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ON B'HALOSCHA - 5760

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From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP:skatz@torah.org]  
Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by SHLOMO KATZ  
Now available, by the editor of Hamaayan: The Haftarah / Laws, Customs & History. For information, email [skatz@torah.org](mailto:skatz@torah.org) All proceeds benefit Hamaayan. Be'ha'alotecha Sponsored by Robert and Hannah Klein on the 90th birthday of mother Dorothy J. Klein The Vogel family on the yahrzeit of Rabbi Joseph Braver a"h (R' Yosef Leib ben Harav Yehuda) Today's Learning: Yoma 4:4-5 Orach Chaim 303:24-26 Daf Yomi (Bavli): Ketubot 86

"According to the word of Hashem Bnei Yisrael would journey and according to the word of Hashem they would encamp . . . When the cloud lingered upon the Tabernacle many days, Bnei Yisrael would maintain the charge of Hashem and would not journey. So sometimes the cloud would be upon the Tabernacle for a number of days . . . and sometimes the cloud would remain from evening until morning . . . or for a day and a night . . . or for two days, or a month, or a year . . ." (9:18-22)

Why? Yitzchak Elchanan Waldshein z"l hy"d (Assistant Mashgiach in Baranovitch) explains: Hashem's intention was to teach Bnei Yisrael three traits -- patience, restraint, and alacrity. They learned patience from staying in undesirable places longer than they wished. They learned restraint by staying in pleasant places a shorter time than they would have liked (and thus being restrained from enjoying whatever fruits that particular oasis offered). Finally, they learned alacrity by having to pack and unpack in a short time. (Quoted in Haggadah Shel Pesach Baranovitch p. 222)

"Make for yourself two silver trumpets . . . and they shall be yours for the summoning of the assembly." (10:1)

The gemara (Menachot 28b) teaches that all of the vessels that Moshe made could be used by later generations as well. However, the trumpets were for Moshe to summon the nation and could not be used by subsequent leaders.

Why?

R' Eliyahu Schlesinger shlita (rabbi of the Gilo neighborhood of Yerushalayim) suggests that there is a simple lesson here. The way that the leader of one generation calls his flock and relates to his congregants will not necessarily work for the leader of the next generation. (Eileh Ha'davarim)

From the same work:

"When the ark would journey, Moshe said, 'Arise, Hashem, and let Your foes be scattered; let those who hate You flee before You.' And when it rested, he would say, 'Reside, tranquilly, Hashem, among the myriads of thousands of Israel.'" (10:35-36)

In the Sefer Torah, these verses are set off by special symbols to highlight that they form a separate "book" on their own. What is so important about these verses that the midrash would refer to them as a separate book?

R' Schlesinger explains: These two verses contain the fundamentals of our existence in exile. At times, the "ark journeys," and the Jewish

B'S'D people are tossed about from one exile to another. At such times, our primary concern is our physical safety, and we pray that Hashem's foes will be scattered and those who hate Him will flee before Him.

On the other hand, when the ark rests, i.e., when the Jewish people are living peacefully in their own land or in a benevolent kingdom, the primary threat is spiritual. It is primarily in those nations which have treated us well that the threat of assimilation has been greatest. Therefore we pray, "Reside, tranquilly, Hashem, among the myriads of thousands of Israel."

R' Schlesinger adds: We read a few verses earlier that Moshe asked his father-in-law Yitro to accompany Bnei Yisrael to Eretz Yisrael, and he told him (10:31), "You will be as eyes for us." Moshe knew that Bnei Yisrael would be in grave spiritual danger once they had settled peacefully on their land, and he therefore wanted Yitro among them so that Bnei Yisrael could look upon him -- they could set their "eyes" upon him -- as an example. What had Yitro done that could serve as an example? He had been living tranquilly in Midian -- indeed, he had been the high priest of Midian -- but he gave it all up and went "against the flow" once he realized that the prevailing beliefs were wrong.

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org]  
Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Beha'aloscha

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Beha'aloscha -  
These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 242, Military Service and Potential Halachic Problems. Good Shabbos!

Aharon, Your Disappointment Is Greater Than Their Offerings  
In the beginning of the Parsha, the Torah teaches the command to light the Menorah in the Mishkan [Tabernacle]. Rashi comments "Why does the section of the Menorah appear immediately after the section of the offerings of the Princes? Because when Aharon saw that there was no role for him or his Tribe in the dedication of the Mishkan, he became depressed. G-d told him 'By your life, your role is greater than theirs -- for you set up and light the candles.'"

The Ramban questions how this specific 'consolation prize' compensates Aharon for his disappointment. In a very famous comment, the Ramban answers that G-d's response hints at the miracle of Chanukah, in which Aharon's descendants would play a major role.

The Shemen HaTov answers differently. He says that within the mitzvah of the Menorah lies the lesson to why Aharon should not have felt badly in the first place. When the Sages say that Aharon was told "Your role is greater than their role," they were not referring to any specific service that Aaron was to perform. Rather, the reference is to his state of depression at not having a role in the dedication, along with the princes. The fact that a person can become depressed or upset by virtue of not being able to participate in a mitzvah, is itself more impressive to G-d than if the person had in fact actually done the mitzvah! The emotion of desire and longing to participate, without being allowed to, is itself very significant to G-d. The reason G-d rewards Aharon with the mitzvah of Menorah is because the Menorah symbolizes this phenomenon.

Why do we have a mitzvah of lighting the Menorah? The Medrash asks, "Does G-d need the Menorah's light? G-d is the Light of the world!" What then is the purpose of the Menorah? It is akin to the cliché

"It's the thought that counts!". True, G-d doesn't NEED the light, but what he wants from us is for us to go through the action of lighting the Menorah, AS IF G-d needed the light. Basically, it is not the light that G-d wants; it is the act of devotion and the feelings that lighting the Menorah demonstrate.

Of course, feelings without actions are meaningless as well. But in the ultimate and final analysis, G-d wants feelings that are represented by actions. This is what Chazal are telling us here. G-d rewarded Aharon with the Mitzvah of the Menorah because the Menorah is symbolic of G-d's reaction to Aharon's feelings. "You are depressed because you can't fulfill a mitzvah? Aharon, you don't know how much that means to me. In reward and recognition of that, I am giving you the Menorah -- which represents the essence of this concept."

Like a Nursing Mother Carries a Baby

We are told that the Jewish people complained about the Manna, and asked for meat. Moshe became frustrated "Why, oh G-d, have You done evil with your servant... to place the burden of this nation upon me?" [Bamidbar 11:11]. It is very difficult to be the leader of the Jewish people and to carry them "...as the nursing mother carries the suckling baby..." [Ibid. 11:12].

The Talmud derives a special lesson from the fact that Moshe Rabbeinu sets "the nursing mother who carries the suckling" as the standard for Jewish leadership. This is an exhortation to the judge and leader of the Jewish people that they must endure the people [Sanhedrin 8a]. The leader must be able to endure all the crazy demands and expectations that are dished out to people in positions of leadership.

Any person who has ever raised an infant knows of the following, all too common, scenario: a little baby is dressed in his or her most beautiful outfit, sitting on the lap of his or her mother (herself wearing a beautiful dress), who is cuddling and enjoying time with her infant. All of a sudden, the baby does what babies do... but the diaper does not perform as advertised.

What does the mother do? Yes, she is upset. But does she take the baby, chastise it, and throw the baby down, saying "how could you do this to me?!"

