

דבר אל-בני ישראל, ואמרת אליהם,
כי תבאו אל-הארץ, אשר אני נתן לכם
ושבתה הארץ, שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT MIKETZ
SHABBAT CHANUKAH
30TH KISLEV 5779
7TH/8TH DECEMBER 2018



Please continue to daven for the refuah and strength of Yeshaya Noson ben Shira Gittel



AN IDENTITY CRISIS? PENINA MYERSON SHEVET NE'EMAN

This Shabbat, on the sixth day of Chanukah we will read parashat Miketz. Chanukah is a festival of exhibitionism, one

in which we proudly publicise our Jewish identity. We do this in the most physical of terms, waiting until it is completely dark and then lighting candles in purposefully prominent positions in our homes. The whole purpose is to attract attention to ourselves so that we may publicise the miracles of the festival.

Somewhat contrary to this message are the actions of Yosef in this week's Torah portion. The parasha begins with Yosef being called before Pharaoh to interpret the ruler's dreams. Doing so successfully, Yosef is celebrated and given a major role amongst the Egyptian ruling elite, taking on a new name and a new way of life. Subsequently, he is once again confronted by his brothers, the strongest reminders of his old identity, and chooses not to reveal himself despite multiple opportunities to do so. Instead, he further commits to his Egyptian image, going so far as to tell his own brothers that he practises Egyptian religious and magical rites.

Which of these, seeming contradictory, messages should we be internalising this Shabbat? Should we be publicly advertising our Jewish religious identity or putting on a neutral public face as Yosef appears to do?

Yosef's behaviour in this week's parasha should trouble us. Indeed, the Torah takes measures to draw out the tension that this character is facing. On the one hand, we are shown numerous harsh actions that Yosef takes against his brothers - the imprisonment of Shimon and Binyamin, the pain that these actions cause to Yaakov, a result which Yosef must have been aware of, and the manipulation of the brothers with the accusation of crimes which Yosef knows full well they did not commit. These

are contrasted against another aspect of Yosef's behaviour, his kindness and mercy towards his family which manifests itself in the placement of additional money in his brother's bags when they leave Egypt the first time and the tears that he sheds alone in a separate room when he initially sees Binyamin.

To fully understand Yosef's actions, we must look ahead to next week's parasha where Yosef reveals himself to his brothers. The Torah tells us that 'Yosef could no longer contain himself' (Bereshit 45:1) - despite the fact that he sends the other people in the room away to give him and his brothers privacy, his cries during this revelation are so loud that even Pharaoh's house hears the news. This is not just a statement of his identity to the brothers; this is Yosef revealing it to the whole of Egypt.

Perhaps from this we learn one of the purposes of Chanukah. It is not always easy to advertise your identity; Jews have struggled with this throughout history through years of persecution and hiding. However, Chanukah demands something more, it insists that you light your candles in public and leave them there as a marker that this is a Jewish home with Jewish people in it. Perhaps the same message may be learnt from the way in which we light: adding a candle each night until all eight are burning at once. It is not always easy to advertise who you are but by the end of Chanukah, just like Yosef, we are proudly and loudly proclaiming this with all eight flames burning. By the time we reach next week's parasha, we will have mirrored Yosef's journey towards claiming our identity in public with pride and without fear.

**PENINA IS A NIVCHERET HANHALLAH
AND WAS A MADRICHA ON HAROEH AND
GIMMEL WINTER MACHANE 5778**

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|------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| London | In: 15:34 Out: 16:41 | Oxford | In: 15:37 Out: 16:45 | Cambridge | In: 15:30 Out: 16:38 |
| Manchester | In: 15:32 Out: 16:40 | Bristol | In: 15:44 Out: 16:52 | Liverpool | In: 15:35 Out: 16:43 |
| Leeds | In: 15:27 Out: 16:35 | Birmingham | In: 15:40 Out: 16:47 | Jerusalem | In: 15:55 Out: 17:25 |

SELF-REFLECTION IN THE MODERN DAY: WHAT IS HUMILITY?



