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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

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Lehatslachat Moshe Ben Rav Yitschak
Hakohen Vechol Mishpachto

VAEIRA

28th TEVET 5777

Shabbat begins: 16:26

Shabbat ends: 17:33



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Patience Is A Virtue!

The Gemara (Bava Metzia 85a) tells how R' Chiya taught Torah to young children.

He would plant flax, spin thread from the flax, weave nets, trap animals, skin the animals, and make parchment from their hides, upon which the words of the Torah would be inscribed.

Our Sages ask why R Chiya needed to go through such a lengthy process. Would it not have been easier to buy the parchment, or even better, a Torah scroll?

At the end of last week's Parasha, Moshe went to Pharaoh to ask for the Bnei Yisrael to be relieved of their duties in order to serve Hashem. Pharaoh responded by making life even more difficult for the Bnei Yisrael and Moshe complained to Hashem regarding his lack of success.

Since Moshe had come on the scene, things had only got worse, not better. Moshe asked Hashem why? Hashem allayed Moshe's concerns by telling him that things were just getting started.

This is the lead up to this week's Parasha where (according to Rashi's

understanding) Hashem began to reproach Moshe:

Vaydaber Elokim El Moshe – And the Almighty (Elokim) spoke to Moshe.

Whenever the Torah uses the word Vaydaber, it refers to harsh words. Similarly, the word Elokim refers to Hashem in judgement.

Hashem told Moshe that He had appeared to the Avot – Avraham, Yitschak and Yaakov and they had never questioned His actions. Why was Moshe questioning Hashem?

The Gemara Sanhedrin (111a) explains sighting examples where the Avot were faced with challenges yet never questioned Hashem..



When Avraham sought to bury Sarah, he could not bury her until he bought a plot for a very high price from Efron.

Similarly, Yitschak sought to use wells his own father had dug and was not permitted to by the local shepherds. With regards to Yaakov it states: "And he bought the part of the field where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor" (33:19). Notwithstanding the problems they faced, none of the Avot questioned Hashem. Thus, Moshe rather than questioning Hashem should have followed their example.

Why is it that Hashem chose these specific examples to show the forefathers unquestionable belief? Surely there are others better examples, such as the Akeida - binding of Yitschak! Avraham was promised children through Yitschak, yet he was told to sacrifice him. Yitschak was not told about this from G-d, yet did not question anyone and told his father to bind his hands so he would not struggle. Similarly why didn't Hashem tell Moshe how Yaakov reacted to the incidents with Yosef!

Our Sages explain that it is with these examples that we see how much faith they *really* had.

The Akeida tells us how Avraham had faith, but that is all! G-d spoke to him, there was nothing to question! But when he gets home having passed his test, his wife is dead. And when he attempts to bury her, he realises he has no real place of his own. He must find her an honourable burial place. Yitschak is told the land will be his. He goes to the wells his father had so diligently dug up and finds them closed up. It seems all his fathers efforts were for naught. He doesn't despair, or question G-d; rather he digs the wells anew. Yaakov was promised the land. He arrives back in Eretz Yisrael and needs to pay to pitch a tent.

When we know someone is watching, or that we are being tested, we put on the best display of our efforts as possible. But these are inaccurate. The true gauge of faith is in the mundane, where we think we are alone.

Hashem's message to Moshe was that although they were tested with



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harsh tests, they never questioned Me. You are also on a high level and should not question.

Yet, there seems to be a more subtle underlying message that Hashem was portraying at the same time.

On the surface Moshe had a good argument; why indeed did Hashem ask him to announce the "impending" salvation, only to have the Bnei Yisrael undergo a worsening of conditions and a frustratingly long time lapse before the actual redemption?

The Mishnah (Avot 6) lists 48 qualities one must acquire in order to learn Torah properly. The thirteenth way is Be yishuv - by sitting.

Western culture has taught us to look for immediate results.
"Lose 20 Kilos in 30 days."

"Turn £1,000 into £10,000 in just hours a day." Something inside says it's too good to be true, yet the allure of almost instantaneous satisfaction is difficult to resist.

With Torah (as with most other things in life) there is no free lunch.

"If someone tells you, 'I have not toiled, yet I have acquired Torah knowledge - don't believe him'". (Megillah 6b)

The only way to become a true connoisseur of Torah is to sit and learn. Today we can load Shas onto our I-Phones, and learn the daf while driving to work, but to true Torah knowledge there are no shortcuts.

