

great happiness, he would still be happy with it when he wakes up in the morning. However, troubles always become less intense after a night's sleep."

During the day, we might experience stress. Throughout the day, it can be bothersome. However, after A Good Night's Sleep, we awaken refreshed. We should thank Hashem for the gift of minimizing or erasing stress. (By Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael.)

### A Thunderous Silence

In the mid 1940's, Rabbi Yisroel Grossman was a student of Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Duschinsky, the world-renowned *talmid hacham* and chief Rabbi of the *Eidah Hacharedit* of Jerusalem. During his four years at the Yeshivah, the young R' Yisroel became a devoted disciple of his great Rebbe.

During those years a small group of dedicated individuals, under the leadership of Menachem Begin, formed the *Irgun*, which fought, often violently, against the British Mandate in *Eress Yisrael*, then called Palestine. The *Irgun's* goal was to force out the British and establish a Jewish state.

One morning, the *Irgun* set off a bomb right outside the British police station in Jerusalem, which was located very close to the Yeshivah. The noise was so deafening that glass shattered, walls rattled and the building trembled. Fearing that it might collapse altogether, the terrified students ran from the study hall of the Yeshivah to seek shelter. Amazingly, Rabbi Duschinsky, who was immersed in his studies, did not move. He seemed unaware of what had happened. Rabbi Grossman saw his fellow students scampering in every direction, and his immediate thought was to join them. However, he then saw that R' Duschinsky was so engrossed in his learning that he was totally oblivious to everything around him.

R' Yisroel decided that he would stay in the *Bet Midrash* and not desert his Rebbe. A second student, R' Duschinsky's son, also remained in the *Bet Midrash*. The two boys spoke nervously to each other, waiting for the Rebbe to notice them. After a few minutes, R' Duschinsky looked up, and saw that the room was empty except for himself and the two boys. "Where is everyone?" he asked, bewildered.

"We think a bomb just exploded next door," R' Yisroel replied. "The noise frightened everyone, and they ran off to find shelter."

R' Duschinsky had not heard anything. He reflected for a moment on what had transpired, and then he said, "The *Hatam Sofer* was once giving a *shiur* in his Yeshivah in Pressburg when he noticed that some of the boys seemed to be moving their lips as though in prayer. 'What are you boys saying?' he asked.

"We are reciting the blessing," one of them answered.

"The blessing for what" asked the *Hatam Sofer*.

"We just heard thunder and saw lightning," the boy replied, "and so we are reciting the appropriate blessings."

"The *Hatam Sofer* looked sternly at the boy and said, 'If one can hear thunder and lightning during his learning, then he is not truly learning!'" (Along the Maggid's Journey)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

## Congregation Magen Abraham

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SHABBAT KITISA ☆ שַׁבַּת כִּי־תִסָּא

SHABBAT PARAH שַׁבַּת פָּרָה

Haftarah: Yehezkel 36:16-38

**MARCH 13-14, 2020 18 ADAR 5780**

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **6:00 pm** Shaharit: **6:10, 6:40, 8:10, 9:10 am**

Candlelighting: **6:42 pm** Morning Shema by: **9:25 am**

Evening Shema after: **7:40 pm** Shabbat Class: **5:20 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **6:20 pm**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Ends: **7:42 pm (R"Y 8:14 pm)**

Sunday Minhah: **6:45 pm**

**From March 13 until April 3 there will be one minyan on Friday night,  
Shir Hashirim 6:00 and Minhah 6:10.**

### A Message from our Rabbi

"וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ מִיָּדוֹ אֶת־הַלְּחֹת וַיִּשְׁבֵּר אֹתָם תַּחַת הַהָר"

"He threw down the *Luhot* from his hands and smashed them at the foot of the mountain" (Shemot 32:19)

Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein writes a true story with a *Halachah* twist. The Rabbi of a shul had a problem. The problem was too much talking in shul during the prayers. He had given speeches on the matter, approached individuals and did everything he could think of to impress upon them how important it is to remain silent during prayers and Torah reading.

One Shabbat, the talking during the Torah reading was so loud and so widespread, that he finally motioned to the Torah reader to stop reading in the middle. Before the amazed eyes of the congregation, he closed the *Sefer Torah* and returned it to the *Hechal* right in the middle of the Torah reading. He then instructed the *Hazan* to start *Ashre* and begin praying *Musaf*.

The message he had been trying so long to convey finally sunk into their hearts. From that moment onwards, there was utter silence during the prayers and Torah reading.

This had been his intention and he was successful, but he still wondered if he had done the right thing. Perhaps it was a disgrace to the *Sefer Torah* to interrupt the Torah

reading and put the *Sefer Torah* back. Perhaps he was also wrong in preventing the congregation from fulfilling their *misvah* to read the weekly Torah portion. Did he do the right thing?

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt”l agreed that the Rabbi did the right thing, and brought a proof from our *Parashah*, in which Moshe *Rabenu* smashed the *Luhot* in response to the golden calf.

Sometimes there are extenuating circumstances in which the only way to preserve the Torah is to do something against it (*bitulah zehu kiyuma*). In the big picture, the Rabbi brought honor and not disgrace to the Torah when he put it back in the *Hechal*, since he stopped them once and for all from talking during the Torah reading.

