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Parshat Kedoshim

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Everyone is invited to join us in Sderot

Monday 5 Iyar (May 9) The entire Yeshiva will be traveling to Sderot for what will begin as a Yom HaZikaron commemoration. As the sun sets, the Yom Ha'Atzmaut festivities, marking Israel's 63rd anniversary, will begin. The program includes a *sicha*, *tefilla chagigit*, a *seudah* together with the Hesder Yeshiva in Sderot, and dancing with local residents. Sometime during the night we will be returning to Yeshiva.



Rav Bina addresses the Sderot Yeshiva on Yom Ha'atzmaut in 5767. Also, check out how much fun we had [last year](#).

Tuesday 6 Iyar (May 10) - The morning of Yom Ha'Atzmaut will begin with a special *tefilla*, followed by special *shiurim*. In the afternoon we will be going to the sports complex in the Neve Yaakov section of Yerushalayim for our annual Barbecue and loads of fun. Alumni in Eretz Yisrael and their families are invited - please RSVP if you are planning to attend the festive meal in Sderot and/or the barbecue in Yerushalayim - dina@yna.edu.

The Start Of The New Summer Zman

In continuing our yearly custom, the Yeshiva will be switching to a new Massechet, which we hope to finish around the time of Matan Toratenu. This year we have chosen Massechet Makkot. With the skills gained from seven months of studying Massechet Buba Basra, our talmidim now have the analytical tools necessary to tackle this challenging massechet. By completing an entire massechet, we hope to have our talmidim leave the year with a sense of true Torah accomplishment. We plan to celebrate the event with a grand siyum during the yeshiva's final trip to the Golan Heights. We wish our talmidim success and growth in Torah and *yirat Shamayim*.



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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Kedoshim

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

Printer Friendly Sicha

Yom Kippur, Atonement, and Matan Torah



"LOVE YOUR FELLOW AS YOURSELF"

The Torah commands us: "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge against the members of your people, love your fellow as yourself" (Vayikra 19:18). In R' Nosson Adler's Shul, customarily, a person was not given an Aliyah to the Torah if he did not fulfill the Mitzvot contained in that particular section of the Torah. For example, when the section discussing Shmittat Kesafim was read (dealing with nullifying the right of a lender to collect a debt owed him at the conclusion of the Sabbatical year), R' Nosson Adler would insist that only someone who followed the opinion of the Rosh and would write his Pruzbul prior to the onset of the Sabbatical year could be called up. One who did not observe this stringency was not called up for that particular Aliyah in R' Nosson Adler's minyan. The same rule applied to other portions of the Torah.

I have always wondered whom he considered worthy of being called up when the portion of "ve-ahavta lere-acha kamocho" "Love your fellow as yourself" was read, for this is an extremely difficult Mitzvah to observe to the fullest. Being that he was a Kohen and therefore unable to receive that Aliyah himself, perhaps one of his students was honored with the Aliyah. One of the most famous of his students whom I am sure you have all heard of was the Chatam Sofer. When Acharei Mot and Kedoshim are read together, the Chatam Sofer being a Yisrael would have been able to receive this Aliyah. However, during years in which Acharei Mot and Kedoshim are read separately, such as this year, the Aliyah containing the pasuk "ve-ahavta lere-acha kamocho" forms the second Aliyah of Parshat Kedoshim and therefore must be given to a Levi. Perhaps R' Nosson Adler had other worthy disciples. Even if R' Nosson Adler had disciples who were able to properly carry out the dictates of this Mitzvah, it remains a very difficult Mitzvah to properly observe. Had the meaning of the Torah's words "as yourself" implied that we need only love someone who is precisely "as ourselves", this would not be as difficult a Mitzvah. This, however, is not the true interpretation of the pasuk, and it is

incumbent upon us to love even those Jews who are not like ourselves.