Of course not! Any mother understands that a baby is a baby, and has limited intelligence. The baby is not capable of realizing what he or she is doing. What does the mother do? She takes the baby, washes off the baby, changes the baby, changes her own dress, and goes on ... all with a smile on her face.

That is the image of "as a nursing mother carrying a baby", which is set by Chazal, our Sages, as the standard for Jewish leaders. One has to be able to endure the people, and to accept even the "unacceptable" from them. One has to sometimes look at the people and excuse them with the thought "alas, they have no intelligence."

They are babies. But therefore, what? Should I throw them down? Should I throw in the towel? Whether we are talking rabbinic leadership, or even lay positions, to be a leader is to be the nursing mother of the infant who soils her.

The Hebrew word for congregation "Tzibbur" (Tzadee, Beis, vov, Reish) can be viewed as an acronym for Tzaddikim, Beinonim, u'Reshaim (the righteous, the in-between, and the wicked). In dealing with the congregation, one will encounter some wonderful people -- Tzaddikim. Then one finds the many who are okay, fine people, -- the "in-betweens". But included in every congregation are the wicked. If not truly wicked, at least those who sometimes act like wicked people.

One is tempted to ask, "What do I need this for?" That is why our Sages tell us that a leader is warned that he has to be prepared to 'endure' the congregation. Whenever we ask ourselves "How far does it go?", "To what extent?", we should remember the example of the baby soiling its mother's dress. That is how far it goes.

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From: Rabbi Kalman Packouz[SMTP:packouz@aish.com]  
ShabbatShalomWeekly@aish.com To: Rabbi Packouz's ShabbatShalom  
List Subject: Shabbat Shalom! Beha'alotecha AISH HATORAH'S  
Shabbat Shalom Weekly

.... DVAR TORAH: based on Love Your Neighbor by RABBI ZELIG PLISKIN Miriam, Moshe's sister, heard from Moshe's wife, Tzipora that Moshe had separated himself from her (so that he, Moshe, could receive a prophecy from the Almighty at any time). Miriam felt that Moshe's behavior was improper, since both she and her brother, Aharon, both carried on their respective married lives, yet received prophecy. Miriam related her feelings to her brother, Aharon.

The Torah states, "And Miriam and Aharon spoke against Moshe because of the Cushite woman whom he had married; for he had married a Cushite woman. And they said, 'Has G-d spoken only with Moshe? Has he not spoken also with us?' And the Lord heard. But the man Moshe was very humble, more than all the men that were upon the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:1-3).

The Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, writes (Shmiras Haloshon 2:18) that from these verses we learn a number of principles concerning loshon hora, the laws regarding defamatory speech:

1) The prohibition against speaking loshon hora applies even when the person spoken against is very humble and does not mind if others speak against him. For this reason, immediately after Moshe was spoken against, the Torah states that he was humble.

2) Even if you have done many favors for another person, it does not give you the right to speak against him. Miriam helped save Moshe's life when he was an infant, but was still punished for her loshon hora.

3) The prohibition against loshon hora applies even if you do not publicize the loshon hora, but only relate it to one person, and that person is a relative who will not repeat it to anyone else. Miriam told the loshon hora only to her brother Aharon who would not publicize it.

4) If you say about a truly great man that his behavior would only be proper if he were on a higher level, but on his present level his behavior is improper, it is considered loshon hora. Miriam felt that Moshe was wrong for separating himself from his wife. She erred, however, since Moshe's level of prophecy was such that at any moment G-d could communicate with him and his abstention was proper. To subscribe to the Shabbat Shalom Weekly -- go to [www.aish.edu](http://www.aish.edu) and check off Shabbat Shalom Weekly

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From: Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky[SMTP:rmk@torah.org]

Subject: Drasha - Parshas B'halosecha -- Mo' Better Jews

RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY Volume 6 Issue 39

This week the Torah uses two of Judaism's greatest prophets to teach us a lesson that is applicable to every Jew that walks the face of this earth. It teaches us about lashon horah evil talk. It chides, not two low level subordinates for speaking against their leader, rather it admonishes none other than Moshe's siblings, Aharon and Miriam. Miriam expressed concern to Aharon about a certain aspect of her brother Es manner, yet Hashem felt it was inappropriate. So Hashem reprimands Moshe's siblings: "Hear now My words. If there shall be prophets among you, in a vision shall I, Hashem, make Myself known to him; in a dream shall I speak with him: Not so is My servant Moses; in My entire house

he is the trusted one. Mouth to mouth do I speak to him, in a clear vision and not in riddles, at the image of Hashem does he gaze. Why did you not fear to speak against My servant, against Moses?" (Numbers 12:6-8). Obviously Miriam's concerns were unjustified for a man of Moshe's stature. But in the course of the rebuke, a phrase seems superfluous. What does the Torah mean by repeating the expression, "against My servant, against Moses"? Shouldn't it have said, against Moses, my servant or my servant, Moses. After all there was only one party involved Moshe.

Rashi elucidates: "against My servant," even if he was not Moses, and "against Moses" even if he was not "My servant." The Torah seems to make a clear warning against slandering either Moses the servant or Moses the man. What is the difference?

My grandfather, Reb Yaakov Kamenetzky told the story of the Chafetz Chaim and another Rabbi who were traveling together in Poland. As guests at an inn, they were served a fitting meal. Upon finishing their supper, the proprietress inquired about the quality of the service and the food. "Excellent," replied the Chafetz Chaim. The other rabbi nodded in agreement and then said as an afterthought, "the soup could use a bit more salt." The Chafetz Chaim turned white. The moment the hostess left the table he turned to his travel partner. "What have you done? All my life I have tried to avoid lashon harah and now I regret this entire trip!" "But what did I say?" pleaded the other Rabbi. "All I mentioned is that the soup needed a bit of salt. Otherwise I was as complimentary as you!" Don't you understand? There is a poor Jewish widow that is the cook. Right now the owner will complain to the cook who may deny that she did not salt the soup, then there may be a fight. The widow may lose her job! And if you don't believe me, come to the kitchen and see what is happening!" True to his prediction they entered the kitchen and saw the hostess admonishing the cook. Only the intervention and continued compliments of the rabbis calmed the ire of the hostess and the cook retained her position.

The Torah teaches us an important lesson in considering about whom we speak. Some of us worry about speaking about Hashem's servants. But the Torah clearly chastises those who speak against Moses, even if he were not "my servant"! Everyone has a capacity in life and deserves the utmost regard no matter how high or low they are on the social scale. The Chofetz Chaim, the great sage who wrote the book that details the laws of Lashon Horah, used to say, "If you say that the rabbi cannot sing and that the cantor cannot learn, that is lashon harah. But if you say that the chazzan cannot sing and the rabbi cannot learn, that is murder! Hashem declares, "I do not approve whether you speak about my servant in the capacity of a Moshe, or a Moshe in the capacity of my servant!" Whether in the capacity of a rabbi or that of a simple Moshe, every Jew has feelings. Whether they are considered "servants of Hashem" or are regarded as just a simple "Moishe," we must be careful of what we say to them, and about them. For the crime of lashon horah is an equal opportunity wrongdoing. Good Shabbos 1 2000 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

