

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT BEHAR

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS!

I was watching closely as two of my students raged in a debate. It looked as if it was starting to get personal and eventually one of them yelled out 'put your money where your mouth is!'.

Interesting I thought, what's he going to do now?

My mind raced ahead, imagining the student taking out a few pound notes and putting towards his lips.

How weird I thought. Was this another statement yelled out in debate without real meaning?

Realising I was watching on, clueless at this statement, the student turned towards me to explain his words.

Rabbi, when we say put your money where your mouth is, we are saying: "if you really believe in your words then put some money on the table and let's take a bet over this. You believe your right so place £10 on the table. If I am proven right, I get the money, otherwise you get it back!"

Wow, I thought that's a great way to earn money! Of course I explained that we do not support betting in any format, and then I suggested to him a deeper explanation to this phrase.

Let me explain, I said.

Yossi was the friendliest guy in town, loved by all around. He courted a smiley face and always had words of encouragement. He was pious and G-d fearing.

Friends new whenever they had a problem, they could discuss it with Yossi, and after a few minutes, they would come out

believing all was for the best. "Don't Worry, Hashem loves you, He will take care of the situation. Have faith!" he would state.

Yossi was also the proud owner of the one and only Kosher Superstore in the town. Everyone bought there and profits were booming.

One day as Yossi walked through town, he was stunned. On one of the old stores there were blackened windows and a big sign: "New Super Kosher Market Opening here in two weeks!"

How dare they! He thought. What a cheek. He was the only kosher supermarket in town.

Now how would you react if you were Yossi?

Find out who the owner was, give him a call and discourage him? Speak to the Bet Din? Bad mouth the competition?

It's all very well to have faith and belief in Hashem...when we are not tested. It's great to constantly say we believe in Hashem and tell others all is in Hashem's hands and will be for the best, but what happens when there is a shock to the system and we are really tested ourselves? How do we react?

Our Sages tell us that "No one hurts his finger in this world if such was not ordained from above" (Chulin 7b) and "No one can touch anything that was intended for someone else" (Yuma 38b.) everything is under G-ds control.

The Chazon Ish explains that there is a difference between Emuna and Bitachon.

The former represents the belief in Hashem and Hashgacha Pratit – divine providence. Bitachon requires that we act in accordance with our Emuna.

We have Emuna (we believe) that whatever will happen to me is the will of Hashem. Whether I survive or not is up to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and I cannot possibly suffer if

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17TH IYAR 5784
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20:44pm
SHABBAT ENDS:
22:01pm

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DVAR TORAH
Put your money where your mouth is
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

DVAR TORAH
Behar - Lag Ba'omer
By Rabbi David Baadani

DVAR TORAH
Don't Abuse
By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem

HALACHOT
By Rabbi Eli Mansour

KIDS ZONE
Quiz & Comic

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

this is not the wish of Hashem. Everyone believes in Hashem. Scientists are so dumbfounded about cells, that to date there is no real estimate of how many cells there are in the human body. One thing they all agree on is that there are trillions of atoms in a cell, and trillions of cells in the human body! Our body is a miracle! Every day we are living that miracle. Just take one human organ - the eye and look how it is a marvel of built-in engineering, combining reflected light, lens imaging capability, multiple lighting adjustments and information processing – all in the space of your eyeball. When working properly, the human eye converts light into impulses that are conveyed to the brain and interpreted as images. Experts estimate humans can distinguish roughly 10 million different colours!

Water is the life source of the planet. Over 70% of our Earth's surface is covered by water. Although water is seemingly abundant, the real issue is the amount of fresh water available. Roughly 97.5% of all water on Earth is salt water, leaving only 2.5% as fresh water. Nearly 70% of that fresh water is frozen in the icecaps of Antarctica and Greenland; most of the remainder is present as soil moisture, or lies in deep underground aquifers as ground-water not accessible to human use. Less than 1% of the world's fresh

water is accessible for direct human uses. This is the water found in lakes, rivers, reservoirs. Only this amount is regularly renewed by rain and snowfall, and is therefore available on a sustainable basis. Do we appreciate it? Do we realise what a miracle we are living in?

We believe in G-d! But how far does that belief translate into action?

This weeks Parsha, begins with the Mitzvah of Shemita. "Shesh Shanin Tizrah Sadecha"- six years you will plant your field... and on the seventh year, a sabbatical will be for the land, a sabbatical for Hashem (25:3-4).

The Kli Yakar brings numerous opinions explaining the reason of this mitzvah. Many explain that it allows the earth to rebuild itself in terms of its ability to provide the necessary nutrition for proper growth. However, he asks, if this mitzvah is simply an ecological consideration, why would the punishment for lack of observance be exile (see Behalotecha)?! Surely it should be the natural consequence of his actions- a depleted field producing a poor harvest? Furthermore, how could this year be termed a "Shabbat laHashem"- a sabbatical for Hashem - is it not a sabbatical for the earth?!

