

Mesilah

AN INITIATIVE OF KOLLEL RABBONIM TZVI ASHKENAZI, AMSTERDAM

mesilah.amsterdam@gmail.com

חנוכה - פרשת וישב December 10-18, 2020 Issue 35

If you won't be
better tomorrow
than you are today,
then what do you
need tomorrow for?

- Rabbi Nachman of Breslav



TODAY

TOMORROW



Halacha
series on
Basar
B'chalav
PART 2
see page 2

CHANUKAH



ACHIEVEMENT IN OUR STUDIES THROUGH THE MENORAH

Rabbi Efraim Arnstien

The *Gemara* brings the following argument: *Beis Shamai* say, "The first day (of Chanukah) one kindles eight lights. From then onwards he decreases the number of candles at the rate of one a day". *Beis Hillel* say, "The first day we light just one, and each day we increase the number of lights by adding one every night of Chanukah."

The *Chasam Sofer* explains the idea behind this argument. He quotes the *Gemara* that says that the lighting of the candles breeds success in the study of Torah. He elaborates that success is needed in two areas: retaining (to remember) what was already learnt and to have an in-depth understanding of Torah.

We know that as a person gets older the memory can start to fade, whereas understanding and wisdom increases with age. The students of *Beis Shamai* were known to have sharp minds, so the area which they felt needed improvement (on their level) was memorizing the material that was already learnt. They therefore lit in a manner symbolizing decrease, referring to the weakness of the memory as the days pass by, thereby channeling the merit of the mitzvah to improve the ability of memorizing and retaining the knowledge of Torah.

Beis Hillel on the other hand, wanted to strengthen the development of in-depth study and sharpness of the mind, in order to get to the true wisdom of Torah. They therefore lit in a way signaling increase, alluding to wisdom (that increases with age), using the *Segulah* to add depth of understanding to Torah learning.

There can be numerous challenges when we sit down to learn. It can be trying to understand the simple meaning of the words (Hebrew or Aramaic), following the flow, or grasping a fine concept. The merit of candle-lighting will accompany us on our journey to discover the depth and broadness of the Torah.

Another tool we have in acquiring Torah is prayer. Because acquiring Torah-knowledge is a gift from Hashem, we pray to Him for this gift multiple times daily.

To name a few: *Veha'arev na...divrei torasechab... please make the words of Torah sweet...*

Shetargileinu betorasechab... may we become accustomed to Your Torah...

We have the power of prayer and the merit of the mitzvah of Chanukah to help us achieve and succeed.

לעילוי נשמת ליטל ימימה בת לאה לילי עליה השלום





THE BOWL OR THE BASIN

Rabbi Chaim Hausmann

On Chanukah we read a Torah portion from Parshas Noso (7:13) in which it says, "His offering: one silver bowl weighing 130 shekels and one silver basin of 70 shekels by the sanctuary weight, both filled with choice flour with oil mixed in, for a meal offering".

The Targum Yonoson explains that both the silver bowl and the basin could hold the same amount even though the bowl contained more silver than the basin. This is because the walls of the basin were a lot thinner as they were hammered out, and the walls of the bowl were thicker and not so banged out.

This poses the question: how did Targum Yonoson know this; from the *pasuk* there is no mention of this?

In Parshas Beraishis, when the *pasuk* says "God made the two great lights", Rashi brings from the Gemara in Chulin that they were both originally created the same size, and later the moon was made smaller. The Vilna Gaon quotes the Ibn Ezra who asks that when the *pasuk* says "the two great lights", it doesn't have to mean that they were originally the same size?



The Vilna Gaon answers that the sages in various places understood that when the *pasuk* says "שני" (two), it means that they were the same, as in the case of the two goats of the Yom Kippur Temple service. Hence, whenever the Torah says "שני", it means they were equal. Therefore, we can now understand the Targum Yonoson; he learnt from the words "שניהם מלאים סלת" (both filled with choice flour) that even though the bowl and the basin had a very different weight, they still held the same capacity.

We can see from here an amazing message – that even somebody who has lesser ability but puts in a lot of toil into what he does can reach the same heights as somebody with much more ability than himself, just like the basin which had less silver, but nonetheless had the same capacity as the bowl which had much more silver.

May we all merit to use the special divine assistance that Chanukah brings to reach new levels in all that we hope to achieve.



THE QUALIFICATION OF 'COOKING' REGARDING MEAT AND MILK

Rabbi M. Ball

In Part 1, we mentioned that if one cooks meat and milk together it transgresses a Biblical prohibition. Additionally, in order for one to transgress the prohibition of eating meat and milk it has to be that it was cooked together first.

However we have to know that the following actions are included in the category of cooking.

