

ב"ה Torah Tidbits

ISSUE 1527

OU
ישראל

י"ח אב תשפ"ג • 5 AUGUST 2023

פרשת עקב
PARSHAT EIKEV
AVOT CHAPTER 5



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Rabbi Moshe Hauer
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See Our New
"OU...Beyond
Kashrut" Page
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ארץ זבת חלב ודבש דברים יא:ט

YERUSHALAYIM SHABBAT TIMES PARSHAT EIKEV

CANDLES 6:58PM • EARLIEST 6:08PM • HAVDALA 8:13PM • RABBEINU TAM 8:50PM



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To View Rabbi Daniel Mann's Article Please See: [TorahTidbits.com](https://www.torahTidbits.com) > Individual Articles

THIS WEEK'S COVER IMAGE!

Painted by Yehoshua Wiseman

I made aliya when I was 20, 32 yrs ago in about 1991. I live in Yerushalayim, Rechov Shmuel Hanavi. The painting is meant to convey the Avot or David Hamelech or similar - they were all shepherds and reached the awesome levels of kedusha through prayer and contemplation and hitbodedut while grazing their flocks.



A SHORT VORT | BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES

Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

ואכתוב על הלוחות את הדברים אשר היו על הלוחות הראשונים אשר שברת (י:1)

"And I will write on the Tablets the words that were on the first Tablets which you broke" (10:2)

Moshe Rabbeinu summarizes in this week's Parsha the giving over of the Second Tablets. In the Pasuk, we see that G-d told Moshe that the Second Tablets will be the same as the First Tablets.

Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888, Germany) asks what is the importance of Moshe repeating this detail to the people? Why do we need to know that the Second Tablets will be the same as the First?

He answers that G-d is transmitting an important message to the Israelites. G-d will not change His Torah to accommodate the lapse of man. It is Man's mission, not to reform the mitzvot, but rather to reform ourselves in accordance with G-d's Laws. Therefore, he wrote upon the Second Tablets the same original laws that were written on the First ones.

Shabbat Shalom

CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



OTHER Z'MANIM



	EIKEV			RE'EH		
	CANDLES	EARLY	HAVDALA	CANDLES	EARLY	HAVDALA
Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	6:58	6:08	8:13	6:52	6:03	8:05
Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al)	7:15	6:11	8:14	7:09	6:05	8:07
Beit Shemesh / RBS	7:16	6:09	8:13	7:10	6:04	8:06
Alon Shvut	7:13	6:09	8:13	7:07	6:03	8:05
Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	7:15	6:10	8:15	7:09	6:05	8:08
Modiin / Chashmonaim	7:14	6:09	8:14	7:08	6:04	8:06
Netanya	7:15	6:11	8:15	7:09	6:05	8:08
Be'er Sheva	7:14	6:09	8:13	7:08	6:04	8:06
Rehovot	7:15	6:10	8:14	7:09	6:05	8:07
Petach Tikva	6:58	6:10	8:15	6:52	6:05	8:07
Ginot Shomron	7:14	6:09	8:14	7:08	6:04	8:07
Haifa / Zichron	7:06	6:11	8:16	6:59	6:06	8:09
Gush Shiloh	7:13	6:09	8:13	7:07	6:03	8:06
Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel	7:15	6:11	8:15	7:09	6:05	8:08
Givat Zeev	7:18	6:09	8:13	7:11	6:03	8:06
Chevron / Kiryat Arba	7:13	6:09	8:12	7:07	6:03	8:05
Ashkelon	7:15	6:11	8:15	7:09	6:06	8:08
Yad Binyamin	7:15	6:10	8:14	7:08	6:05	8:07
Tzfat / Bikat HaYarden	7:09	6:09	8:14	7:03	6:03	8:07
Golan	7:13	6:08	8:13	7:07	6:03	8:06
Nahariya/Maalot	7:15	6:11	8:16	7:08	6:05	8:08
Afula	7:14	6:09	8:14	7:08	6:04	8:07
Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem) - 8:50PM • Next Week - 8:44PM						

All Times According to MyZmanim (20 mins before Sunset in most Cities;
40 mins in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva; 30 mins in Tzfat and Haifa)

Daf Yomi this Shabbat: Gittin 81



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Ranges 11 days Wed - Shabbat

August 2 - 12 / 15 - 25 Av

Earliest Tallit and Tefilin 4:59 - 5:07

Sunrise 5:55 - 6:02

Sof Zman Kriat Shema 9:20 - 9:23

Magen Avraham 8:39 - 8:43

Sof Zman Tefila 10:28 - 10:30

(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)

Chatzot (Halachic Noon) 12:45 - 12:44

Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha) 1:19 - 1:17

Plag Mincha 6:10 - 6:02

Sunset (Including Elevation) 7:40 - 7:31



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DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
Executive Director, OU Israel

Many years ago I learned in Yeshiva in Shilo and ran the overseas program there. We used to take the Rosh Yeshiva's weekly *dvar Torah*, write it in English and print it out for the English speakers in the Yeshiva – a one page black and white document. This was in the early days of the internet, and we realized we could email the *dvar Torah* out to the English speaking Yeshivat Shilo alumni in different countries. I recall thinking how unbelievable it was to use this tool to disseminate Torah.

Fast forward to today, 26 years later, and I am thinking about a couple of incredible things that happened last week. First, for nearly 30 years, NCSY Kollel, together with other NCSY summer programs in Israel, gather annually at the Kotel for the last hour and a half of *Tisha B'Av*. The teens and staff sit on the floor singing their hearts out in prayer. Decades ago, only people who were at the Kotel and happened to see it would join. Over the years, the *kumzitz* has been spread over the internet, and this year's *Kumzitz of the World* was once again broadcast globally and seen by tens of thousands of people who watch it remotely year after year.

For the past 5 years, even before being appointed as Mayor, Mayor Moshe Lion

has been joining this program – sitting in the middle with Rabbi Hershel Schacter (OU Senior *Posek* and *Rosh Yeshiva* at RIETS), Rabbi Micah Greenland (NCSY International Director), Mitch Aeder (OU President), Rabbi Dr. Josh Joseph (OU EVP & COO), David Cutler (Director, NCSY Summer), Rabbi Moshe Benovitz (Managing Director, NCSY), and myself. The ability to broadcast this inspirational program

means that in addition to the impact on the thousands of people there at the Kotel, so many more are being inspired from their homes across the world.

Second, last week I wrote about OU

Israel's special *Tisha B'Av* video – Beit HaMikdash: What We Have & What's to Come. While I am not a professional actor, Nina Broder (OU Israel Social Media Manager) and Laya Bejell (OU Israel Director of Marketing) thought it would be a positive message to create and share its messages under our mission of Inspiring the World from *Yerushalayim*. On a personal level, I



Condolences to Yaakov Kessler
and family on the passing of his

FATHER ז"ל

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

also wanted to share the experience I had connecting my family to *Yerushalayim* and *Tisha B'Av* (you can read last week's article for more details) with the world. Sharing this video on the internet, we've had over 37,000 views since *erev Tisha B'Av*, many of which were families sitting on the floor watching together so we know it impacted many more people.

Creating this video with Nina and Zev Schwartz (videographer) enabled my message to reach such a broad audience. After the video reached its first 1,000 people I started to check the numbers every couple of hours. My wife Pnina asked me why I kept looking at the video's stats and messages from viewers since I am usually anti focusing on the number of likes a post gets or having social media controlling my life. I told her she's of course right. When people post just for likes we become reliant on other people to tell us we did something good and on others to gain control of our self-esteem. However, what the views and feedback from this video show is the thirst *klal Yisrael* has to connect to *Tisha B'Av* and hope for the *Beit HaMikdash*, and that was what drew me to keep checking.

It is my hope and prayer that the reach of this video, the *kumzitz*, and the OU's other *Tisha B'Av* programming – including *kinot* led by Rabbi Azarya Berzon at the OU Israel Center, Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, Rabbi Moshe Hauer, and Rabbi Steven

Weil – along with the *shiurim* and videos from other organizations, show Hashem that His children are ready for the *geulah* (redemption). I pray that Hashem is looking down at us, seeing our yearning for the *Beit HaMikdash*, and getting ready to bring the *Beit HaMikdash* very soon, definitely before next *Tisha B'Av*.

(You can view the 'NCSY Kumzitz of the World', our *Tisha B'Av* video, and the OU's other *Tisha B'Av* content at ou.org/tishabav.)

I'd like to draw your attention to a new weekly feature in Torah Tidbits – OU...Beyond Kashrut which appears after Rabbi Moshe Hauer's *dvar Torah*. Each week, I meet people who tell me they didn't realize how much the OU does both here in Israel and globally. We, *baruch Hashem*, have a lot of programs we are proud of because they help Jews thrive spiritually, connect

to Israel, and become contributing members of the community. It is our hope that by learning about the OU here in Israel you will gain more opportunities to become involved and share relevant programs with your friends and families.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman
Executive Director, OU Israel
aberman@ouisrael.org





FROM THE DESK OF
RABBI MOSHE HAUER

OU EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

ORTHODOX
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The Opportunity of Prosperity

There is a word that is found in the Torah a total of four times, three of them in this week's Parsha (8:10, 8:12, 11:15), and once in last week's (6:11). The word is *v'savata*, "you will be satiated." In three instances the word is used in a dire context, making us aware and warning us of the risks of arrogance and complacency that come along with material prosperity. The most familiar of these occurrences is in the second paragraph of the Shema (Devarim 11:15), where we read, "you will eat and be satiated, be careful lest your hearts be seduced...." Rashi there shares the concern sharply:

"Once you have eaten and are satiated be careful not to rebel, as a revolt against G-d arises only from a state of material satisfaction, as it is written (Devarim 8:12), 'Lest you eat and be satiated... and your sheep and cattle will increase....' What does it then say? 'Your hearts will swell and you will forget Hashem your G-d....'"

