



**In This Issue**

[Return From Poland by David Hochstein \(Shana Alef, HAFTR\)](#)

[HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Achrei Mot](#)

[Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Amos Luban](#)

[Petuchei Chotam on Parshat Achrei Mot/Pesach](#)

[Talk about talking \(in shul\)](#)

[Dedication, Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List](#)

[Join Our List](#)

**Parshat Achrei Mot-Shabbat Hagadol**

Printer Friendly

**DEDICATE**

YNA now offers the ability to be Parnas Hayom and dedicate shiurim. To sponser, please click Dedicate

**DONATE**

American Friends of Netiv Aryeh supports our program. To contribute, please click Donate

Due to Pesach, there will not be a newsletter next week. Chag Sameyach!!!

**Davening Schedule for Shabbat and Yom Tov in Yeshiva**

**Shabbat Achrei Mot (Shabbat Hagadol)**

Micha followed by Kabbalat Shabbat on the porch	6: 50 PM
Vatikin	5: 35 AM
Second Shacharit	8: 30 AM

**First Day Yom Tov**

Micha in the Beit Midrash	6: 50 PM
Maariv/Hallel	7: 30 PM
Vatikin	5: 35 AM
Second Shacharit	8: 30 AM

**Second Day Yom Tov**

Maariv	7: 55 PM
Shacharit	8: 45 AM
Mincha	6: 50 PM
Maariv	7: 50 PM

**Shabbat Chol Hamoed**

Micha followed by Kabbalat Shabbat in the Beit Midrash	6: 55 PM
Vatikin	5: 30 AM
Second Shacharit	8: 30 AM
Mincha	7: 00 PM

**Note:** Davening times for the last days of Yom Tov will be posted at [YNA.edu](http://YNA.edu) when they become available.

[YNA.EDU](#)

[Ask Rav Nebenzahl](#)

[Suggestion Box](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Alumni Update Form](#)

[Parsha Archives](#)

## Return From Poland by David Hochstein (Shana Alef, HAFTR)

### I Am A Jew

I have so much to say yet am having great difficulty gathering my many thoughts. It is impossible to even attempt to comprehend what I have experienced these past two days, I accomplished more than I normally would in a week. The camps, the stories, everything is moving so fast. It is so hard to comprehend and to take it all in.



Chesky Schrier made an incredible observation. We were told that many people while in the gas chambers would climb the walls so they could live for a few extra second and leave this world with the *pasuk* of "Shma Yisrael" on their lips. At the moment of death they proclaimed their faith in HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

Where does that leave me? I have always had difficulty with *emunah*, and these people died with *emunah* - this made such an impression on me. I wish I could have that kind of faith, I am nowhere near their level. They died al Kiddush Hashem, look at me - I find it a chore to even recite a *beracha*. They risked their lives to put on their *tefillin* and I considered it a great chore.

These were Jews like me with dreams and aspirations which were suddenly cut short. They only wished they could live like I do, not to gather the wealth of this world but to have the opportunity to daven and to keep mitzvos. Why am I not on their level?

I feel like I have wasted so many opportunities in my life. It is truly amazing to see their sacrifice in the name of Torah. I grew up so spoiled able to receive what I wanted whenever I wanted. Six million people would have done anything to have the opportunities that I have.

Remember September 11, 2001 - three thousand people were killed, what a tragedy! The Americans responded by waging war. Imagine if there were to be 2,000 September 11<sup>th</sup>! If September 11<sup>th</sup> happened daily it would take approximately nine months to reach six million. That is what the Holocaust was - six million is two thousand times three thousand. What a huge number, the number boggles the mind. Six million! Six million! Six million! Six freaking million! If we were to count one number per second it would take almost ten weeks to reach six million (9 weeks, 6 days, 10 hours, 40 minutes, 0 seconds)! That's crazy! I can't do anything for even three hours without taking a break.

In Treblinka alone an average of 3,100 people were killed per day. How did the world let this happen? You see how impossible it is to even comprehend the number six million - that is a huge number. We went to the barracks today and were shown "only" 17,000 pairs of shoes though it seemed like much more.

The Germans tried hard to conceal their crimes and when they realized they were losing they destroyed Treblinka. Many of us in my generation have learned so much about what happened by speaking to our grandparents. My children will not have the opportunity to speak with survivors like I do. I am a member of the final generation which will have the opportunity to speak to first-hand survivors and witnesses. It is therefore up to people like me to spread everything I hear and learn and never let anyone forget.

It's my time to shine, and take in whatever I can. For once in my life I must taken action and quit

procrastinating. I must absorb as much as I can here - be open to what is happening around me. Quit complaining, I would have had much more to complain about if Chas Veshalom I had been alive during the Holocaust. Just understand that David!

I'm now feeling a tornado of emotions. I am happy that I am alive and the Jews survived and by and large for the way I have lived my life - all thanks to the Creator. I am so sad to be here to see the place where so many of my people perished. I am mad that the whole world let this go on for so long. I am confused by what a huge number six million is. I am detached because I did not realize what it was like. But most importantly I am feeling pride! Proud to be a Jew! Proud to be alive! Proud the Nazis are dead! I don't think I've ever felt such a sense of pride before, especially towards Judaism. I want my ancestors to be proud of me and that it is thanks to them and their hardships that I am alive.

