

# THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
TAL Founder & Director

## THE BILLION DOLLAR PURIM!

We live in the billion generation. A billion is a difficult number to comprehend, but let's try to put that figure in perspective: A billion seconds ago, it was 1959. A billion minutes ago, the Roman Empire was in full swing. A billion hours ago, our ancestors were living in the Stone Age. And.... A billion dollars ago, was only 8 hours and 20 minutes at the rate Washington spends!

We live in a blessed generation. With the onset of technology, people are able to build up businesses and sell them within years for billions. Recently Facebook bought messaging app WhatsApp in a deal worth a total of \$19bn (£11.4bn) in cash and shares! Wow! What makes these companies run, how do they start and what ensures success. Perhaps the key lies within the story of Purim! Times were difficult for the Jewish nation in Persia. Haman with the help of King Achashverosh had sent out an edict to destroy the entire Jewish Nation in One Day! In the twelfth year of Achashverosh's reign on the thirteenth day of Nissan, Haman sent out a letter in the name of the king to the vast empire of Persia: "On the thirteenth of Adar, destroy, annihilate, and lay to waste the entire Jewish nation – every man woman and child." But the Jewish Nation had a special card to play. Hashem had brought forward the cure before the illness – the new Queen of the land, was none other than Esther a righteous Jewish lady. The Midrash tells us that Mordechai was told about this decree by Eliyahu HaNavi. He was informed that it wasn't Haman alone who signed the decree; HASHEM orchestrated these events because of the sins of Klal Yisrael. Mordechai immediately directed Esther to see the king and beg him to have mercy on her people. [Esther said:] "Go and assemble all the Jews who are present in Shushan and fast on my behalf. Neither eat nor drink for three days, day and night. My maidens and I will also fast in a like manner, and then I will go to the king –

contrary to the law. And if I perish, I perish. So Mordechai passed and did all that Esther had commanded him." Esther requested that the Jews fast for three days before her going in to see the king. Mordechai agreed and set the next three days as a time for fasting and Teshuvah. Our Sages question the words 'Mordechai passed' – what did he pass? Rashi explains that the second day of that fast was the fifteenth of Nissan – Pesach. That meant that when they fasted for three days, it overlapped (passed) with the festival of Pesach. That year, instead of drinking four cups of wine and eating matzah, the Jewish people fasted. This was not a simple task, for the Torah clearly commands us to eat Matzot, Marror. We can understand why Mordechai initiated the fast – it was a time of Pikuach Nefesh – the Jewish Nation was in danger and hence it was permitted to put aside the important mitsvot of Pesach in order to fast and gain forgiveness from Hashem. But why the urgency? The edict was not take place for more than eleven months. Surely they could have kept the mitsvot of Pesach, eaten Matsot, celebrated the Seder and then after Pesach had finished, they could have gathered all the Jews to fast for three days. Why the insistence to fast now? A few years ago Microsoft was in trouble. The kind of trouble that we would love to be in! They had excess cash on their balance sheet of about \$40 billion dollars. Apparently they didn't need it for research and development or for marketing. It was deemed by investors as a waist of resources. At the time the CEO and founder of Microsoft – Bill Gates was interviewed. He was asked about his incredible wealth and success. The conversation turned to how he had started out. He responded, "I was in the right place at the right time, and luck has something to do with that." He then continued, "In fact there were a lot of people at the same place, but I had vision." He paused and then said "Many people had vision, but the difference is I took massive and immediate action".

## PURIM AT TAL

SHABBAT, 13TH ADAR II 5784

- Shabbat Begins 17:59pm
- Mincha & Kabalot Shabbat 17:49pm
- Shacharit 8.45am
- Arvit and Megila 19.30pm

SUNDAY 24TH MARCH

- Shacharit & Kriat Hatorah 8.00am
- Followed by Reading of Megila*
- Lechaim at Rabbi Tawil 11-1pm
- TAL Purim Seuda 5.00pm



**DVAR TORAH**  
The Billion Dollar Purim!  
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



**DVAR TORAH**  
Parsha Insights  
By Rabbi David Baadani



**DVAR TORAH**  
What is Holiness?  
By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem



**OUR CHAHAMIM**  
Rabbi Chaim Hizkiyahu Medini



**HALACHOT**  
By Rabbi Eli Mansour



**KIDS ZONE**  
Purim Joke, Recipe & Comic

TAL and all the community wishes  
*Daniel Saidi and family*  
Mazal Tov on his Bar Mitzvah

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

In those days the world had just witnessed its first PC. Bill Gates was one of the few that had a vision, he foresaw the ability for this PC to one day be a part of every household.

