

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This week's Parsha Sheet is kindly sponsored by the Martin and Moses families in honour of the birth of Liora Moses. Wishing her much success, happiness and health.

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



TWO WIVES!

Are you married? No? What you waiting for join the club.

Yes – for how long? Has it been a while since you were under the chupa with your spouse to be? How's married life treating you?

When we are young we all desire to settle down with the perfect spouse. Yet when we hear adults talking about married life, it doesn't seem all that desirable. In a generation of high divorce rates and many singles around, how can we put the impetus back into marriage?

This weeks parsha relates the law of a man who married two wives. The Torah hints that in such a case, one of the wives will be loved and the other despised. It's not an ideal situation.

The Torah continues to discuss the laws of the children of these two wives. When both these wives have children and the father wishes to give his inheritance – Vehaya Ben Habechor LaSenia – the Bechor (first born) states the Torah will be born to the despised wife. The Torah does not say 'Im' – if the first born is born to..., rather it states 'Vehaya' – the first born will be born to the hated wife.

What is the Torah teaching us?

Hashem is Kel Rachum Vechanun a merciful G-d, He is a G-d full of love and care. We are taught VeHalachta Bedrachav – that we should emulate His deeds, just as He is loving and merciful so to

we should be. Hate should not exist between us, especially between husband and wife.

The Sefer Torer Devorah is relatively small yet it is embalmed with potent words of wisdom. The Sefer authored by the Sainly Rabbi Moshe Kordovero is built on the 13 attributes of mercy mentioned at the end of Micha. (Mi kel Kamocha)

The Torer Devorah explains that the twelfth mida is Asher Nishbata Lavotenu – The Merit of our Forefathers – Zechut Avot .

Hashem looks down towards us with certain aspects of mercy. There are times that we are not worthy, and all we have going for us is the Zechut Avot. Our forefathers merit have weight until today, and helps carry through even those that are not worthy.

We are taught to emulate Hashem's attributes. Thus we are also obligated to view others, (even if we think they are not worthy) as worthy. For they carry the merit of their fathers. This is how Hashem's mercy extends towards us and this is how we should view others. When we don't like a certain person, when we think that they are worthless, we should remember that they too descend from Avraham Yitzchak and Yaakov, they to carry this merit and we must love them as Hashem loves them.

There exists a further attribute of mercy. The Thirteenth attribute is Mimei Kedem.

What does that mean? Mimei Kedem refers to the early years. Observing children can be fun. They are so cute and innocent. Their early years and limited understanding cause us to look favourably upon them. It's difficult to really punish a cute kid.

Hashem says, when you sin, I don't punish you straight away, I take into account your youth. I remember your cute early years – when you were relatively innocent and free from sin.

Similarly we too are taught to look favourably at others. To remember that not long ago in the early days of our relationship we viewed them differently. ►

> MAZAL TOV TO

Simon & Samantha Bitton
on the birth of the baby birth Reuven Ariel

Daniella & Moshe Moses
on the birth of baby girl Liora

” THE WEEKLY QUOTE
"Happiness is when we
realize how blessed we are
for what we have..."

> UPCOMING EVENTS

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DVAR TORAH

Two Wives!
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

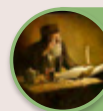
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Do you remember the first date? The man probably got out of the car and opened the door for the lady. He listened to every word she had to say that night. She was so excited to speak to him. They saw the potential of building a great family together. That potential several years later still exists and should be close to reality.

Hashem deals mida keneged mida (Sanhedrin 90). In the same way as we judge others, we will be judged. Thus when we look favourably upon others, Hashem looks favourably upon us.

When we get in an argument with our spouse, children friends, do we look at them with the eye of these attributes. Do we remember their Zechut Avot, does it enter our minds at the heat of an argument to remember that these are holy individuals who were once free from sin (mime Kedem).

Does a husband remember the days when his wife followed him in trust of his every move. Does he remember the difficulties she went through to serve

him and respect his every wish. Does he recall the pain of pregnancy. Does the wife remember the way the husband turned his timetable upside down to please her, how he spent his monthly salary delighted to please his wife?

These are the Yemei Kedem. This is the way Hashem deals with us. It's difficult, but it's not impossible. If we look at people with a different light, then many of the futile arguments and problems fall aside.

When Yaakov was conned into working seven years for Rachel, the Torah states (Bereishit (29:20)) they were in his eyes like yamim achadim – they passed by quick with his love for them.

Our sages are surprised by this statement. If you love someone and are told you have to work seven years, then time passes by very slowly, it should have said that the years were like forever for Yaakov who was eager to get married. Why does it say they passed by quickly?