I am very grateful to my sisters, my parents, and specifically Rav Hirschhorn for pressuring me to go on this trip. I am really grateful for everything they have all done. I await the rest of this trip with great anticipation and am anxiously waiting to see everything so that I can fully assess my time here and what I have learned. I love my family and will never forget that! I have the utmost respect for Rav Hirschhorn. I want to make them all proud, I want to prove to myself who I truly am. I am David Eliezer Hochstein and I am a Jew! I am a Jew!

### HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Achrei Mot

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon.

Printer Friendly Sicha

### SEPARATED BY A HAIRSBREADTH

#### "NULLIFY THE LEAVEN FROM YOUR HOMES"



The prohibition against eating *chametz* on Pesach involves many laws which we do not find with other forbidden foods. Not only is one who eats *chametz* punishable with *kareis*; one may not even derive any benefit from it. In addition we are commanded to remove any semblance of *chametz* from our possession: "... you shall nullify the leaven from your homes ..." (Shemos 12:15). There is no such prohibition against any other forbidden foods. The Rambam learns in the case of *chametz*, that unlike other forbidden foods, the Torah prohibits consumption of less than a *kezayis*.

Chazal even introduced an added stringency - unlike other prohibited foods, *chametz* is not *batel beshishim*, meaning that a mixture containing even the minutest amount of *chametz* is forbidden. The prohibition against eating *chametz*, as we see, is far more severe than that of other forbidden foods.

Furthermore, we spend a vast amount of time cleaning every corner of our houses to ensure that *chametz* is completely removed. As for eating utensils, we either *kasher* them or have special dishes which are used exclusively for Pesach. It is amazing how much effort goes into ensuring that for one week out of the year our surroundings are *chametz*-free. Why is the Torah stricter about *chametz* on Pesach than any other prohibited food?

Another area in the Torah where we find stringencies extending further than those of other mitzvos is *chillul Shabbos* - even more so than *chametz*. A *mechalel Shabbos* is punished with death by stoning, whereas one who eats *chametz* on Pesach is punished with *kareis*. A *mechalel Shabbos* is viewed as having denied the entire Torah, which is not the case with one who eats *chametz*. What is special about these two mitzvos - *chametz* and Shabbos - that the Torah was so stringent with them?

### THE FOUNDATION OF SHABBOS

- Shabbos represents the first foundation of Judaism - belief in the creation. Shabbos testifies that Hashem created the world in six days. The Kuzari wonders why when Hashem revealed Himself to us at Sinai, He introduced Himself as: "I am Hashem your G-d Who has taken you out of the land of Egypt", rather than "I

am the Creator of the world"? He explains that the Jewish people witnessed the exodus from Egypt (clearly they could not have witnessed the creation), they witnessed the great hand of Hashem smiting Pharaoh and the Egyptians, they witnessed the plagues and the great salvation which Hashem brought to the Jewish nation. Hashem emphasizes: "I am Hashem your G-d Who has taken you out of the land of Egypt" because that is something we can relate to. Witnessing Hashem's Providence with our own eyes places a greater obligation upon us than had we simply learned about the exodus.

A person of wisdom is able to view the creation with his own eyes. We are taught that Avraham Avinu looked out at the vast universe and came to the recognition that this ship must have a captain. There were certainly many such wise men among those standing at the foot of Har Sinai, nonetheless the fact that *Klal Yisrael* actually experienced the exodus meant that it was felt that much more strongly. Here we are slaves in Egypt and then we witness Hashem striking the Egyptians with plague after plague and then leading us to freedom. The Jewish people eat the Korban Pesach, place blood on their doorposts and lintels and all over Egypt the firstborns are dying, while Jewish ones remain unscathed. A few days later *Am Yisrael* crosses the Red Sea in a miraculous manner.

Having lived through this experience left a great impression upon the people and Hashem therefore presented Himself as the One Who took the Jewish nation out of Egypt.

In any event, from the Kuzari's question we can learn that belief in the creation is the first foundation of our belief (otherwise why would he find it difficult that Hashem did not present Himself as the Creator of the world). Because Shabbos is testimony to the creation, which is the first principle of faith, the Torah is extra stringent when it comes to its observance.

### **CHAMETZ: TESTIMONY TO OUR BELIEF IN THE EXODUS**

The second foundation of our faith is belief in the exodus from Egypt. The Torah was stringent with regard to *chametz*, for it is testimony to our belief in the exodus. Why is *Yetzias Mizrayim* such a fundamental principle of our faith? The Ramban explains that by remembering and recognizing the "great and known miracles which took place in Egypt, man acknowledges all the hidden miracles which is the foundation of the entire Torah. A person cannot have any portion in the Torah of Moshe without believing that all that happens to us is miraculous and that there is no natural order of the world" (See Ramban end of Parshas Bo). We acknowledge the hidden miracles all around us in our daily *tefillos*: "we gratefully thank You ...for Your miracles that are with us every day, and for Your wonders and favors in every season". "Miracles that are with us every day" refers not only to incidents in which Arabs shoot but miss their target, or to being saved from some other great danger. "Your miracles and Your wonders" refers to **every** element of Creation.

