

way to deal with the annoying situation – a way that will yield improvement.

When you are in a rut – when something that frequently bothers you strikes again – don't accept it! Find a way to do what has to be done in a more efficient or more satisfying manner. It doesn't take much time to become dissatisfied, but the dissatisfaction – when combined with creativity – will lead to innovation and success. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

### Like a Good Neighbor

“A person who moves away from a community neighborhood to the suburbs is exposing himself to dangerous environments. Such people do not identify with the Torah community. A person who identifies with the outside world will find it impossible to maintain the purity of his service to Hashem.”

Our community neighborhoods, synagogues, and family are the tools we need to survive in this society. Like a good neighbor, working in unity with each other perpetuates our community's legacy. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

### Herbert's Roommate

Palestine was a haven for thousands of European Jewish refugees escaping from the Nazis, *yemach shemam*. Among these refugees was Herbert Froehlich, a young man who arrived from Germany in 1935. He rented a room in Haifa from a woman who owned a boarding house. After Herbert had lived there for many weeks, the woman asked him if he would accept a roommate. Realizing that his landlady needed the extra income to offset the difficult economic situation, Herbert readily agreed.

As fate would have it, his roommate turned out to be the only non-Jew in the boarding house. Being a good-natured fellow, Herbert welcomed his roommate warmly and they established a close friendship as well as a mutually deep respect for one another. Herbert learned that his roommate's parents had sent him to Palestine from Sweden in order to learn the British banking system. After being invited to join in various Jewish trips and activities, including Shabbat meals, Herbert's roommate gained an appreciation for the Jewish religion and the Jewish people.

After several months, Herbert's roommate completed his education in Palestine and prepared to return to Europe. As the two friends tearfully bid each other farewell, Herbert's roommate removed his ski cap from his head, handed it to Herbert and said, “I want you to keep this as a sign of our everlasting friendship.”

Just a few years later, the world turned a blind eye as six million Jews were slaughtered in Europe during World War II. Only a small number of gentiles stood up to save Jewish lives. Among these heroes was a young secretary at the Swedish Diplomatic Mission in Budapest named Raoul Wallenberg. He was instrumental in saving thousands of Jews by securing visas for them. To this day his whereabouts are unknown, as Raoul Wallenberg was arrested by Russian soldiers during the last days of the war. It is believed that he died in one of Stalin's prisons or in Siberia.

Many could not understand Raoul Wallenberg's unusual sensitivity towards the Jewish people, but Herbert Froehlich did. You see, Raoul was Herbert's roommate. Herbert believed that Raoul's association with his Jewish friends in Palestine was instrumental in creating his tremendous desire to help the Jews. As for Herbert, he never forgot his friend Raoul and wore his ski cap every night, even as it tattered and frayed with age. Thousands of lives were saved, no doubt in part because one Jew made a *Kiddush Hashem*. (For Goodness' Sake)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נִשְׁמַת לְאָה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

## Congregation Magen Abraham

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SHABBAT NASO ☆ סַבָּת נַסֹּו

Haftarah: Shoftim 13:2-25

**MAY 21-22, 2021 11 SIVAN 5781**

Early Shir Hashirim/Minhah: <b>6:14 pm</b>	Shaharit: <b>4:35, 7:00, 8:00, 8:15, 9:00 am</b>
Shir Hashirim/Minhah: <b>6:41 pm</b>	Morning Shema by: <b>8:17 am</b>
Late Shir Hashirim/Minhah: <b>7:30 pm</b>	Shabbat Class: <b>6:30 pm</b>
Candlelighting: <b>7:53 pm</b>	Shabbat Minhah: <b>1:30 &amp; 7:30 pm</b>
Evening Shema after: <b>8:51 pm</b>	Shabbat Ends: <b>8:51 pm (R"Y 9:23 pm)</b>
These times are applicable <u>only</u> for the Deal area.	Weekday Minhah: <b>7:00 pm</b>

### A Message from our Rabbi

“וְאִם-לֹא נִטְמָאָה הָאִשָּׁה וְיִטְהַרָה הוּא וְנִקְתָּה וְנִזְרָעָה זָרַע”

“But if the woman has not become defiled and she is pure, then she shall be proven innocent and she shall bear seed” (*Bemidbar* 5:28)

The greatest disaster can be turned into the happiest occasion, if you look at it in the right way. It says in the prophets (*Shemuel II* 8:16), “And David carried out charity and justice to all his people.” This description says that when our great King David judged the people he gave out both justice and charity at the same time. How can this be? Justice is a hard concept of right and wrong, and charity is a soft term, implying kindness. The *Gemara (Sanhedrin* 6b) explains that when King David made someone pay he also explained to him that he was getting a bargain. All this time the person's conscience was guilty with the knowledge that he might owe someone else money. When the King ruled that he give it back, this verdict gave him a sense of relief. It was judgment and charity together. As we said, it all depends on how you look at it.

Rabbi A. Carmell explains the story of the *sotah* the same way. A *sotah* is a married woman who is accused of going astray, and suspected of adultery. She was warned not to be associated with a certain man and she disobeyed her husband and was alone with this man. At this point, she is not permitted to live with her husband. She has a choice. She can admit her guilt and get a divorce. If she continues to protest her innocence she drinks a special water. If she is innocent, the Torah gives her a blessing that she will have children. If guilty, she dies a horrible death.

There is a question in this entire procedure. Before she takes the water she must bring an offering of barley. Barley is animal food. She acted like an animal, so she

brings animal food. The water she drinks is given to her in a rough earthenware jar in contrast to the wine she gave to the adulterer in a silver goblet. Why is she treated like an animal if her guilt is only suspected? The answer is that she did not behave as a good Jewish wife should behave. Yet, if she passes the test, she is blessed. How do we understand these two contradictory trends; first she is treated like an animal and then she is blessed? It all depends on how you look at it! From the fact that she disobeyed her husband she deserves harsh treatment. However, there is another way of looking at this. The temptation was so strong as to bring her to the brink of adultery, yet she drew back and refused to go through with it. Hashem appreciates that; she showed character.

