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maskil Le'David

**Cast Your Burden
upon Hashem and
He will Sustain You**

“When you shall enter the Land that I give you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring an Omer from your first harvest to the Kohen” (Vayikra 23:10).

The Torah commands us to bring an *omer* offering from the first harvest to the kohen, following which we must begin counting seven weeks, which are the forty-nine days until the festival of Shavuot, the Giving of the Torah. Our Sages ask why Hashem commanded us to bring this *omer* offering to the Kohen, and why we have to count forty-nine days from Pesach until Shavuot? Hashem could have commanded Bnei Yisrael to celebrate Shavuot on the sixth of Sivan, even without counting the preceding forty-nine days.

A possible answer is as follows:

The reason Bnei Yisrael were redeemed from Egypt was for the sake of receiving the Torah and inheriting the Land, where they could fulfil the mitzvot dependent on the Land and build the Beit Hamikdash. Hashem knew that Am Yisrael would start wondering, “What will be with our livelihood?” If they dedicate their days to Torah study and mitzvah observance, how will they be able to provide for their needs?

Therefore, Hashem commanded Bnei Yisrael that immediately upon entering the Land they should bring a *korban omer* of the first harvest to the kohen; this would strengthen the idea that it is not their strength or might that brings them wealth, rather Hashem in His goodness and kindness sustains and provides for man, in accordance with his deeds (*Alshich Vayikra* 23:9-10). If Bnei Yisrael follow the path of Torah and mitzvot, Hashem will lavishly provide for their needs, without them needing to exert themselves or labor for it. However, it is impossible to supply man's sustenance without *any* effort on his part – Adam Harishon and all mankind were cursed “By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread.” Therefore, as we well know there is sweat and there is sweat, and so one who is particular to follow in the path of Hashem need not trouble himself excessively.

This is the message behind the *omer* offering: Bnei Yisrael's sustenance is not dependent on their toil alone; Hashem is the One who provides for and sustains every living creature,

from the horns of the *re'em* (a large animal) to lice eggs. He is the One who will provide their livelihood if they obey His command and cleave to His Torah.

Immediately after Bnei Yisrael bring this offering to the kohen they begin *sefirat ha'omer*, out of anticipation for the Giving of the Torah. This proves their dedication and vigor for Torah, with the knowledge that Torah endows man with goodness and blessing. This can be compared to a young man who eagerly awaits his wedding day. He counts down the days and as more days pass and the long-awaited day approaches, the more his excitement and joy escalates. Similarly, Bnei Yisrael were commanded to count the *omer* in anticipation of Matan Torah. This proves their great desire to receive the Torah, as well as their understanding that Torah alone endows them with life and opens the storehouses of Heaven, showering them with abundant blessings and goodness.

Chazal relate the following incident (*Shemot Rabba* 52:3): A *talmid* of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai left Eretz Yisrael and returned wealthy. The other students saw this and were jealous. They too wished to travel to *chutz la'aretz* to become wealthy. Rabbi Shimon became aware of this so he took them to a certain valley and prayed, “Valley, valley, fill up with golden dinars,” and it began filling up with golden dinars. He said to them, “If you are asking for gold, here is gold. Take it – but know that whoever indulges now is deducting from his portion in the World to Come, since the reward for Torah is reserved for the World to Come, as it says, ‘She joyfully awaits the last day.’”

When his students heard this, they understood their master's hidden rebuke. They were strengthened with the knowledge of the great reward awaiting those who follow in the correct path. They discarded all the treasures they had collected, while repeating to themselves that true wealth and happiness awaits them in the Next World.

According to Rabbi Shimon, the entire world stands on Torah alone, therefore he saw no reason for man to toil for his livelihood. He firmly believed that Hashem takes care of the livelihood of one who studies Torah and toils in *avodat Hashem* (*Berachot* 35b).

Although we are extremely far from Rabbi Shimon's lofty level – he was entirely holy – even just *contemplating* his sublime stature has the power to strengthen our faith. It brings us to the realization that “Man's sustenance is determined from the beginning of the year to year's end” by the Master of all Who examines our deeds and delivers His ruling accordingly. This is the meaning of the verse (*Tehillim* 55:23), “Cast your burden upon Hashem and He will sustain you.” By trusting that HaKadosh Baruch Hu will take care of your livelihood, you will merit the fulfillment of “He will sustain you.”

