



THE HARRY H. BEREN TORAH WEEKLY

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Because Torah Is for Every Jew

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A Taste of Torah Location, Location, Location

By Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher

We all know that we are to abstain from labor on Shabbos. But how do we know what is regarded as labor? Why isn't lugging the dining room table across the room forbidden, while striking a match is strictly off-limits?

Our Sages teach that the source of forbidden labors on Shabbos is the construction of the *Mishkan*, the Tabernacle. So things like planting and cooking, which were necessary to produce dyes, are forbidden. Slaughtering and skinning, needed to obtain hides, are no-nos. Demolishing, which took place every time the Jewish People travelled, and building, which happened when they camped, are not allowed on Shabbos. In all, there are thirty-nine primary types of labor inferred from the *Mishkan*, and the form of the labor must mimic the form it took in the *Mishkan*.

Which brings me to the prohibition of demolishing. The halacha states that one is Scripturally liable for demolishing a structure on Shabbos only if it is for the purpose of rebuilding in that very same spot. (Otherwise, it is forbidden Rabbinically.) The Talmud (Shabbos 31b) is quite puzzled by this law, because when the Jewish People dismantled the *Mishkan*, it was to reconstruct it after their next sojourn in the desert! The Talmud explains that the Torah states that the Jews travelled and camped "by the Mouth of G-d" (Numbers 9:23); thus, it was tantamount to rebuilding

the *Mishkan* in the same location.

The Talmud's answer doesn't seem to address the question. How does the fact that G-d determined when travel and encampment occurred render the subsequent erection of the *Mishkan* as taking place in the same spot that it stood originally?

Rabbi Naftali Trop (1871-1928) explains that when a child is held in its mother's arms, the child has no location to call its own. Its location is its mother's arms, regardless of where Mom may find herself. Similarly, the Jewish People, during their journey in the desert, were carried, as it were, in G-d's arms. This is expressed by the aforementioned verse that they travelled and encamped "by G-d's mouth"; they were completely under G-d's care and supervision. Thus, regardless of where they camped, the location was always the same: they camped, as it were, in G-d's arms.

The Jewish people in the desert attained a unique level of clear Divine supervision that has remained unmatched. But G-d has guaranteed that he watches over us, his Chosen Nation, for all time, though it may not be as obvious as it was for the Jews in the desert. Whatever situation we may find ourselves in, even the most dire circumstances, our Father in Heaven is there, taking care of us. Like a child being carried in its mother's arms.

Ask the Rabbi Sound Advice

From: Benny

Dear Rabbi,

There's a person who has been coming to our shul of late who is a normal,

nice guy. He is clearly not a beginner to Yiddishkeit. However, he has a peculiar way of pronouncing his blessings which mixes the different customs of

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Stories For The Soul

The Gift Within

The story goes that some time ago, a man punished his 5-year-old daughter for wasting a roll of expensive gold wrapping paper. Money was tight, and he became even more upset when the child used the gold paper to decorate the outside of a gift box.

Nevertheless, the little girl brought the gift box to her father the next day and said, "This is for you, Daddy."

The father was embarrassed by his earlier behavior, but his anger flared again when he found the box empty.

"Don't you know, young lady, when you give someone a present there's supposed to be something inside the package?" he asked.

The little girl looked up at him with tears in her eyes and said: "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was full."

The father put his arms around his little girl, begged her to forgive him for his unnecessary anger, and thanked her for her precious gift.

Only a short time later, a tragic accident took the life of that child. The father kept that gold box by his bed for the rest of his life.

The Torah describes in great detail the building and great beauty of the *Mishkan*, Tabernacle. When the Jews donated the building materials, it was important that they did so with the proper intent. The *Mishkan* was not just a cold lifeless edifice; rather, it was the living house of Hashem. The dedication and love for Hashem were as vital to the construction as the actual wood and stone.

Adapted with permission from Shul-Week by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.

Kollel Happenings

INTO THE ALEPH-BAIS

There is a unique fascination with the Hebrew language and the aleph-bet. Mystical sources explain that the letters of the aleph-bet are the building blocks of the whole world. Discover the world of the aleph-bet with Rabbi Heyman in this informative, dynamic class.



A DEEPER LOOK

Join Rabbi Shachne Sommers as he discusses a number of difficulties encountered in the weekly Torah portion, and develops a comprehensive approach to resolve the issues, simultaneously conveying a deeper understanding of the material being discussed. Sunday nights 7:40-8:30 pm at the Kollel, 1516 Xavier, and Tuesday nights at Aish Denver 8-9 pm.



TRUST THY FATHER

Join Rabbi Schachne Sommers for "Trust Thy Father," a series based on Chovos Ha'Levavos/ Duties of the Heart. Discover and delve into vital Jewish concepts of Bitachon. The classes take place on Tuesdays, from 7:55-8:25 a.m. at Aish. For info email info@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

Interpersonal Issues

Items Found on Private Property

If an item was found on private property at a time when it is open to the public, such as if one is having a minyan or class in one's home, then the item belongs to the finder. If it must be

returned, the finder, not the property owner, is responsible to do so.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Sound Advice

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pronunciation between Ashkenazi, Sefardi and Israeli. This is most apparent when he's called up to the Torah. Some people find it amusing and are a bit derisive. My question is, since he's not a beginner, should someone point out the inconsistency so that he can try to pronounce normally to avoid unnecessary embarrassment (if he were a beginner, it wouldn't seem so strange); or, on the contrary, since he's already frum, he might get offended and feel unwelcome and stop coming to our shul, which would be a shame, because he really is a good guy?

Dear Benny,

I commend you on your sensitivity and on your effort to seek advice before doing anything that might hurt another's feelings.

First, I think you should talk to those who might be making fun of the new person and explain that despite this person's inconsistency in pronunciation, he is still fulfilling the blessings.

In fact, the Midrash notes that G-d even finds such mispronunciations, if uttered with a pure heart, as endearing. Commenting on the verse "His banner ("diglo") is for me a banner of love," the Sages note that this is how the Jewish people refer to G-d. But in G-d's referring to the Jewish people, He changes the word "diglo" to "dilugo" which effectively means "slip up." So that G-d says of His Jewish children, "His slip up is for Me a slip up of love." This can be compared to parent who adores his in-

fant's first jumbled words.

Since all of us are like children before G-d, and all of us also make mistakes, even slip ups of Jewishly-educated adults are beloved in G-d's eyes, if we're sincerely motivated.

That being said, we are required to make every effort not to slip up. And, in fact, we must do our best to beautify every mitzva, which for prayer includes clearly enunciating and correctly pronouncing the words. Within any particular custom of pronunciation, one must be consistent so that the prayer is recited correctly and accurately according to that particular tradition.

So I think that someone who can tactfully point this out to the person without embarrassing or hurting him should do so. It should be done privately, and out of the context of prayers. Assuming that there is no hearing or speech impediment (and maybe that should be looked into), he probably would want to correct his pronunciation if this were pointed out to him. Of course, initially he may be a bit uncomfortable, but I think he will ultimately appreciate the friendly gesture intended for the betterment of his own prayer.

Also, calling his attention to improving his pronunciation will spare him from being viewed askance not only in your shul, but wherever else he may daven as well. And this is certainly in his best interest.

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