

מאת מוה"ר ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHA
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Relevant Halachos for the Yom Tov of Shavuot (2)
Shavuot on Motzei Shabbos. This year, *Chag HaShavuot* begins on *Motzei Shabbos* of *Parshas Bamidbar* and it is important to review a number of relevant *halachos*. On *Shabbos*, before *Mussaf*, the *tefillah* of "אב הרחמים" is recited, even though it is *Erev Yom Tov* (1). The reason being that there were many pogroms and tragedies that took place in Europe during these days, and the *Gedolim* of those generations decreed to say it as a merit for the souls of those who perished. However, the *tefillah* of "צדקתך צדק" is not said during *Mincha*.
Sleeping on Shabbos Afternoon. It is customary to stay up the entire night of *Shavuot* to learn *Torah* and say special *tefillas*. It is permitted to take a nap on *Shabbos* afternoon in order to stay up easily for the night of *Shavuot* (2). However, a person should not specifically speak out that he is going to sleep for that purpose as this might be construed as "*Hachana*" - making preparations on *Shabbos* for the next day. Others permit even saying this, because it is for a *mitzvah* (3).

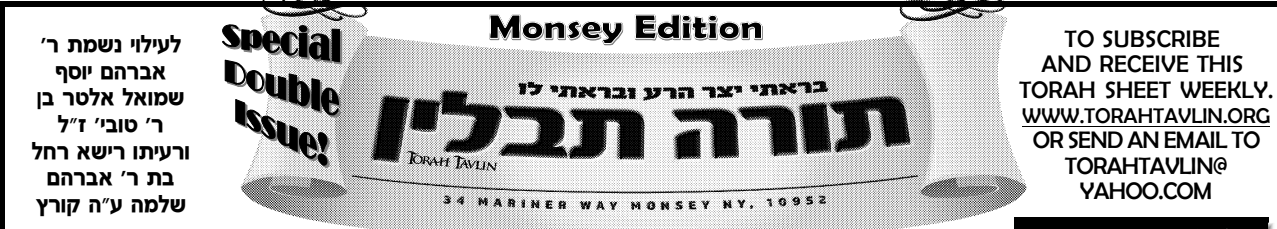
When to Eat Seuda Shlishis. The proper time to eat the third meal of *Shabbos* is from *Mincha* time and on. This year, in the NY/NJ Tri-State area, the time for *Mincha* is from (approx) 1:32 p.m. and on. One could even start the third meal before this time as long as he eats a *k'zayis* (size of an olive) of bread after 1:32. One should wash for this meal, not later than the beginning of the last third of the day in the above area. Once he started the meal before the above time, he can continue eating, as long as he makes sure not to fill himself up in a way that will take away his appetite from eating the *Yom Tov* meal on the first night of *Shavuot*. If he didn't wash before the above time, he should still do so and fulfill the *mitzvah* of *Seuda Shlishis*, but only by consuming the absolute minimum, such as a single slice of bread and piece of fish, and a drink (4).

הוא היה אומר ...

R' Shraga Feivel Schiff *shlit" a* (Menahel Bais Shraga) would say:
"When the Jewish people sit, and busy themselves with the joys of Torah, the Holy One Blessed be He, says to all his heavenly hosts: 'Look at at my beloved children as they forget their own sufferings and become immersed in my delight.' We forget our pain and suffering and learn Torah - what is the pain of sitting and learning Torah? *Chazal* tell us that from the time of *Moshe Rabbeinu* until *Rabban Gamliel*, people did not learn Torah except while standing; when *Rabban Gamliel* died, sickness came into the world, and they learned Torah sitting down. *Hashem* is now praising us, the Jewish people, that we forget our pain of sitting and delve in the Torah of Hashem."

R' Shimshon Pinkus *zt"l* (Nefesh Shimshon) would say:
Usually one counts the soldiers to know how many there are before going to war. *Bnei Yisroel* didn't need to go to war. Why then was the census needed? The Jewish people waged a major war upon receiving the Torah – it was the battle over *Taava* (desire). The census was taken in order to be able to assess the nation's strength and to impress on every soldier (every Jew) that he is a critical component in the war between good and evil."

A (Wise) Man would say: "A man once tried to assault me with milk, cream and butter. How dairy!"
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שבת פרשת במדבר / חג השבועות / זמן מתן תורתנו Parshas Bamidbar / Chag HaShavuot / Kabbolas HaTorah ה-ז סיון תשפ"ב – June 4-6, 2022

הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבינוביץ שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק
החנים לפני המשכן קדמה לפני אהל מועד מורחה משה ואהרן ובניו שמרים משמרת המקדש למשמרת בני ישראל והור הקרב יומת ... (ג-ל) - הרחק משכן רע

פ"ש: משה ואהרן ובניו, וסמוכים להם דגל מחנה יהודה, והחונים עליו יששכר וזבולון, טוב לצדיק טוב לשכנו, לפי שהיו שכניו של משה שהיה עוסק בתורה, נעשו גדולים בתורה, שנאמר יהודה מרוקק, ומבני יששכר יודעי בינה וגו' מאתם ראשי סנהדראות, ומזבולון מושכים בשבט סופר. הנה מטרתו של רש"י בחיבורו הוא לפרש פשוטו של מקרא. אולם בדבריו כאן יצא מגדרו, וראה לנכון להודיענו פרט מסוים שאינו קשור כלל לפירושו של מקרא. וזאת כי ידיעה זו היא בגדר 'סוד והצלת הדת' ממש! וקיום היהדות מקלקלת השורה.

