



BS"D

To: parsha@parsha.net
From: cshulman@gmail.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON DEVARIM – TISHA B'AV - 5778

In our 23rd year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@yahoo.com Please also copy me at cshulman@gmail.com A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net> It is also fully searchable.

Sponsored anonymously in memory of
Chaim Yissachar z"l ben Yechiel Zaydel Dov

To sponsor a parsha sheet (proceeds to tzedaka) contact
cshulman@parsha.net

<http://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/jewish-columns/the-aveilus-of-tisha-bav/2018/07/19/>

The Aveilus Of Tisha B'Av Week

By Rabbi Raphael Fuchs - 7 Av 5772 - July 25, 2012

One may not perform several actions during the week in which Tisha B'Av falls. This is referred to as shavua she'chal bo. For example, one may not take a haircut or wash his clothing (Ashkenazi Jews are forbidden in these actions prior to the week of Tisha B'Av in accordance with the ruling of the Ramah). The Mechaber (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 551: 4) writes that in a year when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos and is pushed off to Sunday (as it does this year) there is a machlokes as to whether there are any prohibitions during the week before Tisha B'Av. The Mechaber seemingly sides with the view that there are no halachos of shavua she'chal bo in such circumstances.

Many Achronim explain that the dispute is based on the understanding behind the establishment of the fast of Tisha B'Av. The Gemara in Ta'anis 29a says that the Beis HaMikdash was lit close to the end of the ninth day of Av and continued burning throughout the tenth day of Av. Reb Yochanan said, "Had I been in the generation wh Tisha B'Av was established, I would have established it on the tenth day of the month since the majority of the Beis HaMikdash burnt on that day." The Gemara says that th Rabbanan who established the fast on the ninth day of the month did so because they felt that it was better to establish the fast day on the day of the troubles' onset.

Based on this, they explain that the first opinion holds that there is no shavua she'cha bo in a year when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos and is pushed off to Sunday because th Rabbanan only argued that, when possible, the fast should be established at the onset—the troubles. However, when it is not possible to fast on the ninth day of Av (i.e., when it falls out on Shabbos), they would agree with Reb Yochanan's view that the fast should take place when the majority of the Beis HaMikdash burnt - namely on the tenth day of Av. Based on this, the week that precedes Tisha B'Av is not the week when the fast falls out, since in a year like this year we fast on the tenth day of the month (Sunday) —which is the beginning of the following week.

7/16/2018 The Aveilus Of Tisha B'Av Week I The Jewish Press - JewishPress.com I Rabbi Raphael Fuchs I 7 Av 5772 — July 25, 2012 I JewishPres...

the halachos of shavua she'chal bo apply, since Tisha B'Av falls out during that week -namely on Shabbos.

This permits us to explain another mach/okes, the one between the Mechaber and the Ramah (554:19) regarding whether one must keep aveilus betzina (hidden aveilus, i.e. marital relations) on Tisha B'Av that falls on Shabbos. The Mechaber says that one may have marital relations on the ninth day of Av when it falls out on Shabbos. The reason: The fast was primarily established to be on the tenth day, and the ninth day is not a fast day at all. Therefore, the Mechaber holds that one need not keep any aveilus betzina on the ninth day. But the Ramah argues that this is forbidden and that one must keep aveilus betzina since the Rabbanan established Tisha B'Av to always be on the ninth day of Av - even when one cannot fast.

There is one problem, however, with this suggestion. Why does the Mechaber say that, when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos and is pushed off to Sunday, there is a leniency

regarding one making a bris milah? In siman 559:9, the Mechaber writes that one who makes a bris milah on a Sunday Tisha B'Av (that really fell on Shabbos) does not hav to fast and may wash his body. In contrast, one must fast and may not wash his bod making a bris milah on the regularly scheduled day of Tisha B'Av. If we explain that t Mechaber is of the opinion that when Tisha B'Av falls out on Shabbos and is pushed o to Sunday (making Sunday the actual day of the fast, and thus Tisha B'Av didn't fall i the prior week), permitting one to have marital relations on Shabbos, why is there an leniency or discrepancy regarding the fast on Sunday?

Rabbi Raphael Fuchs

Rabbi Fuchs learned in Yeshivas Toras Moshe, where he became a close talmid of Ray Michel Shurkin, shlit"a.

While he was there he received semicha from Rav Zalman Nechemia Goldberg, shlit"a. He then learned in Mirrer Yeshiva in Brooklyn, and became a close talmid of Ray Shmuel Berenbaum, zt"l. Rabbi Fuchs received semicha from the Mirrer Yeshiva as well. After Rav Shmuel's petira Rabbi Fuchs learned in Bais Hatalmud Kollel for six years. He is currently a Shoel! Umaishiv in Yeshivas Beis Meir in Lakewood, and a Torah editor and weekly columnist at The Jewish Press.

7/16/2018 VaYigdal Moshe on Tisha b'Av - Jewish Holidays

<https://www.ou.org/holidays/fast-of-tisha-bav/vayigdal-moshe-tisha-bav/>
ORTHODOX UNION FAST OF TISHA B'AV

VaYigdal Moshe on Tisha b'Av Seichel and Beis HaMikdash

Chazal say that someone who has deiah it is as if the Beis HaMikdash was rebuilt in his days (Sanhedrin 92a). How are we to understand this? Why is having deiah likened to the Beis HaMikdash? We find a similarly emphatic statement in Nedarim 41a: one who has deiah has everything and one who is lacking deiah, what does he have?" The fact that Chazal are telling us that without deiah one has nothing means that we really ought to try and understand what deiah is. Regarding Betzalel (Shmos 31:3) we find that Hashem gave him three things: chochmah, tevunah, and daas. Rashi explains there that chochmah, is the raw knowledge that one is taught by others, and tevunah is what one is able to derive on one's own from that which he was taught. The understanding he gains of what he learned by dint of his efforts to comprehend it well. Accordingly, daas is the finished product. The wisdom that is ready for practical implementation. Rashi also says that daas is ruach hakodesh. Are these two completely different explanations? The first approach seems to pin daas as the final product of a person's intellect,

whereas the ruach ha'kodesh approach seems to be a matter of Divine inspiration that is not within the bounds of human intellect. However, it really isn't two different approaches. Rabbeinu Yonah writes in Shaarei Teshuvah (1:10) that the Creator has blown into us a "living soul which is wise of heart and possessed of solid intellect". The intellect, then, is the expression and manifestation of the nishmas chayim, the neshamah that Hashem bestows upon us. The neshamah is our direct connection to the Creator, because it – more than any other facet of creation – is the most direct and refined vehicle of the revelation of Godliness in the world. The ruach ha'kodesh and the seichel are really the same, because the intellect is the expression and manifestation of the neshamah which is our direct and most powerful connection to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. There is a pasuk in Shir HaShirim (4:4) that says, "Like the tower of Dovid is your neck", and Chazal tell us that this is an allusion to the Beis HaMikdash. And why is the Beis HaMikdash compared to a neck? Because the neck serves as the connecting bridge between the spiritual head of the body and the lower, physical part of the body. So too, the Beis Ha'Mikdash is that which connects Shamayim and Aretz as we see in the dream of Yaakov avinu. The ladder was firmly anchored in the ground but it reached all the way up to Shamayim. The Rav Moshe Twersky HY"D August 10, 2016 7/16/2018 VaYigdal Moshe on Tisha b'Av - Jewish Holidays

<https://www.ou.org/holidays/fast-of-tisha-bav/vayigdal-moshe-tisha-bav/> 2/5 lower part of the ladder is on the earth side, and the upper part of the ladder on the Heaven side. And what was in the middle? Rashi (Breishis 28:17) explains that the middle of the ladder was directly corresponding to the location of the Beis Ha'Mikdash. Because the Beis Ha'Mikdash – which is where we are able to fully serve Hashem and connect to him – is the connecting bridge between Shamayim and Aretz. Now we understand why deiah is like the Beis HaMikdash, because it is through our seichel that we come to know and connect with Hashem and thereby build the connection between Shamayim and Aretz. (From the notes of Rav Eliezer Neihaus)

~~~~~ Shavua Shechal Bo When Tisha B'Av Falls on Shabbos

The Tur (Orach Chaim 551) brings varying opinions regarding the status of the week preceding Tisha B'Av when it falls on Shabbos. Although the minhag of Ashkenazim is to refrain from laundering (or wearing freshly laundered clothes) beginning from Rosh Chodesh Av, and from haircuts beginning from Shiva Asar b'Tamuz, this was adopted as a custom in addition to the basic enactment that Chazal mandated. Chazal's enactment is only on the actual week of Tisha B'Av – this is called shavua sheh'chal bo. Regarding the halacha of that basic enactment, there is a difference of opinion regarding when Tisha B'Av falls out on Shabbos. The first opinion that the Tur brings is that when Tisha B'Av falls out on Shabbos, there is no shavua sheh'chal bo. Since, explains this opinion, the fast is postponed to Sunday, you cannot call the preceding week the week in which Tisha B'Av falls. And insofar as the following week is concerned (from Monday and on), that's already after the fast which definitely does not have any restrictions of laundering or haircutting. However, continues the Tur, the Sefer Ha'Mitzvos says that the accepted practice when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos is to indeed treat the preceding week as shavua sheh'chal bo and to refrain from laundering and haircuts. The straightforward understanding of the first opinion, which is based on the words of the Ran and the Rosh, is that they do not accept this statement of the Sefer Ha'Mitzvos. They hold that when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos, there is no shavua sheh'chal bo; period. Let's try to understand what may be the underlying reasoning for this. The prohibition of not laundering or taking haircuts on the week of Tisha B'Av is an expression of aveilus, mourning. The question we can ask, though, is how do we classify this aveilus requirement: is it an independent, self-contained requirement of aveilus over the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash – distinct from the aveilus of the actual day of Tisha B'Av – or is it merely an

extension, adjunct, and lead-up to the full-fledged aveilus of Tisha B'Av? It would seem that the Ran and the Rosh understood the enactment of shavua shechal bo according to the latter proposition. Namely, that the prohibitions of shavua shechal bo are not an independent unit of aveilus, rather they are just an extension of the aveilus of Tisha B'Av itself. Obviously, it is the week-unit that connects the days preceding Tisha B'Av to Tisha B'Av, and that is why those days of the same week can be infused with an extension of Tisha B'Av's aveilus. However, if Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos – which of course cannot have any aveilus (at least open displays of aveilus) – and is pushed off to the following Sunday, then there is nothing to connect the days of the preceding week to Tisha B'Av, and the aveilus therefore cannot be extended to them. The Sefer HaMitzvos, on the other hand, seems to hold like the other approach – that shavua sheh'chal bo is not an extension of Tisha B'Av's aveilus; rather, it is its own, independent unit of aveilus. And its only connection to Tisha B'Av is in terms of determining which week is deemed shavua shechal bo. Accordingly, the fact that there is no aveilus on the ninth day of Av when it falls on Shabbos is immaterial. The week preceding it is still the week preceding it, and it is that week which is assigned the status of shavua sheh'chal bo. (From the notes of Rav Yehudah Eisenstein)

