

TORAH SWEETS

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TZIPPORAH DEVORAH

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SUGARY SAYING OF THE WEEK with R'MENACHEM LOMNER

"It's praiseworthy to do a Mitzvah that you get embarrassed doing."

Our Parsha speaks about how Levi'im were initiated to their service in the Mishkan. During the process, Aharon picked them up and waved them like a korban (offering) is waved. This infuriated and deeply embarrassed Korach. Yet, the Torah says that "as Hashem said, so they did". Rashi says this highlights the praise for the Levi'im that they did exactly as they were told; no one prevented themselves from being waved. In some cases where we feel embarrassed doing something we know we are supposed to do, we should know that the praise will come if we follow through.

SHORT AND SWEET STORY OF THE WEEK with RABBI MORDECHAI LEVIN

One of the top students in the great Volozhin Yeshiva in Europe met a young lady and became engaged. Unfortunately, the marriage didn't last long, he divorced and returned to the yeshiva. Although worried about his prospects for another shidduch due to his divorce, he placed his full faith in Hashem. One evening, one of the Torah leaders of the generation came to Volozhin Yeshiva to look for a suitable boy for his wonderful daughter. He planned to speak to the Roshei Yeshiva, and have them recommend an excellent bochur. By chance, the kerosene that lit the lamps in the Bais Medrash ran out, and the new order of kerosene was first coming the next day.

The entire Bais Medrash was pitch black. Amazingly, the bochurim in the greatest Yeshiva in Europe sat in their places and continued learning from memory. Having no other choice but to wait for light, the visiting Talmid Chochom also sat down and began learning. He heard the sweet sound of learning near him, and realized that the one learning so beautifully must be a real star, for he was repeating pages and pages of Gemara, not making a single mistake, and all from memory! This man got so excited and decided that he must grab this young man for his daughter. With no other choice, he slid over to the bochur and asked if he was looking for a shidduch. The bochur replied that he was.

The man offered his daughter, the bochur accepted, and a shidduch was made! The couple lived happily ever after, and the young man became one of the great Roshei Yeshiva of his time. The Chosson constantly thanked Hashem, and pointed out how perfectly Hashem planned the shidduch. The kerosene ran out. His father-in-law couldn't meet with the Roshei Yeshiva, who would have told him that this young man was divorced and therefore he wouldn't have considered him for his daughter. He had not been asked if he was a bochur but rather if he was looking for a shidduch. All from Hashem! When Hashem decides that it is time for a shidduch, everything simply falls into place!

Comment: The Torah states that all of Klal Yisroel's travels in the Midbar were "Al Pi Hashem", based on the word of G-d (Bamidbar 9:18). Rashi explains the process: The "Anan", the Cloud protecting them rose, the trumpets and horns signaled that it was time to travel, and Moshe Rabbeinu announced it. Everything was based solely on Hashem's wishes and command.

PLUMBING THE DEPTH OF THE PARSHA with RABBI MOSHE KLEIN: BEHALOS'CHA – HOW TO MAKE EMOTIONS LIKE LOVE SUSTAINABLE

One night, Rivka Epstein found her husband, Shmuel, standing over their newborn baby's crib. Silently, Rivka watched him. As Shmuel stood looking down at the sleeping infant, she saw on his face a mixture of emotions: disbelief, doubt, delight, amazement, enchantment, skepticism. Touched by his unusual display of deep emotions, Rivka felt her eyes grow moist. She approached her husband. "A penny for your thoughts," she whispered in his ear lovingly.

"It's amazing," Shmuel replied. "I just can't see how anybody can make a crib like that for only \$39.95!"

Human emotions are powerful, as they have the ability to build relationships and help us live life in full color. However, the drawback of emotions is that they are unpredictable and often go rogue, shunning one's intellect and thinking ability and just going with the feel of the moment, even if it's not proper. Some unbridled emotions such as anger, jealousy, and passion can lead to some of the most terrible transgressions. That being said, how can we harness our emotions and maximize the power that they contain?

Our Parsha opens (Bamidbar 8:2) with Hashem commanding Moshe to "Speak to Aharon and say to him: 'When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah.' The next Pasuk (ibid. 8:3) writes that this is exactly what Aharon did. Rashi (ibid.) asks why is the Parsha dealing with the menorah juxtaposed to the Parsha dealing with the Nesi'im (tribe leaders)? Rashi answers that "when Aaron saw the dedication [offerings] of the Nesi'im, he felt distressed over not joining them in this inauguration, neither he nor his tribe. So, Hashem said to him, 'By your life, yours is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps.'"

The Ramban (Bamidbar 8:2) asks: didn't Aharon have many other offerings that he could have brought? After all, only he was able to bring the Ketores (incense), Minchas Chavitzim, and only he could do the service of Yom Kippur. Why was Hashem appeasing Aharon regarding not being able to bring this offering?