The Messilat Yesharim adds that to love someone "as yourself" should be taken literally - you must love everyone unequivocally, just as you would love yourself and not make excuses for not doing so. We know that we are obligated to love our fellow Jew, even more so if he observes Mitzvot, but sometimes we rationalize that he has faults that make it impossible to love him! Just as a person would not say about himself "I really should love myself but the fact is that I am not such a good person, I have certain negative character traits and there are many Torah prohibitions that I have transgressed, so I do not love myself so much", he should not say that about his fellow Jew. He is obliged to love him unconditionally. Although the halacha does list particular circumstances under which we are not obligated to love the other, it is not simply because he is not as big a tzaddik as Moshe Rabenu. Are you a tzaddik on the level of Moshe Rabenu? Yet you still love yourself! By the same token you should love your neighbor as well.

"You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge" are also very difficult Mitzvot to observe. Perhaps we can prevent ourselves from taking revenge, but from bearing a grudge? How can we erase what the other person did to us from our memories and hearts? This seems extremely difficult but it must certainly be possible, for otherwise the Torah would not have commanded us to observe these Mitzvot.

GOOD CHARACTER FOUNDATION OF TORAH

Rav Chaim Vital poses a well known question (see Shaarei Kedusha volume I, shaar 2): Why is there no explicit commandment in the Torah regarding Middot? A small number of these commandments are mentioned, for example: "you shall not hate your brother in your heart" (Vayikra 19:17), and "you shall love your fellow as yourself" (ibid. 18). In addition, the Gemara cites a source from the prophets for the prohibition against having too much "gaava", haughtiness. But regarding this and other character traits that we know to be both positive and negative Middot from the words of Chazal or by intuition, we find no mention of in the Torah. Why is this? R' Chaim Vital explains that Middot "are the principle preparations for the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvot" they are the introduction to and foundation of the Torah. In order for man to receive the Torah he must first possess good Middot. The Torah therefore cannot command us to be of good character, the good character must precede the Torah.

On the other hand, without the benefit of the Torah, we cannot properly develop our Middot "an unlearned person cannot be scrupulously pious" (Avot 2:5). An ignoramus, an am haaretz who has not studied Torah cannot be of exceptional Middot - the best he can (and must) do is to possess the basic character traits demanded of a human being prior to receiving the Torah. These traits, however, cannot compare to the good Middot of a Talmid Chacham. The Torah perfects man's positive attributes still more and helps them penetrate the soul. Chazal tell us that R' Akiva, before he embarked on a life of Torah study and became a Talmid Chacham, he would say: "who will give me a Torah scholar and I will bite him like a donkey" (Pesachim 49b). On the other hand, the Gemara informs us that even prior to his learning R' Akiva was already "modest and of fine character" (Ketubot 62b). How can we resolve these two seemingly contradictory statements? The "modest and fine character" here refers to that of an unlearned person. What is required of us, however, is to be of the "modest and fine character" of a Talmid Chacham. We must strive to become like R' Akiva after he became a Talmid Chacham not as he was before. Hashem did not give the Torah to the other nations because they do not possess the basic character required to receive the Torah. The Jewish people were given the Torah because they possess this level of Middot required to fulfill the dictates of the Torah.

YOM KIPPUR SERVICE IN HOLY OF HOLIES BASIS FOR ALL REPENTANCE

In most years Parshat Kedoshim is read together with Parshat Acharei Mot. Parshat Acharei Mot which we read on Shabbat HaGadol opens with the Yom Kippur service. Yom Kippur, of course, is a time to repent for any of the 613 Mitzvot we may not have observed properly, but perhaps an analysis of the Yom Kippur service will offer us insight into some of the principles of the Torah. The Torah describes for us three services that are carried out in the inner sanctum the Holy of Holies. The Torah begins by describing the bull whose

blood is sprinkled in the Kodesh HaKodoshim offered by the Kohen Gadol. In addition, there are the two goats, one whose blood is also sprinkled in the Kodesh HaKodoshim and the other which is sent off to Azazel. Then the Torah tells us about the incense brought into the Kodesh HaKodoshim. In actuality the incense offering precedes the bull and the goats.

