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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

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EDUCATION

Have you ever felt in an awkward situation where you really want to let your feelings be known, but it's been hard to portray them well?

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However in a generation that has grown up with communication as key, we seem to be lacking the most important factor – communicating with our children.

Many people struggle with the generation gap between parents and children. Indeed, parents and children are from different generations and have grown up with different circumstances. How do they communicate? What common ground do they have?

Children can be great fun. They are innocent and inquisitive of our lifestyles, they show great potential in their intelligence and it is up to us to utilise that potential and cultivate it.

Our Parasha lends insight. Hashem relates to Moshe that the time has come to build the Mishkan – the temple in the wilderness. The Mishkan is to be built in splendour together with

its vessels. One vessel stands out - the Aron – the Holy Ark. This was the place that harboured the Luchot. It was the place that Hashem's voice would emanate from and communicate to Moshe and Am Yisrael. The Aron represented the Torah which it housed, and was the only vessel towards which every member of the Jewish people made a direct contribution. This symbolised the necessity for everyone to participate in Torah study.

Upon the Aron rested the Kaporet - a magnificent covering out of which the golden Keruvim (Cherubs) were fashioned. What were these Keruvim? (25:17-22)

Rashi (25:18) explains these were (angelic) figures with a face of a baby. What is the significance of these figures?

Rabbi Zev Wolf Frank in Toldot Zev gives an awesome insight. The Gemara states (Talmud Shabbat 119b), "If not for the vapour of the mouth of the little children who pray and learn Torah; the world would not continue to exist."

Furthermore it states (Kallah Rabati 2), "Each day an angel comes before Hashem and requests to destroy the world. But when Hashem sees the children in the Batei Midrash learning and praying, His din is converted to mercy and He sends the angel away empty handed."

It is the Torah and Tefillah of the little children, pure in heart and spirit, which keeps the world from reverting to chaos.

The Aron represented the Torah. Yet on top of the Aron, the Keruvim were placed. This represented that the children's Torah is above all and should remain our focus.

Rabbi Frank continues; we see that the Kaporet (cover to the Aron) which encompassed the Keruvim was made in one go. The bottom part was not made first and then fixed to the Keruvim; rather the base, as well as the Keruvim were made together. Why? ►

3rd ADAR I 5779

SHABBAT BEGINS: 4:44 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 5:56 PM

> MAZAL TOV

Udi Revah & Eli Myers
on their engagement

Shoshana & Rabbi Adam Mather
on the birth of the baby boy

Rivka & Michael Benguigui
on the birth of their baby girl

Maurice Abraham & Leora Aharon
on their upcoming wedding

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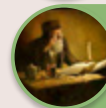
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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This symbolises an essential feature in education. When it comes to teaching our children Torah, there should be no gap. There must be continuation.

The Gemara Succot (42a) asks, "When is a father obligated to teach his son Torah?" The Gemara answers, "as soon as the child begins to speak, the father should teach him the verse; Torah Tziva Lanu Moshe, Morasha Kehillat Yaakov - Moshe commanded us the Torah, the inheritance of the congregation of Yakov, and also the first verse of the Shema."

Rabbi Frank explains that we do not wait to teach our child Torah. As soon as they are able to speak, we immediately permeate them with the words of Torah.

This is the significance of the Kaporet being carved out in one go. The Keruvim and the base are all one - there is immediate continuation and flow; as soon as the child is ready to speak, they are taught Torah.

There is a fascinating idea brought down by the Rama (Rav Moshe Iserles). He asks when does a child qualify Olam Haba? He quotes a Midrash that says as soon as a child says Amen he merits Olam Haba.

This is where the custom came from to get little children to say Amen as soon as possible. One Amen gets a child into OLAM HABA! Eternal reward for such a simple yet potent act.

Rabbi Eliyahu HaCohen writes a similar idea. In the Megilla of Purim, it says Vayehi Omen et Hadassah, referring to the fact that Esther had no parents, her uncle Mordechai raised her and a miracle happened and he was able to nurse her. Rabbi Eliyahu explains Vayehi Omen also means Vayehi Amen; that he trained her to say Amen.

We find the same idea with David HaMelech. In Tehilim he states Lulay He'amanti Lerot Btuv Hashem Be'erezt Chayim. David HaMelech says that the Zechut to get him to Eretz Chayim - the everlasting world is Lulay He'amanti; I was trained to say Amen as a child.

Communicating with the younger generation is difficult. Yet we have been given the most powerful gift by Hashem that enables us to continue and communicate - the Torah. Our Torah is eternal and when learnt and taught with fervour can instil a child with a lifetime of wisdom and merit.

When parents and children sit down to learn together they are bringing G-d into their relationship, which helps strengthen the unity and bond between them. This bond is not only between parents and their children, but spans generations going all the way back to Mount Sinai.

When we are learning we are linking up with all of the generations that have come before us. We are not just learning on our own, or strengthening a bond between parents and children; we are linking ourselves back in time, all the way back to Mount Sinai.

Let us cherish this powerful experience and communicate Hashem's gift to our children and all future generations.

