once he didn't even have wine to recite Kiddush for Shabbat. He went and placed his belt as collateral in order to buy some wine, replacing his belt with a simple piece of string. When Rav noticed, he asked him, "What does this mean?" Rav Huna then explained that he was obligated to put his belt down as collateral in order to buy wine for Shabbat. Thus Rav gave him a blessing that Hashem should provide him with such wealth that he could wear clothes made of velvet!

Starting from then on, his business dealings began to prosper, to the point that he became extremely rich. Once, 400 barrels of wine that he owned became sour and turned into cheap vinegar, and he was faced with a huge financial loss. His friends, the Sages, came to him and advised that he should examine his ways, for he may have committed some sin.

"Do you suspect me of wrongdoing?" Rav Huna asked them.

"Do you suspect the Holy One, blessed be He, of making a Jew lose money for no reason?" the Sages replied.

"If such is the case, please tell me if you have heard anything concerning me that I should rectify. If so, I will immediately mend my ways," said Rav Huna in a spirit of repentance.

"We have heard," the Sages told him, "that you have not given your sharecropper his rightful portion of grapevine shoots. For the same reason as he has the right to a portion of a tree's fruits, a sharecropper has the right to a portion of its shoots and twigs."

Rav Huna was astonished. "But my sharecropper takes all the shoots, leaving me with hardly anything!" he replied. He then decided, "Perhaps starting from today I will set aside a fixed quantity of grapevine shoots for him. In this way he won't steal from me anymore!"

Success immediately began to smile on Rav Huna once again, and the price of vinegar started to rise, to the point that he lost nothing in the whole affair.

Rav Huna's incredible prosperity became well known, to the extent that it was said that whoever saw him in their dreams would experience miracles.

One day a fire broke out in Rav Huna's town, yet the flames didn't touch anything in the district where he lived. The residents of the town believed that they had been saved by his merit. However they were shown in a dream that this was insignificant compared to the greatness of Rav Huna, and that the district had been saved by the merit of a woman who each week lit her stove and allowed all her neighbors to benefit from its use. We can learn from this the power of generosity.

Rav Huna's yeshiva became ever larger. It had about permanent 800 students, and he paid for everything out of his own pocket. Moreover, thousands of students who studied independently during the whole year came to his yeshiva for two months out of the year (Yarchei Kallah in Adar and Elul). They came to listen to the Rosh Yeshiva's lectures, as well as to those of his colleagues, after which they would go back home and attend to their affairs. At that time Rav Huna had 13 assistants. He died at an advanced age. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

SHABBAT – CUTTING A CAKE WITH LETTERS; PUTTING LETTERS TOGETHER IN SCRABBLE

If some wax fell on written text, it is forbidden on Shabbat to remove the wax to reveal the text – even just one letter – as this constitutes "writing." (If some wax covers some text of the Sefer Torah, and the wax is thick, Hacham Ovadia ruled that if the covered text is in the Parasha that is to be read that day, then the Sefer Torah is invalid; if, however, the concealed text is in a different Parasha, then the Sefer Torah may be used.)

The Rama (Rav Moshe Isserles of Cracow, 1530-1572) rules (Orah Haim 340) that if a cake has lettering on it – such as with sugar or cream – it is forbidden to cut through the lettering, as this constitutes "erasing." However, Hacham Ovadia Yosef and Hacham Bension Abba Shaul (1924-1998) ruled that for Sefaradim, this is permissible. This type of "erasure," which is not done for the purpose of writing in place of the erased text, is forbidden only Mi'de'rabbanan (by Rabbinic enactment), and it is permissible to perform an action on Shabbat that unintentionally results in an action that is normally forbidden Mi'de'rabbanan. Since the person has no intention to "erase" the lettering on the cake, and has no interest in doing so, and this "erasure" is forbidden only Mi'de'rabbanan, this is allowed. Nevertheless, Hacham Ovadia writes (in Yabia Omer) that one who is stringent in this regard is worthy of blessing ("Tabo Alav Beracha").

Rabbi Moshe Ha'levi (1961-2000), in Menuhat Ahaba (3:22; listen to audio recording for precise citation), addresses the case of bringing together letters which were written already before Shabbat in order to produce words, such as when playing Scrabble. He writes that this is entirely permissible, since the prohibition of writing on Shabbat applies to creating letters, and does not include bringing together letters that had already been produced before Shabbat. Therefore, he writes, children may be allowed to play such games on Shabbat. Rabbi Moshe Halevi notes that this applies as well to pictures; one may bring together two pieces with partial pictures on them to form a complete picture.

However, he adds, it would be forbidden to attach letters together to form words, such as games in which letters are clipped to a frame or snapped together. Although it is permissible to bring letters near one another, one may not attach the letters together. But if the letters are already in a frame, and one moves the letters around to form words (or in the case of numbers, as in the "15 Puzzle" game), then this is permissible on Shabbat.

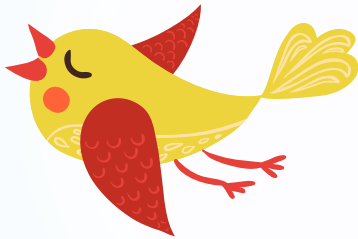
Summary: It is permissible to slice through the lettering on a cake on Shabbat, though those who wish may be stringent in this regard. Children may be allowed to play scrabble on Shabbat, bringing letters near one another to form words, but it is forbidden to attach letter pieces together to form words. ■

LAG BAOMER BBQ

What an incredible bbq TAL has put together, delicious food, great drinks and lovely music. This was my Second TAL event and I will certainly go to more. Thank you so much to the organisation.

By Victoria

KidsTime



TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- 1 How much is "revava"?
- 2 Which "progression" of seven transgressions are taught in Chapter 26, and why in that particular order?
- 3 What is one benefit which the Jewish People derive from the Land of Israel's state of ruin?
- 4 What was the duration of the Babylonian exile and why that particular number?
- 5 The northern tribes were exiled after how many years of transgressing the Torah in the Land of Israel?

Answer
 1 26:4 - Ten thousand. 2 26:14,15 - Not studying Torah, not observing mitzvot, rejecting those who observe mitzvot, hating Sages, preventing others from observing mitzvot, denying that Hashem gave the mitzvot, denying the existence of Hashem. They are listed in this order because each transgression leads to the next. 3 26:32 - No enemy nation will be able to settle in the Land of Israel. 4 26:35 - 70 years. Because the Jewish People violated 70 shemita and yovel years. 5 26:35 - 390 years.

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