

ST. LOUIS  
**KOLLEL**

## Family TORAH JOURNAL

## PARSHA PERSPECTIVES RABBI TODD DAVIDOVITZ



"Forty lashes you should hit him..." This verse in our Parsha prescribes the atonement of lashes. The verse mentions forty (40) lashes. Yet, our sages tell us that the number of lashes given should be thirty-nine (39).

The *Maharal of Prague* (Rabbi Yehuda Lowey circa. 1525-1609) (Gur Aryeh, 25: 2,3) asks "if the Torah meant thirty-nine (39) lashes, why did the Torah say forty (40) (and not thirty-nine (39))?" The *Maharal* answers as follows:

Our Sages tell us that a fetus is formed and considered a fetus after forty (40) days following conception (see *Rashi, Bereishis, 7:4*). To that end, our Rabbis say that one who is expecting a child can pray that the baby should be of a particular gender before the 40th day from conception. However, if one prays after the 40th day, the prayer would be in vain (since the gender is already determined at forty (40) days). (See *Tractate Brachos 60a*).

Accordingly, the *Maharal* explains that the 40th day is the day that the *Neshama* (soul) enters the fetus. We are comprised of primarily two aspects; a physical (body) and spiritual (soul). If there are 40 days to form the fetus, and the soul is the most elevated part of the person, it is the "finishing touch." Therefore, it enters on the 40th day, as the final piece, after the physical is formed.

There is one more fundamental concept necessary to answer the original question. This concept is fundamental to Judaism, and is emphasized by the *Maharal* in various places. Any transgression that we do is only on account of our physical component, not our soul. Our soul's sole desire is to do the will of Hashem. It is our physical nature, that is the seat of our *Yetzer Hara* (evil inclination), that tempts us to sin. However, as long as the soul is one unit with the physical body it is judged together with it.

The *Maharal* therefore answers; the Torah prescribes forty (40) lashes corresponding to the days that a person is formed. It is only natural that a person who was formed for forty (40) days and sinned, should be lashed until each aspect of his being gains atonement. However, once the person received thirty-nine (39) lashes, his physical component (which is formed in 39 days) was purified. Once the physical component gains atonement, the soul no longer needs an atonement since the soul is incapable of sinning. Therefore, the Torah prescribed forty (40) lashes (since a soul that is connected to the sinning body is judged together with it), but once a person received

(continued on next page)

## MOMENTS OF GREATNESS



RABBI SHLOMO EISENBERG

One Shabbos morning, Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (1910-2012) found himself stuck in a hospital recuperating from a small procedure. Rav Elyashiv's family members arranged *minyanim* and for a *Sefer Torah* to be brought into his room for Torah reading, however, they were having trouble finding a suitable candidate who knew how to read that week's Torah portion. Finally, Rav Elyashiv's family members found Daniel, a young Yeshiva student, who was staying with his sick mother, to be the *Ba'al Koreh* (Torah reader). Daniel was extremely honored to be able to read the Torah for the great Torah leader of the generation. After reading the Parsha flawlessly, Rabbi Elyashiv gave Daniel and his mother a heart-warming blessing. When asked how he knew the Torah portion so well to read it flawlessly, Daniel explained that this had his Bar Mitzvah parsha, however, after all the practicing, he never had gotten a chance to read it. The morning of his Bar Mitzvah, it became clear that a terrible mix up had taken place, and another boy was also planning on *laining* (reading from the Torah) that week for his own Bar Mitzvah celebration. Daniel decided to be *mevater* (concede) on his own Bar Mitzvah in order to allow the other boy the opportunity. Although Daniel didn't read the day of his Bar Mitzvah, he merited to read that same parsha for the great Rabbi Elyashiv a few years later.

Can you imagine giving up on something you have been working on for months or years for someone else? That is true greatness!

