

"Mr. Finer, this is the front desk again. Please come now to take your package."
Now Chaim was wide awake. And he was annoyed. "What's going on? I'm not taking any package now. It's the middle of the night!"

Chaim banged the phone down. Sure enough, it rang again.

"Please come get your package now, Mr. Finer."

Chaim sighed. What was the matter with that clerk? Couldn't it have waited until morning? Well, it was three o'clock and he was wide awake. "I may as well go and get the package," he grumbled.

Throwing on some clothes, Chaim stumbled out into the hall and made his way over to the front desk. The entire lobby was deserted at this late hour. The clerk was sitting behind his desk, reading a newspaper.

"Okay, I'm Finer," Chaim snapped. "Where's this important package?"

The clerk looked up, startled. "Excuse me, sir? Was there something you wanted?"

"Yes, the package!" Chaim said impatiently. "You've been calling and telling me about a package, and I came to get it."

The clerk looked bewildered. "I don't know what you're talking about, sir. I don't know about any package here for you, and I certainly haven't been calling anyone."

Now it was Chaim's turn to look puzzled. Had he dreamed the whole thing? But it had felt so real. And he certainly wasn't walking in his sleep now! No, he definitely had talked to someone. Who could have called him in the middle of the night?

A sudden loud crash down the hall made both men jump. Scores of screaming people began running out of their rooms. Chaim and the clerk joined the crowd, pushing their way down the hallway to see what was happening.

Chaim finally broke through the crowd. He was standing at the door to his room or rather, what used to be his room. Now, two walls were barely standing, while a third wall had been demolished completely. And there was a wreckage of metal and machinery strewn across the floor, plowing into Chaim's bed, right where he had been sleeping just a few minutes earlier.

Slowly the story came out. A guest at the hotel had spent the night drinking. Coming home in a highly intoxicated state, the man had lost control of his car, which had crashed through the wall of the motel, straight into Chaim's bedroom.

Chaim simply couldn't believe it. He whispered a silent thanks to Hashem for the tremendous *hashgaha* (Divine Providence) he had just experienced. And Chaim wasn't the only one who understood what had happened. As he raised his eyes, Chaim noticed that the clerk, too, was overcome by what had just transpired. He was staring at Chaim, a look of awe on his face. (Visions of Greatness III)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהִי"ה

בס"ד
Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444

West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764

(732) 870-2225



שַׁבָּת בִּשְׁחָלָה ✪ שְׁבַע בְּשַׁבָּת

Haftarah: Shoftim 5:1-31

FEBRUARY 3-4, 2023 13 SHEBAT 5783

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **4:48 pm (upstairs)** Shaharit: **6:00, 6:45, 8:25, 8:30, 9:00 am**
Minhah: **4:58 (main shul)** Morning Shema by: **9:00 am**
Candlelighting: **4:58 pm** Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 4:40 pm**
Evening Shema after: **5:56 pm** Shabbat Ends: **5:58 pm, R"Y 6:30 pm**
These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Class: **4:25 & 5:58 pm**
Weekday Shaharit: **6:45, 7:10 am**, Sundays: **8:15 am**, Weekday Minhah: **5:05 pm**

This bulletin is dedicated P'ilui nishmat Yaffa bat Kayla – in memory of Karen Mizrahi – by her husband and children

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Abraham ben Frieda "Abe Apples Seruya" - By his wife and children

Tu Bishvat will be celebrated on Sunday night, Feb. 5 & Monday, Feb. 6.

If you did not yet recite *Bircat Halebanah*, it may be said until Saturday night, February 4.

A Message from our Rabbi

”אָז יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׁחַ וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל”

“Then Moshe and the Children of Israel sang.” (Shemot 15:1)

Song is the instinctive response to joy and gratitude for a kindness.

Several young women who had survived the Holocaust shared an apartment in Bnei Brak. When the first of them became engaged, the apartment-mates were overjoyed. The following Shabbat, they prepared a party for the *kallah* and sang and danced for her in the apartment.

One of the neighbors ran to the *Hazon Ish* to protest what he perceived to be a breach in *seniut*, modesty. The *Hazon Ish*, however, was delighted. “They are singing? *Baruch Hashem*, they are finally able to enjoy some *simchah* in their lives! You are concerned about *kol islah* (the prohibition against listening to a woman’s voice)? Take a walk so you won’t hear them, but certainly do not stop them from singing!”

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Heart of Gold

The beginning of this week's portion describes the Jews' Exodus from Egypt. Jews gathered their possessions and took gold and silver from the Egyptians. With sacks of dough they prepared for a trek into the unknown desert. One person, however, was preoccupied with other treasures. "Moshe took Yosef's bones with him, for Yosef, had made the children of Israel swear, saying, "Hashem will remember you, and you shall bring up my bones from here with you."

The *Midrash* explains a verse in *Mishlei* 10:8: "A man with a wise heart shall choose *misvot*." "This verse," says the *Midrash*, "refers to Moshe during the Exodus. While the entire nation was busy collecting gold, silver, and precious stones from their former masters, Moshe was busy looking for the remains of Yosef, the pioneering sojourner who laid the groundwork for Jewish survival in exile."

