Mussar Moment

This month’s special Mussar Message is brought to you by
Rabbi Yerachmiel Frank

There is a mishnah in Mesechet Avos Divrei Nosson that states “Do not distance yourself from something that doesn’t have a set limit or work that doesn’t have an end.” The Chofetz Chaim explains this statement based on the claim of the yetzer hara who claims “Is it worth doing Torah and mitzvos if they have no limit or end, and you won’t possibly be able to do every aspect?”

To this, the Chofetz Chaim brings an analogy from the daily activities in the world. Imagine someone sees a person running to to his job or business in order to make a living and says, “Where are you running? Do you think you will achieve great wealth like the rich people in the world?” Of course the answer is obvious — “Just because I will not become wealthy, shouldn’t I do whatever I can to earn a living for myself and my family?”

The Chofetz Chaim says that when it comes to Torah, mitzvos, and avodas Hashem, even if we will not become the biggest rabbi or tzadik, there is still tremendous rewards in The World to Come for every single mitzvah that we do.

This is a valuable lesson, especially at this time of the year, as we prepare for Rosh Hashana, the day of judgement. Rosh Hashana is the day where we are looking for merits that will tip the scale for a sweet and happy year.

(continued on next page)
LETTER: LAMED
NUMERICAL VALUE: 30
SPELLING: LAMED, MEM, DALET

The letter lamed has the numerical value of 30, and means to learn. The first student of Torah was Moshe who studied from Hashem, and he then taught the Torah to the Jewish people. These teachings of Moshe have been transmitted from teacher to student and parent to child from then until today. Moshe was the ultimate student, to study from G-d Almighty, and he was also the preeminent teacher, in essence the teacher of all Jews, of all generations. This can be seen in the numerical values of the letter. Lamed, with a numerical value of 30, plus all the numbers in its sequence equals the same numerical value as Moshe. (30+31+32+33+34+35+36+37+38+39 = 345) (משה — 40+300+5 = 345)
The letter lamed encourages us to follow in the footsteps of the greatest leader of all time, Moshe, and be a consummate learner, and at the same token, a superb teacher, passing on our knowledge and values to the next generation.

MUSSAR MESSAGE CONT.

for ourselves, families, communities, and Jews throughout the world, to recognize the preciousness of every fulfillment of the will of Hashem.

Rabbi Yerachmiel Frank has been with the St. Louis Kollel since its inception. He has distinguished himself in the Beis Medrash and the community as a highly regarded individual and is currently the Rosh Chabura of the Kollel. He is also the Chair of Talmudic Law & Tradition established in loving memory of Rubin Feldman by Mrs. Gloria Feldman and family.

Q
Does one have to deface dolls that he purchased for his children, so that they should not be mistaken for idols?

A
The Shulchan Aruch (YD 141:4) codifies the halacha that it is prohibited for one to make or purchase images of man. Nonetheless the Chochmas Adam (85:6) writes that nowadays it is permitted to own dolls. The rationale given is that, it is not common for an idol worshipper to serve a doll. The prohibition would still be in effect if it looks like an idol. (cf. Shu’t Oz Nirdbar who writes that it is considered a meritorious act to disfigure, even slightly) the doll.)

How is it possible that there could be three people davening in the same minyan and one answers amen 26 times to the chazzan’s repetition of Sh’mona Esrei, one answers 22 times and one only three?

Last week’s riddle: Which two healthy people do not sit on the floor or a low stool before chatzos on the 9th of Av?

Answer: The person that gets Hagbah during Shacharis and a sandek at a bris.

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