

Before questioning your behavior because you fear that it might not meet the approval of your associates, evaluate your behavior internally. It takes a minute, but it will save you from many mistakes you might otherwise make while trying to get the approval of others. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

### Highway to Heaven

“The blood travels through a rubbery pipeline with many branches. Strung together end to end, one person’s blood vessels could circle the earth 2.5 times. The tubes that carry blood from the heart are the arteries. They are like hoses that carry blood pumped under high pressure to small and smaller branched tubes called capillaries.

Prayer and gratitude form an everlasting connection with Hashem. If we could see the power of prayer, we would notice how each prayer forms a branch and a Highway to Heaven. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

### What Will They Say?

Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the legendary Rav of Yerushalayim, normally returned home from *Shaharit* by 10:00 a.m. On most days he would come home from shul still wearing his *tallit* and *tefillin*, greet the usual crowd of people waiting for him, answer their questions, have a short breakfast, and spend the rest of the day learning. But today he was very late. The group waited patiently and then decided to go and look for their “lost” Rav.

As they traced the route that the Rav normally took from his small home to the shul, in the distance they noticed a man wearing *tallit* and *tefillin* standing near a well. Upon closer inspection they realized that the man was none other than their Rav; and two water buckets joined by a wooden plank were draped across his shoulders. Apparently, he was drawing and carrying water for someone. But for whom, and why?

Standing next to the Rav was a shabbily dressed little boy and his younger sister. Their shoes were completely torn and their sad eyes told a story of woe. As the group approached their revered Rav, one of his followers offered to take the buckets from him. “Rebbe, how can you carry these around the streets? It is just not befitting a man of your stature.” Rav Yosef Chaim, undaunted, although he had clearly heard the man’s comment, continued drawing water, lugging the buckets back and forth, and placing them on a nearby wagon.

To his questioners he explained, “When I passed by the well this morning I saw this little boy and his sister trying to haul these buckets. I asked them why they were doing such a dangerous job and they informed me that their father has been in bed for the last six months, incapacitated by a debilitating disease. Their mother, who had drawn the water until now, was almost due to give birth and could no longer do the job. So the responsibility had fallen into their laps. Leaning in and reaching down could have caused the young children to fall into the well. So I decided to do it myself.”

The group listened, but were themselves worried; after all, Rav Yosef Chaim was an elderly man. He was weak and somewhat feeble. And besides, they thought, someone of the Rav’s stature should not be doing such a menial chore. “Rebbe,” they begged, “what will they say on the streets when they see you doing this?”

Rav Yosef Chaim looked at the men and then back at the children. “And what will they say in heaven when they see that I don’t do it?”

And with that the elderly Rav of Yerushalayim hauled the last buckets of water, placed them on the wagon and helped the children bring them home. (Touched by a Story 3)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נְשֻׁמָּת לְאָה בֵּת בְּהִי"ה

## Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444

West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764

(732) 870-2225



SHABBAT PINHAS ☆ שַׁבַּת פִּינְחָס

Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 1:1-2:3

**JULY 26-27, 2019 24 TAMUZ 5779**

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **6:20, 6:50, 7:30** Shaharit: **4:50, 6:30, 8:10, 8:45, 9:00**

Candlelighting: **7:58 pm**

Evening Shema after: **8:56 pm**

Morning Shema by: **8:31 am**

Minhah Gedolah: **1:30 pm**

Shabbat Classes: **6:25 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **7:25 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **8:56 pm (R)"T 9:28 pm)**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Weekday Minhah: **7:00 pm**

**Rosh Hodesh Ab will be celebrated on Friday, August 2. No meat meals are permitted (except for Shabbat) from Saturday night, August 3 until Sunday night, August 11. It is also forbidden to buy or wear new clothing on these days.**

### A Message from our Rabbi

”וַיָּקָם מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה וַיִּקַּח רֶמֶחַ בְּיָדוֹ”

“He rose up in the midst of the community and took a spear in his hand.”

(Bemidbar 25:7)

Rav Moshe Shurkin, a student of the *Hafess Hayim* in Radin, related that the *maskilim* (Jewish “enlightened” anti-Torah people) once opened a library containing forbidden heretical books in the town. The *Hafess Hayim* was distraught over this development.

Among the yeshivah students were those who thought that they had to take action, in contravention of the opinion of the *Hafess Hayim*, and in the middle of the night they set the library on fire.

The *Hafess Hayim* was very displeased by this act, and indeed right after the fire, the *maskilim* announced publicly that the yeshivah students had been behind the blaze. As a result, they were able to raise a lot of money, and in time, a new larger, more elegant library was built.

You should know, the *Hafess Hayim* told his students, that despite the great breach that the *maskilim* have made, war is not always fought with force. “With strategy you shall make war!”

From this story we learn, says Rav Moshe, that even an act of zealotry needs to be guided by a Rav and *Gadol Hador* in order to succeed.

Moreover, he added, we find in the *Gemara Sanhedrin* (82a) that although Pinhas knew the law that as a zealot he was allowed to kill Zimri, he didn't do so on his own but went to Moshe *Rabenu* and said, "My uncle, did you not teach me when you descended from Har Sinai that when a person does an ugly act like Zimri did, that zealots are allowed to strike him?"