15 Iyar 5786
2 May 2026

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Emor



Hilula

15 Iyar
Rabbi David Yehudayof

16 Iyar
Rabbi Rafael Eliyahu Abu,
founder of Otzar HaTorah,
Morocco

17 Iyar
Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim
Moreh, Rav of Tehran

18 Iyar
Rabbi Shalom Buzgalo,
author of *Mikdash Melech*

19 Iyar
Rabbi Ezra Attia,
Rosh Yeshiva Porat Yosef

20 Iyar
Rabbi Yosef Velatoch

21 Iyar
Rabbi Reuven Pinto,
Rav in Marrakesh





PARSHAH PEARLS

Inspiring Reflections

The Importance of Remaining Calm

“They shall not make a bald spot on their heads, and they shall not shave an edge of their beard; and in their flesh they shall not cut a gash” (Vayikra 21:5).

Since kohanim are short-tempered, explains Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim zy”a, the Ben Ish Chai, this verse comes to warn them about the trait of anger. *Chazal* say (*Pesachim* 66b), “One who becomes angry, if he is wise, his wisdom disappears.” Wisdom is found in the head. Therefore, the kohanim were warned, “They shall not make a bald spot on their heads” – they should not become angry and lose the wisdom they have in their heads.

It is common for people who are generally calm to become more easily upset on fast days. Therefore it is necessary to insert a special warning not to become angry on fast days.

This is alluded to in the above verse: The Hebrew word for beard is spelt *zayin*, *kuf*, *nun*. The letter preceding *zayin* is **vav**, the letter preceding *kuf* is **tzadik** and the letter **mem** precedes the *nun*. These letters, re-arranged, spell **tzom**, the Hebrew word for fast. The Torah says, “They shall not make a bald spot” – kohanim must not become angry so that they should not lose their wisdom as a result. And “... an edge of their beard” – the *side* of the beard, referring to “*tzom*,” the letters that *precede* beard, “they shall not shave.”

Above all, “In their flesh they shall not cut a gash” – they must also protect their health and not grow angry.

Our Limited Perception

“The son of an Israelite woman went out” (Vayikra 24:10).

Rashi explains that the son of an Israelite woman went about in the camp scoffing at the showbread: “A king normally eats warm, freshly baked bread. So why should Hashem have cold, nine-day old bread in the Tabernacle?”

The *Oznayim L’Torah* expounds on the moral lesson this contains: A Jew is obligated to observe the mitzvot exactly according to the law, whether he understands their reason or not. If we don’t understand some conduct of Hashem or one of the Torah commandments it is only due to our limited perception.

The way the blasphemer behaved is a proof of this concept. He began by scoffing at the mitzvah of the showbread since he found the matter surprising, which led to him later pronouncing G-d’s Name and blaspheming.

According to his perception, it is appropriate for a King to eat warm, fresh bread every day and not nine-day old, stale bread.

But had he believed that “the judgements of Hashem are true, altogether righteous” and waited a week, he would have seen that the bread was still warm after eight days. He then would have been saved from this serious sin and its punishment.



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by
Moreinu v’Rabbeinu
Hagaon Hatzaddik
Rabbi David Chananya
Pinto, *shlita*

Resolute in Her Decision

I once received a call from a woman whose newborn was having trouble breathing and was in critical condition. She requested a blessing for his complete recovery.

In order for my blessing to be effective, I asked the woman to undertake the mitzvah of dressing modestly, like all good Jewish daughters. B’ezrat Hashem, in the merit of my holy ancestors, her son would recuperate from his respiratory condition. The woman did as I asked and her baby’s condition improved.

However, after some time his situation deteriorated. The mother phoned me again in a fury. “If the child dies, G-d forbid, I will revoke my commitment to dress modestly!”

I was very pained at her words and told her, “In *Tehillim* (24:3) we read, ‘Who may ascend the mountain of Hashem, and who may stand in the place of His sanctity?’ In this world, there are two types of tests. There are challenges sent by Hashem in order to awaken a person to repent for his sins. These are referred to as ‘who may ascend the mountain of Hashem.’ And there are others which are sent to test one’s level of faith and devotion toward his Maker. These are called, ‘who may stand in the place of His sanctity.’ It is certainly difficult to ascend in levels of spirituality, but it is many times harder to retain the holy level one has achieved.

“You faced the first type of challenge at your son’s birth. You faced it admirably, accepting upon yourself to be more stringent with modesty. Now Hashem is testing you with a different type of challenge. He wants to examine if you are consistent in your resolution, or if it was just a passing whim, undertaken temporarily for your son’s recovery.

“B’ezrat Hashem, when you show determination to unconditionally uphold your pledge, despite the *yetzer hara* convincing you to stop, you will merit the recovery of your young son.”

Baruch Hashem, this woman courageously withstood her trial and even further strengthened her fear of G-d. She merited seeing salvation and her son recovered completely.



FROM THE TREASURY

Based on the teachings of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, *shlita*

Anger interferes with Presence of Mind

“The son of an Israelite woman went out” (*Vayikra* 24:10).