What is the greatest of all miracles? The creation itself! The fact that the sun rises every morning and that the earth rotates. The force of gravity. The fact that the earth does not approach too close to the sun or move too far away. These are the greatest miracles of all. If the earth were to move further away from the sun we would freeze to death and if it would move too close we would burn, *chas veshalom*. This perfect sense of balance and equilibrium exists within our own bodies - if our atoms were to move too close together we would shrivel to the size of the head of a pin, and if they would move further away from each other we would explode and scatter to the four corners of the earth.

Let us analyze the composition of the human body. The brain cells provide us with the ability to think physical and spiritual thoughts. Who gives them this power? Is it the electricity flowing there? Does electricity know how to think? Perhaps the brain's power comes from the nourishment we provide it?

What nourishment do we provide the brain with? I can understand a Yeshiva *bochur* who feeds his brain pages of Gemara and Rambam, but what about a non-Jew, with what does he feed his brain? He feeds it with bread, water, meat, and fish. Do these produce thoughts? Man's ability to think is far greater than that of the animal whose meat he eats, while the animal's intellectual capacity in turn is greater than the grass which it eats.

What about the lungs with which we breathe? It is not for naught that Chazal teach us that we must praise the creator for every breath we take, as the *pasuk* states: (Tehillim 150:6 - the word *neshama*, soul, for homiletic purposes is read *neshima*, breath - see Bereishis Rabba 14:9). Hashem created lungs that work day and night - inhaling and exhaling even while sleeping. This is a wonder of wonders. Scientists have expended tremendous energy attempting to construct machines which work non-stop - albeit unsuccessfully

and here Hashem has given me lungs which work for decades without breaking down! We take this so much for granted that we do not realize how miraculous it is.

The Ramban therefore writes, as we mentioned above, that a person cannot have a share in the Torah of Moshe until he believes that all that happens to us is miracle and that there is no natural order of the world. Why do the lungs breathe air? Is it a law of nature? It is only because Hashem created within their nature an inherent capacity to breathe on their own.

### **NATURE VS. MIRACLE**

- Other laws of nature must all be viewed in the same manner. Let us analyze gravitational force. If I fill up a cup of water and turn it upside down, the water will spill out. Why does the water not fly upward? Gravity, of course! But who decreed that there will be gravity? When Hashem said: "let the waters beneath the heaven be gathered into one area" (Bereishis 1:9), it became established that water will descend rather than ascend. Rashi writes that until that point, water was spread throughout the earth. Even after Hashem commanded "let the waters ... be gathered into one area" not all the waters descended, rather they responded to Hashem's command with "they ascend mountains, they descend to valleys, to the special Place You founded for them" (Tehillim 104:8). Only after they had "gathered into one area" did they adopt the property of water as we know it today that it descends rather than ascends.

In our minds, when Moshe raised his hand to split the waters and Yehoshua placed the Aron in the Yarden causing it to split, these are great miracles. The truth is that water's "natural" property of descending is also a miracle. Why do we refer to the former as miracle and the latter as natural? Because we do not view as miraculous things that we have become accustomed to. Earlier we quoted the Ramban who states that the miracles in Egypt teach us that everything is a miracle. The Ramban adds that there is no natural order in the world, but rather "one who does *mitzvos* will be rewarded and one who violates them will be punished - all are decrees from above." Our *mitzvos* and *aveiros* determine everything, even if we are unable to discern this with our own eyes.

The idea that there are no laws of nature and that everything is a decree from above is especially true in *Eretz Yisrael* which is under Hashem's direct Providence without any intermediary (see Ramban Vayikra 18:25).

It is of the utmost importance that we remember the Exodus and one of the ways the Torah instills this in us is by warning us to be extra stringent with the prohibition against eating *chametz*, the testimony to the exodus.

### **PERFORMING MITZVOS WITH ALACRITY**

- The prohibition against eating *chametz* serves another purpose - to instill within us the trait of performing mitzvot with *zrizus* - alacrity. Chazal derive this from the *pasuk*: "You shall safeguard the *matzos*" (Shemos 12:17): R' Yochanan says 'it should rather be read safeguard the mitzvot (the words *matzos* and mitzvot have the identical spelling). Just as we do not allow our matzah to sour, we must not allow our mitzvot to sour - rather when a mitzvah comes along, perform it immediately" (Yalkut Shimoni Parshas Bo).

We need not take any positive action to invalidate our matzah, all we need do is leave the dough for the length of time it would take us to travel a *mil* and hidden forces we refer to today as microbes will do their work on their own to render our matzah *chametz*. The same may be said with regard to performance of mitzvot: one need not do anything in particular to invalidate a mitzvah. If one takes a lazy approach without any *zrizus*, spiritual germs will enter and will interfere with his mitzvah fulfillment.

"One who grows lax in his work is also a brother to the master of destruction" (Mishle 18:9).

There is a very fine distinction between one who is lax in his work performing it in a lazy fashion, and one who intentionally sabotages his mitzvah - a mitzvah can be destroyed through lack of initiative as well. An analysis of the prohibition against eating *chametz* teaches us to what extent we must have *zrizus*. The concept of *chametz* teaches us how lack of *zrizus* can ruin mitzvos.

