

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



IDEA THAT COULD SAVE YOU MILLIONS!

A few days ago I was shown an article of how a fourteen year old child Suvir Mirchandani calculated that he could save the US government 234 Million Dollars a year!

That's a lot of money, and I read on to see if this was just another gimmick or a real article.

The idea actually added up.

His idea began when he worked out how much his school in Pennsylvania could save in ink after watching multiple leaflets be handed out.

He hypothesised and said if the school changed the font they were using from 'Times New Roman' to 'Garamond' font instead; it would use 25 per cent less ink because each character is lighter and thinner.

"Ink is two times more expensive than French perfume by volume," Suvir related.

He then extended the study to a national level and concluded that if the government used just Garamond it could save \$234 million!

A small change could make a massive difference.

But I found a more impressive lesson from this article which is linked to this week's Parsha.

We are taught about the sacrifice brought by a poor person who had experienced Tzaraat (a spiritual disease with physical symptoms)

The Torah takes into account a person's financial situation and therefore a poor person was able to offer 'cheaper' sacrifices.

In defining the poor person's sacrifice, the Torah relates: "But if he is poor and cannot afford [these sacrifices], he shall take one [male] lamb as a guilt offering for a waving to effect atonement for him, and one tenth [of an ephah] of fine flour mixed with oil as a meal offering, and a log of oil" (14:21).

The verse is interesting because it begins by saying if a person is poor, and then seems to add the superfluous words of 'and cannot afford'. Surely a person who is poor cannot afford?

Perhaps there are two types of poor people. The first is one that defines himself as being poor. He realises his situation and becomes depressed. Accepting that nothing will ever change.

The second is more positive, he realises that he might be poor now but that does not necessarily mean that he'll be poor in the future.

The first is a pessimist, while the second is an optimist.

The Midrash Vayikra Rabba 17:3 lists ten sins that can cause "Tzaraat".

Three such sins are as follows: (1) conceit, (2) Lashon hara - malicious gossip, (3) acting miserly. All of these sins share a common denominator, namely "Ayin Rah" (a bad eye).

This type of person sees the world in a negative and pessimistic manner. In other words, pessimism is the root cause for "Tzaraat".

The Torah hints to us in verse 14:21 that a person has to go from being a "pessimistic" poor person to an "optimistic" poor person as a means by which a "cure" for Tzaraat can take effect.

Part of the cure of the Tzaraat is to realise that he has to change his outlook of the world. ►

7TH NISSAN 5779

SHABBAT BEGINS: 7:34 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 8:46 PM

> MAZAL TOV

Naomi Sassoon & Daniel Ragol Levy
on their engagement

”

THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"A person accomplishes more with patience than all the anger in the world."

> UPCOMING EVENTS

For our upcoming events
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- 1st MAY
Young Married couples
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DVAR TORAH

Idea that could save you Millions!
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

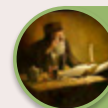
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Shemot - Please dispose of accordingly

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Similarly the Gemara in Ayrachin also says that the punishment of Tzaraat comes "Al Tzorat HaAyin." Tzorat HaAyin [literally - narrowness of eye] does not only mean a person who is tight-fisted or cheap. Tzorat HaAyin is a person who never sees the good side of anything and always sees evil. It is the opposite of a generosity of spirit. It is a stinginess, not only regarding money, but regarding viewing life in general. A Tzar Ayin is a person who does not like to see other people's success. The only success that he is interested in is his own success.

If that is the sin that causes Tzaraat, then the Tikun [correction] that causes the Tzaraat to go away is the person doing Teshuva and switching from being a Tzar Ayin to a Tov Ayin.

The Chidushai HaRim says that when the Pasuk says, "Vhenay Lo Hofach HaNega Et Ayno" - and behold, the Tzaraat did not change its appearance- there is a double meaning. "Lo Hofach HaNega Et Ayno" also means that his Ayin [eye] did not change. In order to do Teshuva, this person's Ayin must change. He must change from being a Tzar Ayin to being a Tov Ayin.

The Pasuk is hinting to us, "Lo Hofach HaNega Et Ayno." His Ayin did not change. He has the same stinginess, the same unwillingness to share and be generous.

"Ayno", here, does not merely mean that the appearance did not change, but also that the Ayin did not change. The Tzoras Ayin, the Avairah that brought on this terrible punishment is still in place.

The Chidushai HaRim continues with a classic Chasiddish vort: The word "Nega" is really the same word as the word "Oneg." What is the entire difference between the word "Oneg" -pleasure- and the word Nega [in the Hebrew lettering]?

The only difference is the placement of the [letter] "Ayin." The "Nun" and the "Gimel" are in the same place. The only difference is whether the "Ayin" is at the beginning or at the end. What is the difference between "Nega" and "Oneg?" What is the difference between a person having Tzaraat and a person having pleasure? It all depends on the placement of the "Ayin." That is this person's problem. The problem is with the "Ayin."