This week's drasha is dedicated to the memory of Jamie Lehmann z'l. We still think of him every single day and learn from his wonderful example of midot tovot and chein. Karen Lehmann Eisner and David Eisner EVERY THURSDAY Join Rabbi Kamenetzky's weekly 20 minute Parshas HaShavua shiur given after the 1:45 Mincha Minyan at Adam Smith, 101 East 52nd Street 29th Floor (Manhattan Tower) or the 4:45 Mincha Minyan at GFI, 50 Broadway NYC 5th floor. A 3 part Series held Monday evenings at the Young Israel of Great Neck 236 Middle Neck Road, Great Neck ... If you would like to be on a shiur update list which sends messages regarding Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky's various lectures in NY City and Long Island and other locations, please send a blank email to [rmkshiur-subscribe@jif.org.il](mailto:rmkshiur-subscribe@jif.org.il) You will receive bulletins about those classes. Drasha is the email edition of FaxHomily which is funded on an annual basis by the Henry and Myrtle Hirsch Foundation Mordechai Kamenetzky Yeshiva of South Shore The Dr. Manfred & Jamie Lehmann Campus 1170 William Street Hewlett, NY 11557 <http://www.torah.org/learning/drasha> Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore, <http://www.yoss.org/>. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 510-1053

From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com] Yated Neeman  
KORTZ UN SHARF-SHORT AND SWEET Parsha Vertlach BY SHAYA GOTTLIEB

"B'haaloscho Es Haneiros"-When you will light the candles Rashi: Why is the parsha of the menorah near the parsha of the Nesiim? When Aharon Hakohen saw the Nesiim bringing a korban, he had 'chalishas hadaas' because his shevet did not have a part in the chanukas hamishkon. Hakodosh Boruch Hu assured him, "your avodah is greater than theirs, for you will light the menorah." Why is lighting the menorah greater than bringing a korban? Medrash Rabbo: Though the korbonos were only applicable when the Bais Hamikdosh was standing, the menorah will endure forever. Ramban: When the Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed, lighting the menorah was also abolished! The Ramban brings a medrash from Rabenu Nissim in reply. Hashem promised Aharon that through his descendants, the Chashmonaim, the menorah will be lit once more. The neiros of Chanuka, which are lit every year, are what is meant by "avol haneiros l'olam kayomin"-the neiros endure forever.

The korbonos that the nesiim brought to the Chanukas Hamishkon were meant to atone for the individual sins of every shevet. - Sforno Aharon Hakohen felt that since he was involved in the Cheit Hoegel, he should have brought a korban. Perhaps his sin will prevent the Shechina from resting amongst Klal Yisroel! Hakodosh Boruch Hu showed him the menorah, with the eternal 'ner hamaarovi' that was never extinguished, though it received the same amount of oil as the other neiros. This was proof that the Shechina rests amongst Klal Yisroel, (Shabbos, 22). The ner hamaarovi was the greatest proof that Klal Yisroel was forgiven for the cheit hoegel. The 'ner hamaarovi' only burned in the merit of the Kohel Godol. After Shimon Hatzadik's era, the nes of the eternal flame did not continue, because the Kohanim Gedolim were unworthy. This was the greatest proof that Aharon Hakohen was a tzaddik and his sins were forgiven. -Avnei Ezel

According to halocho, the menorah was allowed to be lit by a zohr, (not a kohen), but 'hatovas haneiros', cleaning out the menorah was only allowed to be done by a kohein. From here we learn that the hachono, the preparation to a mitzva is greater than the mitzva itself. -Rav Mendel Pilitzer

Rashi: B'haaloscha-the Kohen had to light the menorah until the flame burned on its own accord. This is an allusion to teaching, to lighting the flame of Torah in the hearts of young children. A Rebbe or teacher has completed their mission when the flame of Torah rises on its own-the child is motivated to continue learning and growing.

"Vayaas Kein Aharon"- and Aharon did so Rashi: To tell the praise of Aharon, that he did not deviate What type of praise is this? Why should Aharon deviate from Hashem's command? Although Aharon became elevated as a Kohen Godol, his personality did not change. He didn't become arrogant, but remained with the same level of humility. -Rav Meir of Premishlan

He never changed his lofty spiritual standing-always remaining on the same madreiga, ready and prepared to do the mitzva.

"Vayaas Kein" Just like the 'kein', the middle branch of the menorah does not feel superior to the other branches, so, too, Aharon did not feel superior due to his station. -Sifsei Kodesh

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From: listmaster@jencom.com[SMTP:listmaster@jencom.com]  
OUTLOOKS & INSIGHTS BY RABBI ZEV LEFF Parshas Behaaloscha Consistency and Faithfulness

When the Ark would travel, Moses would say, "Arise Hashem, and let Your foes be scattered, let those who hate You flee from before You." And when it rested, he would say, "Return, Hashem, to the myriad thousands of Israel." (Bamidbar 10:35-36).

According to one opinion in the Gemara (Shabbos 116a), these two verses are set off by inverted nuns to constitute a break between three

episodes in which Klal Yisrael sinned. The first of the three episodes, according to Tosafos and Ramban, was when Bnei Yisrael left Har Sinai as children who flee from school, i.e., relieved that they would receive no more mitzvos. Later, after traveling without stop for three days, the people complained and bemoaned the frantic pace at which God was driving them. The third of their sins was complaining about the manna and demanding meat.

Since a threefold repetition constitutes a pattern in halachah, the Torah did not record these three events in succession, without a break in between. Still to be explained, however, is why the division falls between the first two episodes and not between the second and the third.

To answer this last question, we must understand the importance of consistency in our service of Hashem. When Yosef revealed himself to his brothers with the words, "I am Yosef; is my father still alive?" the brothers were so overwhelmed that they could not answer him. The Midrash comments, "Woe to us from the Day of Judgment and the day of reproof, for if the brothers could not answer the rebuke of Yosef, their younger brother, how much more so will we be overwhelmed by God's reproof when He in the future rebukes each one according to his deeds."

Bais HaLevi explains that the essence of Yosef's rebuke was pointing out the inconsistency of their actions. Until the moment Yosef revealed himself, Yehudah was pleading with Yosef to take into account the suffering of their aged father and therefore free Binyamin. To this Yosef replied, "I am Yosef. Where was your concern for our father's pain and sorrow when you sold me and convinced him that I was dead? Is he still alive after that? When it is convenient, you are concerned with our father's welfare, and when it serves your purposes, you are oblivious."

The Midrash in Tana D'vei Eliyahu records a similar instance of rebuke. Eliyahu Hanavi found himself mocked by an ignorant boor, who did not even know the aleph-bais. Eliyahu asked the man if he did not fear for the day the Heavenly Court would ask him why he did not learn Torah. The man replied that he was not afraid because he was not given the intelligence to learn and therefore could not be blamed. Eliyahu then asked him to describe how he made his living, and the man commenced an animated description of how he made fishing nets and set them out in the most efficient possible fashion. At the end of this discussion, Eliyahu told him, "For fishing you have wisdom, and for Torah, which is even more crucial to life, you do not?" Immediately the man burst into tears at the realization that he had refuted himself.

Eliyahu concluded by pointing out how rampant is such inconsistency. There are those who will plead before the Heavenly Court that they were not given the means to give tzedakah. They will be shown how for their own personal pleasures the money was somehow found. Others will defend their lack of Torah study on the grounds that they were too busy making a living. They will be shown the time spent doing nothing or in idle chatter. There is no more telling refutation of all our excuses than those we ourselves provide.

