

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This weeks Parasha sheet is dedicated leilui nishmat Menashy ben Yehezkel Ezra z'l

לעלוי נשמת מנשה בן יחזקאל עזרא

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
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SHARE THE PAIN!

The Gemara Sotah (11a) tells us that Pharaoh had three advisers: Yitro, Iyov and Bilam. Pharaoh wished to decide how to deal with the Israelite "problem". He sought the opinion of each of his three advisers.

Bilam was an evil man and relished the prospect of eradicating the Jewish people. He advised Pharaoh to kill the male Israelites.

Iyov was opposed to any plan to destroy the Jewish nation. Rather than display his true feelings on the issue, he refrained from offering any opinion and he remained silent.

Yitro on the other hand, vocally rejected Pharaoh's idea of exterminating the Jewish people. Yitro believed it was wrong that these people should be made to suffer for no crime other than being Jewish. Yitro's loud protests angered Pharaoh and Yitro had to flee Egypt in order to save his life.

The Talmud continues by telling us that each of the three advisers were rewarded or punished according to his deed. Bilam was killed by the very people he sought to exterminate. Iyov, who remained silent in the face of Jewish oppression, was afflicted with a life of pain and suffering. Yitro, who fled because of his opposition, sacrificing his position of leadership and life of comfort and wealth in Egypt, eventually became the father-in-law of Moshe and his descendants merited serving as prominent judicial leaders in the Sanhedrin.

Hashem dealt Mida Keneged Mida - measure for measure with all three of them.

On retrospection one can understand both Yitro and Bilam's reward and punishment, yet it is difficult to comprehend why Iyov's punishment was so severe. In fact, even if Iyov had objected, Pharaoh would have still enacted his decree. Iyov's only sin was remaining silent. Why then did he have to suffer such a harsh life, where tragedy followed tragedy?

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot lists 48 ways to acquire Torah. We are taught for example that studying, listening and minimising one's sleep are all ways of acquiring the Torah.

One way out of the 48 seems to stand out. The 39th way is - Nosei Be'ol Chaveiro - participating in the burden of one's fellow. Why should participating in the burden of one's fellow enable us to acquire Torah?

Hashem gave Am Yisrael the Torah as a nation. We were all there at Har Sinai, in fact all the future souls of our nation were there. The Torah was not handed down to one individual; rather it was handed to the nation. One of the intrinsic messages in this action was that in order to uphold and learn this Torah, there needs to be unity. One needs to see himself as part of the other person, one big family.

Choosing a leader isn't easy. When it came to redeeming Am Yisrael, Hashem chose Moshe from the tribe of Levi. What actions reveal Moshe's potential as a leader, and what was so special about the tribe of Levi?

When the Torah relates the lineage of Reuven, Shimon and Levi (Shemot 6:14-16), the Torah states the sons of Reuven... The sons of Shimon... yet when it comes to Levi, the Torah states «These were the NAMES of the sons of Levi...» Why does the Torah emphasize the names of Levi, whilst those of Reuven and Shimon are seemingly ignored?

The Sh'lah HaKadosh (Rav Yeshayahu HaLevi Horowitz) explained that in Egypt the nation were subjugated to servitude. The tribe of Levi however were not. One might have expected them to enjoy this status and "forget" about their brothers.

It is to this that the Torah emphasises the names of Levi's children. He named his sons after his brothers' bondage. «Gershon» -- for they were «Gerim» (aliens) in a foreign land. «Kehat» -- for they gritted their teeth in their suffering. «Merari» -- for their lives had been ►

” THE WEEKLY QUOTE
“Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, mighty as a lion and swift as a deer to carry out the will of Hashem in heaven.”

> UPCOMING EVENTS

• TU B'SHVAT COCKTAIL PARTY
30TH JAN (see more info online)

• GALA DINNER
26TH FEBRUARY (See more info online)



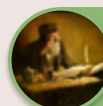
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Shemot - Please dispose of accordingly

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embittered (Maror). Levi wished to actively participate in his brothers' anguish, identifying with them in their times of stress and he named his sons accordingly. It is for this reason the Torah stresses their names.

Similarly, the Torah relates that "Moshe grew up, and he went out amongst his brethren and he saw their suffering" (Shemot 2:11).

Moshe was a prince in Pharaoh's palace. He had everything going for him. Yet he knew his identity and he yearned to relate to his people.

