

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



FIT FOR THE JOB!

In a world populated by more than 7 billion, we are constantly in contact with people around us. Every day we have interaction with others. Imagine the following:

You are walking with the kids in a theme park, or supermarket. Someone comes in the other direction, clearly not looking where he/she is going. Their face is towards the floor, as they by mistake step on your child's foot pushing them to the ground. How do you react?

Scream out at them "watch where they are going!"

Or, move away concentrating on the crying child without saying anything to the passer by?

Let me share with you a fascinating story I heard recently that might help us understand what kind of perspective we should have in these scenarios.

The Golden Age of Spain produced some magnificent Jewish scholars. One of these was the great sage, Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1167).

The Ibn Ezra lived a tough life and was poverty stricken. He was known to travel the world (even visiting England!). Once on his travels, he came across a synagogue that was looking for a Rabbi. The pay was extremely high at twenty gold coins a month and the Ibn Ezra thought it was a blessing sent from heaven. Happy to share his knowledge, he immediately applied for the job.

As he came in for the interview the people looked at the poorly dressed sage and without even listening to a word he had to say, immediately told him that he was in the wrong place.

Perhaps there was a shop in the market that was looking for someone of his calibre, but they were searching for a respectable rabbi, well dressed and well presented.

The Ibn Ezra decided that he would teach this community an important lesson.

He left and went to the other side of town to the market. There he frequented a local simple Jewish grocer - Shimon.

Although simple, Shimon was a smart well-presented figure. He came across commanding and his radiant beard caught the Ibn Ezra's eyes from afar.

The Ibn Ezra approached Shimon and asked if he would like to earn ten gold coins a month.

"Wow, are you sure that's possible?" replied Shimon. "I only get 2 a month from all my hard work." He said.

The Ibn Ezra assured him it was possible and told him the deal. "All you have to do is become the Rabbi of the community on the other side of town."

Shimon was startled, but I barely know how to read Hebrew! That's impossible." He replied.

"Don't worry, leave it to me, you will be the Rabbi and I will be your spokesman. We will split the monthly wage in two. All you have to do is enter the synagogue make a motion with your hands and nod. Then when they ask you a question, I will pretend to ask you and will reply on your behalf".

Shimon understood and happily agreed.

They entered the synagogue and the Ibn Ezra introduced this man as a special Rabbi, well-presented, filled with knowledge and understanding, capable of leading the community.

People all rose in front of Shimon and eventually once seated, they asked him some questions.

Each time the Ibn Ezra would pretend to listen to Shimon for the answer and give over what he had heard to the crowd. Of course all the time it was really the Ibn Ezra himself who was answering all their questions.

Impressed, they immediately accepted this new Rabbi to lead them.

Every day the 'Rabbi' would walk in accompanied by his 'disciple' who would listen to the Rabbi's words and tell them over to the community.

The community started to get word of the man's greatness and knowledge and the synagogue was soon packed.

After a few months the community leader approached the Ibn Ezra; "The community is deeply grateful to have found such a wonderful Rabbi, but the time has come for us to hear from him directly. Please ask him to start to speak to us in person!"

The Ibn Ezra agreed and told him that the Rabbi would start to speak to the community at a big gathering next week. ►

> MAZAL TOV TO

Adam & Ortal Hillel
on the birth of their daughter Talya Sarah

Ester & David Bogen
on the birth of their daughter Tamar Atara



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"A smile is a curve that sets everything straight"

> UPCOMING EVENTS

• **ARABIAN FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**
11TH MAY 2018 (More info check online)



DVAR TORAH

Fit for the job!
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

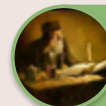
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Shemot - Please dispose of accordingly

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That night the Ibn Ezra went back to Shimon and said – next week you are going to speak to the entire community. You need to know what to say. Let me help you.

If someone asks you “My Tefilin has fallen, what should I do?” Then you answer “Kiss the Tefilin and fast or give some money to Tsedaka”.

Shimon found this hard, he was not used to the wording, but after a day of practice managed to learn the words off by heart.

The next day the Ibn Ezra said to him a few more potential questions. “I forgot to count the Sefirat Haomer for a whole day, what should I do?” then answer “Count the Sefira without a Beracha.”

Shimon learnt the answers and the day finally came to speak in front of the community.

A large crowd gathered to hear the words of the famous Rabbi. The Ibn Ezra was nowhere to be seen.

The first person asked the Rabbi about the Sefirat Haomer.

Shimon not understanding remembered the first answer the Ibn Ezra taught him and replied, “Kiss the Tefilin and fast or give some money to Tsedaka”.

Everyone was bewildered. What’s Tefilin got to do with the Sefira?!

