

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



PARASHA INSIGHTS

In 2015 Johnny Strange lived up to his last name – entering the record books for pulling a huge aeroplane with his ears! Johnny, 26 at the time, used chains through pierced holes in his ears to drag a Cessna 172-P weighing 677.8kg for 20.4 metres at North Weald Airfield, Essex.

Although this task is amazing and clearly impossible for most of us, there is an eventual limit as to how much we can pull with our body force.

Or is there?

Have you ever seen a skyscraper being built? Massive machines are brought in together with cranes and plenty of skilled workers. When there is a large steel beam that needs to be put in place the crane lifts up the beam with ease towards the correct position.

Now for man's input! The crane will only be able to carry it so far and without the workers on the ground to position it, the act is basically worthless. Of course the crane is moving and holding the main weight and the workers are just positioning it, nevertheless it is as if they have moved that beam themselves to the correct position.

Similarly in life we face many daily challenges. At times they seem impossible to accomplish. The weight is too much for us. When confronting our evil inclination we look up and see a massive mountain. It's difficult to manoeuvre around such great opposition.

G-d Almighty has given us the secret. We make our effort, we are on the building site waiting for the plank to come and G-d will bring the large plank towards us; all we need to do is be there, ready to help position it.

The Midrash Shir Hashirim (5:2) says: "Open up for me an opening like the eye of a needle and in turn I will enlarge it to be an opening through which wagons can enter." G-d just needs an opening as big as an eye of the needle. If you take the initiative and allow G-d to enter into your life through a tiny hole, you'll see exponentially greater results.

When working together as a team man can achieve many accomplishments. When working with G-d – there are no limits. The results are clear, but getting there is the difficult task. Only if you are prepared to work will you receive those 'impossible' grades.

A Rabbi once approached a student he hadn't seen in years. "It's been so long. How are you? How's your learning going?" The student replied that all was well, but that his learning had taken a back stage. "Why don't you come and learn chavruta – one on one. I can arrange to have someone sit down together with you and learn?" The student looked back at the Rabbi and said, "Rabbi I already have a chavruta". The Rabbi was impressed. "Who is your chavruta?" he asked. The student gazed up at the Rabbi and without hesitation said, "He is always on time, he never misses an opportunity and makes everything seem so great when he is around – it's the Yetser Hara (evil inclination)!"

The Rabbi understood and replied. "If you really wanted to learn with an angel, you should have started with the Yetser Hatov – the good inclination, that's a real partner, and that's the only way you can grow!"

It is for this reason that we are told that the most efficient way of learning Torah is with a Chavruta – learning partner.

This has been the hallmark of traditional Jewish learning throughout the ages. Together the pair confront difficult scripts. Two minds applied to a problem are almost always better than one. ►

> MAZAL TOV TO

Michael Benouaich & Nina Robinson
on their wedding.



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"Enjoy life today, yesterday is gone and tomorrow may never come."

> UPCOMING EVENTS

- FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER AT HGSS
16TH MARCH
- YMC FIRST AID COURSE
21ST MARCH



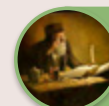
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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Each checks and corrects the misconceptions of the other, questioning and sharpening the other's ideas, while the necessity of articulating one's thoughts to another person brings greater clarity than learning alone. Indeed, the Gemara goes so far as to say that one who learns Torah alone becomes stupid! (Berachot 63a)

Chavruta comes from the Hebrew word meaning, simply, "friend." The importance of companionship is stated in Pirkei Avot: "Make for yourself a teacher, acquire for yourself a friend, and judge every person favourably."

In this week's Parasha we are taught the importance of a 'Chavruta', even for a great leader.

The Parasha summarizes the building of the Mishkan and the making of the Priestly vestments under the direction of Betzalel and his "partners." The two primary architects were Betzalel and Aholiav.

The Midrash notes that the origins of these two individuals were disparate - by design. Betzalel descended from Shevet Yehudah, the tribe of monarchy, dignity and power whilst Aholiav was a descendent of Shevet Dan, the lowliest of the tribes.

In a number of places, the Torah describes Betzalel's genius and unusual spiritual distinction. He was gifted with a G-dly spirit, wisdom and insight. He possessed a degree of wisdom similar to that with which Hashem created the world. Indeed, Betzalel was Divinely inspired to perform the task of supervising the building of an abode for Hashem's Presence in this world. Nevertheless it was necessary that Betzalel to have a specific partner.