רש"י ראה לנכון לגלות לנו מהו משמעו של המושג 'חברים' תיבת 'חבר' יכולה להטעות אותנו במידת מה. כי משמעה כפשוטה היא 'חיבור', כלומר, מדובר בשני נפשות פרטיות שיש דבר מה המחבר ביניהם. ולהבנתנו השישית מדובר בקשר המתבטא לפעמים רק באהבה' שרוחשים זה כלפי זה, וכתוצאה מכך הפך זה בטובתו של זה. אולם בפועל מדובר בשני גופים נפרדים, וכשם שחלוקים הם בנוף כך יכולים הם להיות חלוק גם בדעותיהם ובהשקפותיהם. השקפה מוטעית זו מביאה אותנו לידי הבנה משושבת על המושג 'חברים' של ישראל, לידיה יכולים אנו להימנות כ'חבר' לכל 'מכר', ויתכן שיש בכך גם מצוה להרבות אהבה ורעות בישראל. ע"כ ביקש רש"י להוציא את התיבה 'חבר' ממשמעה, ולגלות לנו את המובן האמיתי של 'חבר'. אכן מדובר בשני גופים חיצוניים, ויתכן שכל עוד שלא התחברו זה עם זה היו דעותיהם והשקפותיהם שונות אלו מאלו. אבל כשהסכימו להתחבר זה עם זה נעשו שניהם כמין אחד. מעתה משווה זה את דעתו לזה. שלושם שבטים שכלילו אלפים מישראל וכו' והתעלו יתר על שאר בני דורם ומדוע דוקא הם? כי קרובים היו אל משה ביותר, וזכו להתחמם לאורו ולחיות תמיד בהליכותיו של הצדיק, וכתוצאה מכך נמשכו גם הם בעקבותיו עד שזכו והתעלו ונעשו גדולים בתורה. הרי שהחיבור עם הוולת עושה רושם על האדם, וכשהוולת הוא צדיק משתנים הצונות והדעות לטובה, ומתוך הן אתה שומע לאו, שאם הלילה להיפך עלולים להידרדר מטה מטה ר"ל. וכמו שמובא בספר הקדוש 'עבודת ישראל' להרה"ק מקוונ"ץ זי"ע (אבות ב. ט): ששאלו לחכם אחד מה מעשך, אמר להם צאו וראו בחברי... אבוד מעתה, שהאדם הבוחר חבר לעצמו חרוץ בכך את גורלו, אם הוא חבר טוב יזכה שגם הוא ייטיב דרכו, ואם ח"ו ימשך אחר חבר רע, ימשך גם הוא אל הרע. כיון שכן אסור לו להתחבר אל רעהו כל עוד שלא תהה היטב על קנקנו ואינו מכיר במהותו, ולא יחשב כי דעתו יפה להבדיל בין טוב לרע, כי האהבה מקלקלת את השורה, וכשנמשך אחר חבר שאינו הגון עלול להלה לסמאות את עיניו מלהכיר את האמת, וגם אם כבר היה איתן בהשקפתו השורה ימצא את עצמו כמגשש באפלה, ובצר לו לא ימצא מסילות כי אם לדיעותיו ולהשקפותיו השליליים של החבר...

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל רעותו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה קורץ

עדותיך אתבונן

מאת הרב אברהם דניאל אבשיין שליט"א מחבר ספר שדה אברהם

ויענו כל העם יחדו ויאמרו כל אשר דבר ה' נעשה ... (קריאה יום א' של שבועות) - בענין קבלת התורה באהבה ושמחה