Perhaps this is why Hashem made things happen so slowly at first. If He so desired, He could have delivered us on a moment's notice. But doing so would just have served to reinforce our perpetual quest for things to happen in

an instant. Hashem needed us to know that becoming the People of the Book meant measuring success in small, consistent steps, not by leaps and bounds.

This was the message to Moshe. The Geula is a process. There is much to be taken in and learnt from this process. Appreciating Hashem and learning Torah also takes time – have patience.

We can now understand why R Chiya had to go through such a long process when writing out the Torah. He was trying to impress the students with the correct attitude towards Torah study: If it comes too easily, it's not worth anything. If you want your Torah to be meaningful, you've got to toil with patience and with unending diligence.

Shabbat Shalom
Lirfuat Shelaima Elisha Ben Ayala



RABBI MORDECHAI FHIMA
RABBI OF ANSHEI SHALOM
BEIT HAMEDRASH
Communication

I have seen a nice Dvar Torah by Rabbi Label Lam regarding the power of communication that I want to share with you. In this week Parasha the Torah says: And Moshe spoke before Hashem saying, "They, the Children of Israel will not listen to me and how will Pharaoh listen to me and I am of damaged lips". (Shemot 6:12). Moshe was not born with misshapen lips but the Midrash (Shemot Rabba 1-26) brings that one day Moshe took away the crown from the head of Pharaoh and he threw it on the floor and Pharaoh was very angry at him - he even wanted to kill Moshe, but his adviser told him not to kill him

because he was only a child and didn't do this action on purpose. Pharaoh sought to discover the intentions behind Moshe's act. He sent for 2 buckets, one containing coal, the other containing gold. These were put before Moshe, with the assumption that if Moshe chose the gold, it would signify his desire to take over Pharaoh's kingdom. Choosing the coal would signify innocent intent. Moshe reached for the gold, and at the critical moment prior to touching it, an angel moved his hand to the coal. Moshe instantly brought it to his lips, thereby damaging his mouth and future oratory skills. Hashem said to Moshe, "See, I have made you a master over Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your spokesman. You shall speak everything that I command you, and Aaron your brother shall speak to Pharaoh, that he should send the Children of Israel, from his land. But I shall harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. Pharaoh will not heed you, and you shall put My hand upon Egypt; and I shall take out My legions-My people the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt, with great judgments. And Egypt shall know that I am Hashem, when I stretch out My hand over Egypt; and I shall take the

Children of Israel out from among them." (Shemot 7:1-5)

What is the nature of Moshe's complaint? He correctly claims that the Children of Israel and (how much more so) Pharaoh refuse to listen and then he goes back to an old argument and states again that he has damaged lips. Why does he regress? Is this a restatement of the "unworthiness for leadership" argument? That was resolved earlier and Moshe had already accepted the mission. Is the problem with the recipients of the "message" or with imperfection of the "messenger"? In that strategy meeting between Hashem and Moshe, we may find the answer to Moshe's objection and a clue to the nature of his problem.

1-He is assured that he is a master over Pharaoh, and his brother will be his spokesman.

2-He is commanded to carry out the mission.

3- He's given certain talking points; like insisting that Pharaoh send the Children of Israel out of Egypt.

4-He is informed that there will not be instant results. There will be some foot dragging on Pharaoh's part. A steep price will be exacted in the form of compounding "plagues".

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5-In the end though even the people of Egypt will know as fact that, "I am Hashem". Egypt then will have heard, but is that the goal? Is it all only to convince Egypt?

I have identified five critical ingredients necessary for effective communication. I like to call them the five "M's" of communication. Let's check off the boxes and see which are accounted for and attempt to determine by the process of elimination, what the basis was of Moshe's hesitancy.

1) The messenger: Moshe and Aaron are affirmed as the ones fitting to communicate.

2) The message: The script, the text of the communication is tight and couldn't be clearer, "Let My people go!"

3) The motive: I don't think it's possible to find a more-noble or just cause than following the precise dictates of the Creator-Hashem. Moshe doesn't need to apologize to any creature or power for what he must do.

4) The method: Sure it's a tough love approach. "The words of the wise are heard when spoken softly" but they are backed up by a big stick because there's a lot convincing to be done. What's left?

5) The moment: When is the real "teachable moment"? When will all of Moshe's concerns have been dispelled? The Sefas Emes offers the following amazing insight, "Because the Children of Israel will not listen, therefore he was of damaged lips...Speech is in exile as

long as the recipients are not ready to hear the words of Hashem..." He goes on to explain that to the extent that the listener is unavailable, the words are hidden. The more ready and willing the recipients are the more open and revealed the message might be. The greatest proof of this is found by the giving of the Torah when the sky opened up and it was declared, "I am Hashem..." it's no mistake that that was the most pure moment of preparedness as we stood then poised to receive the highest and holiest communication.



