

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT SHEMOT

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

WHAT'S BEHIND YOUR YAWN?

There are many mysteries in medicine, but one human and animal behaviour that has been observed for years but is poorly understood, is yawning.

There is no exact reason people yawn, but there are many theories.

Yawning clearly is associated with sleepiness and boredom. However, paradoxically, it is theorized that yawning is not a sign of sleepiness or boredom, but actually a reflex that your brain induces to wake you up or make you more alert. Yawning is associated with some hormones that are released that briefly increase the heart rate and alertness. So actually the reason that one yawns when tired or bored is the body's attempt to keep you alert and awake – if only for a brief time.

Another indisputable cause of yawning is called social empathy. What this means in plain English is "suggestion." If you see someone yawn, or if you read about yawning (like right now reading this) some people will yawn. In fact psychologists have proven that the more empathetic you are, the more likely you are to yawn when someone else does. There has been fascinating research about the hierarchy of this suggestion. If you are very close to a person emotionally, you will yawn if they do. The rank order of this suggestion is family, friend, stranger. The closer one is to the person who yawns, the more likely one is to yawn as well.

So when you next yawn, you should know that you might be showing empathy or in fact your body is attempting to wake you up!

Yawning must be a very Jewish movement and I will explain!

In this weeks Parsha we find Moshe

Rabenu was chosen as the leader to take the Bnei Yisrael out of Egypt.

What was behind this appointment and why was Moshe chosen above all else.

Moshe was humble and G-d fearing, yet there was one final test that made sure he would be the one chosen to lead the Bnei Yisrael.

The Midrash Shemot Rabbah (2:3) states that "G-d does not give anyone a large task before testing their ability with a small one."

Both King David and Moshe were both shepherds before they became great leaders. G-d watched the way they treated their flocks to determine if they were worthy to guide His people.

When Moshe grazed his flock, he deliberately led them beyond the grasslands. In the desert, where only the nomads dwelled, he knew that his sheep and goats would not eat crops that belonged to other people. Once, he noticed a lamb straying from the herd. He followed her until they arrived at a pool, where she drank thirstily. Moshe bent down, gently gathered the little lamb in his arms and placed her on his shoulders. "I did not know you strayed because you were thirsty. You must be tired," he said, and carried her back to the flock.

The Midrash explains (Shemot Rabba 2:2) that G-d knew then that Moshe was the man for the job. "Because you, Moshe, are merciful enough to guide a mortal's sheep, I promise you will eventually shepherd My flock, the Israelites."

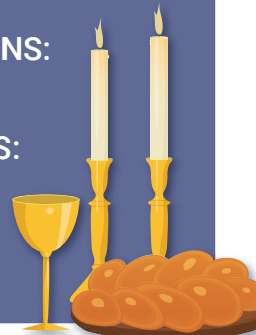
G-d then orchestrated a strange sight: a thornbush on top of Mount Sinai caught fire, but the branches did not burn. It worked; Moshe was intrigued. "I am going to stop what I am doing now and get a closer look at this spectacle! Why isn't the bush catching fire?"

Rabbenu Bechaya offers two interpretations. He quotes a Midrash that notes the Hebrew word for bush ("Sneh") is similar in

21ST TEVET 5783

SHABBAT BEGINS:
16:02pm

SHABBAT ENDS:
17:11pm



DVAR TORAH
What's behind your yawn?
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



DVAR TORAH
Parsha Insights
By Rabbi David Baadani



DVAR TORAH
Parshat Shemot
By Rabbi Danny Fisher



HALACHOT
By Rabbi Eli Mansour



KIDS ZONE
Quiz and Comic

Shabbat Shalom



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spelling to the Hebrew word "Sinai." This Midrash sees the Burning Bush, then, as a symbol of the fire which will burn atop Mount Sinai during the giving of the Ten Commandments.

On another level, Rabbenu Bechaya suggests that the image of the Burning Bush is a paradigm for all physical reality. Since the physical world is a product of G-dly, spiritual creation, it is logical to assume that the physical universe should be consumed by the overwhelmingly powerful spiritual flow emanating from G-d. The continued existence of the entire physical universe, therefore, is very much like the continued existence of this Burning Bush. Through the symbolism of the Bush, the Almighty gave His reassurance to sustain the world.

The Tosafot Daa't Zekanim also note that a bush cannot be used for idol worship and thus Moshe was hearing G-d's will from a medium that would be free of all spiritual pollution.

Rashi, however, sees the Burning Bush as a symbol of G-d's sheltering presence during times when the Jews will go through "burning difficulties." Just as the Bush is sustained because the Almighty supports its existence, so too will the Almighty support the Jewish people's survival in their time of need. G-d was caring and would be there for His people in all future predicaments.