RAV AHARON HERSKOVITZ | RAV SHALIACH

This piece is the fourth in a series on self-reflection in the modern day, based on the book "Musar for Moderns" by Rav Elyakim Krumbein

The last few weeks have been an introduction to the concept of self-reflection, what it means from a Jewish perspective, as well as the challenges in engaging in it, both from a general perspective as well as a specifically modern one.

We are now able to start speaking about specific concepts that are central to one's character development. A trait that gets discussed frequently is *ga'ava* (arrogance), and its opposite, *anava* (humility). In general Rambam (Hilchot Deot 1:4) advises that one take a "Golden Mean" approach to character traits, for example by blazing a path between being too miserly and giving too freely. There are two character traits, however that he advises that one must completely distance themselves from the other extreme: anger and arrogance (ibid. 2:3). He points to a number of sources, including Pirkei Avot (4:4), which tells us that one must be "**very, very** lowly of spirit."

If it is so important to achieve humility, what does it mean? What does "being humble" look like, that one may strive towards that goal?

We have a tendency to define *ga'ava* in a way that is similar to how we would pride: a positive feeling about oneself. If so, this would mean that *anava*, its opposite, would be a lack of such positive feeling. Indeed, there are Jewish sources that define humility in this way, as a complete and utter nullification of ourselves at

the Feet of the One Whose Greatness overwhelms us. Although there are points when this feeling is one that we need to strive towards, living according to it at every moment is not necessarily achievable, and even if it is it would likely lead to us becoming passive and not accomplishing much in life.

When my wife and I meet with couples before marriage, we speak about the importance of communication, and how disagreements and fights are a normal point of relationships. When one party feels hurt or angry, although it is often important for them to work on themselves and not get too worked up about things, it is important that that not be the **only** possible resolution. The refrain we give is that it is important to express one's negative feelings in a forward-looking, non-attacking way "Because your fiancée is marrying you because you're a **person**, not a **doormat**."

**TRUE HUMILITY IS
FEELING PRIDE IN
ONE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS
AND CHARACTER,
BUT FRAMING IT IN
THE PROPER WAY**

The Chovot HaLevavot explains that true humility is feeling pride in one's accomplishments and character, but **framing** it in the proper way: as an act of *chesed* (kindness) from the Master of the Universe. This affects not just our feelings regarding the **source** of our positive aspects, but also the **result** of them: if we are so wise, capable and kind and have been able to accomplish so much thanks to the mercy of Hashem, then our future path must be directed towards continuing to fulfil His will. *Anava* then is more similar to self-esteem: a belief in one's abilities that propels them forward, but one that has at its core an awareness of one's place in the world. We need a feeling of positivity about ourselves so that we can aim high, so that we can accomplish and achieve greatness. But these goals need to be in tune with the will of Hashem, and not merely feelings of personal self-achievement.

**TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO
EMAIL RAV AHARON AT RAV@BAUK.ORG**

DVAR HALACHA: WEEKLY QUESTION WITH RAV AHARON



Question: If there is a window with frosted glass immediately to the left of the front door (ground floor facing the road) so there would be Chanukah candles on the left and mezuzah on the right - but others wouldn't be able to see the lights as clearly due to the

frosted glass is it better to light there than in a front room which has regular windows?

Answer: The Gemara in Shabbat (21b) writes: "Chanukah candles- the mitzvah is to put them at the entrance to the house on the outside. And if one lives in the upper floor, they should place it in the window that is close to the *reshut harabim* (public domain), and in time of danger they should place it on their table and that is enough.

Publicising the miracle is a main concern of the location, and a number of sources show not just the centrality of this concern, but that we aim to publicise the miracle in the **most** public way possible. For example, Rashi and Tosafot disagree when one's house opens into a courtyard if it is best to light at the entrance of the home or at the entrance to the courtyard. Lighting by one's **home** (Rashi) lessens the publicising but emphasises the connection between those candles and one's home, while lighting at the entrance to the **courtyard** (Tosafot) increases the publicising of the miracle. The halacha is

like this second opinion (SA OC 671:5). In other words, publicising the miracle is preferred over other concepts.