There is however one occurrence of the word that is both familiar and very positive, in the verse that teaches us the Mitzvah of Birkat Hamazon (8:10). "You will eat and be satiated and you shall bless

Hashem your G-d." Whereas the other verses present the challenge of prosperity, here the Torah lays out its opportunity. When we have been blessed, we have the chance to reflect and turn to the source of that blessing, acknowledging and thanking G-d for His plentiful gifts. In this context our success becomes a source of firm connection to G-d (see Meshech Chochma, Devarim 8:12).

We live in a time of great blessing, perhaps unprecedented in the history of our Galut. That prosperity can certainly be cause for concern, leading us to both arrogance and complacency, and most basically to forgetting the source of our blessing, ultimately disconnecting us from G-d. The Torah's very practical guidance for us - for our time - is to double down on gratitude. We must take every opportunity to recognize His hand in bringing us the incredible national gifts of our time; a flourishing Jewish homeland, the prosperity and security that have characterized the American Jewish experience, and the ability and resources to build a thriving community after the devastation of the Shoah. In addition, we must be deeply grateful for the personal and familial

blessings we have been granted.

Prosperity can be an unmitigated blessing, bringing us peace of mind and connection to G-d. But only if we respond to it with full-throated gratitude to the Source of all blessing. "Thank You, Hashem!" ■



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Each week we will share one of OU Israel's impactful programs helping English speaking olim with their klita and impacting Israeli society.



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ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

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PARSHAT EIKEV

Moshe's long soliloquy is truly a masterpiece of religious leadership. He is preparing the people to enter the Land. But nervous about various possible failures. And he tackles these concerns one by one. His first concern is neglect of mitzvot and idol worship – the core of Jewish life. Last week in Va'etchanan the word Shema, in various forms occurred 19 times. The word Shamor occurred repeatedly. Meaning, understand, take to heart your unique relationship with G-d and He with you. Remember Mt. Sinai, the covenant of this bond between you and Him. And the mitzvot as the expression of this bond.

Our parsha tackles inevitable challenges as you enter the Land: fear, riches and success. Proper perspective on how to understand who you are and who G-d is, what is your prowess and what His help will allow you to manage these challenges. And Moshe draws on the foundational experiences in the desert to teach

this proper perspective.

The second half of the parsha shifts to Moshe's treatise on the inner life, the life of love, of aspiration, of infatuation. The need for both law and spirit is age old; Moshe lays bare his most inner feelings on the life of the spirit.



1ST ALIYA (DEVARIM 7:12 - 8:10)

On the heels of you keeping the mitzvot, G-d will keep His covenant with you. And love you. You will enjoy success: economic, health, military. Should you fear the nations in the Land, wondering how you will prevail over them, remember what G-d did in Egypt. The signs, the wonders, the outstretched arm. He will do similar to these nations. When you enter the Land, remember the manna in the desert. G-d relieved your hunger through manna, to teach you that bread comes from Him. Now when you enter the Land, it will be different: streams and springs, wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olive oil and dates. You will eat and be satisfied and bless G-d for all this bounty.

You may be concerned that you will fail, defeated by the nations. Moshe draws on history; remember Egypt. They were more powerful; until G-d's intervention with plagues and wonders. You need not fear.

Bounty in the Land is a concern. The food grows on trees, wild wheat and barley. Who needs Him? Remember the

לעלוי נשמת

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Meier, Abramovitz, and Kanotopsky families

manna and Who provides. That manna was a lesson that He provided. In the Land, it will look to you completely different, what with the food growing from the ground and on trees. But do not let that bounty muscle G-d out; it is still He Who provides. We, this generation of fabulous wealth know all too well how the modern Jews success has left no room for the Divine.



2ND ALIYA (8:11 - 9:3)

Be mindful amidst all your success that you not forget its Source.

Even after He has led you all these years, you are apt to say “all this success is my doing”. Remember: He is the One Who gives you this success, as an expression of the Brit he made with you. If you forget Him, He will vanquish you. As you vanquish nations in the Land, so too will it be with you, on the heels of your ignoring Him. Great nations await you; fortified cities, strong people. Know that He will champion your cause and they will be overcome by you.

As material success squeezes G-d out of our lives, so too national success in building the Jewish nation and defeating the peoples of the Land. Just as food growing naturally on the trees can lead us to squeeze G-d out of the picture, so too national success, military prowess, national economic success can squeeze Him out too. The architect of our success is me. We are simply stronger, smarter and more capable than the other nations.



3RD ALIYA (9:4 - 29)

Do not assume your displacement of the nations is due to your righteousness and their folly. It is rather due to their failing and G-d's covenant to you. Remember: you have a

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long history of your own folly. At Horeb: I ascended the mountain to get the tablets, Divinely inscribed with all He spoke at Sinai, for 40 days. But He ordered me to descend for you had made an idol. With the tablets in hand, I descended, shattering them upon seeing the golden calf. I ascended again to plead for you. And there were other moments of folly. But I pleaded, appealing to the covenant, that you are His people.

When you feel superior to the nations, that is mere hubris. Remember the golden calf, *your* terrible moment of folly. Moshe is preoccupied with the machinations of the mind, our short memories, our self-delusions. Remember our history, he says. Learn from it. He champions our cause. He is the source of our success. And. Don't let it go to your head. You suffer foibles like all others. Bad mistakes. But, as we will see in the next aliya, He does not give up on you. And that says more about His greatness than it does about yours.



4TH ALIYA (10:1 - 11)

G-d said to me: chisel 2 stone tablets to replace the first and make an Aron for them. A second set as the first was made and put in the Aron. I descended with the Aron. The Leviim shall

be G-d's servants; they bore this Aron. I implored successfully for you not to be destroyed. G-d said: go up and take the Land I promised to your forefathers.

This is the conclusion of the story of the golden calf. Moshe is telling the people to remember this story to temper their feelings of superiority. Don't feel superior; the golden calf was quite a failure. However, in this conclusion, he emphasizes a different point. Reconciliation. As if to say: you are not a perfect nation. You have failed and you will in the future too. But despair not. G-d's commitment to you is more powerful than your failures.

In addressing these 3 concerns: fear, riches and national success, Moshe has addressed a more global concern. How do we look at our success and failure as barometers of Divine favor? When it is going well, doesn't that mean He is pleased with us? No, Moshe says. He is generous, forgiving. His Ways are tricky; you may be displeasing, but He is magnanimous.



5TH ALIYA (10:12 - 11:9)

Now, what really does G-d want of you? Only this: fear Him, walk in His ways, love and serve Him and keep all He commands of you. His is the universe, yet He chose to love your forefathers. So, circumcise your heart and quit stiffening your neck. Fear, serve, cleave to Him. He is your G-d. As you yourself have seen: you descended to Egypt with 70 souls, all the wonders He wrought, the defeat of Egypt's might at the sea, the desert, the earth swallowing the rebellious ones in the Korah rebellion. You have seen all this; hence, keep the mitzvot to prolong your stay on the Land.



These 20 verses are very difficult to summarize, as they are so stunningly beautiful. This is Moshe with his hair down. It is like he leans a bit closer, elbows on the table, and confides: listen, really, what does G-d want? Now, one would think maybe a one word, one phrase answer. Like: loyalty. Or walk humbly with Him. Or truth. Moshe's answer is not *what* to do but *how* to do it. Moshe answers: you know what G-d wants? He wants emotion, aspiration, feelings, sensitivity. He wants your deepest being to want Him, love Him, cleave to Him. Drop the inhibitions, the distractions, the fluff of life and give your deepest self to Him. What a phrase: circumcise your heart, quit stiffening your neck. Meaning, give Me your true heart, don't be stubborn. This aliya ranks up there with the most powerful of the Torah. For Moshe baits us with a simple question: after all, what does G-d want? And in his answer, shares with us his deepest feelings, a most profound answer: He wants you to want Him, love Him, be preoccupied with Him. Hold nothing back.



6TH ALIYA (11:10-21)

The Land of Israel is not like Egypt: Egypt is fertile, with an abundance of water. Israel relies on the rain from the heavens; hence G-d gazes upon the land the entire year. (2nd paragraph of Shema) And if you will keep the Mitzvot and love G-d with all your heart, then there will be rain. If you sway from this and serve other gods, then there will be no rain, nor will the crops grow. Be cognizant of this all the time, speaking of it with your children and in all you do. As this love of G-d will prolong your success in the Land.

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7TH ALIYA (11:22 - 25)

If you do the Mitzvot, love G-d and cleave to him, then you will prevail over the powerful nations of the Land. G-d will make them fear you and none will be able to stand up to you.

Love, cleaving, the heart. The word love appears 6 times, the word heart 4 times in these last aliyot. Moshe has pivoted. From doing. To feeling. From law. To spirit. Doing is not enough. Love, cleave, your heart. Give all in your love of G-d.

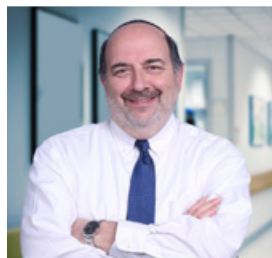
YESHAYAHU 49:14- 51:3

This week's *haftorah* is the second of a series of seven "*haftorot* of Consolation." These seven *haftarot* begin on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

The exiled Jewish people are concerned that Hashem has abandoned them. Hashem responds by reassuring them that it is not so. God compares His love and mercy for His people to that of a mother for her children.

The navi then describes the ingathering of the exiles which will occur when the Mashiach arrives and then concludes with encouraging words, reminding us of what had happened to our ancestors, Abraham and Sarah. Just as they were blessed with a child when it seemed impossible, so too, Hashem will send us the Redemption at the end of days. ■

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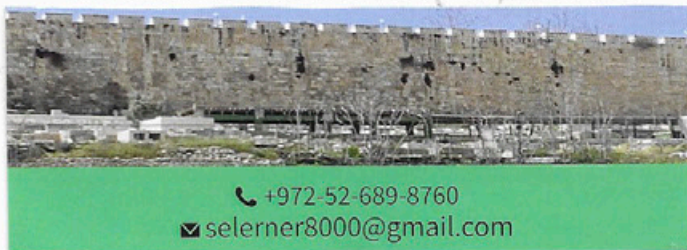
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STATS

46th of the 54 sedras;

3rd of 11 in Devarim

231.83 lines in a Torah, ranks 14th.