Anyone in the congregation who took the Torah reading seriously and really wanted to hear the Torah reading that week, could go find a later *minyan* in which to hear it. The next week, the Rabbi’s *minyan* should read both week’s portions, starting from the beginning of the first week. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

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## Crime and Punishment

”אָנָּה חָטָא הָעָם הַזֶּה חֲטָאָה גְּדוּלָּה”

“I implore! This people have committed a grievous sin.” (*Shemot* 32:31)

What did Moshe *Rabenu* mean by this statement? Of course the people committed a grave sin! There was no question about this. On the contrary, by restating the offense, he was essentially adding insult to injury. In his *Ohev Yisrael*, the Apter Rav z”l explains that when a person commits a sin, the greatest punishment is the realization that he has sinned against Hashem. This does not come immediately, but after introspection, he becomes aware of Hashem’s eminence. Thus, the sin which he has committed takes on a different appearance. How could he have sinned against the One Who gave him everything – Who continues to sustain him? He begins to realize that by committing this sin, he has distanced himself from the Source of all sanctity. He will slowly develop a sense of shame, which will ultimately lead to regret and remorse. Then he will accept upon himself not to sin again. Indeed, one who finds himself on the level of this approach will benefit much more than if he were to experience the harshest punishment.

This is what Moshe said to Hashem: “This nation has sinned egregiously – and they know it. What greater shame can there be? What punishment supersedes the pain they must sustain, knowing that they have sinned against their Benefactor? The shame they are experiencing upon confronting the sin will certainly catalyze such regret that this will never happen again. For this reason, they deserve forgiveness and pardon.”

How fortunate is one who achieves such a level of reflection, in which the very fact that he “sinned” is sufficient punishment for him. The realization of the blemish created by the sin, and the distance it accords the sinner in his relationship to Hashem, comprise all of the punishment the person needs. (*Peninim* on the Torah)

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## Out of Sight

”וַרְאוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־פְּנֵי מֹשֶׁה כִּי קָרַן עוֹר פְּנֵי מֹשֶׁה”

“*B’nei Yisrael* saw Moshe’s face, that the skin of Moshe’s face had become radiant.” (*Shemot* 34:35)

The *Navi* writes, “Your eyes shall see your teachers” (*Yeshayahu* 30:20). Just as the face of Moshe *Rabenu* shone from the intense holiness of the *Shechinah* upon him, so too shall every person make an effort to view *sadikim*, so that a portion of their holy spirit be transmitted to him. Likewise, one should avoid gazing at wicked people.

The famed Ponevezher *Mashgiah*, Rav Yechezkel Levenstein zt”l, was once traveling in a car with his close *talmid*, Rav Shlomo Brevda. The entire ride, the two engaged in a learned discussion, when suddenly Rav Shlomo looked over at his Rebbe, and noticed that Rav Chatzkel had quieted momentarily and was ducking his head. It appeared as if he was attempting to avoid being hit by an oncoming projectile. But when Rav Shlomo instinctively looked around to see what was heading their way and protectively lowered his own head as well, there was nothing to see. The car had slowed down and was idling at a red light; nothing seemed to be out of the ordinary, not was anything dangerous hurtling towards them.

Rav Shlomo was puzzled and concerned. “Is everything alright, Rebbe?” he asked urgently, once again looking about. Rav Chatzkel still had his head down and his eyes closed.

Rav Chatzkel was silent for a few moments longer, until the light turned green and the vehicle began moving again. Then, he raised his head, opened his eyes and straightened his shoulders. Peering over at his *talmid’s* questioning look, Rav Chatzkel finally responded. “We have no idea how much harm may befall our spirituality by being in contact with a mere illumination that originates from a place designed for immorality!”

He then went on to explain to Rav Shlomo that moments before, their car had stopped in the traffic just outside a well-lit and highly populated cinema. The entire area was floodlit by the bright arcades and flashing lights of the theater house and as a result, even their own automobile reflected the beams. Thus, to avoid this contact, Rav Chatzkel made a point of ducking down to prevent these lights from shining on his face, for it did not suffice to simply close his eyes. Evidently, Rav Chatzkel understood that if a person faces impurity, even if he does not actually look at it, he remains affected by its contact. (*Torah Tavlin* II)

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## Wisdom, Not Prophecy

Trying to guess the future is lucrative for an entertainer, but it is a dangerous pursuit for the rest of us. Prophecy no longer exists, but predicting still intrigues the masses. The *Talmud* states, “Who is a wise person? One who can foresee the future” (*Tameed* 32a). Does this mean that there are no more wise men and women since prophecy has ceased?

Not at all. The forecast of a wise person is a logical application of understanding, by which the individual calculates the consequences of a given behavior. Wise people can decide what to do because they can determine the results of specific actions.

Most people don’t realize that every person can achieve this level of “prophecy” by applying their Hashem-given mental prowess. Unfortunately, too many ignore this special talent and do things that harm, rather than benefit, themselves. Even those who are not adept at the art of evaluation and prediction may seek the help of individuals more astute than they are to choose a successful course for the future.

Whenever you are about to do something in order to improve your position, anticipate the potential results of whatever course you have chosen to take. Evaluate the possible outcome of any deed, and then make the decision to act or not to act. That is wisdom: study the consequences *before* acting. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

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## A Good Night’s Sleep

“Hashem designed an eraser of the mind; that eraser is sleep. It is a selective eraser because although it erases worry, it does not erase joy. If a person went to sleep with