Additionally, the Gemara later on (ibid. 22a) writes that one should place the menorah within a *tefach* (hand-breadth) of the entrance, and then records a debate whether this should be on the right or left side. The conclusion of the Gemara is that one should place the menorah to the left side, so that the menorah is on one side and the mezuzah on the other, with the result being that one is surrounded by *mitzvot*.

What happens when these two concepts clash, when one can either light near the doorway (but publicise the miracle less) or by the window (publicising more, but losing out on the connection to the entranceway). Although the Rema records (SA OC 671:7) that the practice in his day (when all would light inside) is to put it near the entranceway, the Magen Avraham (ibid, sk 8) writes that if there are no safety concerns, one should light near the window to publicise the miracle further.

Acharonim (see, for example the Igrot Moshe OC 4:125) explain that this custom is based off focusing on the publicising of the miracle; lighting near the doorway (and on which side) is relevant more when one is lighting **outside** and the miracle is **already** being publicised in the fullest way possible. For that reason, in this example, lighting near the front room windows should be preferable assuming that the frosted glass prevents others from seeing the candles significantly.

A TASTE FROM ISRAEL

TEVET IN ISRAELI HISTORY

9th (5752) - On 16 December 1991, the UN General Assembly Resolution 46/86 was adopted and revoked the determination in Resolution 3379 which was adopted 14 years before. Resolution 3379 "determined that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination". Resolution 46/86 was supported by 111, opposed by 25 nations and abstained by 13 nations.

Chaim Herzog said in response to resolution 3379 passing "Who would have believed that in this year, 1975, the malicious falsehoods of the 'Elders of Zion' would be distributed officially by Arab governments? ... For us, the Jewish people, this resolution based on hatred, falsehood and arrogance, is devoid of any moral or legal value. For us, this is no more than a piece of paper and we shall treat it as such." And he tore the resolution in half. The name of "The UN avenue" in Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv was switched to "The Zionism avenue" as a response to the UN's decision.



The US President at the time was George H.W. Bush and resolution 46/86 was raised under pressure from his administration. He personally introduced the motion by saying "The so-called "Zionism is racism" resolution, mocks the principles upon which the United Nations was founded. And I call now for its repeal. Zionism is not a policy; it is the idea that led to the creation of a home for the Jewish people, to the State of Israel. And to equate Zionism with the intolerable sin of racism is to twist history and forget the terrible plight of Jews in World War II and, indeed, throughout history. To equate Zionism with racism is to reject Israel itself, a member of good standing of the United Nations."

ALSO IN TEVET:

16th (5754) - Israel and Vatican sign "Fundamental Agreement"

22nd (5769) - Operation Cast Lead ended with a unilateral Israeli ceasefire.

24th (5709) - Israel's first national election; David Ben-Gurion elected Prime Minister

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Winter machane is on the 23rd-30th December and applications are still open!! Feel free to email Rafi H at camps@bauk.org to apply or if you have any questions

- Student Bet Midrash continues!! Come along for a great opportunity to hear amazing speakers, have some great food and learn with friends or madrichim! Please feel free to email Eli at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions

- Israel Machane applications are NOW OPEN. For more information or a brochure please contact Chana at israel@bauk.org

- It's the last week of svivot! To get involved at your local sviva for next term beginning 12th January please email Rafi C at svivot@bauk.org

- THIS MOTZEI SHABBAT (8th December) - Chanukah Funfair at Hendon United Synagogue at 5:30-8:00pm for school years 2-10!!

Shabbat shalom, Chanukah Sameach, and Chodesh Tov!!



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Why did the servants proclaim "Avrech!" before Yosef? (See Rashi on 41:43)

2. What was the significance of Yosef calling his second son Ephraim? (See Abarbanel and Rav Hirsch on 41:52)

3. What was the significance of the Torah calling Yaakov by the name Yisrael in pasuk 43:6? (See Haamek Davar)



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