



PARSHA PERSPECTIVES RABBI SHLOMO SOROKA

Of the 12 sons of Jacob our Patriarch, ten convened a tribunal and decided to kill their brother Joseph. Reuvain, the oldest son, wasn't fully on board with the plan, but it was Judah who ultimately decided to sell Joseph as a slave to foreign merchants. The original instigators who wished to kill Joseph were Shimon and Levi. If you believe, as I do, that these were great men, it's hard to comprehend that they wished to perpetrate such a heinous and cruel act. To kill your own brother? Even most serial killers have boundaries!

What makes it even more difficult to comprehend is that when it came to family, it was Shimon and Levi who displayed selfless loyalty. It was they who risked their lives in the daring rescue mission of their abducted sister, Dina. How could they care so much about one sibling and be so callous to the other?

Our Sages expound on this episode and explain that they viewed Joseph as an existential threat to the family. Joseph's dreams of lording over them were telling. They believed that much in the same way that only one son of Abraham, namely Isaac, was chosen to be his true offspring, and only one of Isaac's twin sons, Jacob, was chosen, Joseph wished to be the sole chosen successor. They thought that Joseph wished to sideline his siblings. All of Jacob's sons were to comprise the 12 Tribes but they thought Joseph had other plans. Shimon and Levi didn't view this as harming a brother. They viewed it as saving all the other brothers. They were sincere and well-intentioned, but made a grave error, allowing their emotions to cloud their judgment.

It's easy to be an armchair critic and see the faults in others. But we all have times when we justify our practices or professed beliefs with flawed ideology. Our hearts may be in the right place, but the path to..., as they say, is paved with the best intentions. So how do we know if we are wrong? How can we determine if our moral compass has been compromised by our emotions? By looking at the eternal truths of G-d's Torah.

There are countless things we do and positions we take, whether in our public or private lives, that are influenced by other external factors. Our inner sense of knowing right from wrong is usually enough if we are intellectually honest with ourselves. But sometimes there's a magnet near the moral compass. That's why you also need a map. The Torah is our eternal map for life.

Rabbi Shlomo Soroka was a Kollel member from 2005-2015, serving as Associate Rosh Kollel for the last three years of his tenure. He currently lives in Chicago, serving as Agudath Israel of Illinois' Director of Government Affairs



AMUD-A-WEEK SCHEDULE TAANIS 5B

Short & Sweet - Rabbi Jonathan Fruchter
Maggid shiur of the Amud - R' Jonathan Spetner



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ZMANIM CANDLELIGHTING: 4:23 **SOF ZMAN KRIAS SHEMA** MA: 8:46 GRA: 9:22 AM
SHABBOS ENDS 5:26 PM RABBEINU TAM: 5:54 PM



Harmonious Home

RABBI GIDON NITSUN
STAN JACOBS CHAIR OF SENIOR KOLLEL LEARNING

There are various affronts that can trigger anger and upset in a marriage. Being aware of them and knowing that they may be the source of our upset is extremely helpful. We would like to discuss a few.

Exploded fantasies: When a spouse enters a marriage with unrealistic expectations, they will blame their spouse for the gap between reality and fantasy. These grievances can be resolved by an honest awareness of the realities of marriage.

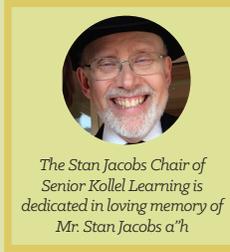
Associations: Because of past experiences, a spouse may attach unintended significance to their spouse's actions. Rabbi Feldman brings the example of a husband who became annoyed when his wife would crack open his hard boiled egg for him in the morning. This apparently reminded him of an overprotective mother in years gone by. The opened egg was a symbol (to him) of an attempt at dominance and caused a knee-jerk reaction of annoyance. The antidote is honesty and self awareness.

The Principle: We often delude ourselves into thinking that we are angry for noble reasons. "I know that what you did was really trivial, but it's the principle of the thing that bothers me." A wife is late; her husband is fuming. He knows that mistakes can happen and that he is really overreacting to her tardiness. Still he can't contain his anger. He explains his extreme reaction by telling himself that he cannot tolerate another person not keeping their word. In truth, however, his anger stems from interpreting her lateness as an act of disrespect - she doesn't consider him important; she has slighted him. By admitting that his ego has been offended, it will be much easier to contain his anger.