His problem is with his perspective and his approach to life. His problem is with his Ayin, so his Tikun must be "Hofach Hanega Et Ayno." He must change his "Ayin." He must take the "Ayin" from the word "Nega" and make it into "Oneg."

Even when we are in a down turn, even when things look bleak, there are times of encouragement ahead. We should take happiness and pleasure at others' success; we should approach life with a positive outlook.

At a time when it looks like the only way to raise money is through harsh taxes, a simple idea of a 14 year old with a different outlook is shaking America.

Challenge: Change our perspective; be optimistic! You never know- you could be saving millions!

■ Shabbat Shalom

RABBI PEARLMAN - MEVASERET ZION, YERUSHALAYIM, IR HAKODESH



SHABBAT HAGADOL

One of the most interesting aspects of this Shabbat preceding Pesach is its name which we usually translate to mean the Great Shabbat. However this leaves us with a number of questions.

1. Why then is the masculine adjective ha-gadol used, instead of the feminine ha-gedolah?
2. Why is the definite article ha- attached only to the adjective? It should be either Shabbat gadol or ha-Shabbat ha-gadol. Shabbat ha-Gadol is grammatically correct only if it means "Shabbat of ha-Gadol".
3. Since the Israelites spoke Aramaic exclusively, if this Shabbat's sole meaning were "the Great Shabbat", it would not have been called "Shabbat ha-Gadol" which is Hebrew, but rather Shabbata Rabbah (as in Hoshana Rabbah).
4. Why is it called this name altogether?

To answer these questions we need first to trace the origin of this name.

The earliest source explaining the meaning of Shabbat ha-Gadol is Rashi (in Sefer ha-Pardes and Sefer ha-Orah). He states that the Children of Yisrael went forth from Egypt on Nisan 15, which was a Thursday. Consequently Nisan 10, the day on which they took and set aside the korban Pesach (see Shemot 12.3), fell on Shabbat. The Children of Yisrael were afraid that the Egyptians would kill them for slaughtering their deity, but when Hashem promised them that they would be miraculously protected from harm each man took his Pesach lamb to keep it ready for four days, until Nisan 14. The Egyptians did indeed attempt to kill the Jews but they were incapacitated by the miracles which Hashem performed for the Israelites. In memory of these miracles that Shabbat has since been known as Shabbat ha-Gadol the "great Shabbat". (A similar explanation appears in Tur, Orach Chayim 630).

This explanation, but with a different description of the events in Egypt, also appears in Tosafot (Shabbat 87b "Ve-Oto" and see Maharsha (Chiddushei Aggadot, loc. cit), who reconciles these diverging descriptions of the occurrences of these five days.

This therefore must be taken as authoritative in respect of our question 4) above. Though there are numerous other suggestions for why it was HaGadol. But in order to answer the rest of our questions we need to quote the Matteh Moshe (Amud haVodoh 542) in name of his teacher Maharshal that the name is taken from the Haftara read on this Shabbat (Malakhi 3:4-24).

The next to last verse of this chapter reads "Behold, I will send you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great [ha-gadol] and awesome day of Hashem". We see from this that it really is the "Shabbat of ha-Gadol".

Matteh Moshe says that the Maharshal asked, if so, then this should have been called "Shabbat ve-Arvah", after the very first word of the Haftarah, as in Shabbat Chazon and Shabbat Nachamu. The answer, Matteh Moshe states is that Shabbat ha-Gadol was so named, not only as an allusion to the Haftarah, but also to the great (gadol) miracle which occurred on that Shabbat.

So this answers all our questions as "HaGadol" is the only appropriate word.

There are other opinions that HaGadol is not an adjective describing this Shabbat, but it is a noun with Shabbat being in the genitive = the Shabbat of the Gadol which also answers all our questions e.g. The Shabbat of the Lechem Hagadol (the extra large loaves baked for this Shabbat for distribution to the poor) or Shabbat of Hallel HaGadol, or of Chodesh HaGadol or of the Rabbi (HaGadol) who gave the Drasha.

All agree that this is a great Shabbat.