10 Parshiyot: 6 open, 4 closed.

111 p'sukim, ranks 26th (4th in Devarim);

same number as Vayikra, but larger.

1747 words, rank: 16th (3rd in Devarim);

same number as Ki Tavo; Ki Tavo has more p'sukim; Eikev has more letters.

6865 letters, ranks 14th (3rd in Devarim).

Eikev's p'sukim are long - 3rd longest in the Torah in words and letters per pasuk. This accounts for the rise in ranking in those categories.



MITZVOT

8 of 613: 6 positives, 2 prohibitions

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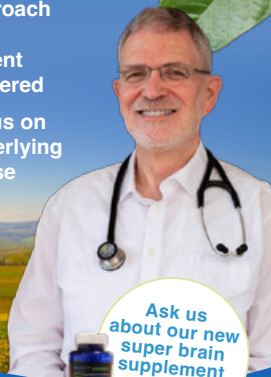
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Yoni thanks Hashem for having
the opportunity of having Tziporah in
his life, to learn of her caring, patience and
happiness, to overcome her challenges. May
Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world,
in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama
shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with
tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a
crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

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IN THE PARSHA

“Discipline and Suffering”

As a parent, grandparent, and psychologist, I am often considered to be something of an expert on parenting and child-rearing. In that capacity, I have frequently been asked to review or give an opinion about any of the plethora of books on the subject of raising one's children.

Like in any genre, there are better books and worse books in this category. What I have noticed is that many of them fail to include a chapter on one of the most important components of child rearing: discipline. With few exceptions, the most that these books contain on the subject of discipline is a chapter on "setting limits."

In my opinion, and certainly in my experience, discipline is an essential component of all parenting and teaching relationships. And discipline is not just about "setting limits." It is also about "setting goals."

My reading on the subject of dealing with children, whether as a parent or as a teacher, has taught me of the importance of setting clear and achievable goals and objectives for children to reach, and then to show recognition of the achievement of those goals.

My experience as a parent myself, as a teacher for many years, and as a psychotherapist for much of my adult life, has

borne out the wisdom of these two steps: Firstly, lay out the expectations that you have of the child and clearly define the nature of the task at hand. Secondly, when the child has accomplished the task, even if not totally successfully, give him or her feedback and recognition, whether in the form of a verbal compliment or a non-verbal gesture.

Discipline does not just involve "setting limits." Indeed, saying "no" and issuing restrictive commands may not at all be what discipline is about. Rather, it involves "setting goals." It is about extending a challenge, with the implicit confidence that sends that child the message, "You can do it!"

This, to me, is the essence of discipline. It is not synonymous with punishment. It is synonymous with learning and personal growth.

And this is what I think is meant by the passage in this week's Torah reading, *Parshat Ekev*, "Bear in mind that the Lord your God disciplines you just as a man disciplines his son." (*Deuteronomy* 8:5)

The Torah has much to say, even if the parenting books don't, about discipline. It takes for granted that parents will discipline their children, and that teachers will

discipline their students. After all, that is why students are called disciples.

The Torah insists, moreover, that the Almighty, too, disciplines us. And He does so in much the same way as successful parents do. He sets clear expectations for us, and He shows us His favor when we meet those expectations and His disfavor when we fail to do so. The Lord really is a Father in this sense.

It is no wonder then, that the book of Proverbs cautions us to "heed the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the instruction of your mother." Notice: first discipline, and then instruction. First "*mus-sar*," and Torah only afterwards.

As usual, there is an even deeper message in the word that the Torah uses for discipline. The root "YSR" is the root of both "discipline" and "suffering."

Judaism teaches us that there is a meaning to our suffering. Sometimes that meaning is obvious to us; more typically though, the meaning eludes us, and we desperately search for it.

But one thing is clear. We learn through discipline, and we also learn through suffering.

The words of Victor Frankl, the psychologist and Auschwitz survivor, who certainly knew a thing or two about suffering, are very instructive here:

"...On the biological plane, as we know, pain is a meaningful watcher and warder. In the psycho-spiritual realm it has a similar function. Suffering is intended to guard man from apathy, from psychic rigor mortis. As long as we suffer we remain psychically alive. In fact, we mature in suffering, grow because of it – it makes us richer

and stronger."

It is through the processes of discipline and suffering that we develop and are transformed. Both processes are painful, sometimes profoundly so. But through both, we widen our horizons, enhance our spirits, and attain a deeper understanding of our life's purpose.

Discipline and suffering: important to us all as individuals, as part of the Jewish people, and as mortal humans, struggling to cope and, ultimately, to grow. ■

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THOUGHTS ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

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לעילוי נשמות

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The Spirituality of Listening

It is one of the most important words in Judaism, and also one of the least understood. Its two most famous occurrences are in last week's parsha and this week's: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deut. 6:4), and "It shall come to pass if you *surely listen* to My commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul" (Deut. 11:13) – the openings of the first and second paragraphs of the Shema. It also appears in the first line of the *parsha*: "It shall come to pass, if you *listen* to these laws" (Deut. 7:12).

The word, of course, is *shema*. I have argued elsewhere¹ that it is fundamentally untranslatable into English since it means so many things: to hear, to listen, to pay attention, to understand, to internalise, to respond, to obey. It is one of the

motif-words of the book of Devarim, where it appears no less than 92 times – more than in any other book of the Torah. Time and again in the last month of his life Moses told the people, Shema: listen, heed, pay attention. Hear what I am saying. Hear what God is saying. Listen to what he wants from us. If you would only listen ... *Judaism is a religion of listening*. This is one of its most original contributions to civilization.

The twin foundations on which Western culture was built were ancient Greece and ancient Israel. They could not have been more different. Greece was a profoundly visual culture. Its greatest achievements had to do with the eye, with seeing. It produced some of the greatest art, sculpture, and architecture the world has ever seen. Its most characteristic group events – theatrical performances and the Olympic games – were spectacles: performances that were watched. Plato thought of knowledge as a kind of depth vision, seeing beneath the

1. See *Covenant & Conversation* on Mishpatim: "Doing and Hearing."

surface to the true form of things.

This idea – that knowing is seeing – remains the dominant metaphor in the West even today. We speak of *insight*, *foresight*, and *hindsight*. We offer an *observation*. We adopt a *perspective*. We *illustrate*. We *illuminate*. We *shed light* on an issue. When we understand something, we say, “*I see*.”²

Judaism offered a radical alternative. It is faith in a God we cannot see, a God who cannot be represented visually. The very act of making a graven image – a visual symbol – is a form of idolatry. As Moses reminded the people in last week’s *parsha*, when the Israelites had a direct encounter with God at Mount Sinai, “You heard the sound of words, but saw no image; there was only a voice.” (Deut. 4:12). God communicates in sounds, not sights. He speaks. He commands. He calls. That is why the supreme religious act is *shema*. When God speaks, we listen. When He commands, we try to obey.

Rabbi David Cohen (1887–1972), known as the Nazirite, a disciple of Rav Kook and the father of R. Shear-Yashuv Cohen, Chief Rabbi of Haifa, pointed out that in the Babylonian Talmud all the metaphors of understanding are based not on seeing but on hearing. *Ta shema*, “come and hear.” *Ka mashma lan*, “It teaches us this.” *Shema mina*, “Infer from this.” *Lo shemiyah lei*, “He did not agree.” A traditional teaching is called *shamaytta*, “that which was heard.” And so on.³ All of these are variations on the word *shema*.⁴

2. See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, University of Chicago Press, 1980.

3. This appears in the opening pages of his work, *Kol Nevuah*.

4. To be sure, the Zohar uses a visual term,



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This may seem like a small difference, but it is in fact a huge one. For the Greeks, the ideal form of knowledge involved detachment. There is the one who sees, the subject, and there is that which is seen, the object, and they belong to two different realms. A person who looks at a painting or a sculpture or a play in a theatre or the Olympic games is not an active part of the art or the drama or the athletic competition. They are acting as a spectator, not a participant.

Speaking and listening are not forms of detachment. They are forms of engagement. They create a relationship. The Hebrew word for knowledge, *da'at*, implies

ta chazi, “Come and see.” There is a broad kinship between Jewish mysticism and Platonic or neo-Platonic thought. For both, knowing is a form of depth-seeing.

involvement, closeness, intimacy. “And Adam *knew* Eve his wife and she conceived and gave birth” (Gen. 4:1). That is knowing in the Hebrew sense, not the Greek. We can enter into a relationship with God, even though He is infinite and we are finite, because we are linked by words. In revelation, God speaks to us. In prayer, we speak to God. If you want to understand any relationship, between husband and wife, or parent and child, or employer and employee, pay close attention to how they speak and listen to one another. Ignore everything else.

The Greeks taught us the forms of knowledge that come from observing and inferring, namely science and philosophy. The first scientists and the first philosophers came from Greece from the sixth to the fourth centuries BCE.

But not everything can be understood by seeing and appearances alone. There is a powerful story about this told in the first book of Samuel. Saul, Israel’s first king, *looked* the part. He was tall. “From his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people,” (1 Sam. 9:2, 10:23). He was the *image* of a king. But morally, temperamentally, he was not a leader at all; he was a follower.

God then told Samuel to anoint another king in his place, and told him it would be one of the children of Jesse. Samuel went to Jesse and was struck by the appearance of one of his sons, Eliab. He thought he must be the one God meant. But God said to him, “Do not be impressed by his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. God does not see as people do. *People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks*



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at the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7).

Jews and Judaism taught that we cannot see God, but we can hear Him and He hears us. It is through the word – speaking and listening – that we can have an intimate relationship with God as our parent, our partner, our sovereign, the One who loves us and whom we love. We cannot demonstrate God scientifically. We cannot prove God logically. These are Greek, not Jewish, modes of thought. I believe that from a Jewish perspective, trying to prove the existence of God logically or scientifically is a mistaken enterprise.⁵ God is not an object but a subject. The Jewish mode is to relate to God in intimacy and love, as well as awe and reverence.

