



Menucha v'Simcha



A PARSHA WEEKLY BY THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL

Candle Lighting: 4:51p.m.

Parshas Bo 5775

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DVAR TORAH

Lessons From an Ant

By Rabbi Yosef Prupas

Most of us are familiar with the concept of “*zerizus*,” generally translated as, “performance of mitzvohs with alacrity.” We tend to understand it to mean that beyond the actual obligation to fulfill the mitzva, one would receive “extra points” by immediately performing the mitzva. However the *Mechilta*, as Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner points out, suggests a deeper meaning. The *Mechilta* expounds upon a verse in this week’s Parsha, “*V’shamartem es hamatzos*” “And you shall guard the matzos”. Our sages tell us that the similar Hebrew lettering of “matzos” to “mitzvohs” in the verse, hints to a loftier concept. “*Mi’kan she’ein machmitzin es hamitvohs*” “From here we learn that one should not let his mitzvohs become *chometz*.” By not performing a mitzva right away, it becomes like *chometz* on *Pesach*. This comparison of non-immediate fulfillment of a mitzva to *chometz*, implies that there is an actual defect in the mitzvah. Why is this?

Rabbi Hutner tells us that to comprehend this concept, we must first discard our pre-conceived notions as to what *zerizus* is. For if all *zerizus* means is rushing to do something, the “rushing” to do a mitzvah would be no different then the “rushing” to go to work. We do see a hint of a loftier meaning in an interesting Gemara in *Eiruvin* (100b). The Gemara there lists various animals, from whom, we are able to learn certain positive character traits even if the Torah had not been given. Rabbi Hutner asks, why does the Gemara omit learning how not to be lazy from an ant, when a verse in *Mishlei* clearly advises one to do so? It seems that without Torah knowledge, learning how not to be lazy from an ant would not be possible. What does this mean?

The path to understanding *zerizus* is through a parable explaining a verse in *Koheles*. The verse states “*Hanefesh lo simalei*,” “The soul never senses fulfillment.” This is comparable to a princess who marries a commoner. The commoner never having been exposed to a royal lifestyle, lacks the ability to fully comprehend and fulfill his wife’s wishes. So too one’s soul, stemming

from an infinite and loftier world, will never be satisfied by the pettiness of our physical world.

The Vilna Gaon writes that the words of our daily prayer “*Baruch She’amar*” reference two physical creations – the universe and time. That being the case, our souls reject not only the physicality of the universe, but time as well. Coming from a world without time, it is our soul’s deepest desire to fulfill its spiritual desires, i.e. mitzvohs, without the limitations of time. Doing a mitzvah with a sense of urgency demonstrates a sincere desire to break the shackles of time and fulfill the mitzvah in its true spiritual element, beyond time. That is the meaning of *zerizus*.

We can now turn back to the ant. The Medrash tells us that an ant “only lives six months and only requires the total amount of a kernel and a half of wheat to sustain itself during that time. Yet it brings in hundreds of measures of wheat.” An ant works much more than what it needs to exist. It lives a life beyond its existence. Only having learned what true *zerizus* is, can one now look at an ant and comprehend what the verse in *Mishlei* advises one to learn from the ant. Not to live for something more, traps the mitzvah within time, curtailing its true potential. It ruins the mitzvah.

The Maharal teaches us that the commandment to rush out of Egypt was to convey and internalize at the onset of Jewish Nationhood the eternity of the Jewish People. May we through our *zerizus* merit that eternity speedily in our day.

DVAR HALACHA

Halachos of Netilas Yadayim

By Rabbi Yochanan Eskenazi

We mentioned last week that one should preferably use a cup for *netilas yadayim*. There is a *machlokes haposkim* whether one may use a disposable, plastic or paper cup. According to many *poskim* it is acceptable, however, in the opinion of Harav Moshe Feinstein, *zt”l*, since disposable cups nowadays do not have *chashivus* (importance), ideally they should not be used. If one has no other cup, perhaps he can use it (Igros Moshe OC



Menucha Vesimcha has been dedicated by **Kutest Kids Early Intervention Services**.

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3:39).