Why did the Torah single these out to be the principle offerings of Yom Kippur? I believe they form the basis for all the repentance required of us on Yom Kippur. The bull offered by the Kohen Gadol is meant to remind us of the sin with the Golden Calf the first sin of the nation in the "bein adam laMakom" category following the giving of the Torah. The bull is specifically offered by the Kohen Gadol because it was Aharon, the first Kohen Gadol, who made the calf.

I. ATONEMENT FOR THE GOLDEN CALF - ROOT OF ALL SINS BETWEEN MAN AND G-D

It is not clear precisely what their sin was, especially in light of the fact that the Rishonim point out that the Jewish nation could not have been so foolish as to believe that a calf which was made only today took them out from Egypt three months previously. Only a fool would believe such a thing and Hashem would not have been so angry with a bunch of fools. The fact is that the generation in the dessert is praised by Chazal as being the "dor deah", the generation of knowledge, and on a very high level.

What then was going through their minds when they sinned? They miscalculated the exact day on which Moshe was due to descend from Har Sinai. The Satan took advantage of this and convinced them that Moshe had not returned because he had died (see Shabbat 89a and Rashi Shmot 32:1). The people were desperate. They needed to create some physical form in which to house the Divine Presence. Up until that point, Moshe Rabenu had filled that role for them - "Who caused His splendorous arm to go at Moshe's right side" (Yeshayahu 63:12). Moshe's passing meant the loss of the Divine Presence as well and they had needed a physical form which would embody it (see Kuzari 1:97). Am Yisrael believed that the Divine Presence had until now resided in Moshe, however "this man Moshe who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what became of him" (Shmot 32:1), therefore they needed another object that could house the Shchina.

Should the people not rather be praised for desiring a place for the Divine Presence to rest? Did Hashem not command Moshe to construct an edifice for the purpose of housing the Divine Presence? The Jewish people themselves proclaimed when they left Egypt "You will bring them and implant them on the mount of Your heritage, the foundation of Your dwelling-place that You, Hashem, have made - the Sanctuary, my L-rd, that Your hands established" (Shmot 15:17), clearly they knew there was destined to be a Mikdash for this purpose. Was it such a grave sin for the people to desire housing for the Shchina? They happened to choose the form of a calf for this purpose. This may not be what Hashem wanted, but should this incur Hashem's wrath?

WE CANNOT DICTATE TO HASHEM

Am Yisrael brazenly thought that they could dictate to Hashem where He must reside. The calf was not constructed as a possible option allowing Hashem the decision as to whether or not to utilize it. It was rather a demand that He must bring His Shchina down to their calf. There is no such thing as "must" when it comes to Hashem. This perhaps can explain why Hashem was angry with them. They should have understood on their own that one cannot coerce Hashem into doing anything. Not only does Hashem not want a calf, but Hashem had commanded Moshe "gods of silver and gods of gold shall you not make for yourselves" (Shmot 20:20) (the idea behind this prohibition is not to alter the shape of the Cherubim - see Rashi there). Perhaps the Jewish people had not yet heard this prohibition, for according to Rashi they did not know about it until Moshe Rabenu returned from Har Sinai. Even so they should have realized that there is nothing which can dictate where Hashem must rest His Shchina.

The Ramban tells us that they chose to house the Shchina in a calf because in the "maasei merkava" there

appeared an ox's face. Who are they to make such interpretations? While the commentaries explain why it was an ox's face, this had no bearing on them. That the face of an ox appears in the "maasei merkava" in no way implies that we can force the Divine Presence into the form of a calf. We can pray to Hashem for something specific, but we may not dictate what Hashem should do!

For this reason the halacha requires that the construction of the Beit HaMikdash must be carried out precisely the way Hashem dictated through His prophets and not through one's own derivations and understanding. Regarding the construction of the Beit HaMikdash, David HaMelech informed Shlomo that he had gathered gold, silver, and other materials necessary for the building of the Beit HaMikdash. He then handed over the plans for the construction of the Mikdash and told him: "everything is in writing, by the hand of Hashem, which He gave me understanding to know" (Divrei Hayamim I 28:19). The pasuk there does not inform us of the precise details of the construction, for it was given in a prophecy to Shmuel HaNavi who then transmitted this information to David HaMelech.

