

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



PARASHA INSIGHTS

How is your schedule looking next week? Shouldn't really talk about it on Shabbat, but I am asking as this question has a specific lesson to teach.

We are grateful to be living in one of the most advanced nations in the world, at one of the most advanced times in history. So many luxuries out there ready for the take and yet we seem so busy.

Not so long ago we would rely on our memory, whether it was in school math exams, or with car directions. Nowadays we rely on digital calculators, mobile phones and electronic calendars with reminders to keep us afloat.

How many reminders have you set yourself this year in your calendar?

Have you ever forgotten a sibling's birthday? Need a reminder for an important meeting or Dr's appointment? It's all done now at the tip of your finger tips. You can even set yourself weekly or annual reminders.

We rely heavily on these reminders to keep us going.

There is a special day once a week for which our Sages advise that we should set a reminder.

The Gemara Shabbat (35b) describes a custom that was observed each week before Shabbat during Talmudic times. A person would climb onto the rooftop of a tall building in the town and blow six Shofar blasts. Specifically, he would twice blow the series of Teki'a-Teru'a-Teki'a. The Gemara explains the significance of

each Shofar blast. The first, served as a warning to the farmers working in the fields outside the city that they must put down their tools and start making their way back home to prepare for Shabbat. The second Shofar blast alerted the shopkeepers in the city that the time has come to close their stores, and the third indicated the time to light the Shabbat candles. The final Shofar blasts indicated the onset of Shabbat.

The person blowing the Shofar would then put down the Shofar and come down from the rooftop, as Shabbat begun.

Thus Shabbat was sanctified publicly by blowing the Shofar and privately by kindling lights (Tanhuma Matot 2).

Interestingly, the Shulhan Aruch (Orah Haim 256) records this practice, noting that it was observed during the times when the Jewish people lived securely under self-rule. Even though this custom does not appear to have any practical ramifications for the Shulhan Aruch's time, he nevertheless found it necessary to mention this custom.

The Kaf Ha'haim (Rav Yaakov Haim Sofer, Baghdad-Israel, 1870-1939) writes that this Halacha should be followed in places where Jews enjoy control over their communities and do not fear the local gentile population. Under such circumstances, a public proclamation of the onset of Shabbat should be made, if not with a Shofar, then with some other medium, such as a siren or a bell. Indeed, the Kaf Ha'haim records various customs that were practiced in several Jewish communities to announce the onset of Shabbat. He writes that in Jerusalem, the Rabbis would dispatch messengers just before Shabbat to instruct the storekeepers to close their shops, warning that they would not receive blessing from any profits earned from sales made after that point.

Today in many cities in Israel, loud Jewish music is played just before the onset of Shabbat to remind the people and get them into the mood of this auspicious day. ►

> MAZAL TOV TO

Benjamin Agami and Annaelle Bettane Benair
on their engagement



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"The adventure of life is to learn. The goal of life is to grow. The nature of life is to change. The challenge of life is to overcome. The essence of life is to care. The secret of life is to dare. The beauty of life is to give. The joy of life is to love!"

> UPCOMING EVENTS

- TU B'SHVAT COCKTAIL PARTY
30TH JANUARY (see more info online)
- GALA DINNER
26TH FEBRUARY (See more info online)



DVAR TORAH

Parasha Insights
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

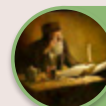
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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In fact there is a custom in Kabbalat Shabbat to recite six psalms of nature which correspond to the six days of Creation. These also signify the six Shofar blasts that were sounded on Erev Shabbat.

R Moshe Chorev Shlita observes that there is an interesting note that appears in this week's Parasha in one Pasuk six times.

The Torah relates that the spiritual food enjoyed by the Bnei Yisrael (Manna) fell daily, except on Shabbat. To make up for this two portions fell on Friday signifying the preparation of Shabbat to be done the day before.

"See that Hashem has given you the Shabbat; therefore He gives you on the sixth day food for two days. You should remain – each man – in his place; let not any man go out from his place on the Seventh Day." (Shemot 16:29)

In Sephardic communities this note is called Shofar holech – literally – a horn going forward.

R Moshe explains that this is to hint to the six Shofar blasts that were sounded as a reminder and preparing the people every Erev Shabbat.

