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THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

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A PACKET OF COOKIES

“One who will strike his fellow without knowledge...he shall flee to one of these cities (of refuge) and live.” (19:4,6)

If a person accidentally killed someone, the Torah provides for him to flee to a ‘city of refuge.’ There he had to stay until the Kohen Gadol passed away. However, if the fugitive emerged before the death of the Kohen Gadol, he risked being killed by the slain person’s ‘blood avenger.’

It could well be that the Kohen would be a young man, and so the fugitive could be cooped many long years, not able to go home.

Thus, he had a vested interest in the Kohen’s early demise.

To stop him from praying for the the Kohen’s premature death, the Kohen’s mother would send the fugitive regular “care packages” so that he shouldn’t pray for her son to die.

But how could a mere ‘packet of cookies’ compete with the longing to return to his home and his family? Did the Kohen Gadol’s mother really think that a little gastronomic bribery would stand up to the homesickness of the fugitive?

We can see from this a powerful idea: If we want our prayers to be answered we must pray **with every last ounce of conviction**. In *davening*, 99% is not enough.

Just a packet of cookies was all that was needed to ‘knock the gloss’ off the prayers of the fugitive, and ensure a healthy, and long, life for the Kohen Gadol...

• *Heard from Ephraim Hodes at his vort, in the name of Rabbi Eisenblatt*

INSIGHTS

STATUS SYMBOL

“...he (the king) shall write for himself two copies of this Torah in a book... It shall be with him and he shall read from it all the days of his life, so that he will learn to fear Hashem, his G-d...” (17:18,19)

During the *Amidah* — the standing prayer — a person bows four times. The Kohen Gadol (high priest), however, has to bow at the end of every bracha — 19 times. And a Jewish king has to bow at the beginning and the end of each and every bracha — 38 times!

Another opinion holds that the Kohen Gadol has to bow at the beginning and the end of every bracha, and a king bows once at the beginning of the prayer and stays bent over during the entire prayer.

The greater a person is the more he must humble himself before Hashem because the more Hashem has given him.

Also, the greater the person, the greater is the temptation to think that his greatness is of his own making.

For this reason, a king has *two* sifrei Torah, one of which he must keep with him the whole time. He needs a constant reminder that he is the servant of The Law, a servant of the Almighty, and all his power and status is only given to him to serve Hashem.

• *Talmud Berachos 34, Rashi heard from Rabbi Yehoshua Bertram*

LIVING LINKS

“And you will come to the priests, the Leviim, and the judge who will be in those days.” (17:9)

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi was extremely sensi-

tive to the smell of garlic and could not tolerate its odor. Once, he was teaching a group of students. He paused, the smell of garlic reaching his nose... “Would the student who ate garlic, kindly leave the room?” he asked. Not just one, but many students left. One of them was Rabbi Chiya.

The next day, Rabbi Shimon (Rabbi Yehuda’s son) chided Rabbi Chiya for his lack of consideration in eating garlic before attending the lecture. Rabbi Chiya replied “I didn’t eat any garlic. The reason I left was so that the offender should not have to be embarrassed by revealing his identity.”

Where did Rabbi Chiya learn the need for this sensitivity to the feelings of others? The Talmud teaches us that Rabbi Chiya learned this behavior from seeing Rabbi Meir conduct himself in a similar way. And from whom did Rabbi Meir learn it? From Shmuel HaKatan. And Shmuel? From Schania in the Book of Ezra. And Schania learned it from Yehoshua, who learned from Moshe Rabbeinu.

Why didn’t the Talmud skip all those generations and just get to the point? Why didn’t it just say “Rabbi Chiya learned his sensitivity and noble behavior from Moshe Rabbeinu?”

We stand at the end of an unbroken chain of generations. A chain of generations that stretches back ultimately to Moshe Rabbeinu and a moment of supreme contact with Hashem on Sinai. **But our contact with that moment is with the great sages of our own generation.** There are no “missing links” in the chain of the Torah. Every rebbe is a talmid of *his* rebbe.

When we seek wisdom and direction, we need look no further than our own living links to the past.