Rashi writes, “Where did he go out from? Rabbi Levi says that he left his share in the World to Come... And the Mishna says that the Beit Din of Moshe ruled against him. He came to pitch his tent in the camp of Dan, and they said to him, ‘What brings you here?’ He replied, ‘I am a descendant of Dan.’ They said, ‘It is written, “Each man by his banner according to the insignias of their father’s household.”’ He went to the Beit Din of Moshe and they ruled against him, so he began blaspheming.”

Rashi explains that this son of the Israelite began debating with the tribe of Dan: he wished to pitch his tent in their portion since his Jewish mother, Shlomit bat Dibri, descended from the tribe of Dan. But the tribe of Dan told him that the Torah rules that inheritance goes according to the father, and since his father was a non-Jew he was not entitled to a portion in their inheritance. The son of the Israelite did not accept this answer, so he went to the court of Moshe where they ruled in favor of Dan. Out of great anger and rage over this ruling, he began blaspheming the Name of G-d.

This demonstrates the severity and danger of the trait of anger. One who is overcome with anger loses his senses and lacks self-control. As it says (*Nedarim* 22a), “One who becomes angry is seized by all kinds of Gehinnom.” This means that besides inheriting Gehinnom in the Next World, the dangerous spirits of This World, who are messengers of Gehinnom, will harm him. It is no secret that many have suffered nervous breakdowns, heart attacks, strokes, and other maladies *r”l*, as a result of enormous rage.

In light of Rashi’s words we can conclude that the blasphemer deteriorated to this low level of cursing G-d’s Name out of his great rage. Besides this, he also spoke against the truth and denied reality: despite being aware of the enormous miracle that occurred with the show-bread, he scoffed at it, because as we explained, anger totally disrupts one’s rational mind.



WORDS OF THE SAGES

How Do We Observe the Mitzvot?

We may ponder why we define ourselves as “Torah observant Jews.” What exactly are we trying to observe? A careful look in the holy Torah reveals that the term “observe” is mentioned several times, an example of which we find in this week’s parsha: “You shall observe My commandments and perform them” (*Vayikra* 22:31).

So what exactly is this “observing” that the Torah commands us and how do we carry it out?

Rabbi Reuven Karlenstein *zt”l* addresses this topic in his *sefer Yechi Reuven*. He writes that in fact, it is possible to interpret the words “You shall **observe** My commandments” according to its simple meaning: an expression of guarding. We are being commanded to guard the mitzvot and protect them so that they should not become spoiled; to preserve the quality of the mitzvot. If a person does not pay attention and performs a mitzvah without heart, joy, or thought, it does not have much value.

He quotes a beautiful explanation in the name of Rabbi Shalom Schwadron *zt”l*, on the verse, “You shall safeguard the matzot” (*Shemot* 12:17). The Mechilta expounds: “Do not read it ‘*matzot*’ but ‘*mitzvot*’.” Just as one does not leave the matzah dough to rise, so one should not neglect a mitzvah opportunity. If a mitzvah comes your way, perform it immediately.” Asks Rabbi Shalom, why does the Torah specify this rule particularly in reference to this verse and not in any other place?

He replied: “Wonder of wonders! In order for a matzah to become *chametz*, it is not necessary to do any act with one’s hands, it is enough just to leave the dough alone. If dough that is made from water and flour is left to rest without doing anything to it, it will automatically rise.

“Therefore, specifically in this verse the Torah alludes to this lesson and stresses: Do not forgo a mitzvah opportunity! You should know that to spoil a mitzvah and lose it, it is not necessary to perform any negative act. If you don’t stand guard over it, it will quickly get lost or ruined.”

When a person recites the blessings after a meal, it is a time of closeness to Hashem. In the second blessing, “We thank You,” we are claiming something mighty. We are thanking Hashem for His covenant and His Torah! *Chazal* tell us, “One who does not recite the [section of the] covenant and the Torah has not fulfilled his obligation [of grace after meals].” However, even if he does recite this section but his thoughts were elsewhere, he is losing out incredibly! The *sefer Yesod Veshoresh Ha’avodah*, as well as other *sefarim*, write that if one says the blessings but does not pay attention to what one is saying, even though one has mentioned the covenant and Torah, one loses the value of the mitzvah. Just through a lack of observation and appropriate concentration on the words one is reciting, one loses this blessing which is a Torah obligation!

When a person wakes up in the morning he should think to himself: “Ah, I will soon merit laying tefillin!” But sometimes he wakes up and the first question that comes to his mind is, “What’s the time? Maybe I can sleep for another five minutes...” Let us think about this: How can he long to sleep? It’s almost time to put on tefillin! Feel excited! The mitzvah of tefillin! Wait for it with anticipation!

“You shall **observe** My commandments and perform them.”

This is the preparation required for mitzvot. If one merits “observing” the commandments, then “performance” will follow.