Even from the start of the week we already have an established relationship with Shabbat.

In Shemot (20:8) the Torah states: "Remember the Shabbat to keep it holy." Based on this, the Mekhilta comments that we are obligated to count the days of the week leading up to Shabbat. Accordingly, the Ramban comments that the verse teaches that we should remember Shabbat every day of the week. This is to ensure that we do not forget Shabbat and confuse it with another day. Additionally, this is also in order to remember the creation of the world and it's Creator daily.

Therefore, the Ramban writes, our method of counting the days of the week differs fundamentally from that of the non-Jews. The non-Jews use unique names for each day of the week, such as Sunday, Monday, etc. By contrast, we count the days of the week with an eye towards Shabbat,

as seen in the "Shir Shel Yom": "Today is the first day in (the count towards) Shabbat."

Shabbat is a day we remember and anticipate.

In an ever increasingly busy society, the Torah has already laid down the way forward.

Believe it or not, it could be forgotten!

So every single day we remember the Shabbat. Even more so on Friday, as we approach the Shabbat we are reminded by the six blasts hinted at in our six psalms of Kabbalat Shabbat (and music in certain cities in Israel).

Winter is upon us, Shabbat begins so early and Friday's are hectic. Yet we know that the enjoyment of a real exclusive Shabbat experience is dependent on prior preparation.

Don't get lost in all that work, remember the Shabbat!

Next week add this to your diary; set yourself a reminder for this valuable day. Perhaps you can even add an electronic voice of a Shofar to make it extra special!

Shabbat Shalom ■

RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM - SHALOM LAAM DIASPORA

DVAR TORAH



TRUST OR EFFORT

While the Jewish People travelled and sojourned in the desert, G-d sustained them with the Manna – heavenly bread. It was a miraculous food that was sent daily from heaven and tasted according to each person's wishes. The experience of these open miracles revealed to them and to future generations that, essentially, all our sustenance is G-d-given. On Rosh Hashanah G-d establishes how much parrassah each person will receive that year. However, money spent on doing G-d's mitzvot is not included in the yearly allowance. Whatever a person spends for the purpose of learning Torah, educating his children, Shabbat expenses and other mitzvot, is paid back fully to him.

What is the difference between emunah – faith and bitachon

– trust, and why do we need both of them? While emunah is the knowledge that G-d runs the world in His infinite wisdom and with flawless perfection, bitachon is the calmness that envelopes one who is convinced of this truth. We all know that things do not generally go exactly as we plan them. Life is not like that. Although we are certain that what we want is good for us, often G-d knows better. Life is full of surprises, sometimes even unpleasant ones. There may be heavy burdens to carry, trials and difficulties to face. This is why we need bitachon – it is the practical application of our emunah. It is not enough just to believe "in theory", we must actually "live with

G-d" through all our life situations and feel calm that He is looking after us, and that everything He does is for our best.

The question is: how does bitachon – trust in G-d, fit in with hishtadlut – the steps a person must take in order to achieve his needs? G-d expects everyone to make some sort of effort, but beyond that, a person must believe and trust in Him. How much effort a person needs to make depends upon their level of trust. Everyone must try to honestly gauge how much hishtadlut Hashem expects him, in his standing, to do in order to achieve a certain goal. Beyond that, is where his personal service of "trusting in G-d" comes in. A person should operate on his own level of trust and not exceed it. For example,

an average businessman should not say: "I will go to the office two hours a day and that's it". That would be a mistake that could destroy his business. Rather, he should go according to the norms of that trade.

However, if similar businesses are open from nine to five, and he wants to "take off" an hour to learn before coming to the office, and trusts that this will not harm his trade, then that is a feasible plan. He is not enslaved to regular office times, and as long as the "pipeline" is open, blessing will come in. Someone on a higher level than that may feel that he can look for a business that will take up even less time. He may think that he can run his business from home on a computer and devote half a day to learning Torah; if that is truly his level of trust, then G-d will help him.

We serve Hashem according to our personal level of trust. We must fully believe in Him and trust Him on that level before we take on more. As we become more proficient in bitachon, our belief and trust will hopefully rise, and the level of effort required, decrease.