That idea is commendable, but an idea alone without action eventually evaporates. He developed the idea and created software for the future PC placing him (in terms of wealth) the richest man on earth. Every great accomplishment in history began with an idea.

But an idea alone is useless unless put it into action.

The difference between those that succeed and those that are left on the side lines are that the successors take immediate action. There are times in life that we are motivated and times when we are down.

The key is to seize the moment and put it

into concrete action.

The Mesilat Yesharim (Perek 7) states: "There is no danger as great as the danger of time".

All you have to do to ensure you never realise your ambitions is to let time cool them down; let time pass and it will become more and more difficult to pursue.

Back to Mordechai:

The Jews had just heard about the most terrible decree. They were frightened and devastated.

Mordechai understood that it was important to play immediately on their emotions, to help bring forth a serious and successful Teshuva. He therefore decreed that everyone should fast straight away, even if that meant forgoing on the Mitsvot of Pesach.

Such was the turnaround of the generation,

that everyone headed to his call, fasted, prayed and repented, ensuring a Hitaruta Deletata – an awakening from down below on earth, that caused the evil decree to be abolished and the success of the Jewish Nation.

For us billions is not a value for how many dollars we have, it's a value to our actions and servitude of G-d.

We all have great ideas, we all have sparks of spirituality that are fired up on occasions, especially on Purim – lets seize the moment! Develop that idea, join one of the many programs available to you in your community and create a brighter future.

Mordechai's seizing the moment and quick decree, coupled with the peoples actions of repentance helped us be here today. Now that's worth much more than billions!



## RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

### PURIM INSIGHTS

It said about Purim, הַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה נִזְכָּרִים וְנִבְעָשִׂים. 'These days are recalled and observed'. Before we get to Purim, in order to prepare the כלים, the vessels to be able to contain the tremendous קדושה of Purim we should prepare ourselves especially in these three days before Purim, same as the

זכור את שבועות before שלושת ימי הגבלה אשר עשה לך עמלק. Remember what Amalek did to you. How does Amalek affect your life. עמלק גימטריה ספק, doubts. The doubts in your belief, the doubts you have in your abilities as חלק אלוהי, as a part of the Divine. Etc.

Another Amalek is hinted in the פסוק וְצֵא וְהָלַחְתָּ בְּעַמְלֶק מִחֵר, 'Go out and do battle with Amalek. Tomorrow'. This type of Amalek causes you to postpone things for later, that

sometimes never comes.

We should start now, we should take some time to reflect on what Amalek does to you and how we can fight back. First by recognising where your battlefield is, then by praying for help from הקב"ה. And בשם ה' נעשה ונצליח. To be זוכה to a great שמחה as our Sages said: אין בעולם שמחה כהתרת. There is no joy like the resolution of doubts. Amen.



## RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

### What is Holiness?

In the book of Bereshit we learned about how our forefathers – the pioneers of our nation, acted to perfect their characters. The book of Shemot relates about our enforced slavery in Egypt, which in retrospect, taught us the trait of subservience. All of these character improvements were, in fact, a necessary prerequisite for our acceptance of the Torah, which requires good character traits. The book of Shemot finishes off by describing, in great detail, the building of the Mishkan – the Tabernacle, and some of the avodah – service that was to be carried out there by the Kohanim, Levites and Israelites.

The book of Vayikra, which contains the most mitzvot of any of the five books of the Torah, deals mainly with the practical issue of doing G-d's commandments. In essence, the purpose of all the mitzvot is to elevate the level of holiness of our nation as a whole, and of each person

individually. This is true, whether the mitzvot are related to the actual service of the Mishkan, i.e. the offering of different types of animals or birds, wine or flour, or whether they are the other mitzvot of Hashem, which comprise of those "between man and G-d", those "between man and his fellow man", or those "between man and himself".