At the conclusion of *Maggid* we declare:

"This matzah, why do we eat it: to commemorate the fact that there was insufficient time for the dough of our forefathers to leaven, until the King of kings the Holy One Blessed is He revealed Himself to them and redeemed them."

*Am Yisrael* was taken out of Egypt in incredible haste - in a mere 18 minute the entire nation was cleared out of Egypt.

When we say: "there was insufficient time for the dough of our forefathers to leaven" we are referring not only to the physical dough which did not have sufficient time to rise, but to the spiritual dough (the soul of the Jewish people) which was about to sour and could have spoiled to a point of no return. *Am Yisrael* had sunk to the forty-ninth gate of impurity. Had Hashem not taken them out from Egypt precisely when He did, had they remained in Egypt for even one additional moment, they would have assimilated amongst the Egyptians to the point where they could no longer be distinguished from the Egyptians and thus unable to be redeemed. "'I shall go through the land of Egypt on this night' (Shemos 12:12) - I and not an angel."

Why did Hashem not send an angel to carry out this act, why did Hashem Himself take *Am Yisrael* out of Mitzrayim? One explanation is that an angel would not have been able to differentiate between Jew and Egyptian, between who should be smitten and who should not be.

While many wicked people died during the days of darkness, many of those who remained behind were not so much better. Certainly there were *tzaddikim* such as Aharon HaKohen, Yehoshua bin Nun, and others, but the nation as a whole was so deeply entrenched in the impurities of Egypt that the angel would have been unable to distinguish between them and the non-Jews, even after they had performed the *mitzvos* of *bris milah* and *Korban Pesach*, and had placed blood on their doorposts and lintels.

#### **A HAIRSBREADTH SEPARATES HOLY AND PROFANE**

Even after HaKadosh Baruch Hu had taken *Am Yisrael* out of Mitzrayim and they had followed Him into the desert without any provisions, as Hashem recalled one thousand years later: "I recall for you the kindness of your youth, the love of your nuptials, your following Me into the Wilderness, into an unsown land" (Yirmiyahu 2:2).

Even after six days of faithfully following the pillars of cloud and fire, on the seventh day the minister of Egypt was still able to ask on the seventh day: "what makes these different from those" (see Yalkut Shimoni remez 238). The possibility still existed that *Am Yisrael* would drown at sea along with the Egyptians, G-d forbid. Although Hashem saved the Jewish people, we see how close they were to sinking in the impurity of Egypt. We were only saved because Hashem revealed Himself to us at midnight and whisked us out of Egypt. Had He arrived even a moment later, we would not have been redeemed.

We can learn from here what difference a minute can make - the salvation of *Klal Yisrael* depended on that one minute. A moment later they would have sunk so deep that there would have been no chance of redemption, as the Rambam relates: "It almost came to pass that the great tree that Avraham Avinu had planted was uprooted" (Hilchos Avodas Kochavim 1:3). Avraham Avinu, and then Yitzchak, and then Yaakov followed by the holy tribes, toiled exceedingly hard to build a nation of believers in Hashem. Had Hashem waited one additional moment, all that would have been lost.

The prohibition against eating *chametz* alludes to the difference that one moment can make. In one minute we ascended from the impurity of Egypt to a fifty day track which brought us to a level no other nation was able to attain - to stand at that great and awesome gathering at Har Sinai. One moment of delay and all would have been lost.

The principle that a hairsbreadth separates holiness from impurity is fundamental to our belief. Chazal teach us: "you shall distinguish between the clean animal and the unclean" (Vayikra 20:25) "the Torah does not need to say (you shall distinguish) between a cow and a donkey, for they are distinct and obvious, rather between that which is pure to you and that which is impure to you - between one which has the greater part of a sign slaughtered and one which has half of it slaughtered, and how much is the difference between the greater part of it and half of it? A hairsbreadth" (Rashi *ibid.*).

Only a mere hairsbreadth distinguishes a kosher animal that can be used to fulfill the mitzvah of *Korban Pesach* and a *nevela* (an animal which died through means other than ritual slaughtering) whose consumption is punishable with *malkus*. This is the lesson of *chametz* - the hairsbreadth which separates

holy from unholy both in time and in space.

The next *pasuk* states: "I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine" (Vayikra 20:26), Chazal comment: "If you eat the one animal then you belong to Hashem, if you eat the other animal then you belong to Nebuchadnezzar and his cohorts, G-d forbid" (see Rashi). A mere hairsbreadth can mean the difference between serving Hashem and serving Nebuchadnezzar.

There is nothing accomplished by fulfilling mitzvot approximately. A Sefer Torah which is missing even the tip of the letter *yud*, is invalid. The lesson we can derive from the laws of *chametz* is that the dough taken out of the oven at one particular moment may be considered *shmura* matzah and may be used for the mitzvah of eating matzah, while that same bread that remained in the oven for one moment longer is *chametz* whose consumption is punishable by *kareis*. The difference is ever-so-slight - a mere hairsbreadth.

Many mitzvos in the Torah require great precision. There is of course a limit to how exacting a person can be. Chazal and commentaries discuss whether or not "it is possible to be exact" (see Bechoros 17b). Regarding the quantities of matzah, a person who is unsure of the precise measurement should when possible, eat a bit more, while one who is unsure regarding the precise number of minutes classified as *achilas peras* should consume his matzah in less time. When uncertain, eating less matzah or within a longer period of time would certainly not be the right approach.