One fascinating modern example came from a Jew who, for much of his life, was estranged from Judaism, namely Sigmund Freud. He called psychoanalysis the “speaking cure”, but it is better described as the “listening cure.”⁶ It is based on the fact that active listening is in itself therapeutic. It was only after the spread of psychoanalysis, especially in America, that the phrase “I hear you” came into the English language as a way of communicating empathy.⁷

5. Indeed, many of the great medieval Jewish philosophers did just that. They did so under the influence of neo-Platonic and neo-Aristotelian thought, itself mediated by the great philosophers of Islam. The exception was Judah Halevi in *The Kuzari*.

6. See Adam Philips, *Equals*, London, Faber and Faber, 2002, xii. See also Salman Akhtar, *Listening to Others: Developmental and Clinical Aspects of Empathy and Attunement*. Lanham: Jason Aronson, 2007.

7. Note that there is a difference between empathy and sympathy. Saying “I hear you” is a way of indicating – sincerely or otherwise – that I take note of your feelings, not that I necessarily agree with them or you.

There is something profoundly spiritual about listening. It is the most effective form of conflict resolution I know. Many things can create conflict, but what sustains it is the feeling on the part of at least one of the parties that they have not been heard. They have not been listened to. We have not “heard their pain”. There has been a failure of empathy. That is why the use of force – or for that matter, boycotts – to resolve conflict is so profoundly self-defeating. It may suppress it for a while, but it will return, often more intense than before. Job, who has suffered unjustly, is unmoved by the arguments of his comforters. It is not that he insists on being right: what he wants is to be heard. Not by accident does justice presuppose the rule of *audi alteram partem*, “Hear the other side.”

Listening lies at the very heart of

Dr. Harry Weisman

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relationship. It means that we are open to the other, that we respect them, that their perceptions and feelings matter to us. We give them permission to be honest, even if this means making ourselves vulnerable in so doing. A good parent listens to their child. A good employer listens to their workers. A good company listens to its customers or clients. A good leader listens to those they are leading. Listening does not mean agreeing but it does mean caring. Listening is the climate in which love and respect grow.

In Judaism we believe that our relationship with God is an ongoing tutorial in our relationships with other people. How can we expect God to listen to us if we fail to listen to our spouse, our children, or those affected by our work? And how can we expect to encounter God if we have not learned to listen. On Mount Horeb, God taught Elijah that He was not in the whirlwind, the earthquake or the fire, but in the *kol demamah dakah*, the “still, small voice” (I Kings 19:12) that I define as *a voice you can only hear if you are listening*.

Crowds are moved by great speakers, but lives are changed by great listeners. Whether between us and God or us and other people, listening is the prelude to love.⁸ ■

8. For more on the theme of listening, see above, Covenant & Conversation on parshat Bereishit, “The Art of Listening,” and on parshat Bamidbar, “The Sound of Silence.”

These weekly teachings from Rabbi Sacks zt”l are part of his ‘Covenant & Conversation’ series on the weekly Torah teaching. With thanks to the Schimmel Family for their generous sponsorship, dedicated in loving memory of Harry (Chaim) Schimmel. Visit www.RabbiSacks.org for more.



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"ותאמר ציון עזבני ה' - וה' שכחני"

Of the various responses of Israel to the promised redemption prophesied by the navi Yishayahu, none are more painful than the opening words of our haftarah: "Hashem has abandoned me; He has forgotten me." More than once, I have been brought to tears upon hearing them read in shul and wondering how the nation could ever believe that is true! Even G-d Himself seems amazed when He answers the people and tells them that He could no more abandon His beloved children than could a mother forget her child!

And yet, upon more serious contemplation, the reaction of Israel was actually quite understandable. Hashem Himself appears to express that very idea in the Torah when He states [Shmot 29; 45]:

"ושכנתי בתוך בני ישראל והייתי להם" - לא'לוקים - that He would "dwell" in the Mishkan/Mikdash "in the midst of Israel" as a constant proof for the nation that He is their G-d! But when the Beit HaMikdash would no longer stand and He would

no longer dwell there the people would assume that Hashem had abandoned them and forgotten them. In fact, it is the Abarbanel who, in the 15th century, suggests that Israel's feelings of abandonment are based upon the "G-d - inflicted" *galut* to which they were condemned. He writes

"It is as if Zion is complaining about the extended exile, saying that just as a husband abandons his wife - so has Hashem abandoned Zion - and all this is due to the protracted *galut*!"

How, then, can Yishayahu hope to comfort a nation so despondent? How can he breathe a spirit of optimism and faith into their hearts so that they don't fall into a state of complete despair?

Rav Moshe Lichtenstein lays out the navi's "blueprint" of comfort. In the earlier prakim of *nechama*, consolation, the prophet tells the people that exile is not meant to be their permanent state of existence and, since Hashem regards them as His beloved nation, they will certainly be redeemed. In our haftarah, Yishayahu hears the desperate cries of Israel in the opening pasuk, cries that were a result of the extended *galut*, so he does not respond by merely repeating the promise of *geulah* but by describing and the future redemption. He then goes on by urging them to respond quickly to his charge ("Miharu banayich") for, he promises, the redemption is quickly approaching - so quickly, in fact, that there soon will be insufficient room for the returnees.

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But the navi realizes that promises for the future and visions of what would soon be might not suffice to console the suffering masses. For this reason, notes Rav Lichtenstein, Yishayahu describes a three-fold relationship that G-d has with His people.

The first is that of parent to child, as expressed in the outset of our haftarah:

“התשכח אשה עולה...” – “Can a woman forget her infant...?”

The second is that of a conqueror to his treasured captive:

“היוקח מגיבור מלקוח...” – as Rashi explains it refers to Israel - G-d's *treasured* nation

The third relationship is that of husband and wife:

“אי זה ספר כריתות אמכם...” – “Show me the divorce document I gave your mother”

The navi's multi-pronged approach to

comfort Israel, i.e. the promise of redemption, the guarantee of its approach and the unique relationship that Hashem has with the Jewish nation, may not have succeeded in consoling the millions who suffered through the *churban* and *galut*. And yet, today, we look back with wonderment at the fact that these words continued to echo through time and place for two-thousand years and have brought solace and hope to generations of grief-stricken.

Which is why we can still declare: עוֹד “לא אבדה תקוותינו” – we have never lost our hope, the hope instilled into our hearts by Yishayahu HaNavi. ■

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Why Tablets Made of Stone?

Several times in Parshat Ekev there is a reference to **לוחות אבנים** – *Luchot Avanim*. Why is it that the tablets upon which the ten commandments are engraved are referred to by their substance – **stone**? They are at times called *Luchot Habrit* – appropriately depicting the **covenant** which they represent. Is there any significance to the repeated reference to *Luchot Avanim* – the fact that they are engraved in **stone**?

Haketav V'Hakabala offers a creative idea as to the significance of the **Stone Tablets**.

One Entity Derived From Various Parts

First – as a substance, stone is the composition of several minerals. The ten commandments written upon these stones is representative of all of the 613 mitzvot. Rashi in Parshat Mishpatim cites Rav Hai Gaon who derived all 613 mitzvot from the

ten commandments. Just as stone is one entity composed of many other particles, so too the content of the ten commandments is representative of many derivative mitzvot.

FOUR TYPES OF STONE –

FOUR APPROACHES TO TORAH

Hazal have expressed that there are four approaches to interpreting the Torah, represented by the acronym **פְּשָׁט** (פרדס – פשט, רמז, דרש, סוד – Peshat, Remez, Derash, Sod). These approaches may symbolically be compared to the four types of stones that exist.

אֶבֶן (EVEN)

One type of rock is referred to as **אֶבֶן** (even). Its root is similar to **בָּנִין** – to build. This type of stone is composed of sand and dirt and is easily crafted to be used as a building material. This is similar to one who learns *Peshat* – a simple understanding of the text, where one can

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סֵלַע (SELA)

A second type of rock is called a Sela. These are אבני סיד (limestones), which are used in the manufacture of concrete. It is much harder and stronger than an *even*. This is compared to *Derash*, whose meaning is not easily apparent. One must work hard to seek an explanation of a seemingly puzzling verse.

צור (TZUR)

The third type of rock is a Tzur (flint). These types of stones are very hard and have historically been crafted to be used as swords or knives. The Torah indicates that Tzipora used a Tzur to perform a circumcision on her son (Shemot 5:25). This represents *Remez* – the hints hidden in the Torah. It takes a sharp mind to

decipher the clues within specific words or sequences of events in the Torah.

חלמיש (HALAMISH)

Halamish is a very strong stone, similar in nature to a diamond. It is very difficult to break. So too with the fourth face of the Torah- סוד – the secrets hidden within the Torah are difficult to crack and not accessible to everyone.

Perhaps the reason the luchot are referred to as “*luchot avanim*” in the plural is because they represent these four faces of the Torah. The contents of the Luchot may be understood in various dimensions, as the substance of stone exemplifies.