~~~~~ Heter of a Baal Bris to Eat When Tisha B'Av Falls on Shabbos

When Tisha B'Av falls out on Shabbos and the fast is nidcheh, postponed until Sunday – and there is a bris on that day – the parents of the baby, the mohel, and the sandak are all allowed to eat (after Mincha) as they are all designated as "baalei ha'bris"(Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 559:9, and Mishnah Berurah 36). We see from this that when the fast is nidcheh, it is not as stringent. However, it is important to understand the precise parameters of this leniency. The Tur quotes the source for this halacha: such a thing actually happened once with Rabbeinu Yaavetz, and he ate after Minchah. As the source for what he did, he pointed to the Gemara in Eruvin 41a that says the following. "Said Rabbi Elazar bar Tzadok, I am from the descendants of Sanah ben Binyamin. One time, Tisha B'Av fell out on Shabbos and the fast was postponed until Sunday. We started off fasting, but we did not complete the fast, because that day was our Yomtov." In the time of the Beis HaMikdash, various families would donate wood for usage therein on a rotation basis. This was called korban eitzim. The day for the family of Sanah ben Binyamin to bring the korban eitzim was the tenth of Av, and it was thus their personal Yomtov. What we see from this statement of Rabbeinu Yaavetz is that a personal Yomtov – such as the day of bringing the korban eitzim or the baalei bris when there is a bris milah – has the power to override a postponed Tisha B'Av fast. In the later Poskim, we find leniencies for ill people, nursing mothers, and the like when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos and the fast is postponed to Sunday, but in the Rishonim we do not find any mention for that type of leniency as it is of a totally different category. The only thing we find is, as we said, this concept that a personal Yomtov overrides a postponed fast of Tisha B'Av, but not more than that. 7/16/2018 VaYigdal Moshe on Tisha b'Av - Jewish Holidays <https://www.ou.org/holidays/fast-of-tisha-bav/vayigdal-moshe-tisha-bav/> 4/5 (From the notes of Rav Yehudah Eisenstein)

~~~~~ Motzei Tisha B'Av

The Tur and Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 558) bring down that, because the majority of the Beis Ha'Mikdash burned on the tenth of Av, it is appropriate to refrain from eating meat and drinking wine the day after Tisha B'Av. The Rama says that the minhag of Ashkenazim is to refrain until midday, but no longer. Although the Mishnah Brurah cites the Achronim who followed in the footsteps of the Maharshal to forbid bathing and haircuts as well, in the Biur Halachah he quotes other Poskim who point out that the fact that the Tur, Shulchan Aruch, and Rama did not make any

mention of such a thing clearly indicates that they held that the only thing we refrain from on the tenth of Av is meat and wine, but bathing and haircuts are totally permissible. Of course, the question is why the differentiation? My grandfather, Rav Yosef Dov Ha'Levi Soloveitchik zt"l explained that the prohibition of eating meat and drinking wine following Tisha B'Av is akin to the halachah of an onein, someone whose close relative just died. An onein is forbidden from partaking of the meat of korbanos, and this prohibition includes the night following the burial. Only consumption of meat and wine has a connection to this, whereas bathing and haircuts has no association with this whatsoever. (From the notes of Rav Yehudah Eisenstein)

Taanis vs. Aveilus

The Ramban holds that the prohibitions of bathing and anointing begin immediately following the seudah hamafseket despite the fact that it is still permissible to drink and eat (this shitah of the Ramban is not brought l'halachah in the Shulchan Aruch or Mishnah Berurah). Why is that? The answer is that the prohibitions of Tisha B'Av are divided into two main categories: aveilus and taanis. A fast-day is always a specific, calendar day. As such, there wouldn't be any reason for the prohibitions of eating and drinking to begin before that day actually commences. However, insofar as the aveilus component of the day is concerned, that can begin even before the actual day starts, like the Rambam says that already from the seudah ha'mafsekas we are in a state of "meiso mutal lefanav, when the deceased is lying before him". Another difference between aveilus and taanis is the prohibition of washing only the hands, face, and feet as well as washing with only cold water. That's only a function of the fast-day status, because aveilus does not forbid those things. 7/16/2018 VaYigdal Moshe on Tisha b'Av - Jewish Holidays <https://www.ou.org/holidays/fast-of-tisha-bav/vayigdal-moshe-tisha-bav/> 5/5 © 2018 Orthodox Union | All Rights Reserved Now, in general, the Rambam and Ramban have a difference of opinion regarding when the aveilus status commences for one who has lost a close relative. The Ramban holds that the aveilus status begins immediately, whereas the Rambam holds that it only begins following the burial. The Ramban holds that it is the relative's death that is the obligating catalyst of aveilus, whereas the Rambam holds that it is the burial that is the obligating catalyst of aveilus. With this in mind, we can better understand the Ramban's statement that immediately following the seudah ha'mafsekas one may not bathe or anoint. During the seudah ha'mafsekas, we already feel the destruction of the Beis Ha'Mikdash, it is akin to one whose deceased relative has just died and is lying before him. And that, according to the Ramban, is what marks the beginning point for aveilus. Accordingly, immediately following the seudah ha'mafsekas, the aveilus prohibitions of bathing and anointing come into effect. However, there is a kashya on this understanding of the Ramban: if it is true that the Ramban holds that the aveilus status begins immediately following the seudah ha'mafsekas, then it should also be prohibited to learn Torah (because that prohibition is also a function of aveilus), but the Ramban makes no mention of that?! Furthermore, he explains the commencement of the bathing and anointing prohibitions in such a way that implies that learning Torah is still permissible. He says that the reason one may not bathe or anoint after the seudah ha'mafsekas is that the pleasure and benefit will carry on into Tisha B'Av. Tzarich iyun.

(From the notes of Rav Yehudah Eisenstein) Provided courtesy of VayigdalMoshe.com

<http://www.aish.com/h/9av/oal/96779149.html>

ABCs of Tisha B'Av & the Three Weeks
Jun 20, 2010 | by Rabbi Shraga Simmons
The Jewish national period of mourning.
» Click here for the complete Tisha B'Av section «

View overview video: Crash Course on Tisha B'Av

The "Three Weeks" between the 17th of Tammuz and the Tisha B'Av have historically been days of misfortune and calamity for the Jewish people. During this time, both the First and Second Temples were destroyed, amongst other tragedies.

These days are referred to as the period "within the straits" (bein hametzarim), in accordance with the verse: "All her oppressors have overtaken her within the straits" (Lamentations 1:3).

During this time, various aspects of mourning are observed by the entire nation. We minimize joy and celebration – no weddings are held, we do not listen to music, nor are there haircuts or shaving. The expressions of mourning take on greater intensity as we approach the day of Tisha B'Av.

Since the attribute of Divine judgment ("din") is acutely felt, we avoid potentially dangerous or risky endeavors.

On Shabbat during the Three Weeks, the Haftorahs are taken from chapters in Isaiah and Jeremiah dealing with the Temple's destruction and the exile of the Jewish people.

Agonizing over these events is meant to help us conquer those spiritual deficiencies which brought about these tragic events. Through the process of "teshuva" – self-introspection and a commitment to improve – we have the power to transform tragedy into joy. In fact, the Talmud says that after the future redemption of Israel and the rebuilding of the Temple, these days will be re-dedicated as days of rejoicing and festivity.

The story is told of Napoleon walking through the streets of Paris one Tisha B'Av. As he passed a synagogue he heard the sounds of mourning and crying. "What's this all about?" Napoleon asked. An aide explained that the Jews were in mourning the loss of their Temple. "When did this happen?" Napoleon asked. The aide replied, "About 1700 years ago." Napoleon said, "Certainly a people which has mourned the loss of their Temple for so long, will merit to see it rebuilt!"

Seventeenth of Tammuz

The beginning of a 3-week period of mourning is the 17th of Tammuz, a fast day commemorating the fall of Jerusalem, prior to the destruction of the Holy Temple.

On the 17th of Tammuz, no eating or drinking is permitted from the break of dawn until dusk. (Should the day coincide with Shabbat, the fast is delayed until Sunday.)

Five great catastrophes occurred in Jewish history on the 17th of Tammuz:

=====

Moses broke the tablets at Mount Sinai – in response to the sin of the Golden Calf.

The daily offerings in the First Temple were suspended during the siege of Jerusalem, after the Kohanim could no longer obtain animals.

Jerusalem's walls were breached, prior to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE.

Prior to the Great Revolt, the Roman general Apostamos burned a Torah scroll – setting a precedent for the horrifying burning of Jewish books throughout the centuries.

An idolatrous image was placed in the Sanctuary of the Holy Temple – a brazen act of blasphemy and desecration.

The Nine Days

The period commencing with Rosh Chodesh Av is called the "Nine Days." During this time, a stricter level of mourning is observed, in accordance with the Talmudic dictum (Ta'anit 26): "When the month of Av begins, we reduce our joy."

During this time the additional "signs of mourning" include abstaining from meat and wine (except on Shabbat) and from doing laundry or wearing

freshly laundered clothes (except on Shabbat). We also do not bathe for pleasure, though it is permitted to bathe in cool water in order to remove dirt or perspiration. For more details, see "The Three Weeks."

Tisha B'Av – Ninth of Av

The intensity of mourning reaches a peak on Tisha B'Av, five national calamities occurred:

During the time of Moses, Jews in the desert accepted the slanderous report of the 12 Spies, and the decree was issued forbidding them from entering the Land of Israel. (1312 BCE)

The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar. (586 BCE)

The Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans. (70 CE)

The Bar Kochba revolt was crushed by Roman Emperor Hadrian. (135 CE)

The Temple Mount was plowed under, and Jerusalem was rebuilt as a pagan city.

Other grave misfortunes throughout Jewish history coincided with the Ninth of Av, including the expulsion from Spain in 1492, the outbreak of World War One in 1914, and the mass deportation of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942.

During the late afternoon prior to Tisha B'Av, it is customary to eat Seudah Hamaf-seket – a meal consisting only of bread, water and a hard-boiled egg. The food is dipped in ashes, symbolic of mourning, and eaten while seated on the ground. (The rules are somewhat different when Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbat or Sunday.)

Sundown marks the commencement of Tisha B'Av, where no eating or drinking is permitted until nightfall the following evening. It is also forbidden to bathe or wash, wear leather shoes, or engage in marital relations. We also do not learn Torah, except for texts relevant to Tisha B'Av and mourning – e.g. the book of Lamentations and Job, and certain sections of the Talmud (including the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza).

The Book of Eicha (Lamentations), Jeremiah's poetic lament over the destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple, is read in the synagogue as part of the evening service. Special "Kinot" (elegies) are also recited, both at night and during the day.

Other mourning practices include sitting on a low chair (after midday, a regular chair permitted; see "Laws of Shoes and Chairs"). We also minimize business and leisure activities.

Following Tisha B'Av, all normal activities may be resumed, except for the following which are delayed until midday of the 10th of Av, because the burning of the Temple continued through the 10th of Av: haircuts, washing clothes, bathing, listening to music, and eating meat and wine.

For more details, see "Tisha B'Av"» Click here for the complete Tisha B'Av section «

About the Author

Rabbi Shraga Simmons is the co-founder of Aish.com, and co-author of "48 Ways to Wisdom" (ArtScroll). He is Founder and Director of Aish.com's advanced learning site. He is co-founder of HonestReporting.com, and author of "David & Goliath", the definitive account of anti-Israel media bias. Originally from Buffalo, New York, he holds a degree in journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, and rabbinic ordination from the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem. He lives with his wife and children in the Modi'in region of Israel.