This would match the reason Moshe was finally chosen. He was someone that cared so much for others. Not only did he care for people, but he had also shown how he managed and

cared for flock as well. But caring alone is not enough, one must act, and by Moshe approaching the burning bush he showed that he was ready to investigate and act even at a time of seeming danger.

Moshe showed us how we should not stand by idly when remarkable things are happening. We should act and by doing so we can change our lives.

Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein was mashgiach (spiritual counsellor) of Mir Yeshiva in Europe and later in Ponevezher Yeshiva in Israel.

He once entered a cab in Israel and the driver upon seeing such a spiritual giant, related that he once witnessed an open miracle. When secular Israelis finish their army service, they typically unwind by touring some exotic location. After his discharge, this cab driver had gone with a few of his friends to tour a mountainous region in Africa. One night, they awoke in their tent to hear one of their friends screaming in terror. The boy was enveloped by a huge boa constrictor, which was squeezing him to death.

They had no idea how to free their friend, and they were afraid to do anything to the snake, for fear that they would antagonize it and make it squeeze even harder. Facing what seemed to be inevitable, a member of the group told his friend, "I know that when Jews are about to die, they recite Shema. You should recite it now."

As soon as the ex-soldier screamed, "Shema Yisrael, G-d Elokeinu, G-d Echad," the snake unwound itself and slithered away into the darkness of

night.

"The miracle changed my friend's life," the cab driver concluded. "He went directly back to Israel and is now an observant Jew."

Rav Yechezkel did not look surprised and looked up at the driver and asked; "And what about you?"

"Me?" the driver responded in a quizzical tone.

"The Rabbi doesn't understand – the snake wasn't wrapped around me; it was wrapped around my friend."

We live in a miraculous world. Things are happening all around, unfortunately some like to view it as "it's happening to others," whilst the reality is even if it is, we should all recognise the big picture and come closer to G-d.

Yawning is a great phenomenon; the scientists are still baffled.

When you yawn, researchers think you may be communicating how you are feeling: whether you are tired, bored, or under mild stress. Some researchers think that yawning is an empathetic and social skill where we show that we connect with others.

We don't need to wait to yawn to connect to others. Rather, we have been given a wonderful characteristic where we can show care for others, and the world is given to those who share.

As we begin the book of Shemot (Exodus), let us focus on freeing ourselves so that we can share that freedom with others, remembering always that the more we share the more we have.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT SHEMOT

This week we start reading - The Book of Exodus שמות which is also called the Book of Redemption, as it deals with the redemption of Israel under Egyptian slavery.

Although the Book of Redemption is called ספר שמות which means the Book of names, we find that in the פרשה that describes the birth of the Saviour of Israel all the names have disappeared.

This is how the Torah describes the birth of Moses.

וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֵוִי וַיִּקַּח אֶת-בֵּת-לֵוִי... וַתֵּהָרֵם הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן... וַתַּצְבֵּב אַחֲתָו מִרְחֹק... וַתֵּרֶד בֵּת-פַּרְעֹה.

A certain man of the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman... The woman conceived and bore a son... And his sister stationed herself at a distance... The daughter of Pharaoh came down.

Why did the Torah not say, "and Amram went out and married Yochaved, and she gave birth to a son and named him Moses. His sister Miriam

stationed herself at a distance... and Batya the daughter of Pharaoh came down"?

Why did the Torah erase all the names from this section of the Parasha?

The Torah teaches us an important lesson here.

If it really was written, "And Amram went out and married Yochaved, and she bore a son and named him Moses. His sister Miriam stationed herself at a distance..." We could think that only a man born to a father who is the greatest of the generation like Amram and a righteous mother like

Yocheved, a brother to Miriam who received prophecy at the age of three is capable of being a leader, a saviour, and a faithful servant.

That is why there is no mention of their names in the Torah. So that we know that this is not what made Moshe the leader, but his care, and concern for the individual and the willingness to do everything in his power to alleviate his brother's

suffering. That is the reason he was chosen by G-d to lead the Jewish nation.

There are many times, the feeling of inadequacy is what stops us from doing the right thing, such as reaching out to help, saying a comforting word, and giving good advice.

'Who am I? What powers do I have? I'm not Moshe! I was not born to parents like Amram and Yocheved. I

just do not fit into in!'

Hashem tells you, "It does not matter where you came from. The main thing is, where you are willing to go". The desire, the readiness, and the courage to do the right thing, is what gives us the power to be an ambassador, and a messenger of the Divine, spreading light, hope and redemption.

Shabbat shalom.