The Midrash comments that Moshe saw their suffering and cried: «How my heart goes out for your suffering! If only I could die for you, to spare you your suffering.» Moshe removed his princely garments and went out into the field to try to help his brethren make the bricks and mortar, just so that he could be a part of their pain.

According to the Midrash, Hashem said to him: «You left your comforts to participate in the pain of Israel as an equal; I will leave the company of the Higher Ones so that I may speak with you.»

It is for this reason that Moshe was chosen as a leader. A leader must be able to see beyond the physicality to delve deep and feel the emotional suffering as if that suffering is happening to him. Moshe felt it, he was distressed and he acted accordingly.

The Alter of Kelm comments that earlier we find the Torah relates that "Hashem Saw and Hashem Knew" (that the time had come for redemption) (Shemot 2:28).

Rashi, explaining this verse, uses virtually the same expression as he did concerning Moshe: «G-d placed his eye upon them and did not remove his heart from them.» The Alter of Kelm explains that G-d was inspired - as it were - by the actions of Moshe. It was Moshe's own similar actions that triggered G-d's looking at and taking to heart, so to speak, the troubles of the Jewish people.

Such is the power of Am Yisrael, when we are together, when we truly feel for our brothers and sisters; then Hashem's redemption is sure to follow.

We can now understand why Iyov suffered for his silence. Iyov was not sure what possible good would come out of him voicing resistance to Pharaoh's evil edict. He

reckoned it would not change anything. Even if Pharaoh would not change the edict, he still should have voiced his opinion. When Iyov personally suffered, then he did not remain silent, rather he raised his voice beseeching G-d.

Thus Iyov's punishment stirred him to react in a manner that in turn demonstrated the error of his failure to raise his voice in protest against Pharaoh's heinous plan.

I was once in Yerushalayim talking to a Gadol Hador when an ambulance with its sirens wailing whizzed by. The Gadol stopped in the middle of talking to me, and with his eyes closed started to say a prayer. At first it didn't hit me, but then I realised what had happened. The Rav didn't see the ambulance as a piece of scenery in the background. He saw it as a person in distress, a person who is being rushed to hospital, a person in need of help. This is how we must approach the suffering of our fellow Jews.

Just as we share in our nations sorrow, so too may Hashem Bless us to always share in our people's Simcha Bekarov. Amen ■

RABBI DOVIE SCHOCHET - RABBI AT HASMONEAN HIGH SCHOOL AND AUTHOR FOR CHABAD.ORG

DVAR TORAH



SOLVING RASHI'S PROBLEM

In this week's parashah, Pharaoh orders the midwives named Shifra and Puah to kill any new born Jewish boy. However, the midwives feared G d and did not obey. When challenged by Pharaoh, they told him that the Jewish women were skilled in the art of giving birth, and would give birth before the midwives even got to them.

So who were these heroines who were willing to risk their lives only to never be mentioned in the Torah again?

Rashi tells us that Shifra was Yocheved and Puah was Miriam. The name "Shifra," translates as "improvement," a reference to the way that Yocheved would "improve" the new-borns by cleaning them and straightening their limbs. "Puah" means

"cooing," a reference to how Miriam would "coo" to the babies.

So just how many midwives were there? Let's take a step back. Sixty-six Jewish males descended to Egypt, along with many women. The commentaries tell us that at that point in history all Jewish mothers were having sextuplets. So that would mean that there was a population boom among the Jewish nation at that time. Their numbers were increasing so dramatically that Pharaoh feared they'd soon be strong enough to wage war against his country!

So how did two midwives single-handedly deliver every baby from every mother?

Most commentaries offer a simple answer: There were in fact many midwives, up to 500 of them. Shifra and Puah were merely the ones in charge of all other midwives, hence they were the ones Pharaoh addressed.

Yet from Rashi it seems that Shifra and Puah were the only midwives in Egypt - which would be impossible! What is even more mind-boggling is the possibility that the midwives weren't necessary at all. As the midwives tell Pharaoh: "The Hebrew

women are not like the Egyptians, they know how to deliver. They can give birth before a midwife even gets to them." We know that this wasn't merely an excuse the midwives gave to throw off Pharaoh, because Pharaoh could have easily verified their assertion.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe answers that Yocheved and Miriam still had roles as midwives, as they were available in case of any complications during a birth. Even though they were only two people, their reputation as wellborn and righteous individuals (who would be granted Divine assistance if necessary) was enough to reassure the entire population of birthing women.¹ ■

¹For a more in depth scope on the topic see Sefer HaMa'amarim 5709, Kuntres 64.