CONSULT WITH THE GEDOLEI HADOR

Had this been the nation's only violation in the chet haegel, Hashem perhaps would not have become so angry. Did they after all not have good intentions, surely their sin was unintentional? There is, however, another aspect to this sin that better explains Hashem's anger. Prior to Moshe's ascending Har Sinai, he had left explicit instructions regarding what to do in his absence - "behold! Aharon and Chur are with you; whoever has a grievance should approach them" (Shmot 24:14). If there is anything you do not understand, you must turn to Aharon and Chur - they are the gedolei hador who will take my place during my prolonged absence. If the Jewish people truly believed that Moshe was no longer alive, they should have turned to Aharon and Chur and said: "Esteemed Rabbanim, Moshe is gone, where must we turn now?" Aharon and Chur either would have responded using their great Torah wisdom - perhaps Aharon, Chur, Nachshon ben Aminadav, Yehoshua, or someone else would have been appointed as the new leader. In addition to being the Gadol HaDor, Aharon was a prophet and he could have inquired of Hashem as to the proper course of action. Hashem perhaps would have told him to tell the people "do not be afraid, Moshe Rabenu is still alive and he will return from Har Sinai tomorrow".

What did the people do? Rather than asking Aharon, they dictated to him what they thought must be done - "rise up make for us gods" (Shmot 32:1)! The pasuk describes the people's gathering around Aharon as "vayikahel haam AL Aharon" (Shmot 31:1), and not "EL Aharon". The expression "el Aharon" to Aharon would imply that they came towards him and gathered around him to hear what wisdom he had to offer them, while "al Aharon" implies a certain imposing of their will ON him. Chur in fact opposed their suggestion, and paid for it with his life (see Rashi Shmot 31:5). With this understanding, we can no longer suggest that their sin was unintentional. They were instructed to ask the Torah Sages for guidance. The fact that they neglected to do so and even dictated to them what they should do not to mention killing anyone who stood in their way, deems this sin as intentional.

The sin of the Golden Calf therefore represents the root of all sins between man and G-d, and the bull offered by the Kohen Gadol serves to atone for this.

II. ATONEMENT FOR THE SELLING OF YOSEF - ROOT OF ALL SINS BETWEEN MAN AND HIS FELLOW MAN

The root of sins between man and his fellow man is the selling of Yosef. We cannot understand how hatred for a brother could have been so intense that they wished at first to kill him and then to sell him into slavery, especially when speaking of the holy tribes. We can only interpret the incident based on what the Torah and Chazal tell us. It all began with jealousy, their father made a special fine garment for Yoseph which aroused a feeling of jealousy from the other brothers. Had the brothers realized that their judgment was being skewed by jealousy perhaps they would not have acted the way they did. They accused him of being a "rodef" (lit. one who pursues them) wishing to take away from them the sanctity passed down from their forefathers as

well as the Land of Israel. They saw that Avraham had left this legacy only to Yitzchak and not to Yishmael. By the same token, Yitzchak had left the legacy for Yaakov and not for Esav. They feared that Yoseph wished to be the only one to inherit Yaakov's spiritual legacy, as was already evidenced by his dreams, and that the rest of the brothers would become slaves to him as Yitzchak had said that Esav would become a slave to Yaakov.

It seems they were guilty of not fulfilling the injunction to "judge every man in a favorable, meritorious light" (Pirke Avot 1:6). They should have thought that perhaps Yoseph did not mean to harm them, perhaps he informed their father of what he perceived as wrongdoing in order that the father teach them how to do things properly. The sin of the brothers' misjudgment was what Yoseph was guilty of as well. He accused them of eating "eiver min hachai" and other things cited by Rashi, while they claimed that the meat they were eating was not classified as "eiver min hachai". Why did Yoseph not think for a moment that perhaps they were right and he was wrong? The commentaries discuss the precise point of contention, but it appears that both sides were guilty of not judging the other favorably. We read in Parshat Kedoshim: "with righteousness shall you judge your fellow" (Vayikra 19:15). If a person is not totally evil, but is righteous or even mediocre, we are obligated to judge his actions favorably even if on the surface they may appear questionable. Yoseph and his brothers each failed to do this.