■ **Shabbat Shalom**

RABBI ELCHONON FELDMAN - RABBI OF BUSHEY UNITED SYNAGOGUE



BEING A GIVER IS ABOUT FULFILLING WHAT IS NEEDED

Oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the incense (Shemos 25:6)

Building upon Rashi's commentary of this pasuk the Maharal in his sefer Gur Aryeh is puzzled with the Torah's description of the oil and spices donations to the mishkan. Identifies the Maharal that when it came to all of the other offerings towards the building of the mishkan, there was no explicit mention of the purpose for which the donation would be utilized. It doesn't for example say where the gold or silver specifically would be used. Yet when it comes to this pasuk we are informed of the offerings destination. The Torah writes 'Oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the incense (Shemos 25:6)'. Could this mean that for these two items an exception was made and the contributor would have

advanced knowledge towards what he was bestowing? The Maharal explains that Rashi informs us otherwise. Only Betzalel the great constructor of the mishkan was given the Divine wisdom to know which person's contribution should go towards which aspect of the mishkan project. The copper kiyor ablution laver, whose materials exclusively came from the donated cosmetic mirrors of the Bnos Yisrael was a good illustration of this. Rather the commentaries elucidate that further details offered by the pasuk were simply to understand the quality of what was donated, as both oil and spices have degrees of worth, but not that what was offered could be in some way directed.

This principle of offering our resources, time, money and abilities, unconditionally towards where Hashem wants them to be directed, runs counterintuitive to society's approach to giving. Today, it is certainly accepted practice, that it is the benefactor who chooses, not only the cause but even which aspect of the cause, he wishes to support in some meaningful way. The Torah is teaching us, through the paradigm of the mishkan's construction, that this is the

incorrect approach to giving. True nedivus lev, heartfelt philanthropy, we see from here, is about giving of oneself unconditionally with the open hearted intention of creating more emanation of Hashem's glory in the world. How this will happen ultimately is beyond the ken of man and should, in our humility, be recognized as such. It is well-known that when Rabbi Chaim Volozhiner first approached his Rebbi, the Vilna Gaon, about his plan to open the first yeshiva as we know it, the Gaon did not grant his approval. It wasn't until he came back a second time, much later demonstrating that his intentions were purely for the sake of Heaven and not for personal accomplishment, that the Gaon gave his blessings to revolutionize Torah study through the opening of the Volozhiner Yeshiva. True dedication to kavod shamayim and increasing Hashem's presence in the world, we learn from the building of the mishkan, is the only guaranteed formula to determine our donations will end up doing the utmost good and is how we should be giving.

■ **Shabbat shalom**

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI AVRAHAM YEHOSHUA HESCHEL · “THE KAPISCHNITZER REBBE”

On Monday the 16th of Tammuz 5727 (1967), Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel, the Kapischnitzer Rebbe, suddenly passed away. The sad news quickly spread, and thousands rushed to his Beit Midrash in Borough Park, Brooklyn. The greatest Rabbis and Rebbes, Roshei Yeshiva and their students, and Jews of every type walked with head lowered behind his casket and accompanied it in silence on the way to his final resting place in Jerusalem.

Who was this Rabbi, who was esteemed and praised to the heavens by everyone? He was obviously very well known and loved by all segments of the population, yet in reality he was also hidden – well known and hidden at the same time.

Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was born in 5648 (1888) to the Rebbe of Kapischnitz, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir, in the town of Husiatyn, a small city in Galicia by the Zabrotz River, which then separated Austria from Russia.

When the First World War erupted the Rebbe of Kapischnitz, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir, fled with his family to Vienna, the capital of Austria. Vienna was then filled with Jewish refugees fleeing Russia, many of whom suffered from hunger and poverty. Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua worked with great devotion to help each and every one of them, and he became a living legend to all.

In 5699 (1939), Rabbi Yehoshua Heschel left for America and settled in a suburb of New York City.

Not long afterwards, his home became a center to which everyone turned. All Jews who had a problem addressed themselves to the Kapischnitzer Rebbe, spilling out the bitterness of their hearts to him. The Rebbe, kindhearted and filled with mercy and pity, would console and help them with all his might.

Everything about his appearance reflected a special kind of nobility, with royal mannerisms after the traditional style of Rozhin. At the same time, however, he was friendly to every Jew who entered into contact with him.

The Kapischnitzer Rebbe performed his community work without asking for anything in return. He was always standing in the wings, and his name did not appear in public. He held no official position whatsoever, and throughout his life he fled from honor. Everyone knew, however, that he played a part in everything that concerned the community, and many important institutions were established through his initiatives.

When the Chinuch Atzmai (“independent education”) program was being organized and found itself in need of funds, the Kapischnitzer Rebbe invested all his energies and efforts into this sacred task. Without taking his own fragile health or advanced age into account, he devoted himself with superhuman force to the task of establishing schools in Eretz Israel that were in complete conformity to the requirements of the Torah.

