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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

MISHPATIM
SHABBAT SHEKALIM
28th SHEVAT 5777
Shabbat begins: 17:17
Shabbat ends: 18:20

This week's edition is Dedicated
Lirfuat Sarah Bat Rachel Betoch
Shaar Cholei Yisrael



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Money, Money, Money!

Money makes the world go round is the famous saying. We need money to buy our food, to build our houses to pay our day to day bills. Money enables us to survive. Yet money, especially in today's economically hard hit world, seems to represent an evil. Money seems to be a potion of lust and desire, and can take the worst out of people. We hear stories of embezzlement, fraud, to the astronomical sizes in their billions (\$65Billion - Madoff) and we wonder, is money good or bad? Let us take a deeper look into our Parasha. Parashat Mishpatim is full of different Mitzvot particularly those pertaining to the relationship between man and his fellow. We are told to lend money and give charity specifically to the poor. Yet the Torah seems to use a peculiar way of stating this. The Pasuk states:
"Im Kesef Talve Et Ami, Et HeAni Imach" (22:24) – "When you lend money to My people, [to] the poor person *with* you". The commentators are baffled as to why the Torah states the poor person with you. What is behind this statement, surely it should have just said when you lend money to the poor, why the extra addition "with you"?

There was once a man who had three friends. His best friend was with him wherever he went. When he went out shopping, partying, socialising, and when he came home, this friend was always with him.

The second friend was also a good friend. But he would only be with him at his home. Whenever he was at home then this friend would visit, yet whenever he went out of his home, the friend didn't escort him.

The third friend was less acquainted with him. He would only see this friend from time to time, yet whenever he saw him, they had much fun together.

Time passed by, and one day this man was called in by the authorities and accused of a heinous crime. Of course he persistently claimed his innocence, but to no avail.




He asked his best friend to attend the hearing with him and to come and defend him.

His best friend answered that he would gladly help, but he could only lead him from his room to the door of his house. He could not come out of his house with him. The man was startled. What are you saying?! You have been my best friend all my life, and all you can do is take me from my room to the door?! I need you to come with me and represent me in the

court! His words however fell on deaf ears and he realised he was wasting his time. He then went to his second friend who was happy to help, but who informed him he would only be able to take him as far as the court entrance, but not all the way in. At least he would offer assistance up to the court, but the man remained distressed. Who would be with him in court?

He realised that he would have to go to the court alone. So along he went. Just before he entered the court, his third friend happened to be passing by. He met him and asked him why he was so sad. The man explained his situation and the third friend replied without hesitating, that not only would he be glad to enter the court with him, he even knew some powerful lawyers that would happily represent him in defence. And so it was, thanks to this friend, the man was well represented. After this episode he lamented at the lost time he had spent with the first two friends and realised how crucial a relationship he had with the real – third friend.

Our Rabbis explain that the same is true in life. A person's best friend is his money. It's with him wherever he goes, he is constantly thinking about it and ways of bettering his relationship with it. Yet when the time comes to part from this world it says to him – I can only take you from your room to the door – I can only accompany you from birth to death. Once a person reaches the next world they cannot take with them any money. Then, there are other friends – our parents and real friends in this world. They are our best friends at home. They take care of us constantly they give us a roof over our head and seek the success we deserve in life. Yet when the time comes, they can only lead us from the house to the court, they do not enter the court with us. They provide for us, 

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and lead us on the right path; the rest is up to us. At the end of the day we are personally responsible for our actions. Then there is the third friend, that friend that we don't see so often – the Torah we learn and the Mitzvot we perform. When a person finally stands in front of the Heavenly Tribunal *they* are the friends that will stand up and defend him. It is then that the person realises that these are the true friends that have such power.

We can now understand the meaning of the Pasuk. If you lend money to the poor, and you do kindness with your money then at the time of your passing, Et HeAni Imach – the poor will be with you, they will come and guarantee you life in the next world. That money, Torah and Mitzvot will accompany you in the next world. They will provide assistance at the gates of heaven. So concentrate now on them and let them be your best friend!