The ideal service of Hashem is described as "all your days" without interruption, with consistency and constancy (Ibn Ezra to Devarim 19 9). The Gemara (Berachos 6a) says that if someone comes regularly to shul and one day is absent, Hashem inquires as to his absence, and if he has no acceptable excuse, he is punished. The person who never attends shul is not scrutinized in the same manner, for he has never exhibited the capacity to attend regularly.

We can now understand why the Torah separated between the eager departure of Bnei Yisrael from Sinai and their complaints about the swift pace at which they were moving. When Bnei Yisrael ran to avoid a proliferation of additional mitzvos, Hashem observed, "My children, if you have the energy to run from Har Sinai, let us harness that energy and direct your running to your final destination, Eretz Yisrael." Immediately Bnei Yisrael complained that they lacked the strength and stamina to run. That was the ultimate self-condemnation in inconsistency. To run from Torah you have the stamina, and yet to run to Eretz Yisrael you

lack that same capacity. To minimize the inconsistency involved, the Torah distinguished between these two episodes.

The letter nun represents  $\phi$  faithfulness and consistency (Shabbos 31a). The inverted nuns, therefore, represent inconsistency and self-contradiction.

The two verses set off by the inverted nuns describe the antidote to that inconsistency. When Moshe saw the Cloud of Glory begin to ascend and depart, signaling Hashem's desire that Bnei Yisrael resume their journey, he proclaimed "Arise, Hashem." This proclamation was a confirmation of Hashem's will and an expression of Moshe's desire to subjugate his desires to Hashem's. Similarly, when the Aron came to rest, Moshe again proclaimed, "Return Hashem...."

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch comments that this sedrah marks the end of one epoch of Jewish history and the beginning of another, leading to the sin of the spies and culminating in the destruction of the Temple and exile. The root of all this misfortune was the inability to be consistent in our avodas Hashem.

May we strive to correct this flaw so that the inverted nuns are once more made upright, as they are in the ultimate expression of total devotion. Then we will merit two other words that also begin with be comforted, My nation, with the ultimate Divine redemption.

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From: listmaster@jencom.com[SMTP:listmaster@jencom.com]  
peninim@shemayisrael.com Subject: PENINIM ON THE TORAH by  
RABBI A. LEIB SCHEINBAUM - B'haalotcha  
PENINIM ON THE TORAH by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum  
Parshas B'haalotcha

And Aharon did so Bas Hashem had commanded Moshe. (8:3)

Rashi explains that the Torah presents the notion of Aharon doing as he had been instructed in order to praise Aharon, to demonstrate that he had not deviated. These words have become famous in their description of the greatness of Aharon HaKohen: "He did not deviate." From what did he not deviate? Obviously, the Torah does not have to tell us that Aharon followed Hashem's command. Maharel explains that Aharon could have delegated the kindling of the Menorah to one of the other Kohanim. After all, it did involve a certain amount of menial labor in preparing the wicks and dealing with the soot and oil. Yet, it did not bother Aharon. He was honored to comply with Hashem's command. Horav Bunim Mi'Pesischa,zl, interprets Aharon's "not deviating" as applying to Aharon himself. Despite his exalted position as the person who lit the Menorah, he did not change. He remained the same warm, humble person he had always been. His new position did not transform him.

Horav Levi Yitzchak,zl, Mi'Berditchev, explains that any person who would be granted the incredible opportunity to light the Menorah would be overcome with emotion and excitement. Certainly, having been selected to be the one to light the Menorah is a compelling experience. It would seem that the chosen individual would be extremely nervous and quite possibly not physically in control. He would be so overwhelmed with passion and enthusiasm that he might spill some of the oil and soak the wicks. Not Aharon HaKohen. He was in complete control. Never once did he falter, never did he shake. He stood before Hashem and lit the Menorah with complete confidence, his emotions restrained out of respect for the Divine Service.

We might tend to overlook another aspect of Aharon's emotion. Horav Ovadiah Yosef, Shlita, notes that Aharon was to enter the Kodesh Hakadoshim, Holy of Holies, the place where his two precious sons, Nadav and Avihu, had died on the very day of their inauguration into the Priesthood. Certainly, Aharon was filled with great pain and sorrow as he entered this place. He was to confront the tragedy over again. As he looked around the room, he saw his sons; he saw them being consumed by the Heavenly Fire. Any lesser person would have been so overcome

with emotion he probably would not be able to come face to face with the reality of the tragedy. Not Aharon HaKohen, the first Kohen Gadol, who personified and exemplified gadlus, greatness, to the fullest extent of the word. He did not flinch; he did not cry; he did not deviate from that which was expected of the Kohen Gadol. He accepted the Divine command to light the Menorah, just as he had accepted the Divine decree that his sons prematurely leave the world under such tragic circumstances. This is true gadlus.

Last, Vayakhel Moshe offers an interpretation based upon an exegesis quoted from the Gaon M'Vilna. The commentators question the text of the Kiddushin when -- as a man places the ring on his bride's finger -- he says, "Behold, you are consecrated to me by means of this ring, according to the ritual of Moshe and Yisrael." "Daas Moshe v'Yisrael," the ritual of Moshe and Yisrael, is a reference to the Torah. Why would we draw a parallel between the Kiddushin, marriage ceremony of a woman, and the Torah?

The Gaon explains that when one hears a Torah thought from his friend which he already knows, he should not tell him, "I already know that." He should always view every dvar Torah, word of Torah, as novel, original, a brand new idea. This is the holiness of Torah. It is always viewed as something fresh, new and exciting.

The same notion applies to marriage. Husband and wife are, hopefully, together for the rest of their lives. Day in and day out, they are together. There is always the fear that they might get "used" to each other; the excitement, the spark of life that used to be there might be extinguished. The Torah warns us against this. Marriage is like the Torah: We must always view it as something new, as one long honeymoon.

The risk was that Aharon HaKohen might become complacent by lighting the candles day in and day out. The Torah tells us that Aharon's enthusiasm did not wane - even momentarily. The love and excitement that permeated him on that auspicious first day continued throughout his tenure as Kohen Gadol.

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[http://www.torahweb.org/torah/1999/parsha/rwil\\_bhalos.html](http://www.torahweb.org/torah/1999/parsha/rwil_bhalos.html) (last yr)

BY RABBI MORDECHAI WILLIG

Torat Emet I

The commandment to light the menorah daily in the Beit Hamikdash follows immediately after the dedication of the Mishkan by the Nesi'im. Rashi comments that these two sections are juxtaposed in the Torah to tell us that Aharon felt badly that he did not take part in the dedication. To console Aharon, God gave him the mitzvah of lighting the menorah, and told him, "Yours is greater than theirs [the nesi'im], for you light the candles daily."

Rashi's comment requires explanation. After all, Aharon was told of the mitzvah of lighting the menorah long before the dedication of the Mishkan (see Shmot, 27:21; Vayikra, 24:3). How was he consoled by God's answer? Furthermore, why was Aharon upset by being left out of the dedication? Certainly, he was not insulted by being excluded from the honor of the ceremonies!

A dedication has a great and lasting significance. The peak of excitement attained at the outset of any undertaking must provide inspiration for the entire lifetime of the person or institution involved. Aharon feared that he and his descendants would lack the excitement that all other Jews had gained through their participation in the dedication. To allay Aharon's fears, God responded that the mitzvah of the menorah would be an even greater source of spiritual invigoration for him and his descendants.

