

this world, but knew not to overindulge. Food, he realized, is for sustenance and energy, and not for overindulgence. Clothing is to “wear” – to protect against the elements and keep our bodies covered. Ya’akob *Abinu* knew that if he became wealthy, he might lose sight of what he really needed and might pursue other aspects of the physical world, such as luxury and senseless toys. This, he feared, would deter him from his service to Hashem.

We are all on a flight: Flight #120. How much time do you want to spend on making yourself comfortable for such a short trip, and how much time do you want to invest in creating the proper environment for when you finally land at your destination? (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Your Honor

Rav Yosef Poesner was the son-in-law of the Noda B’Yehudah, the esteemed Rav of Prague. He was a brilliant scholar and an amazingly righteous individual. During his entire life, he seemed to be plagued by a nagging wife who would belittle him at every opportunity. After a brilliant lecture, she would come into the room, and belittle him. During meetings at which his opinion was prominently sought, she would serve the company food, but at the same time she made sure to deride him. During all these outbursts, he never said a word. He never defended himself. In fact, he hung his head low, as if to agree with her words of derision.

Then, suddenly, he passed away. Hundreds came to the funeral. All of the gathered contrasted his greatness to the difficult life he had led, by being married to a shrew of a wife who was about to bury him.

After the eulogies, his wife suddenly appeared before the coffin, crying uncontrollably. She begged his permission to speak and then burst into tears.

“All these years,” she cried, “I fulfilled the adage that a loyal wife fulfills the wishes of her husband. And due to my loyalty and respect to you and your greatness, I did whatever you had asked me to. But now that you are in the world of the truth, I can finally say the truth.” She began to declare her respect for his greatness and humility, his piety and patience, his kindness and compassion.

The people near the coffin were shocked to see this woman transformed into a loving, grieving widow. And then the true shock came. She continued her soliloquy.

“Despite, how difficult it was for me, I kept the promise and commitment you had asked me to make. Any time you were treated honorably, or were asked to fulfill a prestigious role, you told me to come in and belittle you as strongly as possible. You were afraid that the honor they afforded you would make you haughty. I only complied because that was your will!”

“But now I can finally say the truth! But that was only in front of people!

“You know how much I appreciated and cherished you!” She continued to cry over the great *saddik* and lifelong companion she lost. The stunned grieverers were shocked at the tremendous devotion of the Rebbitzin, who portrayed herself as a harrying nag all for the sake of her husband’s wishes. (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהֵיָה

בס"ד

Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444

West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764

(732) 870-2225



SHABBAT SHOFTIM ☆ שַׁבַּת שׁוֹפְטִים

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 51:12-52:12

SEPTEMBER 2-3, 2022 7 ELUL 5782

Shir Hashirim/Minhah:	Shaharit: 5:25, 6:45, 7:45, 8:25, 9:00 am
5:39, 6:45, 6:55 pm	Morning Shema by: 8:51 am
Candlelighting: 7:08 pm	Shabbat Class: 5:25 pm
Evening Shema after: 8:06 pm	Shabbat Minhah: 1:30, 6:25 & 6:45 pm
	Shabbat Ends: 8:04, R”T 8:36 pm
These times are applicable <u>only</u> for the Deal area.	Weekday Minhah: 7:00 pm

This bulletin is dedicated by Danny & Marilyn Safdieh
in memory of Meir ben Sabout – Mike Safdieh לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת מֵאִיר בֶּן צְבוּת

This bulletin is dedicated by Mitchell Antar
in memory of Eddie Antar לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת עֵזְרָא בֶּן רוֹזָה

This bulletin is dedicated by Joey & Karen Mizrahi
in memory of Joseph Tobias לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת יוֹסֵף בֶּן אֶסְתֵּר

This bulletin is dedicated by Morris Sutton in honor of his son Charlie’s birthday.

This bulletin is dedicated by Ikey and Karen Braha
in memory of Jack Braha לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת יַעֲקֹב בֶּן שָׂרָה

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night.

Mabrook to Jack & Francis Haddad on the birth of a baby girl.. Mabrook to the grandparents, Michael & Barbara Gindi.

A Message from our Rabbi

”כִּי יִפְלֵא מִמֶּךָ דְבָר לְמִשְׁפָּט”

“If a matter of judgment will be hidden from you.” (Debarim 17:8)

A true story about Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef zt”l. One day the head of the *Bet Din* in Petach Tikvah placed a call to the home of Harav Ovadiah. His wife z”l answered the phone. The judge of the *Bet Din* said he must speak with the Rabbi due to the urgency of the situation. The Rav’s wife answered that he cannot talk to him right now. But, the

judge was insisting that he had an urgent question regarding the genealogy (יחוסיו) of a certain person and he must get the Rav's opinion.

However, the Rav's wife explained: Harav Ovadiah was involved in a question of an *agunah* (a woman in a situation preventing her from remarrying) and the Rav had not slept for 48 hours straight until he resolved the problem to permit her, and he just went to sleep. She cannot disturb him until he wakes up. She promised that when he wakes up she will tell him immediately to call him back. "But don't worry, because I know he won't sleep for more than three hours."

An hour and a half later the Rav woke up, returned to his studies, and at that time he called back the judge and handled that question. The judge happily received his answer that resolved his problem. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

Blinded by Bribery

This week's reading is aptly named, for it begins with *Shoftim*, judges, and many of the 41 Commandments found in the reading pertain to witnesses and judges. One of these is the warning to not accept a bribe, "for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise, and twists the words of the righteous" [16:19].