Moshe said to him, "The one who delivers the letter should be the emissary to carry out what it says." Only when Pinhas heard this did he take the spear in his hand and avenge the act done against Hashem.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Senah

## The Little Things

”קח־לך אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ... וְנָתַתָּה מִהוֹדֶךָ עָלָיו”

“Take to yourself Yehoshua...You shall place some of your majesty upon him.” (*Bemidbar* 27:18,20)

Moshe *Rabenu* was instructed to induct Yehoshua, his faithful disciple, as his successor. In describing this induction, the Torah says, “You shall place **some** of your majesty upon him.” This prompts *Hazal* (*Baba Batra* 75a) to say that not all of Moshe's majesty was transferred to Yehoshua. As *Rashi* quotes, “The face of Moshe was like the sun and that of Yehoshua was like the moon.” This means that Yehoshua was a reflection of Moshe's greatness, but not his equal. *Hazal* conclude with a statement made by the *Zekenim*, Elders, who witnessed this change in “illumination” between Rebbe and *talmid*, teacher and student: “Woe for that shame! Woe for that disgrace!” The simple explanation of this enigmatic statement is: What a shame and disgrace that the majesty of the very next prophet, Yehoshua, is so much lower than that of his Rebbe, Moshe.

What shame and disgrace were being referred to by the *Zekenim*? The *Hida* explains that Yehoshua merited to become Moshe's successor, due to his devotion to the little things. He did not care that some of the functions of his service might be demeaning. For instance, he would clean up the study hall nightly, regardless of its condition. He saw to it that every chair was returned to its rightful place. The *Zekenim* did not do this. It was beneath their dignity to carry out such menial labor. True, it was a *bet midrash*. But they were the *Zekenim*! They were ashamed to do what Yehoshua was doing. This was **their** shame and disgrace. Now, it had all changed. When they saw Yehoshua become Moshe's successor, when they saw the illumination on his face, they became envious: “Woe to that shame that had prevented us from cleaning up the *bet midrash*. It did not stop Yehoshua from doing what was right. **Then** we were ashamed; thus, now we will be Yehoshua's disciples – instead of being the teachers.”

It happens all of the time; we refuse to get our hands “soiled,” delegating the toil to someone else. Our self-centered arrogance convinces us that some jobs are simply demeaning and beneath our dignity. Later, we discover that the path to greatness and distinction via that job was eschewed. We should learn that **any** activity which revolved around Torah is not shameful – whether it means being a waiter, working in the kitchen, etc. If it is Torah-related, it is not disgraceful. Look at Yehoshua's reward, and let it serve as an inspiration. (*Peninim* on the Torah)

## The Daughters' Claim

(*Bemidbar* 27:3) ”אָבִינוּ מִתּ בְּמִדְבָּר וְהוּא לֹא־הָיָה בְּתוֹךְ...בְּעֵדֵת־קֶרֶחַ”

“Our father died in the desert and he was not... in the company of Korah.”

Selofhad died without any sons to inherit his portion in the land of Israel. His

daughters, described by our sages as wise and righteous, approached Moshe with their claim to a share in their father's inheritance. As an introduction to their request, they told Moshe that their father was not among those who perished with Korah in his rebellion. Why did they deem it necessary to preface their claim with this seemingly irrelevant statement?

The *Ramban* explains their extraordinary concern that Moshe not associate Selofhad with Korah: “The daughters thought that Moshe hated the congregation of Korah more than all the other sinners that died in the desert because they rebelled against Moshe and rejected all his actions.” Selofhad's daughters suspected that Moshe might feel hatred against their father, who had sinned, and therefore withhold justice and kindness from them. That is why they took pains to point out that their father had not been involved in Korah's uprising.

Moshe, the paragon of humility, never held a grudge against any man. Surely, when it came to matters of Torah law, he judged by one criterion only: the absolute truth. Moshe achieved a degree of character perfection that is beyond our perception, and merited to ascend heavenward to receive the Torah, learning every detail from Hashem Himself. Can we imagine Moshe discriminating against these orphans and rendering a decision that was anything but completely just?

One of the most basic elements of understanding human dynamics and psychology is the complex interaction between man's mind and his heart. Although we like to believe that our thought processes are intellectually honest and free of any bias or emotional influence, this is unfortunately not the case. Every decision, every observation and every assessment of a situation that we make is colored by our feelings and distorted to some degree by our emotions. This emotional factor is known as a *negiah* - a bias or prejudice. Even Moshe, on his lofty level and with his mastery of Torah, could have been infinitesimally influenced by negative feelings towards Korah's co-conspirators. His vision could have been clouded ever so slightly and the outcome of the case could have changed.

The danger of a *negiah* does not only apply to judges. We all judge others and are constantly making decisions that are influenced by our subconscious and conscious emotions. Whether it be a parent with a child, a teacher with a student, or a businessman with a customer or client, the fairness of our actions can be affected by these feelings. To the degree that we purify our hearts and prevent any emotional factors from entering our minds, we will achieve a clarity of vision and truth of judgment. (*Majesty of Man*)

## Self-Confidence

Did you ever watch a little boy acting wild just to attract notice? Attention seeking changes with age. A small child who feels that no one is paying attention to him will do anything to create excitement. Yet, a teenager who develops an unsightly blemish will refuse to go out in public because she is convinced that everyone will laugh at her. A middle-aged person might not dress to perfection because “nobody ever notices me.” And once people join the ranks of the elderly, their attitude often becomes, “I hope no one notices me!”

All of these attitudes demonstrate a lack of self-confidence. If you learn the right values from truly ethical teachers, you can develop the ability to decide whether something is right or wrong without taking a survey of friends, neighbors, and business associates. You will be able to decide whether you were dressed properly, spoke effectively at the meeting, or dealt with any situation in the correct fashion. Self-confidence means you trust yourself to evaluate your own actions.