

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This week's Parasha Sheet is sponsored Lehashtlachat Harav Yitzckak Ben Moshe Hacohen veChol Mishpachto

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



### ARE YOU WISE?!

A Jew was riding on a train travelling through Russia. Seated next to him was a soldier of the Czar quietly boiling and seething with deep hatred toward the Jew. In one moment he let loose his anger to the Jew who, unaware of the danger, was staring into one of his holy books. He barked, "What makes you people so smart?"

The Jew was startled. He realized his life was at risk and he had better give the correct answer. Without hesitation, with help from heaven, he responded with perfect calm, one word - "Herring!" (That little bony fish) The soldier sternly inquired, "Do you have any?" The Jew acknowledged that he had a few pieces remaining which the soldier demanded with authority should be handed over to him.

Taking a big risk, the Jew refused and insisted he be compensated 20 Rubbles for the now desirous herring. The soldier hurriedly threw the money at him and took hold of the prize. In a one gulp, like a hungry bear, he swallowed the whole lot of them. After wiping his mouth brutishly he turned to the Jew, who had calmly returned to his books, and protested, "20 Rubbles for those few pieces of fish?! Where we are going to in Moscow I can get five times that amount for the same price!" At that point the Jew turned to him with a full face and declared, "You see, it's starting to work already!"

Am Yisrael are known as a wise nation. The Torah states (Devarim 4:6) "Therefore be careful to observe them (Torah); for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'"

What makes us such a wise nation?

The Torah hints to the secret in the above mentioned verse.

We are nation that is careful to observe - Ushmartem VaAsitem - we guard and perform. Rashi explains the difference between guarding and performing. Guarding is the learning Torah aspect, performing is the action of the Mitzvot. We learn and we put into practice what we learn. This enables us to internalise our Torah.

The Torah continues, it is not just those Mitzvot that we understand the meaning of that we perform, rather it is also the Chukim - statutes, in which we have no real understanding of, that enhances our wisdom and standing amongst the nations.

The story is told of an ignorant villager that used to live on his own. One day he had a yearning for fish. He made his way to the fishmonger and asked for the tastiest fish. Whilst paying for the fish, he asked the fishmonger for the best recipe that would bring out the delicious flavour of the fish. The fishmonger wrote a list of instructions including how to salt the fish, what herbs to put, what temperature to heat it at, and for how long. The man paid, put the recipe in his pocket and went happily home. He arrived home, placed the fish on the table, and got ready preparing the herbs. He was shocked to notice a cat, swoop for the fish on the table, and yank it away with his teeth biting the fish in his mouth, cunningly escaping through the window.

The man shook his head towards the cat, and with a smile on his face, said "Silly Cat, what good will the fish be to you, - I have the recipe!" ▶

## > MAZAL TOV TO

Jenny and Jacob Morrison Wood  
on the birth of a baby boy

Jonny and Donna Tanne  
on the birth of their son Yaakov David

**THE WEEKLY QUOTE**  
"The constant question we must be asking ourselves is, How can i now fulfill the will of my creator?"

## > UPCOMING EVENTS

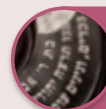
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND STUDENTS  
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### DVAR TORAH

Where's My Reward?  
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

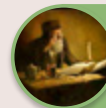
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The Taamei (reasons) Hamitsvot are tastes to the mitzvah. They give taste to the mitzvah, but the real Mitzva exists whether the taste is there or not.

Our Sages state that although we should endeavour to learn Torah and understand the Mitzvot, there are plenty of Mitzvot that are known as Chukim – they were given to us, and we should perform them even without fully understanding them. The fact that Hashem commanded us to do these Mitzvot, should be enough of a reason to perform them.

When the nations of the world observe our heritage, and they see how we have stood through the waves of history with our traditions; how we stand strong in the performance of Mitzvot that we don't even understand, then they exclaim "This great nation is a wise and understanding people."