RABBI DANNY FISHER

Director - TAL Boys After School Programs

פרשת שמות

In this week Sedra we find the end of an era as each of the שבטים passed away. As it says יומת יוסף וכל אחיו וכל הדור ההוא.

explains that even though יוסף had died the מצריים still respected the בני as long as some of the שבטים were alive. In fact the בני

were shown respect similar to that of the מצריים and were treated well. However once the דור of יוסף had passed away and a new דור began the מצריים started to enslave the בני.

The שיחת מוסר explains that as long as the בני respected themselves the מצריים couldn't enslave them. It was only once they fell from their מדריגה and became lower in their own eyes, that the מצריים

could subjugate them to hard work and slavery.

We can learn from here some incredible insights into the יצר הרע. The יצר הרע cannot attack a person, if that individual has self respect and כבוד for themselves recognising their own greatness. It is only once we have a negative impression of ourselves, and see ourselves as inadequate that the יצר הרע harms us.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

If One Remembers That He Forgot to Make a Beracha While Drinking

The Rishonim (Early authorities) discuss what to do if one took a sip of a beverage and before swallowing, remembers that he forgot to make a Beracha. They concur that he may not make a Beracha with his mouth full, yet they allow him to swallow the beverage, as spitting it out would ruin it.

The Poskim disagree as to what he should do after he swallows it. According to Rashi and Rabbenu Hannanel, after he swallows it, there is nothing more to do; he has missed the Beracha. On the other hand, the Rosh holds that he can still make a Beracha of Shehakol on the swallowed beverage retro-

actively. This is a rare case, in which there is an opinion that one can make a Beracha on a food "after the fact."

The Shulhan Aruch rules in accordance with Rashi and Rabbenu Hannanel that one does not make a Beracha after he swallows. The Rema rules in accordance with the Rosh. The Mishna Berura (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933) points out that the accepted practice of Ashkenazim is to follow Maran, and not the Rema.

Hacham Ovadia presents a Chidush (novel approach) as to what to do when the beverage is still in his mouth. He rules one may "think" the Beracha, without verbal-

izing it. Although, in general, "Hirhur" (thinking) is not tantamount to speaking, in this case there is no choice. Hacham Ovadia goes so far as to say that, based on that Beracha, he is allowed to continue drinking more beverages, without verbally articulating an additional Beracha.

SUMMARY

If one forgot to say a Beracha on a beverage, he cannot verbally recite it, while the liquid is in his mouth. He may "think" the words of the Beracha, and that would not only exempt the liquid in his mouth, but it would also cover any additional beverages he wants to drink.

KIDS zone

QUIZ TIME!



1

Why does the verse say "And Yosef was in Egypt?"

1:5 - This verse adds that despite being in Egypt as a ruler, Yosef maintained his righteousness.

2

Why did Pharaoh specifically choose water as the means of killing the Jewish boys? (Two reasons)

1:10,22 - He hoped to escape Divine retribution, as Hashem promised never to flood the entire world. Also, his astrologers saw that the Jewish redeemer's downfall would be through water.

3

"She saw that he was good." What did she see "good" about Moshe that was unique?

2:2 - When he was born, the house was filled with light.

4

Which Hebrew men were fighting each other?

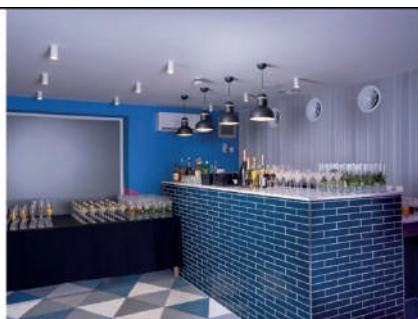
2:13 - Datan and Aviram.

5

Why did the Midianites drive Yitro's daughters away from the well?

2:17 - Because a ban had been placed on Yitro for abandoning idol worship.

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WEEKLY TIMETABLE



MONDAYS:

- 10am Yoga with Zule
- 11am Shiur with Zule
- 7pm Chavruta 6th Form
- 7:30pm Chavruta 19+
- 8pm Shiur 6th Form with Ruthie
- 8:30pm Shiur 19+ with Ruthie

TUESDAYS:

- 1-2-1 UCL Chavruta Learning Boys
- 4:30pm Bar Mitzva Learning

WEDNESDAYS:

- 10am-12pm Mother & Baby Program
- 12pm Lunch & Learn Immanuel College
- 4:30-6pm After School Club House
- 6-7:30pm After School Club Menorah
- 7:40-10pm Lads Chavruta Program



THURSDAYS:

- 12pm Immanuel Lunch & Learn
- 4:30pm Bar Mitzva Learning
- 6-7pm Krav Maga

SHABBAT

- 8:45am Shabbat Service with a hot Kiddush

SUNDAYS:

- 9:30am Pirkei Avot Zoom Shiur
- 10am-12pm Bat Mitzvah Program
- 6-7:30pm Chazanut Program



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