May we be able to delve into the intricacies of the Torah and gain a comprehensive understanding of the “rock” solid content contained and at times not readily apparent. ■



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10:20 AM

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Rabbi Dr. Aaron Adler
(Resumes Aug. 27)

11:30 AM

Shivat Tzion in Tanach:
**Rabbi Yitzchak
Breitowitz**

2:00 PM

Men's Talmud
Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

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MON, AUG 7

9:15 AM

Sefer Kohelet (L'Ayla)
Rebbetzin Pearl Borow

10:30 AM

The Thought of Rav Kook
on Eretz Yisrael: A study of
the sefer Eretz Chefetz
Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider
(Resumes Aug. 14)

10:30 AM

Special Guest Shiur-
Rabbi Avi Kilimnick

11:45 AM

Novel Parsha Nuances
Rabbi Avi Herzog

8:30 PM

Semichat Chaver
Program **Rabbi Elyada
Goldwicht** (The Bais)
(Resumes Aug. 21)

SPECIAL EVENT

8:00PM

Why do they Hate
Us? Upsurge in Anti-
Semitism
Dr. David Luchins

TUE, AUG 8

9:15 AM

Rebbetzin Shira Smiles
Torah Tapestries (L'Ayla)
(Resumes Aug. 15)

10:30 AM

Parshat HaShavua
Rabbi Yosef Goldin

9:30AM Minchat Chinuch
Rabbi Breitowitz

2:00 PM Men's Talmud
Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

7:30PM (The Bais) Safrus
(Men) **Rabbi Tzvi Mauner**
(Resumes Aug 29)

8:00PM

Sefer Shmuel **Rabbi Machlis**
(not teaching Aug 8)

SPECIAL EVENT

7:00PM

Special Guest Shiur-
**HaRav Herschel
Schachter shlita**

Schedule Subject to change, please check website for updates
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WED, AUG 9

9:00 AM

Torah and Technology

Rabbi Shimshon Nadel

10:15 AM

Contemporary Halachic
Issues

Rabbi Anthony Manning

11:30 AM

Ani Maamin-But Do You
Know if it's Really True?

**Rabbi Yitzchak
Feigenbaum**

12:30 PM Lunch and Learn

Rabbi Neil Winkler

8:00 PM

Halachic Controversies

Rabbi Aschi Dick (The Bais)

THURS, AUG 10

9:00 AM

Parshat HaShavua

Rabbi Ari Kahn

(Resumes Aug 31)

10:15 am

Parshat HaShavua

Rabbi Baruch Taub

(resumes Aug 21)

11:30 AM

Unlocking the Messages
of Chazal

Rabbi Shai Finkelstein

2:00 PM

Men's Talmud-Mesechta –
Bava Basra

Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

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Rabbi Taub

Parsha, 7:00PM Mon

Halacha, 7:00PM Wed

Rebbetzin Shatz

(L'Ayla)-Insights of
Chazal- Tues, 5:00PM

Rabbi Goldwicht

Parshat HaShavua

Wed. 8:30PM

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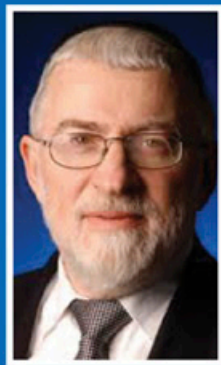
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Rav Broide in *Sam Derech* notes that further on in the *parashah*, Moshe tells the people that if they forget Hashem they will perish, “*ekev lo tishme’un bekol Hashem* – because you will not have hearkened to the voice of Hashem” (*Devarim* 8:20). Linking the two ideas, we can infer that a *laisse faire* attitude toward “insignificant” mitzvot will lead to our destruction. The

path towards greatness and closeness to Hashem is dependent on our recognition that every mitzvah, whether we view it as worthy of a small or large reward, is the Word of Hashem and a means to increase His glory in our world.

Rav Scheinerman in *Ohel Moshe* explains that one needs to view all mitzvot as a composite whole. Each mitzvah has the potential to build a person and the spiritual world around us. Just as one would never want to remove the spleen or kidney from the body since it is so small and inconsequential, likewise we must perceive each mitzvah as an integral detail to serve Hashem. In addition, once one develops a casual or mindless attitude towards “smaller” mitzvot, it is easy to extend such a mindset toward more “serious” mitzvot. On the other hand, when one lives a mindful existence in the “easy” details, it will impact the entirety of his observance and *avodat Hashem*.



As the Elul season approaches, this idea ought to be at the forefront of our minds. We all want to work on ourselves and improve in our *avodat Hashem*, but often-times we are unsure where we should focus. It feels “bigger” to fixate on the “major” or popular mitzvot. But this is a mistake. To illustrate, Rav Pincus z”l tells a story of a Rav who came to a small town in southern Israel to give a lecture as part of a kiruv initiative. There was only one man in

attendance. Instead of giving his prepared presentation, the Rav taught this man about the mitzvah of *negel vasser*, washing one's hands in the morning. A few years later, the Rav returned to the town, and the same man came over to reintroduce himself. He told the rabbi that he now gives a daily Talmud shiur in his shul, and it all started with the small mitzvah of *negel vasser*. Every mitzvah, teaches Rav Pincus, is a gate to enter the King's palace. Whatever gate we choose, it will be an avenue of connection to Eternity. ■

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Eikev: Know!

Rebbe Yisrael Alter, the Beis Yisroel of Gur, zy'a, was fond of repeating a *m'aseh* about his great-grandfather, Reb Yitzchok Meir, the *Chidushei haRi'm*:

One day, a self-described non-believing *maskil*, rebellious and arrogant, came before the *Chidushei haRi'm*. This man gloated that although he had done many *aveiros*, indulging all of his wants and desires, he lives a happy, fulfilled life, is wealthy, has honor and is in good health. With a cynical and mocking tone, he challenged the great sage: “Rabbi, does it not explicitly state in the *Shema*,

הַשְׁמָרׁוּ לָכֶם פֶּךְ־יִפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶּם וְסִרְתֶּם וְעַבַּדְתֶּם
אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים... וְחָרָה אֶפְרָה' בְּכֶם וְעָצַר אֶת־
הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהִאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת־
יְבוּלָהּ וְאֲבַדְתֶּם מִיָּהָרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה,

‘Beware lest your heart be lured away and you turn and worship alien gods.... For then the wrath of Hashem will be kindled against you, and He will close off the heavens, and there will be no rain, and the ground will not give its produce, and you will perish quickly from upon the good land that God has given you.’ ... But look at me! I have all I could possibly want and more. The Torah’s claims are nothing but empty threats and false promises!”

The *Chidushei haRi'm* sighed, and then spoke: “Since you are familiar with the

contents of the *pesukim*, it is clear that you must have recited the *Shema* at least once in your lifetime. Know that this is an unimaginable *zechus* that carries inestimable power and supernal value. The merit of saying *Shema even once* is beyond measure and comprehension — and how much more so for you, who can quote scripture and verse by heart! So *of course* you are blessed with all the good in the world.”

This Shabbos, we are introduced to the second chapter of the *Shema*, which both enumerates the fundamental elements of our faith and obligations and presents the rewards of fulfilling the Torah’s commandments (as well as the opposite repercussions).

The *Shema* expresses *yichud Hashem*, the indivisible Oneness of our Creator. It is our theological mission statement and forms the essential core of our belief and life, expressing the essence of what it means to be a Jew. It is the beginning and end of *Yiddishkeit*, the first prayer we hear as infants, and traditionally, a Jew aspires that it be his or her last words on earth.

Rav Adin Steinsaltz, zy'a, elaborates:

“For the Jewish People, the *Shema* is a call, a slogan, a sign of identification and an expression of great emotion. It is a declaration of bond, of principles and identity... (that are) with us from the very beginning of our history. These words have

accompanied our people for thousands of years in our homeland and in exile, in times of peace and war, in the gas chambers and along with our cries of triumph.

“The Shema is our ‘password’; it is how Jews recognized each other — despite geographical, linguistic and cultural differences. The Shema is a declaration of connection, of faith and of confidence. It is a promise and a call: ‘We are here, we belong, we continue, we have a past and a future.’”

And we should know that the mitzvah of reciting Shema is not only a source of spiritual and cultural strength, but even physical strength, as our holy sages testify (*Sotah*, 42a):

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מְשׁוּם רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחִי
אָמַר לָהֶן הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לִישְׂרָאֵל: אֶפְּלִי לֹא
קִיִּמְתֶּם אֲלָא קִרְיַת שְׁמַע שְׁחֲרִית וְעֶרְבִית, אִי
אַתֶּם נִמְסָרִין בְּיָדָם.

“Rebbe Yochanan said in the name of Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai: The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the Jewish People: Even if you have not fulfilled any mitzvah but reciting the Shema in the morning and evening, you will not be delivered into the hands of your enemies.”

In 1941, Rebbe Yosef Yitzchok, the Friediker Lubavitcher Rebbe, instituted a program that provided Jewish children from New York City public schools with an hour of weekly Jewish study. Every Wednesday afternoon, volunteers, *talmidim* from Yeshivah Tomchei Temimim would interrupt their own learning for several hours, travel across town to various public schools, and meet the kids during their club hour. There they would escort them

to local shuls where they would learn the basics of Yiddishkeit together.

One *masmid*, a serious and dedicated budding *talmid chacham* wrote to the Rebbe, asking to be excused from participating in the program. He felt that his time might be used more effectively in the *beis medrash*, and that the shlep across town was a waste of time in his own case... “For, how much are we actually achieving with the students?”

The Friediker’s reply was direct and clear: “Know that on Wednesday afternoons, all of the souls in Gan Eden from throughout all of history, including Moshe Rabeinu himself, are envious of you, jealous that you have the awesome *zechus* each week to say *Shema Yisrael* with a Jewish child. The *neshamos* in Gan Eden no longer have the opportunity to interact with Jewish children and draw them closer to their Father in Heaven. Do you have any idea what the *tzadikim* in Gan Eden would give for the opportunity to say Shema with a Yid even once!?”

.....

If someone who aspires to a life of *kefirah* and rebelliousness benefits just from being familiar with the contents of Shema, how great must the merit be for those who strive to live with Hashem’s will! Such is the perspective of the *tzadikim*, who know the value of our prayer, our Torah...and our people.

May we appreciate and savor every Kriyas Shema with our children or in our daily services, morning and evening; may we know the value, power and potential of saying the Shema even once with a Yid — including ourselves! ■



Redemption and Yiras Shamayim

As he nears the end of his life, Moshe is terrified about our future. He had seen enough to convince him that, after his death, we would likely revert to our rebellious tendencies. Moshe loved us, but well understood that, given our mulishness, we would never skip an opportunity to rebel or to complain. The first three parshiyot of Devarim contain Moshe's "monologue of worry", reminding us of our past betrayals and cautioning us to preserve our faith once we enter Israel.