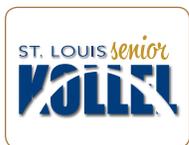


## UPCOMING WEEK'S SCHEDULE YEAR 3, WEEK 21 — BERACHOS 58A

Rabbi Jonny Fruchter, son-in-law of David & Jill Mogil  
R' Peretz Shlosberg

Maggid shiur for the Amud — R' Daniel Lefton

For more info or to sign up to get the weekly video shiurim, please contact Rabbi Yaakov Berkowitz



This week's Family Torah Journal is dedicated in memory of our dear friend and Kollel Partner,

**STAN JACOBS**

YEHOSHUA HENOCH BEN MOSHE ZALMAN

ZMANIM CANDLELIGHTING: 7:25 PM SOF ZMAN KRIAS SHEMA MA: 9:07AM GRA: 9:43 AM  
SHABBOS ENDS 8:27 RABBEINU TAM: 8:54 PM

## THE HARMONIOUS HOME RABBI GIDON NITSUN



In this week's parsha the Torah says, "When a man marries a new wife he shall not go out to the army nor shall it obligate him for any matter; he shall be free for his home for one year and he shall gladden his wife whom he married".

Rav Chaim Friedlander (1923-1986) asks, how can it be that a time when Klal Yisroel faces a crisis, with a state of war at hand and the men engaged in battle, the newly married man is exempt from the army? Not only does he not serve in active duty, he doesn't join the war effort in any way!

Rabbi Friedlander answer's that in fact the newly married man is not shirking his responsibility in the slightest way. Just as the soldiers are performing a crucial mission, so too, the husband is fulfilling a mandatory and holy function. He explains that just as those who are going out to battle are involved in the building and preservation of Klal Yisroel, so too, the newly married man is also involved in beginning a chain reaction which will ultimately result in the building and preservation of Klal Yisroel to an even greater extent.

During the first year of marriage, the husband and wife are meant to be building their relationship – forging a real and meaningful bond. Such a bond leads to a happy and vibrant couple and since happiness breeds happiness, such a couple will bring up happy children.

Happy children have an excellent chance, *b'ezras Hashem*, of becoming wholesome and G-d fearing adults (see *Sefer Hachinuch* 582) and raising children to be wholesome and G-d fearing adults is the greatest and most powerful way to ensure the growth and preservation of Klal Yisroel.

How is such a relationship built? We will address this question, *b'ezras Hashem* in the next column of "The Harmonious Home"

## PARSHA PERSPECTIVES CONT.

thirty-nine (39) lashes and his physical nature receives atonement, the soul does not need an atonement.

This teaches us an important lesson. No matter the depths a person has sunk there is always hope since we still possess a soul that is pure and impervious to sin. As we recite every day *Neshama shenasata bi tehorah hi* – "The soul that you gave me is pure."

Rabbi Todd Davidovitz was part of the Kollel team from 2004-2008. He is now the Associate General Counsel - Intellectual Property, for Anheuser-Busch.

## KOLLEL KASHA KORNER RABBI YAAKOV SILVERMAN

**What is the only letter of the Aleph Beis missing from bentching?**

**Last week's riddle:** How is it possible that there could be three people davening in the same *miyan* together and one answers amen 26 times to the *chazzan's* repetition of *Shemona Esrei*, one 22 times, and one only three?

**Answer:** *Rosh Chodesh* in Israel, where they say *Birchas Kohanim* (Priestly Blessing) every day. One person heard the 19 *brachos* of *Shemona Esrei*, the three *amens* in *ya'aleh ve'yavo* for *Rosh Chodesh*, and the four *amens* of *Birchas Kohanim*, one for the *bracha* and three for the verses, totalling 26. The next person answered 22 times because he himself is a *Kohen* and did not answer amen to the four of *Birchas Kohanim*, lowering his total to 22. The third person was the *chazzan* and he did not answer amen to any of the *brachos* of *Shemona Esrei* or *ya'aleh ve'yavo* but did answer three out of four of the *Kohanim's* *brachos* based on the ruling of the *Shaar Hatzion* (128:61).

## I DIDN'T KNOW THAT



RABBI YITZCHAK KOWALSKY

**Q** I am accustomed to kiss my *seforim* upon completing my learning from them. Today, with the convenience of Torah apps on my smartphone, I can now learn almost any Torah topic anywhere. Should I kiss my phone when I complete my learning from it?