■ Shabbat shalom

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI SHIMON THE RIGHTEOUS

Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik (the Righteous) was one of the last survivors of the Kneset Hagedolah (the Great Assembly), a group composed of 120 men of Israel. On the day after the destruction of the first Beth Hamikdash (Temple), it was the Kneset Hagedolah that did so much to assure the survival of the Jewish nation, a nation that was threatened as much by the disappearance of the Beth Hamikdash as by the Galut (exile) that ensued. It is to them that we owe, in particular, our ritual of prayer, say the Sages in citing the prophet Hosea: "Let our lips substitute for bulls." Counted among those in that Kneset Hagedolah were great members of the community, including even some of the prophets. Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik himself was the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) in the Beth Hamikdash. He held this office for forty years, attired in his solemn blue garments, and by virtue of his immensely pious works, many were the miracles that the Jewish people benefited from. What follows is an account of one of these miracles, thanks to which the Beth Hamikdash was saved from destruction by the Samaritans, a group that also wanted to massacre the Jewish population of the land. The Eternal, however, put an end to this sinister plan and punished the Samaritans as they deserved. This entire story is recounted in the Talmudic tractate Yoma.

Our Sages teach us: The 25th of Tevet is a Yom Tov (a holiday). On that day we are not allowed to give eulogies or recite Tachnun (bi-weekly supplications). On that day, in fact, the Samaritans had asked for and obtained from Emperor Alexander the Great the authorization to destroy the House of the Eternal in Jerusalem. The terrible news was told to Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik. What did he do? He dressed himself in his High Priest garments and called for several notable figures in Jerusalem. Each took a lit torch and they all marched during the night to encounter the Emperor, who was on his way

to Jerusalem with his retinue. In the morning they found themselves face to face with his procession.

His court attendants announced to the Emperor: "Here are the Jews that have arisen against you."

Yet in seeing Shimon HaTzaddik, Alexander the Great hastened to descend from his chariot and prostrate himself before him. Stunned, his court attendants asked him, "A great king such as you bows down before Jews?"

He replied, "I saw the face of this man when I was in the midst of battle. It was thanks to that vision that I triumphed over my enemies."

Then, turning towards Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik and his companions, he asked them why they had come to meet him. Rabbi Shimon replied, "Is it conceivable that idolaters could manage to persuade you to destroy a building in which we never stop praying for you and the longevity of your Empire?"

"Of what are you speaking?"

"The Samaritans."

Cognizant of his error, Alexander the Great told them, "They are in your hands. Do with them as you wish."

Immediately, the heads of the community seized the conspirators, attached them to the tails of their horses, and dragged them among prickly shrubs and thistles all the way to their villages on Mount Gerizim. There, they destroyed everything in their path, exactly as the Samaritans had planned to do to Jerusalem.

Since that time, the 25th of Tevet has been decreed as a festival among the Jewish people. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

PESAH – SEARCHING FOR HAMETZ

The Torah obligation to eliminate one's Hametz on Ereb Pesach can be fulfilled in one of two ways – through either "Bittul," renouncing one's ownership over his Hametz, or "Bedikat Hametz," thoroughly searching one's home for Hametz and eliminating all the Hametz he finds. However, the Sages enacted that even if one makes a "Bittul" declaration, he should nevertheless perform "Bedilka" and eliminate the Hametz from his property. One reason is that the Sages were concerned that one might not proclaim the "Bittul" wholeheartedly, and will not fully intend to renounce his ownership over his Hametz, in which case it is invalid and the Misva is not fulfilled. The second explanation is that since we normally eat Hametz all year round, we might mistakenly eat Hametz that we find in our home during Pesach. To avoid this risk, the Sages enacted that besides the verbal proclamation of "Bittul," one should also search for all the Hametz in his home and eliminate it.

The Mishna in the beginning of Masechet Pesachim teaches that one performs the search for Hametz "Or Le'arba'a Asar," which the Gemara explains to mean on the night of the 14th of Nissan – meaning, the night before Pesach. The Shulhan Aruch (Orach Haim 431) writes that the "Bedika" should be done "Bi'thilat Ha'layla" – "at the beginning of the night." Hacham Bension Abba Shaul (Israel, 1924-1998) explains that although the Misva can be fulfilled throughout the night, one should perform the search at the beginning of the night, at Set Ha'kochavim (when the first stars can be seen), in accordance with the rule of "Zerizin Makdimin Le'misvot" (one should perform a Misva at the earliest opportunity). However, Hacham Bension adds, when the Sages said that the "Bedika" should preferably be done right at the time of Set Ha'kochavim, they took into consideration the recitation of Arbit. Following the rule of "Tadir Ve'she'eno Tadir, Tadir Kodem" – that a more frequent Misva should precede a less frequent one – one should first pray Arbit at Set Ha'kochavim – some 20 minutes after sunset – and then immediately proceed to the "Bedika."

The Hafetz Haim (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933) writes that once the time of Bedikat Hametz arrives, one should not eat even a small portion of food, such as a fruit, until after fulfilling the Misva.

As "Bedikat Hametz" is performed before one makes the "Bittul" proclamation, the "Bedika" has the status of a Misva De'Orayta – the fulfillment of a Biblical Misva. It is thus a very precious opportunity, and one should not at all minimize the great value and importance of the search for Hametz on the night before Pesach.