The goats of the Yom Kippur service were chosen to atone for sins between man and his fellow man because in the Torah's description of the sale of Yoseph we are told "they took Yoseph's tunic, slaughtered a goatling, and dipped the tunic in blood" (Bereishit 37:32).

III. ATONEMENT FOR LOSHON HARA

Regarding the Ketoret, incense offering, Chazal tell us "What does the incense atone for? For the sin of 'loshon hara', let something that is offered in private come and atone for an action committed in private" (Yoma 44a). I believe that the Ketoret atones for Yoseph's role in the dispute with his brothers, for Yoseph's having spoken loshon hara about his brothers eventually lead to their selling him into slavery.

One of the Tefillot we recite on Yom Kippur declares: "for You are the Forgiver of Israel and the Pardoner of the tribes of Yeshurun". HaGaon HaRav Yoseph Chaim Sonnenfeld zt"l interprets this in the following manner: "For You are the Forgiver of Israel" refers to the chet haegel where the Jewish people exclaimed: "this is your god, O Israel" (Shmot 32:4). This is the root of all sins between man and G-d (bein adam laMakom). "The Pardoner of the tribes of Yeshurun" refers to the selling of Yoseph. The sale of Yoseph is the root of all sins "bein adam lachavero" - between man and his fellow man. As we mentioned, the entire Yom Kippur service asks for Hashem's forgiveness in sins bein adam laMakom and bein adam lachavero.

YOSEF - REMEMBERS BUT DOES NOT TAKE REVENGE

In spite of what we may say regarding Yoseph's guilt in this incident, I believe it is he who serves as the classic example of fulfillment of "you shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge". How does a person attain such a level? So many terrible things were done to him - his brothers at first wished to kill him, they then threw him into a pit filled with snakes and scorpions, they then sold him into slavery and he eventually ended up in jail. Can we imagine a person having gone through all those trials and tribulations yet bearing no grudge? Yoseph did not forget for a moment what had been done to him - "I am Yoseph your brother - it is me, whom you sold into Egypt" (Bereishit 45:5). It was because Yoseph did not forget what had transpired years earlier that the brothers feared his taking revenge following their father's passing: "Yoseph's brothers perceived that their father was dead, and they said, 'perhaps Yoseph will nurse hatred against us'" (Bereishit 50:15). Yoseph, of course, had no intention of bringing any harm on his brothers he remembered everything but was not about to act in response to this memory.

The Torah relates that when Yoseph revealed his true identity to his brothers he said: "it was not you who sent me here, but Hashem" (Bereishit 45:8). What did he mean when he said that they did not do it? Does

the Torah not tell us that they were the ones who sold him? What Yoseph was saying is: anything that happened to me was not through your doing. You may have carried out the actual act, but the moving force was not you. You do not have the power to sell or not to sell, to kill or not to kill. Hashem runs the world and He decides who is to be imprisoned and who is to be thrown into a pit. If Hashem did it then it must be for the good - "whatever the Merciful One does He does for the best" (Brachot 60b).

In the case of Yoseph it is clear that it was all for the good for he eventually became viceroy in Egypt. However, we do not always see the good in all that happens to us yet we must believe that it is all for the best. There is no reason to ever become angry at someone and therefore no reason to take revenge or bear a grudge.