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com

from: Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com>

reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com

subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

My Opinion THE ABSENCE OF CIVILITY

Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog

There was a time, well within recorded memory, when political differences and legislative proposals that people had could be discussed and decided with a modicum of civility and even courtesy. That seems not to be true anywhere in the world any longer. Here in Israel we are accustomed to bitter politics and a great deal of personal venom. Yet, somehow this pales in comparison with the current political climate in the United States.

The catalyst for all of this has been the election of Donald Trump as president. However the underpinnings of hate and vitriol all have been in the making for many decades. Fueled by ideology and the certainty of beliefs, encouraged by people who make a living out of rabble rousing, this situation approaches a dangerous one. Violence is never far from the surface and in the society where there are more guns than people, the domestic situation can readily deteriorate.

American democracy has been the strongest form of democracy in world history. However, the United States once fought a bitter and protracted civil war that killed over 600,000 of its citizens. As President Lincoln himself put it in his remarkable second inaugural address: "Both sides prayed to the same God for victory and each was convinced of the righteousness of its cause." The same can be said of much of the political dispute currently wracking the American public. And, what happens in the United States has consequences here in Israel as well.

The great Rabbi Naphtali Zvi Yehuda Berlin in the introduction to his commentary to the Torah points out that the basis for the destruction of the Second Temple was the baseless hatred that existed between scholars and different sections of the Jewish people at that time. He points out that the underlying cause for this baseless hatred was the inability to discuss and disagree on issues in Jewish life in a sensible and civil manner.

Rather, the contending parties resorted to name-calling and even demonization of their ideological opponents. Those that disagreed with one side were immediately labeled by them as heretics and nonbelievers. Such an attitude inevitably leads to personal and eventually baseless hatred. This was the main reason why the Jews were unable to successfully resist the Romans. The Temple was destroyed and our long exile amongst the nations of the world began.

The lack of civility in public discourse, the personalization of disagreements with others and vehemence of partisanship over all else creates a society consumed by hatred of others that will eventually morph into self-hatred as well. The hallmark of all totalitarian states is the demonization and eventual destruction of all those that do not agree with the stated policies and worldview of the state itself. One need only view the wreckage of the 20th century and its wars of extermination in order to realize the danger that begins with the lack of civility in political and even religious issues and discussions.

Our religious world suffers from these deficiencies in a very intense manner. One of the hallmarks of the great men of the Mishnah and the Talmud was how they tolerated each other personally even though they may have strongly disagreed on matters of law and principle.

Shamai and Hillel disagreed on three matters of Jewish law. Their disciples in later generations disagreed on 312 matters of Jewish law. Yet we are told that in spite of these strongly held views and disagreements both groups tolerated each other and were willing to hear and sometimes even adopt their opponents' viewpoint.

It is this nobility of spirit and selflessness that allows these two groups to march in unison throughout Jewish history till this very day. Politicians and communal leaders make their living off of the differences – many times minor ones – that exist between groups in society. It is those differences that justify their presence in leadership positions. However, for the good of the

society similarities should be emphasized and differences minimized and managed.

When the sole purpose of remaining in power is paramount then differences are not only pointed out and sometimes even manufactured, these differences very soon sink to the level of incivility. From there it is a very short road to bitter dispute, demonization of the others and even to violence and the shredding of the fabric of the very society that these types of leaders claim to guide and protect.

Shabbat shalom

Berel Wein

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com

from: Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com>

reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com

subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Weekly Parsha DVARIM

Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog

In summing up the story of the Jewish people, from Egyptian slavery to the eve of their entry into their promised homeland, our great teacher and leader Moshe minces no words. He reminds the people of Israel of their shortcomings and of their transgressions during the 40 years that he has led them. There is very little bitterness in his narrative but rather just the damning truth of hard facts and known circumstances.

Though this fifth book of the Bible will contain many commandments and legal matters in it, the overall message of the book is one of historical perspective – of the past and of the future, of the weaknesses and foibles of the people and of their greatness and search for spirituality and holiness. The rabbis taught us that it is better to hear criticisms and chastisement from Moshe who loves us, then compliments and blandishments from Bilaam, who essentially hates us.

The truth is that all of us find it difficult to accept criticism easily and coolly. Our ego flares up and we immediately build up a wall of resentment and excuses in order to deflect the criticism leveled against us. But that is certainly a self-defeating mechanism that only reinforces our shortcomings and prevents us from taking the necessary steps to bring about self-improvement. The Talmud itself bemoans the fact that the diminution of the generations has left us with a society that finds it difficult to accept criticism, and a lack of people who can administer criticism correctly. That certainly seems to be the case in our world today as well

The reading of the first chapter of the prophet Isaiah, from which this Shabbat derives its name –Chazon - is a strongly worded indictment of the Jewish society in first Temple times and provides the background as to why destruction and exile followed. The prophet will complain later that the people were not attentive to his words and in fact inflicted physical harm upon him for having the temerity to address them in such a fashion.

The great men of Mussar over the past two centuries have placed a greater emphasis on being able to hear the opinions and criticisms of others. Needless to say, this attitude did not prove to be overly popular even amongst religious Jews. Yet, it is abundantly clear that having a closed mind and deaf ears leads to great societal problems, both personal and national.

I would say that, in my opinion, it is one of the more serious failings that exists in our attitudes and behavior patterns. Smugness and self-righteous contentment are truly enemies of progress and spiritual advancement. The Lord Himself, so to speak, asks of us to come, debate and discuss behavior and problems directly with the Almighty. But the fear of criticism and the lack of the ability to truly digest such criticism prevents many such a discussion or debate from somehow taking place. A little less ego and a lot more humility and attentiveness to others would certainly stand us in good stead.

Shabbat shalom

Rabbi Berel Wein

<http://www.dailyhalacha.com/>

Rabbi Eli Mansour

Halachos of the Three Weeks and Tish'ah B'Av dailyhalacha

8032. Special Halachos for Shabbos which is the Ninth of Av - and the Tisha B'Av fast is observed the next day, on Sunday.

1. Although one normally should not study Torah on erev Tisha B'Av after Chatzos (except for Torah portions permitted on Tisha B'Av itself) when erev Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos one should fulfill his regular Shabbos Torah study, however, it is customary not to learn Pirkei Avos after Chatzos. Shulchan Aruch w/Mishnah Berurah 553:2

2. The usual Seudah Mafsekes is replaced with a regular Seudah Shlishis of Shabbos at which one may eat meat and drink wine and eat any foods one desires. One may eat the meal with the family at one table, however, one should not invite guests unless one regularly has guests for Seudah Shlishis. One may conclude the meal with a Zimun as always. One must be careful to conclude the meal before sunset/Sh'kiah. One should not say that he is eating to have strength for the fast, and one may not take a pill that makes it easier to fast, because one would be preparing on Shabbos for Sunday which is not permitted. One may sing zemiros. Shulchan Aruch w/Mishnah Berurah 552:10, Shmiras Shabbos Kehilchasa 28:77, Igros Moshe 4:112

3. If one completed the 3rd seudah before sunset and said Birchas Hamazon one may eat and drink until sunset without making any t'nai (condition). Sha'ar Hatziyun 553:7

4. One may sit on a chair until nightfall.

Shmiras Shabbos Kehilchasa 62:88

5. No preparations for Tisha B'Av may be made on Shabbos. One may not bring Tisha B'Av shoes or Kinos to shul on Shabbos even if there is an eruv. Therefore, it is advisable that one should bring these items to shul before Shabbos.

Shmiras Shabbos Kehilchasa 28:77

<http://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/jewish-columns/rabbi-lord-jonathan-sacks/the-effective-critic/2018/07/19/>

The Effective Critic (Devarim 5778)

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

The first verse of Devarim, the fifth and culminating book of the Torah, sounds prosaic. “These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan—in the wilderness, on the plain opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahav.” There is no hint of drama in these words. But the sages of the Talmud found one, and it is life-changing. What is odd in the verse is the last place-name: Di-zahav. What and where is this place? It hasn’t been mentioned before, nor is it mentioned again anywhere else in Tanakh. But the name is tantalizing. It seems to mean, “Enough gold.” Gold is certainly something we have heard about before. It was the metal of which the calf was made while Moses was on the mountain receiving the Torah from God. This was one of the great sins of the wilderness years. Might the enigmatic mention of a place called “Enough gold” have something to do with it?

From these clues and cues, the sages inferred a remarkable drama. This is what they said:

Moses spoke audaciously [hiti'ach devarim] towards Heaven . . . The school of R. Yannai learned this from the words Di-zahav. What do these words mean? They said in the school of R. Yannai: Thus spoke Moses before the Holy One, blessed be He: “Sovereign of the Universe, the silver and gold [zahav] which You showered on Israel until they said, ‘Enough’ [dai], was what caused them to make the calf . . . R. Hiyya bar Abba said: It is like the case of a man who had a son. He bathed him and anointed him and gave him

plenty to eat and drink and hung a purse around his neck and set him down at the door of a house of ill-repute. How could he help sinning?[1]

^p^p
Moses, in this dramatic re-reading, is portrayed as counsel for the defence of the Jewish people. Yes, he admits to God, the people did indeed commit a sin. But it was You who provided them with the opportunity and the temptation. If the Israelites had not had gold in the wilderness, they could not have made a golden calf. Besides which, who needs gold in a wilderness? There was only one reason the Israelites had gold with them: because they were following Your instructions. You said: "Tell the people that every man is to ask his neighbour and every woman is to ask her neighbour for objects of silver and gold" (Ex. 11:2). Therefore, do not blame them. Please, instead, forgive them.

This is a wonderful passage in its own right. It represents what the sages called *chutzpah kelapei Shemaya*, "audacity toward heaven." [2] (We tend to think of *chutzpah* as a Yiddish word, but it is in fact Aramaic and comes to us from the Babylonian Talmud). The question, though, is: why did the sages choose this passage to make the point?

