

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



**PARSHAT
MATOT-MASEI**

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

MANY THOUGHTS!

You're late for a very important business meeting. The Chazan finishes the Amida – and you wait for the potential good news – no Tachanun. But it doesn't come!

You check your watch and decide time out. Off go the Tefilin and before you know it you're in the car on the way to the meeting.

Fate has it of course that every traffic light you seem to approach – turns red!

In an undertone you can hear yourself claiming – it wouldn't have made any difference if I would have stayed in Shul 5 extra minutes. (Of course it would have made all the difference as each extra minute with Tefilin and each Amen gains eternal reward!)

Shlomo Hamelech stated – Rabot Machshavot – "Many thoughts are in a man's heart, but Hashem's advice will prevail (Mishlei 19:21).

We think we are gaining by leaving early, but Hashem sometimes has a different plan.

In this week's Parasha, Moshe, was commanded to avenge the attack on the Children of Israel by the Midianites before his death. Rashi comments that even though Moshe knew that his death would follow, he did this with joy and did not procrastinate.

We can ask, how did Rashi know that Moshe acted joyfully? Perhaps he felt sadness and only did this because of G-d's command.

The "Kli Yakar" (Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim of Lunshitz) explains that the answer can be found in the changes Moshe made when repeating G-d's words. Whereas G-d said: "Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites; afterward you shall be gathered unto your people," Moshe changed his words and said: "...execute Hashem's vengeance on Midian". Moshe said to himself: If I repeat the words as they were spoken, that they should go to war with Midian for their own honour and afterwards I will be gathered up unto my people, the Children of Israel will say: We forego the vengeance and let Moshe not die! Therefore Moshe changed the wording and said: "... Hashem's vengeance on Midian." The vengeance is for the honour of the Almighty, and this you cannot forego.

This type of message can only result from joy, not sadness.

Our sages, who expressed Moshe's greatness, mention in that same Midrash that not everyone merits rising to such a high level. Even a spiritual giant like Yehoshua did not achieve that degree of selflessness demonstrated by Moshe.

Our sages taught: It is written in Yehoshua (1:5) "As I was with Moshe, so will I be with you."

Yehoshua should have lived 120 years like Moshe! Why was his life shorter by 10 years? When G-d told Moshe: "Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites; afterward you shall be gathered unto your people," and even if this heralded Moshe's death, he acted quickly "and Moshe sent them". But when Yehoshua was about to fight against the 31 kings, he said "If I kill them immediately, I will die right away, just like Moshe or teacher. What did he do? He delayed the war with them, as it is written (Yehoshua 11): "Yehoshua made war a long time with all those kings."

G-d said to him: "Have you done everything? Behold, I will shorten your life by 10 years." (Bamidbar Rabba 22)

Yehoshua thought that he would prolong the war and live longer. Hashem wasn't happy with this conduct and the opposite occurred. So said Shlomo "Many thoughts are in a man's heart, but G-d's counsel will prevail." (Mishlei 19:21):

In fact on a deeper level, throughout Jewish history these famous words have rung out, symbolising G-d's Guiding Hand in our eventful history.

The entire exile to Egypt was as a result of Yosef going out to look for his brothers.

There were no GPS's in those days. He was not looking for a specific address. He was out in the field in the middle of nowhere.

Yosef should have gone back to Yaakov and told him "I tried to find them but I was not successful. They were nowhere to be found."

But the Almighty wanted Yosef to find his brothers and a man found him and behold he was blundering in the field..." (Bereishit 37:15) Yosef was 'found' by a man who helped guide him to his brothers.

He went off to see them, they sold him to Egypt and the rest is history.

The Ramban on this Pasuk " says four very important words: HaGezeira Emet V'haCharitzut Sheker. When G-d wants something to happen, He makes it happen!

HaGezeira Emet - what G-d has decreed is true (it will happen), V'haCharitzut Sheker and the

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SHABBAT BEGINS:

20:58pm

SHABBAT ENDS:

22:13pm



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DVAR TORAH

Many Thoughts!

By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



DVAR TORAH

Parshat Matot-Masei

By Rabbi David Baadani



DVAR TORAH

Money equals Happiness?

By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Meir Horowitz



HALACHOT

By Rabbi Eli Mansour



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Quiz & Story



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diligence of man is false.

Man can plan and do this and that but in the final analysis, if G-d wants something to happen, it will happen and if He does not want it to happen, it will not happen.

This is Jewish history. This is the whole story of the exile to Egypt. It was all hanging on Yosef finding his brothers.