A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

Chinuch Thoughts from the Great Roshei Yeshivot



If we turn our attention skyward and take a look at the stars, they appear as nothing more than tiny dots of light. But the truth is, stars are huge masses – some are even ten times larger than Earth itself.

A Torah-based outlook compares the teachers of young children to stars, as *Chazal* say (*Baba Batra* 8b), “Those who teach righteousness to the multitudes [will shine] like the stars, forever and ever’ – This refers to those who instruct young children.” This week’s *parsha* begins by addressing those who instruct the public, “Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and tell them.” *Chazal* point out an apparent redundancy in the verse. Why was it necessary to say “and tell them” after it already said “say?” They explain that this teaches that the adult kohanim took extra caution regarding the children.

The *tzaddik* Rabbi Chaim Friedlander *zt”l*, Mashgiach of Ponevezh Yeshiva, raises the question of why those who teach young children are compared to stars.

He explains how educators and teachers of young children do their job seriously, but the importance and impact of what they are doing is not always felt. In reality, they are creating worlds. Every *talmid* who grows up following the path set for him is ascribed to the merit of his teachers and parents – it is clearly a result of their investment and care. The success of his education endures and affects future generations. The opposite is also true: A flawed education can lead to defection in generations to come.

Rabbi Eliezer Turk *shlit”a*, in his *sefer Otzroteihem Amaleh*, relates that Hagaon Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky used to learn with his young sons every day, and even finished Shas with several of them before they reached Bar Mitzvah. Rabbi Chaim was asked why he did this – are young children at all capable of grasping complicated *sugyot* in *Eiruv* and *Nidah*? His measured reply was:

“I wanted to show them that finishing Shas is not something unattainable. This itself would encourage them and fill them with the aspiration to continue learning and completing masechtot.”

This is the implication of *Chazal*, “If there are no kids there are no goats and if there are no goats there are no kids.” If we want our offspring to grow up with the correct outlook in life, we must instill in their pure souls, already from a young age, all the principles that are important to us. We must imprint the value of Torah in their hearts, the longing to grow in Torah and gather its treasures, even while they are still infants.

In a similar vein, the esteemed Admor of Kalev *zt”l* relates that when he was in the Auschwitz concentration camp during the war, he met a young boy who was wandering around, constantly mumbling to himself. The Admor approached him and asked, “What are you constantly mumbling?” At first the boy recoiled in fright. All the prisoners were bald and lacked any sign of Jewishness on their faces. He had no idea who this being who had picked on him was, and what his intentions were.

But after the Admor identified himself the young boy answered, “I constantly repeat to myself the eternal verse ‘Hear, O Israel: Hashem is our G-d, Hashem, the One and Only.’ My mother *hy”d* would repeat this verse to me morning and night, from when I was still in the cradle. This is the only verse that I know by-heart and it accompanies me through all the difficulties that I am now experiencing in this terrible war.”

Waves of Love

One of the vital principles in education, stresses Harav Turk *shlit”a*, is love. Love is essential; it forms a soul connection between rav and *talmid*, which paves the way for the rav to make an impression on his *talmid*.

Without love, a rav can get his *talmid* to do the motions, but he is incapable of having any lasting effect on his *talmid*. The greater the love between rav and *talmid*, the greater his chances of influencing him positively.

A distinguished Rosh Yeshiva in Yerushalayim relates that when he established his Yeshiva Ketana, he approached the esteemed Admor of Slonim *shlit”a* for guidance.

The Admor told him the following, “My father, the Netivot Shalom of Slonim *zt”l*, would say that when a teacher or Maggid Shiur enters his class on the first day of the year and meets his *talmidim* for the first time, before opening his mouth he must sit quietly for a moment and gaze loving at his dear *talmidim* sitting in the room, and try to fill his heart with sincere love for them. Only when he loves them can he truly influence them. Love for one’s *talmidim* is critical and essential for the entire relationship between rav and *talmid*.”

Rabbi Abish Eizen *shlit”a* relates that when he was a *talmid* in the Eitz Chaim Talmud Torah, he merited travelling several times, as part of an organized trip by the Talmud Torah, to Maran the Chazon Ish *zt”l*, who tested them on their learning and blessed them. During those visits, he merited hearing the Chazon Ish speaking to the *melamed* and telling him more or less these words: **“A *melamed* must know that if he greets every single *talmid* when he arrives at the Talmud Torah in the morning with a wide smile, the *talmid* will return this gesture with two smiles – and his whole day will pass differently.”**

The Chazon Ish taught the *melamed* that the entire relationship between a teacher and his *talmid*, his measure of influence and soul-connection, depends on his pleasant countenance, his patience, and demonstrations of love and affection that he shows to his *talmid*. This is the only way to succeed in opening his heart and having a far-reaching influence on him.



“Contemplate and see that Hashem is good”

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