The answer is that for Yaakov, due to his love of Rachel, seven years for him were a cheap price to pay for such a wonderful kalla! He appreciated her so much, the time was worth it and passed by quickly.

Rav Dessler Ztsl used to give sound advice to every chattan and Kalla. So long as you think about giving to the other side your marriage will be constantly steady and successful. The moment either side thinks about taking that's when the challenges come.

In an age where singles are the norm, and marriages need fortifying let us take the message from the Torah, let us emulate Hashem. Open our eyes, remember that first love, remember the merit of the forefathers, respect our spouses and build wonderful families for the next generation. Let us shine new light on our marriages and may Hashem deal with us in kind. Amen. ■

AHARON GABBAY - KOLLEL ZICHRON CHANA VERACHEL - JERUSALEM

DVAR
TORAH



THE TORAH'S SOFT SPOT

The Torah states that “You shall not pervert the judgement of a stranger or an orphan”. The Sforno says this is referring to a case when there is a dispute between two people, one should not disregard the argument of the orphan or stranger due to their handicap. Rashi is troubled with the fact that this ruling is already mentioned earlier in Torah. In Parashat Shoftim it reads “You shall not pervert justice” - not to distort judgement in any form regardless of who the litigant is. Rashi answers that people who are poorly (physically or emotionally) are a lot more vulnerable to be taken advantage of and distort their judgement. Therefore the Torah stresses that when it comes to situations where the litigant is poorly, one should be more

cautious to treat them as if they were not poorly.

We see a very similar idea in Parashat Mishpatim. The Torah brings a prohibition “You shall not oppress any widow or orphan... If you oppress him, and he cries out to me (Hashem), I will surely hear his cry”. This law speaks for itself, however, Rashi brings a Mechilta which adds that this prohibition not only applies to orphans and widows, but also any person. Nevertheless, the pasuk only speaks of weaker people who are more likely to succumb to oppression.

R'Yerucham Levowitz brings a story from the Mechilta: When Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon were being lead to their death by the Romans, Rabbi Shimon said to Rabbi Yishmael “Rebbe, my heart trembles for I don't know why deserve to die?” Rabbi Yishmael turned to Rabbi Shimon and asked him: “In your life, has someone ever approached you for a question or enquiry and you made him wait a moment while you drank from your cup, did up your laces or put on

your garment before answering him. The Torah says “If you oppress him, and he cries out to Me, I will surely hear his cry”. Rabbi Shimon replied “Rebbe, you have consoled me”.

R'Yerucham continues that if death was decreed even in such a case, how much more so should we be meticulous with our actions towards one and other. For the very same reason R'Yerucham would ensure that the door to his personal room would be left open as not to make anyone wait outside. For there are many who make people wait for a long time, and they have surely violated the prohibition of “You shall not oppress”.

Due to their greatness, our rabbis are judged with an outstanding amount of stringency, therefore one could not equal what is expected of them. However, there are definitely areas to relate to. Life is full of opportunities to help others. If we consider the people around us and their needs, it will help to change us and the world. ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI NAPHTALI AMSTERDAM

The sixth of Adar is the Hilloula of Rabbi Naphtali Amsterdam Tatzal. He was born in 5592 (1832) in Salant, and his father was Rabbi Shlomo Tatzal. During his youth, he was extremely diligent in study, to the point that everyone called him "Naphtali the matmid." He was among the great students of our teacher Rabbi Israel Salanter Tatzal. He took on the role of Rabbi in the cities of Helsinki and Novogrod, where he did much to elevate the level of Torah observance and the fear of Heaven. Next, he returned to Kovno where he settled down to study. To sustain his family, his wife ran a bakery, and to better their income Rabbi Naphtali accepted the rabbinate of Yaswerin and Elkost. After a certain time, he gave up all public responsibility in order to devote himself uniquely to the study of Torah. In 5666 (1906), he went to live in Jerusalem, settling down in the Strauss district next to his friend Rav Yitzchak Blazer Tatzal. He left this world in 5716 (1916).

Rabbi Naphtali spent all his life spreading Torah and the fear of Heaven. When it was not in an official capacity, he gave Mussar courses in his home, in the Beit Hamussar of Kovno, and in the Slabodka Yeshiva. He attributed great importance to the power of speech, encouraging everyone to verbally express his thoughts and ideas on Torah and the fear of Heaven. One day he said, "The power of speech, made in the depths of the soul, is such that it has a greater impact than deeds."

