



TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel



Parshas Va'eschanan

August 12, 2022

A Taste of Torah

A Matter of Honor

by Rabbi Yossi Ephrathi

Moshe reviews the experience of the Giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai and reviews the *Aseres Hadibros*, the Ten Commandments. The fifth commandment recounted is "Honor your father and mother as Hashem, your G-d, commanded you" (Va'eschanan 5:16).

The words "as Hashem, your G-d commanded you" seem to be extra. Why else would we perform mitzvos if not because Hashem commanded us to do so? Rashi states that the mitzvah of honoring one's parents was already given to the Jewish People earlier, before the *Aseres Hadibros* were uttered at Mt. Sinai, and that fact is referenced in the ending of the verse.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (1740-1809) provides another explanation based on the Gemara (Yevamos 5b) that states if one's parent instructs him to disobey G-d (for example, to desecrate Shabbos), the child may not listen to the parent, for obeying Hashem's command is the first priority. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak explains that this is the intent of the seemingly unnecessary verse. Honor your parents, says Hashem, but only the way I commanded you. One must understand that honoring G-d takes precedence over honoring one's parent.

The Dubno Maggid (Rabbi Yaakov Kranz; 1741-1804) illustrates this teaching with a parable.

There were three close childhood friends who decided to go their separate ways in pursuit of achieving great things. They agreed upon a date several years in the future when

they would convene and discuss their findings and accomplishments.

When that day finally arrived, they met and greeted each other fondly. The first one said, "I discovered how to create a telescope that's very powerful. It can be used to see things many miles away!"

The second one said, "Look at this chariot I built. It can travel thousands of miles in mere minutes."

The third said, "I became a doctor and developed a wondrous medication that can cure any malady!"

The first took out his telescope and gazed intently into it. To his chagrin, he saw that many miles away, in the king's palace, there was a tremendous commotion. The princess was deathly ill, and none of the local doctors seemed to have a remedy for her.

The second friend said, "Everyone hop into my chariot. Let's go and see if we can help." When they got to the palace, the doctor presented his medicine and healed the princess.

There was great excitement at the king's court. The king called in the three friends and said, "How can I repay you? Even if I were to open my treasuries and let you take whatever your hearts desire, that wouldn't suffice. Therefore, I decided to grant the princess to one of you as a wife. But I can't decide who is most deserving. What do you fellows think?"

The friends started quarreling. The telescope maker said, "If not for my telescope, we wouldn't have known that the princess was ill in the first place. I deserve to marry her." The chariot builder remarked, "Without

Stories for the Soul

Doctor's Out-of-Order

Rav Elazar Menachem Shach (1899-2011) was the leader of the Torah world for many years. He was renowned for his devotion to Torah study, despite the many responsibilities he bore on his shoulders. As Rosh Yeshiva (dean) of the Ponovezh yeshiva in Bnai Brak, Israel, he would deliver a *shiur* (lecture) to the students every Tuesday. Come what may, he delivered the *shiur*.

It once happened that Rav Shach was ill, and the doctor examining him declared that he was too sick to deliver his weekly *shiur*.

Rav Shach replied that he *must* deliver the *shiur*, and if he could not walk, he would have his students carry him in on a chair. The doctor reiterated that he could not deliver the lecture, even if carried in by his students.

Undaunted, Rav Shach went to deliver his *shiur*, with the concerned doctor following close behind. For one hour, Rav Shach spoke, explained and argued in his enthusiastic, fiery fashion. After he finished and turned to leave, the doctor said, "According to normative medicine, the rabbi should not have been able to make it past the opening though of his lecture. But what can I say? The rules of medicine simply do not apply to him."

In this week's parsha, Moshe tells the Jewish People of the importance of Torah study. Torah study is not just an ideal or a nice thing to engage in; it is the lifeblood of the Jewish People, and we must be prepared to sacrifice to ensure we continue to delve into its depths.

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Kollel Happenings

**THIS WEEK! KOLLEL ANNUAL
MOTZOEI SHABBOS
NACHAMU KUMZITZ ON
AUGUST 13**

Join the Kollel for its annual Motzoei Shabbos Nachamu kumzitz on August 13th at 9:45 pm pm at the Kaplan home, 4750 S. Xanthia St. Live music, inspirational singing, divrei Torah and refreshments make this an event you don't want to miss. For men and women.

PROJECT SEED IS IN DENVER!

A group of yeshiva students is in Denver from August 8-18 to enrich and enliven the Denver Jewish community. These budding Torah scholars will be teaching Torah throughout the Jewish community. If you are interested in arranging a learning program for your shul, please contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at 323-333-0953.

SPRING-SUMMER AVOS UBANIM CONTINUES THIS SHABBOS

The Kollel's spring-summer Avos Ubanim program continues this Shabbos afternoon at the Kollel Torah Centers in West Denver and Southeast Denver. Learning begins one hour before mincha, followed by nosh and prizes. Program ends 15 minutes before mincha in Southeast Denver, at mincha in West Denver. For sponsorships and more info, email info@denverkollel.org.

Halacha Riddles

Last week we asked: How is it possible for a person to wash *netilas yadayim* (as is done for bread) twice in a short period of time without making a *bracha*? (Nothing happened to ruin the first *netilas yadayim*, and he is eating the requisite amount that would require a *bracha*.)

Answer: If one washes his hands before eating food that is wet, no *al netilas yadayim* blessing is recited when washing the hands. If he is careful and does not get distracted from keeping his hands pure, there is debate whether or not he must wash

again before eating bread. Practically, one should wash again for bread, but because some say he needn't do so, no blessing of *al netilas yadayim* is recited, as the general rule for a doubt concerning whether one must recite a *bracha* is that it not be recited. If he did get distracted from guarding the purity of his hands, he would wash for bread with a *bracha*. (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 158:7 with Rema and Mishna Berura ad loc.:31-32)

This week's question: How could a crack ruin one's *netilas yadayim*?

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra - Part I

One of the more influential Torah commentators of the medieval era was Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra. As is often the case when exploring the lives of individuals who lived many centuries ago, it is difficult to ascertain what is

fact and what is exaggeration or even fanciful myth. This series will attempt to present what is thought to be factual as well as items whose accuracy is less clear; statements whose veracity is difficult to ascertain will be noted as such.

A Taste of Torah

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my chariot, we couldn't have traveled to the palace". And the doctor exclaimed, "I healed her!"

The princess heard the commotion and offered her wise opinion. "Regarding the past, there's no way to resolve this," she said. "None of these gentlemen would have been able to heal me without the others. However, regarding the future, I have no use for the chariot or the telescope. But I do need the medicine every day till I nurse myself back to health. I must marry the doctor."

Rabbi Kranz quotes the Gemara (Niddah 31a) that teaches, "There are three partners that create a child. G-d, a father, and a mother." A child might think, "Which one is the most important whom I should listen to? In the absence of any of these partners, I

would have never been created!"

However, that's all true regarding the creation of the child, which is in the past. After his birth, the child can survive (albeit with difficulty) without parents. He can't manage without G-d, however. Hashem keeps him alive from moment to moment; He sustains him, feeds him and provides for him. Therefore, if a parent instructs a child to disobey Hashem, the child must disobey the parent and fulfill Hashem's commandment.

Hopefully, nobody will find themselves stuck in this quandary where a parent tells them to stray from the ways of G-d. However, the idea is relevant at all times - Hashem is responsible not just for bringing us into the world, but for keeping us alive and providing for us at every moment of our lives.

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