The *Talmud* provides many examples of Sages who refused to hear a case after a litigant did him the smallest of favors. Rav, one of the earliest scholars of the *Gemara*, refused to hear the case of a man who had hosted him (*Sanhedrin* 7b). In modern terms, something as trivial as bringing a judge coffee could make him refuse to adjudicate. And we have to wonder, would that really be significant? Could something that seems like basic respect truly twist judgment?

The *Hafess Hayim*, Rabbi Israel Mayer Kagan zt"l, explains with a parable. He says: if Reuven describes Shimon as wealthy, one has to know Reuven's financial situation in order to know what this truly means. After all, if Reuven is tens of thousands of dollars in debt, he might consider anyone driving his own car to be wealthy! But if you hear this from Elon Musk's accountant, then you know that Shimon is at least a multi-billionaire, for otherwise no one dealing with the Musk family books would consider him substantial.

The *Hafess Hayim* then points out that the same is true of *chochmah*, Torah wisdom. Not everyone is sufficiently gifted to know who is truly wise. But if one of the leading scholars of the generation told you that someone is wise, or all the more so Maimonides were to say this, you would know this person was truly blessed with wisdom. If Shelomo *HaMelech*, King Solomon, the wisest man of all, were to describe someone as wise, you would know that he must be incredibly wise indeed.

So now let us imagine if Hashem Himself were to testify about someone that he is wise (as he does about King Solomon). You would immediately know that this person contains limitless wisdom, far beyond anything we can understand.

And nonetheless, the *Hafess Hayim* points out, the Torah says that it is this person who will be blinded by bribery! For who is it who says that the "wise man" will be blinded? Hashem, in His Torah! So it's not referring to someone that you or I would describe as wise, or even a great scholar of our day, or even Maimonides, or even Shelomo *HaMelech* — but someone with such profound wisdom that Hashem Himself calls him wise.

That is the incredible power of even a small favor, such that it can twist the judgment of the wisest people you could ever meet.

There is a positive lesson in this, because in our daily lives we are not corrupting judges or twisting judgment by being generous with our time or resources — except in the way that others judge us. Do someone even a small favor, and he will perceive you

differently. We can accomplish tremendous things in our relationship with others, simply by showing them small acts of kindness. (Rabbi Yaakov Menken)

Oh Brother

This week's *perashah* includes the *misvah* of appointing a king. We read (17:15), "You shall surely set over yourself a king whom Hashem, your *Elokim*, shall choose. From among your brethren shall you set a king over yourself; you cannot place over yourself a stranger, who is not your brother." R' Shlomo Hakohen Rabinowitz z"l (Rabbi and Chassidic Rebbe of Radomsko, Poland; died 1866) asks: Would we have thought to appoint a stranger, a foreigner, as king? He explains: We read (*Shemot* 28:30), "Aharon shall bear the judgment of *Bnei Yisrael* on his heart constantly before Hashem." Someone who is considered the *saddik* of a generation must have this quality of Aharon's—that he carries the burdens of his brethren on his heart and sacrifices himself for their good. This, too, is the meaning of our verse—the king must be someone who sees each Jew as his brother and is willing to sacrifice himself accordingly—not someone who behaves as a foreigner. (*Tiferet Shlomo*)

R' Yitzchak Menachem Weinberg (Tolner Rebbe in Yerushalayim) adds: The explanation offered by the *Tiferet Shlomo* is the foundation of all leadership. And, every person should realize that he or she is in a leadership position. Every parent is a leader to his or her children. Every older sibling is a leader to his or her younger siblings, even if the "older" sibling has just barely reached *Bar* or *Bat Misvah* age. Every person must act towards the people under his influence as a "brother" who is willing to sacrifice for the other, not as a foreigner or stranger. (Rabbi Shlomo Katz)

Flight 120

Most people find flying long distances to be a very uncomfortable experience. This is especially true in coach class, where individuals must figure out how to best position themselves in the small area allotted to them. Since airlines are in business to make money, they try and squeeze as many seats as possible into a finite amount of space. Legroom is a precious commodity, as are wider seats. Even in the first-class section of most flights, the traveler's chair serves as bed, seat, and eating table.

Imagine the following scenario: A passenger arrives at the airport, and, instead of toting the typical collection of suitcases, he is lugging a couch, a dining table and chairs, and other assorted furniture from his home. The baggage handler laughs and says, "Sir, this is not a cargo plane. Those are located in a different part of the airport."

"Yes, but you see, I must be comfortable in my trip," the traveler petulantly responds. "Without these specific items, I will be very uncomfortable until we reach our destination."

"I understand," the baggage handler replies, "but the flight is only ten hours long, and there is no room for furniture on a ten-hour flight."

We might think that this passenger is being unreasonable. We might even chuckle at his ridiculous proposal to the airline representative. However, when we look at the big picture, *we* are that passenger and *we* are the ones spending most of our time and energy trying to make a short trip as comfortable as we can. Pursuing the comforts of this world in the short amount of time that we are given to spend here — approximately 120 years — is a quest that is futile and nonproductive.

Of course, a person needs food, clothing, and shelter. Ya'akov *Abinu* asked that Hashem provide him with "bread to eat and clothing to wear" (*Beresheet* 28:20). The commentators ask, "Bread is to eat and clothing is to wear, so why did he specify the use?" The answer is that Ya'akov *Abinu* realized the value of the practical necessities of