

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT BEHALOTECHA

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

ARE YOU MOSHE?!

Want to be a servant? Of course not, it's a tough job right?

Well there's another side to that argument.

The number of butlers registered with Greycoat Placements, the servants' employment agency, has almost doubled to more than 5,000 over the past five years.

It seems that demand is rampant and people are happy to work as butlers and servants.

A few years ago Buckingham palace even put an advert out searching for a new trainee butler. They were inundated with people wishing to work there.

Why is it so popular? Surely it's a very demanding job?

Our Sages have taught us that when someone becomes a servant of a powerful king or queen, then there are perks.

'A servant of a king is a king!'

Wherever the king goes, the servant accompanies him, staying in the most luxurious places in the world, eating of the most delicious food, surrounded by the most influential people in the world.

Being a servant can actually be exciting.

In this weeks Parasha we are taught about the ultimate servant of G-d. Moshe is termed Moshe Avdi – Moshe my servant – 'in my whole house he is loyal. Face to face I speak with him....' (Bamidbar 12:7-8). Hashem was addressing Miriam's speech with Aharon against Moshe's conduct.

The Pasuk continues later – 'why did you not fear to speak about my servant about Moshe.' The commentators are puzzled as to why there is a double superfluous statement. The torah didn't need to tell us again that Moshe was Hashem's servant. And even if it did need to repeat, surely it should have stated BeAvdi Moshe – and not BeAvdi BeMoshe.

The commentators explain that there are two types of personalities that are close to a king. First is his top minister. Whenever there are big decisions, he will confide in his minister.

The Minister will be there with him advising and implementing the kings will.

The second is the king's loyal servant. He too will be in attendance of the kings presence attending to the kings every will.

On the one hand the minister is higher up and can implement big decisions, yet on the other hand, he needs to wait to see the king. He needs to organise an official meeting.

The servant is a Ben Bayit – part of the kings house, he can enter and leave the kings presence whenever he sees fit.

The king understands that the servants every move is for his benefit.

Moshe was like a minister in Hashem's palace. He was the leader of Am Yisrael; he led them out of Egypt and encouraged them to keep Hashem's Mitzvot. But he was also an Eved Hashem – a servant that had the opportunity to enter and leave (so to speak) the Kings presence. He was BeAvdi (as a servant can enter at free will) and BeMoshe (like a minister and leader).

The Rambam (Hilchot Teshuva 5:2) states that every person Rauy Lihyot Tsadik KeMoshe – has the ability to be a Tsadik like Moshe Rabenu.

How is it possible to be as righteous as Moshe? The torah clearly states (Devarim 34:10) that there never will be a prophet as great as Moshe?

The Radak (Yehoshua 1:1) explains that an Eved Hashem is someone who puts all their actions and intentions at the will of Hashem. This Eved Hashem will leave even mundane things to be orchestrated by Hashem. He completely nullifies himself to his Master. Whatever he acquires, his Master acquires. This was who Moshe was.

Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman zts'l explains that every person can reach the same level of righteousness as Moshe. How?

By becoming a true servant of Hashem. When we work on nullifying our will to that of the Creator, then we are working hard to become his servant like Moshe achieved. That level of righteousness is open to all.

Regarding prophecy however, we will never be able to attain the same level of Moshe as he was granted special character traits and

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OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid



HALACHOT

By Rabbi Eli Mansour



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Quiz & Story



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strengths that enabled him reach that level.

In the year 5693 the Chafetz Chaim passed away. His student R Elchanan Wasserman zts'l, was asked to give a Hespded (eulogy).

A difficult task lay ahead, the Chafetz Chaim was the leader of the generation a light to the people, the author of many books which have shaped Jewish law and are used by all to this day.

He stood up and gave the Hespded with two words. Quoting the Pasuk - Vayomot Sham Moshe – EVED Hashem. (Devarim 34:5) R Elchanan explained that Moshe's entire life and essence was hidden in these two words.

What was the meaning of Eved Hashem? He asked. The Midrash Tanchuma (Lech Lecha 88) relates the following story.

There was once a rich man who had only one son. He cherished and looked after his son with all his love and the son was always there for him.

One day the man needed to travel for business and took with him his most

loyal servant. They travelled for a while amassing much wealth. But alas along the way, the man fell ill. He was worried he would die. What was he going to do?