Toward the end of this soliloquy, Moshe makes one final, desperate, and straightforward plea, reducing his entire sermon into one elementary demand:

ועתה ישראל מה ה' אלוֹקֶיךָ שׁוֹאֵל מֵעַמְּךָ כִּי
אִם לִירֵאָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ

To Moshe, Yiras shamayim lies at the core of religious experience and, additionally, serves as a gateway to other essential religious goals.

To showcase the transformational nature of yiras shamayim Moshe prefaces his plea with a bold term ועתה - which translates into "now". "Now" he argues, is the moment in which yiras shamayim

is crucial. Even though yiras shamayim is an enduring feature of avodas Hashem, it is even more vital "now", at their current historical juncture.

A NEW ERA

Yiras shamayim is critical for this new generation. About to enter the Land of Israel, this group will battle for the Land, settle it, and, eventually, fashion a home for Hashem. They will be directly involved in a long-term redemptive process, which could, conceivably, lead to Messianic utopia. Chazal asserted that the first Mikdash era offered Messianic opportunities which, sadly, were squandered.

However, the euphoria of redemption can severely stress yiras shamayim and, recognizing this risk, Moshe appeals to them to bolster this supremely important trait.

DEFINING YIRAS SHAMAYIM

Yiras shamayim is one of the two "mind-sets" which comprises religious identity. Yiras shamayim and ahavas Hashem are two polar opposites, but each is vital for a balanced and passionate relationship with Hashem.

Ahavas Hashem arises from our ability to synchronize Hashem's will with our own. Appreciating that Torah enhances human experience, increases our gratitude towards, and love of Hashem. Recognizing the beneficial nature of a religious lifestyle arouses love for Hashem for having delivered us this gift.

By contrast, yiras shamayim braces our faith even when we are unable to decipher Hashem's will and unable to recognize religion as an enhancer of life. Blind submission to the inscrutable divine mystery is an act of yiras shamayim. If ahavas Hashem is predicated upon synchronicity yiras shamayim is grounded in dissonance. Ahavas Hashem stems from clarity while yiras shamayim emerges from mystery.

Successful religious experience demands delicately calibrating these two opposing emotions of ahava and yira. Too much ahava and we become too casual and too confident in our relationship with Hashem causing His transcendence, in our eyes, to gradually diminish. Too much yira and Hashem becomes distant and slowly slips out of our consciousness.


At different stages of our personal lives, we toggle between ahava and yira. During our successful moments, when life makes sense to us, ahava anchors our religious identity. During bleaker periods, when we can't fathom the divine plan, we tap into yiras shamayim as our religious anchor.

THE HISTORICAL TOGGLE

Jewish history also affects the toggling between ahavas Hashem and yiras shamayim. During the golden era of Jewish sovereignty, when we felt Hashem's caress, ahavas Hashem surged. Understandably, during darker periods of Jewish history, when Hashem's presence was obscured by Jewish suffering and the world seemed to crash around us, we drew strength and faith from yiras shamayim.

THE NEW ERA

We are currently entering a new era which is imperiling yiras shamayim.




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During this final phase of Jewish history, we are, literally, partnering with Hashem in constructing the end of time, relandscaping history and resurrecting Jewish destiny. While the tables of history are turning, we are experiencing national euphoria. However, excess giddiness can lead to excess intimacy with Hashem, which upsets the delicate balance between ahava and yira. In an era of redemption we face a potential crisis of too much ahava.

Nadav and Avihu faced this same challenge. The appointed day of the shechinah's descent into our realm arrived, causing joyful celebration. Exhilarated by the arrival of the shechinah, they freelanced and offered personalized sacrifices which hadn't been authorized. They felt too close with Hashem and their ahava got the better of their yira. Their tragic death by fire

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restored the delicate equilibrium between closeness and distance.

CAN REDEMPTION NURTURE YIRA?

Theoretically, redemption can advance yiras shamayim. Witnessing the overwhelming and awe-inspiring power of Hashem humbles Man and augments yiras shamayim. Directly exposed to Hashem's breathtaking power at the yam suf, we attained this yiras shamayim: וירא ישראל את ה' הגדולה אשר עשה ה' במצרים ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו.

A similar experience unfolded at Har Sinai. Terrified by the billowing mountain and frightened by the infernal fire, we hurriedly retreated from this fiery mountain, begging Moshe to intercede and to relay the word of Hashem to us. Gratified by this fear, Hashem announced להבא מן הים כי יראת ה' תהיה לכם, expressing His wish that we preserve this moment of submission. During moments of redemption, when we encounter grand miracles and awe-inspiring force of Hashem, our egos are humbled, and yiras shamayim flows.

However, during other, less dramatic moments of redemption, when humans don't flee mountains, but partner with Hashem in a redemptive process, our yiras shamayim is tested. When our historical partnership makes us feel too comfortable with Hashem, yiras shamayim attenuates.

Modern tefillah postures in Israel reflect the overemphasis of ahava at the cost

of yira. The Shulchan Aruch claims that, during tefillah we should stand humbly before Hashem in the manner of a servant. In some circles, Chassidus-influenced tefillah styles include intense gestures of outstretched arms to heaven. These motions, which presume a degree of intimacy with Hashem, would shock our non-Chassidic ancestors who, during tefillah, stood erect and at attention. However, in the brave new world of Jewish redemption it feels perfectly natural to many.

As Jewish history becomes more dazzling, we, naturally, feel greater ahavas Hashem. We must also take great care not to overwhelm our yiras shamayim. As much as we think we understand history, we can never fully decode it, and we can certainly never fully grasp Hashem's essence. ■

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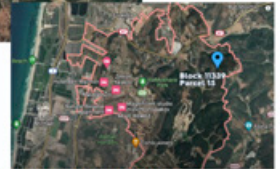
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HAFTORAH INSIGHTS

BY REBBETZIN DR.
ADINA SHMIDMAN



YESHAYAHU 49:14 - 51:3

Forever United: The Land of Israel and Its Eternal Bride

This week, we continue the series of ten Haftorot that are connected to the time of year rather than a haftorah thematically related to the weekly Parsha. This week's Haftorah is the second of the seven Haftorot of consolation.

שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינֶיךָ וְרְאֵי כָּל־מַקְצָצוֹ בְּאֵיזֶלֶךְ
חֵי־אֲנִי נְאֻם־ה' כִּי כָּל־מַקְצָדִי תִּלְבָּשִׁי וְתִקְשְׁרִים
כָּפְלָה:

Look up all around you and see: They are all assembled, they have come to you! As I live —declares Hashem —You shall don them all like jewels, deck yourself with them like a bride.

In a vivid description of the return of the exiles to the Land of Israel, Hashem swears that the Land will don the people like jewels, and be adorned with them like a bride. When the people come back to the Land of Israel, the land will “wear” the people in a manner that will beautify the Land, adding grace and charm.

What does the phrase “as adorned like a bride” add, aside from a more flowery presentation of the original image? The Aderet Eliyahu, Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Baghdad (1833-1909), suggests that while a woman generally wears her jewelry on special occasions, a bride so long

as she is a bride wears her adornments and doesn't remove them. Hashem swears that the return of the people to the land will be permanent, as represented by the bride who wears her jewelry constantly.

Normally, a bride bedecked in jewelry glows in her unique “bride” status for a short window of time as she gradually transitions into everyday life. The navi assures us that we will be blessed to remain the land's bride, sparkling in her jewelry for all time. Yeshayahu comforts the people that in the time of the redemption, the Jewish people will not sin and our holy land will adorn our people forever. ■

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Real Life Rescues

Uzi Sellouk is part of a family of lifesavers, with his wife, son, and daughter all volunteer EMTs.

Last month, Uzi was riding his ambucycle with his daughter when they were notified of an allergic reaction at the D-City mall near Maale Adumim. Switching on the siren, Uzi raced to the location and found a worried mother who explained that her baby had been eating when she suddenly broke out in hives and started having some difficulty breathing.

A quick examination and a full check of vital signs confirmed that the allergic reaction wasn't serious enough to warrant medication. Uzi and his daughter reassured the anxious young mother until an ambulance arrived to facilitate transport to the hospital so that the young girl could receive follow-up care and observation.

Uzi and his daughter had just got back on his ambucycle when yet another alert came in.

This time it was far more serious.

A family had posed for a photo next to their jeep on the side of a highway while the mother went down a small slope to take the picture. In a devastating turn of events, the precariously balanced jeep flipped over and rolled right on top of the woman.

Emergency services were called and IDF teams together with community-based first responders arrived quickly at the scene. The IDF teams worked urgently to lift the heavy vehicle off the woman. When she was finally released, Uzi and his daughter together with other EMS personnel found that she was in multi-system trauma, unconscious and with terrible injuries across her body. The combined team feverishly provided medical intervention and managed to stabilize her condition. She was rushed off at top speed to the trauma unit of the nearest hospital.

Uzi and his daughter also treated the father and two small children (ages 4 and 6) who had been injured by debris and glass shards. They too were evacuated to the hospital.

But the Sellouk family of first responders wasn't finished yet as Uzi explained. "While my daughter and I were treating the badly injured woman and her family, my wife and son responded to a medical emergency nearby where a young man suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. My wife, who is a paramedic, was the first responder at the scene," recounted Uzi. "So all four of us were saving lives at the same time. This to me is very special and I am proud that this is an ethos that I am able to pass on and share with my children."