Let us solidify our present level of trust in G-d, enabling us to "live with Him" and have peace of mind due to our reliance upon Him, which will eventually bring us to the next level of trust.

Shabbat shalom. ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MATZLIAH MAZUZ

The great Kabbalist Rabbi Ovadia Hadaya Zatzal was at his desk, immersed in his thoughts. A letter from abroad had just been brought to him, and as was his habit he studied its contents attentively. Nobody dared to break the silence that ensued, and only the Jerusalem breeze made a slight sound as it blew in the room, like a cool wind from the mountains that crown the eternal city.

It was obvious that this long letter was different from others. Rabbi Ovadia was in the habit of receiving mail, including from abroad, which requested his advice on uncertain cases. However the particular language of this letter drew the Gaon's attention. With exquisite writing, the author laid out a treatise on a very complex subject, analyzing the problem at hand in a sharp and profound way, widely and exhaustively, and by citing the Sages of the Talmud and the Poskim. The author dealt with a problem that, in the end, he solved through "the power to rule leniently."

Reading this left no doubt in the mind of the Gaon that what he held in his hand was a letter from an exceptional man, a sage among sages – perhaps even the Rav of the community. He hurried to send a long and detailed response to the author (who lived in Tunisia), and at the end of his response he asked the author if he could kindly lend his support to his Kabbalist yeshiva in Jerusalem, Yeshiva Bet E-I, where he taught. "I would be very grateful if you could collect funds for our yeshiva in Jerusalem," he wrote at the end of his response.

The author, who lived beyond the sea, did not delay in giving a surprising answer to this request: "Your request is impossible for me to perform because I am too young. I study in a yeshiva and I do not have enough experience to go from one person to another collecting funds. Furthermore, I do not know how this is normally done."

That was not the only Halachic writing of the young man, who had celebrated his Bar Mitzvah only three years earlier. He also wrote Halachic responses that astonished readers when he was only 14 years old. Everyone saw in him a person destined for greatness. His name, our holy Rav Rabbi Matzliah Mazuz, was later known in the most remote regions of the world.

Some 20 years have passed since an accursed Arab, possessed by a spirit of violence and protected by our enemies, attacked our holy Rav and sent his soul to Heaven. To us, however, it seems that only a few days have passed, and nobody seeks to be consoled over their loss. We remember him always, and his memory remains forever engraved on our hearts. However his riches – spiritual treasures – are here to encourage and comfort us. The precious books that the holy Gaon left behind spread like a dew of light on his cherished shadow, and they cause the wind of resurrection to blow upon a desert of profound grief. Everyone knows that his lamp has not been extinguished and that his light has not grown dim.

Some three after the passing of our teacher, the first volume of his enormous Halachic work *Ish Matzliah* (Responsum on Arbaah Turim) was published, marking a very important day. On the night of Passover, Tunisian Jews have the custom of studying the work of Rabbi Matzliah Mazuz, that great Posek, the last of the Gaonim of Tunisia, and the Rav of all Jews in exile. At the end of that same year, the second volume of his work appeared, but it had to be divided into two parts because it was so large. The first part was on Orach Chaim and Yore Deah, and the second part dealt with Even Ha'ezer and Choshen Mishpat. Together these two parts comprise 178 paragraphs, which is the numerical value of his name, Matzliah. Several years later the work was republished.

In the year 5750 (1990), devotees of Torah and wisdom marked the third anniversary of the appearance of the second part of *Ish Matzliah*. One never tires of consulting this book, which can be leafed through with amazement, for great riches hide within his responses – from Halachah to philosophical writings, hidden wisdom to exacting language. The style of his long responsum charms the reader, for they combine Halachic investigation with tremendous knowledge, youthful insight, and mature wisdom. One remains wonderstruck before the author's power to plumb the depths of the Talmud, penetrating its abyss to bring up an abundance of pearls and hidden treasures originating from Poskim both ancient and recent. These he inserts into his writings to yield a teaching that is clear and thoroughly inspected with a fine-tooth comb. No secret is hidden to him, and the melody of his words sings in the reader's ears.