AM YISRAEL - ONE BODY - ONE UNIT

Yoseph's statement provides us with another reason why he did not anger and why there is no room for revenge or bearing a grudge: "I am Yoseph your brother" (Bereishit 45:4). The word for brother "ach" is from the same root as "echad" (the root is the letters "aleph" and "chet"). We are one body, one unit - there is no revenge to speak of. Any grudge I have against you is only against myself. The Yerushalmi provides the following explanation for the prohibition of "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge against the members of your people" (see Nedarim 9:4). If one were to hold a piece of meat in one hand and a knife in the other, and rather than cut the meat, he accidentally cut his hand, will he then transfer the knife to the injured hand to take revenge upon the healthy hand? Both hands belong to the same person! The one who caused the damage is the one who is the victim. Can one take revenge and bear a grudge against himself? Can a person after such an incident suddenly declare: "let my right hand forget its skill" (Tehillim 135:5)? He will continue to wash and care for his right hand as he did before. The brothers are all sons of Yaakov "all sons of one man are we" (Bereishit 42:11) - any harm you brought upon me, is like one arm harming the other. There is no one to take revenge against.

Yoseph is teaching us that the Jewish people are all one body and thus one cannot speak of revenge between one body part and another. R' Moshe Kordevero (see Tomer Devorah 1:4) uses this idea to provide the following explanation for Chazal's words: "kol Yisrael areivim zeh bazeh" "all Jewish people are responsible for one another" (Sanhedrin 27b). To be "areiv" implies to be intertwined with the others. Each Jew has within him a spark of every other Jew. We are one body. If the left hand was to hurt the right hand, or the right hand were to hurt the left, there is no one to be angry with. Is there jealousy among our various body parts? When there is hard work I use my hands, when there are distances to journey I use my feet, when there is delicious food available, I eat with my mouth. Is this justice? Is this a fair distribution of tasks? It is not the hands that work, nor the feet that walk and not the mouth that eats. They are all part of one body, the body functions as one complete unit - IT works, walks, and eats. The body parts are the organs set aside carrying out these various tasks - they cannot be interchanged with each other. The entire Jewish nation is one individual, we are all intertwined.

WORKING ON MIDDOT - PREPARATION FOR MATAN TORAH

We find ourselves in the midst of the days between Pesach and Shavuot as we count the days towards Matan Torah. These are also days in which we mourn the passing of the students of R' Akiva. Chazal tell us they died because "they did not accord each other mutual respect" (Yevamot 62b). We can prepare for Matan Torah by strengthening our love for our fellow Jew.

The exact nature of what they did wrong is not clear but in the Gemara we find one terrifying example of their not according each other mutual respect. Yehuda ben Nehemiah, one of the students of R' Akiva, had a dispute with R' Tarfon regarding a halachic issue. R' Yehuda ben Nehemiah went on to disprove R' Tarfon's view. R' Yehuda ben Nehemiah was overjoyed. Here he was, a young prodigy of R' Akiva and he actually "defeated" the revered sage R'Tarfon. R' Tarfon was older and wiser and according to one opinion he was even the Rebbe of R' Akiva (see Ketubot 84b). A mere student of R' Akiva disproved his Rebbe's Rebbe! He

was so happy at this that his face radiated with happiness: "The face of Yehuda ben Nehemiah brightened with joy" (Menachot 68b). On seeing this R' Akiva remarked: "Yehuda your face has brightened with joy because you have refuted the sage; I wonder whether you will live long" (ibid.). Immediately thereafter, the Gemara relates: "R' Yehuda b'Rebbi Ilai said: 'This happened two weeks before the Passover and when I came up for the Shavuot festival I inquired after Yehuda ben Nehemiah and was told that he had passed away'". As R' Akiva had predicted, Yehuda ben Nehemiah did not live long, and he passed away shortly after this incident took place. (It appears that he was among the students of R' Akiva who died between Pesach and Shavuot).

How are we to understand this? What terrible sin did Yehuda ben Nehemiah commit? R' Tarfon asked a question, Yehuda ben Nehemiah provided the solution, what is wrong with this? He did not utter a single bad word against R' Tarfon, G-d forbid! What then is so terrible about the manner in which Yehuda ben Nehemiah acted? The answer is that the students of R' Akiva were of such high spiritual caliber that Hashem dealt strictly with them even to a hairsbreadth. Even this minor blemish in their character, the joy of victory that was apparent on the face of Yehuda ben Nehemiah, was enough to sentence him to death. How can you rejoice? Are you not sensitive to the embarrassment R' Tarfon feels at having a younger student of R' Akiva prove he knows more?