After all, the episode of the Golden Calf is set out in full in Exodus 32-34. The Torah tells us explicitly how daring Moses was in prayer. First, when God tells him what the people have done, Moses immediately responds by saying, "Lord, why should Your anger burn against Your people? ... Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that He brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'?" (Ex. 32:11-12). This is audacious. Moses tells God that, regardless of what the people have done, it will be His reputation that will suffer if it becomes known that He did not lead the Israelites to freedom, but instead killed them in the desert.

Then, descending the mountain and seeing what the people have done, he does his single most daring act. He smashes the tablets, engraved by God Himself. The audacity continues. Moses goes back up the mountain and says to God, "These people have indeed committed a great sin. They have made themselves an idol of gold. But now, please forgive their sin – but if not, then blot me out of the book You have written." (Ex. 32:31-32). This is unprecedented language. This should be the passage to which the sages attached an account of Moses' boldness in defence of his people. Why then attach it here, to an obscure place-name in the first verse of Deuteronomy, where it is radically out of keeping with the plain sense of the verse. [3] I believe the answer is this. Throughout Devarim Moses is relentless in his criticism of the people: "From the day you left Egypt until you arrived here, you have been rebellious against the Lord... You have been rebellious against the Lord ever since I have known you." (Deut. 9:7, 24). His critique extends to the future: "If you have been rebellious against the Lord while I am still alive and with you, how much more will you rebel after I die!" (Deut. 31:27). Even the curses in Deuteronomy, delivered by Moses himself, [4] are bleaker than those in Leviticus 26 and lack any note of consolation.

Criticism is easy to deliver but hard to bear. It is all too easy for people to close their ears, or even turn the criticism around ("He's blaming us, but he should be blaming himself. After all, he was in charge"). What does it take for criticism to be heeded? The people have to know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that the leader is always ready to defend them. They have to know that he cares for them, wants the best for them, and is prepared to take personal risks for their sake. Only when people know for certain that you want their good, do they listen to you when you criticise them.

That is what led the sages to give the interpretation they did to the place-name *Di-zahav* in the first verse of Devarim. Why was Moses able to be as critical as he was in the last month of his life? Because the people he was talking to knew that he had defended them and their parents in his prayers for Divine forgiveness, that he had taken the risk of challenging God, that he

had declined God's offer to abandon the Israelites and begin again with him – in short, that his whole life as a leader was dedicated to doing what was the best for the people. When you know that about someone, you listen to them even when they criticise you.

One of my all-time heroes is the great Hassidic rabbi, Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev (1740-1809). Many stories are told of how he interceded with Heaven on behalf of the Jewish people. My favourite, doubtless apocryphal, story is this: Levi Yitzhak once saw a Jew smoking in the street on Shabbat. He said, "My friend, surely you have forgotten that it is Shabbat today." "No," said the other, "I know what day it is." "Then surely you have forgotten that smoking is forbidden on Shabbat." "No, I know it is forbidden." "Then surely, you must have been thinking about something else when you lit the cigarette." "No," the other replied, "I knew what I was doing." At this, Levi Yitzhak turned his eyes upward to heaven and said, "Sovereign of the universe, who is like Your people Israel? I give this man every chance, and still he cannot tell a lie!"

The great leaders of Israel were the great defenders of Israel, people who saw the good within the not-yet-good. That is why they were listened to when they urged people to change and grow. That is how the sages saw Moses. This was the man who had the audacity to win forgiveness for the people who had made the Golden Calf.

It is easy to criticise, hard to defend. But the Midrash about Moses tells us a life-changing idea: If you seek to change someone, make sure that you are willing to help them when they need your help, defend them when they need your defence, and see the good in them, not just the bad. Anyone can complain, but we have to earn the right to criticise. Shabbat shalom.

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com

from: Rabbi Chanan Morrison <chanan@ravkooktorah.org>

to: rav-kook-list@googlegroups.com

subject: [Rav Kook Torah]

Tisha B'Av: The Three Watches of the Night

Rav Kook Torah

Anguished Roars

All over the world there are flourishing Jewish communities, blessed with thriving synagogues, bustling schools, and prominent yeshivot. But with all of this Torah study and mitzvah-observance, do we feel the absence of the Beit HaMikdash? Are we aware of our state of exile and dispersion?

The anguished roars of a lion - that is how the prophet describes God's constant grief over the loss of the Holy Temple: "God roars from on high; He calls out from His holy dwelling, roaring over His habitation" (Jeremiah 25:30).

The Sages were able to hear these roars and translate them for us:

"Woe to My children! On account of their sins, I have destroyed My House and set fire to My sanctuary and exiled them among the nations of the world." (Berachot 3a)

Three Watches

The Rabbis also knew at what hour these heavenly cries may be heard. These roars, they taught, take place during the three watches of the night. (The darkness of night is a common metaphor for the exile.) And there are even signs that indicate the exact time of these anguished cries:

"The night consists of three watches, and during each watch the Holy One sits and roars like a lion.... The sign for this: in the first watch, a donkey brays; in the second, dogs howl; and in the third, a baby nurses from its mother and a woman converses with her husband."

What is the meaning of these strange signs - donkeys braying, dogs howling, babies nursing, and early-morning conversations?

The Flawed Service of Israel in Exile

We must first understand the significance of these night watches. The watches are a metaphor for underlying spiritual mechanisms in the universe. Each watch corresponds to the elevation of higher realms, an elevation that is a result of Israel's service of God in this world. Since the Temple's destruction and the exile of Israel, however, the Jewish nation has been reduced to an atrophied spiritual life. This decline has diminished the overall level of Divine providence in the world. The roars of heavenly anguish during the night watches are an expression of the cosmic pain caused by this spiritual decline.

Why are there three watches? The three watches correspond to the three basic levels in which we serve God: (1) through our actions, (2) by refining our character traits, and (3) by deepening our understanding and knowledge. Sadly, all three aspects have been adversely affected by the exile and the absence of the Beit HaMikdash.

Deeds and Traits

The first form of serving God is through deeds and actions. When the Jewish people are on an elevated spiritual plane, their mitzvot and acts of kindness are guided by a profound awareness of God's presence. Due to the detrimental influences of exile, however, all of our actions are tainted by an overall atmosphere of self-centeredness and materialism. This causes our service of God to lose its reparative quality of tikkun. Lacking the guidance of Divine wisdom, materialistic tendencies are reinforced. This phenomenon is particularly apparent regarding mitzvot that involve physical pleasures, such as the mitzvah to rejoice on the holidays.

For this reason, the sign of the first watch is the braying of a donkey (in Hebrew, chamor), indicating the awakening of materialistic tendencies (chomriut). This is a basic aspect of human nature - "For man is born a wild donkey" (Job 11:12) - that is bolstered by the negative influences of exile and its limited spiritual life.

The second night-watch corresponds to our service of God through the acquisition of positive character traits, such as kindness, generosity, and humility. The current state of the world, however, with its lack of holy influences, fosters various negative traits. This is not due to the body's physicality but rather because we lack an accurate image of pure and refined traits, as we are unable to faithfully model ourselves after God's traits of kindness and compassion.

The sign for the distortion of this service is the howling of dogs. Dogs symbolize negative traits, especially insolence (see Isaiah 56:11). Greed and brazenness are the source for many other flawed traits.

Service of the Intellect

The final watch corresponds to the highest form of serving God: using our cognitive powers. There are two levels in this avodah: those who study Halachah and the revealed parts of Torah, and those who delve into deeper esoteric studies. Unlike the service of God in actions and character traits, Torah learning cannot be debased. As the Sages taught, "Words of Torah cannot contract ritual impurity" (Berachot 22a). Therefore the signs of the third watch are positive ones, signs of Divine intimacy and beneficence: a baby nursing and a wife conversing with her husband.

However, even this level is detrimentally influenced by the exile. What is the heavenly sign for those who study the revealed parts of Torah? "A baby nursing from its mother." This indicates a state that is incomplete, an intellectual service not fully developed; it is therefore symbolized by a nursing baby.

Those who study on a deeper level, contemplating the nature of God with philosophical and mystical inquiries, are blessed with a revealed love of God. The sign for this level is one of love and affection - "a woman conversing with her husband." Nonetheless, even this holy service appears to be deficient, as the Sages described it as a 'conversation' (mesaperet), the relating of stories without deeper and truer content. Once again, this state is due to our current lack of Divine inspiration and prophetic wisdom.

(Silver from the Land of Israel (now available in paperback). Adapted from Ein Ayah vol. I on Berachot 3a (1:6).)

See also: Tisha B'Av: The Beauty of the Universe

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com

www.matzav.com or www.torah.org/learning/drasha

Parsha Parables By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Drasha By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Parshas Devarim - Speaking Louder

Moshe is saying his last good-byes to his beloved nation. He stands at Israel's border and reviews forty years of trials and tribulations, the good times and the bad, and how his nation Israel matured to become the inheritor of the Promised Land. The first verse in this week's portion alludes to the ensuing topics of discussion. The Golden Calf, the incident with the spies, and the time when Israel faltered at the idol Ba'al Pe'or are amongst the many issues that are re-examined.

But the Torah defines Moshe's rebuke by confining it to a specific time frame. The Torah tells us that only "after smiting Sichon, king of the Amorites, and (the giant) Og, king of Bashan, did Moshe begin explaining this Torah (rebuke) to them." (Deuteronomy 1:4)

The fact that the Torah makes a point of stating that the reproofs occurred only after Moshe smote two powerful enemies has obvious connotations. Rashi explains: "if the Jews were to say, 'what has Moshe done for us? Has he brought us into the Land? How does he have the right to rebuke us?'" Moshe thus waited until the defeat of the last two major enemies before rebuking the nation."

Perhaps Moshe wanted to tell us a bit more.

Reb Mendel Kaplan (1913-1985) was a Rebbe at the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia from 1965 until he passed away. In the later years, he would conduct an early morning class with a select group of students. He would study with them Daas Chachma U'Mussar, the magnum opus of his Rebbe, Rabbi Yeruchum Levovitz, the Mashgiach of the Mirrer Yeshiva of Europe and later Shanghai. Each day the group would meet before Shacharis (morning prayers) and listen to their elderly Rebbe discuss deep philosophical issues concerning the nature of man and the profound eternal struggle he faces.

One night a heavy snow covered the streets of Philadelphia. As the boys trudged into the classroom they were dazzled by the view of the dawn breaking over the white blanket that softly covered the frozen ground. But an even more amazing sight beheld then inside the classroom. Rav Mendel was at sitting at his desk wearing his boots, gloves, and an overcoat that was as warm as his expression. "Today we will learn the real Mussar (ethics)," he smiled. "Don't take off your boots and coats." He closed the large tome on his desk and pointed to six shovels neatly stacked in the corner of the classroom.