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI HAIM PINTO HAGADOL ZATSAL

Rabbi Haim Pinto the Great was born in Agadir, Morocco on Tammuz 15, 5509 (July 1, 1749), on the Hilloula of Rabbi Haim Ben Attar.

He was the son of the saintly and venerated Rabbi Shlomo Pinto Zatzal, the descendant of Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto, known by the name of the Rif of Ein Yaakov.

Rabbi Shlomo Pinto Zatzal instructed Torah to his son, Rabbi Haim Pinto, when he was very young. Unfortunately, Rabbi Shlomo Pinto passed away in 1761, leaving behind him an orphan barely 12 years old. That same year, an earthquake completely destroyed Agadir, and numerous Jews fled and settled in Mogador (Essaouira). Rabbi Haim Pinto was to be found among the refugees.

Rabbi Haim Pinto studied Torah along with Rabbi David Ben Hazan at the yeshiva of Rabbi Yaakov Bibas, the Dayan of the city. Rabbi Haim Pinto's reputation was so great that all Morocco resonated with accounts of his miracles and wonders, and this from his most early years. His teacher, Rabbi Yaakov Bibas, died in 1769, and the community of the city turned to Rabbi Haim Pinto to accept the heavy responsibility of Dayan. Being but 20 years old, he finally accepted this responsibility in association with his friend, Rabbi David Ben Hazan. Rabbi Haim Pinto carried out his mandate as Head of the Rabbinic Court in an extremely firm manner, and when necessary he knew how to be very strict. Never did he allow someone to act incorrectly, exercising this function for more than 70 years. The greatest Chachamim of the generation esteemed him with fear and respect, and Jews and Muslims alike venerated him. His fame spread throughout Morocco, across the Middle East, and reached all the way to Europe. Eliyahu Hanavi revealed himself regularly to Rabbi Haim Pinto and studied with him, which explains why Rabbi Haim Pinto participated in all the Brit Milahs that took place in Mogador.

Among the many stories about Rabbi Haim Pinto z"l, the following account has been gathered from the book on him entitled The Light of the Righteous.

Rabbi Haim Pinto awoke every night to recite prayers and to make "requests of G-d". Afterwards, he would study Torah until dawn. One day his daughter Mazal entered into his room in the middle of the night and saw him studying with a man. In the morning, he scolded her and said, "Why did you come into my room without knocking?" She was not in a position to see Eliyahu Hanavi. "Now you deserve a punishment, meaning that on the day of your marriage you will become blind." His daughter, who was a great saint, accepted the decree.

A few years later, the grandson of Rabbi Khalifa Malka came from Agadir to Mogador and went directly to Rabbi Haim Pinto's home. When he saw Mazal, she found grace in his eyes, and so he asked Rabbi Haim Pinto to give his daughter to him in marriage, but the Rabbi refused. He insisted, but Rabbi Haim Pinto absolutely refused. The grandson of Rabbi Khalifa Malka returned to Agadir saddened and hurt because the Rabbi had refused to give him his daughter as a wife.

Later, Rabbi Haim Pinto had a dream in which he saw Rabbi Khalifa Malka, who told him, "I sent you my grandson happy, and you sent him back to me sad." Rabbi Haim Pinto responded, "Your honor knows that my daughter Mazal saw Eliyahu Hanavi and a decree has been given: On the day of her marriage, she will become blind. This is why I refused her to your grandson." Rabbi Khalifa replied that his grandson would accept this decree as is. All of this occurred during the dream.

The next day, Rabbi Haim Pinto sent a special messenger to Agadir to bring the grandson of Rabbi Khalifa Malka to him. When Rabbi Haim Pinto saw him, he explained what would happen to his daughter on the day of her wedding, and he agreed. However, thanks to their merit and uprightness, this cruel decree was annulled and they had children and lived a great many years. They passed away in the same week.

When Rabbi Haim Pinto would arise every night to study Torah, his Shamash (assistant) Rabbi Aaron Ben Haim, would also arise and prepare him a cup of coffee. Once, the Shamash awoke a little late and therefore hurried to prepare a cup of coffee for the Rabbi, when suddenly he heard two voices coming from his room. He then went and prepared an additional cup for the unexpected guest. In the morning, Rabbi Haim Pinto asked his Shamash, "Why did you prepare two cups of coffee during the night?" The Shamash responded, "I heard two voices and I thought to prepare a second cup for the guest." The Rabbi told him, "Happy are you, my son, you who had the merit to hear the voice of Eliyahu Hanavi. However I decree that you repeat this secret to no one." After the death of Rabbi Haim Pinto, the Shamash recounted this incident to the inhabitants of the city.