Apart from the general concept that all mitzvot generate holiness, there is a specific commandment of "kedoshim tiheyu" – you shall be holy (Vayikra 19:2). What is kedushah – holiness, and how do we attain it? Rabbi Shimon Shkop (in the introduction to his classic work Sha'arei Yosher) explains that this mitzvah of being holy is the foundation and root of all that we should be aiming for in our lives. Holiness, he says, is the dedication of all the input and effort that we put into our thoughts, words and actions, to be for the good of others, whether an individual or a community. When a person makes this his goal and

aspiration, then even what he does essentially for himself, e.g. eating, taking caring of his needs etc. are all really to enable others to gain from him. By making this our goal, we are following in G-d's ways. He created the world as a medium for giving, so too, our goal should be to imitate this and live a life of giving.

Within our various relationships, whether with Hashem or with other human beings, like between husband and wife, parent and child etc., opportunities constantly arise for us to give. When we give in these situations, often we will reap immediate gains, like a sense of good feeling because of what we did or perhaps being shown appreciation. However, more often than not, our input doesn't produce any immediate, tangible results and it may seem to us that we did it for nothing. We may come to feel that "we can't be bothered" doing our daily quota of Torah learning, praying or even giving to our spouse. We may think:

"even if I help out by washing the dishes, I may not be thanked for it!" "If I get up early to make scrumptious sandwiches for my son, he may just tell me afterwards that he wanted egg and not tuna!" In situations like these a person's ability to give selflessly, without expecting returns, is being tested.

Actually, any positive input that a person does will gain returns, even if it only becomes apparent "way down the line". An example of this is one's child's education, which requires years of constant input. There may be very gradual progress, with results only becoming apparent years later. One may find the same, regarding

other relationships as well. Moreover, by doing for others, we are nurturing and polishing our spiritual essence, even if the returns will never become visible. We become more refined, less egotistical and more selfless when our life's ambition is to live for others. This is the epitome of holiness.



## OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Chaim Hizkiyahu Medini, "Author of Sdei Hemed"

Rabbi Hizkiyahu Medini's books provide an abundance of principles concerning Halachah, both in general and in detail, and reference a great many authors from different eras. He was great in Torah and deeds, and the great authorities of our time cannot make do without his works. We will cite one story that he himself recounted as to the origin of his wisdom.

Rabbi Hizkiyahu once told a friend that in his youth he did not have any particular talents. The sources of wisdom had only opened for him when he was older because of a certain incident.

"When I was a young avrech," began the Sdei Hemed, "I studied in a kollel financed by a wealthy man, and which was located in his own home. At that time I was not among the most brilliant minds in the kollel, however I learned with great diligence and steadily progressed in my studies. One of the students of this group became jealous and set a trap for me. Every morning a cleaning lady came to work in the Beit Midrash. He bribed her to publicly accuse me of trying to seduce her when she arrived

in the Beit Midrash to do her work in the early morning. One day, as soon as this woman arrived in the Beit Midrash, she began to scream and accuse me of disgraceful behavior. Everyone immediately gathered about, and I was accused of hypocrisy and insulted over and over again. It was a tremendous desecration of G-d's Name. Unable to tolerate such shame, I was forced to flee. The Rosh Kollel did not believe the cleaning lady, and he fired her.

"After a certain time, when the cleaning lady had exhausted all the money that she had made with her accusations, she came to beg my forgiveness for the tremendous wrong that she had done. She promised me that she would publicly recount the truth and state that it was all a plot, that one of the avrechim had given her money to accuse me.

"Given that she had no longer any livelihood, she implored me to do all that I could, once she had cleared my name, to help her get her job back.

"At that moment," said the Sdei Hemed, "I was confronted with a tremendous dilemma. On one side, I was happy with this unexpected opportunity to see my name

cleared of this terrible accusation and to have everything put back in order. I almost agreed to her request, yet at the same time the complete opposite thought came to me. A terrible desecration of G-d's Name had already occurred, and if the actual story were to become known, there would be yet another one due to the shameful conduct of the avrech. Not only that, but he himself would suffer a terrible fate. Consequently, it was preferable that I continue to bear my shame in silence than to provoke a new scandal. The decision was very hard to make, and my thoughts were jostling against one another in my head as I changed my mind from one minute to the next. Finally, I decided to tell the cleaning lady that I would push myself to speak in her favor, but I absolutely forbid her to tell anybody about the bribe.

"At the time that I took this difficult decision, one that risked endangering my entire future in the world of Torah," concluded the Sdei Hemed, "I felt the sources of wisdom opening before me. Instead of the damage that my choice should have caused me, I had merited great Heavenly assistance, one that has led me until my present situation."



## HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Halachot (LAWS) OF GIVING GIFTS ON PURIM

1) Mishloach Manot is fulfilled by sending two types of ready-to-eat food to at least one friend. This mitzvah should be performed on Purim day itself.

2) There is a custom to send Mishloach Manot through a third person messenger, since the word Mishloach is related to the word for messenger, Shaliach.

3) Matanot La'evyonim is fulfilled by giving money to at least two poor people on the day of Purim. The gift should at least equal the value of a fast-food meal.

4) This is not a "family" obligation, but rather each person should perform the mitzvah themselves.

5) The money needn't be given directly to a poor person, but can be given to a community representative – as long as the money is actually distributed to the poor on Purim day.

6) Matanot La'evyonim is a special mitzvah, not to be included in the amount of money a person sets aside for charity during the rest of the year.

7) Maimonides writes that it is inappropriate to buy expensive Mishloach Manot, if this will come at the expense of larger gifts to the poor.

The Chasam Sofer adds that prayers on Purim are so powerful that G-d answers any heartfelt prayer on this special day –

even if we don't deserve it. He bases his idea on the words of the Ritv"a.

The Ritv"a in his commentary to Megillah 7a quotes the Talmud Yerushalmi which explains regarding the fulfillment of the obligation to give matanot La'evyonim, gifts to the poor, on Purim, that "Kol Ha'posheit Yado Leetol Yitnu Lo - we give to anyone who extends his hand to receive".

This is to say that on this festive day we give money to everyone who asks, without first checking to see if they truly are poor and worthy of receiving tzedakah funds.



# WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

## Parshat Vayikra

The Book of Vayikra (Leviticus), also known as Torat Kohanim – the Laws of the Priests – deals largely with the korbanot (offerings) brought in the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting). The first group of offerings is called a korban olah, a burnt-offering. The animal is brought to the Mishkan's entrance. For cattle, the person bringing the offering sets his hands on the animal. Afterwards, it is slaughtered, and the kohen sprinkles its blood on the Altar. The animal is skinned and cut into pieces. The pieces are

arranged, washed and burned on the Altar. A similar process is described involving burnt-offerings of other animals and birds. The various meal-offerings are described. Part of the meal-offering is burned on the Altar, and the remaining part is eaten by the kohanim. Mixing leaven or honey into the offerings is prohibited. The peace-offering, part of which is burned on the Altar and part eaten, can be from cattle, sheep or goats. The Torah prohibits eating blood or chelev (certain fats in animals). The offerings that atone for inadvertent sins committed by the

Kohen Gadol, by the entire community, by the Prince and by the average citizen, are detailed. Laws of the guilt-offering, which atones for certain verbal transgressions and for transgressing laws of ritual purity, are listed. The meal-offering for those who cannot afford the normal guilt-offering – the offering to atone for misusing sanctified property, laws of the "questionable guilt" offering, and offerings for dishonesty – are detailed.

Rabbi Sinclair, Seasonsofthemoon.com



## Cheerful Chocolate-Filled Funfetti Hamantaschen

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2-2½ cups flour
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ⅓ cup sprinkles
- 1 bar of chocolate (or 1 cup chocolate chips)

### METHOD

1. Mix the eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla.
2. Add 1 cup of flour and the baking powder. Mix.
3. Add the remaining flour until the dough forms a soft but not sticky ball.
4. Gently knead in the sprinkles.
5. Roll out the dough and cut out circles.
6. Put a piece of chocolate, or 3-4 chocolate chips, in the center of each circle.
7. Gently fold the sides and pinch shut tightly.
8. Bake for 10-12 minutes at 350° F.

Yields: Approximately 20 hamantaschen

### PURIM JOKE

It's winter in Russia and the people are hungry. The town council announces that meat will be arriving so everyone gets on line to wait for the meat. After an hour of waiting in the snow and the freezing cold, the town council announces that there will be less meat coming than expected, all Jews should go home. So, all the Jews leave the line. Another hour goes by and, again, the town council announces there will be less than expected food arriving, all non-communists should go home. All the non-communists leave the line. Another hour, and the town council announces there will be no food arriving, everybody go home. As one man trudges home through the snow, he turns to his friend and says "you see, the Jews always get to go home first!"

**Mediterranean FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER**

5th April 📅  
 Young Professionals 22-35 👤  
 3 tickets £75 | 1 ticket £30 🍷

ARRIVAL

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