Let us ensure we pass the mantle down through the generations, let us strengthen in our service of

Hashem, through Mitzvot and Chukim and may we all be Zoche to the Wisdom of Hashem. Amen.

Rabbi Shaul Yonatan Tawil

**"Allow me now to cross over and see the good Land that is on the other side of the Jordan, this good mountain and the Lebanon." (3:25)**

This good mountain – Jerusalem, And the Lebanon – The Holy Temple – Rashi

The Holy Temple was called Lebanon, which derives from the word, lavan [white], for through its remarkable powers of atonement, all our sins are whitened. – Sifri

Allow me now to cross over – Moses was not thinking about his own welfare when making this request. Rather, he feared that whoever would lead them into the Land would not complete the task and leave them at risk of being exiled eventually. Thus he requested,

"Allow me to lead the people into the Land, for I will not rest until every last of its current inhabitants are driven out, lest they later entice the Jews to sin and cause them to be exiled from the Land." His request was denied and his prediction proved prescient. – Sforno

If he requested to "cross over," wouldn't that automatically imply that he would "see the good Land"? R' Menachem Mendel of Kotzk explained that many people merit to spend time in Israel, but few of them see only the good of the Land. Instead, they allow themselves to be sidetracked by the hardships and struggle that so often accompany one's existence in the Land. Moses promised G-d that if he were allowed to enter the Land, he would only see "the good of the Land," and not focus on its less savory aspects. ■

## GUEST WRITER - DVAR TORAH

This week's Haftorah begins with the words Nachamu Nachamu Ami, which means that Hashem will console us, twice.

שמחינו כימות עניתנו שנות ראינו רעה  
(Tehilim 90:15)

We plead with the Shechino that we should merit to rejoice in our salvation, equal to the amount of suffering we endured...

How is this possible?

The Mashgiach of Lomza Yeshiva, Reb Moshe Rosenstien explained beautifully.

When a father rebukes his child, the child is sad. Even later, when the child apologises and is comforted by his father, the earlier sadness can't be undone.

All they can look forward to is a renewed and stronger relationship, but the past remains.

However, HKB"H is the כל יכול and we ask for wonders. We ask and plead that the past should be undone and that we should have double comfort.

Not only the future, even the past.

נחמה בכפלים

Reb Binyomin, the Magid from Radin, once told over the following parable to the Chofetz Chaim zatzal.

It was a particularly cold Russian winter and there was a group of businessmen who needed to travel from Petersburg to Odessa.

This journey would take approximately 72 hours in the freezing temperatures. They hired a driver who led them on an ice sledge which was very much out in the open and unprotected from the elements.

As such the travellers came prepared. Armed with furs to cover themselves, their goods and a bottle of alcohol to warm their bones, they set out late one night.

As nightfall fell, they kept themselves warm by talking, singing, sharing words of Torah and drinking their beverages.

As the hours passed by, the men fell into a restless sleep and slept throughout the short Russian day. When they awoke they saw the light of the moon high above them, not realising that it was the next evening.

After more talk, more singing and more drinking, they slept again and missed seeing the short hours of the day.

As this pattern continued, one passenger called to the driver and queried as to what part of the world they were in, as there was no day at all.

The driver dutifully replied that had been daylight hours, but unfortunately the men had slept through them, thereby only seeing the dark skies – but that didn't mean there wasn't any sunlight.

It was there, but they hadn't seen it. They only saw darkness.

שומר מה מלילה, שומר מה מלילי  
(Isaiah 21)

We ask HKB"H, the Shomer, "what's with this endless night?"

And HKB"H replies לילה וגם לילה, there has been day as well as night. We missed it.

We ask Hashem to reveal to us, that even though we have suffered so much in our Golus, we should be zoicheh to see how everything that happened was actually for our good, even when we didn't see it.

We ask Hashem, that not only should our future be bright, but we also ask HKB"H to undo the suffering, which only He can do.