Rabbi Chaim Zaitchik, Z'l, explains that the litmus test for successful leadership is one's ability to lead despite having an accomplice working together with him. Some people have difficulty working with others. Already at the outset when creating the world G-d taught us the important lesson of including others in our decision. The

Torah relates "The Almighty said, "Let us make Adam (man) in our image and our likeness." (Bereishit 1:26)

Why did G-d say, "Let us make man"? To whom did He make this statement, and why? In His infinite humility, G-d consulted His Heavenly Court before creating man. G-d also included the angels to teach humility and the importance of bringing others into the decision process, even if at the end of the day it is you that will be running the show.

Betzalel, from the 'highest' tribe, was assigned a partner from the 'lowest' tribe to show that G-d does not desire leaders with personal egos but that He desires leaders who include, unite and partner with their fellow brothers.

Moving hundreds of kilograms with an ear might not be possible for most of us, but through a true partnership involving others and the Almighty, even the sky is not the limit. ■ **Shabbat Shalom**

AHARON GABAY - KOLLEL ZICHRON CHANA VERACHEL

DVAR
TORAH



THE ETERNAL GIFT

"Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have sanctity, a day of complete rest to Hashem". This is the commandment at the core of Am Yisrael, the backbone of our religion, the reason we all sit around our tables once a week. Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, better known as the Chafetz Chaim says that the 248 positive Mitzvot that we are commanded, correspond to the 248 limbs in our body, to the extent that just like there are vital organs, there are also vital Mitzvot. One of these is Shabbat. But what is it that makes Shabbat so significant? What is it that makes us halt from all our mundane lives into a day of sanctity.

There once was an inventor who invited everyone to see his new machine that he was ready to launch. Hundreds of people gathered to see the new invention anxious to see what

it does. When all the audience arrived, the inventor proceeded to switch the machine on. Lights began to flash and there was buzzing as a robotic arm protruded from the machine and reached over towards a big red button and pressed it firmly, and then returned the hand back to where it came from. One of the audience called out "what does the red button do?" The inventor replied with delight on his face "it turns the machine off."

We go through our lives living day in day out: working, eating, sleeping, investing in time and money; but for what? Is it merely just to get through to next day until we turn ourselves off?

Every day we say the Bracha "you planted into us a life of eternity". The Chafetz Chaim explains that since our body is physical and finite the only thing that can satiate it, is things that are physical and finite: food, drink, air. Our soul, on the other hand, is spiritual and eternal, therefore requires something spiritual and eternal to be satiated. So Hashem handed us the Torah and Mitzvot which are an endless opportunity for anyone to partake in a life full of wonders and happiness. However, the reward can only be justified in a spiritual world

of eternity. So in our finite world, we work, eat, sleep and invest. A Promise is a Promise

time and money to build on ourselves and work to change who we are so that when we get to the eternal world, we can bathe in its glory.

"Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have sanctity, a day of complete rest to Hashem. The six days that we work are a build up to the seventh day, in contrast to the build up of our finite lives to the eternal world. Shabbat acts as a weekly reminder of the world to come. It is brought down in Halacha that it's a mitzvah to bathe, cut nails, trim our hair and change all clothing in honour of Shabbat. We are supposed to feel the sensation of transition from one stage to another. The Medrash says that Shabbat was given as an 'example' of the next world. An example of purpose. An example of where we are coming from. An example of where we are heading to. ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI AKIVA

Rabbi Akiva was among the greatest of the great, as it is written, "Are you like Akiva ben Yosef, whose renown fills the entire world?" It was thus that one day, Rabbi Dosa ben Hyrcanus, whose eyesight had dimmed though age, called out to the great man (whose precept we present today in order to comment on it). He was the first that we know of who endeavored to systematically classify the immense knowledge base that is the Oral Law. It is to him that we owe the first manuscript of the Mishnah, and it is to him that we may attribute Tosefta, Sifre, Sifra, and the historical work Seder Olam Rabba.

Just as important as his scholarship was his teaching abilities, as well as his work for the good of the community. His piety, fear of sin, love of G-d, and submission to the Divine Will always came to the fore in both major and minor things.

His life's destiny was incredible. His father was an idolater who had converted to Judaism. The son grew up in ignorance and earned a living in keeping sheep, until eventually a young noble woman won him over to Torah study. He left his father's home to follow his greatly loved wife, yet in poverty and penury.