There are times, however, when being *machmir* is not a relevant option. For example, the Torah gave us the precise dimensions of the vessels of the *mishkan*. If it is impossible to be exact, how are we expected to properly carry out this commandment? The Gemara explains: "When the Torah says to make something, then whatever we can do, we must do" (ibid.) We must do the best we can, for "the Torah was not given to ministering angels" (Berachos 25b), yet we must do the utmost of what is humanly possible.

The idea of precision is not limited to quantities but applies to *halachic* rulings as well. This requires great precision and depth - the facts of a case do not always correspond to a particular *seif* in the Mishna Brura and at times require searching further. At times, there are disputes between *poskim* and we need to know how to rule. The *halacha* is filled with disputes regarding the final ruling in different instances, yet in general there are guidelines determining how we should rule.

Rav Moshe Feinstein felt that there was an uncertainty whether or not the *halacha* follows Rabenu Tam's definition of nighttime, and therefore would permit relying on it in times of great need. The Rav (HaGaon HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach) zt"l, however, felt that the accepted custom in *Eretz Yisrael* was to follow the Gra's definition of nighttime - the emergence of three stars - which is earlier than Rabenu Tam's definition. Although many follow Rabenu Tam's view when it constitutes stringency (e.g. a later conclusion of *Shabbos*), it should not be relied upon in *Eretz Yisrael* when it constitutes a leniency (e.g. beginning *Shabbos* later).

I have been asked whether it would be appropriate to rule leniently on both ends - to begin *Shabbos* later in accordance with the view of Rabenu Tam and to end *Shabbos* earlier following the opinion of the Gr"a. There is no doubt in my mind that whoever acts in such a manner will be punished in the Next World. When a person who lived his life in *Eretz Yisrael* arrives at the Heavenly courts after 120 years and is asked why he followed the Gra's opinion, he can explain that that was the local custom. To be lenient in both directions, I believe, is a clear violation of the *Shabbos*.

### **STRINGENCIES IN MITZVOS BEIN ADAM LACHAVERO**

The idea of being precise applies not only to *mitzvos bein adam laMakom* - between man and G-d but also *bein adam lachavero* - between man and his fellow man. If someone owes money to another then he must pay it in full. Many have asked whether cheating is permissible under certain circumstances. The *halacha* forbids stealing even from a non-Jew and certainly from a Jew. The Rambam goes one step further and writes that a *Talmid Chacham* should be strict with himself even beyond the demands of the Torah. Someone on his level must pay back money even in circumstances where he has a *heter* not to pay. When it comes to collecting money owed him by others, however, it is better not to be so strict but to be *mevater* whenever possible.

Some are of the opinion that whoever leaves this world without having paid off his debts will have to return

here in another *gilgul* to pay back that which he owes. It does not seem worth returning to this world simply in order to pay back the one or two dollars a person may have neglected to pay. Some may argue that perhaps life is better in this world than in the Next World, we however do not believe this to be the case. The importance of being exacting in mitzvot *bein adam lachavero* is highlighted by Chazal's words:

"For sins between man and his fellow man there is no atonement until he appeases his fellow man." (Yoma perek 8, mishna 8)

Chazal write that one mitzvah that a large number of people are guilty of on a daily basis is *avak loshon hara*. People can avoid *loshon hara*, but *avak loshon hara* is much more difficult yet is incumbent upon us to try. According to the Vilna Gaon every moment a man elects to keep his mouth shut and refrain from negative speech, he has merited a life that even an angel cannot fathom (Even Shleima 7:1). Imagine his reward if instead of *loshon hara*, *divrei Torah* poured forth from his mouth?

The Mishna states "Know ... before Whom you will give justification (*din*) and reckoning (*cheshbon*)" (Avos 3:1). What is the difference between *din* and *cheshbon*? The Gr"a explains that *din* is punishment for the sin itself, while *cheshbon* is punishment for mitzvos which could have been performed or the Torah which could have been learned during the time spent doing *aveiros*. Nobody can have a claim against one who does not learn Torah because he was eating, sleeping, or earning a living - these are needs man has from the moment he is born. However, he is not obligated to sin - therefore when he sins he will also be held accountable for the Torah and mitzvos which could have been performed at that time. He has no excuse - why not learn Torah rather than speaking *avak loshon hara*?

There are other mitzvos *bein adam lachavero* we must be extra careful with such as *lo sikom* - you shall not take revenge, *lo sitor* - you shall not bear a grudge, *lo sisna es achicha bilvavecha* - "you shall not hate your brother in your heart, *ve-ahavta lere-acha kamocho* - you shall love your fellow as yourself.

It is told of Rav Nosson Adler zt"l that he would not give an *aliyah* to a person who did not strictly adhere to all aspects, even *hiddurim*, of the mitzvos that appeared in the *parsha* section about to be read. For example, in *Parshas Re-eh*, he would not give an *aliyah* in the section dealing with *shemittas kesafim* (a remission of loans at the end of seven years) to anyone who did not insist on writing a *prozbol* at the end of the sixth year in deference to the opinion of the Rosh who rules that a *prozbol* must be written prior to the start of the seventh year and not at the end (see Tur Choshen Mishpat 67:32 and Sm"a seif katan 53).