If he wrote a will for his son, surely the servant would manipulate it and take all the wealth for himself.

He waited anticipating his healing, yet things got worse and he was forced to act. He called in his servant and told him – "you have been a worthy servant. Therefore I have decided to inherit everything to you. However, my son will be able to first choose one thing from my inheritance and then you can take the rest for yourself."

The servant was excited at the 'good' news and after the death of his master went to the son with the inheritance document in his hand, proving his claim to the family fortune.

The son was distraught at the news, and felt even more pain when hearing that he had been left only one thing from the inheritance of his fathers massive fortune. He went to a wise person for

advice as to what to do. The wise man explained to the son. "Your father was very intelligent. He knew that if he would have given you all his inheritance the servant would have taken everything for himself. Therefore he wrote out his entire inheritance to the servant, so that the servant would guard it as if it was his and allow you to choose one item.

When you get to the court, tell them that all you want to claim is the servant himself. He will be the item that you claim. And what the servant owns the master owns (Pesachim 88b)!"

Rabbi Elchanan finished his Hespded by saying that the Chafetz Chaim was an Eved Hashem, he nullified his will to that of the Creator. And his very essence was constantly carrying out the will of Hashem.

To be a servant of a king is a Zechut. To be able to enter the palace at will is of high value. This is what we have to strive to. As the Rambam states everyone has the ability to be a Tsadik like Moshe Rabenu!



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT BEHALOTECHA

The commentators are troubled why is it that we begin the Parasha of בהעלותך with the mitzvah of the kindling of the Menorah? Many of the commentators focus on the fact that it was that Aaron was a bit deflated that he was not part of the consecration ceremony.

But perhaps we can look at a different

reason, a different layer on what lighting the menorah is all about. Lighting the Menorah illuminates the situation, it turns darkness into light. When one lives their life in Menorah fashion, they are able to see things in a positive way, in a beautiful way, and in an illuminated way, which is resonant throughout the entire Parasha.

The נצי"ב states that the Cloud of glory turned into fire at night, it got illuminated. How can the same item be a cloud of glory at day and fire at night? It depends on your

perspective and Hashem helps you with this perspective. You'll be able to see the same cloud turning into fire at night when you're a person of a Menorah.

This is the lesson of the Menorah הנהרות when you're lighting up the Menorah, not only in the משכן and later in the בית המקדש but also in our own lives. Light the Menorah in your own life to illuminate all situations, to see the positive. When one sees the positive great things are around the horizon.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

FIRM COMMITMENT

Our parashah begins with the mitzvah of lighting the menorah – the candelabra, in the Bet Hamikdash – our holy Temple. It was the privilege of the Kohanim – the priests, to be entrusted with the daily service of preparing and lighting the menorah. The seven-branched menorah comprised of three lights on each side of its central stem, each side having its wicks pointing towards the middle flame. The Kohen would place sufficient oil in the lamps for them to burn from the

evening until the following morning. The central light, however, miraculously burnt until the next evening. This phenomenon acted as a testimony for all that G-d's divine presence resides amongst His people. The Torah then praises Aharon Hakohen for his consistency in the service of lighting the menorah, never veering from the given instructions. Every day, at the same time, irrespective of the situation or his feelings, Aharon did this service of G-d in the divinely-prescribed fashion. What is the message in that?

Although hopefully we live stable lives, situations, complications, happy moments, or pressurizing ones often do arise. The question is, what happens

under these circumstances to our good habits, conduct and performance of mitzvot? Do we lose our equilibrium and advertently or inadvertently forget, ignore, or even spurn our normal practices, or do we hold onto them?

We should try to hold on tightly to our acquired values, customs and conduct in all situations. The more we practice a good routine consistently, the more chance there is that we will continue this commendable conduct even during trying times. When necessary, we should endeavor to arrange to do what needs to be done around our regular duties and good routines.

The Gemara (Shabbat 31a) states that

when a person departs from this world, the heavenly tribunal will ask him six questions. One of them is: "Did you have a fixed schedule for learning Torah and stick to it?"