איתא בפסחים (סו, ע"ב): "אמר רבי אלעזר: הכל מודים בעצרת דבעינן נמי לכם מאי טעמא - יום שניתנה בו תורה הוא, ע"כ. ועמדו המפרשים על דברי הגמ', דאדרבא משום שיום שניתנה בו התורה, היה ראוי להיות שיא כולו לה, בלי שום אכילה ושתיה, כדי לדברות בתורה ביום זה. וכתב רבינו דוד (שם) לבאר דברי הגמ' וז"ל, "הכל חייבים לשמוח ביום שניתנה בו תורה, כדי לראות את עצמו שהוא שמח במתן תורה, ואינה עליו כעול על צוארו, ואינו מראה עצמו שמח אלא באכילה ושתיה", עכ"ל. הרי מבואר מדבריו, שהתכלית בקיום "לכם", ע"י האכילה ושתיה, הוא להורות על גודל השמחה בקבלת התורה, וכמו שפי' רש"י על דברי הגמ' וז"ל, "דבעינן נמי לכם - שישמחו בו במאכל ומשתה, להראות שנוהו ומקובל יום זה לישראל שנתנה תורה בו", עכ"ל. הרי מבואר גם מדברי רש"י, שהתכלית של האכילה ושתיה ביום קבלת התורה הוא להורות על השמחה של קבלת התורה. ויש להוסיף על זה, דזה עיקר עבודת ימי הספידה. שידועים דברי החינוך במה שכתב (מצוה ש"ו) לבאר הטעם של מצות ספידת העומר וז"ל, "משרשי המצוה - על צד הפשט, לפי שכל עיקרן של ישראל אינו אלא התורה, ומפני התורה נבראו שמים וארץ וישראל ... והיא עיקר והסיבה שנגאלו ויצאו ממצרים כדי שיקבלו התורה בסיני ויקיימנה. ... שתקבלו התורה שהיא העיקר הגדול שבשביל זה הם נגאלים והיא תכלית הטובה שלהם. ... נצטוינו למנות ממחרת יום טוב של פסח עד יום נתינת התורה, להראות בנפשנו החפץ הגדול אל היום הנכבד הנכסף ללבנו, כעבד ישאף צל, וימנה תמיד מתי יבוא העת הנכסף אליו שיצא לחירות, כי המנין מראה לאדם כי כל ישעו וכל הפצו להגיע אל הזמן ההוא", עכ"ל. הרי מבואר שעבודת ימי הספידה הוא להורות התשווקה והחפץ שאנו רוצין לקבל את התורה, ואנו מודים זה ע"י זה שאנו מונים הימים עד אורתו יום, שזה מורה שאנו מצפים לקבל את התורה. והעומק בבאיור הענין, שאין זה רק האופן לקבל את התורה, אלא זהו גופא צריכותא לעיקר קיים התורה. שידוע דברי הגמ' בנדרים (פא, א): "זמני מה אין מצויין ת"ח לצאת ת"ח מבנינו. ... רבינא אומר: שאין מברכין בתורה תחלה, דאמר רב יהודה אמר רב, מאי דכתיבי: מי ראש החכם ויבן את, דבר זה נשל לא לחכמים ולגבאים ולא פירשוהו, עד שפירשוהו, דכתיבי: ויאמר ה' געזב עזבם את תורתיו וגו', היינו לא שמעו בקולי היינו לא הלכו בהו. אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: שאין מברכין בתורה תחלה", ע"כ. הרי, הטעם שנחרב ירושלים, והטעם שאין בנים של ת"ח, ת"ח כמותם, היינו משום שלא ברכו בתורה תחילה. וכבר פירשו כל המפרשים (ע"י בדברי הר"ן שם), שהטעם לזה, היינו אינו רק משום שלא אמרו עצם ברכת התורה, אלא כוונת דברי הגמ' הוא, שהתורה לא היה חשובה להם לברך

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

Malchus means to be undeterred, to be strong and courageous and not to care what anyone says. A *Melech* represents the honor of *Hashem* and therefore he must be bold enough to stand up against the entire world to do what is right. On the other hand, a *Melech* must be humble. A Jewish king is commanded, "בלתי רם לבבו" - his heart may not become haughty. If he has an ounce of *gaavah*, he cannot be a King, because he is serving himself rather than *Hashem*.

Dovid HaMelech displayed the *middah* of *Malchus*. Dovid was constantly ridiculed and put down. He was not even meant to live for one moment, if not for *Adam Harishon* who gave him 70 years of his life - 70, which is a derivative of the number 7, representing the *Malchus* of Dovid. He had no existence of his own, his whole life was for *Hashem*. Dovid spent his difficult life pouring out his heart to *Hashem*. He

דרגה יתירה

EDITORIAL & INSIGHTS ON ONE'S MIDDOS TOVOS

מלכות שבמלכות ואמהר ואתקדש בקדושה של מעלה ... We have traveled a long distance from the head to the heart. For the past seven weeks we have been learning about the beautiful *middos* with which *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* created and sustains the world. It is only through these *middos* that we can "touch" *Hashem*, we can know Him and emulate Him! It is only through these beautiful traits that we can have the ability to be *mekabel* the *Torah*. And now, we've arrived - the 7th and final *middah* of *Malchus*. *Malchus* is the actual internalization and actualization of all the *middos* that we have been discussing during these holy weeks of *Sefiras Haomer*. *Malchus* is the combination and synthesis of all these *middos*, it takes completely opposite traits and allows them to work together. *Dovid HaMelech* symbolizes this *middah*. On one hand,

AND THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN SHLITA

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE SIFREI TANACH

ריבו כאמכם ריבו כי היא לא אשתי ואנכי לא אישה ... (הושע ב-ד)

In lieu of their unabashed sins, *Hoshea HaNavi* likens *Klal Yisroel* to a woman who betrays her husband and puts her child's paternity in question. He quickly changes tactics, and concludes with a promise from *Hashem* that despite it all He will never abandon us since we, His children, will always remain just that. It's ironic how quickly *Hashem's* attitude towards *Klal Yisroel* went from accusatory to loving: why? R' Hersh D'MaLuk *shlit'a* explains that precisely *Hashem's* attitude change is indicative of a deeper love that He has for us. *Hashem* implanted the *Yetzer Hara* in the world to combat a Jew's natural inclination to be good and

