

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



FINDING PARKING!

A man was driving to a very important meeting in town. He was late and any more delay could cause him the loss of a multibillion dollar deal.

He arrives near the office only to find that all the parking places were taken. Looking towards the heavens, he cries out to G-d:

"Please G-d take pity on me and let me find a parking spot! I know I have not been to synagogue as much as I would love too, but I assure you from now on I will be going every morning. Please just give me a spot!"

Miraculously as he finishes speaking, a car indicates and makes its way out, right before his eyes. He raises his eyes towards the heavens and says, "it's OK G-d. I have found one!"

Every day we go through experiences; some seem normal, others seem super real, yet do we really believe that it all comes from G-d?

This week, we learn the amazing story of a young boy, Yosef, who is put through trials and tribulations from his youth. Although loved by his father, he has a hard time with his brothers, eventually sold to Egypt and enslaved in a stranger's house. After being tested with Potiphar's wife and not committing adultery, he is thrown into prison for his 'sin'. Yet throughout these tough thirteen years and even later at the age of thirty when he is eventually brought in front of Pharaoh, Yosef never loses faith in G-d.

A famous Gemara (Yoma 35b) relates how our Rabbis taught that after a long life in this world, we will all be challenged by the heavenly tribunal. There will be those that are rich in this world and those that are poor, those that through their blessings have tougher tests and those with easier circumstances.

When the poor, the rich or the wicked shall appear before Divine Judgment, they will be asked, 'Why didn't you study Torah while you were alive?'

If the poor responds that he was poor and had to earn a living and therefore had no time to study, the heavenly court will say, 'Were you poorer than Hillel the Elder?' Concerning Hillel the Elder, it was said that every day he used to work and earn one Tarpeik [a small sum], half of which he gave away to the guard of the house of learning [for admission] and with the other half he supported himself and his family.

One day, Hillel didn't earn anything and the guard refused him admission because he didn't have any money. He climbed up onto the roof and sat upon the skylight so that he might listen to the words of the living G-d from the mouth of Shemaiya and Avtalyan [the leading Sages of the generation]. This incident occurred on a Friday during the month of Tevet in the winter and snow fell upon him and covered him up.

The next day, on the Shabbat, at dawn Shemayia said to Avtalyan, 'Brother, why is it that every day light is visible in the academy at this time, and today it is still dark? Is it such a cloudy day?' They looked up and saw the figure of a man above the skylight. They went up to the roof, and found Hillel covered by three cubits of snow. After removing the snow, they took him down and cared for him, placed him before a fire, and remarked, 'Such a man deserves that even Shabbat should be violated for his sake.' ►

> MAZAL TOV TO

Rivka & Jonathan Thabaut
on the birth of their baby boy

Sarah & Jonathan Taieb
on the birth of their baby boy

” THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"Don't be afraid of discovering that the 'real you' may be different than the 'current you.'"
Rabbi Noach Weinberg, zt"l

> UPCOMING EVENTS

- CHANUKAH EVENT ON A LUXURY BOAT
13TH DEC
- LEGENDARY SKI TRIP IN SLOVAKIA
21ST- 25TH JAN
- TU B'SHVAT COCKTAIL PARTY
30TH JAN (see more info online)

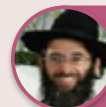


DVAR TORAH

Finding Parking!

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

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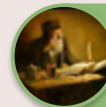


DVAR TORAH

Jerusalem Live!

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

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Thus if you say you were too poor and were busy earning a living, Hashem will point to Hillel who was even poorer but climbed on the roof in the snow to learn Torah.

If you claim you were too rich and too busy handling your affairs, Hashem will point to Rebbi Elazar whose father left him one thousand cities on land and one thousand ships at sea. Yet every day he would take up his satchel and travel from town to town and city to city to study Torah.

If you are busy with your physical desires, and say that it was difficult, after all Hashem made you handsome and you had a tough evil inclination, then Hashem will point to Yosef and ask were you more handsome than him?

He was willing to live life as a slave rather than violate G-d's will.

There will be no excuses in the Olam HaEmet – the True everlasting world.

Upon closer inspection, our Sages tell us that when Yosef was about to sin with Potiphar's wife,

he merited seeing his holy father Yaakov in an image; this helped him keep his cool and run away from the sin.

We may ask, if Yosef was helped with this image, then of course he would not sin. Why was he helped, and when we sin, we don't seem to have any holy images come to us? And how is it that G-d compares us to Yosef, if he was able to be shown an image of the Holy Yakov, and we are not?