Summary: On the night before Pesach, one should pray Arbit right at the time of Set Ha'kochavim (approximately 20 minutes after sundown) and then immediately proceed to perform "Bedikat Hametz." One should not eat even a small snack from the time of Set Ha'kochavim until after completing the search for Hametz. ■

Kids Time

STORY

TREMENDOUS POWER

Avi, isn't this a great tour?
It sure is Chaim. Where else would we get to see these big looms that weave the fabrics that make up the clothing that we wear?

You're right Avi. Excuse me, Mr. Tour Guide, how many looms are in this factory?

Excellent question, young man. We actually have 247 standard loom in this factory. They are all arranged in rows according to the fabric that they make. Some make thick material, some fine, some single-weave, some double-weave, some cotton, some wool, some polyester, and all types of blends.

Wow, 247 loom is sure a lot, sir.

I said 247 standard looms. We have one other loom that is not standard.

Is it bigger or smaller than the standard looms, sir?

Let me take you to see it boys. You can judge for yourselves.

With that, the group walked to the far end of the factory. They stood in front of two huge steel sliding doors. Making sure that no one was standing too close to the doors, the tour guide pressed a button and the doors slowly began to slide apart. The boys could not believe their eyes. Standing behind those doors was a monster of a machine. Its tons of high-density stainless steel dwarfed all other machines around it. That is some loom, sir.

It sure is boys. It is so big and powerful, that it can produce as much fabric as all of the other machines in this factory combined. Look now, the workers are about to fire it up.

The wheels of the giant machine slowly began to turn. The threads slowly began to feed in. Faster and faster the machine accelerated. Within minutes, hundreds of yards of fabric were coming out of the giant loom. The boys practically had to shout to be heard over the noise of the machinery. Sir, that is amazing. We have never seen anything quite like that. A machine that can produce so much in so little time.

Suddenly, warning whistles began sounding. The giant loom was malfunctioning. The workers scurried around to turn off the machine. But it was too late. In those few seconds, hundreds of yards of fabric were ruined.

Boys, now you have seen the other side of it. This machine is wonderful when it is running properly. When it is malfunctioning, however, it will ruin more fabric than all of the other looms combined. We really have to watch this baby. It

has tremendous potential, both to create fabric and to destroy it.

Sir, have you ever heard of the Chofetz Chaim?

Did he work in the fabric industry?

No, he was the leading Rabbi of the Jewish people during the early part of this century. He wrote several books about the mitzvos of proper speech.

Do you mean pronunciation and grammar?

No, he wrote about not degrading other people. He encouraged people to use their gift of speech for only good things, and not to hurt others with words. Sir, you may wonder why I began talking about him.

That thought did cross my mind, young man.

In one of his books, the Chofetz Chaim compared the human body to a factory, much the same as yours.

No kidding.

Each of the 248 limbs of the body corresponds to one of the 248 positive mitzvos in the Torah. Wait a minute, 248 is the number of looms that we have here in our factory.

Exactly. Each loom can produce material, just as each limb can "produce" a mitzvah. One limb however, is as powerful as all of the other 247 combined.

Just like here in the factory. Now you really have my curiosity aroused. Which limb is the most powerful one?

It is ... the tongue. Our gift of speech, when used properly to study Torah and say nice things about people, can "produce" more mitzvos than all the other limbs put together. After all, learning Torah is equal to all of the other mitzvos combined. That is the positive side. However, just as that giant loom has a negative side, so too does the power of speech. When that loom is malfunctioning, it can ruin more material than any other machine. Similarly, when we speak badly, we cause more destruction than with any other limb of our body.

Boys, that is amazing.

Thank you very much for the tour, sir. It was very enlightening.

Boys, I am the one who must thank you. You have enlightened me to the tremendous power of speech. That giant loom will remind me that when I speak properly I create great things. And there is no greater destructive force than improper speech.

Sir, we're sure that you will keep the machine running in tiptop shape.

TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- What is unique about the chatat and the asham offered by the metzora?
- In the Beit Hamikdash, when the metzora was presented "before Hashem" (14:11), where did he stand?
- Where was the asham of the metzora slaughtered?
- How was having tzara'at in one's house sometimes advantageous?
- When a house is suspected as having tzara'at, what is its status prior to the inspection by a kohen?

Answer
 1 14:10 - They require n'sachim (drink offerings). 2 14:11
 - At the gate of Nikanor. 3 14:13 - On the northern side of the
 mizbe'ach. 4 14:34 - The Amoritess concealed treasures in the walls of their
 houses. After the conquest of the Land, tzara'at would afflict these houses. The
 Jewish owner would tear down the house and find the treasures.
 5 14:36 - It is tahor.



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