When he wanted to emphasize the prime importance of speech, Rabbi Naphtali relied on the opinions expressed by certain researchers concerning the fact that speech is lacking in babies. "It is not that they cannot speak, since nothing is lacking for this, but that they do not yet have the necessary intelligence to do so."

This consists of the intelligence that man was endowed with, and which is at the root of speech. This is its very essence, the instrument that allows man to actualize his thoughts by means of words. When the source of speech is intelligence, everything can be found therein, given that it is used judiciously.

Rabbi Naphtali gave an example to explain the importance of actualizing what we have in mind. When we ask ourselves what is preferable, the bread that we eat or the gold we accumulate, everyone will agree that gold is worth more than bread, because it allows a person to purchase everything that he needs, including bread.

Yet when someone is lost in the desert, if he possesses a certain amount of gold but nothing to eat, he will die. However if he had bread he would survive. That which is more important is therefore not the potential, but that which is tangibly present. Therein lay the interest to capitalize on man's intellectual strength. That is, furthermore, the role of man, said Rabbi Naphtali: "The entire goal of Creation was to make man descend into the world of action to perform concrete mitzvot, for example in taking the skin of an animal to make Tefillin, or taking linen and wool to make Tzitzit."

The same idea applies to the words of Torah and the fear of Heaven. Rabbi Naphtali Amsterdam Tatzal ends by saying that even though we can also accomplish the study of Torah by simple reflection, "the one who wants the Torah's fruit to be born in him, not to be forgotten or removed, should practice it verbally." ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

TOOTHPICKS, FLOSS, OR TOOTHBRUSH ON SHABBAT

One of the 39 prohibited Melachot of Shabbat is HaShohet-slaughtering. One of its Toladot (corollaries) is Netilat Neshama (taking life), which also includes causing bleeding to people or animals. Even bruising someone is a violation of this prohibition. The "black and blue mark" is an indication that blood vessels were ruptured. Therefore, one should be careful not to pinch someone, even in jest, so as not to cause such a bruise. The Ben Ish Hai (Vayera 12) brings this, and says that it is prohibited M'Drabanen (rabbinically).

The Poskim discuss whether it is permitted to use a toothpick or dental floss to clean one's teeth on Shabbat. Does the fact that he may bleed make this a prohibited action? Hacham Ovadia (Halichot Olam Vol. 4) quotes the Ben Ish Hai who is strict and prohibits it. However, Hacham Ovadia himself is lenient. He argues that since one has no use for the blood, it is considered a Melacha She'enah Sriha L'gufa—an action not needed for its own sake. That fact, coupled with the fact that the Melacha here is only M'Drabanen in the first place, will make it permitted in situations of Sa'ar (pain), like this where this is discomfort or pain of having food caught in between the teeth.

Similarly, Hacham Ovadia (Yabia Omer Vol. 4 OC:30) also discusses whether it is prohibited to use a toothbrush on Shabbat out of concern that it will cause oral bleeding. There also, he rules that it is permitted as long as it is not certain that it will cause bleeding.

Interestingly, according to Rambam, if someone bruises someone else in order to assuage his anger, it is considered an Issur D'oraita, because his goal was accomplished. On the other hand, the Ramban considers that case also to be a Melacha She'enah Sriha L'gufa and only prohibited by the Hachamim.

SUMMARY

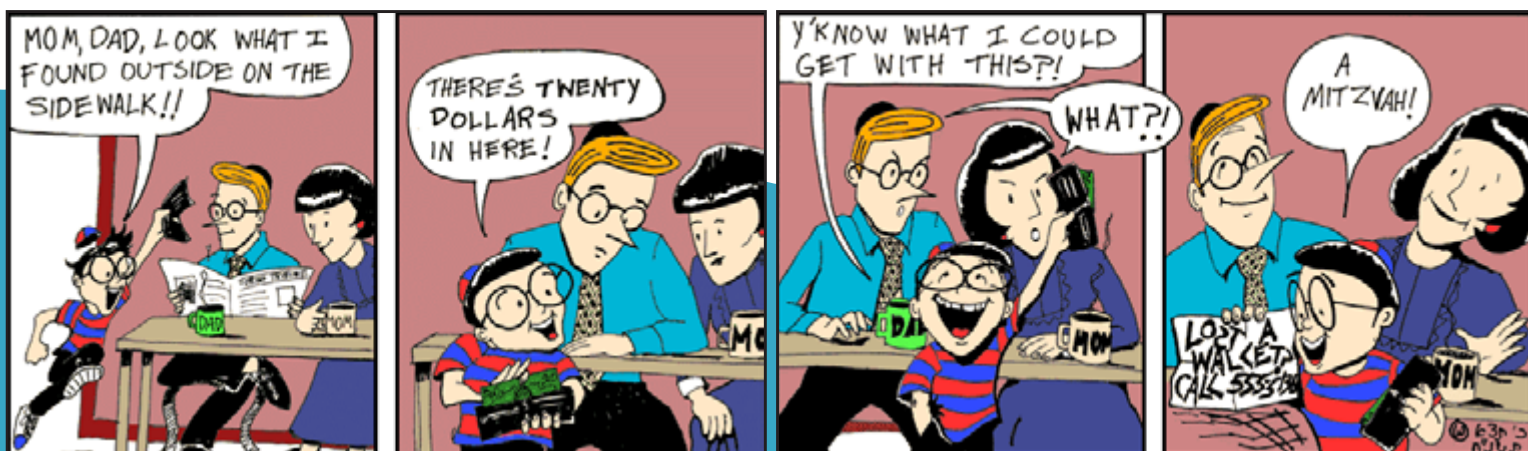
It is permitted to use a toothpick, dental floss or toothbrush on Shabbat, as long as it will not cause certain bleeding. ■