Why was the menorah singled out among all the mitzvot of the Kohanim as an inspiration even more powerful and lasting than that of the dedication of the Mishkan? The answer lies in the symbolism of the menorah. The menorah represents Torah, and the study of Torah, unlike

other mitzvot, constantly affords new insights. Because of his involvement with the menorah and Torah, Aharon did not need the excitement of the dedication. For Aharon, every day was new and refreshing, as the words of the Torah are like new to us each day (Rashi, D'varim 6:6). Therefore, Aharon's source of constant spiritual regeneration was, indeed, greater than that of the Nesi'im.

## II

Rashi (ibid.) teaches that the words of Torah should be like new to us each day. The Talmud (Chagiga 3a), however, states that Torah is new, and tells us that it is impossible to be in a Beit Medrash without a chiddush. How can we account for the difference between Rashi's teaching, that the Torah should be like new, and the statement of the Talmud, that the Torah is new? Rashi refers to "these words," the written Torah, which is unchanging, but must be in our eyes as if it were new. The Talmud describes the Oral Torah, which is studied in a Beit Medrash. Talmudic discourse inevitably yields fresh insights and, as such, is really new. The Talmud (ibid. 3b) further expresses the freshness and expansion of Torah when it explains the passage (Koheles 12:11) that compares words of Torah to plantings, saying that just as a plant procreates, so to the words of Torah procreate. This metaphor is also utilized in our daily prayers, when we bless God for implanting eternal life within us, "v'chayei olam nata b'tocheinu".

Let us take a moment to further discuss the procreation of Torah by examining the aforementioned phrase in conjunction with two others that precede it in our prayers. The first phrase, which immediately precedes it, states "v'natan lanu Torat Emet", "and God gave us the Torah of truth". The Beit Halevi (Yitro) explains that God giving us the Torah of truth refers to the written law, whose truth is determined by the interpretation of the Sages, which comprises the ever-expanding Oral law. The second phrase, which appears before the two phrases quoted above, states, "Baruch Hu Elokeinu shebra'anu lichvodo vihivdilanu min hatoim", "Blessed is God Who created us for His glory and separated us from those who stray." What does this juxtaposition teach us?

Perhaps the last phrase represents a prerequisite for innovation in Torah. Unchecked creativity can lead to false and even dangerous procreation. In order for a novel interpretation to be part of Torat Emet, ultimate and eternal truth, its author must not stray, and must be separated from those who stray. How can this be assured?

If one recognizes that he was created to serve God and enhance K'vod Shomayim (the glory of Heaven in the eyes of men), then he will not stray. By contrast, if one is interested in greater self-actualization and in adding to his own glory, then he will likely stray from the truth.

In other words, we must begin by stating categorically that our role in this world is to bring honor to God. We will thereby avoid straying from the truth of Torah. And lest one think that, as a result, there is no room for originality and creativity in Torah, we conclude by alluding to the inevitable positive procreation of Torah which is implanted within us.

The modern Western world has strayed from this fundamental principle which is now disparaged as fundamentalism. Modern man and woman are interested in self-gratification and actualization. For the spiritually inclined, this manifests itself not as hedonism but as religious subjectivism. If it feels good, do it, and, if you are Jewish, call it a mitzvah. This unholy procreation of those who have strayed poses a serious threat to authentic Torah study and practice.

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<http://www.jpost.com/>

SHABBAT SHALOM: A Torah of warmth and love

BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

(June 15) "And it came to pass, when the Ark traveled forward, that Moses said, 'Rise up O God, and scatter your enemies; and let them that hate You flee before You.' And when it rested he said, 'Return O God,

unto the ten thousands of the families of Israel." (Num.10:35-36)

I would like to invite you to join me in a fascinating detective search, an intellectual journey whose destination is the understanding of a strange typographical biblical insertion in this week's portion of Beha'alotcha which gives rise to an even stranger rabbinical assertion.

Tradition ordains that the two stirring verses quoted above be bracketed, as it were, by two inverted "nuns," the 14th letter of the Hebrew alphabet. So strong is this scribal tradition that even the printed Bible texts set these verses off with the two inverted "nuns."

The Talmud raises the issue of this curious typography, explaining that "in the Torah parchment this section is preceded and followed by a reversed "nun"... because it ranks as a book by itself." (B.T. Shabbat 116a)

Hence, it seems to me that our sages are granting these verses the status of a separate book because they encapsulate the true potency of the entire Torah. Now remember that the "nuns" which surround our verses are inverted. If we turn to Nachmanides's explanation concerning the rainbow that God placed in the sky as an expression of His covenant with Noah, we find that, for this great sage, the rainbow is an inverted bow (as in bow and arrow): "He [God] has not made the rainbow with its feet bent upward because it might have appeared that arrows were being shot from heaven... Instead, He made it the opposite of this to show that they are not shooting at the earth from the heavens. It is indeed the way of warriors to invert the instruments of war which they hold in their hands when calling for peace." (Nachmanides 9:13)

If the inverted bow, or rainbow, of the covenant with Noah symbolizes the opposite of war, then it's logical to assert that the inverted "nun" of our portion this week symbolizes the ascent of Israel rather than her fall. Indeed, the Talmudic passage we cited previously goes on to reinterpret the verse from Psalms by merely changing the punctuation: "Fallen, O virgin of Israel, no more; She shall rise." (Amos 5:2)

In effect, our two reversed "nuns" are a silent covenant between God and the Jewish people that the Torah, eternal source of strength of our nation, has the power to scatter all our enemies as long as we the people always move together with it!

PERMIT me to develop this idea one step further - and elucidate the deepest meaning of the words of these verses. "When the Ark traveled forward..." alerts us to the significance of the necessity of the Ark - and the Torah it encompasses - to travel together with the nation, albeit a little bit ahead - but never so far ahead that it leaves the people behind. Rashi is teaching us that Moses was scrupulous about making sure that the Ark was never more than three days ahead. Remember the well-known piece of folk wisdom: If you're one step ahead of the generation, you're a genius. If you're two steps ahead, you're a crackpot!

Obviously we require the proper religious leadership to ensure that not only are the people in step with the Torah, but the Torah must be in step with the people. Furthermore, the latter portion reads: "And when it rested, he said Return, O God unto the 10,000s of the families of Israel."

The root of the word "when it rested" (nuho) derives from the same root as sweetness, gentleness, accepting comfort (noah) - the idea of the Torah being sweet, accepting, gentle, comforting. Seen in this light, the verse enjoins us not only to endeavor to make Torah relevant, but also to see to it that it be an embracing and accepting Torah, a Torah of love and inclusiveness. After all, does not the Talmud teach: "For three years the schools of Hillel and Shammai debated the law, until a heavenly voice declared ... 'these and these speak the word of the living God, but the law is like Bet Hillel.' But if so, why then should the School of Hillel prevail? Because Hillel was gentle and accepting (nohin), and they would always answer a question by preceding their words with the ruling of Shammai." (B.T. Erubin 13b)

And if our Torah is a law of accepting love and not fanatic hatred, of warming light rather than of destructive fire, then the ten thousands of

the families of Israel shall truly return to God! I'd like to share a personal story.

Some readers may already know from my writings that I was not born into an observant family. But because the yeshiva in my neighborhood was considered far more academically challenging than the local public school, my parents consented to my grandmother's urging that I receive a day school education. Living in a non-observant home, however required certain balancing skills. On Friday nights I would join my grandmother for the Shabbat meal, and every Shabbat lunch I was invited to the home of the principal of our yeshiva, Rabbi Menahem Manes Mendel, who remains a powerful influence in my life.