שמעתי ותרנו כמני לקול צללו שפתי יבוא רקב בעצמי ותהתי ארנו אשר ליום צרה לעלות לעם ג'ודנו ... (הבקר ג-יב)
The *Haftorah* on the second day of *Shavuos* details *Chavakuk HaNavi's* open and unrestricted challenge from *Hashem* who instructed him to marry a harlot and bear children from her. *Chazal* note that *Hashem* made Chavakuk do this so that he would have a personal feel for the way *Hashem* deals with *Klal Yisroel* – just as Chavakuk still loves his children despite knowing that they may or may not be in fact his children, *Hashem* unconditionally loves every single Jew. Unlike other prophecies this vision was directed at Chavakuk personally and he "*quaked and trembled in fear as he awaited a people to come to attack.*" Why is that? R' Yosef Kara ז"ל (*Mahari K'ra*) explains that there were some prophets throughout history who were tasked with prophesying for Nations other than *Klal Yisroel*. These include (but not limited to) Yechezkel, Hoshea, Chavakuk, etc., and while it seems interesting that *Hashem* would

true to Him, and while this is a lifelong struggle for us all, more often than not we rise above the *Yetzer Hara's* predations and shine like a bright light. *Hashem* knows this very well and it is for this reason that He still loves and cherishes us – despite the many times we have fallen both nationally and individually. Incredibly, while we constantly struggle with it, the *Yetzer Hara* in our heart could be useful since in direct proportion to the difficulty of the struggle, the reward is immense. Primarily in a time when many have abandoned their loyalty to *Hashem*, that is when we, the *Torah* Jews, have the opportunity to "cash" in and reap the benefits.

send such holy men to prophesize for other Nations, it is important to remember that everything in the world happens for *Klal Yisroel* – and these prophecies are no different. In fact, this particular prophecy was carefully designed to evoke the deepest of emotion amongst members of *Klal Yisroel* since they could not fathom why a holy man such as Chavakuk would lament the failings of gentile Nations. Furthermore, it shocked them to the core to see Chavakuk stoop to their low level and marry an unfaithful woman. But that was exactly the point since upon seeing all that, they immediately took stock of their own iniquities and repented wholeheartedly causing a mass *teshuva* movement and a resurgence of *Torah* study. As the time for *Kabbolas HaTorah* descends upon us, it behooves us to remember the lesson of *Chavakuk HaNavi* and how he followed *Hashem's* dictates to the letter without any reservations.

משל למה הדבר דומה

שאו את ראש כל עדת בני ישראל למשפחתם לבית אתם כמספר שמות ... (כמדר א-ב)

Rachamim ben Achai was one of the wealthiest diamond dealers in Bagdad, Iraq. He was a hard worker as well as a man of principle and when his son Moshe came of age appropriate, he began to groom him to work in the family business. Moshe though, unlike his father, was not a very hard-working individual and it didn't take long for *Rachamim* his father, to recognize this disappointing quality in his son. He decided to take an open approach. He gave his son some money, as well as a few precious stones, and left it up to him to figure out the rest. A surprised Moshe happily took the money, but not with good intent. Rather quickly, he burned through the money on recreational activities. With nothing left, he had no other choice but to take a loan, and when asked for a collateral, he was forced to put up his last few precious diamonds. Unfortunately, things only got worse for him and Moshe was forced to take one loan after another. Finally the bank had enough and now Moshe was really stuck.

When *Rachamim* found out what his son had done, he was shocked at his son's incompetence. He confronted him straight. "Moshe, the diamonds I gave you are worth double all your loans, why do you refuse to sell them and pay back your debts?" His father pressed his son, but Moshe was ready. "Father, as long as I have those stones I am still considered rich. People treat me better and I get special privileges like the rich get. As soon as people will hear that I don't even have those diamonds, well, what am I worth?" **נמשל:** The **Ben Ish Chai** commented on this story, that as *Bnei Avraham, Yitzchok* and *Yaakov*, we ought to express this same feeling, as the *Torah* states: למשפחותם לבית "למשפחותם לבית - A Jew is only counted if he is true to his ancestry. For only as long as one is true to his proud Jew values, can he then participate in the joy of Jewish life. *Shavuos* is the *Yom Tov* that is "חצי לה' וחצי לכם" - half for *Hashem* and half for us. Hence, only a full "*Torah*" Jew can enjoy the elation and euphoria of this special *Yom Tov*.

constantly fought against his enemies, but it was never about himself. It was always to be *mekadesh shem shamayim*.

The *middah* of *Malchus* is found in Rus, when she is told over and over to leave. Go back to where you came from, “*Lech na shov na*” ... GO AWAY! But Rus had the *middah* of *Malchus*. She knew what was right and was undeterred.