Rabbi Maklouf Ben Lisha came to the home of Rabbi Haim Pinto concerning matters of importance for the community of Mogador. Because of the fact that this was a serious matter, he went directly to Rabbi Haim Pinto in the middle of the night. He entered into his room and saw the Rabbi, whose face was "illuminated", and someone else who resembled an angel. He wanted to come a little closer, but he was seized with such great fear and fright that he fled to his home. The next day the Rabbi told him, "Very happy are you, my son, who had the merit of seeing the face of Eliyahu Hanavi." Rabbi Maklouf lived a long time, to the age of 110, and he described this incident in his prayer book.

Rabbi Haim Pinto of blessed memory had four sons: Rabbi Yehudah (known as Rabbi Hadane), Rabbi Yossef, Rabbi Yoshiyahu, and Rabbi Yaakov. All were great Tzaddikim, devoted to Torah and to Klal Israel.

Rabbi Haim Pinto of blessed memory left this world on Elul 26, 5605 (September 28, 1845) at the age of 96. On the day of his passing, he promised his disciples that those who would invoke his name on the day of his Hilloula would see their prayers answered. May his merit protect us. Amen. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

DOES ERUB TABSHILIN ENABLE ONE TO COOK ON THURSDAY FOR SHABBAT?

Although it is permitted to cook on Yom Tob, one may only cook for consumption on Yom Tob itself. There is a Rabbinic prohibition to cook on a Friday Yom Tob for the Shabbat. However, the Misva of Erub Tabshilin was instituted to enable one to cook food for Shabbat when Yom Tob falls on Friday.

The question was asked: Does Erub Tabshilin also allow one to cook from the Thursday of Yom Tob, or only from Friday?

This issue is discussed in Teshubot HaRosh (23:8) and Teshubot HaRashba (1:485). They conclude that the Rabbis "Only permitted a close infringement and not a far infringement." Meaning, Erub Tabshilin only allows one to cook from Friday, which is closer to Shabbat. Therefore, even if a woman is going to be very busy on Friday Yom Tob, the Erub does not allow her to cook for Shabbat on the Thursday of Yom Tob.

In the event she violated this Halacha and cooked for Shabbat on the Thursday of Yom Tob, Hacham Ovadia rules that the food is not forbidden to be consumed.

SUMMARY: Erub Tabshilin does not enable one to cook from Thursday Yom Tob for Shabbat, only from Friday. ■

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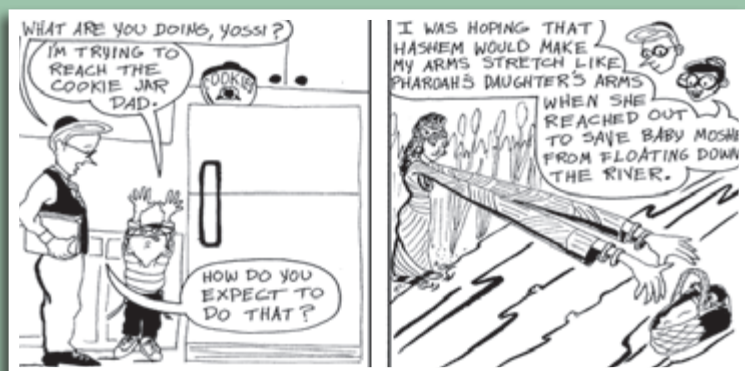
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TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ What did the staff turning into a snake symbolize?
- ❷ For how long did Moshe refuse to be the redeemer of the Jewish People?
- ❸ Why didn't Moshe want to be the leader?
- ❹ "And Hashem was angry with Moshe..." What did Moshe lose as a result of this anger?
- ❺ How many names did Moshe's father-in-law have?

Answer

- ❶ 4:3 - It symbolized that Moshe spoke ill of the Jews by saying that they wouldn't listen to him, just as the original snake sinned through speech.
- ❷ 4:10 - Seven days.
- ❸ 4:14 - Moshe lost the privilege of being a kohen.
- ❹ 4:18 - Seven.
- ❺ 4:10 - He didn't want to take a position above that of his older brother, Aharon.



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