Once in the depth of servitude in Egypt, we see that Pharaoh wanted to get rid of the Jewish boys. He decreed that all male children be thrown into the Nile.

Pharaoh stated – Hava Nitchakma Lo Pen Yirbeh - Let's come up with a plan lest they increase in population... R Shlomo Zalman Auerbach Zts'l explained that the numeric value (Gematria) of this phrase is 918.

Pharaoh wanted to bring down our population; G-d has a different plan: Vayomer Lahem Elokim Pru Urvu... - and G-d said to them: Be fruitful and multiply. This also has a numerical value of 918.

And so it was that G-ds plan overrode Pharaohs plan.

Similarly when it came to Moshe's birth – Pharaoh was told by his astrologers that the saviour of the Jewish people would be born. He decreed that every male baby be thrown into the river. And it was – even Moshe Rabenu himself was thrown into the Nile as an infant.

Pharaoh decreed – Kol Haben Hayilod Hayora Tashlichu – numerical value of 1154. And Hashem had other plans – but

G-d's counsel will prevail - Atsat Hashem Hi Takum – 1154.

Pharaoh's own daughter came down just then to bathe, saved Moshe, and he was raised in Pharaoh's own palace. It was as a result of his own plan that the future Jewish leader was raised not as a slave, but as a prince who learned the protocols of leadership.

It is only when we tap into and connect ourselves to Hashem, that we are able to attach to the infinite. Hashem has been with us and will always be with us throughout history. If we make our will like the will of the creator – we cannot fault.

Many are the thoughts in the hearts of man, and G-d's plan is what emerges.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT MATOT-MASEI

אלה מסעי בני ישראל...

These were the journeys of the Israelites..

וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מוֹצְאֵיהֶם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם עַל־פִּי ה' - Moses recorded the starting points of their various journeys as directed by 'H'.

The 'Degel Machane Efraim' writes in the name of his grandfather the 'Ba'al Shem Tov': "Know that everyone from the day of their birth until they return to the next world goes through 42 journeys. The day of the exodus from Egypt corresponds to the day a person is born, up until they reach the promised land, their own redemption and perfection. Life is full of tests and trials, journeys, and upheavals. This happens for one's benefit, because these are the trials one needs to go through to reach

perfection, to receive the ultimate gift, the spiritual land of Israel, and their personal redemption.

One of the 'places' in the journey is a place called 'Kivrot hatta'avah', 'The Grave of Lust' which is a place where a person should bury all their lust due to their closeness to G-d. Another 'place' is called 'Tabera' where one's heart should burn in love of G-d. And this is אֶלֶּה מַסְעֵי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל - this is the journey of the Israelites.

וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מוֹצְאֵיהֶם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם עַל־פִּי ה' -

The 'Or HaChaim' explains that the Torah comes to teach us that the journey of the Israelites was written in the notebook of Moses during the forty years that they stayed in the desert, and after that G-d commanded him to write it in the Torah.

Rabbi David of Lelov says: 'Just as Moses wrote the journey of the Israelites, so does

Elijah the prophet write all the journeys and adventures of each individual Jew. At the time of redemption, it will be a book from which one will learn and understand all that they have gained and corrected in what happened to them. It will focus on how they managed to bury their unwieldy lusts in the graves of lust, and how they got their hearts burn in the love of G-d. This is how each person goes through all the journeys throughout their life.

This is the journey of the Israelites - אֶלֶּה מַסְעֵי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל this is your journey, a journey worthy of being written, a journey that will be remembered for generations, your personal journey with all its ups and downs. The pleasant times and the challenging hours, moments of happiness alongside thoughts of despair, all are steps, and journeys leading you to your own salvation, perfection, and promised land.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

MONEY EQUALS HAPPINESS?

Two of the twelve tribes, Reuven and Gad, came to Moshe Rabbenu with a request. They had a lot of cattle, and although the Jewish People were due to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land, they wanted to settle down on the east side of the river, where there would be plenty of green pasture for their animals to graze on. During the ensuing discussions, they suggested to Moshe Rabbenu that they

would build enclosures there for their sheep and cattle, and... cities for their children (Matot 32:16). Moshe Rabbenu picked up on the fact that they gave precedence to their earthly possessions over their children. He told them (ibid. 32:24) that they must first build cities for their children, and then, enclosures for their cattle. In fact, our Sages tell us that as a result of these two tribes attaching too much importance to their physical wealth, they did not see blessing from their possessions.