**A** The custom to kiss *seforim* upon starting and ending learning is not only a sign of respect to the written word. The *Kaf HaChaim* (OC 155:12) quotes that kissing ones *seforim* before and after learning from them, is a *segula* to remember ones learning. Nonetheless it seems to be that this custom should not apply to digital screens. In *Shu"t Tshuvos V'Hanhagos* (3:326) Rav Moshe Sternbuch writes at length that words that appear on a digital screen do not have sanctity and therefore may be erased. Thus it would seem there is no reason for one to kiss his smartphone.

**Q** I enjoy singing "Lecha Dodi" at my own pace. Do I need to say "bo'ei b'shalom" together with the rest of the congregation?

**A** Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl (*Yeushalyaim B'Moadeha* – *Shabbos* Vol. 2 Pg. 159) writes that it is not necessary to say "bo'ei b'shalom" together with the congregation. Nonetheless, he continues, it is appropriate to turn around when everyone else is turned around. He quotes in the name of Rav Shlomo Z. Aurebach *zt"l* a reason for why it is our custom is to turn around and face west at the end of "Lecha Dodi." He explains that since the sun sets in the west, the new day – *Shabbos* – is starting in the west. Therefore we turn to greet the incoming day of *Shabbos*.

For final rulings please consult your Rav.



# Stan Jacobs

*Yehoshua Henoch ben Moshe Zalman*



*The Senior Kollel mourns the passing of one of its “founding fathers”, Stan Jacobs. Stan was not only a proponent of the idea of Senior Kollel, he was actively involved by dedicating his time and resources to ensure its success.*

*As a way of eternalizing his memory, and showing gratitude for his friendship, the Senior Kollel, led by Rabbi Nitsun, began learning one mishna a day. The learning should be uplifting for the neshama of our beloved friend*

**Stan, Yehoshua Henoch ben Moshe Zalman.**



Stan meeting Rav Chaim Kanievsky



## PIZZA NIGHT AT NUSACH HARI

This Sunday, August 26 — 5 to 7 pm

### ~ ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT PIZZA BUFFET ~

Pizza, pasta, salad, garlic bread, dessert, beverage!

Plus a movie for the kids. Place carry-out orders by 10 am Sunday morning. E-mail orders preferred to [jeff@nhbz.org](mailto:jeff@nhbz.org) or last resort, call 314-991-2100, ext. 2.

Pick up time for carry out is 4:30-4:45 p.m.

Food prepared under the supervision of Rabbi Ze'ev Smason.

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

THIS WEEK

AUGUST  
SUNDAY  
**26**



## Bread of Distinction — *Halachos of Pas Yisroel*

at the Aguda from 9:45-10:30 AM  
Given by Rabbi Yitzchak Kowalsky

THIS WEEK

AUGUST  
MONDAY  
**27**



in partnership  
with  
**U-City Shul**  
present...



## “Spirit of Shabbos”

Join Our Tomer Devorah Lunch & Learn Group  
with the incomparable Rabbi Gidon Nitsun  
Lunch at 12:30 PM — Class begins at 1 PM  
at U-City Shul, 700 North & South

No charge for tuna wrap lunch but RSVP required.

*Sponsorship opportunities available.*

Call 314 726-6047 or email [office@stlkollel.com](mailto:office@stlkollel.com) before 8AM to reserve lunch.

THIS WEEK

AUGUST  
THURSDAY  
**30**



## Tee Off With Torah and Turf™ at Topgolf

Thursday, August 30th starting at 7:30PM  
at Topgolf

16851 N. Outer 40 Rd, Chesterfield, MO 63005

**A TNT Pre-Registration Event**



SEPTEMBER  
SUNDAY  
**2**

&

SEPTEMBER  
MONDAY  
**3**



## “Deepening our Tefilla Experience”

*Rabbanit Yemima Mizrachi video shiur*

Sunday, Sept. 2 at 8:00 PM      Monday Sept. 3 at 8:00 PM  
Hosted by Mrs. Daniella Rosner      Hosted by Young Israel of St. Louis  
8310 Balson Ave.      8101 Delmar Blvd.

**Donation: \$5**

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