After returning to my neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, I would spend a quiet hour with my mother, a kind of quality time when we would both talk about what was closest to us. The latter part of the afternoon I would spend with Saul Berman, the son of a prominent community rav and my special "Shabbos friend."

But one particular Shabbat while my mother and I were busy talking, there was a knock on the door. When my mother saw it was my Shabbos friend, she hid the cigarette she was holding behind her back. When my mother came back into the living room, still holding the cigarette, she looked at me and said rather sadly: "I think God made a mistake by putting you and me together. You're religious, and every day becoming even more religious, and I'm not interested in religion at all. Why should God have given me a son like you?"

My response was clear. I was sure that God hadn't made a mistake at all. I really believed what I was saying. I told her that not only was I religious but I even wanted to become a rabbi.

To which my mother countered: "You know I think you're right. Perhaps God made me your mother so that you would learn to love everyone, even people who aren't necessarily observant."

That attitude - which I truly learned from my mother - has been a guiding principle of my life.

Shabbat Shalom

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From: Yeshivat Har Etzion's Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash[SMTP:yhe@vbm-torah.org] Subject: SICHOT -36: Parashat Beha'alotekha Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash (Vbm) Student Summaries of Sichot by the Roshei Yeshiva Parashat Beha'alotekha

SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

COMMITMENT

Summarized by Matan Glidai

Translated by Kaeren Fish

At the beginning of the parasha, Rashi writes that when Aharon saw the nesi'im bringing their contributions he was dismayed, and the Holy One comforted him with the job of lighting the menorah and preparing the lights. The Ramban presents several questions on this (such as, why was it not the offering of the incense, or the Yom Kippur service that was offered as consolation). He tries to explain that what saddened Aharon was the fact that all of his functions were compulsory, in contrast with the sacrifices of the nesi'im, which had been brought voluntarily. The Ramban rejects this explanation, for the lighting of the lamps was also obligatory and so this did not represent any consolation. He suggests a different explanation (having to do with the restoration of the Temple by the Chashmonaim).

We may say that what God was really trying to teach Aharon was that it is specifically those actions that are performed routinely, out of obligation, that are the most important. In the introduction to "Ein Yaakov" there is a midrash of unknown origin that attempts to find a verse that is a synopsis of the entire Torah: Ben Zoma said, We have found the most all-inclusive verse to be, "Hear O Israel..." Ben Nanas said, We have found the most all-inclusive verse to be "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Shimon ben Pazi said, We

have found the most all-inclusive verse to be, "You shall offer the one ewe in the morning, and the second ewe you shall offer at twilight." Someone stood up and said, It is ben Pazi who is correct, as it is written, "All that I have shown you, the plan of the mishkan and the plan of all its vessels..."

This midrash does not mean to teach that the sacrifices are the most important part of the Torah, for many other verses could have been cited that relate to the sacrifices. The midrash is emphasizing the importance of commitment to the fundamentals, the routine of mitzvot, rather than trying to find innovations and to institute changes. First and foremost we must take care of the basic framework of the ewe in the morning and the ewe at twilight. It may seem boring, but the routine of mitzvot is the foundation of the Torah.

The modern world seeks to obliterate any commitment to a framework, developing a perception that everyone can do what he pleases, seeking his own innovations and his own way of doing things. This perception is penetrating even the Beit Midrash of people wish to learn what they feel like learning and when they feel like learning, finding difficulty in accepting any orderly framework.

Many people think that an inflexible framework causes stagnation, while freedom from such a framework brings about creativity and originality. The opposite is true of experience demonstrates that it is specifically those who are careful to maintain an orderly framework who eventually achieve innovation and originality, while those who always try to do things their own way and do not see themselves as committed to anything, ultimately remain in the same place where they started and introduce nothing new. The reason for this is that these latter types waste all their creativity in the search for new and different ways of doing everything, such that no creativity is left to build and to innovate. It is specifically the observance of an orderly framework, a fixed timetable, etc., that allows one ultimately to build and to create.

"Like the vision that God showed Moshe, so he made the menorah" of "This verse speaks in praise of Aharon, who changed nothing" (Rashi). The Sefat Emet explains that this verse comes to teach us that Aharon did not seek ways of doing everything in an original manner, such that his personal seal would remain on his work.

He did exactly what he was commanded to do day after day, and this was his praise.

(Originally delivered on leil Shabbat Parashat Beha'alotekha 5757 [1997].)

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RABBI JONATHAN SCHWARTZ From: jschwartz@ymail.yu.edu  
Sent: Wednesday, June 21, 2000 11:59 AM To:  
chaburah@hotmail.com Subject: Internet Chaburah --  
Parshas Be'Haalosecha

Prologue: American society is quite concerned with the breakdown of the family. Family loyalty, family values and family dynamics appear to be popular discussions in the popular media as well as within the world of scientific academia. There is a common perception that the average American is no longer family-oriented as much as he is driven by personal success. He has no interest in spending time with his family and he tries to get others to tend to family issues as much as possible. Current trends in research are starting to demonstrate that this system may leave the average Joe wealthier than his counterpart 30 years ago, but not happier (A proof to Ben Zoma's famous recognition that the truly rich is the one who is Sameach B'Chelko).

Jewish Hashkafa is clearly different. The proudest crown to a Jewish parent is his child and the glory of the child is his parent (Ateret

Zekanim Bnei Banim V'Tiferet Banim Avosam). Judaism encourages the interplay between the generations and the family bond of the Jewish family is the cornerstone of Klal Yisroel. When a Jewish child is in pain, his parent feels that pain as if it were his own. The parents' experience and that of the child are as one, Nafsho Keshurah B'Nafsho.

The Be'er Moshe notes that this unique relationship can help explain an interesting challenge at the end of Be'Haalosecha. After Moshe Davens for Miriam, Hashem tells Moshe that if her father had spit in her face, she would hide her head in shame for a week. The Beer Moshe asks why Hashem made the comparison to a father spitting at a child? He explains that we must recall that Miriam's father was also Moshe's. Miriam had spoken badly about Moshe. Therefore, in essence, she had spoken badly about Amram as well. In the same manner that Amram would have reacted to Miriam's attack on his own child, Hakadosh Baruch Hu feels he should be reacting as well. Thus, the statement was not so much over the embarrassment of Miriam from her father as much as it was her embarrassment from her father's reaction to her attack on Moshe.

Our Jewish parents work exceptionally hard to provide our Jewish children with the best opportunities in Chinuch. We try to be sure that we send them to Yeshivos with the best teachers possible (Yaasher Kochachem for another great year), and attempt to supplement that education with additional instruction and practice in the home and community. This week's Chaburah examines a communal Chinuch Shaila that has become commonplace in the American Shul. It is entitled:

Rivivos Alfei Yisroel: LAINING IN JUNIOR CONGREGATIONS  
(Dedicated L'Ilyui Nishmas Elianna Bas Harav Gershon Daniel TNTBH)

In recent years, the proliferation of youth programs within Orthodox shuls has provided our youth with additional instruction and guidance in the performance of Mitzvos and study of Torah. These programs have focused upon Chessed, Avodah, Tefillah and many other shul-based Jewish rituals. One particular cornerstone of many of these programs has been the Junior congregation, where young men and women prior to the Bar Mitzva age come together to conduct pseudo-Minyan services in the hope of teaching them how to conduct a regular adult Tefillah service. One of the main components of such a service is the Laining from the Torah. Can one Lain in a Junior Congregation or not?