I can't imagine to whom he would give an *aliyah* for the section of *lo sikom*, *lo sitor*, or *ve-ahavta lere-acha kamocho*. He apparently must have had members of his community who were meticulous about these mitzvos. One of his well-known disciples was the Chasam Sofer. He must have had other disciples who were also *gedolim* whom he felt were careful regarding these mitzvos and worthy of receiving the corresponding *aliyos*. Being strict in mitzvos *bein adam lachavero* is much more difficult than being careful to write a *prozbol* prior to the onset of the *shmitta* year.

The mitzvos of *chametz* and *matzah* teach us that minor distinctions which people do not take seriously can sometimes spell the difference between eternal life in the Next World and *gehinom*, G-d forbid.

A mixture of food separated by strictly adhering to the dictates of *Hilchos Borer*: 1) with his hand, 2) by removing that which he wants from that which he does not want, and 3) for immediate use, can be used to fulfill the mitzvah of *oneg Shabbos*. However, separating these foods within the mixture improperly can make the person liable with death by stoning. This minute distinction applies to other *halachos* as well.

The difference between a woman being married or not can also be ever so slight. If one who performed the act of *Kiddushin* with something valued at slightly less than a *peruta*, his *Kiddushin* will not take effect. Similarly, when it comes to the mitzvah of *tefillin*, the difference between fulfilling the mitzvah and not only not fulfilling it but making a *beracha levatala* is also very minute.

I once spoke in shul and mentioned the requirement of eating a *kezayis* of *matzah* at the Pesach Seder within the period of time known as a *kedei achilas peras*. I was asked: "what would be if I were to eat approximately a *kezayis* within a *kedei achilas peras*?" I answered him that he would sit approximately in Gan Eden. I once explained to a group of schoolchildren that one who eats approximately a *kezayis* is likened to one who wishes to call someone whose telephone number is 1234567 and accidentally dialed 1234568. Not only did he come close but he even dialed a greater number than what was required. Even

so, he was unable to reach his destination - he must dial the precise number allotted by the telephone company. An approximation is not good enough.

### **BEING ENGROSSED IN THE WORDS OF TORAH**

- We have spoken about the importance of precision regarding fulfilling the *mitzvos* of the Torah. We can apply this idea with regards to learning Torah as well. The Yerushalmi (end of Berachos) writes that every form of idle talk is negative, with the exception of chatter in *divrei Torah*. Although it is not prohibited, it remains just that - chatter. A person will not become a *talmid chacham* or know how to determine the final *halacha* without delving into the *sugya*, understanding the *hava amina* and the *maskana*, understanding what is behind the opinions of Abaye and Rava and whose opinion is followed in the final analysis. The Torah is not "approximate". Chazal tell us regarding one who is not meticulous in analyzing the *halacha* until the very end - "a careless misinterpretation is considered tantamount to willful transgression" (Avos 4:13).

Meticulousness in *halacha* is of infinite value: "for G-d will judge every deed, even everything hidden, whether good or evil" (Koheles 12:14). The Gemara (Chagiga 5a) cites a few examples of just how strict a person's judgment can be. One example brought concerns a person who kills a louse in front of someone who finds it distasteful. The person who killed the louse had no intent to pain the other, he simply wanted to rid himself of lice, nevertheless he should have done so in a way which did not disgust his companion.

The Gemara (Berachos 18b) cites the case of Shmuel who once ascended to the heavens and saw his friend Levi (who had already died) sitting outside the Heavenly Yeshiva. Shmuel asked him why he was sitting outside and not inside among all the great *tzaddikim*. Levi responded that during the time that Rav Efes had been Rosh Yeshiva, he, Levi had learned *chavrusa* with R' Chanina. R' Chanina, who was a *gadol* and was not subordinate to Rav Efes, was learning outside. Given that Levi was R' Chanina's *chavrusa* the two learned together outside the Yeshiva (see Kesubos 103b). Although Levi meant no harm, Rav Efes was hurt by this. It was thus decreed that Levi remain outside the *Yeshiva Shel Maala* for the same number of days which he had remained outside Rav Efes' Yeshiva. He certainly was not guilty of *bitul Torah*, but he was punished for having insulted Rav Efes despite his noble intentions. Hashem is exacting with *tzaddikim* like a hairsbreadth.

Chazal teach us "whoever appraises his ways will merit to witness the salvation of HaKadosh Baruch Hu" (Moed Katan 5a) - a person who carefully weighs what to do and what not to do will merit seeing Hashem's salvation for His people and His Land, and the building of the Beis HaMikdash speedily in our day. Amen.

## Turn The Lights On

The Jewish nation is said to have been born at the time of Yetzia Mitzrayim, the prophet Yechezkel explicitly refers to this period as "the day you were born". Many of us tend to view the ten plagues as ten separate events each showing the power and brilliance of our G-d. I would like to suggest the ten plagues are a progression leading up to Makkat Bechorot. With that in mind we should not think that the exodus took place after the tenth plague, but specifically after Makkat Bechorot - the essence of the exodus was the firstborn of Egypt being smitten. Our birth as a people can therefore be said to take place within the context of Makkat Bechorot.