This *middah* is also found in Yehuda, when he stood up to Yosef to protect his brothers. “*Vayigash Ailav Yehuda*.” Only Yehuda stood up to take responsibility. Nothing would stop him. He showed this *middah* when Tamar was being taken to her death and he said, “*Tzadka Mimeni*,” she is more righteous than I. I take responsibility! Despite the shame and discomfort, a *Melech* gets up and does what is right.

If this is the *middah* that combines all the *middos* together, and is the prerequisite to real *Kabbolas HaTorah* then how do we attain it? How can we reach this lofty plateau? The answer is to do what Dovid did. He DAVENED! He cried, he begged, he pleaded, he beseeched *Hashem* with every fiber of his being to help him be what he was meant to be. The only way to get there is by knowing that one cannot get there alone. One cannot do anything without *Hashem*.

We need to cry, beg, plead, implore *Hashem* with every fiber of our being to help us attain our goals. We must be strong and give our children the *chinuch* to be undeterred by

the messages of the world to find pleasure in foreign places. That is our job. We must be strong and take responsibility for what we believe is right. But we must never rely on our own efforts. We must humble ourselves and believe that we are nothing and can do nothing if not for *Hashem*.

This is what *Klal Yisroel* did by *Matan Torah*. They accepted the *Torah* with the *middah* of *Malchus*. They said, “נעשה” - We will DO! We will stand up and take responsibility! We will be undaunted and courageous to do *ratzon Hashem*. But on the other hand, “ונשמע” - we will listen. We will humble ourselves to realize that we don’t know all the answers. We will listen to our *Rabbanim*, we will humble ourselves and truly make *Hashem* our King!

This is *Malchus*. And with this we can understand the great power of these two words, *Naaseh V’nishma*, and why 600,000 angels came down and placed two crowns on the head of every *yid*, one for *Naaseh* and one for *Nishmah*. Because a crown is surely the most befitting adornment for one who accepts the *Torah* with the *middah* of *Malchus*!

May we all be *zoche* to a true *Kabbolas HaTorah* this *Shavuos*. May we be ready and willing to stand up against the world to insure the purity of our homes and may we remain humble and modest, and pour out our hearts to *Hashem* for the success of our children in *Torah* and *avodas Hashem*.

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV AND HEMSHECH HADOROS

מחשבת הלב

FROM THE FAMILY OF R’ CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT”L

ויבהן אלעזר ואיתמר על פני אהרן אביהם ... (במדבר ג-ד)

There are various explanations for the words “על פני אהרן” **Rashi** says it means during Aharon’s lifetime. The **Ramban** differs. The **Ksav Sofer z”l** offers yet a third possibility. He writes that there is a concept known as “ברא” - מוכה אבא” - the actions of a son elevate his father. Hence, even after Aharon was *niftar* he received “gifts” in *shamayim* from Elazar and Isamar’s respective *avodah*.

As children embark on their life’s journey, forging their own destiny, they may sometimes cast aside the *mesorah* that their parents lived with. Elazar and Isamar realized that their success in *avodas Hashem* would be based on the weathered road traversed by their saintly father. Thus, says the *posuk* “ויכהו” - they served and followed אהרן - “ויכהו” **אביהם**, the paved path Aharon so faithfully traveled.

My father, *shlit’a*, once brought out this point using the following *mashal*. A lad once set out from his hometown on

ויקרא באוני העם ויאמרו כל אשר דבר ה' נעשה ונשמע ... (שמות כד-ו)

As *Klal Yisroel* uttered these words in unison, history was made; we were declared the proprietors of the *Torah*. A heavenly voice descended and said, “Who revealed this secret; words that are used by the heavenly angels themselves?” What was so unique about that phrase, and why is it the language of the *Malachim*?

The **Bais Halevi** asks a question. The **Rambam** rules that

if an employer orders his employee to “do whatever I tell you,” even if the worker agrees to do it, he cannot be obligated. The reason is, that since he doesn’t know precisely what the boss had in mind when he ordered him to do something, there is not enough *smichas daas*. If so, how were the *Yidden* obligated in the *Torah* by proclaiming “נעשה ונשמע” - we will do as we’re told, if there is no *smichas daas*?

“We were in absolute shock at how clearly the double *mitzvah* of *kibbud av v’eim* – mine for my father, and Moshe for his father - had saved his life, *bechasdei Hashem*.” Reb Aharon concluded: “I thought I was going for my father, but actually, I had traveled for my son, Moshe, to save his life ...”

“*Kabed es avicha v’es imecha leman yarichun yamecha* - Honor your father and your mother in order that your days be lengthened.” (Source: “**Noam Siach**” - **sichos of R’ Shlomo Zalman Friedman shlit’a, Rov of Khal Zichron Elazar Santov**)

יום אשר עמדת לפני ה' אלוקך בחרב באמר ה' אלי הקהל לי את העם ואשמעם את דברי ... (דברים ד-י)

R’ Gershon Weiss z”l, Menahel Ruchani of Yeshivah Staten Island once taught a class in the teachers’ institute for young men. The students were about nineteen or twenty years old. He asked them how many believed that George Washington was the first president of the United States. Most of them raised their hands. He then asked, “Why do you believe it? Who told you? Is it because it is written in the history books? If it is printed in a lot of books, then you believe it?”