The answer is found in how Yosef conducted his life.

At the height of his youth, he was sold to a strange land. He was shunned by his brothers and engaged for the rest of his youth and adulthood up to the age of thirty as a slave and prisoner.

The Midrash tells us that Potiphar's wife was constantly imploring him to go with her, yet he would resist. With all her power and beauty,

she could not break Yosef's pure and dedicated heart.

When a person is constantly aware and tries hard to be saved – he will be.

The only reason his father's image appeared was because he constantly fought off his evil inclination.

Chanah stated (Shmuel I 2:9) "Raglei Chasidav Yishmor," He guards the ways of the pious. When a person is dedicated to G-d, they will not falter.

Next time you find that parking spot, let out a "Thank G-d!" Show your appreciation and realisation that He constantly runs the world.

As we approach Chanuka - a time of rededication - let us dedicate and commit ourselves to serve G-d and may G-d constantly guard over us. Amen. ■

RABBI YITSCHAK HAKOHEN TAWIL - MIR KOLEL, JERUSALEM

DVAR
TORAH



JERUSALEM LIVE!

"He mourned for his son for many days (22 yrs!)....and he refused to be comforted" (37:34)

Rashi explains that G-d placed into nature that the bitterness of the passing away of a dear one gradually decreases until the departure gets relatively forgotten about. This is a great kindness that G-d imposed - we would all go crazy if we would constantly vividly remember and visualise all our misfortunes!! This instinct however, is only apparent when mourning for somebody who is truly dead.

This instinct however, is only apparent when mourning for somebody who is

truly dead. Yaakov however was falsely made to believe that his son Yosef had been ripped apart by a wild animal. As in truth Yosef was still alive, Yaakov refused to accept true comfort for all these sorrowful years.

Armed with this phenomena, that only for a truly deceased does nature eventually allow full comfort, R.Chaim of Volozn the famous pupil of the Vilna Gaon, Explains a comment in the Talmud.

The Talmud in Bava Bathra (60b) informs us that "He who mourns for the loss of Yerushalayim (of old, i.e. during it's peak, when we had the Bet HaMikdash, a city which was the centre of Torah study and spirituality, filled with G-d fearing people enthusiastically serving G-d – which we lost due to our sins and until this day we are in exile from) He shall merit and see it in it's happiness (the final redemption, when we will have the Third Temple, and Yerushalayim will return to be the great spiritual centre that it once was).

He explains as follows: By our constant mourning the loss of Yerushalayim of Old, we express and confirm that, despite almost 2000 years of exile, we still have full belief that Temple times is not a thing of the past – on the contrary Yerushalayim is still alive, waiting to reveal itself should we merit. Throughout the exile, year after year we all mourn the loss of Yerushalayim, refusing comfort. We even have a National day of mourning, Tisha B'Av when we all actively live the customs of a mourner, the whole community worldwide, sitting on the floor, fasting and mourning, moaning Lamentations with tears, as well as many Halachot (Laws and customs) restricting enjoyment throughout the year. We are not yet comforted!! Yerushalayim is still alive, waiting for us!! This sad day, we are promised, will be turned in future to a National Day of Joy!! ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI AMRAM BEN DIWAN

It is always with a feeling of respect and awe that the Jews of Morocco evoke the holy name of Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan.

Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan was born in Jerusalem, and later he settled in Hebron. In 5523 (1743), he was chosen by the Rabbis of Hebron as an emissary to Morocco with the mission of collecting money for the yeshivas of the Holy Land. He decided to settle in the Moroccan town of Wazan, and there he founded a Talmud-Torah and a yeshiva where numerous students came to quench their thirst for study by drinking from the source of his words.

Rabbi Amram became attached to his students. His fatherly affection created a solid connection between him and his students. He provided for all their material needs, and spiritually directed them on the path that leads to the performance of G-d's will. By his rich and varied pursuits, he contributed to the elevation and dissemination of Torah in all the communities of Morocco. Rabbi Amram was also known for his miracles. His blessings always came to pass, and Jews would travel from all the towns of Morocco to urgently seek him in order to be delivered, through his merit, from their troubles. He occupied himself with the well-being of everyone in particular, and the well-being of the community in general. His home was always open to all the afflicted who came knocking at his door, hoping that the Tzaddik would be their staunchest defender before our Father, the Holy One, blessed be He.