As a means of understanding this, we must point out that the idea of bechor - firstborn, is something very central in the Torah. We see Yaakov and Esav fighting over the birthright. Yaakov's house revolves around whether Reuven or Yosef are considered the firstborn. For those of us from Western culture it is hard to understand why one child appears to receive more than the other - he receives double the inheritance of the others, and he has the special mitzvah associated with him of *pidyon haben*. There is obviously something intrinsically different about the bechor than the others.

There ten plagues which many have said correspond to the ten sayings (*asara maamarot*) with which the world was created. If that is the case then there is a corresponding relationship between the two. Many have compared the ten plagues to the ten sefirot - supporting the idea that the makkot are a progression. It can be said that the ten plagues served the purpose of eradicating any false ideas associated with Egypt and revealing the world as it should be based on the ten sayings with which it was created. Creation had reached a certain level by ridding the world of the Egyptian culture which ruled at that time. Once these ten sayings have been revealed then the world is ready for the Ten Commandments. Had Klal Yisrael not received the Torah, the world would cease to exist, the existence of the world hinges upon Klal Yisrael receiving the Torah, as the *pasuk* states: "*im lo briti yomam valayla chukot shamayim vaaretz lo samti*" (Yirmiyahu 33:25). Without klal yisrael receiving the ten commandments there is no purpose to the ten sayings with which the world was created. In other words, Hashem is saying that He cannot give to the Torah to a world containing Egyptians and their culture.

You want the Torah? You must get rid of Egypt and let the world reach its ultimate destination. According to Chazal each of the plagues had two aspects - to destroy Egypt and to purify the Jewish nation. Let us look for a moment at the plague of darkness, by the same token one of the ten maamarot is "vayomer Elokim yehi or". What is light and what is darkness? Perhaps the plague of darkness is the darkening of other forces and the appearance of the light of the Torah - the Torah tells us that the Jewish nation had light, what does it mean they had light while the Egyptians did not.

Our Sages discuss the *pasuk*: "Woe to those who desire the day of Hashem: 'Why do you seek this day of Hashem? It is darkness and not light'" (Amos 5:18). Chazal see this as "An analogy of a rooster and a bat who were awaiting the light of dawn, said the rooster to the bat 'I am awaiting the light, because the light is mine (Rashi: I benefit from the light), but you, why do you want the light?'" (Sanhedrin 98b). The rooster loves the day, he can run, dance, jump, and break a few dishes (see Mishna Baba Kama 17a). What about the bat? He has no eyes! Even when day does arrive, he will not realize it! Why must he wait for light? On the contrary, the dark serves his purposes better than the dawn.

The *pasuk* is teaching us that in the End of Days the ultimate light which has been hidden since creation will be revealed. For one who has spent his life involved purely in pursuits of this world, that light will be darkness, while for one who has spent his life striving to grow higher and higher, he will feel the light. Chazal tell us that "love your fellow as yourself" is a great precept of the Torah. this defines the essence of Torah - worrying not about yourself but about others, your neighbor, your wife which is the ultimate expression of *bein adam lachavero*. Ultimately it expresses itself in trying to do for HaKadosh Baruch Hu. One who was egocentric and only cared about himself will see darkness in the end of day. Each plague against the Egyptians is a greater revelation. When we say that the Jewish people had light we mean that they saw the light.

The ultimate as we said was Makkat Bechorot. The Jewish people are referred to as *reishit*. What does a firstborn do? He transforms an individual into a father. Hashem therefore referred to Klal Yisrael as *beni bechori Yisrael* in Parshat Shmot. The Jewish nation is now revealing the true meaning and purpose of the creation - *Bereishit Bara Elokim*. Just as the child reveals the father's potential, the *reishit* of the Jewish

nation reveals what the world is about. We have turned Hashem into our father. Hashem first revealed Himself in the period of yetziat Mitzrayim. The forefathers each had their own personal understandings of His existence, but true revelation took place when we left Egypt. From that point onwards Hashem reveals Himself only through the Jewish nation and it will continue in this manner until the arrival of Moshiach. You want to see G-d in this world? Look at Am Yisrael. You hate the Jews? That means you hate Hashem. It was the smiting of the Egyptian firstborn associated with the forming of the nation of Israel that taught us and the world of what true bechora is - not the Egyptian one. The bechor who reveals what the world is about is not the Egyptian one.

In the End of Days it is not that the righteous will be rewarded with light and the evil will be punished with darkness. It will be the same light which for the righteous is light but for the wicked is darkness. A person who has the vessel for receiving the light, a vessel of Torah and mitzvot, will be able to receive the light. One who spent his life in other pursuits will not. Makkat Bechorot marked the collapse of any false ideas as to the purpose of creation.

It is interesting to note that until Parshat Bo which describes the final three makkot, the Torah has basically been a narrative. It is from this point on that the purpose of creation was revealed and any future narrative will be intertwined with mitzvot. The first mitzvah in the Torah given to the Jewish people as a nation is "hachodesh hazeh lachem", this month is for you. We are all familiar with the opening Rashi in Chumash who asks why the Torah did not begin here. The Jewish people have been compared to the moon. Hashem, as we mentioned, only reveals Himself in this world through the Jewish nation. Just as at night we do not see the sun on its own but only through the moon. In the End of Days that light will be revealed in all its glory on its own.