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TOWARDS MEANINGFUL SHABBOS

BY REBBETZIN ZEMIRA OZAROWSKI
Director of OU Israel L'Ayla Women's Initiative



תוספת שבת

Imagine you have two guests. Moshe fills his plate with chicken, kugel, and cholent, licks his plate clean and then takes a second helping of everything. Chaim on the other hand, pushes the food around his plate, nibbles a bit here and there, and leaves a lot over on his plate. It's clear as day who enjoyed your food and who suffered through it. (R' Zalman Sorotzkin)

The same is true when it comes to Shabbos. The way we enter into and leave the Shabbos will illustrate clearly how we feel about the Shabbos. If we wait until the last minute to light candles and then wait anxiously for Havdalah so that we can finally get back to regular life, then we obviously do not fully enjoy Shabbos. But if we enter into Shabbos early and wait a bit before ending Shabbos (השבת מן הצאת מן השבת "המאחרים לצאת מן השבת לבוא") (then we show how precious Shabbos is to us.

The **Mishna Berura** 261:19 brings down that there is a Mitzvah of תוספת שבת - to add onto Shabbos both at the beginning and at the end of the day. We generally do this by setting candle lighting time 18 minutes before sunset (and 40 minutes before in Yerushalayim). So the basic way to fulfill this Mitzvah is at the very least to strictly adhere to the set candle lighting time (men should accept Shabbos after *davening Mincha* in shul a few minutes before sunset).

An even higher level is to add on extra time of our own.

This is obviously easier said than done, as many of us are often down to the wire before Shabbos, and need any extra minutes we can get to finish up our preparations. But if we could manage to finish our preparations a bit earlier and bring in Shabbos just a bit earlier, it will change our whole outlook on Shabbos.

The **Ohr HaChaim** (Parshat Ki Tisa) explains that the purpose of Tosefes Shabbos is to show that we are excited and happy that Shabbos is coming ולא תהיה השבת עליו חס ושלום לעול ומשא וכל שכן שלא יהא יושב ומצפה מתי יוצא השבת ויכול לעשות - and that it shouldn't appear like Shabbos is a burden and that we are sitting and waiting for it to end already.

The **Rambam** (Hilchot Shabbat 7:2) writes that a person should be מִיחֵל לְהִקְבֵּל תּוֹסֵפֵס שַׁבָּת - sitting - פְּנֵי הַשַּׁבָּת כְּמוֹ שְׂהוּא יוֹצֵא לְקִרְאָת הַמֶּלֶךְ - sitting and waiting with anticipation to welcome the Shabbos, the same way he would anticipate going out to greet the king. Or, alternatively, the Ohr HaChaim describes it as the way a Chatan goes out to greet his bride.

The **Brisker Rav** used to finish preparing for Shabbos hours before Shabbos and as evening approached, he would go out to his *mirpeset* in his Shabbos clothes, with his face shining with anticipation, and would just sit there doing nothing, as he waited with excitement for the sun to set and Shabbos to arrive.

Often we get so stuck in our Shabbos preparations that we forgo the important mitzvah of Tosefes Shabbos. Sometimes, if we see we won't be ready in time, it would be better to clean a little less or make one less dessert in order to enter into Shabbos with this special feeling of anticipation and excitement. If we take those extra moments to really appreciate the fact that Shabbos is coming, it will elevate our entire Shabbos experience, and impact on our children's relationship to Shabbos as well.

Tosefes Shabbos is brought down as a segula for many things including Shidduchim, children, parnassa, and more. It's not those extra minutes that are a special button that cause good things to happen. Rather, it's the transformation a person goes through when he begins to add on that extra time - stopping, contemplating, and appreciating - that puts him on a different level, ready to receive Hashem's abundance of bracha.

May we all be *zoche* to take on an additional level of תוספת שבת and join the ranks of those who are "שומרי שבת", not just that we keep the laws of the Shabbos, but we actually watch over the Shabbos and stand in wait for it, and don't keep Shabbos waiting around for us! (R' Yaakov Katina, Rachmei haAv)

(Many of the ideas for this article are taken from the book מאור השבת). ■



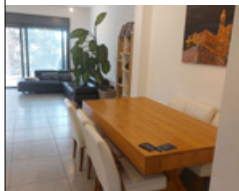
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SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

Our Sedra opens with the words:

Vhaya eikev tishmaun, eit hamishpatim haeleh, ushmartem vaasitem otam, v'shamar Hashem Elokecha lecha et habrit v'et hacheses asher nishba la avotecha.

And it shall be, if you will heed these statutes, and fulfill and do them, Hashem your G-d will fulfill the covenant and kindness He promised to your ancestors.

The great Chasidic Master, **Reb Mordechai of Lekovitch zy'a**, offered a very novel interpretation of this *pasuk*. The *Rebbe* points to a teaching from the *Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh*, that the word *v'haya*-Literally and it shall be, connotes *simcha*-joy, while the word *ekev* - which literally means the heel, or bottom, connotes humility.

The *Rebbe* explained if one merits to personify these two character traits, of serving *Hashem* with joy and humility, he will indeed succeed in heeding the words of the *Torah HaKadosha*, succeed in fulfilling the *mitzvot*, and merit that in turn, *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* will bless us through his covenant of kindness.

Similarly **Rabbeinu B'Chaya** taught that "*the simcha one experiences as they perform a mitzvah, is a mitzvah in and of itself!*"

But how are we to condition ourselves to feel joy in each and every mitzvah? How exactly are we meant to see each and every mitzvah as a joy filled experience?

There is a well known teaching the

Mishna in Masechet Makkot : *Rebbe Chananya ben Akashya omer: ratza HaKadosh Baruch Hu Izakot et yisrael, lefichach hirba lahem Torah umitzvot...Rabbi Chananya Ben Akashya taught: HaKadosh Baruch wishes to bestow merit upon the Jewish people, therefore he gave them so many mitzvot within the Torah....*

At face value, this teaching seems contradictory. If *Hashem* truly wants us to succeed and to receive merit, why then are there so many laws and statutes, which we are expected to fulfill? Seemingly having so many regulations might for many seem intimidating, or as potential obstacles to success. How are we to understand this teaching?

The **Rambam**, in his commentary on this *mishna*, brilliantly clarifies the message that *Rebbe Chananya* intended to convey. The *Rambam* explains, that since *Hashem* has given us so many *mitzvot*, it is impossible for one to go through an entire lifetime, and not have at least one *mitzvah* that they excel at and fulfill completely, and through that one *mitzvah* they give eternal life to their soul.

The *Rambam*, in this important insight, teaches us to pivot in our definition and relationship to *mitzvot*, to begin to see *Mitzvot* not solely as obligations, but more so as opportunities. Opportunities to demonstrate our fidelity to *Hashem* and the *Torah HaKadosha*, and simultaneously

to feel *Hashem's* covenantal commitment and fidelity to each one of us.

Yehi ratzon, may each of us indeed merit to take to heart these two important insights, to see each and every *mitzvah* as an opportunity to serve *Hashem* with joy and humility, and to merit to receive the blessing of the promise of Divine Kindness inherent in each and every moment. ■

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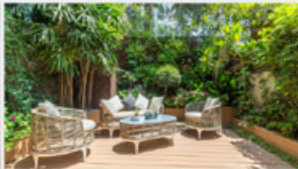
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RABBI GIDEON

**Machon Puah for Fertility and
Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha**

WEITZMAN

The Need for Supervision

Last time we discussed the halachic reason for requiring supervision during fertility treatment.

But surely the fertility clinics are extremely careful that there should be no mistakes, why do you need to place supervisors in the laboratory?

The fertility clinics are vigilant to ensure that there are no mistakes during the process of fertility treatment. While one embryologist performs a procedure another embryologist watches to make sure that no error occurred. Yet, mistakes do happen, as was recently demonstrated, with the recent publicity around two mistakes in the same clinic.

There was a paper published in a British medical journal that reported over 200

mistakes that had been recorded over a number of years. This paper only reports recorded mistakes, and we can only guess as to whether there were more mistakes that were unnoticed and, this, unreported.

Therefore, it is clear that with the best intentions, and safeguards in place, mistakes can and do happen.

Rabbi Burstein, the founder of PUAH, tells the story, about how he first started doing supervision. He toured the clinics and observed their strict protocols and observation standards. He was convinced that the clinics were particular enough and that there was no need for additional supervision.

He went to speak with Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, the late leading posek. Rabbi Auerbach felt that supervision was necessary, but Rabbi Burstein attempted to suggest otherwise, based on his experience in viewing the lab procedures.

Rabbi Auerbach was persistent and



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suggested that Rabbi Burstein visit the lab on a Friday afternoon, some 15 minutes before they were to close for Shabbat. Rabbi Burstein did as he was instructed, and saw the genius of the older posek. Under pressure the lab was more likely to work quicker and mistakes could happen.

Even the most scrupulous and meticulous professional can make mistakes, especially when working under pressure. As more and more patients turn to fertility treatment in order to have healthy children, the clinics are busier than ever. The staff work long hours under stressful conditions, working on complicated and intricate procedures. Mistakes can happen, and supervision becomes even more essential.

It should be stressed that supervision exists to prevent human error, and not malicious intent. Someone who wants to cheat and lie will find a way to do so despite the most stringent supervision. In such a clinic it would be almost impossible to supply comprehensive and competent supervision. We offer supervision in clinics where the highest standards are observed, to ensure that there is no chance of human error.

More on this next time. ■

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PORTION FROM THE PORTION

RAKEL BERENBAUM
Contributor, Torah Tidbits

Do Not Fear

One morning before the nine days, I took my granddaughters to the beach. I went early in the season in order to enjoy the beach before the crowds during August and the jellyfish (*meduzot*) that annually arrive just in advance of the three weeks. I checked the report on the condition of the sea and it said that there wouldn't be any jellyfish. While playing in the water we saw some girls running out of the water shouting "there's a jellyfish". Although none of my grandchildren had ever been stung by a jellyfish, the fear they witnessed in the other girls' faces and their shouts was contagious. After that my granddaughters were afraid to go near the water. I told them that we could just sit at the edge of the water and would be able to see if the jellyfish were coming and stay away from them, but they didn't even want to put their feet in the water. They were flooded by their fear and weren't able to enjoy something they had wanted to do just minutes before.

My grandchildren aren't the only ones filled with fear. It seems that a lot of the unrest in the country these days is fueled by fear; fear of change, fear of religion, fear of those that are different...