The Kli Yakar explains that the fundamental purpose for the Mitzvah of Shemita is to instil in the Jewish people a deep and profound belief – Emuna AND Bitachon in G-d.

Upon leaving Egypt the Bnei Yisrael were sustained miraculously via the Manna for 40 years. When you are sustained miraculously it's easy to believe in G-d.

But upon entering the land of Israel, all would change. There they would farm the land, and depend on 'nature'. In this there lay a danger that the farmer's belief in G-d as provider would be diminished. He would focus his belief on his hard earned efforts and nature. Thus Hashem commanded us with the Mitsva of Shemita – this would act as a constant reminder that the success of the land is indeed dependant solely on G-d and to recreate the feeling that we had in the desert that even if we leave the land alone completely, (if this is what Hashem wants), it will produce on the same level and even more that it did when we worked it.

This was the farmer's way of showing his Emuna AND Bitachon. He leaves himself completely at the mercy of Hashem realising everything emanates from the Almighty.

The world and society we grew up in provides us constantly with tests to our Emuna and Bitachon.

The person with Bitachon not only believes Hashem is running the world, but acts in conformance with that belief.

So, I turned to the student and finished saying, "do you put your money where your mouth is?"



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

בהר - לג בעומר

ואהבת לרעך כמוך. אמר רבי עקיבא זה כלל גדול בתורה.
 "THOU SHALT LOVE THY FELLOW MAN AS THYSELF" –Rabbi Akiba said: "This is a fundamental principle of the Torah"

For thirty-three days of ספירת העומר the Jewish people mourn over the loss of 24 thousand students of Rabbi Akiva who died from a difficult epidemic. An epidemic that took 750 students every day in average, and this, according to our sages, מפני שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה, is because they did not treat each other with respect.

How can such people who were found worthy to be called 'Rabbi Akiva's students' Raised on the great principal, the way of life in which their great Rabbi lived, of ואהבת לרעך כמוך love your fellow man. Failed, relatively to their level of course, and had lack of respect for one another?

The difference between love and respect in general, is that we love what is similar to us and respect what is different from us. Love comes in recognition of the unity of the beloved ones (אהבה בגימטריה = אחד). Conversely honor comes from admiration of features which emphasize the differences and uniqueness of the other.
 Rabbi Akiva's students, probably

followed in ways of their master, the way of loving every one of the Jewish people and especially their friends. They loved the similarities between them, what united them, they 'loved their friends' only when they were כמוך, same as they are. But when it came to things which reflected the differences between each other, where the other had their special personality, and qualities that made them 'not like you'. They would not respect each other. During these days of counting the Omer, we will work on ourselves not only to love our friends and relatives because of their similarities, but also to respect them in the ways they differ from us. It is these differences that give each one of us our unique and individual personalities in G-d's world.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

DON'T ABUSE

This week's parasha discusses a prohibition common to business and speech: "When you sell an item to your friend, or you buy from your friend, do not exploit (overcharge or underpay) one another" (Behar 25:14). The Torah commands both the seller and the buyer to be straight with each other. The seller should not pretend that the price is more inflated than it really is. If he does so and the purchaser finds out, the sale in certain circumstances may be retracted. The same holds true for the buyer, if he finds a "great bargain" because the owner does not know it's real worth, he should not play on the innocence of the seller, claiming that he must know its real value.

When running a business, one is commanded not to deceive one's customers. Although he is not stealing

money directly, as officially both sides agreed to the terms of sale, he nevertheless has tricked the other person into it. When this person finds out, he will not be forgiving for having been exploited. Our Torah does not want us to gain through false or crooked ways. (Even in the event of unintentionally overcharging someone, one is still required to reimburse them.) A person must "make ends meet" by using his naturally-given talents with truth and integrity. As no-one wants to be tricked concerning a purchase; one should never do this to anyone else.

Three verses later, the Torah states that not only must one not exploit someone else financially, but also, not be abusive to them with one's comments. One may not say words which are hurtful or cause misery to one's friend. For example, one may not remind a repentant person about his bad ways of the past. If one's friend is looking for a certain product, do not mislead him by sending him to the wrong address. One may not go into a shop and ask the price of an object that one has no

intention of buying (unless he informs the shopkeeper of this).

The Torah's way is to live harmoniously with others, and not to abuse them financially or verbally. In fact, verbal abuse has greater ramifications than financial, and thus requires more care to avoid it, as people may become hurt even by the nuances of what we say.

In conclusion, let us not push ourselves forward at the expense of someone else. The way to build a mountain is not by digging a hole. The running of a business or any other endeavour must be done within the accepted norm. There is plenty of bounty available for G-d to shower upon a person without having to use wrong methods. When it comes to our finances and even to our speech, let us remember: yes, we need to gain, yes, we need to live, but let him also gain and live; that's only fair. By adopting such an approach, we will be building our mountain without encroaching on our friend's.

