

you, Mrs. Epstein?" the butcher asked. "I'll be done with these kids in a moment."

She did mind, as she was very tired, but didn't say anything. She watched as the butcher proceeded to gather up chicken legs, gizzards, necks and other leftover parts, weigh the entire mess and scoop it all into a bag. He handed the bag to the children, and the older of the two said, "Please put it on our account."

Mrs. Epstein was appalled. Didn't the butcher earn enough without having to charge obviously needy people for the garbage he would have discarded? Too weary to engage in a heated discussion, she allowed the issue to pass...until the following week, when precisely the same incident transpired. "How can you do such a thing?" Mrs. Epstein demanded of the butcher.

"I'll tell you," the butcher replied. "Their mother had been a good customer for many years, when suddenly her husband fell ill. He couldn't pay his bills, mine included, but I couldn't allow a family with nine children to starve, could I? I carried them for month after month, until their account stretched back over three years. It was a tidy sum, and I couldn't afford to carry them much longer. So I started saving all the trimmings that would normally be discarded, and I'd give it to them for Shabbat. Each week, they tell me to put it on their account, and each week I...don't. Oh, sure I weigh it and make a show of entering the amount in my book, but only to maintain their dignity."

Tears welled up in Mrs. Epstein's eyes - tears of pity for the needy family and tears of shame for misjudging the kindly butcher. She opened her purse and pulled out her checkbook. "I want you to send two chickens to them at once," she said, "not only today, but every Friday. But you must never reveal my identity to them." The butcher happily complied, and knowing Mrs. Epstein was a woman of very modest means herself, charged her well below the wholesale price.

But the story doesn't end here. When Mrs. Epstein related her tale to a friend, that friend also withdrew her checkbook, anxious to participate in this beautiful *misvah*. "It's funny you should do that," Mrs. Epstein said, "because this story actually took place a number of years ago, and everyone to whom I've related it has reacted in an identical fashion. *Baruch Hashem*, I now have nineteen families whom I supply with Shabbat chickens, and countless anonymous people who generously share my *misvah* with me. And all because of my failure to judge my fellow man favorably!

All too often, failures like Mrs. Epstein's do not have such positive results. Our Sages have affirmed that the way one judges his fellow man is the way G-d will judge him. This, along with the fact that it is a positive commandment from the Torah, should be sufficient incentive to judge others favorably. Inevitably, observance of this *misvah* also makes for a happier life. (A *Midrash* and a *Ma'aseh*)

The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לֵאָה בַּת בְּרַיָּה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT BO ✪ לַבַּיְתָה

Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 46:13-28

JANUARY 27-28, 2023 6 SHEBAT 5783

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **4:40 pm (upstairs)** Shaharit: **6:08, 6:45, 8:25, 8:30, 9:00 am**
Minhah: **4:50 (main shul)** Morning Shema by: **9:03 am**
Candlelighting: **4:50 pm** Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 4:30 pm**
Evening Shema after: **5:48 pm** Shabbat Ends: **5:49 pm, R"Y 6:21 pm**
These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Class: **4:15 & 5:49 pm**
Weekday Shaharit: **6:45, 7:10 am**, Sundays: **8:15 am**, Weekday Minhah: **4:55 pm**

This bulletin is dedicated by **Joey and Sophia Mizrahi**
in memory of **Joseph I. Mizrahi** לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת יוֹסֵף בֶּן מִרְיָם

This bulletin is dedicated by **Dr. & Mrs. David Pinhas**
in memory of **Rosie bat Esther** לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת רוֹזֵי בַת אֶסְתֵּר

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night, January 28. If not, it may be said until Saturday night, February 4.

A Message from our Rabbi

”וּלְמַעַן תְּסַפֵּר בְּאָזְנֵי בְנֶךָ וּבֶן-בְּנֶךָ”

“So that you speak into the ears of your children and your grandchildren.”
(*Shemot* 10:2)

Rav Boruch Ber Lebovitz recalled that as a child, his mother would put him to sleep by singing lullabies about *Mashiah* and the *Geulah*. He explained that parents should begin instilling their children with the fundamentals of faith and *Mashiah* as babies, even before they are capable of comprehending the meaning of these ideas. In this way, the principles take root and grow even in an environment of heresy.

This is why Hashem instructed the nation to speak into the “ears” of their children and not merely to tell their children. Even if the children are too young to understand, the parents should still speak into their ears, thereby inculcating the ideas in their hearts.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

No Barking

When *Klal Yisrael* left Misrayim, the *pasuk* says that no dogs barked at them. The *pasuk* in *Mishpatim* says “You shall not eat flesh of an animal that was torn in the field, to the dog you shall throw it.” *Rashi* comments that dogs were singled out to be thrown the non-kosher meat as an indication that the Almighty does not withhold reward from any deserving creature. In other words, as reward for not barking at the Jews when they left Egypt, the dogs are to be given the unkosher meat that could not be consumed by Jews.

The question that can be asked is as follows: In last week’s *perashah*, *Hazal* say that the frogs jumped everywhere—even into the Egyptian’s ovens. In this way, they sanctified the Name of G-d. Now, who is more deserving of reward, a frog for jumping into a fiery oven or a dog for not barking? Logically, we would say the frogs sacrificed their lives and were more deserving of reward than the dogs. Yet, the Torah does not say that we should give our dried worms (or anything else) to the frogs as a reward for their meritorious service in Misrayim.