So, what is the correct way to view our physical assets? It may be true that "money makes the world go round", but it does not create happiness. Giddy over-spending on

extravagant luxuries doesn't make anyone happy. Certainly, money enables a person to attain his needs and have the peace of mind that he can sustain himself and his family to live conveniently and efficiently, without overstretching his budget. Yet, it is only a means and not a goal.

Conversely, one should never despise money or treat it "cheaply", as it is a very important commodity, one that enables man to live and do the mitzvot of Hashem. On the contrary, our Sages teach us that the money of the righteous is very dear to them, as we find that when our forefather Yaakov forgot some small utensils during one of his journeys, he went back to retrieve them.

This is because money that is earned without transgressing any prohibitions, such as stealing, lying, charging forbidden-interest, overcharging, tale-bearing, giving bad advice or entering into an argument, is hard to come by. Moreover, it is a gift from Hashem and is to be used appropriately. Money that is earned in a "kosher" way is a spiritual acquisition.

We may ask: How much money do we need to live on? There is no given answer for this, as every person's needs are different. However, when a person oversteps his needs, he will find that he cannot meet his expectations and is in the difficult position of not being able to support himself and his

family. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us to understand what our needs are, by thinking about our individual requirements, without looking "over our shoulders" at how our neighbours or friends are living. Additionally, when seeking to increase our wealth over what we presently have, we may be just creating a situation where we will have more worries about how to control and take care of our additional assets. The truly rich person is one who is happy with his financial standing. One who continually seeks more shows that he is essentially poor, being constantly dissatisfied with his lot. A multimillionaire, who lost all his wealth recently, told me that all he wants

now is a simple job to be able to provide his basic needs.

When discussing our individual needs and how much to spend, we should know that our yearly budget, what we are going to gain or lose, is decided for each individual on Rosh Hashanah. The exception to this, however, is what we spend on doing mitzvot. Whether it is buying a beautiful etrog, tefillin, enhancing Shabbat, educating our children or helping out the needy, that is not included in our predestined income. Hence, the more we cherish G-d's commandments and spend on them to fulfil them properly, the more means we will be given to do so.



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Meir Horowitz – The Dzikover Rebbe

Rabbi Meir Horowitz Zatzal was the son of Rabbi Eliezer Zatzal, the Dzikover Rebbe, who was the son of the holy Rabbi Naphtali of Ropshitz. In his youth, Rabbi Meir was known as a genius who could absorb raw information in an astonishing way. He worked in secret, elevating himself in Torah and Chassidut to such an extent that many said he was the pillar of Torah in his generation. After the death of his father, Rabbi Meir took upon himself the yoke of leading the

community. Thousands gathered around him, and every Shabbat he had three tables at which he related his Torah insights. These talks were later printed in his Torah commentary Imrei Noam, a book that was accepted as authoritative throughout the Diaspora. All during his life, Rabbi Meir said that a person must live in order to know how to die. In fact something extraordinary is said to have happened just before he died. On Tammuz 8, 5637, he suddenly sat in his chair and said: "Today there will be a sign." A few moments later he said, "The

soul is Yours and the body is Your work. Have pity on Your work." At that instant his soul departed in holiness and purity towards the light of life, a light reserved for the tzaddikim in the World to Come.

Rabbi Meir Horowitz left behind sons who were well-known tzaddikim, namely Rabbi Naphtali Chaim, Rabbi Yechiel, Rabbi Aaron, Rabbi Asher, Rabbi Tuvia, and Rabbi Yehoshua (who succeeded his father as the Dzikover Rebbe). Rabbi Meir's son-in-law was Rabbi Israel Hager, the Rebbe of Viznitz and author of Ahavat Israel. May his merit protect us all.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

COMBING HAIR ON SHABBAT

The Shulhan Aruch (Orah Haim 303) explicitly forbids combing one's hair on Shabbat, given that combing invariably results in the removal of some hairs from the head (listen to audio recording for precise citation). Pulling hair from one's head on Shabbat falls under the category of Gozez – shearing. During the construction of the Mishkan, the hair of animals was removed from the skin as part of the process of preparing the skin for use in the Mishkan. Since the Shabbat prohibitions are modeled after the categories of work done in the construction of the Mishkan, it is similarly forbidden to remove hair from one's head on Shabbat. As a result, one may not comb his hair, as this always

causes hairs to be removed.