■ נחמו נחמו עמי

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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. ■



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# HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

## DOES THE BERACHA HAGEFEN COVER ALL BEVERAGES

The Halacha states that the Beracha of Hagefen, recited on wine or grape juice, exempts all other beverages that one is drinking. Just as Hamosi covers all foods, Hagefen covers all beverages.

However, there is a disagreement how much wine must be consumed in order for the Beracha of Hagefen to exempt the other beverages. Some hold that even a minute amount of wine empowers the Beracha to include everything. Others hold that one must drink a "Revi'it" (86 cc) for the Beracha to exempt other drinks. The Halacha Berura explains that in a case of doubt or disagreement, the Halacha is in accordance with the lenient position. Therefore, if one did not drink a "Revi'it" of wine, he should not recite a separate Beracha of Shehakol on the other drinks. However, one should avoid this debacle in the first place by drinking a "Revi'it."

There is an additional Halacha that mandates reciting Berachot in the proper sequence. The more specific Beracha precedes the more general Beracha. For example, Ha'etz and Ha'adama precede Shehakol.

Based on these two Halachot, there seems to be a problem with the common practice at a Shul Kiddush. In some communities, the Rabbi makes Kiddush and the congregation stands around holding little cups of wine. Based on the Rabbi's Beracha they (legitimately) drink their wine. However, they drank less than a Revi'it, and therefore, if they want to drink another beverage, they have put themselves into a dilemma whether the Hagefen exempted the Beracha of Shehakol on the other beverages. The fact that the rabbi drank a Revi'it does not help them.

In some places, people hold little glasses of liquor and fulfil Kiddush by listening to the Rabbi make Kiddush on wine. After answering Amen, they say

a Shehakol on the liquor. This is problematic since they have deviated from the proper sequence of Berachot. How can they say Shehakol before making the more specific Berachot on the other food they intend to eat at the Kiddush? The Shehakol they made was not the Misva of Kiddush; they fulfilled Kiddush with the Rabbi.

Therefore, the best practice at a Kiddush is to listen to the Rabbi's Kiddush, without holding a little glass of wine or liquor. It is perfectly acceptable to fulfil the Misva in this way, since there is no need to drink from personal glasses when hearing Kiddush. This way, Halachic uncertainty and compromise are avoided.

**SUMMARY :** One should avoid drinking less than a Revi'it of wine if he then intends to drink other beverages. Therefore, at a Shul Kiddush, it is best to listen to the Rabbi's Kiddush without holding little glasses of wine or liquor. ■

## Kid's Time



## TEST YOURSELF - Q&A



- ❶ "And I prayed to Hashem at that time." Why "at that time"?
- ❷ What characteristic trait is represented by Hashem's "strong hand"?
- ❸ What is ha'levanon?
- ❹ What did Hashem tell Yehoshua after the battle of Ai?
- ❺ Where did the Jewish People first receive the command to honor parents?

### Answer

❶ 3:23 - Defeating Sichon and Og, whose lands were part of Eretz Canaan, Moshe thought perhaps Hashem had annulled the vow against his entering the Land. ❷ 3:24 - His willingness to forgive. ❸ 3:25 - Ha'levanon means the Beit Hamikdash, which "whitens" (lavan), i.e., atones for, the Jewish People. ❹ 3:28 - Yehoshua must lead the army into battle. ❺ 5:16 - At Marah. (Shmot 15:25).

## RIDDLE

**A rich man has three sons. When he died, he willed his 17 camels to the sons, to be divided as follows: The first son gets half of the camels. The second son gets 1/3 of the camels. The third son gets 1/9 of the the camels. The sons are sitting around trying to figure out how this can possibly be done, when a very old wise man rides by. They stop and ask him to help them solve their problem.**

### Answer

The old man temporarily added his camel to the 17, making a total of 18 camels  $\frac{1}{2} = 9$ ;  $\frac{1}{3} = 6$ ;  $\frac{1}{9} = 2$ , a total of 17. He then took his camel back and rode away.