They continued to ask him questions, it didn’t take them long to realise that this man was an imposter and the real ‘Rabbi’ was the Ibn Ezra himself.

The Ibn Ezra had taught them one of the most important lessons in life – don’t judge a book by its cover.

“Rabbi Meir said, do not look at the flask but what is in it. There are new flasks filled with old wine and old flasks which do not even contain new wine.” (Pirkei Avot 4:27)

Appearances can be deceiving, but it’s up to us to always entertain every scenario. It is our duty not to act with immediate judgement. Rather we must evaluate every situation carefully entertaining all possibilities and only then come to a good call.

Imagine if in the case mentioned at the beginning of the article above, the person who had hit your child, had just lost a close relative.

Imagine that you were informed of this just before he stepped on your child’s foot.

Now everything changes. We wouldn’t jump out and shout at the other person; rather we would reflect and act accordingly.

Perhaps they were clumsy and should have looked where they were going, but perhaps they weren’t clumsy and just had a tough day, or suffer from blindness. Before we react we should try and entertain situations.

In this weeks Parsha Aharon suffers the loss of two of his four sons.

They were trying to serve G-d, yet never came out of the newly sanctified Mishkan alive.

How sad and upset must he have felt. Yet Aharon teaches us to first think before reacting. Vayidom Aharon, he is silent. He accepts G-d’s judgement.

As we enter the third week of the Sefirat Haomer, let’s concentrate on unity, judging others favourably and entertaining all options before coming to decisions. ■

Shabbat Shalom.

RABBI YEHOANATAN SALEM - SHALOM LAAM DIASPORA

DVAR TORAH



WHY DO WE HONOUR?

On the first of Nissan, during the consecration of the Mishkan – the Tabernacle, Moshe Rabbenu summoned Aharon and his sons, who were the Kohanim in charge of the service in the Mishkan. He also called the elders of Israel, to instruct all of them regarding the order of service and rituals.

We may ask: “Why were the elders of Israel picked out specifically to hear these instructions, if they have no specific function in regard to them?”

Furthermore, the Gemara (Sanhedrin 107b) tells us that until Avraham Avinu’s time, an elderly person would not look any older than a young person. So, a person who wanted to speak to Avraham may have mistakenly spoken to his son, Yitzchak! Hence, Avraham

prayed that elderly people should have an aged appearance. Why? Since we need to honour and show respect to our elders, we need an easy way to identify them.

Let us understand, though, what is the purpose of us honouring our elders, parents and rabbis? Surely, honour is no more than an illusion that may even be a burden upon the recipient. The reason we are commanded to honour them is not necessarily for their gain, but rather, for our own good, to enable us to learn and gain from them. If we do not value or show honour to someone or something,

we will never bring ourselves to receive or to gain from them. If a parent justifies his child against a teacher, in a way that undermines the regard that his child has for that teacher, then, his child will probably never be able to bring himself to gain from that teacher again. Conversely, the more one honours a person, the more opportunities one will get to gain from them. Thus, on the auspicious occasion of consecrating the priestly service in the Mishkan, Moshe Rabbenu saw fit to give the sages of our people their due respect and involve them in the proceedings.

A common saying is “the world belongs to the youth”. It is true that they are the next generation, our continuation, and the ones most capable of effecting change within themselves. Yet, our Torah attaches great importance to seniority. The Torah commands us that besides the duty to stand up for a Torah sage who enters the room, we must also stand for any elderly person. A person is the product of all his actions and experiences. Hence, an elderly person, who has absorbed the wisdom of all his life-experiences, is a living example for us to honour and learn from. All the more so, an elderly person who is also a Torah sage, has the wisdom and understanding of the Torah’s view point as well as an accumulated, deep and far-sighted perception of the world and people through his life-experiences.

Let us make sure to honour and respect our elders, parents and rabbis in order to be able to gain from their life-experience and knowledge. ■

Shabbat shalom

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI SAADIA GAON

Rav Saadia Gaon was the Rosh Yeshiva of Sura in Babylon. He was very wealthy, but also merited teaching Torah to numerous disciples.

The story that we shall recount occurred in the month of Nissan. There was much work to be done in the home of the Rav. As part of his duties, one of the Jewish servants journeyed to the river located at the other end of the city. He went there to immerse some cutlery in order to make them usable for Passover. In arriving by the river, he set down some precious crystalware, but before having time to immerse them, he saw a large wave arise from the river and carry them off into the depths. The servant looked on stunned as he saw them disappear, his heart filled with grief. However he quickly reassured himself by thinking, "Certainly no one will notice the loss of a few plates at my master's home. He has a great deal of cutlery, and who will think to look for these exact ones? Besides, even if someone notices that they're lost, why would anyone suspect me? It's better if I keep all this to myself and that I relate it to no one." He continued to immerse the rest of the cutlery, and when he was finished he went back to the Rav's. Several days passed, and no one figured out the servant's secret. He himself almost forgot the incident.