At first glance, one might argue that this should be permissible on Shabbat due to the principle of "Melacha She'ena Sericha Le'gufa." This principle makes an exception in cases where the person's action is not intended for the purpose of the Melacha (forbidden act). Here, the individual's intent is to comb his hair, not to remove hair, and this would therefore seemingly qualify as a "Melacha She'ena Sericha Le'gufa." The Ran (Rabbeinu Nisim of Gerona, Spain, 1290-1380), however, refutes this argument, noting that in the original Melacha of Gozez, during the construction of the Mishkan, the intent was not the removal of the animal's hair per se. The hair was removed for the purpose of preparing the skin, and not to use the hair. Therefore, since the model of Gozez is a case where the act was not performed for the purpose of hair removal, the prohibition similarly applies to all cases of hair

removal, even if this is not the person's objective or intent.

Another argument that could be raised is the fact that one has no interest in removing hair while combing. His concern is not that hairs should fall, but rather that he look presentable, and therefore perhaps it should be permitted. The Sha'ar Ha'siyun (notes to the Mishna Berura by that work's author, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, 1839-1933), however, notes that since one cannot comb his hair without causing hairs to fall, he is considered as though he wants the hairs to fall, and combing is therefore forbidden.

The Mishna Berura cites the Yeshu'ot Yaakov as decrying the fact that so many people are unaware of or unwilling to accept the prohibition against combing hair on Shabbat (listen to audio recording for precise citation). The Yeshu'ot Yaakov condemns these people as willful Shabbat violators who actively

desecrate the Shabbat by combing their hair. The Mishna Berura exhorts Rabbis to teach their congregations about this prohibition, so that hopefully at least some people will be alerted to this issue and will refrain from combing their hair on Shabbat. One should therefore arrange his hair on Shabbat with either his hands, or with a soft-bristle brush that does not uproot hairs. Women must also be instructed to comb their hair with only

soft-bristle brushes, and not with regular combs. Interestingly, the Maharam Shick (1807-1879) wrote that if a person appears in the synagogue on Shabbat with combed hair, he is classified as a public Shabbat violator, as he must have violated the prohibition of combing hair on Shabbat. We, however, do not follow this view, given the possibility of combing in permissible fashion, as discussed. A

person who appears with combed hair may be given the benefit of the doubt that he combed his hair through permissible means. In any event, this is a Halacha of which many people are unfortunately unaware, and something that we should all be mindful of. **Summary:** It is strictly forbidden to comb one's hair on Shabbat, except with one's hands or with a soft-bristle brush. This applies to both men and women.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

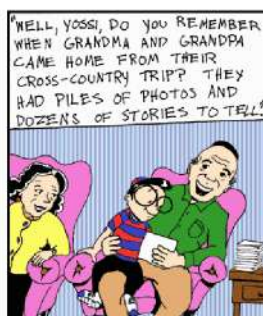
Parshat Matot

Moshe teaches the rules and restrictions governing oaths and vows, especially the role of a husband or father in either upholding or annulling a vow. The Bnei Yisrael wage war against Midian. They kill the five Midianite kings, all the males and Bilaam. Moshe is upset that women were taken captive. They were catalysts for the immoral behavior of the Jewish People. He rebukes the officers. The spoils of war are counted and apportioned.

The commanding officers report to Moshe that there was not even one casualty among the Bnei Yisrael. They bring an offering that is taken by Moshe and Elazar and placed in the Ohel Mo'ed (Tent of Meeting). The Tribes of Gad and Reuven, who own large quantities of livestock, petition Moshe to allow them to remain on the eastern side of the Jordan River and not enter the western Land of Israel. They explain that the land east of the Jordan is quite suitable grazing land for their livestock. Moshe's

initial response is that this request will discourage the rest of the Bnei Yisrael, and that it is akin to the sin of the spies. They assure Moshe that they will first help conquer the Land of Israel, and only then will they go back to their homes on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Moshe grants their request on condition that they uphold their part of the deal.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com



1 Who may annul a vow?

30:2 - Preferably, an expert in the laws of nedarim. Otherwise, three ordinary people.

2 When may a father annul his widowed daughter's vows?

30:10 - If she is under 12 and 1/2 years old and widowed before she was fully married.

3 Why were the Jewish People not commanded to attack Moav, as they were to attack Midian?

31:2 - Because Moav only acted out of fear against the Jewish People. Also, Ruth was destined to come from Moav.

QUIZ TIME!

4 Those selected to fight Midian went unwillingly. Why?

31:5 - They knew that Moshe's death would follow.

5 What holy vessels accompanied the Jewish People into battle?

31:6 - The aron and the tzitz.

MOTHERS & BABIES

10am Shiur for mums with Rebbetzin Ruthie Halberstadt - Babies welcome!

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