This illustrates how important it is for us to be steadfast in our commitment to mitzvot, and to endeavor to continue them under all circumstances. My father's gemara study group has met together weekly for the last sixty years. Apart from a person remaining dedicated to his own personally- attained spiritual

level and commitments, he should also ensure that he continues his heritage, customs and tradition that have been passed down through the generations. Whether a custom is attributed to a particular country, city, or community, or even to a particular family, if it has halachic basis, then it is incumbent upon every member of that group to perpetuate that given custom. The strength of our lineage and its future depends upon each link of the chain remaining loyal and unwavering to the

ways of the Torah. Our resolute unwillingness to veer from our customs is what has kept us together throughout the generations, whether as a family, community, or a nation.

Let us try to emulate those who set a fixed time for learning Torah, who have not missed a prayer in the last ten years, or a day calling their parents, by concretizing our commitment. Let us hold on to our customs, traditions and heritage, and merit being part of the eternal link that upholds our people and our Torah.



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid

The renowned Gaon, Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid, the Rabbi of Tetouan, was one of the most glorious personalities among the Gaonim of Morocco. Rabbi Yitzchak was born in 5557 (1796) and continued the magnificent line of the illustrious Ben Walid family. His entire life was devoted to elevating himself in the study of Torah and the Divine service. His invaluable book, Vayomer Yitzchak, a compilation of questions and responses, lends dignity to the libraries of the great Poskim, who come to draw from the source of his Torah, and who are guided in their every step by the judicial decisions of his work.

Rabbi Yechayia Ben Naim was one of Rabbi Yitzchak's students. He was the father of

the Gaon Rabbi Raphael Haim Moshe Ben Naim, well-known in all middle-eastern countries under the name of the HaRaha man (the merciful one).

The story goes that for many years Rabbi Yechayia Ben Naim (Rabbi Yitzchak's student) did not have a son. His teacher advised him to make undertake a pilgrimage to the tomb of the renowned Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan in Wazan in order that, by the merit of the Tzaddik, he could have a son. Rabbi Yechayia followed this advice, and soon afterwards a son was born that Rabbi Yechayia named Moshe. Later on, when the child fell ill, the name Raphael Haim was added to him.

Rabbi Haim Shemuel Convarti, the Chief Rabbi of the city of Tiberius, was the teacher of Rabbi Raphael Haim Ben Naim.

Rabbi Shemuel gave his approbation for Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid's book Vayomer Yitzchak, and he showered praise on the author, describing his greatness in Torah as miraculous. Among other things, Rabbi Shemuel described him as, "One of the last of the Great Assembly, the supreme and great Rabbi, a fortress and stronghold, a father of justice."

Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid was known as a holy man who performed miracles. During the month of Adar, on the day of his Hilloula, many Jews come out at night to reflect and pray on his tomb in Tetouan. Up to our days, the Jews of Morocco continue to venerate the name of Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid, and in Israel many institutions of learning bear the title Vayomer Yitzchak, named after Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Walid.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

DETACHING, SMELLING AND WATERING PLANTS ON SHABBAT

The Torah prohibition of "Tolesh" forbids detaching a fruit from its tree, or a plant from the ground, on Shabbat. One violates this prohibition by pulling a fruit off a tree even if he uses his weaker hand. Whereas normally performing an action with one's weaker hand relegates the violation to the level of "De'Rabbanan" (Rabbinic enactment), in the case of Tolesh, one violates the Biblical prohibition regardless of which hand he uses to remove the plant, since the use of the weaker hand has no significant effect on the nature of the act performed. In fact, one violates this prohibition even by biting the fruit off the tree. The Mishna Berura (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933) laments the

fact that many people in his time were unaware of this Halacha, and would bite fruit directly off trees on Shabbat. He goes so far as to recommend appointing guards in orchards on Shabbat to warn people not to commit this transgression.

As a safeguard against violations of Tolesh, the Sages enacted that one should not smell a fruit that it still attached to a tree on Shabbat, as one who smells the fruit might then detach it in order to eat it. However, Hacham Ovadia Yosef clarifies that this prohibition forbids only going up to a tree in order to smell a fruit; if one walks into an orchard, he is allowed to smell and enjoy the fragrance of the fruit, and one may even specifically recite the Beracha over fragrances and enjoy the smell of the orchard. Furthermore, this prohibition applies only to edible plants. It is entirely permissible to smell inedible fragrant plants – such as flowers or Hadasim – and one may even hold them with his hands (obviously, without detaching them) and

recite the Beracha over the fragrance.