Once in a conference held for Chinuch Atzmai, the participants did not give as much as was asked of them,

and so the Rebbe got up and with a tear-filled voice addressed his listeners: “Listen, my dear friends. You are still young, but I am old and sense that my end is near. What will I say on the Day of Judgment, when I will be asked what I did for Chinuch Atzmai? We have an opportunity to save so many children and have them walk in the ways of Torah and tradition!” He sobbed greatly as he spoke, and his words – which emanated from his pure heart – entered the hearts of his listeners, and there and then a great sum of money was collected.

His devotion to the construction of mikvaot holds a place apart. He expended all his money for constructing houses for purification, especially in new settlements in Eretz Israel, whose residents were poor and lacked the means to build a mikveh. He knew no rest before finding funds when necessary, and he built new mikvaot in all corners of the Holy Land.

Because of his community work, be it for Chinuch Atzmai or for mikvaot, the Rebbe often traveled to Eretz Israel. There many people came to see him for advice and assistance.

Once while he was in Eretz Israel, a Jew came to him and complained about his bitter fate, and while recounting his story he mentioned in passing to the Rebbe that he didn’t even have a hat for Shabbat. The Rebbe spoke to him gently as he consoled him, encouraging him not to lose hope. All while speaking to him, the Rebbe also gave him his new felt hat, but the man refused to take it. The Rebbe then showed him that he had two hats, but the man felt that the Rebbe was giving him his new one while keeping the old one for himself. He therefore asked the Rebbe to give him his old hat. The Rebbe kissed him and said, “Listen my son. I have two hats: One for this world and one for the World to Come. The hat that I’m giving you is the one for the World to Come. Do you want to be wearing an old hat in the World to Come?”

One day a fire broke out in one of the yeshivot in town, and a place for Torah study was therefore needed. A Rav from the fire-damaged yeshiva came to ask him for permission to study with his students in his yeshiva, and upon hearing his request the Rebbe became upset and said, almost in anger: “Is it to me that you are asking for permission? Does the Beit Midrash belong to me? On the contrary, it’s yours to do whatever you like. I ask you only one thing: Allow me the right to use it as well.”

He put great effort into having people observe Shabbat, personally going through the streets of New York to beg merchants to close their shops on Shabbat. He spoke gently, with an accent of nobility, and his words had a great effect. He always told Jews going outside to warn Sabbath desecrators to close their shops, but not to yell or get angry with them. Rather, they were to speak gently and utter words from the heart. Whenever a group was formed to observe Shabbat in various areas of town, he supported it both financially and with his advice. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

DOES THE OFFICIATING RABBI DRINK THE WINE UNDER THE HUPA?

The Hupa ceremony begins with the Rabbi reciting the Beracha of “Boreh Peri Ha’gefen” over a cup of wine, followed by the Birkat Erusin. He then gives the cup to the groom to sip, and then the bride is given the cup to sip. Must the Rabbi also sip some of the wine, or does it suffice for the bride and groom to sip?

This question was addressed by the Rambam (Rabbi Moshe Maimonides, Spain-Egypt, 1135-1204), in one of his responsa (Pe’er Ha’dor). He writes that the Rabbi must, in fact, take a sip of the wine, and if he does not, then his Beracha is considered a Beracha Le’batala (a Beracha recited in vain). The reason, the Rambam explains, is that the recitation of Birkat Erusin constitutes a Minhag (accepted custom), and not an outright obligation. This Beracha thus differs from Kiddush and Habdala, which are also Berachot recited over wine. The person who recites Kiddush and Habdala may have somebody else drink without drinking himself, since these Berachot are required according to Halacha. When the Beracha is obligatory, one can recite the Beracha of “Ha’gefen” and the obligatory Beracha for somebody else, who may then drink the wine. Indeed, Hacham Baruch Ben-Haim zt”l would give the Habdala cup to somebody else to drink after he recited Habdala. But when the Beracha is not obligatory, the person who recites the Beracha with “Ha’gefen” must drink the wine.

It is thus customary for the Rabbi to take a sip of the wine over which he recites the Birkat Erusin. In order not to drink directly from the cup that he will then give to the bride and groom, the Rabbi generally spills a few drops onto his finger and then sips it that way, thereby fulfilling the Halacha without drinking directly from the cup.

This Halacha does not apply to the second cup of wine used at a Hupa, over which the seven Berachot are recited at the end of the ceremony. The one who recites “Ha’gefen” over this cup does not have to sip from the wine, since these Berachot are, indeed, obligatory, and it is therefore sufficient for the bride and groom to drink some of the wine.

Summary: After the Rabbi recites Birkat Erusin at a wedding, he sips a bit of the wine and then gives the cup to the bride and groom. Regarding the second cup at the Hupa, over which the seven Berachot are recited, only the bride and groom need to drink from the cup. ■

Kids Time



TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ What did the faces of the keruvim resemble?
- ❷ On what day of the week was the lechem hapanim baked?
- ❸ What does miksha mean?
- ❹ What was the purpose of the menorah's gevi'im (cups)?
- ❺ How did Moshe know the shape of the menorah?

Answer: ❶ 25:18 - The faces of children. ❷ 25:29 - Friday. ❸ 25:31 - Hammered. ❹ 25:31 - Purely ornamental. ❺ 25:40 - Hashem showed Moshe a menorah of fire.

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