The Midrash in Bamidbar (22:8) asks why the Hebrew name for property is Nechasim? The reason given is because it becomes "covered up" ("Nichsim") from one person and discovered by another! The Midrash continues, and why is currency called "Zuzim" in Aramaic? Because it moves ("Zazim") from one person to the next. Why is money called

"Mamon?" It stands for "Ma Ata Moneh" – "Why bother counting it?" It's not worth the effort! ... And you can similarly explain [the other names for money in this manner]. Perhaps we could add that the English word "money" should also be read as "Ma Ani" – What am I worth?

This Midrash teaches us that money comes and money goes, but the world always stands. Our Rabbis have taught that wealth is not guaranteed for generations. A person can be rich, yet Chas Ve Shalom his grandchildren might be poor (as the various terms for "money" suggest).

The world is round, there are ups and downs and nobody knows what tomorrow will bring. Yet, just as Hashem has created uncertainty, there are things that *are* certain.

The Ben Ish Chai brings an analogy of a man who once asked his intelligent son: If there are 10 birds that came down on the roof, and hunters came and shot at them killing 4, how many were left over?

The son answered four.

The father was angry with his son's impetuous response. If there are ten and four are taken away that leaves six! He exclaimed.

The son answered that the six that are alive will fly away due to the noise and attack of the arrows, that will leave only the four dead birds. No noise would be loud enough to move them!

The Ben Ish Chai explains that the money with us today, might fly away tomorrow. The only money which is considered Imach – Yours – is that which you invest spiritually, other money is not guaranteed to be called yours; today it might be with you, but tomorrow who knows?

The Sages point out that aside from the eternal bliss earned from the great mitzvah, one is also assured that their descendants will gain the help they need in difficult times. This is hinted at in the word Venatenu – and they shall give which is spelled the same way whether written forward or backward. The idea thus expressed is that an act of giving actually results in an act of receiving.

Money just like any other object in the world can be used for good or bad; let us focus on the worlds we can create and the lives we can impact positively with our blessed wealth.



AHARON GABBAY
Kollel Zichron Chana
VeRachel
Bishvili Nivra Ha'Olam

This week's Parasha briefly mentions that one who murders another is subject to the punishment of death. The Mishnah in Sanhedrin points out that murder is an extremely severe act, since all subsequent generations are wiped out, not just one individual. The Mishnah elaborates that, for this very same reason, when one kills another it is as if a whole world has been lost. The Mishnah then

concludes that every man is obligated to say "Bishvili nivra ha'olam" – The world was created for me.

This outstanding concept is not an excuse to skip to the front of the queue or to barge on a bus, nor is it a reason to lead a life of haughtiness. R' Yerucham Levowitz zt"l, the Mashgiach of Mir Yes-hivah explains that Hashem brought each and every person into this world and constructed every moment for that individual. There are billions of individuals in the world with their own past, present and future, no two people are the same. Every one leads a life of events which was built for them and them only, it can so happen that their life can clash with another but they are still entirely separate. For example, you get into a car accident, Chas Veshalom, the immediate reaction is why did he crash into me? This is an incorrect approach; the correct question that should be asked is why were you put into such an event? And the same goes for your counterpart who crashed into you. You

both have independent reasons why you were found to be there. For each and every person, Hashem strung together a sequence of events which is unique only to them and in essence created that world for them.

However, there is more to what R' Yerucham means. Every blink, breath and even sneeze that was brought into this world was for you. If the sun shines on you today, that was for you. If you pass by a beautiful scenery, that was for you. If you are witness to a bad deed, you should ask yourself why was I put in a place where I was to see such a thing. There is a reason for every second in this world, and a purpose for all moments and feelings.

The purpose of this idea is not to make a person self conscious of their every move, neither is it to speculate the twitch of an ant, rather it is to appreciate the value of life and its sequence of events. If we approach these correctly, we can use them to build ourselves and to maximise our potential.