DERECH ERETZ KADMA LATORAH

It is therefore incumbent upon us to correct our middot prior to the Torah being given. Whatever we do not manage to rectify prior to Matan Torah, we must rectify on the heels of Matan Torah. Praiseworthy will we be if we manage to improve ourselves prior to Matan Torah, deeming us more worthy of receiving the Torah.

R' Yisrael Salanter zt"l once entered a Beit Midrash to find two students in the midst of a heated argument. One shouted "you fool, what you are saying shows that you are a total ignoramus!" R' Yisrael approached them saying "we are all obligated to learn Torah but this is not the way, a bit of derech eretz is called for". The following day R' Yisrael returned to the same Beit Midrash to find the students speaking to each other in a much more respectful manner: "it would appear that his honor is correct, I concede to his opinion". R' Yisrael said to them: "When I said that derech eretz is required it does not mean you are not obligated to learn. We all know that 'derech eretz kadma laTorah' 'derech eretz precedes the Torah' (Vayikra Rabba 9:3), but the derech eretz must be followed Torah learning. You have no right to agree to a 'pshat' you find incorrect simply out of derech eretz. If you disagree then you must voice your opinion, just be careful not to insult him in any manner".

To be ready to receive the Torah on Shavuot we must learn Torah and strive to uncover the correct "pshat", while at the same time have the necessary respect for our friends and colleagues.

Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Kenny Hirschhorn

We find ourselves in the middle of Sefirat HaOmer, days which should be of a Chol HaMoed nature highlighting the period between Pesach and Shavuot. Instead, the deaths of the Rebbe Akiva's students have transformed these into days in which we adopt certain mourning practices. The entire year we find commemorate the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash with certain practices of mourning. Chazal went even further and ordained that we remember the *churban* even at our happiest moments. Presumably, based on Berachot 13a which teaches us that later day troubles cause us to forget the earlier troubles, we have an obligation to recall the *churban* of European Jewry.



What exactly must we remember? We should keep in mind that in our world where G-d has given man free will, there is also great potential for evil - when a powerful leader threatens to destroy the Jewish people he should be taken seriously. Our response should be that if a single Jew is threatened then the entire Jewish nation is obligated to come to his aid. (Rav Soloveichik felt that American Jewry should "clop" an extra *al*

cheit for not placing enough effort in rescuing their fellow Jews during the Holocaust). We must also remember those Jews who bravely battled the Nazis, physically as well as spiritually, to protect the honor and dignity of Klal Yisrael. These people managed under the most horrific conditions to maintain their *tzelem Elokim* and helped others do the same, maintaining their relationship with the Creator. It is imperative that we remember and honor the lives of those who died *al Kiddush Hashem*.

At times it is easy to believe in G-d, but at times our faith is put to a greater test. However, we are taught: "a person is obligated to bless G-d for the bad just as he blesses G-d for the good" (Berachot 54a). We must not only sing when times are good - *lehagid baboker chasdecha* "to relate Your kindness in the dawn" (Tehillim 92:3), but also when things do not appear to be going as well - *ve-emunatcha baleilot* "Your faith in the nights".

Rav Soloveitchik says that when confronted with tragedy, our response should not be: why, but rather what can I, what must I, do now. The Jewish people's reaction to the decree of Haman was to accept the Torah wholeheartedly - *kiyemu vekiblu*. Many rebuilt their lives after the Holocaust, many Jews worked hard at building Yeshivot and communities. In fact there are more Yeshivot and more learning than ever before. Don't ask why, ask how - how can a nation that has been targeted for destruction so many times, manage to survive for so long? There is no plausible explanation other than the Hand of G-d.

Sociologists and historians are at a loss to explain the phenomenon that we have outlived all the mighty empires which have persecuted us and tried to destroy us. The Midrash Rabba cites a quote from the Roman Emperor Hadrian: "how great is the sheep which survives in the midst of seventy wolves." The Midrash continues with Rav Yehoshua's response: "how great is the Shepherd who safeguards them."