The main reason cited for being Matir such a practice is the issue of Chinuch. It should be noted that the Inyan of Chinuch should allow us to Lain from the Torah in its proper place in the services (B'Zmana). But whether such a Laining can be done with a Beracha is a bigger question. For Kriyas HaTorah requires a Minyan and ten young people do not make a Minyan. Still, the removal of the Torah from the Aron Kodesh does not seem to present a problem in light of the fact that it seems to be for a purpose. The Rov ztl. (Cited in Shiurei Maran Yosef Dov Soloveitchik Al Meseches Gittin MiPi HaShmua) was of the opinion that anything that requires a Minyan should not be performed by children in a junior congregation for they are not a Minyan. As to the issue of Chinuch, the Rov felt that Chinuch dictated teaching children about how to perform a ritual under circumstances that would the child have been older, he would be Yotzai. The child in the junior congregation would not have been Yotzai in a group of fellow Katanim, thus teaching them about ritual in such a manner was wrong Chinuch according to his opinion.

Still, we must probe the question of whether one can remove a Sefer Torah for a junior congregation if no Berachos are to be recited.

The Drisha (Tur Yoreh Deah 270) quotes the Rosh who notes that there is no Mitzva to write a Sefer Torah today but that there is a Mitzva to buy Seforim and learn from them. The Rosh explains that the main component of the Mitzva of writing a Sefer Torah today is the study of

Torah. (Hence the Rambam excludes women from the Mitzva of Sefer Torah writing for they are excluded from the OBLIGATION of Torah study - See Shaagas Aryeh Siman 35 and Shut Beis HaLevi I:10). It appears that the opinion of the Rosh is that the Mitzva of writing a Sefer Torah is to have one, not necessarily to actively write one.

The Drisha writes that since the main Torah studied today is through Seforim, it is considered a slight to the Kavod of the Torah if one were to remove it from the Aron Kodosh without reason. So there is no Mitzva to write a Sefer Torah today since one cannot learn from it according to this opinion. The Taz disagrees. The reason for his disagreement needs to be explained. Is he arguing that since one learns from a Torah when it is read, it is still a Kiyum of the Mitzva to study Torah? Or is he merely arguing that the reason we use Seforim for our Torah study is for ease. But one who wishes to study Torah from a Torah scroll may do so without worry that he will be affronting the honor of that Torah (See Chasam Sofer to Yoreh Deah 254).

According to the Rosh who is of the opinion that the main Mitzva of writing a Sefer Torah is to study Torah from Seforim, why do we continue to Lain the Torah on Mondays and Thursdays? After all, the main Takkanna was to be sure to not allow three days to pass without the study of Torah? Rav Yaakov Ariel Shlita (Shut B'ohala Shel Torah II:7) suggests that the Takanna of Laining was a communal one which required a kosher Sefer Torah like the one Moshe used when he taught the Torah communally.

Additionally, one must entertain the possibility that Kriyas Hatorah has two potentially different obligations. The Achronim debate whether the issue of Laining is one of hearing the Torah read or actually reading from the Torah (See Har Zvi to Tur Orach Chaim 139). If the Mitzva of Laining is the reading of the Torah, then it is an individual requirement of each person in the Shul. The requirement is akin to learning Torah (as noted above) which is also an individual's requirement which is performed by many individuals in a structure we call a Minyan. However if the obligation is the hearing of the Torah reading, then it is an obligation of the Tzibbur, in a Tzibbur structure called a Minyan. The key difference between these two classifications is whether one can remove a Sefer Torah for personal Torah Study. According to the first approach, each time we take out a Torah it is for personal study, we just merge our personal obligations of Torah study together in Minyan form. However, if the obligation of Kriyas Hatorah is Tzibbur-based, on hearing the Torah reading, then a Torah can only be removed from the Aron for Tzibbur-based Torah learning. (Like the Mogen Avraham in Yoreh Deah Siman 284).

Hence, in reference to our question of Junior congregations who use an actual Sefer Torah (albeit hopefully without making Berachos), the question of Laining is a personal one. The group is clearly not a Tzibbur. Hence, assuming that we hold like the opinion that removing a Torah from an Aron for a personal Torah study purpose is ok, the use of a Torah in Junior Congregations would be ok as well. This seems to be the opinion that is relied upon by many of the Shuls in America supporting their youth, to teach them Torah from a Sefer Torah without making Berachos (See Shut Meishiv Davar, Kriyas Hatorah Shelo L'Tzorech) and can be done in schools as well, even to show little children what a Sefer Torah looks like (Shut B'ohala Shel Torah II:7).

Battala News Mazal Tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Yechiel Morris upon their recent marriage Mazal Tov to Mr. and Mrs. Eli Moskowitz upon their recent marriage Mazal Tov to the Neuman and Pollack families upon Heshy's Aufruf and forthcoming marriage to Leba. Mazal Tov to Dr. Ron Samet (founder) and the entire Internet Chaburah upon the 4th anniversary of the Chaburah. V'SheNizkeh Kulanu Lilmod U'Lilamed Lishmor L'aasos u'Likayem Es Kol Divrei Talmud Toraso

If Only We So Desire...

One of the most unusual phenomena of the Torah appears in our Parsha. Two verses, in the middle of the parsha, are enclosed by upside-down versions of the letter 'nun', much like parentheses (Bamidbar 10:35-36). The 'nuns' signify that these two verses really don't belong in this particular place (Rashi). "Why then were these verses placed here? To separate between one insubordination and the other." (This does not mean to imply that originally these verses were elsewhere, and subsequently relocated to here. Rather, Hashem Himself instructed Moshe to place these verses here as a form of separation.)

What were these two incidents of "insubordination"? The second one is obvious -- "The people took to seeking complaints; it was evil in the ears of Hashem... (v. 37)." But what was the first? Look carefully. What do you see? Examine the preceding verses with a microscope. Can you solve the riddle?

For this we need Torah she'ba'al peh -- The Oral Torah. "The first insubordination was, 'They journeyed from the Mountain of Hashem (v. 33).' Said Rabi Chama bar Rabi Chanina: 'They turned away from Hashem.' (Shabbos 116a)" The Jews didn't merely leave Mount Sinai -- They turned away from it. They forsook Hashem, so to speak.

The Ramban elaborates by citing a Medrash: "They traveled from Mount Sinai like a child who runs away from school. They said, 'Perhaps He will give us more mitzvos.' This is [the meaning of] 'They journeyed from the Mountain of Hashem.' Their intent was to get away from there \*because\* it was the Mountain of Hashem. This was the first insubordination."

It goes without saying that the Jewish people were being censured on their level. Had we seen them, we would have perceived no wrongdoing, just as when we examine the Written Torah, we find no evidence of sin. Their flaw was so subtle that it could very well be that the Jews themselves were unaware of it. It took a special teaching in the Oral Torah to reveal their hidden iniquity. Nevertheless, it is our responsibility to learn from their behavior and to relate it down to our level.

Let us contemplate the profundity of this Medrash. Children always get excited toward the end of the school year. As the weather warms, as blossoms bloom, the children lose patience for sitting in the classroom. On the last day they literally burst outside, as they cast off their year's learning in exchange for a summer of freedom and fun.

From personal experience (just ask my mother!) I can testify that children don't appreciate education. A child does not anticipate how his education will help him in the future. Indeed, a child does not care at all for the future. All he sees is the next twenty-four hours. So for what does he need to study?