With that, he took a shovel, walked outside, and began to lead the boys in shoveling a path from the dormitories to the Bais Medrash where the entire school would soon conduct their morning prayers. Moshe knew that for forty years he had admonished his nation on issues of faith, trust in Hashem, and belief in the prophets. He had put his honor on the line, as he constantly defended their misdeeds. He prayed for them as they battled with Amalek and prayed for them when G-d's wrath was upon them. But he had yet to do physical battle.

The call came. Moshe had to fight the most notorious and powerful rulers of the region, Sichon and Og. They were stronger and bigger and surely more aggressive than he was. His faith was on the line. He had to teach real Mussar. Only after conquering those two foes, showing his people that he too can get down in the trenches, did he begin to admonish the nation for forty years of various improprieties.

Sometimes, if you'd like your friend to become as pure as snow, you can't just talk about it. You have to shovel it.

Good Shabbos! ©2018 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com
from: Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu>
to: weekly@ohr.edu
subject: Torah Weekly

Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Devarim

For the week ending 21 July 2018 / 9 Av 5778

Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com

Insights

Words Building Worlds

"These are the words..." (1:1)

Shortly before his marriage a young man went to great Torah scholars. He said that he had something that was weighing heavily on him, something that even the day of his marriage would not atone for. "I grew up in Jerusalem when food was a luxury. Nobody even knew what a banana looked like. One day the rebbe went out of the classroom for a few moments and left a few coins on his shtender. I was hungry and I took the money and put it in my pocket. The rebbe came back and immediately saw that the money was gone. He made the whole class stand in a line facing the wall, and one-by-one he checked our pockets. Quickly I dropped the money into the pocket of the boy who was standing next to me. When it came his turn he couldn't believe that the money was there and he started to cry. He pleaded with the rebbe and told him that he hadn't stolen the money, but of course no one believed him. After that he got a name of being a thief, and not too long afterwards he dropped out of the cheder, and gradually he went down until he dropped religious observance completely and became secular. Even though the day a person gets married is a day of atonement for him, how can I ever atone for what I did to that poor boy?"

The Torah sage said, "This reminds me of something that happened to me when I was in cheder. The rebbe also made us all stand in a line facing the wall, but when he found the culprit he didn't let on, but simply put the money back in his pocket. When he got to the end of the line, he said, 'Tov! Let us all say together, Hashivenu... Bring us back to you, G-d, and we will return!' That young boy went on to be one of the great scholars of the generation," explained the wise Torah scholar.

He continued: "You were not to blame for the other boy's dropping his religion; you were young and hungry. And the fellow himself – G-d will understand what he went through and judge him accordingly. The person I'm concerned about is the rebbe — through a moment's lack of judgment and sensitivity he ruined someone's life!"

This year the portion of Devarim falls on the 9th of Av — Tisha B'Av — the day of national disaster. The seminal sin of the spies by speaking ill of the Land of Israel caused the Ninth of Av to be a day set aside for disaster and punishment throughout Jewish history. Ostensibly, it's difficult to understand why the punishment for the slander of the spies should be so severe, to the extent that the Gemara compares it to the three cardinal sins of murder, idolatry and immorality. Certainly Beit Din will not execute someone for speaking lashon hara as they would for someone convicted of those three cardinal sins!

The word in Hebrew for a "thing" is *davar*, which has the same root as *dibbur*, meaning a "word". G-d created everything in this world with speech. There are two parts to this creation: *yeish m'ayin* (ex nihilo) and *yeish mi'yeish* (bringing forth new existences from the raw material of original creation). Only G-d can create something out of nothing, but man also was given the power to create from what already exists. As the verse states, "My words that I have placed in your mouth." (Yeshayahu 59:21) This is the

reason for the extreme seriousness of negative speech: It literally prevents the world from reaching its perfection. It destroys worlds as surely as it destroys lives.

© 1995-2018 Ohr Somayach International

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com
http://www.ou.org/torah/author/Rabbi_Dr_Tzvi_Hersh_Weinreb
from: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org>
reply-to: shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org

Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

OU Torah

Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

The Path to Eloquence

It is an experience common to all freshmen. One comes to a new campus, knows no one, and tries to orient himself by identifying the senior students who seem to have prestige. Then, he tries to connect with these campus big shots.

This was my experience precisely when, many years ago, I explored a new yeshiva at a transition point in my life. I was barely 19 years old, and I was trying to decide whether I would pursue an exclusively Talmudic education or combine my Talmud studies with college courses. I decided to spend the spring semester in an elite institution devoted only to Talmud, and to determine whether this approach suited me.

I quickly came to learn that the senior students were organized in a kind of hierarchy which reflected their respective degrees of erudition and their relationship to the world-famous dean of the school. I was somewhat impressed by all of them, but one in particular stood out for me. I do not recall his name now, but I can close my eyes and easily conjure up an image of him.

He was about 25 years old, of medium height, thin and wiry. He had a precision to him which resulted from his carefully measured movements. When he walked, he seemed to be taking each step intentionally. When he moved his hands, there was a precision to his movements. The words that came out of his mouth were few and deliberate; and his comments, short and to the point.

I remember being impressed by how he sat down before the texts he studied, first brushing the dust off of his desk and chair, then opening his book cautiously, and then taking from his pocket a plastic six-inch ruler. He placed the ruler under the line of text which was his focus, almost as if he intended to literally measure the words on the page.

I was fascinated by him and began to inquire about his background. I soon learned that he was the wunderkind of the school. His scholarly achievements impressed everyone. In early adolescence, he had found his studies extremely frustrating. Had this occurred but a decade or two later, he would probably have been diagnosed as learning disabled. He was not as bright as his peers, had great difficulties in following the give and take of Talmudic passages, and couldn't handle the bilingual curriculum.

At the suggestion of his high school's guidance counselor, he made a trip to Israel to study there, something more uncommon in those days. While there, still frustrated, he sought the blessing and counsel of the famous sage, Rabbi Abraham Isaiah Karelitz, more commonly known as the Chazon Ish.

This great man, then in his waning years, encouraged the young lad to persist in his studies, but to limit the scope of his daily efforts to small, "bite-sized chunks" of text. He concluded the interview with a blessing, quoting the passage in Psalms which asserts that Torah study can make even a dullard wise.

I befriended the young man, easily five or six years my senior, and attempted to enlist him as my study partner. But I soon discovered that his keen intelligence and the broad scope of his knowledge were far too advanced for

me. The advice and blessing of the Chazon Ish coupled with the young man's years of toil and commitment had the desired effect. He may indeed have once been a dullard, but he was one no longer. He was now an intellectual giant.

Although I did not learn much Talmud from this fellow, I did learn a most important life lesson from him. I learned that one can overcome his limitations if he persists in trying to overcome them. I learned that one could undo his natural challenges with a combination of heeding wise counsel, becoming inspired spiritually, and devoting himself with diligence and dedication to the task.

It was much later in life when I realized that I could have learned the same important life lesson from this week's Torah portion, Parshat Devarim, and from no less a personage than our teacher, Moses, himself. This week, we begin the entire book of Deuteronomy. Almost all of this book consists of the major address which Moses gave to the Jewish people before he took his final leave from them. "These are the words that Moses addressed to all of Israel..." (Deuteronomy 1:1).

Although it is now the long, hot summer, all readers of this verse remember that cold, wintry Sabbath day just six months ago when we first encountered Moses, back in the Torah portion of Shemot. We then read of how Moses addressed the Almighty and expressed his inability to accept the divine mission. He said: "Please, O Lord, I have never been a man of words, either in times past or now that You have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue..." (Exodus 4:10). Moses stammered and stuttered, and suffered from a genuine speech defect.

How surprising it is, then, that in this week's Torah portion, albeit forty years later, he is capable of delivering the lengthy and eloquent address which we are about to read every week for the next several months! How did he overcome his limitations? What are the secrets of his path to eloquence? These questions are asked in the collection of homilies known as the Midrash Tanchuma. There, the rabbis speak of the astounding power of sincere and sustained Torah study. They speak too of the effects of years of practice. And they emphasize the healing which comes about from a connection with the One Above. The rabbis of the Midrash Tanchuma could have cited the Lord's own response to Moses' initial complaint: "Who gives a man speech? Who makes him dumb or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"

But those rabbis chose another proof text entirely to illustrate that man, with God's help, can overcome his handicaps and challenges. They quote instead that beautiful passage in the book of Isaiah which reads:

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
Then the lame shall leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the dumb shall shout aloud;
For waters shall burst forth in the desert,
Streams in the wilderness. (Isaiah 35:5-6)

We seldom contemplate the development, nay transformation, of the man who was Moses. But it is important that we do so, because, although we each have our unique challenges and personal handicaps, we are capable of coping with them, and often of overcoming them. We all can develop, and we all can potentially transform ourselves.

This week, and in all of the ensuing weeks which lie ahead, as we read Moses' masterful valedictory and are impressed with the beauty of his language, we must strive to remember that he was not always a skilled orator. Quite the contrary, he was once an aral sefatayim, a man of impeded speech, who grew to achieve the divine blessing of shedding his impediments and addressing his people with the inspiring and eminent long speech that is the book of Deuteronomy.

He can be a role model for us all.

Ohr HaTorah Announcements <announcementsittohrhabarah.com>

Reply-To: Ohr HaTorah Announcements

<announcements@ohratorah.com>

Rabbi Zvi Soboiofsky

36 Rector CI Bergenfield, NJ 07621

201-244-5905

www.obthatorab.com

Guidelines from the Ray for Erev Tisha B'Av that Falls Out on Shabbos:

1. Bring Tisha B'Av shoes to shut before Shabbos as one cannot carry them on Shabbos for after Shabbos.

2. Shabbos meals as on a regular Shabbos - including Zemiro&

3. One may learn anything Shabbos afternoon until Shelia (8:22PM).

4. Seuda Shlishis must be finished before Shaft (8:22 PM).

5. An Mishit B'Av restrictions with the exceptions of wearing shoes and sitting on chairs begin at Shelia (822 PM).

6. One wears leather shoes if coming to shul anytime before 9:13PM. The Chazan says

Baruch Harravdil Bain Kodesh Uchol before Barchu and takes off his shoes before

Barchu. After Barchu, everyone takes off their leather shoes and davens Meetyly in their

socks. Women at home recite Baruch Hamavdil Bain Kodesh Uchol after 9:13PM and take