When the holiday of Passover returned the next year, he was again sent to immerse the cutlery in the river. Immediately, the incident of the previous year came to mind, and he was seized with fright that this should happen to him again. When he went down to the river, what should he see in the current but some crystal cutlery floating and making its way the shore, finally being tossed up onto land! The servant approached, and he saw that it was the same actual cutlery that had sunk into the depths the year before. What's more, not one of them was missing!

His joy was immense, but his surprise was greater still. He decided to recount everything when he went back to his master's. When he arrived at the house, he went to find Rav Saadia Gaon and admitted everything to him. At the end he added, "Apparently, success smiles upon the Rav. He has merited having everything of his recovered." Now instead of the joy that the servant expected, a large sigh escaped the Rav's lips, and his servant remained mute with astonishment.

Not long afterwards, Rav Saadia Gaon began to become poor, to the point that he no longer had anything to eat and had to resort to charity. When his house was seized, his servants found themselves dispersed, and the servant mentioned above went

down to Egypt, where he settled and established a flourishing business. One day, during the course of his travels, Rav Saadia Gaon arrived at the home of his servant in Egypt, who, appalled at seeing him in poverty, invited the Rav to stay there with him. The invitation came from the heart, and the Rav accepted. The servant gave him a special room and provided him with everything he needed, yet tranquility did not last. As soon as the next day, the Rav became sick with a grave disease, one that brought him to the threshold of death. The host cared to the utmost for the needs of his guest and called in the best doctors, but without success. One day, the doctors ordered that he should drink a very concentrated broth in which several fattened chickens were repeatedly cooked, concentrated to the point that it was boiled down to a single spoonful. Without discussing these instructions any further, the concentrate was prepared and brought to nourish the patient, his heart filled with hope. Yet at the exact moment that the spoon was brought to his mouth, a cobweb fell into it from the ceiling, and the solution that had been so carefully prepared was lost.

The residents of the house began to lament over having done all this work for nothing. The servant looked upon Rav Saadia with disappointment, yet there he was with a smile on his lips! At that moment, the servant recalled the previous incident – the Rav's sigh when he told him the story of the cutlery that had washed ashore. He could not contain his curiosity, and so he asked, "May the Rav explain two astonishing things to me: The first, why he sighed at that moment; and the second, why he is smiling now, when the precious solution has been lost."

The Rav answered, "I know that in the same way that riches are not forever, neither is poverty. When you told me the story of the crystal cutlery that the river had returned, I understood that this was a supernatural occurrence, and I feared that I had arrived at a summit of wealth and had benefited of too many good things. I realized that the wheel risked turning at any moment, and that is why I sighed."

"Now, however," continued the patient, "when the medicine was ruined after all the trouble we had gone to, I suspected that I had arrived at the height of my suffering and henceforth salvation would arrive. That is why I smiled."

This is effectively what happened, as the Rav was healed a few days later. He immediately got up and left for Sura, his city, and at the end of a short time he regained his exalted position, that of Gaon of Israel, of whom he was the glory. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

IF A WOMAN LIT SHABBAT CANDLES BEFORE PRAYING MINHA

The Halachic authorities debate the question as to whether a woman may pray Minha on Friday afternoon after she lit the Shabbat candles. Ideally, a woman who normally recites Minha every day should recite Minha on Friday afternoon before she lights the Shabbat candles. Lighting the Shabbat candles constitutes the formal acceptance of Shabbat, and so Minha, which is a weekday prayer, should be recited prior to candle lighting. The case under discussion is where a woman who normally prays Minha every day forgot to recite the prayer before lighting the Shabbat candles on Friday afternoon. Assuming the sun has not set, and thus the time for Minha has not passed, may she still recite Minha, or is it too late for her to pray Minha, since she has already accepted the onset of Shabbat?

The Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909) rules that a woman may not pray Minha once she lit the Shabbat candles and accepted Shabbat. This is also the position of the Mishna Berura (commentary by Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933), in Siman 263 (Se'if Katan 43). Hacham Ovadia Yosef, however, disagrees, and allows a woman to recite Minha in this case. His primary argument relates to a distinction between an individual's formal acceptance of Shabbat, and that of a congregation. When a congregation accepts Shabbat in the synagogue, such as by declaring "Bo'i Kalla" in the Kabbalat Shabbat service, this constitutes a definitive acceptance with respect to all Halachot. An individual's acceptance of Shabbat, however, as in the case of a woman lighting the Shabbat candles, is not absolute. Under certain circumstances, such as when a woman forgot to recite Minha before candle lighting, she may consider Shabbat as having not yet begun, and may thus recite Minha.