This is one of the main differences between a child and an adult. Whereas the child cannot wait to leave the classroom, the adult will spend thousands of dollars and much time and effort to do so. The adult understands that education is investment for the future, and as such it pays to make the best of it. "Who is wise? He who anticipates the future (Tamid 32a)."

How much more is this true regarding a Torah education. Here, it is not just a preparation; the very study of Torah itself pays the greatest dividends. Yet children continue to flee!

Another aspect of the Medrash was that they said, 'Perhaps He will give us more mitzvos.' It seems that they were afraid of becoming "too frum." Rather than contemplate the eternal worth of mitzvos, all they perceived was the temporary burden. Mitzvos are the most valuable commodity available to man. For a few pennies a person can acquire everlasting pleasure.

If someone offered you an opportunity to gather diamonds, how would you react? "Gevalt, I'll have to bend down time and again to pick up the little stones. And the more stones I gather, the heavier my burden will become. And then (sigh) I'll have to schlep that heavy sack all the way to the diamond exchange to receive cash. What a pain!" I highly doubt it.

But because of this inaccurate perception, the Jews 'ran away from Mount Sinai.' Make no mistake. Mitzvos are reality. Running away would in no way change reality. All it could do was temporarily appease their conscience.

Let us remember that all this took place after Kabbalas HaTorah. "They journeyed from the Mountain of Hashem."

We ourselves have just experienced Kabbalas HaTorah. Not only on Shavuos, but many of us have just finished a year in yeshiva or seminary. A year of Kabbalas HaTorah. Now comes the time to "leave the Mountain of Hashem," to take what we have attained and implement it out there in the "real world." We now stand before the very same challenge before which our ancestors stood at Har Sinai.

How do we feel. Are we reluctant to leave? Do we feel as if we are being torn away from the Source of Life? As if our umbilical cord is being cut? Or are we more like children running away from school? Have we already thrown off the yoke of Torah in exchange for the 'freedom' of the 'real world'? Do we accurately

assess the value of Torah and mitzvos? Do we genuinely appreciate all we have learned and can still learn? Are we children, or are we adults?

Moreover, are we afraid of becoming "too frum?" Are we afraid of truth? Do we, like the proverbial ostrich, prefer to hide our heads in the sand with the belief that that will change reality, and save us from the hungry lion? Do we foolishly think that what we don't know can't hurt us? Are we afraid that a glimpse of truth will force us to make changes in our comfortable, duty-free lifestyle?

This is the flaw of, "They journeyed from the Mountain of Hashem." It is our responsibility to learn from the errors of our forebears. If we value what we have achieved, we will not hastily throw it away.

Take a few minutes to contemplate our vast achievement. We have elucidated the Jew's responsibility in this world. We have become cognizant of the inestimable value of learning Torah. We have developed a sensitivity for the need for precision in our observance of mitzvos. We have attained an appreciation for feeling a true closeness to Hashem via our davening. And most importantly, we have acquired a sense of priority in life. These are things that most people never think about. Not only have we thought; we have attained.

What a shame to throw it all away. We can hold onto it if only we so desire. If only we so desire...

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The Weekly Daf #332 Ketubot 81 - 87 Issue # 333 Parshat Beha'alotcha / Sh'lach (in Israel) By RABBI MENDEL WEINBACH, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

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WHO IS MORE BELIEVED?

"I know this woman to be suspect of swearing falsely." This disclosure made to the Sage Rava by his wife caused him to withdraw from the woman her right to take an oath. His court had imposed an oath upon her to allow her to verify her denial of a monetary claim made against her, and based on his wife's statement, Rava took away this right.

As in any case of a defendant suspected of swearing falsely, the oath was transferred to the claimant, who was empowered to collect his money after swearing that he had not been paid.

Another case came before Rava in which someone wished to collect a debt based on a note that he produced. Rava's disciple Rabbi Papa confided to him that he knew that this note had been paid. Rava asked him if there was a second witness to discredit the note, and when he heard that there was no other witness he rejected Rabbi Papa's testimony.

Rabbi Ada bar Masna, who observed this, asked his master why the testimony of Rabbi Papa was less reliable to him than that of "the daughter of Rabbi Chisda," Rava's wife. The sage's reply was that he was absolutely familiar with the character of the daughter of Rabbi Chisda, and he was certain that she never lied, a familiarity he did not have concerning Rabbi Papa.

Rava never meant to intimate, writes Rabbi Moshe Feinstein in his responsa (Iggerot Moshe, Yore Deah 54 and repeated in his responsa on Orach Chaim and Even Haezer), that he considered his wife a more pious person than his disciple. This is evident from the challenge of Rabbi Ada, which was based on Rabbi Papa's piety, and from Rava's response which did not refute that assumption. Believing someone because of his record of piety cannot, however, make his testimony any more effective than that of a single witness, which the Torah ruled was insufficient in monetary matters. Even the testimony of tzaddikim as great as Moshe or Aharon is not given more credence than that of any single witness.

This is true, however, only when the judge believes the witness based only on his record as a righteous person. But if he has an intimate knowledge of the character of the witness and has had many occasions to observe that person's steadfast aversion to lying, we consider the testimony of such a witness equivalent to the judge himself seeing the act reported by the witness. For Rav, this was so in regard to his wife but not in regard to his disciple.

[The applications of this principle by Rabbi Feinstein range from aged parents relying on the special kashrus arrangement made for them by non-observant children (a question he was asked in Moscow back in 1934), to a kohen believing his wife who reports that she was violated by an Arab before the marriage and therefore forbidden to him (a question put to him in 1961 from Eretz Yisrael.)]

\* Ketubot 85a

### THREE STORIES -- TWO REASONS

Three stories with one theme and two reasons: Someone deposited with Rabbi Measha seven pearls wrapped in a sheet. A sudden death prevented Rabbi Measha from informing his household that he had undertaken to watch these pearls for their owner. When the owner came to claim the pearls from the heirs and accurately described the package he had left for safekeeping, the heirs argued before the court of Rabbi Ami that perhaps the pearls belonged to their father. Rabbi Ami rejected their claim and offered two reasons for doing so. One was that he knew Rabbi Measha was not a man of means who would own such a treasure. Secondly, the claimant provided an accurate description of the contested pearls which indicated that they belonged to him.

The same situation arose regarding a silver goblet deposited by a man who subsequently died. Rabbi Nachman gave the very same ruling. The third story concerned a precious silk garment deposited with Rabbi Dimi and it was Rabbi Abba who gave the identical ruling based on the two reasons for discounting the possibility that the disputed property may have belonged to the deceased.

Are these two independent reasons or are they interdependent? What if the deceased was indeed a man of means who could afford owning something of the value of the disputed property -- would the identifying description provided by the claimant still serve as valid proof that it indeed was his?

The answer to this question given by Tosefot and Rosh is that the only time that the claimant is awarded the disputed object is when both reasons are there. Should the deceased have been a man of means, the identifying description would not serve as sufficient proof for the claimant.

Tosefot explains this by pointing out that if he were a man of means we assume that he purchased it from the claimant whose ability to accurately describe it could be based on earlier ownership. Rosh suggests a different approach. If he were a man of means, we assume that someone who frequented his home and saw the precious object described it to someone else -- (the visitor himself is disqualified from making such a claim, as his familiarity with the object is based on his frequent visits) -- who then proceeded to claim it on the basis of his ability to describe it.

\* Ketubot 85b

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