There are always two ways of looking at everything in life. What you think is good or what you think is bad is neither good nor bad. It is always an opportunity to take the challenge of seeing things in a positive way. It depends on how you look at it.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

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### *This Can Never Happen to Me*

Immediately following the *parashah* of the *Sotah* [suspected adulteress], is the *parashah* of the *Nazir* [one who vows to abstain from wine]. *Rashi* quotes the teaching of our Sages that the reason for the juxtaposition of these two Torah sections is that whoever sees the shame of the suspected adulteress should take a vow to abstain from wine, for it ultimately leads to adultery.

Reb Yeruchum Levovitz makes the following interesting observation: Most people's reaction to the *Sotah*'s ordeal would be "How disgusting! How despicable! How stupid!" This is a fine upstanding woman, married to a fine fellow, with lovely children. She is respected in the community. Look what she did! It was not only disgusting on her part — it was stupid! She gave up everything for a moment of passion."

People's standard reaction to such a spectacle is "This has nothing to do with me. I would never risk my family, my status in the community, even my life by engaging in an act of such moral turpitude. I might not be the biggest *sadik* in the world — but I am not an animal! Certainly I am not that stupid. This has nothing to do with me!"

However, our Sages warn that this should not be our reaction. The person who eventually winds up as a *Sotah* did not transform from being a fine and noble person one day to being a disgusting immoral person the next day, giving up everything and becoming an adulteress in a moment of passion. It never happens like that.

Rather, the woman started as a fine, righteous, upstanding, smart woman who one day performed a small act that involved the smallest of breeches. Maybe it was not even a sin. It was perhaps just some flirtatious comment. It always starts innocently enough.

However, that initial innocent flirtatious comment can lead to another thing that can lead to another thing that can lead to another thing until the people become so involved and so blinded by their passions that they lose their entire sense of reason and common sense. It is always somewhere down the line - two months later, four months later, two years later - that people lose their wisdom and ability to look at things clearly. It never starts out like that.

Therefore, our Sages teach that EVERYONE who sees a *Sotah* in her shame should learn a lesson and plan preventative strategies. One should not say "It can never happen to me." It can happen to anyone.

Wine symbolizes that which brings a person to irrational behavior. Too much wine, too much beer, too much liquor – and the next thing a person knows — he has lost all rhyme and reason. Once one acts irrationally, sin inevitably follows.

A person should never say that it can never happen to him, because the path towards irrationality is a slippery slope from which none of us are immune. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

## *A New Found Freedom*

What does it mean to be a *Nazir*? Of course there are technical points having to do with stepping away for thirty days from any contact with wine, dead bodies, or cutting hair. What's the reason for this discipline? It could be that the person wants a new spiritual beginning and through the discipline of becoming a *Nazir* he jumpstarts the process of self-improvement.

Wine is intoxicating and the person can become too lightheaded and silly with drink. By coming into contact with dead bodies he may become morose and depressed. Therefore he is looking to strike a balance between these two tendencies. By not cutting his hair and letting it go wild, he is committing himself to change his focus, like a typical mourner, to turn his eyes inward. That is where all the solutions are found.

Nowadays it is possible for a person to change his life with a simple 30 or 40 day regimen. Why would someone take on a dramatic change? I remember going to get a coffee for my Rebbe very early in the morning. He declined the coffee and when I questioned why he had halted drinking coffee, he replied in a curious way, "I discovered the coffee was drinking me!" I did not have any idea what he meant. I was mystified. Later I came to understand his statement and new self-discipline.

Rabbi Yosef Yozel Horowitz, the Alter from Novardok told a story to illustrate how people tend to deceive themselves about how involved they are in their indulgences. I only read my emails, headlines, sports etc. but I can stop when I want. I only smoke a few cigs a day but can halt any time. I only eat such and such but only when I'm a little anxious but I am under control.

My Rebbe was telling me that we think we are reading the newspaper but the newspaper is reading us. We may think we are listening to the news but the radio is listening to us. We might deceive ourselves into thinking we are eating up a piece of cake but the cake is really eating us up. Someone just may feel that he is shopping at the mall but the mall is shopping him. We have yielded our freedom to these small and permissible habits that like the ropes that bound Gulliver anchor us in a given orbit of behavior.

We may believe we are free but by taking a few forceful steps in the other direction we are declaring our freedom from the powerful lure of these tiny strings that bind. This is what's so wondrous about the *Nazir*, as he arrests himself and thereby declares a new found freedom. (Rabbi Label Lam)

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### *Revolving Door*

Which yardstick should be used to measure happiness is a question that has puzzled Sages and philosophers for millennia. Ben Zoma says, "Who is wealthy? The one who is satisfied with his lot" (*Abot* 4:1). He was certainly referring to the fact that if people are happy with what they have, then they are far richer than others who might have a much higher net worth, yet always seek more of what they see others possess.

In the realm of the spiritual, however, the dictum of Ben Zoma – being satisfied with your status – works against the person. When you are satisfied even with a bad situation, then you do nothing to change for the better.

It was probably someone who was terribly unhappy with waiting on line at the bank who invented the automatic teller machine. And I can't prove it, but I can guess that someone who got pushed and shoved once too often trying to get into a building, and was consequently delayed, invented the revolving door to facilitate traffic flow in busy entranceways.

In the world of business and in the realm of self-improvement, dissatisfaction can make a person wealthy. The trick is in resolving to face the problem and find a better