Additionally, Hacham Ovadia notes, the weekday Amida recited at Minha on Friday afternoon is not necessarily at odds with the observance of Shabbat. Fundamentally, the weekday Amida may be recited even on Shabbat. The Sages formulated a different, briefer Amida prayer for Shabbat in order not to overburden us with a lengthy prayer service on Shabbat, but essentially, the weekday Amida is appropriate for Shabbat, as well. Therefore, in the case of a woman who forgot to recite Minha before candle lighting, she still has the opportunity to recite Minha after candle lighting, even though she has already accepted Shabbat.

Summary: A woman who generally recites Minha should recite the prayer on Friday afternoon before candle lighting. Nevertheless, if she forgot to pray Minha before candle lighting, she may recite it afterward (assuming, of course, that she remembers before sunset). ■



YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Hi Avi! How are you doing?

Thank G-d, Chaim.

Do you want to come with us to the hospital today?

I generally try to avoid hospitals, Chaim.

I am talking about going to the hospital to do a mitzvah.

Which mitzvah is that Chaim?

Bikur Cholim, the mitzvah of visiting the sick, Avi.

Sure, Chaim. I'll be happy to go. When it comes to doing mitzvos, I'm always ready to lend a helping hand.

While walking down one of the corridors of the hospital, Avi and Chaim overhear the doctor speaking to a woman.

Mrs. Cohen, the prognosis looks good. Your husband stands a good chance of making a complete recovery.

Thank G-d, Dr. Friedman.

He will have to go on a very strict diet, however. It may be very time consuming for you to prepare his special food.

Whatever you say, doctor. My husband's recovery is more important than anything else.

He will have to avoid salt, sugar, fried foods, microwaved foods, fats, high cholesterol foods and dairy products. I will give you a detailed report of precisely what he can and cannot eat before he is ready to leave the hospital.

Thank you so much Dr. Friedman.

Chaim and Avi continue visiting patients in the hospital. A short time later, they overhear the same Dr. Friedman speaking to another woman.

Mrs. Black, I have some not-so-good news for you.

Oh no, doctor, what is it.

The prognosis does not look very good for your husband.

But doctor, isn't there anything you can do to help him? Perhaps a special diet?

You can try but I don't think it will make a difference. I am sorry Mrs. Black.

Chaim and Avi think about the doctor's words.

The diet will help Mr. Cohen, but not Mr. Black.

You know, Avi, there is something very important that we can learn from this.

What is that, Chaim?

TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

❶ What date was "yom hashmini"?

❷ Which of Aharon's korbanot atoned for the golden calf?

❸ What korbanot did Aharon offer for the Jewish People?

❹ What was unique about the chatat offered during the induction of the Mishkan?

❺ When did Aharon bless the people with the birkat kohanim?

Answer

❶ 9:1 - First of Nissan. ❷ 9:2 - The calf offered as a korban chatat. ❸ 9:3:4 - A he-goat as chatat, a calf and a lamb for an olah, an ox and a ram for shela'mim, and a mincha. ❹ 9:11 - It's the only example of a chatat offered on the courtyard mizbe'ach that was burned. ❺ 9:22 - When he finished offering the korbanot, before descending from the mizbe'ach.

If you look in this week's Torah portion, Parshas Shemini, you find two lists of animals. One is the list of kosher animals that are permissible to eat, and the other is the list of non-kosher animals. Why are some foods forbidden to eat? They seem perfectly nutritious and appetizing. The Midrash Rabba, a commentary on the Torah written by our great Talmudic sages explains with a story. There were two patients: one was going to live, and the other was not. The one who was going to live, needed a special diet to nurse him back to health. The other had no hope, so there was no point restricting his diet.

Chaim, that's just like the two conversations we overheard here in the hospital today.

Exactly my point, Avi. The Torah puts us on a special diet called "Kashrus". It is for our own benefit, to insure a long and productive physical and spiritual life. WE'RE GOING TO

LIVE! However, we have to follow the diet, to guard our health.

You know what they say, Chaim. "You are what you eat." Eating kosher is a must for those who strive to learn Torah and keep mitzvos.

Avi, all of this talk about food is making me hungry.

Me too, Chaim. Let's go home and eat a good lunch so we can have more energy to do more mitzvos.

"Bi-te-avon", Avi.

What does that mean, Chaim?

Have a good appetite.



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