It is forbidden to place flowers in water if this will cause the flowers to open. Thus, for example, one may not place roses in water on Shabbat unless they have already fully opened. Even though the flowers are, of course, already detached from the ground, it is nevertheless forbidden to put them in water in such a case, since this will have a significant impact upon their development. The Rama (Rav Moshe Isserles of Cracow, 1530-1572) rules that even if the flowers have opened, or even if the plants do not have flowers, one may place the flowers or plants in water only if they had been in that same water before Shabbat. Under no circumstances, according to the Rama, may one place plants in fresh water on Shabbat. Hacham Ovadia Yosef, however, based on the ruling of the Rashba (Rav Shlomo Ben Aderet of Barcelona, 1235-1310), rules that one may place plants in fresh water on Shabbat, unless this would cause the flowers to open. For example, it would be

permissible to place hadasim in fresh water. A vase of flowers is not Mukseh on Shabbat, and there is no reason to be concerned that moving them with their water will promote their growth in any way. Therefore, it is entirely permissible to move a vase with flowers on Shabbat.

Summary: It is forbidden to detach a fruit

from a tree on Shabbat with either hand, or by biting it directly from the tree. It is forbidden to smell a fruit that is attached to a tree on Shabbat, but one may smell inedible fragrant plants even though they are still attached to the ground. It is permissible to enjoy the fragrance of an orchard on Shabbat, as long as one does not go up to

trees to smell their fruit. One may place flowers or other plants in water on Shabbat, except in the case of flowers which have not yet opened, and will likely open as a result of being placed in water. It is permissible to move a vase of flowers or other plants on Shabbat.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Behalotecha

Aharon is taught the method for kindling the Menorah. Moshe sanctifies the levi'im to work in the Mishkan. They replace the firstborn, who were disqualified after sinning through the golden calf. The levi'im are commanded that after five years of training they are to serve in the Mishkan from ages 30 to 50. Afterwards, they are to engage in less strenuous work.

One year after the Exodus from Egypt, Hashem commands Moshe concerning the korban Pesach. Those ineligible for this offering request a remedy, and the mitzvah of Pesach Sheini – allowing them a "second chance" to offer the korban Pesach, one month later – is detailed. Miraculous clouds that hover near the Mishkan signal when to travel and when to camp. Two silver trumpets

summon the princes or the entire nation for announcements. The trumpets also signal travel plans, war or festivals. The order in which the tribes march is specified.

Moshe invites his father-in-law, Yitro, to join the Jewish People, but Yitro returns to Midian. At the instigation of the eruv rav – the mixed Egyptian multitude who joined the Jewish People in the Exodus – some people complain about the manna. Moshe protests that he is unable to govern the nation alone. Hashem tells him to select 70 elders, the first Sanhedrin, to assist him, and informs him that the people will be given meat until they will be sickened by it. Two candidates for the group of elders prophesy beyond their mandate, foretelling that Yehoshua instead of Moshe will bring the people to Canaan. Some protest, including

Yehoshua, but Moshe is pleased that others have become prophets. Hashem sends an incessant supply of quail for those who complained that they lacked meat. A plague punishes those who complained.

Miriam tries to make a constructive remark to Aharon, which also implies that Moshe is only like other prophets. Hashem explains that Moshe's prophecy is superior to that of any other prophet and punishes Miriam with tzara'at, as if she had gossiped about her brother. (Because Miriam is so righteous, she is held to an incredibly high standard.) Moshe prays for Miriam to be healed, and the nation waits until she is cured before traveling.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com



1 Toward which direction did the wicks of the menorah burn, and why?

8:2 - They leaned toward the middle wick so people wouldn't say that the menorah was lit for its light.

2 From what material and in what manner was the menorah made?

8:4 - It was hammered out from one solid piece of gold.

3 Moshe was commanded to cleanse the levi'im by sprinkling on them "mei chatat." What is "mei chatat"?

8:7 - Water containing ashes of the parah aduma.

4 Which three "tnufot" (wavings) are in the Parsha?

8:11 - The wavings of Kehat, Gershon and Merari.

5 Why did Hashem claim the firstborn of the Jewish People as His possession?

8:17 - Because in Egypt He spared them during makat bechorot.

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