• *Based on Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz zt”l*

Moshe tells the Bnei Yisrael to appoint judges and officers in their cities. A bribe of even an insignificant sum is forbidden. Trees are not to be planted near Hashem’s altar as was the way of idolaters. Blemishes in animals designated for offerings and other points of disqualification are listed. The

Great Sanhedrin is to make binding decisions on new situations according to Torah criteria to prevent the fragmentation of the Torah. A very learned scholar who refuses to accept the Halachic decisions of the Sanhedrin incurs the death penalty. A Jewish king may only have possessions and symbols of power commensurate with the honor of his office, but not for self-aggrandizement. He is to write for himself two *Sifrei Torah*, one to be kept with him wherever he goes, so that he doesn’t become haughty. Neither the *Kohanim* nor the Levites are to inherit land in the Land of Israel, rather they are to be supported by the community, by a system of tithes. All divination is prohibited. Hashem promises the Jewish People that He will send them prophets to guide them, and Moshe

explains how a genuine prophet may be distinguished from a false one. Cities of refuge are to be provided for someone who kills accidentally, in order to escape the blood-avenger from the family of the deceased. However someone who kills with malice is to be handed over

to the blood-avenger who may exact his revenge. Moshe cautions the Bnei Yisrael not to move boundary markers to increase their property. Two witnesses who conspire to “frame” a third are to be punished with that same punishment that they conspired to bring upon the innocent party. A *Kohen* is to be anointed specifically for when Israel goes to war, to instill trust in Hashem.

Amongst those who are disqualified from going to war is anyone who has built a new house, but not lived in it yet, or anyone who is fearful or fainthearted. An enemy must be given chance to make peace, but if they refuse, all the males are to be killed. Fruit trees are to be preserved and not cut down during the siege. If a corpse is found between cities, the elders of the nearest city must take a heifer, slaughter it, and wash their hands over it, saying that they are not guilty of the death.

OVERVIEW



INSIGHTS INTO THE SHABBOS ZEMIRO

צור משול "THE ROCK..."

*"With food and sustenance
He satisfies our souls..."*

There are two categories of food: The necessities such as bread which are referred to as *mazon* and the luxuries such as meat which are in the category of *tzaidah*.

This distinction is evident from the analysis made by our Sages (*Mesechta Chulin* 84a) of the term used by the Torah (*Vayikra* 17:13) in describing the manner in which one acquires the undomesticated animal or fowl whose blood he must cover before he eats its flesh. "When a man shall trap his prey ..." says the Torah even though the same requirement applies to fowl which need no trapping. The lesson is one in economic practicality: Don't eat meat so readily because it may strain your budget. Approach its consumption as if you had to exert yourself to trap the animal or fowl and you will avoid becoming impoverished.

Therefore, on Shabbos when we eat both bread and meat we sing praise to Hashem for "satisfying our souls" with both the necessity and the luxury.



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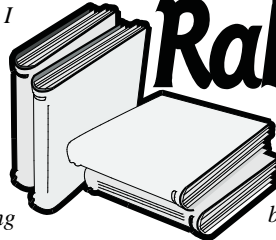
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GRANDMA DRAMA

<ABubbe@aol.com> wrote:

I am an actress. A wonderful part in a play has become available to me. It's a truthful play dealing with prejudice and real emotions...with much humor and pathos. It is a play that touches the heart.

However for the first time in my long acting experience, I am confronted with a moral decision. The play and the lines I will have to say are not ones that I would be proud for my children or my grandchildren to hear (even though they will not see this play). My question is, is it right for me to consider taking this part?



Ask the Rabbi

LIEN ON HIS CAR

Alan Shear

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wrote:

This question was asked to me at a halacha shiur I gave:

If one purchases a car, which will belong to him in a few years time (since actually the bank owns it until the owner can pay back fully for it) but does not currently belong to him, may he make a Shehechyanu blessing on it — or should he wait until the car is fully paid for, and actually belongs to him, and then say the blessing?

Dear Bubbe,

Guess what? All of us are confronted with your exact decision! This world is a 'great play' with fantastic scenery and ingenious props. We all have a wonderful part in it.

But it is an improvisational theater; the lines of the play are ad-lib. I can only tell you how I try to make up the lines for my part. I don't first look at my children to see how they will react to my performance. First, I look at the 'Producer' — the one responsible for giving me the part in the first place.

One should always use 'clean' language, and never utter an offensive or coarse word. Even words such as 'p - i - g' should be avoided when possible.

Your embarrassment in the face of your children is telling. When Joseph's brothers plotted to kill him, Judah said, "What good is it if we kill our brother, and cover his blood?" I heard from Rabbi Yisroel Simcha Shorr, *shlita*, an explanation of the words "and cover his blood." Judah told his brothers: "However justified we may feel in killing Joseph, the fact that we have to 'cover it up' indicates that, underneath it all, we know it's wrong."

Now, I have a question for you. Will the play be performed Friday night, or Saturday night before dark? No? Good.