The Shem Mishmuel develops (from the Ramban in the Sefer Emunah U'Bitachon) an important concept for our daily lives. When a person experiences an emotion of love for Hashem, he has to substantiate that love by putting it into a Mitzvah; otherwise, the love will flutter away. As such, all the actionable Mitzvos exist so that they can bring out the love to Hashem. Karbonos comes from the word "karov" (which means to bring close) and this was the purpose behind the idea of a Mishkan.

Similarly, we find that a wedding is the inauguration of a relationship between two parties. The Shem Mishmuel writes that when a person puts on his Tefillin for the first time, there's a sense of excitement. After the sin of the Golden Calf, the love was even more pronounced after Hashem had forgiven and re-accepted them. This is why the princes had this dedication; they wanted to put the love into action. When Aharon saw he wasn't able to put that love into action, he was distressed. While he had plenty of holy Mitzvos he could do, Aharon didn't have a Mitzvah to memorialize that love.

As such, Hashem gave Aharon the Mitzvah of lighting the Menorah. The flame of the Menorah flickers every single second, which represents the flame of a person and that newfound love a person can have for his Creator. Rav Moshe Shapiro, ZT"L, explains that although the flame always looks the same, it is burning oil every single second and is being rejuvenated all the time. The same goes for a person who may look the same, but in reality, has the ability to rejuvenate his love for Hashem. For that reason, the light symbolizes the constant ability to renew love. A person has to always find ways to exhibit their love for Hashem.

The Shem Mishmuel brings down that Shabbos is like a Menorah. The same way that we have three days before Shabbos (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) and three days after Shabbos (Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday), there are three lights on either side of the center candle. The week is a representation of the way a person is supposed to be. The Shem Mishmuel explains that every single week, creation is renewed. The Ohr Hachaim Hakodesh (Bereishis 2:3) states that all Creation can only sustain until Shabbos, but the holy seventh day has the ability to renew it. We all want to connect to Hashem; Shabbos allows us to renew that love and connection.

Sometimes we get lost in the days of life and at other times, get preoccupied with Mitzvos and Ma'asim Tovim. Yet, occasionally we forget about the positive Mitzvah of loving Hashem. As we said, love is an emotion that we cannot fully express without action. We see from the Shem Mishmuel that one has to constantly renew that love using the power of Shabbos and the power of Mitzvos. When one puts on Tefillin and davens Shemone Esrei, one can think "I love Hashem." When one learns Torah or does Chesed, if they do it with the thought that they love Hashem, they put the love into action and make that love last longer.

BEHALOS'CHA – THEY RESTED, THEY TRAVELED

One theme that is very prevalent in this week's Parsha is traveling. The Torah teaches that when the cloud lifted off the Mishkan the camps prepared to travel, and when the cloud rested, the nation camped. In the midst of the discussion, a section of the Torah is separated from the rest by a pair of backward *nuns*. There are different opinions as to why this was set up that way.

Rashi is of the opinion (Bamidbar 10:35) that the entire bracketed section has been moved from another location in the Torah. The **Maharal** (in the Gur Arye) elaborates: the place for the description of the moving of the Aron is not here between the moving camps, but previously when we learned of the flags dancing through the wilderness. After all, the Aron is a flag; it is not a camp. The Maharal makes an interesting assertion regarding which Aron is under discussion. Earlier, the Torah made reference to the Aron traveling ahead of the camp to help scout locations for resting.

Rashi says this is the Aron that goes out to war with the soldiers. At first glance, this information seems to be extraneous. Nobody asked which Aron is being discussed. However, the Maharal explains that there are two Arons that travel with the camp. One was made by Betzalel and one was made by Moshe with his own hands after he shattered the first set of Luchos. Both have pieces of the shattered luchos. When the broken pieces of the luchos made by Hashem are moved into one of the Arons, they still fall back into the other.

As such, it turns out that the Aron made by Moshe with the new luchos in it and bits of the broken ones also has the greatest power. Everything moves with purpose - the camps in the desert mirroring the hosts above. The bracketed section concentrates on the movement of the Aron suddenly as a surrogate for the tribes of Israel. If this were a musical composition, it would be the solo. Which Aron is moving remains unclear, but when it stops, the masses of people, clouds, and ministering angels stop with it. When it moves, it stirs thousands and tens of thousands of people.

The Maharal says these are the twenty-two thousand levi'im and they complete the pattern. The Shechinah (Divine Presence) moves on high with twenty-two thousand camps of attending malachim. Israel moves in concert with the movement above. When the Shechinah is ready to rest, the entire assemblage prepares for repose, the tent of the Mishkan is unfurled, the levi'im move into possession, and then the Shechina prepares to rest in her position among Bnei Israel, in the dwelling place that was built for her.

HALACHA QUESTION OF THE WEEK with RABBI BINYOMIN RADNERPESACH SHEINI – SECOND CHANCES: WHO GETS A SECOND CHANCE?