SMOKING

In the Jerusalem Talmud (Nedarim) there is a question whether this is considered cooking. The Shulchan Aruch (87:6) following the Rambam rules that smoking meat and milk together is not punishable with lashes (i.e. it is not a Biblical transgression). This is because they are concluding that smoking is not considered cooking.



is fluid like water as opposed to fat. The concept of cooking can therefore only refer to milk. However cooking meat in its fat is not considered cooking, rather it is frying. Clearly Rashi is of the opinion that frying would not be forbidden *min haTorah*.

Tosfos however, explains that the concept that one has only transgressed a Biblical prohibition when it has been cooked teaches us that the prohibition applies to meat and milk, both of which are permissible to cook (and eat) separately but not when cooked together. Thus excludes cooking meat in its fat because the fat is anyway forbidden, so it can't be said that the act of cooking the two is what prohibits their consumption. It is clear from Tosfos that he did not explain like Rashi because he is of the opinion that frying is considered cooking.

ROASTING

By Korban Pesach the rule is that it must be roasted but the Torah still uses the word *bishul* - cooking with regard to this Korban. The Pri Chadash says that from here we see that Roasting is included in the category of cooking and it would be forbidden *min haTorah*. (According to Rashi above that frying is not considered cooking many commentators say that so too roasting is also not considered cooking)



FRYING

The Torah says "Lo svasheil gedi bachaleiv imo". The word "bachaleiv" as it is written in Hebrew can be read as "bcheileiv - in fat". How then do we know that it refers to milk? In order to prove that the correct way to read it is "bachaleiv - in milk" the Talmud (Sanhedrin 4b) says that we look at the context of the *pasuk* – that the Torah prohibits cooking these two things together. Rashi explains that milk



PICKLED/ SALTED

The Talmud (Pesachim 44b) says that the *issur* of "Meat and Milk" has an interesting twist that if one would soak meat in milk all day it would not be forbidden. However, cooking is forbidden. It is clear that pickling is not a Biblical transgression. Based on this, salting is also not Biblically prohibited since the Talmud puts pickling and salting in the same category.

Even if any of the above are not Biblically forbidden they are still Rabbinically forbidden. However there would be big differences between the two, as we shall see.

To be continued.....





EVENT: CATHERINE II CREATED THE PALE OF SETTLEMENT

DATE: 27 KISLEV 5552 - DECEMBER 23, 1791

Compiled by Rabbi Y Rose

The Empress of Russia, Catherine II, (most commonly known as Catherine the Great) created the Pale of Settlement. This was a western region of Imperial Russia with varying borders

that existed from 1791 to 1917 in which permanent residency by Jews was allowed and beyond which Jewish residency, permanent or temporary, was mostly forbidden. Most Jews were still excluded from residency in a number of cities within the Pale as well. A few Jews were allowed to live outside the area, including those with university education, the ennobled, members of the most affluent of the merchant guilds and particular artisans, some military personnel and some services associated with them, including their families, and sometimes their servants.

At its height, the Pale, including the new Polish and Lithuanian territories, had a Jewish population of over five million, and represented the largest component

(40 percent) of the world Jewish population at that time.

Life in the Pale for many was economically bleak. Most people relied on small service or artisan work that could not support the number of inhabitants. This together with other extremely restrictive decrees and recurrent pogroms led to much emigration from the Pale, mainly to the United States and Western Europe. However, emigration could not keep up with birth rates and expulsion of Jews from other parts of Russia, and thus the Jewish population of the Pale continued to grow.

During World War I, the Pale lost its rigid hold on the Jewish population when large numbers of Jews fled into the Russian interior to escape the invading German army. By August 1915, the boundaries of the Pale were *de facto* unenforceable. The Pale formally came to an end soon after the abdication of Nicholas II, and as revolution gripped Russia. On March 20 1917, the Pale was abolished by the Provisional Government decree: *On the abolition of religious and national restrictions*.

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY



HARAV SHALOM MORDECHAI SCHWADRON ZT"L

(5672 / 1912 - 5758 / 1997)

Compiled by Rabbi S. Stanton

Harav Shalom Mordechai Schwadron was famous as the *maggid* (spiritual preacher) of Yerushalayim. He was born in Yerushalayim in 5672/1912. His father, Reb Yitzchak, was a son of the esteemed *Marasham*, the leading *posek* in Galicia before World War I, for whom the child was named.

When he was seven years old, his mother was left a widow with six orphans. Times were extremely hard in Yerushalayim between the two World Wars, and his mother could barely feed her children. Each night, she would recite *tehillim* and share with her children Torah insights that her late husband had taught.