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OUR CHACHAMIM

Rabbi Nosson Zvi Finkel
The Alter of Slabodka

The Gaon Rabbi Nathan Tzvi Finkel Zatzal was born in the tiny Lithuanian town of Rasei in the year 5609. From his youth he was known as an Illui (genius), a child prodigy. As he grew older, he was among those close to the Gaon Rabbi

Simcha Zissel Ziv of Kelm, the disciple of Rabbi Israel Salanter (the founder of the Mussar movement). Although Rabbi Simcha Zissel Ziv appointed Rabbi Nathan Tzvi as the director of the Kelm Talmud Torah, he did not rest upon his laurels. In fact he began establishing numerous yeshivot throughout Poland and Lithuania. In 5637 Rabbi Nathan Tzvi helped establish the famous Telshe yeshiva, while at the same time he set up the Kovno kollel. It was there that remarkable avrechim perfected themselves, and where the Mussar movement produced Tzaddikim.

Rabbi Nathan Tzvi went on to establish the Slabodka yeshiva, the crown jewel of yeshivot. It was to the Slabodka yeshiva, which Rabbi Nathan Tzvi saw as his great goal in life, that he sent famous Gaonim

to teach. Nevertheless, he did not neglect other yeshivot, for he cared for his students as a father for his children.

When the First World War began, Rabbi Nathan Tzvi was forced to leave Slabodka, traveling with his students to Minsk, and from there to Kremenichug. In 5684 a portion of his yeshiva students left for Hebron, where the yeshiva continued under the direction of his son-in-law, Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Epstein. It remained there until 5689, when Arabs committed the infamous Hebron massacre. Because Rabbi Nathan Tzvi was so concerned for his students, he became known as the Alter ("elder," i.e., father) of Slabodka. He passed away on Shevat 29, 5687. May the memory of the Tzaddik be blessed.



HALACHA RABBI ELI MANSOOR

Can A Man or Woman Eat or Drink Prior
To Kiddush On Shabbat Morning

The obligation to recite Kiddush on Shabbat morning takes effect only after the recitation of Shacharit. Therefore, before one prays on Shabbat morning, he is permitted to drink tea, coffee and water – those beverages that are allowed to be drunk before the morning prayers. Since the Kiddush obligation descends upon a person only after Shacharit, the prohibition against eating or drinking before Kiddush does not apply before he

prays; hence, he is allowed to drink whatever is permissible to be drunk before one prays in the morning generally.

The question arises as to whether or not this Halacha applies to women, as well. According to the Ben Ish Chai (Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), women become obligated to recite Kiddush immediately when they awaken Shabbat morning, and therefore they may not eat or drink anything until they recite Kiddush. Others, however, including the Kaf Ha'chayim (Rabbi Chayim Palachi, rabbi of Izmir, Turkey, 19th century) and Chacham Bentzion Abba Shaul (Israel, 1924-1998), distinguish between women who normally pray Shacharit in the morning, and those who do not. If a woman normally prays Shacharit, then her status is no different from that of a man with regard to this Halacha, and her obligation to recite Kiddush does not take effect until after she prays Shacharit. But if a woman does not normally recite Shacharit, and she recites only the morning blessings and the like, then her Kiddush obligation takes effect

immediately when she arises in the morning, and therefore she may not eat or drink anything until she first recites Kiddush. In such a case, when a woman must recite Kiddush in the morning, if she finds it difficult to recite the entire text of Kiddush she may recite from "Ve'shamru," or even from "Al Ken" or just the Beracha itself.

Summary: On Shabbat morning, a man may drink water, tea or coffee before the morning prayers, since the Kiddush obligation has yet to take effect. This applies as well to women who are generally accustomed to reciting Shacharit every morning. Women who normally do not recite Shacharit, however, must recite Kiddush before they eat or drink anything on Shabbat morning, and in such a case they need not recite the entire text of Kiddush.

The Rabbi Jacob S. Kassir Memorial Halacha Series
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