An obvious question arises. Why is Moshe lauded as a man searching for *misvot* and praised as one who has special wisdom? Didn't the Jewish people gather gold and silver at the request of Hashem? The Torah openly commands the people in *Shemot* 11:2 "that each man ask his fellow (Egyptian) man and each woman ask her fellow (Egyptian) woman for gold and silver utensils." If that is the case — both Moshe and the Jews were all doing *misvot*. Why then, is Moshe considered "wise of heart?"

During the early 1920s, Velvel Epstein drove a truck on the Lower East Side for the Mittleman Seltzer Company. He delivered promptly and was courteous to his customers. But one day a most terrible event occurred. A horse-drawn wagon veered in front of his truck and he swerved sharply to avoid it. Dozens of cases came barreling out of the truck and went crashing to the cobblestones. Glass and bubbles were everywhere, and Epstein knew that his career at Mittleman's Seltzer Company was over.

All of a sudden from the small throng of spectators a heavy-set man appeared with his fedora outstretched in his hand. He turned to all the onlookers. "Why are you all just standing there? Let's help this poor man out!" With that he thrust a ten-dollar bill into the hat and passed it around. He cajoled and persuaded the gathered to help the driver in his plight. After a few minutes the man had gathered a sizable collection and approached the hapless driver.

"Now, young man. Give this money to your boss, and I'm sure he will be happy with the compensation!" With that the distinguished gentleman disappeared from the crowd.

The onlookers were amazed. "What a mensch," cried one woman. "A real hero," shouted another. "Such a *misvah*!" declared a third.

Epstein rolled his eyes heavenward. "*Misvah*, Shmitzva. That was Mr. Mittleman!"

There are many, many *misvot* to do. Some are very enjoyable and easily performed. Some even mete out to us personal gain and honor. Others, however, require self-sacrifice and hard work. The *misvah* of retrieving gold and silver was quite honorable. However, there may have been much self-motivation involved. We do not know where the actual wealth finally ended up. It may have been contributed to the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), or it could have served as a portion of the Golden Calf. One thing we do know. The bones of Yosef that were taken by Moshe served as an inspiration to a generation that faced hardship, questions, and uncertainty. Even today, those bones interred in Shechem still do. That is, thanks to Moshe, the man of wise heart who had a vision of the future. (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky)

Taste Test

When the bread the Jewish people brought with them for their Exodus from Egypt had run out, G-d provided them with Manna that miraculously descended each day from

the Heavens. Of course, we're all curious what Heavenly bread tasted like. The *Talmud* (*Yoma* 75b) cites three different flavors listed in the Torah: bread, oil, and honey, and explains that for older people it tasted like bread, for the youth it tasted like oil, and for the little children it tasted like honey.

There is also a well-known *Midrash* that says the taste was different for each person — whatever flavor you desired at the time, it miraculously had that flavor. While this is quite interesting, it directly contradicts the Torah's statements that it had one of three flavors!

Rabbi Shimon Schwab zt"l explains that when someone would eat the Manna for the sole purpose of satisfying their hunger, it would taste like one of the flavors listed in the Torah. If their consumption was for the sake of enjoyment, the taste was whatever flavor they had in mind.

As an aside, Rav Schwab says he once had the opportunity to spend Shabbat in the home of the holy *Hafess Hayim*. The *Hafess Hayim* asked those present, "What did the Manna taste like if you did not think of anything when you were eating it?" After no-one attempted an answer he said, "I'll tell you. When there is no thought, there is no taste." He went on to explain that spiritual matters, like the Manna, only have taste if you are mindful of what you are doing. The same, he explained, is the nature of Torah study. If you think about what you're studying, and plumb its depths to understand it, you will taste the sweetness of G-d's word (As the *Hafess Hayim* said this, he put his fingers to his mouth, as if he were savoring the sensation he described). However, if you simply sit in front of the book, and read the words with little to no understanding, there is no taste at all. The richness of the Torah's flavor, as well as any spiritual endeavor, follows the degree of thought you apply.

When you learn Torah, invest yourself into it, think carefully and deeply, and you'll find yourself enjoying a sizzling, mouth-watering piece of Torah. Bon Appetit! (Rabbi Mordechai Dixler)

Weekly Pele Yoetz

Each week we will offer a brief excerpt from the *sefer Pele Yoetz*. **This week's topic is: Unity - אחדות**

The *Shechinah* (Divine presence) does not dwell in this world unless the people are living in unity. When the people are unified, even if they are worshiping idols, Hashem is not as strict with them when punishing them for their sins. This is why Hashem did not wipe out the generation of the Tower of Babel like He did to the generation of the flood in the times of Noah. Because they were unified, Hashem dispersed them instead of totally wiping them out.

Any group that wants to having a lasting success in their project must be unified. But if there is discord among them, they will not succeed. A parable is told of someone who wants to break a bundle of reeds. If he tries to break them all at once, he will fail. But if he breaks one reed at a time, they will be easily broken.

Special Delivery

Chaim Finer was in Atlanta on a business trip. He checked into a motel after an exhausting day and tried to get some sleep. The ringing of the phone jerked Chaim awake.

"What's going on?" he mumbled, half asleep. He reached for the phone. "Hello?"

"Mr. Finer? This is the front desk. A package was just delivered here for you."

"What? No, it must be a mistake. Forget it," Chaim mumbled, hanging up.

Chaim turned over and dozed off. But two minutes later, the phone rang again.