- ❶ What do you do if you find a lost object that costs money to maintain?
- ❷ Why does the Torah forbid wearing the clothing of the opposite gender?
- ❸ Why does the Torah link the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother-bird with the *mitzvah* of making a railing on the roof of your house?
- ❹ What mixture of wool and linen is permitted to be worn?
- ❺ What three things happen to a man who falsely slanders his bride?

Answer

❶ 22:2 - Sell it and save the money for the owner. ❷ 22:5 - It leads to immorality. ❸ 22:8 - To teach that one *mitzvah* leads to another, and to prosperity. ❹ 22:12 - Wool tzitzit on a linen garment. ❺ 22:18 - He receives lashes, pays a fine of 100 silver shekel, and may never divorce her against her will.

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Kids STORY

"Hurry up children, we only have a few minutes left. Leah, finish setting the table. Muttu, sweep the floor. Shoshie, Esti, finish getting dressed. Mommy, is the food ready?"

"Yes dear, everything is fine."

"Daddy, why does everything have to be so nice?"

"Because Mr. Goldberg is coming."

"Oof, Mr. Goldberg. We work so hard for Mr. Goldberg. Why?"

"Esti, every year around this time, Mr. Goldberg comes here to Israel to visit. We are honored to have him as a guest in our house."

"But Daddy, we treat him like he is a VIP"

"He is a very important person to our family. Do you want to know why?"

"Yes, we want to know why we are working so hard to make things nice for him."

"Many years ago, my great-grandfather and Mr. Goldberg's great-grandfather were friends in Russia. Those were dangerous times for the Jewish people. My great-grandfather was captured by the Cossacks and thrown into prison. Mr. Goldberg's great-grandfather risked his life to get my great-grandfather out of prison. Were it not for him, my great-

grandfather would have died a young man in prison, and none of us would be here today."

"Wow!"

"Now do you see why we give Mr. Goldberg the red-carpet treatment?"

"We sure do, Daddy."

"The Ammonites and Moabites should have been so nice to the Jewish people."

"What do you mean Shoshie?"

"We learned about them in this week's parsha class. Lot was the father of those two nations. Avraham Avinu, our father Abraham, saved Lot's life, similar to the way Mr. Goldberg's great-grandfather saved our great-great-grandfather's life."

"Excellent, Shoshie! Please tell us the story."

"There was a huge war between four kings and five kings. It was really the first world war ever in history. The four kings won the war, and captured Lot. Avraham Avinu went to war against the four kings, risking his life to save Lot and his wife. Many generations later, the Jewish people again met up with Ammon and Moab on their way to the Land of Israel after their forty years in the desert."

"Ammon and Moab must have treated them royally, as we treat Mr. Goldberg. After all, Avraham saved Lot's life."

"Not exactly, Muttu. Not only did they not greet us with bread and water, but they hired the wicked Bilaam to curse us."

"That's terrible!"

"Exactly. Because of this, even their converts are not permitted to marry into our nation."

"I guess that G-d is trying to teach us all a lesson. What is that lesson kids?"

"We have to be grateful to people for good things they do for us."

"Right, Esti."

"We are all part of a big family called Klal Yisrael the Jewish people."

"Leah, you are on the ball. I am so proud of you kids. You really know your stuff. This is one great family."

"Mommy and Daddy, you taught us everything we know. Thank you!"

"This is one grateful family."