They did not know how to give a clear answer, but the idea was that people would not print such a lie. Why would anyone want to make up such a lie and publish it? He asked, “Since you are all so sure, how many of you are willing to bet a hundred dollars on the fact that George Washington was the first president of the United States?” Only two stubborn boys kept their hands up. Then he asked the class, “Why is it that just a few minutes ago, everyone believed that George Washington was the first president - and now that we’re talking money, everybody’s hand goes down?”

Well, they said, as long as it did not affect them personally, it was easy to believe. But if it might cost them money, then they would want to find out for sure. Maybe Rabbi Weiss had something up his sleeve, they speculated. Maybe he’d learned from somewhere that George Washington wasn’t really the first president. Possibly, some academics have come up with such a theory and he’d found out about it. At any rate, the students could not substantiate their belief strongly enough to bet on it.

Finally, Rabbi Weiss asked them, “Here is my final question: If you do not know that George Washington was the first president, then how do you know *Hashem* gave us the *Torah* at Mount Sinai? Is there a difference?” He was wondering if anyone would answer. Until he responded for all of them, “Well, I am not sure about George Washington because it is possible that the individuals who wrote that fact in the history books were lying. But I am sure about the *Torah* from *Har Sinai* because I have a tradition, reports handed down from hundreds of thousands of people - six hundred thousand actually - of whom are mentioned in the *Torah* itself, who saw it with their own eyes. And there have been millions and millions of people who have kept the holy *Torah* since then....” This no doubt, clinched the argument! (**Holocaust through the prism of Tanach**)

בין הריחים – תבלין מדף היומי

כך מקובלני מבית דינו של שמואל הרמתי - עמוני ולא עמונית. מואבי ולא מואבית - יבמות דף עז.

Avner told us that we learnt in a *braisa* מואבי ולא מואבית & therefore who comes from דוד המלך, since it is not proper for women to go outside & greet travelers, the women of מואב are not held responsible & are therefore punished like the men? Avner didn’t have an answer so he went to the *Bais Medrash* to ask & was told that this *halacha* is a קבלה from

but עמוני ומואבי אסור לבוא בקהל & is indisputable. The **אויסורי ביאה פ"ב, יח' רמב"ם** also says that the reason is because he married herself, marrying herself would be an *issur*! Why was he only worried about his future generations? The Griz answers that the גואל thought this *psak*, based on the *drasha* they made, was a standard *psak* of a *Bais Din*, which we know can be overturned by another *Bais Din* if they find the reasoning faulty. The גואל was aware of the *psak* but was concerned that a future ב"ד might “Shlug Up” the *drasha* (like דואג tried) causing his future generations to become *pasul*. This is why דואג was told it is not a standard *psak* but rather a של שמואל like the Rambam says it is a קבלה מב"ד של שמואל & like the Rambam says it is a קבלה למשה מסיני & causing his children to be *pasul*.

The **אויסורי ביאה פ"ב, יח' רמב"ם** also says that the *issur* of “לא תדרוש שלומם וטובתם” includes inquiring about their welfare & even applies to the women of מואב, even after they are מגייר!

brings the **אבי עורי** who argues & says that after גירות this לאו does not apply. Rav Shach brings that he was asked by a *talmid*, the following question: Boaz often asked about Rus & even did *chessed* for her, but how was he permitted based on the **Minchas Chinuch**? פייקל R' says he met R' Shach & said the הגהות מיימוניות says it’s *assur* to initiate, but to repay a מואבי who did you a *chessed* is *mutar*. So, since Rus was taking care of Boaz’s relative, he was permitted to inquire about the welfare of Rus. He reports that R’ Shach was very pleased with this answer.

Beis Medrash. ‘Don’t Come back until you have a *Chiddush*,’ he told me. I felt like crying, I could not believe this was happening. Slowly I walked up the steps, sat down on one of the benches and stared blankly at the pages of the *Gemara*.

“A half hour passed and once again I went down to R’ Leizer Yudel. ‘Well do you have a *Chiddush*?’ I admitted that I did not and again I was sent back to the *Beis Medrash*. Now I began to worry, maybe I had made a terrible mistake by coming to the *Mir*. Maybe I would never fit in. But all the while, regardless of my nervousness and negative thoughts, I knew somehow, by the love and caring that emanated from the *Rosh Yeshivah*, that this was a test that I must and would pass. So I went back to the *Beis Medrash* to develop an original *Torah* thought. And finally I did!