Dear Alan Shear,

I asked this question to Rabbi Sholom Yoseph Elyashiv, *shlita*. He rules that provided one is capable of making the monthly payments, he should say *shehechyanu* at the time of purchase.

Since the *shehechyanu* blessing depends on '*simchat halev*' — happiness of the heart — one should say it as soon as possible, while he still feels the '*simcha*'.

Speaking of the bank owning something — or having a 'lien' on it:

A king once wanted his vassals to pay higher taxes.

"But what if they don't pay?" asked the king's advisor.

"We'll slap a lien on their property," said the king.

"What shall we call this 'lein' imposed upon the vassals?" he asked.

"Please," said the king. "Don't try to force me into making a bad pun."

Sources:

• *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 223:4

Yiddle Riddle

In what non-life-threatening situation is there a positive mitzvah to eat the meat of a *neveilah* — i.e., something that died without *shechita* (kosher slaughter)?

• Riddle submitted by Reuven Miller <millerr@ashur.cc.biu.ac.il>

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WHEN ONE MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

If someone makes a voluntary meal offering (*mincha*) he may bring any amount from one *issaron* of flour – the standard amount of a *mincha* – to 60 *issronim* in one vessel.

Why is there a limit of 60? Two explanations are offered:

1) Rabbi Yehuda's reasoning is based on the fact that the most *issronim* we ever find offered by the community along with its sacrifices is 61. This happens when the first day of Sukkos is on Shabbos and this is the calculation: Regular daily lambs – 2; additional lambs for Shabbos – 2; additional lambs for Sukkos – 14; total lambs – 18; one *issaron* per lamb = 18. Additional rams for Sukkos – 2; two *issronim* per ram = 4. Additional bullocks for Sukkos – 13; three *issronim* per bullock = 39. Total *issronim* 61.

Since the most the community can bring is 61 it makes sense that the individual should be one step down and offer only 60.

2) Rabbi Shimon's explanation is that the one *lug* of oil which must be mixed with the flour to make the dough can only be effectively mixed into 60 *issronim*, not one more.

This explanation encounters two challenges:

If 60 *issronim* can be blended with oil does it make sense that one more cannot?

The rule is that even if the oil is not actually mixed into the flour the *mincha* is kosher. Why does it matter then if 61 *issronim* cannot be mixed with the oil?

In regard to the first challenge, Rabbi Shimon declares that all of the standards and measurements stated by the Sages are precise. If a *mikveh* has forty *se'ah* the one who immerses himself in it has become purified. If it lacks a drop from this amount he remains impure.

As far as the second point, the insistence is not on the **actual** mixing of the oil and flour but rather on the **possibility** of it tak-



Insights, explanations and comments for the seven pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle.

ing place. This is the famous rule of: “When anything is capable of being mixed together, the actual mixing is no longer an absolute prerequisite; if it is not capable of being mixed then this is an absolute prerequisite.”

• Menachos 103b

THE GIFT OF POVERTY

A subtle distinction is made by the Torah in describing one who offers a sacrifice. In introducing the chapter on the voluntary offering of an animal or bird the expression used is: “If any **man** of you brings an offering” (Vayikra 1:2). The chapter concerning the voluntary meal offering (Vayikra 2:1) begins: “And when a *“nefesh”* (literally, a life) will offer a meal offering.”

What is the reason for the use of the word “*nefesh*” in regard to a meal offering?

Rabbi Yitzchak explains that it is as if Hashem was saying to us: “Who is accustomed to bringing a meal offering if not the poor man. (In Vayikra 5:11 the rule of the sliding scale for certain sacrifices entitles the poor man who can afford neither animal or bird to achieve his atonement with a meal offering.) I shall consider it as if he had offered his very life to Me.”

The commentaries have already pointed out that every sacrifice is a vicarious offering of one's own life, and that the objects designated for sacrifice are either ones which are physiologically similar to man or materials which nourish him.

This concept is apparently difficult for the more prosperous individual to truly identify with because he has so much left after making his offering. The poor man, however, is probably sacrificing his last bit of food, and can more readily imagine that he is offering Hashem his very life.