After a long stay in Morocco, Rabbi Amram felt a great longing for the Land of Israel. He therefore interrupted his holy work. His students, to whom he had taught Torah, had themselves become great scholars over the course of the years. Thus he decided to return to the Holy Land. When he arrived in Hebron, he became friends with Rabbi Haim Bagoyo and Rabbi Avraham Gedalia, the Rabbis of the city. Together they studied Torah and penetrated many of its wondrous secrets, ascending day by day the rungs of perfection in Torah study and Divine service.

However, Rabbi Amram's stay in Hebron was short-lived. An unfortunate incident caused his departure, forcing him to take up the mantle of sojourner once again and return to Morocco. The following story describes what happened.

At that time, Jews were not permitted to enter into the tomb of the Patriarchs. However, for Rabbi Amram, this prohibition did not in the least quench his fervent desire to pray by the tomb of our Fathers. He therefore disguised himself as an Arab, and without being noticed he entered the cave with the rest of the Muslims that had also come there to pray. Imagine his emotions when he approached the tomb of the Patriarchs! As his face became drenched with tears, he quietly uttered his prayers, beseeching the Creator of the world to hasten the Final Redemption. No one doubted that this "Muslim", so absorbed as he was in his prayer, was nothing other than a Jew. Suddenly, as Rabbi Amram was preparing to leave, an Arab saw and recognized him. Immediately, he ran to the Pasha and informed him of the offense.

Rabbi Amram incurred heavy suffering for such a sacrilege. A friend of Rabbi Amram, who was also a servant of the Pasha, hurried to warn him that he intended to arrest him. In the middle of the night, Rabbi Amram, accompanied by his young son, Rabbi Haim, left their home. They feared returning to Jerusalem or a neighboring country because during that era Turkish power held sway over several countries. He therefore decided to return to Morocco. As soon as he arrived in Fez, the city's inhabitants welcomed him with great honor. Many of the city's notable men quarreled over the merit of having him as their guest. He was finally received by Rabbi Menasheh Ibn Denan, one of the leaders of Fez's Jewish community.

The story is told that Rabbi Menasheh's children were all girls, and that another girl had just been born to him. Rabbi Amram advised him to name her Fedina, which means, "we have finished". In other words, we have finished giving birth to girls. And it was thus that after this girl, Rabbi Menasheh had only boys.

Not long after his arrival in Fez, Rabbi Amram and his son Rabbi Haim traveled to all the towns of Morocco in order to spread the teaching of Torah. He arrived in Sefru, where he lodged in the Elbaz home. Having no children of their own, they asked him for a blessing to have a son. Rabbi Amram blessed them and promised that in the following year, at the very same time of year, the wife would give birth to a son who would later become a great Torah scholar. The blessing of the Tzaddik came to fruition. The son who was born to the Elbaz family was given the name of the Tzaddik, Amram, and afterwards the name of Rabbi Amram of Sefru became famous as a Gaon and great Torah Scholar.

While Rabbi Amram was staying in the Elbaz home in Sefru, his son Rabbi Haim fell deathly ill. The doctors gave him no chance at recovering. Rabbi Amram prayed to the Creator of the world that He take his soul in place of his son's. His son, Rabbi Haim, recovered from his illness, and they continued on their journey to all the towns of Morocco. When they arrived in Wazan, Rabbi Amram himself fell gravely ill, and soon afterwards rendered his soul to his Creator.

The tomb of Rabbi Amram became a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco. Each year on Lag BaOmer, thousands of Jews come to Wazan to make the pilgrimage to the grave of the saint. Numerous miracles are said to have occurred on his tomb: Incurable illnesses have been healed, the blind have regained their sight, the mute have found their voice, the paralyzed have returned home on their own, and infertile women have had children after having prayed there.

They tell that a French military sergeant had a son who remained paralyzed after a serious illness. This sergeant had a Jewish friend that advised him to take his son to the tomb of Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan in Wazan. At first, the sergeant was skeptical and refused, but then later promised that if a miracle were to happen and his son would be healed, he would build a road with his own money in order to facilitate access to the tomb of the Tzaddik. The miracle occurred: As soon as his son approached the tomb of Rabbi Amram, he was healed. The happy father kept his promise and constructed a road that leads to the tomb of Rabbi Amram.

The great poet, Rabbi David Ben Hassin, composed a liturgical poem especially in his honor, a song that is sung by the Jews of Morocco on the day of his Hilloula.