HALACHA
RABBI ELI MANSOOR

May One Talk About Mundane Matters on Shabbat?

The Navi (Prophet) warns regarding speech on Shabbat: "V'Daber Dabar" (From speaking talk). The Hachamim derive from this phrase that one's speech on Shabbat should be different than his speech during the week. Rambam understands this to mean that it is prohibited to speak on Shabbat about activities which would be forbidden to perform on Shabbat-whether by Torah or Rabbinic law. For example, one may not say, "Tomorrow, I am driving to New Jersey," or "Tomorrow I am flying to Miami." Since those activities cannot be performed on Shabbat, it is also prohibited from saying it.

However, Tosafot have a different understanding of this issue. They learn that not only is it prohibited to speak about prohibited activities, but it is even prohibited to talk excessively about any mundane topic, such as news, politics etc. They cite an incident in the Midrash, in which Rabbi Shimon rebuked his grandmother for talking too much on Shabbat about any subject. The Talmud Yerushalmi records that the Hachamim barely permitted saying Shalom on Shabbat. Of course, there is no issue with talking words of Torah, Tefila and Musar.

Interestingly, Shulhan Aruch (307:1) records both the opinion of the Rambam and the Tosafot. It is important to know that the Aruch Hashulhan (Rav Yechiel Michel Epstein of Nevarduk, 1829-1908) understand the opinion of Tosafot, who hold that any excess speech is problematic, as a preference and not as actual law. He proves this from the comment of the Rema who adds that if a person derives enjoyment from talking about permitted topics, he may do so. Clearly, if the issue was a bona fide prohibition, enjoyment would not be a factor to permit it. The fact that someone may enjoy turning on lights does not justify violating the Shabbat. Thus, even though the Halacha says that one should curtail his speech on Shabbat, it

is regarded as Midat Hasidut-the behavior of the righteous.

The Mishna Berura (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933) cites a custom of certain Sadikim to speak only in Lashon HaKodesh-Hebrew- on Shabbat. Doing so enabled them to avoid idle speech. Other Sadikim would engage in a Ta'anit Dibur-a day of silence-every Shabbat. While this may seem extreme for most people, these practices underscore the lofty nature of Shabbat. It is not just a day for rest and relaxation. One should focus on the Shechina and the pursuit of holiness. For most people, refraining from speaking during the Torah reading is a challenge, but for the Sadikim, the entire day of Shabbat was like one long Torah reading, and hence they refrained from speaking.

SUMMARY

It is a bona fide prohibition on to speak on Shabbat about activities which are prohibited to perform on Shabbat. It is preferable to refrain, in general, from speaking about mundane matters on Shabbat, unless he derives special benefit from doing so.

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STORIES OF CHACHAMIM

Rabbi Ephraim Navon -
Machaneh of Ephraim

The gaon Rabbi Ephraim Navon Zatzal was born in the city of Constantinople, where he and his friend of the same age, the gaon Yaakov Sasson, studied Torah

with their teacher Rabbi Alfandri Zatzal. Rabbi Ephraim continuously elevated himself in the rungs of Torah and the fear of Heaven, studying with extraordinary diligence and perceptiveness. When he reached the age of marriage, he married the daughter of the gaon Rabbi Yehudah Irgaz Zatzal, at which time he and his father-in-law left for Eretz Israel and settled in Jerusalem. Rabbi Ephraim remained isolated for 10 years, studying the entire Talmud with tremendous concentration and in great depth. During that time he also studied the works of the Rambam and the Beit Yosef. Thus Rabbi Ephraim's name became famous in the Jewish world.

Sent by Rav Roshehien, Rabbi Ephraim left Israel and returned to Constantinople, where he became the Rav of the city. At

the same time, he wrote his famous book Machaneh Ephraim on various Halachot, a book that the Chida described as being incredibly insightful and valuable. In fact his book was acknowledged by the entire Torah world, and even today both Machaneh Ephraim and its commentaries are studied in yeshivot throughout the world.

In reading Machaneh Ephraim, one can clearly see the author's extensive scholarship and wisdom. It is even said that Rabbi Ephraim could perform wonders, knowing the sacred Names of Hashem and being able to use Kabbalah to save Jews from their hardships and illnesses. Rabbi Ephraim Navon passed away on Nissan 26, 5491, as his soul ascended to the celestial academy. May the memory of the tzaddik be blessed.



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