“A half hour later, I emerged with ‘*Efsher ah diyuk in ah Rashi*’ (perhaps a thought on *Rashi*). Hesitantly, I approached R’ Leizer Yudel once more to share my *Chiddush*. This time, his face broke into a wide grin. He smiled at me, opened his arms and placed a kiss on my forehead. ‘*Shalom Aleichem!* Welcome to the *Mirrer Yeshivah!*’

“After eating and talking for a while with the *Rosh Yeshivah* and his *Rebbetzin*, I was shown to my room. I thanked them for their warmth and hospitality and laid down to sleep. A short while later, the door opened. R’ Laizer Yudel was checking to make sure I was sleeping and although I gave no indication that I was still awake, I peeked out from under my covers to witness something incredible. Located directly above my bed was a set of *Shas*. R’ Leizer Yudel spread out his arms wide until his hands were able to touch both ends of the collection of *Gemaros*. And then with deep emotion, he hugged and kissed them. Then, he whispered, so as not to wake me up, ‘*Torah, ich hub dir azoi leeb!*’” (*Torah, I love you so much!*)

That memorable first day and night remained etched in R’ Nosson Tzvi’s memory forever. Nate quickly became Nosson Tzvi and he learned and learned and learned. And he never stopped. His modest beginnings gave him unusual insight into the hearts and souls of even novices in learning. When they were afraid to dream on their own, he would dream for them. He believed in his *talmidim* and thus helped them reach inconceivable heights.

כבד את אבך ואת אמך למען יאריכון ימך על האדמה אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך (שמות כ-יב)

After the terrible tragedy on *Lag Ba’omer* in Meron last year, when so many *bochurim* and *yungerleit* were taken from us suddenly, many people were looking for ways to improve themselves as a *tikkun* for the tragic deaths. **R’ Shlomo Zalman Friedman *shlit’a***, *Rov of Khal Zichron Elazar Santov*, recently received a phone call from Reb Aharon Walkin, a resident of Lakewood, NJ, who told him over the following incredible story.

“I have a son, Moshe, who learns in *Yeshivas Mir* in *Yerushalayim*. Some time before *Lag Ba’omer* last year, he called me and said that one of his close friends had gotten a ticket for the *hadlakah* of the **Toldos Aharon Rebbe** in Meron. The ticket gave them the privilege of pouring oil in preparation for the fire at the *kever* of *Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai*. His friend had asked the organizer for a few more tickets, so he could invite some good friends to join him at the *hadlakah* and share the privilege of pouring the oil. The *bochur* told my son that he had a ticket for him as well. My son was very happy and excited that he’d be able to take part in the *hadlakah* along with a number of friends.

“A few days before *Lag Ba’omer*, I called my son. I told him that because I had not visited *Eretz Yisroel* for a year and a half due to the coronavirus, and I hadn’t seen my father, **R’ Chaim Walkin *shlit’a***, *mashgiach* of *Yeshivas Ateres Yisroel*, now that I had received an entry permit, I was planning to arrive in *Eretz Yisroel* on *Erev Lag Ba’omer*. First I would go to *Yerushalayim* to visit my father, and then, later that night, I would go to Meron, to the *kever* of *Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai*. The plan was to return to *Yerushalayim* for *Shabbos*. When my son heard this plan, he told me that even though he’d gotten a ticket for the *hadlakah* at *Toldos Aharon* and had made up with his friends that they would go together, he would change his plans. They had even rented an apartment in *Tzefas* for *Shabbos*. Nevertheless, because of the *mitzvah* of *kibbud av*, he was happy to forego all those plans. He’d wait for me and join me wherever I went.

“I arrived in *Eretz Yisroel* on *Erev Lag Ba’omer* in the afternoon. Moshe waited for me, and we went first to visit my father. We spent a few hours there, and we also heard a *vaad* that my father gave to the *bochurim* of his *yeshiva*. We then set out for *Meron* late that night. As we neared *Har Meron*, we were stopped by police and told that a tragedy had occurred at the *kever*, and they had shut down the entire mountain to visitors. No one could get there. There was no point in going further.

“I was disappointed, because I was finally in *Eretz Yisroel*, and almost at *Meron*, yet I couldn’t even go in and say a *kappitel* of *Tehillim* or write a *kvitel*. My son, Moshe, was much more distraught. He had a ticket to pour the oil at the *hadlakah*; he’d missed that, and the entire *hadlakah* and the experience with his friends. Not only that, but now he wouldn’t even be able to say *Tehillim* at the *tziyun* of *Rashbi*. But we had no choice, so turned around and drove back to *Yerushalayim*, hoping that all of this was for the best.

“On Friday morning, when the magnitude of what had happened became clear, Moshe was understandably stricken. He was trembling at the news that two of his closest friends, *Haboichur Dovi Steinmetz z”l* and *Haboichur Yosef Yitzchok Kohn z”l*, whom he was supposed to be standing next to the previous night, had perished in the tragedy.

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He answers that there is one scenario where a person or an employee would be obligated to listen. If he were to become enslaved, then he has no choice but to listen. Only a person with his own identity is subject to the aforesaid “*smichas daas* rule.” However, an *eved* is required to heed his master. Hence, when we, as a Nation, said “*נעשה ונשמע*”, we were, in essence, subjugating ourselves to the service of *Hashem*. As a result, the transaction was effective, and we, as servants of *Hashem*, require no *smichas daas*. That is the level of a *malach* - an angel has none of his own motives.