His son, Rabbi Haim Ben Diwan, continued his father's work. He traveled from town to town with the goal of instructing Torah. He died at a ripe old age and rests in the village of Anranz, south of Marrakech. His tomb has also become a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco.

May his merit protect us. Amen. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

POURING WATER HEATED BY THE SUN ON FOODS ON SHABBAT

The Shulhan Aruch (318:3) rules that cooking with a surface heated by the sun, "Toldot HaHama," constitutes Bishul (cooking) M'drabanan. That is, it is Rabbinically prohibited to cook an egg on a cloth heated by the sun. The reason for this is that one may come to use a surface heated by fire to cook, which is a Torah prohibition.

If one would immerse an egg in water heated by the sun, it would be an Issur D'rabanan- Rabbinic prohibition of cooking. However, Hacham David, in his Halacha Berura, permits pouring water heated by the sun over a raw food. He reasons that since there is a general disagreement whether pouring even regular hot water over a raw food can cook it, one can be lenient in the case of solar heated water, which is only an Issur D'rabanan. This question is particularly relevant in Israel where they commonly use solar panels to heat the water.

SUMMARY : While one may not cook raw food by immersing it in water heated by the sun, it is permitted to pour such water over a raw food. ■

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Kids STORY

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

"Avi, have you seen my birthday gift?"
 "Mazel Tov, Chaim. May you have many, many more birthdays until 120."
 "Amen."
 "What did you get?"
 "A set of different measuring tools. Here is a tape measure that is fifteen feet long."
 "Wow."
 "Here is a ruler that measures both inches and centimeters. The last piece in the set is a micrometer that measures microns."
 "That's really small. It sounds like you can measure just about anything with this kit."
 "Sure. Do you have anything to measure?"
 "How about measuring a word."
 "Measuring a word? What do you mean? The length of the word? That's easy. Just count the letters. You don't need any fancy tools for that."
 "The number of letters is one measure of a word. That is not what I meant, however."
 "Do you mean the Gematria (numerical value of a Hebrew word based on the letters) of a word Avi?"
 "No, that's not what I mean either. I want to know if you can measure the effect of a word."
 "That sounds pretty complicated. Can you give me an example, Avi?"
 "In this week's parsha, Yosef HaTzaddik, our righteous ancestor Yosef, said some words that had a very big effect on his life."
 "What did he say?"
 "He spoke to his father Yaakov about some things that he felt his brothers were doing wrong. Among other things, he said that they were slaves, and that they had eaten meat that was not shechted (slaughtered according to Torah Law). He loved them and had only had their best interests in mind. He spoke to their father in order to correct the situation."

"What's wrong with that?"
 "The Chofetz Chaim explains that one must tell the person directly about his fault. To tell someone else when you could have told the person himself is loshon hora (slander)."
 "I'm in suspense, Avi. What effect did these words have on Yosef's life?"
 "G-d made everything that Yosef said about his brothers happen to him. He called them slaves; therefore he was sold as a slave. He said that they were eating meat that was not shechted, therefore they shechted and animal and dipped his coat in its blood."
 "That's incredible. Every word that he said was measured, weighed, and then sent back to him."
 "Exactly, Chaim. That is what I mean by the measure of a word. Good words are stronger than the latest wonder drugs. They can make a person feel great, build up his confidence, even develop his talents. Bad words, G-d forbid, on the other hand can be more powerful than bombs and bullets. They can embarrass, depress, or even break a person. Yosef's words caused him to be sold as a slave, a pretty miserable fate."
 "We have to measure our words pretty carefully, Avi."
 "That's what I'm getting at Chaim. You received this measuring set for your birthday. I hope that it will always remind you, me, and everyone to always measure our words carefully before we say them. One of the rewards for guarding ones speech is a long life. In the merit of keeping this mitzvah, may you have many, many more birthdays."
 "Avi, those are beautiful words. I can see that you measure your words carefully before you say them. G-d should reward you measure for measure with a long, productive life."
 "Amen."

TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- 1 Who brought Yosef down to Egypt?
- 2 Where was Reuven when Yosef was sold?
- 3 In addition to the brothers, who else knew that Yosef was alive?
- 4 For how long did Yaakov mourn the loss of Yosef?
- 5 Who was Tamar's father?

Answer

1 37:28 - A caravan of Midianites. 2 37:29 - He was attending to Yaakov. 3 37:33 - Yitzchak. 4 37:34 - Twenty-two years. 5 38:24 - Shem.



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