of their shoes. If one ends up without Tisha B'Av shoes after Mast*, when walking in the street one may wear regular shoes, but they must be removed as soon as it is safe to do

so.

7. Those driving to shut after Shabbos should say baruch hamavdil first and remove shoes at

home after 9:13PM.

8. Before Eicha, the &ache of Borei Maori Haesh is recited over a havdala candle.

9. Havdala is not recited until Sunday night, and wine or grape juice can be used and there is

no need to give it to a child to drink. Only Bard Pr! Hagafen and Hamavdll are recited

Sunday night before eating.

10. One may get a haircut or do laundry immediately on Sunday night, but meat and wine (with

the exception of Havdala) remain prohibited until Monday morning.

from hamelaket@gmail.com

from: Torah in Action /Shema Yisrael <parsha@torahinaction.com>

subject: Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Shema Yisrael Torah Network

Peninim on the Torah - Parshas Devarim

פרשת דברים תשע"ה

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל... בין פארן ובין תפל ולבן וחצרת ודי זהב

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Yisrael... between Paran and Tofer and Lavan, and Chatzeiros and Di Zahav. (1:1)

Rashi quotes Chazal, who explain that the names of these cities are actually allusions to specific sins committed by the Jewish People during their sojourn in the Wilderness. When Moshe *Rabbeinu* mentioned Lavan, he was referring to the *manna*. Lavan means white. When *Klal Yisrael*

complained about the insubstantial food, ie. *manna*, they referred to it in a denigrating manner by mentioning its color. Why is the white color of the *manna* important? Apparently, on some level, their sin was associated with the *manna*'s white color. What about the color of the *manna* made their words sinful?

The *Zera Shimshon* quotes a *pasuk* in *Beha'alo'secha* (*Bamidbar* 11:6), "Our bodies are dried out, for there is nothing at all; we have nothing but *manna* to look at." First, why did they seek a way to slander the unquestionably most extraordinary food that ever existed? Why did they need to complain?

Obviously, the problem was quite different. *Chazal* (*Shabbos* 129a) teach that someone who visits the doctor for a session of bloodletting should eat meat and drink red wine that day. Meat brings back the *nefesh*, which was lost when the blood (which is the human being's life source) was removed from the body and wine replaces the red color of the blood that was removed. The Jews complained that the traveling had taken a toll on their bodies. At times, it was necessary to have a good, thick piece of meat in order to restore their energy after the rigors of the road. Unfortunately, they had neither meat nor wine. *Manna* is an extraordinary food, which replaces the body's energy (as does meat), but it does not do the job achieved by the wine, which gave them their color. The *manna* was white. *Klal Yisrael* complained that they were missing "redness." They needed red, ie. wine and meat. *Manna* is white. Wherever they were, they saw white! What would rejuvenate their bodies after the difficulties encountered from their travels?

Having said this, the *Zera Shimshon* now explains the meaning of Moshe's rebuke. Moshe underscored their lack of gratitude. "You complained about the *manna*'s whiteness" (when you sought a food that was red). *Chazal* teach that a smile [during which a person's lips are parted and the whites of his teeth are noticeable] is more important than the portion of food one gives to a poor man. In other words, it is not what you give, but how you give it. Showing someone the whiteness of one's teeth, ie, a smile, is a sign of love and friendship. The poor man needs that reinforcement more than the food he receives.

Moshe told the nation, "There is a specific reason that Hashem colored the *manna* white. It was Hashem's way of 'smiling' at you every morning when He sent the *manna* to your door. However, you chose to complain specifically about the color of the *manna* (without giving a thought to the idea that perhaps a positive reason was behind this choice of color). Yet, it was this whiteness that you chose to denounce. You wept over the lack of 'red' color in your diet, essentially repaying goodness with evil. Hashem made a point not merely to send you food, but to accompany it with His message of love. You, in turn, turned to cast aspersion on His benevolence, on the very kindness that He showed you!"

I write this because it is so common for us to look a gift horse in the mouth and find fault in it. How often are we the beneficiaries of someone's heartfelt care, only to undermine his good and find fault in his motives? Why is this? First and foremost on the list has to be envy. People who suffer from this disease go through life painfully obsessed by the advantages enjoyed by others. Jealousy impedes contentment and satisfaction. When we compare what we do not have to what others do have, it reduces our ability to appreciate that which we actually do have.

Second, is they feel they deserve the benefits which they have received. The privileges and advantages are theirs because they have earned them. No one seems to remember when and how, but they certainly do. This is an immature form of entitlement, whereby we convince ourselves that *es kumt es mir*, "I deserve it!"

Third, is a form of entitlement which comes as the result of expectation. Ingratitude is the result of unreasonable expectations. I expect everyone to drop what they are doing in order to accommodate my sudden needs. It would be nice – but it is certainly not required. I expect others to

give and give, yet I find every excuse in the world for me not to be on the giving end. We determine that Mr. "X" is wealthy; thus, he can afford to carry the entire project on his shoulders. Why should we participate? These expectations lead to ingratitude.

At the end of the day, I think ingratitude is the result of one's inability to accept the fact that it is not all about "him." At the root of all ingratitude is the love of one's own greatness. This attitude robs one of *hakoras hatov*, appreciation and gratitude to Hashem. He finds it difficult to accept that he is really a paralytic living from *neshimah l'neshimah*, breath to breath, by the grace of Hashem. We love our own glory and prize our own self-sufficiency; gratitude forces us to look reality straight in the eye and realize that it is all a façade. Our success has been manipulated by Hashem, Who has employed the services of a number of agents. They are all part of the scenario which we think we control. The first step toward paying gratitude is the realization that one is far from perfect and that what he has achieved has been Divinely ordained. He then realizes that every step of the way he should have taken a moment to say thank you – not just for the bread (*manna*), but for the way it was served (white).

When one lives a life that is charged with gratitude, his attitude toward life and everything that he receives from it is positive. It behooves him to feel a sense of appreciation for all and anything that has benefited him, regardless of whether it had to be planned or not. Such a person embodies the teaching of *Horav Nachman Breslover*, *zl*, "Gratitude rejoices with her sister, joy, and is always ready to light a candle and have a party. Gratitude does not like those who are bored, filled with despair or take life for granted." One who does not have gratitude does not live.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks writes about one of the great medical research exercises which took place in the early 1900's. It became known as the "New Study." Some 700 nuns, all members of a specific school, agreed to allow their records to be accessed by a research team that was doing a study on the process of aging and Alzheimer's disease. At the time of the study, the participants were between the ages of 75-102.

What gave this study its unique scope over time is that in the 1930's the nuns (who were mostly in their 20's) had been asked by their Mother Superior to write brief biographies of their lives to indicate their motivation in their entrance into the convent. Sixty years later, these biographies were now analyzed by the researchers, using a system that coded positive and negative emotions. They also checked the nuns' emotional state when the biographies were penned. The goal was to determine whether their emotional states sixty years earlier had an effect on their health today as senior citizens. Why investigate these nuns more than any other group? They had lived together under one roof for over sixty years. The study was, thus, not a study of random individuals; it was about a unique group, whose attitudes more or less paralleled one another and who had spent most of their lives together.

Now for the results: The more positive the emotions – such as contentment, gratitude, happiness, love and hope – that the nuns had expressed sixty years earlier, the greater the chance that they were alive and well six decades later. This led to a deeper understanding of the impact of emotions on physical health. We do not require the support of lessons from researchers or nuns to know that the quality of one's life is enhanced by positive emotions. One of the seminal principles of our faith is remembering the Exodus. Our religion is based upon *z'chirah*, remembrance, because, when we remember, we become cognizant: that what we have has been bequeathed to us; that when we stand, we stand upon the shoulders of others; that we did not just happen; that we have a purpose and a goal to achieve. An ingrate refuses to remember due to the implications involved. Our people are a grateful nation whose heritage is built upon reminiscing the past, learning from it, incorporating it

into the present – and never forgetting to offer our gratitude for that which has benefitted us.

ותשבנו ותבכו לפני ד' ולא שמע ד' בקלכם ולא האזין אליכם

Then you retreated and wept before Hashem, but Hashem did not listen to your voice and He did not hearken to you. (1:45)

When you offend someone and all he wants as penance is to see that you are remorseful – is that too much to ask? What if, instead of remorse, you ignore him, thereby compounding the pain: would you be upset if he became angry with you? Would you think less of him if he punished you as a way of getting you to acknowledge your transgression? If so, why is Hashem any different? We act inappropriately; we offend; compound our sin by ignoring our infraction; then we become upset when He punishes us. Obviously, I am leading up to something. Let us look at the above *pasuk*.

The *meraglim* debacle takes up much of the first *perek*, chapter, of our *parsha*. Moshe *Rabbeinu* is rebuking the people and reviewing the odiousness of their sin. He recounts Hashem's reaction to the nation's ingratitude, swearing that the entire generation would end their lives in the wilderness. These people shunned *Eretz Yisrael*. They would never live to see it. Understandably, the nation was brokenhearted. In an attempt to demonstrate their willingness to go into battle, they attempted to force the issue by ascending the mountain and waging war with the *Emoriim*.

Hashem "stood His ground." He was not helping them, because He had said that they were no longer welcome in *Eretz Yisrael*. The *Emoriim* came at them, pursuing them until Chormah. The people now cried (too little too late). Hashem refused to listen, because they had catalyzed this themselves. It was their fault. In addressing Hashem's reaction to *Klal Yisrael*, *Rashi* explains, "You made Hashem's attribute of Mercy as if it were cruel." In other words, it appeared as if Hashem were turning a deaf ear to their pleas. Rather than show them mercy, it appeared as if He were acting to them in the opposite – totally atypical – manner.

Rashi's statement has powerful implications. *Horav Avraham Pam, zl* (quoted by *Rav Sholom Smith* in *Messages from Rav Pam*), spoke about these implications in a pre-*Neilah* address. When a person sins, he must perform *teshuvah*. There is no avoiding it. To ignore the fundamental principle of *teshuvah* is a gross error. Rather than receive Hashem's blessing, he has compounded his previous sin. As a result, his punishment will be magnified, making it appear as if Hashem is acting cruelly towards him, when, in fact, he brought it upon himself by not expunging the sin when he had the opportunity.

Everybody makes mistakes; nobody is perfect. When we sin, we force Hashem to punish us. We cause Him to hold back on His infinite mercy, because we do not deserve it. When He punishes us, however, our immediate reaction is: How cruel! How could He do this to us? In reality, we are the cause of this punishment. The punishment is only a reaction to our misbehavior that was compounded by our ignoring the sin.