Jealousy: Because of our inflated view of ourselves, we often cannot tolerate the better treatment or even praise our spouse gives to someone else. "Why does so and so deserve such praise and not me? Obviously, I am not regarded as highly as the other person". A husband may be jealous of his wife's love for her parents or siblings, or visa versa, or a husband may even be jealous of his wife paying more attention to their infant than to him. Putting more effort into a job or project than into one's spouse may

also evoke the same type of feeling. Jealousy can often be counteracted by the simple admission that jealousy exists. Facing the immaturity of the emotion can often let in a gust of healthy air. Also, awakening in oneself feelings of love for the object of the jealousy can counteract the feelings of jealousy. Love makes the lover desire to benefit his beloved, and when this feeling exists, there can be no place for jealousy.

(Adapted from "The River the Kettle and the Bird")



I Didn't Know That!

RABBI ELIYAHU CHAIM GOLDSTONE

Q. Are there special requirements for women during the Chanukah holiday?

A. Great question! We have a concept in Halacha that women are obligated in the Mitzvos of Chanukah because "they too were in the miracle". According to some, this means that the miracle was performed by a woman. Let us discuss three practical applications of this rule.

- 1. Reciting Hallel** According to many contemporary sources, women are obligated to recite Hallel on Chanukah. The Artscroll Women's Siddur writes, "Some opinions maintain that women are obligated to recite Hallel on Chanukah. You should make a special effort to say Hallel on each of the eight days of Chanukah."
- 2. Menorah** Women have an obligation equal to men to light the Menorah. Customarily, married women do not light and are included in their husband's kindling. Customs vary regarding adult female children residing in their parents' home. One should be careful to be present at the time of the lighting. Similarly, a husband should wait for his wife to return before lighting. If the husband/father will not be in the house at all that night, the woman should light.
- 3. Work** There is a praiseworthy practice for women not to do work at the time that the candles are lit. She may begin working once a half hour has passed and one may extinguish the candles (the particulars are beyond the scope of this article). Work only includes skilled work such as sewing or labor that requires effort and concentration such as laundry. Mopping or cooking is permissible.

Have your own question?
Email egoldstone@stkollel.com

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Ethics for the Ages

RABBI AVI BIN-NUN

PRAYER: NOT JUST 3 TIMES 18

One of the three things that hold up the world is tefillah, prayer. One can ask a basic question on the Shemona Esrei that we say daily. The Gemara tells us that 120 sages, many of them prophets, came together and composed our Shemona Esrei. It would seem that the writing of prayers is a monumental task. Why is this so? Many of us have turned to Hashem and asked things of Him without needing to consult 120 rabbis. Furthermore, why do we say the same language every day? Would it not be better to shake things up a little? Also, why are we using the same language our great-great-grandfathers prayed in? Haven't our needs changed?

The Ruach Chaim explains that, on the contrary, there has not been a single prayer since the creation of Shemona Esrei that has been the same. When our great Sages created Shemona Esrei they did so in a way that is relevant to every Jew and to his soul. Each of its hallowed words soar up to heaven to exactly where they need to go to bring about salvation. It is now obvious why prophets were needed for this monumental composition. The Ruach Chaim points out that even the lofty authors of our Shemona Esrei could not understand the depth of it, for it is too elevated to be understood by a mortal.

How fortunate we are to have Shemona Esrei as part of our daily lives!

WEEKLY MUSSAR VAAD FOR MEN

There will be no Mussar Vaad next week.

Kasha Korner

RABBI CHEZKY FREUND



There are 112 פסוקים (verses) in Parshas Vayeishev. How many do not start with the letter "ו" (vav)?

Extra credit: What is significant about this number?

ANSWER TO LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Which two names in this week's parsha are found as part of a לא תעשה In the Torah?

Both Amelek and Korach are in the parsha and are part of a לא תעשה. Additionally, Chamor, the father of Shechem, is found in this parsha and there are multiple לא ייין that mention "Chamor" but in the context of a donkey not a person.

Congratulations: Dr. Dovid Greengart, Hillel Anton and Jonathan Witten

Got an answer? Email cfreund@stlkollel.com



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Halachic Estate Planning

Rabbi Ari Marburger
Dayan for the Bais Din Maysharim of Lakewood, and author of "Business Halacha: A Practical Guide to Modern Business"



Monday December 13 - 1 PM

- How is an estate divided according to Halacha?
- What is the enforceability of a verbal 'Will'?
- What are the practical applications of a Bechor/firstborn?

Zoom Meeting ID 882-183-0991

Questions? Email office@stkkollel.com

Pictures from the week

Launching a chabura for undergraduate Wash U students with Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Goldstone



Partial view of the over 100 participants enjoying the Eishes Chayil pre-Chanuka event



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