Petuchei Chotam on Parshat Kedoshim



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 following is from the Mahara"m Shiff (Parshas Vaeschanan): A new group of people have arrived who are in the habit of speaking in shul. Every Jew is aware of the severity of this prohibition. We find in the Zohar: "Whoever speaks in Shul, woe is to him, for he separates all worlds, he has no share in the G-d of Israel ..., even though he claims to believe in Hashem, he does not believe that He (Hashem) is in Shul, and he interrupts the praises of Hashem to carry on with his own conversations" (See Zohar Parshat Trumah 131b).

The Zohar is making three points: Such a person has separated himself - his soul does not cleave to the G-d of Israel, not to mention the rift which he has caused up above. The Zohar's second point is that one who speaks in shul has detracted from the honor of Heaven. In addition he has most likely missed out on the chance to answer Amen for he has not heard the end of the berachot. Even if he has heard the end of the berachot he is not aware on what he is answer amen. Furthermore, if there are not ten people answering amen during the repetition of the Shmone Esrei then all the *brachot* are *brachot levatala*. The reward for answering amen is great beyond measure: "open the gates so the righteous nation, keeper of the faith (*shomrei emunim*, same root as amen) may enter" - this is detracting from the honor of Heaven.

The third point the Zohar makes is that a person who speaks idle conversation in shul has no share in the G-d of Israel, he has shown that he does not believe that G-d is in the shul for otherwise why would he have even considered standing before the King of kings HaKadosh Baruch Hu in His own residence and not even be embarrassed to engage in idle conversation.

What should be instituted is levying fines against those who speak in shul, for as strange as it may seem they obviously have greater fear of fines than of heaven. If we can apply this principle to general areas of authority, how much more so can we apply this to forbidden conversation, loshon hara, and levity.

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

Visitors

The following people visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Gabriel Bernstein (5769-70)
- Abe Eisenstat (5748)
- Jackie Eisenstat (5750)
- David Golzman (5755)
- Burry Klein (5769-70)
- Tzuriel Merzel (5769-70)
- Paul Packer (5750)
- Jeffrey Socloff (5749-50)
- Avi Spindler (5768)
- Yehuda Spindler (5758)
- Jeremy Shapiro (5768-69)
- Eitan Kestenbaum (5767-69)

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:

- [Tzvi](#) (5755) and Devorah Harow on the birth of a baby girl, Nofet Maya.

Tehillim List

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

- Michoel Pinchas ben Frachah
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Rachel bat Chana
- Yehuda Pinchas ben Asna
- Sagit bat Esther
- Matityahu Yaakov ben Gittel Rivka
- Ada Bat Miriam
- Reuven ben Tova Chaya
- Aharon ben Simah
- Shayna bat Chava

- Fruma bat Ita
 - Chaya bat Grunia
 - Tamara Nechama bat Karmela
 - Ester bat Chaya
 - Binyamin Yonatan ben Leikah
 - Chaya Chana bat Alta Rivkah
 - Yosef ben Hilda
 - Maron ben Hadas Esther
 - Chaya Meira Mindel bat Chava Golda
 - Chinoam Rina bat Avital Hoday-ya
 - Ditzza bat Vardit Tali bat Devorah Bina
 - Akiva ben Gittel
 - Marcel Ben Pninah
 - Evelyn Bat Dina
 - Mordechai Eliezer Hacohen ben Esther Miriam
 -
 - Avraham Elizar ben Chana Pesha
- Zev eliezer ben Chaya Shaindel
 - Avram Gershon ben Tzippa
 - Freydil Tzivya Bas Rochel
 - Ari ben Rivka
 - Yosef ben Golda
 - Esther bat Brana
 - Miriam bat Shulamit
 - Rivka Chava bat Rachel
 - Margalit Chaya bat Rachel
 - David ben Leah
 - Elizabeth bat Annette
 - Edmund Ben Nazira
 - Shmuel Chai Ben Hadassa
 - Alyza Sarah Bat Yehudit
 - Inbal bat Nelya



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