One response that the author wrote when he was only 14 years old (a response that stretches over several pages at the beginning of the section on Yore Deah) deals with an actual question having serious implications:

When the hands of a Shochet tremble, yet he wants to continue practicing his livelihood and states that his hands carry out their task as directed, should he be permitted to do so? Or perhaps, on the contrary, he should be told to stop because what he is saying is not reliable. In the latter instance, is the meat that he already slaughtered permitted to eat, given that he maintains that he did not tremble during the slaughter? In analyzing this question from every angle, the young author arrived at the conclusion that the animals he slaughters are forbidden, even the ones he slaughtered before he was told to stop.

This response was examined by the greatest scholars of Israel, and it received the total and unconditional approval of the Av Beit Din of Tunisia at that time, the Gaon Rabbi Moshe Shetrug Zatzal. At Purim, when Rabbi Matzliah Mazuz's friends were immersed in celebrations, he enclosed himself at home to rewrite every word of this response in his notebook, which was a sign of things to come.

Sometimes Rabbi Matzliah Mazuz accompanied his Halachic responses with remarks that surpassed the realm of Halachah, remarks by which he revealed himself to be a great teacher and educator.

The sons of the Gaon undertook a vast project that combined craftsmanship and scholarship to produce his books. These were published by the Rav Matzliah Institute, in the name of our holy Rav, Rabbi Matzliah Mazuz, and by the Kisse Rahamim yeshiva in Bnei Brak. This yeshiva had originally been established by the Rav in Tunis, and in accordance with his desires his sons transferred it to Israel after his death. His position as Rosh Yeshiva was assumed by the Gaon Rabbeinu Meir Mazuz Shlita, and his brothers Rabbi Tzemah Shlita and Rabbi Rahamim Shlita taught at the yeshiva and participated in its administration. Since they all worked for the yeshiva, the Torah blossomed under the guidance of a straightforward and pure education, and the responsum of the renowned Gaon were expounded from one end of the land to the other. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

BORER: IF ONE SELECTED ON SHABBAT BY MISTAKE

If one violated the prohibition of Borer B'Mezid (intentionally), the selected food is forbidden to benefit from. The only solution is to mix it back in with the P'solet (waste) and start again by selecting in a permitted fashion.

If one violated Borer B'Shogeg (unintentionally), Hacham Ovadia and Hacham David in Halacha Berura bring several factors to rely upon to be lenient. First, there is the opinion of Rabbi Meir who permits benefiting from all prohibited Melachot performed B'Shogeg. Second, it is only forbidden to benefit from Melachot similar to Bishul (cooking) in which there is an intrinsic change to the object. E.g. raw food becomes cooked food. However, Borer, is similar to the Melacha of Hosa'ah (carrying) in which the food is moved about, but nothing is done to the food. In such cases, the Hayeh Adam (Rav Abraham Danzig of Vilna, 1748-1820) rules that there is no problem benefiting from the Melacha.

Moreover, there was a permitted way to perform the Borer, and therefore it is not actually considered benefiting from a prohibited Melacha, since he could have done it the permitted way.

SUMMARY

If one violated Borer unintentionally he may benefit from the food on Shabbat. ■

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TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ The princes of Edom and Moav had nothing to fear from the Jewish People. Why, then, were they “confused and gripped with trembling?”
- ❷ Moshe foretold that he would not enter the Land of Israel. Which word in the Parsha indicates this?
- ❸ Why is Miriam referred to as “Aharon’s sister” and not as “Moshe’s sister”?
- ❹ The Jewish women trusted that Hashem would grant the Jewish People a miraculous victory over the Egyptians. How do we know this?
- ❺ Which sections of the Torah did the Jewish People receive at Marah?

Answer

❶ 15:14 - They felt horrible seeing Israel in a state of glory. ❷ 15:17 - “T’v’lamo...” - “Bring them!” (and not “bring us”). ❸ 15:20 - Aharon put himself at risk for her when she was struck with tzara’at. (See Bamidbar 12:12) ❹ 15:20 - They brought musical instruments with them in preparation for the miraculous victory celebration. ❺ 15:25 - Shabbat, Red Heifer, Judicial Laws.



SAVE THE DATE
26TH FEBRUARY 2018

T"01

REVEALED



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