It is a common mistake in life. We work for a boss. We play games at work, shirk our responsibility, ignore our obligations, etc. The obvious reaction of a responsible boss is to punish in some manner. The boss, however, is a kind-hearted, decent, benevolent man who understands that workers will play games at times. He allows time for him to acknowledge the error, to show some form of remorse, and, in some manner, to repent. The worker continues with his immature, nonsensical behavior, shirking responsibility, showing his boss that he does not care. Now – when the boss becomes fed up and fires the worker, he suddenly becomes heartless, cruel, etc. We have all been witness to such a scenario. The only one who is heartless and cruel is the worker – to himself – and, by extension, to his boss, because now the boss looks bad for taking action against the "beleaguered" worker.

Enough of your circling this mountain... you are passing through the boundary of your brothers, Bnei Eisav... you shall not provoke them. (2:3,5)

Chazal (*Midrash Rabbah* 1:15) relate that when *Klal Yisrael* was about to wage war against the descendants of Eisav, Hashem showed Moshe *Rabbeinu* the mountain where the *Avos*, Patriarchs, were buried. Moshe understood that the location of the burial place prevented *Klal Yisrael* from battling Eisav. Apparently, it was in Eisav's *zechus*, merit, for honoring *Yitzchak Avinu* (and by extension *Avraham Avinu*). This is the meaning of *Rav lachem sov es hahar hazeh*; "Enough of your circling this mountain." This means the mountain provides a reason to consider Eisav to be off limits. This was all the result of his *Kibbud Av*.

Another *Midrash* (*Tanchuma Kedoshim* 15) seems to present an additional reason for protecting Eisav from *Klal Yisrael*. The *Midrash* notes that Hashem never withheld reward from a person – regardless of his negative spiritual, ethical or moral standing. We see this from Eisav who emitted three tears when he heard that he lost out on his father's blessings (actually it was only two tears, since the third tear remained welled up in his eye). *Chazal* imply that Eisav's tears earned him the reward of good fortune.

Horav A. Henoch Leibowitz, zl, reconciles both *Midrashim*, suggesting that Eisav's reward for honoring his father was augmented when he cried three times. It was because Eisav honored his father that he realized the significance of the blessings – which catalyzed his tears upon losing the blessings. Thus, the tears elevate the *Kibbud Av*, which earned him and his descendants' protection from the Jews. The *Rosh Yeshivah* derives a powerful lesson from here. Eisav warranted the blessings due to his extraordinary commitment to the *mitzvah* of honoring his parents. When he saw that he lost the blessings, he became emotional and emitted three tears. The pain that Eisav expressed over losing the blessings became a source of reward for him, thus elevating his *mitzvah* of *Kibbud Av*, which resulted in his passion for the blessings. We see from here that pain derived as a result of a *mitzvah* magnifies the reward that one receives. It is not just the pain that one experiences while performing the *mitzvah* that gains him reward, but, even afterwards, pain that is sustained as a result of the *mitzvah* will gain him reward. Eisav had no idea that he would one day have pain because of his *Kibbud Av*. The three tears were related to his *Kibbud Av*, but experienced later; yet, they catalyzed his future reward.

Eisav merited that his land was not invaded by the Jewish army due to his exemplary *Kibbud Av*. The *Midrash* (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:15) quotes *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* who posits that no person showed as much respect to his parents as he did. Nonetheless, said the sage, "My honoring my father paled in comparison to that of Eisav, for I would wear my regular street clothes when I honored my father, while Eisav donned his finery when he approached *Yitzchak*." If this is the case, why then did *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* not follow suit and also put on his finery when he served his father? After all, what is right is right. Rather than talk about what he should have done – why did he not do it?

The *Rosh Yeshivah* asks a similar question concerning *Mar Ukva* who states (*Chullin* 105a), "I am worse than my father, like vinegar compared to wine. When my father ate meat, he would not eat cheese until the next day, while I will eat cheese at the next meal. (Obviously, it was after the *halachically* allotted time of separation between meat and milk. While *Mar Ukva's* father waited 24 hours between meat and milk, *Mar Ukva* would eat the same day at a later meal.) The question is: If *Mar Ukva* was lauding his father's behavior, stressing that his father was very devout, why did not *Mar Ukva* accept upon himself to emulate his father's devotion and also wait 24 hours between meat and milk?

The *Rosh Yeshivah* explains this based upon a *mussar* (ethical character refinement) principle, established by the *Slabodka* school of *mussar*. They taught that one should not skip spiritual plateaus to ascend above his actual level. In other words, do not act more religious than you really are, because you will err and think that you belong on this elevated spiritual plane – when, in fact, you are unprepared for its demands. This can bring one to haughtiness by thinking he is better – on a loftier spiritual plane – than others. This does not mean that one should refrain from *mitzvah* performance; rather, he should not go overboard until he is certain that he belongs, and is prepared to serve, on this level.

Apparently, these two sages were not prepared to go beyond executing the *mitzvah* in full accordance with *halachah*. They felt that piety was a step above them. *Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, ©All rights reserved prepared and edited by Rabbi L. Scheinbaum*

רב לכם סב את ההר הזוהר... אתם עובדים בגבול אחיכם בני עשיו... אל תתגר בו

From Esplanade Capital <jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com> 2016

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Devarim 5776

1. As we prepare for Shabbos Chazzon falling this year on the 9th of Av, Shabbos Parshas Devarim. How very appropriate for Shabbos Chazzon, Parshas Devarim begins with Mussar. As Rashi says in 1:3 (סמוך למיתה). Prior to his death Moshe Rabbeinu gives Mussar to Klal Yisrael. He gives them Mussar about the things that they had experienced, the Aveiros that they did in the Dor Hamidbar.

I saw a Gevaldige Kasha in the Mishnas Reb Aharon. He asks, Moshe Rabbeinu had to give Mussar, for the last 38 or 39 years every Tisha B'av people went into their graves and 15,000 Jews died every Tisha B'av because of the Cheit Hameraglim. They saw it, they knew it. There were many Jews sitting Shiva for a week after Tisha B'av. The Kasha is, you have to give Mussar, you have to give Tochacha, what bigger Mussar is there than that?

The answer is an important Yesod. No matter what it is that should shake you up, that won't shake you up. In Yiddish they say Mir Vaint Zach Tzu. You get used to things. Even things that should change you, that should influence you, that should be Mashpia, the first time it shakes you up, then a human being gets used to anything. When you get used to things that should influence us, that should make an impression on us and they don't. Even though 15,000 Jews went into their graves and were not getting up in the morning, every Tisha B'av year, after year the feeling, the Hergish is also something that wears off.

To me this comes to mind in our days, in our lifetime the most. An incredible thing that is happening all around us that we don't take notice of. HKB"H told us through Moshe Rabbeinu thousands of years ago, the Neviim came later and they reiterated. That Mikeitz Hayamim HKB"H will gather Jews Mai'arba Kanfos Ha'aretz and bring them to Eretz Yisrael. The Yidden will come back to the land of Israel from the four corners of the world. Open your eyes, this ancient Nevua which did not take place for thousands of years is taking place before our eyes. It seems that every decade from another part of the world Jews are brought to Eretz Yisrael by one or another usually political events that takes place.

We have seen in my lifetime, in the 80's with the overthrow of the Shah in Iran, Iranian Jews coming. In the 90's Jews from Russia coming, Jews from Ethiopia coming. We see now Jews from France and other European countries coming to Eretz Yisrael in large numbers. It is an incredible Kiyum Hanevua. It should shake us up. It should wake us up to the special time we live in. It should awaken in us a yearning when Tisha B'av comes, for the Bais Hamikdash and Moshiach, it is so close you only have to deserve it. Mir Vaint Zach Tzu. They are Tzu Gevoit to anything that happens. We should be influenced.

There is another Rashi here in the beginning of the Parsha. Rashi says that Moshe Rabbeinu gave Mussar Somech L'misaso like Yaakov Avinu. Yaakov Avinu also gave Mussar to Reuvain Somech L'misaso. Rashi says incredibly, that as long as Yaakov was not close to death he did not give Mussar to Reuvain (כדי שלא תגיהני ותלך ותרדק בעשו). Maybe Reuvain would defect and go over to Eisav. So he didn't want to give him Mussar.

In the Sichos Mussar in Devarim (Taf Shin Lamed Gimmel), he asks an extraordinary Kasha. The Gemara says in Maseches Shabbos 55b (19 lines from the top) (א"ר שמואל) (בר הנמי א"ר ינתן כל האומר ראובן חטא אינו אלא טועה) seemed in Pshut Pshat in the Posuk through Znus. Reuvain sinned in that he was Tovei'a, he demanded in the the honor of his mother and without permission moved his father's bed into his mother's tent. On Reuvain's Madreiga that was a sin. The Tochacha/Mussar on such a sin Shema Yeilach L'tzad Eisav? What is the Pshat in Rashi? It is a Davar Pele! The Kasha is a very strong Kasha.

It is not so clear what Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz is answering. He goes off into a discussion of Tochacha and Yiush. Let me tell you what I think he means and you look at it and form your own opinion. Human beings by nature like things that are clear, that are black or white. We like clarity. We don't like to weigh two sides of an issue. It is much more satisfying to deal in absolutes. This is Treif, you cannot eat it period. We can deal with that.

It is a food which is Tov L'hachmir that it is better not to eat, we have a hard time with that. When things are grey it is a struggle. We like absolutes and we tend to shy towards absolutes even when it is not called for. We see this very often. When people have friction with a friend instead of working it out they just walk away from a friendship. It is easier to deal with absolutes and say I don't want to have anything to do with him.

Even an Avla. It is much easier than to weigh things, maybe he is right maybe he is wrong. Even if he is wrong let's fix it up. Absolutes are easier especially when you can couch the absolutes in terms of a Frumkeit. Absolutes are easier.

When you give someone Mussar even on a small thing, there is a certain sense of disappointment, of Yiush. That sense of disappointment causes people to do extreme

things. I remember once that Rav Pam once asked me to tell one of the Bachurim in the Yeshiva who was a Yasom who was Davening for the Amud to tell him that there are a couple of words in Chazaras Hashatz he pronounces incorrectly. I did it. His response was, what? Rav Pam said that? I am not Davening for the Amud anymore when Rav Pam is in Yeshiva, let my brother Daven. I will Daven at the Minyanim that he is not there. So now 40 years later he is still mispronouncing those words. It is much easier to say let me walk away from it rather than to have to try to work things out.

Even Reuvain B'madreigoso, there is a fear that Reuvain would say nothing doing. Mussar, I am walking away from it. What a powerful lesson. We hear Mussar. People criticize or correct us, we take it personally. We shouldn't. If you are going to an interview and someone says your tie is crooked you say thank you and you fix your tie. You have to take things as they are intended, sometimes better than they are intended. Take them correctly. Two important thoughts how a human being is Tzu Gevoit, you get used to things and how human beings react harshly to Mussar.

From Esplanade Capital <jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com> 2018

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Devarim 5778

Topic - A Yesod that Dibbur comes from the connection of the Neshama.

Let's get to a topic which is **appropriate for the Parsha and for the 9 days**. I would like to speak out a Maimar from the Pachad Yitzchok on Pesach, Maimar 15, Os 4. The Pachad Yitzchok goes on the first words of the Parsha. (אָלֶה הַדְּבָרִים, אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר מֹשֶׁה). Moshe Rabbeinu says Klal Yisrael come close I am going to talk to you. He talks to them for 37 days. From Rosh Chodesh Shvat to Zayin Adar and he Chazers the Torah. Rav Hutner asks whatever happened to (לא איש דברים אנכי). Moshe Rabbeinu back when we first meet him at the Sneh says as is found in Shemos 4:10 (לא איש דברים אנכי). I am not a good speaker. I am not a person who is capable of explaining and talking and convincing.