In this week's Parsha (Bamidbar 9:7) we find that a year after the Exodus from Egypt, Hashem instructed the Jewish people to bring the Pesach offering on the afternoon of the 14th of Nissan. However, some Jews had become ritually impure by no fault of their own and were thus unable to participate in the Korban Pesach. They approached Moshe and Aharon and asked why they should be deprived of the opportunity to present the Pesach offering.

The Gemara (Sukkah 25a) says these Jews were impure with being *Tamei Meis* – the impurity that comes from handling a corpse. In fact, this is one of the sources where the Gemara derives that one who is involved in a Mitzvah is exempt from performing another Mitzvah. The Gemara brings three opinions on why they were impure from a corpse:

1. Rabi Yosi Haglili says they were transporting the coffin of Yosef Hatzaddik from Egypt through the desert to the Land of Israel.

2. Rabi Akiva says these men were Mishael and Eltzafan who removed the remains of Nadav and Avihu from the Sanctuary after Nadav and Avihu were punished by being burned by Heavenly fire.

3. Rabbi Yitzchak says that they were impure from *Meis Mitzvah*. Although normally a *Meis Mitzvah* refers to an abandoned corpse that has no one else to bury it, **Rashi** and **Tosafos** both explain that here the term is used in a more general sense to refer to their close relatives whom they had to bury. In response to the inquiry of these great men, Hashem instructed Moshe Rabbeinu about the Parsha of Pesach Sheini wherein one who is unable to fulfill Pesach Rishon due to being impure or far away, is able to bring a Korban Pesach on Pesach Sheini one month after *Pesach Rishon*.

In fact, Rashi says that this Parsha should theoretically have been given over by Moshe Rabbeinu when the rest of the Torah was given to *Klal Yisroel*. Nonetheless, it was postponed until this time in order to give credit to those who initiated and did not want to be left out of the Mitzvah of Korban Pesach. They asked for a second chance and they got it. *Megalgalin Zechus Al Yidai Zakai* – Hashem arranges good things to happen to come about through good and deserving people. *Wishing everyone a wonderful and healthy summer!*

 Summary: We are currently discussing Nekiyus in interpersonal relationships and last week we started discussing the sin of Avak Lashon Hara - the dust of evil speech and we mentioned how sometimes people hint at something or make a comment in a way that can be interpreted negatively and how we must be careful to avoid any such talk.

The Ramchal summarizes: *"The general principle is that the evil inclination has many ways. Any words which could potentially lead to damage or shame to one's fellow whether the words are uttered in his presence or not is included in the sin of evil speech, which is hated and despised before G-d, and which the sages said (Gemara Arachin 15b) 'whoever speaks evil speech is as if he denied Hashem'".* (Mesilas Yesharim, Chapter 11)

Why is saying the words of Lashon Hara akin to denying Hashem? Rabbeinu Yonah (Sha'arei Teshuvah 3:200) says this refers to someone who speaks Loshon Harah without restraint, adding that this kind of person does serious damage to the reputations and careers of others, which is serious wickedness. He adds that no one would wantonly do such wickedness unless he is completely in the grip of his Yetzer Hara and has cast off the yoke of Heaven from himself, which is denying Hashem's existence.

The **Rabbeinu Yonah** (quoted in the Way of the Upright) adds that those who speak Lashon Hara freely tend to adopt the attitude that while their actions must conform to Hashem's will, speech is their own domain and exempt from any of His strictures. That amounts to a denial of His jurisdiction, which extends over all that He created.

The Ramchal concludes his discussion on this topic: *"and it also says (Tehillim 101:5) 'He who slanders his neighbor in secret, I will cut him down.'*" (ibid. Chapter 11)

Rabbi Avigdor Miller, ZT" L, explains that Hashem will make the life of a Lashon Harah speaker shorter. If one keeps Hashem in mind at all times, it will be an effective strategy to keep one away from this sin. Rabbi Miller also suggests the following deterrent: Imagine that the person about whom we are speaking was present; what would his or her reaction be to our words?

At the end of the day, Lashon Hara is a never-ending battle that we must constantly wage so long as we live amongst people. There is no way for a person to be successful without constant reminders of the severity of this sin, which can only be accomplished by learning the Halachos (laws) about it. The **Chofetz Chaim**, ZT" L, put out several Sefarim on *Shemiras Halashon* (guarding one's tongue), which have been translated and elucidated for the masses and are a must-learn.

To be continued next week, *B'Ezras Hashem*.

SUGAR RUSH with RABBI ELI REIT
MITZVAH # 30 – THE REMOVE THE ASHES FROM MIZBEACH

It is a Mitzvah for a Kohen to remove the ashes from the Mizbeyach each day. This service is referred to as *terumas hadeshen*. It is necessary for the Torah to stress this Mitzva, as people generally would be reluctant to perform work that does not appear to be chashuv (dignified), such as removing ashes, which is a form of dirt.