Reb Shalom attended Talmud Torah Meah Shearim, and at the age of 11 began learning in Yeshivat Tzion. From there he went on to the Lomza Yeshiva in *Petach Tikvah*, where he was one of the top *talmidim*. After the Chevron riots in 5790 / 1929, when the Chevron Yeshiva moved to Yerushalayim, Reb Shalom began studying there.

In Chevron Yeshiva he excelled greatly, learning up to 18 hours a day with intense *hasmadah*. He completed the amazing feat of learning more than 500 *pages* of *Gemara* in one semester! He was a close disciple of

Harav Leib Chasman and much later, Harav Eliyahu Lopian, both giants of the *mussar* (self-improvement through study of various Torah works) world.

In 5696 / 1936 he married the daughter of Harav Chaim Leib Auerbach, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Shaar Hashamayim and father of Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l, one of the most prominent Halachic authorities of the last century. He settled in the Shaarei Chessed area in Yerushalayim, where he devoted himself totally to Torah study and *avodat Hashem*.

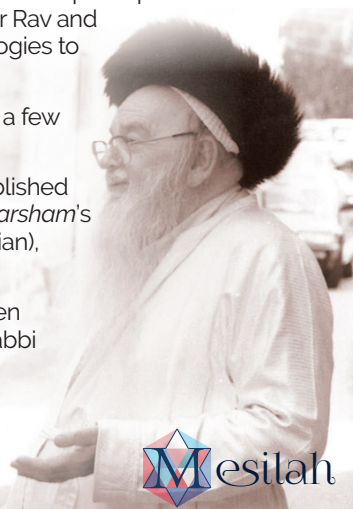
In 5712/1952, being an eloquent and gifted speaker, he began to deliver a weekly Friday-night shiur, which eventually earned him the title of *Maggid*. His riveting speeches eventually inspired thousands all over the world. His unique and original style drew large crowds to his weekly *shiurim* in Yerushalayim. He imbued his audiences with his pure words, "*devarim hayotzim min halev* - (words that emanate from the heart)" inspiring them with his first-hand experiences gained from being close to many great luminaries of the previous generation, whilst punctuating his speeches with Torah thoughts, stories and jokes, always ending in a passionate call to enhanced service of Hashem.

In his capacity as a *Maggid*, he often served as the spokesperson for the Torah leaders of that time, such as the Brisker Rav and others, conveying their words and their ideologies to the wider public.

Harav Shalom passed away on 22 Kislev, just a few days before Chanukah.

In addition to his renown as a *maggid*, he published approximately 25 of his grandfather, the *Maharsham's* works, as well as *Lev Eliyahu* (of Rav Elya Lopian), and the writings of Rav Chasman, *Ohr Yohel*.

Many of his speeches and thoughts have been published in the popular *Maggid* series by Rabbi Paysach Krohn.



BIOGRAPHY



PRAYER FROM THE HEART

A woman was once listening to a class given by Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein. In the class, the Rabbi told over how he once asked Rav Aharon Leib Steinman זצ"ל, for a *beracha* to open a dormitory for a girls school that he worked with. Rav Shteiman told him: who said it's the will of Hashem that you should have a dormitory?

The next year was very difficult for Reb Zecharia to make progress with the girls without the dormitory. When the girls went home each evening from school, they would usually lose what they gained. The next year, he went back to Rav Steinman and said, "please give me a *beracha* for a dormitory, we need it so badly". This time Rav Steinman gave him a warm *beracha* for success. Rabbi Wallerstein asked him what was the difference from last year to this year; why did he only give him a *beracha* the second time round? Rav

Steinman replied, "last year you said you **wanted** a dormitory. This year, you said you **needed** a dormitory. Just because you want something doesn't mean it is good for you. But if you really need it, Hashem will help".

There was a woman who became very inspired after hearing that lesson. She had been praying for years for her son to get married. He was having a very hard time with *shiduchim* and it seemed like her prayers were not helping. When she heard that class, she prayed *mincha* that day with renewed strength. She told Hashem how much her son needed a *shiduch*. In the same week the phone rang, it was the *shadchan* with a new suggestion for her son. Not long after, her son got engaged to that very girl! We must always remember that the main part of every *tefila* is a person's heart and sincerity.

This edition of Mesilah has been dedicated

לע"נ הרב חיים בן ר' יוסף ז"ל

נלב"ע ר"ח תמוז תש"פ

ולרפו"ש למרת אלישבע בת רבקה לויתא תחי'

ענבני הגפן וענבני הגפן דבר נאה ומתקבל

We would like to wish a big טוב מזל to our chairman and friend

R' Danny Elburg ז"ל and his wife Shuli תחי'

on the engagement of their son

Jishai ז"ל to Sarah Leiner תחי' from Antwerp

יה"ר שהזוג יעלה יפה ושיזכו להרבה נחת מיוצאי חלציהם