Rav Hutner says let's think about an understanding of the change in Moshe Rabbeinu from a (40 אֶלֶה הַדְּבָרִים) years ago to (אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר מֹשֶׁה), someone who can give a class for 37 days running. The Pachad Yitzchok explains based on a Maharal as we will see in a moment, but Kedarko he explains with a Yesod.

The Yesod begins with an understanding of (אֲשֶׁר בָּצַר) and (אֲשֶׁר בָּצַר) that we say every day. (אֲשֶׁר בָּצַר) is praising Hashem for the nature of the body with which we are blessed, (אֲשֶׁר בָּצַר) (רופא כל בשר). (אֲשֶׁר בָּצַר) is thanking HKB"H for the Neshama that we have. The Neshama Shenasata Bi. The two parts of a person, the body in Asher Yatzar and the Neshama Shenasata Bi on the Guf. In between we say (רופא כל בשר) (וּמְפָלִיא לְעִשׂוֹת).

Zagt Rav Hutner (וּמְפָלִיא לְעִשׂוֹת) is a bridge between the two Berachos. The Rama Teitches (וּמְפָלִיא לְעִשׂוֹת) to say that it is a Pele that Hashem connects a Neshama with a Guf. The fact that a Neshama stays in our body until the day we die is from the Niflaos Haborei. Two things which are very different one from the other, the Neshama and the Guf stay connected. (וּמְפָלִיא לְעִשׂוֹת). The connection of Guf and Neshama.

Rav Hutner goes on to say that the connection of Guf and Neshama is what allows us to speak. The Koach HaDibbur came as it says in Beraishis 2:7 (וַיִּפַּח בְּאָפְיוֹ, נְשָׁמַת הַיָּיִם) Hashem blew the Neshama into Adam. Of course he gave Chiyus entirely, but that connection the Targum says Ruach Mimalala. There is a Ruach that allows speaking.

The body has the physical tools for speaking, the Neshama has the intellect, the understanding. You need Seichel to speak. The two together give the Koach Haddibur. Now we go to the Maharal. The Maharal says Rav Hutner, explains why did Moshe Rabbeinu come with a difficulty speaking. (לא איש דברים אנכי). Why was Moshe Rabbeinu lacking in that physical talent?

Zagt the Maharal, because the Koach Haddibur comes from the connection between the Neshama and the Guf. Moshe Rabbeinu was so elevated that his Neshama was so L'mayla Min Haguf, that the Koach Haddibur, the ability to explain things which requires a good connection from the Neshama to the Guf, that was lacking. So Moshe Rabbeinu was too lofty to be able to use the Kochos of the Guf appropriately. This is what it says in the Maharal.

Zagt Rav Hutner, that all changed by Kabbalas Hatorah. By Kabbalas Hatorah there was a Chibur of Gashmi and Ruchni like never before. Mai'olam Lo Yarda Sila Mi'mata Mei'Yud, Umai'olam Lo Ala Adam Mi'mala Mai'Yud. The idea that the Shechina could come down to earth and that a human being can go up to heaven. As it says in Shemos 19:20 (וַיִּשְׁמַע עָלָה, אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים) and 19:3 (וַיִּרְדּוּ יְרֵךְ-עַל-הָרַ סִינַי) That was unique by Matan Torah.

At that time we say Moshe Rabbeinu was healed. What do you mean that he was healed? We mean that his Neshama connected to his Guf. His Guf became a Ruchniyosdika Guf and the Neshama was able to connect. Therefore, Moshe Rabbeinu who started before Mattan Torah as a person who was a (לא איש דברים אנכי) became a

Baal Devarim. How? By the Neshama connecting to the Guf. A beautiful Biyur and Hesber.

The Yesod of course is that for every one of us, our Koach Hadibur, our ability to speak, requires a proper connection of Neshama to Guf. Now we don't have Moshe Rabbeinu's problem of being too lofty. On the contrary, sometimes we have a problem of being too Gashmios. Our Neshama doesn't adequately influence the Dibbur. But we understand that Dibbur is the Neshama speaking through the megaphone of our vocal chords, so we understand the idea that a person has to be able to speak in a fine way. I am not talking about Lashon Hora, I am not talking about Rechilus. I'm not talking about Aveiros. But if the Neshama is showing through with the Koach Haddibur then a person has to become fine in the way he speaks. He has to be kind in the way he speaks. When someone speaks with crude expressions. No Aveira, but crude expressions, like I dated her but you should know that I dumped her. To talk that way, I dumped her, is a crude expression. It comes from Gaiva, it comes from Guf. The Fine'keit of the Neshama, of the Cheilek Elokim requires people to talk appropriately, to talk properly. I mentioned to you once, that someone in Yeshiva was once arguing with a friend if the English word for Gehinnom is a dirty word. Are you allowed to say it? Gehinnom is not a dirty word. So they went to Rav Pam and they asked Rav Pam that there are some words that the world considers inappropriate but really they don't mean anything bad. He was asking regarding the English word for Gehinnom. Rav Pam said what do you mean? So he wasn't about to say the word, so he beat around the bush and stammered and said you know there are words that are not so nice and people consider them curse words and not pleasant.

Rav Pam said what do you mean? Finally Rav Pam said oh I see you mean words like Fress. Well if the question was if Fress was an appropriate word then the Bachur said yes that is what I mean. The word Fress, there is no Aveira in saying it, but it shows a Chisaron in the connection to the Neshama and the Guf.

Rav Pam once said in a Shmuz, people are talking and they are saying whatchamacallit. I'm quoting Rav Pam. They say whatchamacallit. Velleche Sart Vort Iz Das? What type of word is that? It shows that you are speaking without thinking! Whatchamacallit? The Neshama has to be connected to the people. The Avoda very much of these days, is to become a better person. To become an elevated person.

In Bain Adam L'chaveiro, a lot of Sina, a lot of bad will, a lot of bad feelings come from a lack of connecting the Neshama Kedosh to your mouth. Before you speak, remember that the mouth is the speech tool of the Neshama. Words come to a person because he is thinking them. It should be with a Fine'keit, it should be with a sensitivity. There shouldn't be Lashon Hora or Devarim Asurim.

So a thought on the Parsha, the Yesod that Dibbur comes from the connection of the Neshama. A Vort for the 9 days and Tisha B'av. A Yesod that Dibbur comes from the connection to the Neshama. Let's make it a meaningful Tisha B'av. Let's walk out with something meaningful. May HKB"H grant us all the ability to be elevated from the Tisha B'av. Our first wish is that Moshiach should come, but don't forget our other wish is that when you go through a Tisha B'av before Moshiach comes, it gives us a seriousness, an Avodas Hashem which is lacking in our generation. A seriousness in the things we say. May we be Zoche to use the wonderful tool called Tisha B'av in serving Hashem properly.

A Gutten Shabbos and a meaningful Taanis. Next Thursday B'ezras Hashem, I hope to be in Eretz Yisrael. Hashem should give me the Zechus to be there. The great Zechus to be there and to speak to you from Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh. Halevai we should all be there. A Gutten Shabbos!

On Thu, Jul 19, 2018 at 6:40 PM, Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> wrote:

Tisha b'Av is not about the Beit Hamikdash

Rabbi Moshe Davis

July 19, 2018

Everyone knows that the reason we fast on Tisha b'Av is because we are mourning the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash, the Temple that stood in Jerusalem. Everyone but the Rambam, Maimonides. In his commentary to the first chapter of Tractate Rosh Hashanah, the Rambam presents an interesting assertion with regards to Jewish history.

He writes that during the time of the Second Commonwealth in Jerusalem, when the ashes of the first Temple had been cleared and the second Temple was built in all its glory, the people still fasted on Tisha b'Av. That seems quite odd. If Tisha b'Av is a day to mourn the destruction of the Temple, then once the Temple was rebuilt, the mourning should have stopped.

Maybe the explanation of this practice is that during the Second Temple period the people were not mourning the absence of the Temple, but rather that it had once been

destroyed. They may have been happy with what they had, but they did not want to forget what they had lost and all the previous pain that they had endured. Tisha b'Av was for them an exercise in Jewish history. This approach however is flawed, at least within the framework of the Rambam. The Rambam writes in the Laws of Fasts 5:19 that in the End of Days all of the fast days will become nullified, as per the prophecy of Zecharia. In the future there will be no fasting on Tisha b'Av. It is therefore hard to simply suggest that during the Second Temple period Tisha b'Av was observed simply to remember our history, for if that it is the case then perhaps it should also be observed in the End of Days.

Rather, as the Rambam himself suggests, the fast of Tisha b'Av was observed during the Second Commonwealth because it is a day of Huchpelu bo Tzarot, abound in suffering. We are not just mourning the loss of the Temple, we are mourning the myriad of Jewish persecution and troubles over the millenia (See Taanit 4:6). Even while the second Temple stood there was sadly plenty of tragedy to go around.

It seems heretical to suggest that Tisha b'Av is not primarily about the Beit Hamikdash.

I myself have delivered many lectures and classes on the concept of Zecher Lechurban, religious observances enacted to remember the destruction of the Temple, and the need to shed a tear on Tisha b'Av for the Makom Hamikdash, Har Bayit, that lays in ruin.

But it would seem that the scroll of Eichah also minimizes the role of the destruction of the Temple in our mourning. Professor Yeshayahu Leibowitz once pointed out that the Megillah in fact does not focus on the actual destruction of the Temple at all, and there is perhaps just one verse that makes direct reference to the destruction, "Al Har Tzion sheshamem shualim hilchu vo" - Because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate; Jackals prowl over it. Though one can argue that the focus of the megillah is an emotional response to destruction rather than an historical account, his point is worth noting. Tisha b'Av then is a day to focus on all the tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people, not just the tragedy of the destruction of the Temple. What is the purpose of this mourning? I think we can again learn something from the position of the Rambam - in the End of Days there will be no mourning on Tisha b'Av. Why not?

Megilat Eichah concludes with the verse, "Ki im maos me'astanu katzafta aleinu ad me'od" - You have rejected us, bitterly raged against us. All the tragedies that befall the Jewish people are so painful because we are worried that they represent a rejection of us as a people. Perhaps Hashem has had enough with all of our rebelliousness and has kicked us out of His house.

When a parent disciplines a child, puts him in the corner or sends him to his room, the child still knows that deep down his parent loves him. The child (hopefully!) knows that although he misbehaved, he nonetheless still has a relationship with his parent. But what happens when a parent, lo aleinu, kicks a child out of the house? What happens when a child's behavior is so egregious, such a slap in the face, that the parent feels like he has no choice but to reject that child? That is where true pain lies. And that is the depth of our pain on Tisha b'Av.

Ki im maos me'astanu, You have rejected us. We worry that the tragedy after tragedy and pain piled upon pain is a sign that God has kicked us out of His house. He is not just punishing us, but far worse, rejecting us. This is why we conclude the public reading of Eichah by repeating the second to last verse, "Hashiveinu Hashem elecha venashiuva" - Take us back Hashem, and we will return. It is a fervent prayer that we not be rejected.

In the End of Days we will have the clarity and perspective to understand that in fact all the pain and suffering was not a rejection, but a lesson. As such, at that time there will be no need for a Tisha b'Av. But in the present moment it can be hard to have that perspective. Even if there are individuals among us who are able to see the lesson, the majority of people do not. The majority of people respond to the age old question of Tzaddik ve'Rah Lo, why do good things happen to bad people, by rejecting God. If that is what God does for His people, if God can reject us, then I reject Him, they say. How many children of holocaust survivors became atheists, and how many Jews who lived during the era of the destruction of the Temple left the fold? Far too many.

This year, the ninth of Av falls out on Shabbat, and as such the fast is delayed until Sunday and we eat on the ninth of Av. Let us hope and pray that our Shabbat feast this week will be a prelude of things to come and by reaffirming our commitment to Hashem, He will show us and the world that He has not, nor will He ever, reject us. Rabbi Moshe Davis is the rabbi of Brith Sholom Beth Israel in Charleston, South Carolina

The words of this author reflect his/her own opinions and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Orthodox Union