



Family TORAH JOURNAL

PARSHA PERSPECTIVES

RABBI ZEVI FARKAS



In this week's parsha, Hashem commands the Jews to build the *Aron Kodesh*, the Holy Ark that housed the *luchos*, the two tablets, for the Mishkan, the Tabernacle. The *aron* was made of three inserts, each nesting within the other. The middle insert was wood, and the inner and outer inserts were of pure gold. As the *pasuk* says (25:11), "And you shall cover [the Aron] with pure gold, from within and from without shall you cover it, etc."

There is an interesting story about Rav Saadia Gaon (10th century) and an *aron kodesh*. When Rav Saadia Gaon was serving as the Chief Rabbi in Egypt, he was offered the prestigious position of Rosh Yeshiva in the Yeshiva of Sura, in modern-day Iraq, which was the epicenter of Torah study. He accepted the offer, but before leaving Egypt, he collected large sums of money from wealthy individuals in his community. One wealthy man graciously donated a significant sum, on the condition that when Rav Saadia would arrive in the yeshiva, he would erect a plaque on the *Aron Kodesh* with his name on it.

When Rav Saadia arrived, he saw that someone had already donated the *aron* and had their name engraved on the plaque. Rav Saadia Gaon sent a letter to the man explaining that the *aron kodesh* had already been donated, however, he wrote, the *aron kodesh* in the Beis Medrash is only the "house" for the Written Torah. What is the *aron* for the Oral Torah? The *aron* for the Oral Torah is within each individual who studies it. A person himself can be the *aron kodesh* for the oral Torah! So what could be greater than donating money for the welfare of the Rabbis who studied at the yeshiva, as they were each an individual *aron* for the oral Torah?

There is another story cited in the Gemara in Brachos (27b-28a). The gemara relates a story about Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria. The Nasi, Rabban Gamliel felt that only the individuals who were as pure on the inside as they were on the outside would be allowed to learn Torah in the Beis Medrash. He placed guards at the entranceway, and many individuals were turned away. Due to a dispute between Rabban Gamliel and R' Yehoshua, Rabban Gamliel was removed from his post as *nasi*, and R' Elazar Ben Azaria was appointed in his place. He removed the guards and allowed everyone to come and study. When Rabban Gamliel came to study, he saw the tremendous amount of Torah being studied, and he felt bad about it. He felt he had been responsible for preventing Torah from being learned.

The first Gerrer Rebbe, the Chidushei HaRim (19th century) points out something puzzling. Why was Rabban Gamliel sad? He had made a calculated decision before deciding only to allow a select few into the Beis Medrash, and he must

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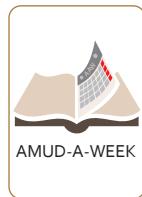


AMUD-A-WEEK SCHEDULE

ERUCHIN 2B

Short & Sweet - R' Jonathan Spetner

Maggid shiur of the Amud - Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Goldstone



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Harmonious Home

RABBI GIDON NITSUN

STAN JACOBS CHAIR OF SENIOR KOLLEL LEARNING



The Talmud in Mo'ed Katan (18b) states that one can derive the concept of *Bashert*, "that it is from Hashem that a woman is assigned to a man," from Chumash, Nevi'im, and Kesuvim. In Chumash (Genesis 24:50) it writes, "The matter stemmed from Hashem." In Nevi'im, it writes (Shoftim 14:4), "His father and mother did not know that it was from Hashem." And, in Kesuvim (Mishlei 19:14), "A house and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but an intelligent woman is from Hashem." By examining the example brought from Shoftim, we will come away with a new understanding of the concept of "Bashert."

The pasuk is brought in relation to Shimshon and his marriage to a Plishti woman from Timnas. When Shimshon told his parents that he sought to marry her, they attempted to dissuade him. The pasuk states they were unaware that she had been ordained as his wife since his conception. This was Hashem's plan to afflict the Plishtim, who were ruling over the Jews at the time. What is amazing is that she was far from the ideal wife! When Shimshon challenged the Plishtim with a riddle, she forced the answer from him and revealed it to the Plishtim, resulting in much death and destruction. Yet this match was called "it was from Hashem" -she was his "bashert". The reason is that the idea of "bashert" is not the person who will bring you the most happiness and pleasure, rather it is the person Hashem gave you to achieve your life's purpose. Sometimes this is through happiness, and other times it is through challenges that require you to work on your middos. The challenges we face with our spouse are ones we need to embrace, not run from, because this is our purpose in this world. (Obviously this does not negate the need for professional guidance in some cases.)