Shabbat shalom



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Writing on Shabbat – Fingerprints, Photographs, Writing on Windows or in the Air, Pens With Temporary Ink

Hacham Ovadia Yosef ruled that taking fingerprints is forbidden on Shabbat, as it falls under the prohibition of writing. By the same token, taking a photograph would also violate this prohibition.

The Torah prohibition of writing on Shabbat is violated by writing two or more letters, though writing even just one letter is forbidden Mi'de'rabbanan – by Rabbinic enactment. Hacham Ovadia notes that if one writes on Shabbat one letter and there is carbon paper underneath such that the letter appears on two different pieces of paper, one has transgressed the Torah prohibition, since he produced two letters.

It is forbidden on Shabbat to write with one's finger in the condensation of windows, though making a line, without forming letters, is permissible.

Hacham Ovadia ruled that if one smokes a cigarette on Yom Tob, and as the fire burns the cigarette it erases the name of the company printed on the cigarette, this does not violate the prohibition of

erasing on Yom Tob. This kind of erasing would, in principle, be forbidden only Mi'de'rabbanan, and one may perform an act on Shabbat or Yom Tob that would inadvertently result in an unintended violation of a Rabbinic prohibition. Therefore, erasing letters on a cigarette by smoking does not violate the prohibition of erasing on Yom Tob, as the erasure is unintended. (It goes without saying that one should in any event refrain from smoking because of the damage it causes to one's health.)

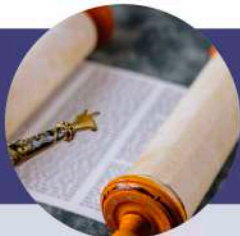
Writing on Shabbat with one's weaker hand – the left hand, if one is righthanded – does not violate the Torah prohibition of writing, but is nevertheless forbidden Mi'de'rabbanan. Hacham Ovadia ruled that if one types with a typewriter on Shabbat, then he violates the Torah prohibition of writing regardless of which hand he uses, as long as he types in the normal manner of typing.

One should not make letters on Shabbat in a liquid that spilled, even though the shape of the letters will last for only a very brief moment.

It is entirely permissible on Shabbat to make the motion of writing letters in the air, since this does not create any form of the letters, even temporarily.

Writing on Shabbat with ink that disappears after a period of time is forbidden Mi'de'rabbanan, and does not violate the Torah prohibition of writing. Therefore, Hacham Ovadia advised that doctors who need to write prescriptions or other important medical information on Shabbat for a seriously ill patient should use the "Shabbat pens" with temporary ink, in order to avoid the Torah prohibition of writing on Shabbat.

Summary: Taking fingerprints or photographs on Shabbat is considered writing and thus forbidden. It is forbidden on Shabbat to write in the condensation that forms on windows, or in liquid, even though the letters remain for only a brief moment. It is permissible to make the motion of writing in the air. Doctors who need to write prescriptions for seriously ill patients on Shabbat should, if possible, use the special "Shabbat pens" that have temporary ink.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Behar

The Torah prohibits normal farming of the Land of Israel every seven years. This "Shabbat for the land" is called "Shemittah." After every seventh Shemittah, the fiftieth year, Yovel ("Jubilee") is announced with the sound of the shofar on Yom Kippur. This was also a year for the land to lie fallow. G-d promises to provide a bumper crop prior to the Shemittah and Yovel years. During Yovel, all land is returned to its original division from the time of Joshua,

and all Jewish indentured servants are freed, even if they have not completed their six years of work. A Jewish indentured servant may not be given any demeaning, unnecessary or excessively difficult work, and may not be sold in the public market. The price of his labor must be calculated according to the amount of time remaining until he will automatically become free. The price of land is similarly calculated. Should anyone sell his ancestral land, he has the right to

redeem it after two years. If a house in a walled city is sold, the right of redemption is limited to the first year after the sale. The Levites' cities belong to them forever. The Jewish People are forbidden to take advantage of one another by lending or borrowing with interest. Family members should redeem any relative who was sold as an indentured servant as a result of impoverishment.

Rabbi Sinclair, Seasonsofthemoon.com



1 If a home in a walled city is sold, when can it be redeemed?

25:29 - Only within the first year after the sale. Afterwards, even in yovel, it does not return.

2 What does the word "days" mean in this week's Parsha?

25:29 - The days of an entire year.



3 What is considered a walled city?

25:29 - A city that has been surrounded by a wall since the time of Yehoshua.

4 What is the definition of a "ger toshav"?

25:35 - A non-Jew who lives in Eretz Yisrael and accepts upon himself not to worship idols.

5 To what is one who leaves Eretz Yisrael compared?

25:38 - To one who worships idols.

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