• Menachos 104b

1. What is the role of *Shoftim*? What is the role of *Shotrim*?
2. May a judge accept a bribe, if only for the purpose of judging fairly?
3. What is the source for the concept ‘Seek out a good *Beis Din*’?
4. Even though the *Avos* were permitted to use *matzeivos*, the Torah later forbade them. Why?
5. “You will come to ... the judge **who will be in those days** (17:9).” Since it's impossible to go to a judge who lives at a different time, why does the Torah add these extra words?
6. How many horses may a Jewish king own?
7. How many Torah scrolls must he have?
8. How was Shaul Hamelech punished for disobeying a ‘minor’ command of the prophet Shmuel?
9. What is meant by ‘*Nachalas Chamisha*’ and ‘*Nachalas Shiva*’?
10. Certain kosher animals are not included in the *din* of *chazeh, shok, and keiva*? Which ones?
11. How many sheep must be shorn before the owner must give a

12. Which three categories of false prophets are executed?
13. What does it mean to ‘prepare the way’ to the cities of refuge?
14. How many witnesses are meant when the Torah uses the word ‘witness’?
15. ‘Through **the mouth** of two witnesses....’ What types of testimony does this verse invalidate?
16. If witnesses in a capital case are proven to be ‘*zomemim*’ (false-conspirators) **before** their ‘victim’ is executed, how are they punished?
17. Why does the section about going to war follow the laws governing witnesses?
18. The Jewish army is warned of four ‘scare-tactics’ the enemy might employ. What are they?
19. When a murder victim is found in a field, who determines which city is closest?
20. What happens to the murderer if he is found after the calf has had its neck broken?



I Didn't Know That!

“Who is the man who built a new house...planted a vineyard...betrothed a woman...? He should go return home lest he die in battle...”(20:5-7) These military exemptions **do not** apply to the battle for the conquest of the Land of Israel. For this, even ‘a bride from her canopy’ goes out to the fray.

• Mishna Sota 8:7, Sforno

Bonus Question ?

“In order that he live long in his kingship... (18:20)” Why does the king need a special promise of long life?

Answers on back page

1. 16:18 - *Shoftim* are judges who pronounce judgment. *Shotrim* are officers who enforce it.
2. 16:19 - No, because it will sway his judgment.
3. 16:20 - "Tzedek tzedek tirdof..."
4. 16:22 - Because the Canaanites used them for idolatry.
5. 17:9 - To teach that although the judge of a particular generation may not be as eminent as those of previous generations, the Jewish People are still obligated to obey him.
6. 17:16 - Only as many as he needs for his carriages.
7. 17:18 - Two. One stays in his treasury and one he keeps with him.
8. 17:20 - He lost his kingship.
9. 18:2 - *Nachalas Chamisha* is the land

of the first five tribes to claim their inheritance: Reuven, Gad, Menashe, Yehuda, and Ephraim. *Nachalas Shiva* is the land of the remaining tribes, who didn't inherit until after Joshua's death.



10. 18:3 - *Chayos* (undomestic-type animals).
11. 18:4 - Five.
12. 18:20 - One who prophesies something he didn't hear, prophesies something that was told to another

prophet, or prophecies in the name of an idol.

13. 19:3 - To post signs saying 'Refuge' at the crossroads to point the way.
14. 19:15 - Two, unless otherwise specified.
15. 19:15 - 1)Written testimony sent to the court; 2)Testimony given through a translator.
16. 19:19 - They are put to death.
17. 20:1 - To teach that if the Jewish People execute judgment in a just fashion they will be victorious in war.
18. 1) Clanging their shields 2) Making their horses stomp and whinny 3) Shouting 4) Blowing horns.
19. 21:2 - The *Sanhedrin*.
20. 21:9 - He is tried and, if guilty, executed.

Recommended Reading List

	RAMBAN		
16:21	Trees	498	Qualities of Leadership
17:11	Obedience	503	Safeguarding the King
17:15	Kingship	510	The Occult
17:20	Conceit	516	True Prophecy
18:15-16	Prophecy	517	False Prophecy
19:8	Our Borders	526	Strengthening the Army
19:13	Self Defense	527	Humane War
20:8	The Torah Army		SFORNO
	SEFER HACHINUCH	16:21	Beautiful But Bad
491	Securing Justice	17:3	The Sun And the Moon
496	Antidote to Anarchy	18:14	Above the Stars

Bonus Answer!

"Leadership positions bury those who occupy them (Pesachim 87)." Being in a position of leadership tends to shorten a person's life. It is for this reason as well that the blessing 'Yechi HaMelech!' 'May the king live!' is offered at the king's inauguration.

HAFTORAH: Isaiah 51:12-52:12

Throughout the long night of exile, it is only the promise that Hashem will one day redeem us and bring

us consolation for all the tragedies which have befallen us that sustains the Jewish People. We know that Hashem is close at hand, and even when the darkness threat-

ens to overwhelm us, we take strength from the words of the Prophet, "It is I, It is I, Who comforts you..."

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