The explanation is that nothing is more precious to the *Ribono shel Olam* than a person or animal or creature breaking its nature. That is what Divine Service is all about. A person overcoming his natural instincts and his innate personality traits is more beloved and dearer to the Almighty than anything else.

Dogs bark! The *Gemara* says in *Berachot* that when dogs sense the Angel of Death, they certainly bark. It is an amazing accomplishment in the Eyes of *Hashem* for the dogs in Egypt to conquer their inclinations and not give in to their natural tendencies. The frogs, on the other hand, may not have even realized that they were jumping into ovens, and even if they did deserve any reward, perhaps not dying in the ovens and living to tell the tale was their reward.

Of course, whenever we hear a teaching of *Hazal* like this, these are all metaphors. *Hazal* are trying to teach us something. The message is that we all have natural inclinations. Some of us are inclined to get angrier easier than others, some people have a tendency to be cheap and stingy, while other people have a tendency to spend money loosely. People have various tendencies. Even siblings have significant differences in their personalities.

Man’s challenge in serving the *Ribono shel Olam* is to be able to control and channel his qualities and tendencies as needed to adhere to the Will of the Almighty. That was what was so great about the dogs in Egypt. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

The Stroke of Midnight

Egypt was in ruins, utterly devastated by the first nine plagues. The cities were reduced to piles of rubble, with dead and wounded everywhere. Bloated carcasses of livestock littered fields denuded of crops and vegetation. Now it was time to administer the coup de grace. The tenth and final plague, the death of all the firstborn, would sweep away the last vestige of resistance in Egyptian hearts, and they would finally release the Jewish people from bondage.

As the time of the Exodus draws near, Hashem instructs Moshe to warn Pharaoh about the impending death of all the Egyptian firstborn “at the stroke of midnight.” Moshe, however, made a small revision when he transmitted it to Pharaoh. Instead of saying “at the stroke of midnight,” he says that the firstborn will die “near midnight.”

Why did he do this? The Sages explain that Moshe was concerned the Egyptian astrologers might be somewhat less than accurate in their time-keeping. It was thus possible that the plague would indeed commence precisely at the stroke of midnight but

that the astrologers would think it was a few minutes before or after midnight. Pharaoh might then be encouraged to mock Hashem’s might by accusing Him of being off in his timing and continue to resist. Therefore, in order to defend the honor of Hashem, Moshe told him the plague would take place “near midnight.”

It is utterly amazing that even at this point Pharaoh would find it in himself to continue to deny the power of Hashem and refuse to let the Jewish people go. How could a mere few minutes on the clock lead him to ignore the overwhelming evidence of his shattered country and the ubiquitous corpses of the firstborn, just as Hashem had warned?

There can be only one explanation. The total irrationality of the human ego under attack. Faced with total humiliation and defeat, Pharaoh sought desperately for the merest straw to grasp, no matter how insubstantial, no matter how irrational. As long as there was even the slightest flaw in the execution of the plague, he could delude himself into believing he could be ultimately victorious, if only he did not lose heart. Reason and good sense had absolutely nothing to do with it. No matter how absurd continued resistance appeared to wiser heads, he would refuse to capitulate.

While listening to the traffic report on the radio, an elderly woman heard that a car had entered the wrong way on an exit ramp of a major highway and was traveling against the flow of traffic. Suddenly, the woman realized that her husband was driving on that very highway. In a panic, she called him on his cell phone to warn him.

“There’s a crazy guy driving the wrong way on your highway,” she asked. “Watch out for him.”

“One crazy guy?” he screamed back into the phone. “There are hundreds of them, all coming towards me.”

In our own lives, we have the tendency of going to great lengths in our own defense, like the man driving down the wrong side of the highway and calling everyone else crazy. Rather than admit to our own shortcomings and limitations, our natural inclination is to justify our actions and positions, even at the cost of viciously attacking opponents and detractors. If we were to stop and consider the wisdom of such a reaction, we would have to admit that it is irrational to defend an erroneous position rather than admit our error. We would also be facing the possibility of damaging relations with spouses, families, friends or associates, or otherwise inflicting gratuitous damage. But the ego is a harsh master, and only when we gain control of it can we be truly free. (Rabbi Naftali Reich)

Weekly Pele Yoetz

Each week we will offer a brief excerpt from the *sefer Pele Yoetz*. **This week’s topic is: Amen.**

It is well known that one who is careful to answer *Amen* will receive great reward, and severe punishment awaits one who neglects this *misvah*. Therefore, if a person is among people who will answer *Amen*, he should say his *Berachot* loud enough that they can hear him.

One should be even more careful to answer *Kaddish* properly. The person who is reciting the *Kaddish* must be careful to pronounce the words slowly and correctly so that nobody will miss the opportunity to answer. This is also true regarding the *Berachot* that a person says when he gets an *aliyah* to the Torah or when he says the *Berachot* on the *haftarah*. In this way, those who answer *Amen* will be blessed, and the person who said the *berachot* will be blessed as well.

A Chicken in Every Pot

Mrs. Epstein was waiting in line at the butcher shop, and when at last her turn came two youngsters entered the store. “You won’t mind waiting a few more minutes, will