Because of the beach incident, verses 7:17-18 in this week's portion that talk about fear caught my eye, "Will you say to

yourself, "These nations are more numerous than I; how will I be able to drive them out"? You shall not fear them...."

Fear is a legitimate human emotion. The Torah even tells us that some of our forefathers were afraid at different times of their lives (Bereshit 12:2,7, 13:15-16, 22:17, 26:4, 28:13-14). So how could the Torah command us "You shall not fear" That we shouldn't fear our enemies? How would a command "not to fear" help us control our amygdala's signals of danger to the rest of the body starting our fear response?

The Malbim quotes the Abarbanel who explains that a command alone won't help get the fearful thoughts out of our head. That is why the verses continue "You shall surely **remember** what the Lord, your God, did to Pharaoh and to all of Egypt: The great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm with which the Lord, your God, brought you out. **So will the Lord, Your God, do to all the peoples you fear**"(7:19). The advice to prevent this fear from taking over us completely is to remember that just like God fought for us against Pharaoh who was mightier than us, so He will be by our side against all our other enemies. These lessons from our past help our higher cognitive brain modulate our fear. These are important lessons to always keep in our minds, especially in these days when we have so many enemies

who would like to destroy us and so many people trying to instill fear into our minds.

Now back to my beach story – a lady at the beach asked to borrow a shovel from us – which she used to take a jellyfish out of the water and then bury it. She did not let her fear of jellyfish freeze her. I was glad to have my grandchildren watch how she dealt with her fear. Enjoy the beach! Do not fear!

This week's portion includes numerous verses about the goodness of the Land of Israel. One verse (8:8) includes the list of the seven species of the Land of Israel: "a Land of wheat and barley, grapes and figs and pomegranates, a Land of oil producing olives and [date]honey". Therefore this week's recipe includes some of the seven species as ingredients: grapes, olive oil, date honey.

ROASTED CHICKEN WITH GRAPES, OLIVE OIL AND DATE HONEY

- 4 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 tablespoon of dried thyme
- salt and pepper to taste
- 6 chicken thighs (about 1.134 kg)
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 tablespoon date honey (*silan*)
- 12 to 15 whole medium shallots, peeled (use onions if you don't have)
- 2 cups of red grapes, cut into serving size clusters
- Thyme sprigs

Pat the chicken dry and season with thyme, salt, and pepper. Heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook (10 minutes), skin down, until well browned and crisp. Lower flame if it starts to smoke too much. Flip chicken and brown lightly

on the other side, about 3 minutes. Transfer chicken to a plate. Brown the shallots in the vinegar and date honey, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat. Return chicken to pan, pushing the shallots aside so that the chicken skin remains exposed. Add some thyme sprigs. Place pan in 220 C. oven and roast, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Add the grapes on top of the chicken, and roast for another 15 minutes. Remove and serve. ■

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RIGHT, THANK YOU, MENACHEM, FOR THAT... ERM...
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DEAD WOODLICE.
NEXT - DVIR...



OH BOY... MY END-OF YEAR BIOLOGY
PROJECT THESIS PRESENTATION...
I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THIS FOR EVER
AND NOW I NEED TO SUMMARIZE IT IN
5 MINUTES FOR THE CLASS, AND ALL OF A
SUDDEN THESE HEADER POINTS I WROTE DOWN
FOR MYSELF DON'T MAKE ANY SENSE...



MAYBE BECAUSE
I WROTE THEM
WHILE MY HEAD
WAS STILL
FULL OF THAT
SHOW WE FILMED
YESTERDAY IN
EFRAT...

DVIR!



NOT EASY TO CONCENTRATE WHEN YOU'VE
GOT BENTZI YERUSHALMI'S IMAGE STUCK
IN YOUR HEAD, SINGING
"HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR OLD TOWN"
AT FULL VOLUME
FROM THE TOP OF A LAMPOST...

BUT I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO MANAGE WITH
WHAT I HAVE.



UH, OK, HI, EVERYONE.
THE TOPIC I CHOSE TO LOOK INTO
OVER THESE PAST FEW MONTHS
WAS:
THE "SEVEN SPECIES" THAT
THE LAND OF ISRAEL EXCELS IN...



SO, LIKE, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THESE
SEVEN FRUITS AND GRAINS HAVE GREAT
SIGNIFICANCE IN THE TORAH, BUT I WANTED
TO RESEARCH WHETHER **BOTANICALLY**
THEY HAVE THEIR OWN...

...REGIONAL COUNCIL,
INDEPENDENT OF GUSH ETZION'S...

SORRY, DID I WRITE THAT?
WHAT WAS I THINKING?



ANYWAYS, I DISCOVERED THAT ALL
SEVEN SPECIES SHARE A CURIOUS
COMMON PHENOMENON CALLED...

ERM...
BY THE LOOKS OF IT...

ZAIDY.

ZAIDY?!

SORRY, THAT'S...
MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT
ZAIDY'S PIZZA, ONE OF EFRAT'S
LEADING...



NEVER MIND...



DVIR, THIS IS MOST UNLIKE YOU.
KINDLY FOCUS ON THE TOPIC AT
HAND...

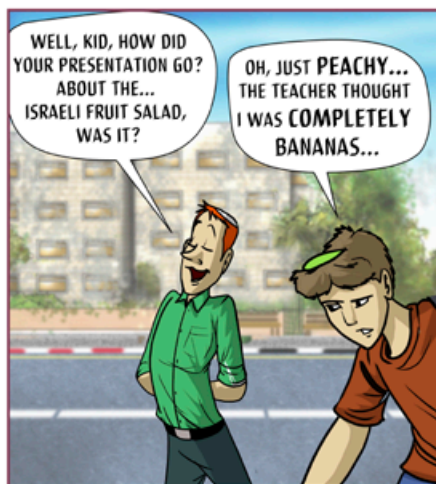
SURE, RIGHT YOU ARE...
UM...
WELL, LET'S START WITH
RIMON - POMEGRANATE:



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EFRAT'S OLDEST
NEIGHBOURHOOD,
ESTABLISHED BY THE
FOUNDERS...

I MEAN... SORRY...

...IT'S REDDISH AND FULL
OF SEEDS THAT TASTE
REALLY GOOD MARINATED
IN KIDDUSH WINE...





Shimmy Goldsmith
Raanana
Chapter Director

Hashem Is in Control

In Parshas Eikev, Moshe repeatedly warns the people of Israel, "Be very careful! As life becomes more comfortable in Eretz Yisrael, with plentiful food, beautiful homes, and other luxuries, there's a risk that you can forget Hashem and you will begin to boast, saying, 'It is my strength, not Hashem's, that brought me all this success.'" This warning was true then, and it remains relevant for us today.

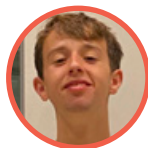
A question can be asked, how come the Torah does not say that the people might say, "It is my strength that got me this success," Instead, it states that they will say it! How can the Torah say this with certainty? The Alter of Kelm, Rav Simcha Zissel, answers this question saying that from the time of *Adam harishon's* punishment, when humans were cursed to work hard for their food and our money, this inclination has been present. The more effort we put in, the more tempted we become to take credit for our success. This instinct is deeply rooted in us that the Torah predicts people will inevitably fall into this mindset.

The Torah emphasizes that while we must put in our efforts, we must not forget that Hashem is ultimately in control.

Rav Schwadron shares the tale of a

diligent traffic director stationed at Jerusalem's entrance, who tirelessly managed the traffic flow day after day, stopping cars when needed and letting others go by. One day, illness struck the man, confining him to his bed. Concerned, he asked his wife who would take his place directing the traffic. His wife assured him, "Don't worry! They will look at the traffic lights."

Many of us laugh when we find out that this man has been a traffic director using traffic lights. We laugh when we think of how pointless this man's job was! They were watching the traffic lights, not the man! But Rav Schwadron says that although we laugh, we should really be looking at ourselves. How many of us are the man! We think we're doing something important not realizing that God is in control.



Jonathan Bernstein
Raanana
11th Grade

Man Does Not Live By Bread Alone.

In this week's Parsha we read "... so that you know that man does not live by bread alone, but by all that proceeds out of the mouth of G-d does man live. "

A story is told about a prisoner in the jail of the Russians in Siberia. His job for twenty-five years was solely to make a wheel spin that was connected to the wall... day after day without stopping. This prisoner

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never saw what was on the other side of the wall. He thought that on the other side of the wall there was a flour mill, and what he did was grind wheat. He imagined every day, thousands of bags full of flour that he ground. "How many children and people will eat the flour that I prepare?" asked the prisoner.

Twenty-five years passed, his punishment ended, and before he got out of jail, the prisoner asked only one thing, to see the machine that is on the other side of the wall. They went and showed him that there was no mill, nothing at all on the other side. The wheel was just a wheel... There was no wheat, no flour, no people who ate that flour, just the wheel. Seeing that what he did for twenty-five years was for nothing, the prisoner passed out and he died.

The moral of the story is that sometimes we come to a moment when we understand that money and physical wealth are not everything in life. This is the message of the above excerpt from today's Parsha.

Every creature in this world has a complex of two parts - body, and soul. The body has to eat, drink, rest to continue living, but the soul also needs to eat, the soul also needs spiritual sustenance.

What does the soul need? The soul needs to know that what we do has a great objective, that all the effort we make is for something important. We can see thousands of people, full of money, but empty of joy, and

vice versa, people who do not have money but are overflowing with joy.

Physical food is not the only thing that ensures man's existence. Apart from normal sustenance, there are Divine forces which sustain man in his progress through life. Man does not live on bread alone - apart from bread - the needs of the spiritual life should not be neglected. The nourishment of the physical bread is not the most important thing in life. What is most important is the connection to Hashem, to one's goals in life, and the connection to the noble values that Hashem wants from us.

Shabbat Shalom ■

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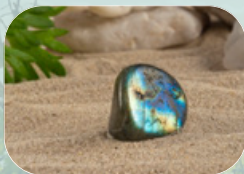
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