As mentioned last week, according to the Zohar the reason we wash *netilas yadayim* is because there is *ruach raah* (spiritual impurity) on the hands. In addition to sleeping, other activities that cause *ruach raah* include: cutting nails (Shulchan Aruch 4:18), cutting hair (Shulchan Aruch 4:19), entering a bathroom, attending a funeral and entering a cemetery (Shulchan Aruch 4:18). The water used to wash off the *ruach raah* is prohibited to benefit from (Shulchan Aruch 4:9), since it can cause damage (Mishneh Berurah 4:21). One may not even give it to his animals (Mishneh Berurah 4:20) or wash his dishes or floor (see Shulchan Aruch 4:9). If water did get onto his dishes (e.g. he washed his hands over the dirty dishes in the sink) he should rinse off the dishes before using them (Laws of Daily Living Vol. 1 pg. 20).

Additionally, one should also be careful not to touch any food products before washing his hands (Shulchan Aruch 4:4). If one did, he should wash off the food if possible (Mishneh Berurah 4:14). There is a discussion in the *poskim* if one may buy food that a Jew who did not wash *netilas yadayim* touched the food. Some opinions hold that one should not buy from him [unless he is able to wash it off]. Others disagree that since a person will generally wash his hands a few times for sanitary purposes, we can assume that he washed some level of *netilas yadayim* (see Laws of Daily Living pg. 8: ftnt. 34).

Before washing *netilas yadayim* one should not touch any openings of his body (Shulchan Aruch 4:3). The Mishneh Berurah [4:12] writes that ideally one should not touch even

the outside part of any of those openings [e.g. the outside of one's nose or ears]. However, it is permitted to touch those areas through a cloth.

Anytime one is required to wash *netilas yadayim* because of *ruach raah*, he should try to wash *netilas yadayim* after each thing he does which requires him to wash. For example, if one cuts his hair and nails, one should wash after each activity, as opposed to waiting until you complete both of them. Additionally, one needs to wash their entire hand (Mishneh Berurah 4:38).

There are additional cases when one has to wash *netilas yadayim* in order to clean them from uncleanness [like excrement or perspiration], but not because of *ruach raah*. In these type of situations, one would only need to wash his hand one time and does not need to wash his hand immediately (Mishneh Berurah 4:38). Included in this category is: touching shoes (Shulchan Aruch 4:18) and touching a normally uncovered part of the body (Shulchan Aruch 4:18 & Mishneh Berurah 4:41).

The *poskim* write that there are certain instances one would not be required to wash *netilas yadayim*. This includes: sticking your hand into the bathroom [e.g. to turn off the light switch] (Shu"t Rivivos Efraim 1:6:1); one who bites his nails out of habit or nervousness; one who cuts someone else's nails (Laws of Daily Living pg. 31); one who cuts his beard or *peyos* (Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 2:7 ftnt 10); one who touched shoes never worn outdoors or only touched the shoelaces (Laws of Daily Living pg. 36); one who gets up in the middle of the night to take care of a child [and touch the bottle] (Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 13:16).

Kollel News

Friday, January 23:

4:51 p.m.: Candle Lighting
5:09 p.m.: Shkiya/sunset

Shabbos, January 24:

8:15 a.m.: *Shacharis*
9:08/ 9:44 a.m.: Latest Krias Shema

4:30 p.m.: Mincha
5:10 p.m.: Shkiya/ Sunset
6:05 p.m.: Ma'ariv.
6:22 p.m.: 72 minutes
6:45 p.m.: MASMID
7:30 p.m.: Rabbi Reisman's Navi Shiur

KESHER 2015 Mother and Daughter program. Week #3 This Sunday Morning! January 25, 2015.

Coming Up! Two Exciting Shiurim For Women

1. Come and Hear the Internationally Renown Author and Lecturer **Miriam Kosman** on **"Its a Man's World (But Maybe it Should Be a Woman's?)," Exploring Gender in Judaism, Tuesday, February 17th, 2015** at the home of Stacey Goldman, 325 Sycamore Avenue Merion

Station, PA 19066 Lecture Starts at 8:15pm

2. REJUVENATE! An Inspirational and Educational Refresher on the Laws of Taharas Hamishpacha: Given by the Popular **Rochel Goldbaum** The two part lecture will take place on **Wednesday Evening, February 18th, 2015** at the home of Shani Daniel 300 Highland Ave Merion Station, Pa. Program begins 8:00pm sharp

Community News

Bnos of Bala Cynwyd will not meet this shabbos, Parshas Bo, Jan. 24.

Torah Youth will meet this Shabbos from 2:45– 3:45 pm in the social hall of LMS.

Mazel Tov To:

Russell and Chaya Lyons on the birth of a grandson to their children, Yaacov and Michaela!

Rabbi and Mrs. Shmuel and Ruthie Lynn on the bris of thier son, Gavriel Chaim!

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