There was perhaps never a man who had to fight and battle to acquire knowledge as much as Rabbi Akiva did. Although no longer young, he had to begin by the most rudimentary of lessons, learning how to read and write at the same time as earning a living for his wife and children. No one ever had to show as much patience and perseverance as Rabbi Akiva. He learned for 16 years with his teachers, without ever speaking, until eventually he raised his voice to utter a decisive statement, finally triumphing over his own teacher.

Probably no other man was involved in such prodigious teaching activities as Rabbi Akiva. Around him were 24,000 followers, men

young and old that he would instruct in the fields. Perhaps no other man lived through such terrible events as Rabbi Akiva. His disciples were taken before his very eyes, the man that he had thought was the Messiah (Bar Kochva) succumbed in combat to the Romans, and Israel suffered a defeat the likes of which it had never previously undergone, nor undergone since. All seemed lost, but Rabbi Akiva didn't lose his faith in G-d. This confidence gave him the courage to begin his teaching activities anew, at an advanced age, and to develop men who would become the pillars of Judaism. His work, blessed by G-d, nevertheless aroused the anger of the Romans. He was thrown into prison and gave his life for the sanctification of the Divine Name. When he was being executed by the most horrific means of torture, he proclaimed the unity of G-d and praised his Creator for his being able to give witness, through his death, to his infinite love for the Master of the world.

The precept that the great Sage left us (See Perkei Avoth, The Rights of Man, above) forms the beginning of a series of statements that gives us some perspective on the depth of his thought.

After the return of the captives from Babylon, when the Men of the Great Assembly founded a new Jewish state, they uttered a profound statement: "Make a fence around the Torah" (Perkei Avoth 1:1). The Torah resembles an exquisite garden where the most precious trees, the most useful plants, and the most beautiful flowers grow, thrive, and flourish. Tame and wild animals, wicked and dishonest men, and children and thoughtless people would quickly wreck the garden if a protective did not encircle it.

As he lay lifeless on the ground, bleeding from a thousand wounds, Rabbi Akiva revealed to our people that he was the man worthy of grabbing hold of the principle uttered by the Men of the Great Assembly. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

BORER: SELECTING CLOTHES IN A DARK ROOM

The Poskim deal with an interesting case of Borer, involving selecting clothes from a dark room on Shabbat. If a person has, for example, many pairs of dark colored socks-brown, black, navy etc.-and wants to select a certain color, his desired pair is not easily discernible in the dark. He must pick a random pair and hold it up to determine its color. One might argue that if he picked out the wrong color, then his selection constitutes removing P'solet (waste) from the mixture and would be a violation of Borer.

Rabbi Shlomo Miller, in his Sefer, Shabbat Shel Shlomo (p. 177), presents a number of rationales why this does not constitute Borer. First, Borer is only when one makes a Tikun of a mixture by removing definitive bad from definitive good. In this case, it is not clear that it is P'solet at the time that he removes it. He is removing it to find out which it is.

Moreover, if he would discover that it was the wrong pair, he should immediately throw it back in the drawer, which would clearly indicate that he did not perform a Tikun on the mixture. Therefore, although some Poskim argue, it is permitted to remove each pair one by one to discern whether it is the desired one, if he returns the undesired pair immediately back to the drawer.

SUMMARY

It is permitted to remove an item from a mixture to determine whether it is the desired item, if he returns it to the mixture immediately, in the event he discovers that it is not. ■

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TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ On which day did Moshe assemble the Jewish People?
- ❷ Why is the prohibition against doing work on Shabbat written prior to the instruction for building the Mishkan?
- ❸ Why does the Torah specify the particular prohibition of lighting a fire on Shabbat right after it had already noted the general prohibition of doing work on Shabbat?
- ❹ Why is the word Mishkan stated twice in verse 38:21?
- ❺ Why is the Mishkan called the "Mishkan of Testimony"?
- ❻ Who was appointed to carry the vessels of the Mishkan in the midbar?

Answer

① 35:1 - The day after Yom Kippur. ② 35:2 - To emphasize that the building of the Mishkan doesn't supersede the laws of Shabbat. ③ 35:3 - There are two opinions: One opinion is to teach that igniting a fire on Shabbat is punishable by lashes as opposed to other "melachot" which are punishable by death. The other opinion is to teach that violation of numerous "melachot" at one time requires a separate atonement for each violation. ④ 38:21 - To allude to the Beit Hamikdash that would twice be taken as a "mashkan" (pledge) for the sins of the Jewish People until the nation repents. ⑤ 38:21 - It was testimony for the Jewish People that Hashem forgave them for the golden calf and allowed His Shechina to dwell among them. ⑥ 38:21 - The Levim.



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