There’s a phenomenal *pshat* from the **Ksav v’Hakabala** on *Sefiras Haomer*. Based on the *posuk*, “לא תתעמר בה” - do not enslave an “אשת יפת תואר”, he says that “עומר” symbolizes a preparation for *Kabbolas HaTorah* through leading our lives as His servants. The difference though, is that we, His slaves, are princes, בני מלכים, we are not peasants.

Let us realize our privilege to serve *Hashem* and dedicate our lives towards that lofty goal. The Master of the World will no doubt fulfill the *posuk* “לא תרדה בו בפרך”, not making *golus* so difficult, and will speedily bring *Moshiach, Amen!*

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

טוב לי תורת פוך מאלפי זהב וכסף (תהלים קיג-עב)

One year, during the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuos*, the *bochurim* in *Yeshivas Ner Yisroel* were singing with enormous enthusiasm, “*Tov li Toras pichah me’alfei zahav vakasef*” (*Torah* from Your mouth is better for me than thousands of pieces of gold and silver). In *Tehillim*, these words ring out and on *Shavuos* the students and faculty were not only filled with this feeling, but demonstrated as much with their dancing and singing.

The day after *Shavuos*, **R’ Dovid Kronglas z”l**, gave a *shmuess* in the *Beis Medrash*. He shook his head as he recalled the previous day’s enthusiasm and asked, “What was so special about these words of *Dovid Hamelech*? All he said was that the *Torah* that emanated from *Hashem* is more valuable than gold and silver. Well, of course it is! Don’t *yeshivah* boys feel the same way? Weren’t you all singing it with tremendous enthusiasm just yesterday, on *Shavuos*?”

“The difference,” pointed out R’ Dovid, “is that King David did not these words on *Shavuos*. He said them on an ordinary weekday. They are not reserved for special holidays! No, these words apply when one can make thousands in gold and silver. In other words, when you have the opportunity to make the big money - millions and millions - and you trade it in for *Torah* from the mouth of *Hashem* - then your statement reaches an entirely different level.”

The **Shlah Hakadosh, R’ Yeshayahu Halevi Horowitz z”l** was known to become annoyed at learned people who looked down upon sincerely pious but unlearned people. He would quote the *Medrash* saying that at *Har Sinai*, *Hashem* lifted the mountain above the heads of *Klal Yisroel* and threatened to destroy the entire Nation if they refused to accept the *Torah*. The question is, why was this necessary? Was their outer joy masking an inner reluctance?

The *Shla”h* responded as follows: “Having heard from *Moshe Rabbeinu* that *Hashem* was going to reveal Himself and present the Nation with the *Torah*, undoubtedly the brilliant and scholarly amongst the people prepared themselves for a profound *shiur* from the Almighty Himself on the most esoteric and difficult halachic intricacies. Imagine their disappointment then when *Hashem* announced as follows: ‘Keep *Shabbos*! Do not steal! Respect your parents!...’ These people cried foul! ‘This is an insult to our intelligence,’ they complained. ‘This is for lay people who know nothing of intellectual depth, not for scholars such as we!’ It was most evident that they were ready to return their tents.”

“For these people,” said the *Shla”h*, “*Hashem* had to raise the mountain over their heads, in order to coerce them to appreciate the simple facade of the *mitzvos* in the *Torah*.” (Smiling Each Day, Rabbi Abraham J Twerski)

אהבת עולם בית ישראל עמך אהבת תורה ומצות ונשמח בדברי תורתך ובמצותיך לעולם ועד (ברכת קריאת שמע)

When **R’ Nosson Tzvi Finkel z”l**, *Rosh Yeshivah* of *Mir*, first arrived in *Eretz Yisroel*, he slept at the home of **R’ Leizer Yudel Finkel z”l**, his uncle and *Rosh Yeshivah*, where he had an excellent opportunity to observe his uncle’s saintly ways. R’ Nosson Tzvi told his *talmidim* that he rarely ever saw R’ Leizer Yudel waking up in the morning. He was always up early learning *Torah*. But early one morning, he finally merited seeing his uncle start his day. Getting out of bed, R’ Leizer Yudel went over to his bookshelf and lovingly extended his arms over the whole *Shas* on the shelves. He passionately kissed their worn covers and begged *Hashem* to inspire him to study *Torah* and teach it to others.

R’ Nosson Tzvi said over in his own words the story of when he first came to the *Mir*. “At the time, my name was Nate. I was a tall and lanky kid wearing a Chicago Cubs baseball cap and was exhausted from the trip. It was well over 24 hours since I left Chicago O’Hare Airport. I was anxious to get settled and get a good night sleep. I was related to the *Rosh Yeshivah*, R’ Leizer Yudel, and relieved to see him coming down the corridor. I greeted him with a smile and *Shalom Aleichem*. But his response surprised me: ‘So tell me a *Chiddush* on what you’ve been learning.’

“I couldn’t believe it. Couldn’t the entrance exam wait until the morning? As it was, I was coming from Arie Crown Day School in Chicago. The level of learning in the *Mir* was certainly quite a jump from my high school. ‘I don’t really have a *Chiddush*,’ I said. The *Rosh Yeshivah* looked at me and instead of inviting me into his apartment, directed me to the