PARSHA PERSPECTIVES

CONTINUED

have felt that this was the best course of action, even at the expense of refusing entry to so many! The Chidushei HaRim answers that as much as Rabban Gamliel felt that only the purest individuals should be allowed to study, he saw that once everyone started to study, even the "impure" individuals developed into people who were pure on the inside! He felt bad that he did not give these people the opportunity to study and become great.

The Torah has such an immense power to be able to purify and uplift anyone who learns it. Even a small amount of Torah study can go a long way. We need to remember that we are an *Aron Kodesh* for every word of Torah, and every little bit we study becomes part of our very essence and is ours to keep forever.

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What Would You Say?

RABBI ELIYAHU CHAIM GOLDSTONE

The Stan Jacobs Chair of Senior Kollel Learning is dedicated in loving memory of Mr. Stan Jacobs a'h

Q. The V1 rockets, and subsequently, the V2, shot by the Germans in World War II may have been a scientific wonder of the time, but they were rather crude by modern standards. The Germans built ramps in France and aimed them across the English Channel toward the London metropolitan area. Although these rockets were unguided, by following the path laid out for them by the ramps, they succeeded in inflicting catastrophic civilian and military damage. The Royal Air Force set out to develop a strategy that would minimize the damage. One of the most fascinating defensive maneuvers in RAF history was developed to assist in this mission. Pilots would fly alongside these rockets and gently nudge them away from London towards the less populated suburbs, in order to decrease civilian casualties. It was daring and it was difficult, but it is also questionable. From a Halachic vantage point, is this acceptable? What gives the pilot the right to choose to save the life of the city dweller over that of the villager?

Have an answer? Email egoldstone@stlkollel.com

Kasha Korner

RABBI CHEZKY FREUND



What is mentioned in this week's Parsha, and has not been mentioned since Parshas Bereishis?

LAST WEEK'S KASHA:

Q. Which pasuk in this week's parsha has three verbs, and all three are repeated twice in the same pasuk?

A: Chapter 22 verse 22.

אם־עננה תעננה אותם כי אם־צעק יצעק אלֵי שָׁמְעַ אֲשֶׁר צִקְתָּה:
If you do mistreat them, I will heed their outcry as soon as they cry out to Me.

Congratulations: Nachi Anton and Joshua Vorobeychik.

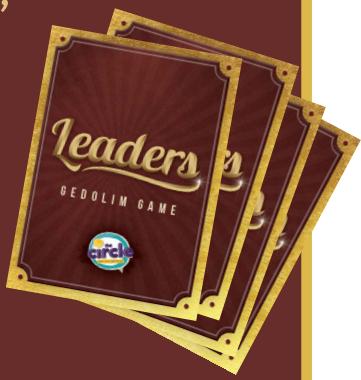
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Short Story

Walking to Avoid Lashon Hara

The Chofetz Chaim was once traveling in a stagecoach with a group of animal dealers. Throughout the journey, the men talked about animals and horses while the Chofetz Chaim sat quietly in the corner engrossed in his own thoughts. However, the conversation soon turned to speaking badly about another animal trader. The Chofetz Chaim politely tried to steer the conversation back to animals, but all that resulted was the animal dealers making fun of him. Content that they were no longer discussing the other dealer, the Chofetz Chaim sat happily in the coach.

They soon returned to their previous conversation, speaking Lashon Hara about the other dealer. Seeing that his words were unable to stop them from speaking Lashon Hara, the Chofetz Chaim asked the coachman to stop the coach. There, in the middle of the road, the Chofetz Chaim disembarked. "It is better to get off in the middle of the road," exclaimed the Chofetz Chaim, "than to hear words of Lashon Hara."



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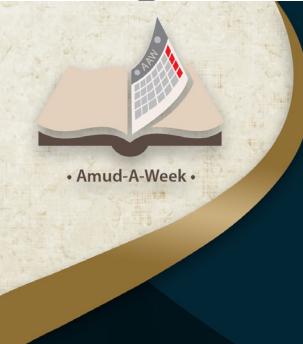
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