The moon has an approximate 30 day cycle, for the first 15 days it grows bigger then grows smaller until it vanishes. The fifteenth generation from Avraham was Shlomo HaMelech and the building of the Beit HaMikdash - the light was shining strongly. From the sixteenth generation it was downhill as the kingdom split into two. Finally the thirtieth generation marked the destruction. This is the meaning behind what we say in Kiddush Levana that we pray for the moon to remain complete. We pray for the speedy arrival of Moshiach in which the Jewish nation represented by the moon will remain strong and whole with the building of the Beit HaMikdash which will remain for eternity reflecting the light of Hashem in this world, not only through the Jewish nation but in all its glory.

### **Petuchei Chotam on Parshat Achrei Mot/Pesach**



Rav Chanan Bina will be teaching a passage from the sefer Petuchei Chotam each week on the parshat hashavua. The sefer was written by HaRav Yaakov Abuchatzzeira zt"l. Click [here](#) to listen.

### **Talk about talking (in shul)**

*Given that the subject of talking in Shul is a subject which is very close to the heart of our Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"a, we have decided to bring you excerpts of our rendered translation to the Sefer "Morah Mikdash". The Sefer is a collection of citations on the subject from many sefarim including the Zohar and Shulchan Aruch first printed in the year 5542 (229 years ago) and reprinted in 5743 (28 years ago).*



**#18**

The Shulchan Aruch rules (Yoreh Deah 246:17): "only divrei Torah may be spoken in a Beit Midrash, even when one

sneezes others do not wish him 'in good health' (*gezuntheit*). The Ta'z adds that we are already warned about the severity of the punishment for violation of this halacha, we must take great care to take this very seriously. How much greater care must we take to refrain from engaging in any idle conversation! One who increases the glory of Torah is honorable and praiseworthy.

## Dedications, Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List



[Poland Trip Gallery](#)

**DEDICATE**  
 YNA now offers the ability to be  
 Parnas Hayom and dedicate shiurim.  
 To sponser, please click Dedicate

### Mazal tov's

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh would like to wish a mazal tov to:

- [Yaacov](#) (Madrich, 5767) and Hila Prupis on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Hillel](#) Greene (5757) on his marriage to Rachel Federman.
- [Rabbi](#) Josh Lookstein (5749) on his marriage to Georgie Kleiman.
- [Shmuel](#) Stern (5764) on his marriage to Rachel Andron.
- [Naftali](#) Gidon (5768-69, Machal, 5771) on his marriage to Mia Goldsmith.
- [Eytan](#) Bar-Chama (5749) on his marriage to Katherine Gurman.
- [Rav](#) Yoel (Staff) and Shoshana Rackovsky on the marriage of their daughter.
- [Daniel](#) (YNA Administration) and Michal Rosenfeld on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Elliot](#) (5750) and Dafna Prince on the Bar Mitzva of their son Ezra Noam.

### Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • Michoel Pinchas ben Frachah            | • Matityahu Yaakov ben Gittel Rivka |
| • Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah            | • Ada Bat Miriam                    |
| • Rachel bat Chana                       | • Reuven ben Tova Chaya             |
| • Yehuda Pinchas ben Asna                | • Aharon ben Simah                  |
| • Sagit bat Esther                       | • Shayna bat Chava                  |
| • Fruma bat Ita                          | • Zev eliezer ben Chaya Shaindel    |
| • Chaya bat Grunia                       | • Avram Gershon ben Tzippa          |
| • Tamara Nechama bat Karmela             | • Freydil Tzivya Bas Rochel         |
| • Ester bat Chaya                        | • Ari ben Rivka                     |
| • Binyamin Yonatan ben Leikah            | • Yosef ben Golda                   |
| • Chaya Chana bat Alta Rivkah            | • Esther bat Brana                  |
| • Yosef ben Hilda                        | • Miriam bat Shulamit               |
| • Maron ben Hadas Esther                 | • Rivka Chava bat Rachel            |
| • Chaya Meira Mindel bat Chava Golda     | • Margalit Chaya bat Rachel         |
| • Chinoam Rina bat Avital Hoday-ya       | • David ben Leah                    |
| • Ditza bat Vardit Tali bat Devorah Bina | • Elizabeth bat Annette             |
| • Akiva ben Gittel                       | • Edmund Ben Nazira                 |
| • Marcel Ben Pninah                      | • Shmuel Chai Ben Hadassa           |
| • Evelyn Bat Dina                        | • Alyza Sarah Bat Yehudit           |

- Mordechai Eliezer Hacoheh ben Esther  
Miriam
- Inbal bat Nelya
- Avraham Elizar ben Chana Pesha



And of course we are always davening for the safe return of Gilad Shalit (Gilad ben Aviva)

[Submit Names](#) to the list.

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. **Are you visiting Israel?**- [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

**Shabbat Shalom,**  
Rav Bina,  
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh | Western Wall Plaza | One Hakotel Street | POB 32017 | Jerusalem | 91319 | Israel