

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT BEHALOTECHA

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

ARE YOU MOSHE?!

Want to be a servant? Of course not, it's a tough job right?

Well there's another side to that argument.

The number of butlers registered with Greycoat Placements, the servants' employment agency, has almost doubled to more than 5,000 over the past five years.

It seems that demand is rampant and people are happy to work as butlers and servants.

A few years ago Buckingham palace even put an advert out searching for a new trainee butler. They were inundated with people wishing to work there.

Why is it so popular? Surely it's a very demanding job?

Our Sages have taught us that when someone becomes a servant of a powerful king or queen, then there are perks.

'A servant of a king is a king!'

Wherever the king goes, the servant accompanies him, staying in the most luxurious places in the world, eating of the most delicious food, surrounded by the most influential people in the world.

Being a servant can actually be exciting.

In this weeks Parasha we are taught about the ultimate servant of G-d.

Moshe is termed Moshe Avdi – Moshe my servant – 'in my whole house he is loyal. Face to face I speak with him....' (Bamidbar 12:7-8). Hashem was addressing Miriam's speech with Aharon against Moshe's conduct.

The Pasuk continues later – 'why did you not fear to speak about my servant about Moshe.'

The commentators are puzzled as to why there is a double superfluous statement. The torah didn't need to tell us again that Moshe was Hashem's servant. And even if it did need to repeat, surely it should have stated BeAvdi

Moshe – and not BeAvdi BeMoshe.

The commentators explain that there are two types of personalities that are close to a king. First is his top minister. Whenever there are big decisions, he will confide in his minister.

The Minister will be there with him advising and implementing the kings will.

The second is the king's loyal servant. He too will be in attendance of the kings presence attending to the kings every will.

On the one hand the minister is higher up and can implement big decisions, yet on the other hand, he needs to wait to see the king. He needs to organise an official meeting.

The servant is a Ben Bayit – part of the kings house, he can enter and leave the kings presence whenever he sees fit.

The king understands that the servants every move is for his benefit.

Moshe was like a minister in Hashem's palace. He was the leader of Am Yisrael; he led them out of Egypt and encouraged them to keep Hashem's Mitzvot. But he was also an Eved Hashem – a servant that had the opportunity to enter and leave (so to speak) the Kings presence. He was BeAvdi (as a servant can enter at free will) and BeMoshe (like a minister and leader).

The Rambam (Hilchot Teshuva 5:2) states that every person Rauy Lihyot Tsadik KeMoshe – has the ability to be a Tsadik like Moshe Rabenu.

How is it possible to be as righteous as Moshe?

The torah clearly states (Devarim 34:10) that there never will be a prophet as great as Moshe?

The Radak (Yehoshua 1:1) explains that an Eved Hashem is someone who puts all their actions and intentions at the will of Hashem.

This Eved Hashem will leave even mundane things to be orchestrated by Hashem. He completely nullifies himself to his Master. Whatever he acquires, his Master acquires.

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THE ORIGINAL COMMUNAL PARASHA SHEET, SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR OVER 12 YEARS!

This was who Moshe was. Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman zts'l explains that every person can reach the level of righteousness of Moshe. How? By becoming a true servant of Hashem. When we work on nullifying our will to that of the Creator, then we are working hard to become his servant like Moshe achieved. That level of righteousness is open to all.

Regarding prophecy however, we will never be able to attain the same level of Moshe as he was granted special character traits and strengths that enabled him reach that level.

In the year 5693 the Chafetz Chaim passed away. His student R Elchanan Wasserman zts'l, was asked to give a Hespel (eulogy).

A difficult task lay ahead, the Chafetz Chaim was the leader of the generation a light to the people, the author of many books which have shaped Jewish law and are used by all to this day.

He stood up and gave the Hespel with two words.

Quoting the Pasuk - Vayomot Sham Moshe - EVED Hashem. (Devarim 34:5) R Elchanan explained that Moshe's entire life and essence was hidden in these two words.

What was the meaning of Eved Hashem? He asked.

The Midrash Tanchuma (Lech Lecha 88) relates the following story.

There was once a rich man who had only one son. He cherished and looked after his son with all his love and the son was always there for him.

One day the man needed to travel for business and took with him his most loyal servant. They travelled for a while amassing much wealth. But alas along the way, the man fell ill. He was worried he would die. What was he going to do?

If he wrote a will for his son, surely the servant would manipulate it and take all the wealth for himself.

He waited anticipating his healing, yet things got worse and he was forced to act.

He called in his servant and told him - "you have been a worthy servant. Therefore I have decided to inherit everything to you. However, my son will be able to first chose one thing from my inheritance and then you can take the rest for yourself."

The servant was excited at the 'good' news and after the death of his master went to the son with the inheritance document in his hand, proving his claim to the family fortune.

The son was distraught at the news, and felt even more pain when hearing that he had been left only one thing from the inheritance of his fathers massive fortune. He went to a wise person for advice as to what to do.

The wise man explained to the son.

"Your father was very intelligent. He knew that if he would have given you all his inheritance the servant would have taken everything for himself.

Therefore he wrote out his entire inheritance to the servant, so that the servant would guard it as if it was his and allow you to choose one item.

When you get to the court, tell them that all you want to claim is the servant himself. He will be the item that you claim.

And what the servant owns the master owns (Pesachim 88b)!"

Rabbi Elchanan finished his Hespel by saying that the Chafetz Chaim was an Eved Hashem, he nullified his will to that of the Creator. And his very essence was constantly carrying out the will of Hashem.

To be a servant of a king is a Zechut. To be able to enter the palace at will is of high value. This is what we have to strive to. As the Rambam states everyone has the ability to be a Tsadik like Moshe Rabenu! Shabbat Shalom !



RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT BEHALOTECHA

Each morning, we say these powerful words from Pirkei Avot (5:20):

"Be bold like a leopard, light like an eagle, run like a deer, and strong like a lion - to do the will of your Father in Heaven."

This morning, we focused on just two words: "קל כנשר" - "light like an eagle."

What does it mean to be "light like an eagle"? It means that when it comes to doing mitzvot, we should be quick and enthusiastic - not heavy or sluggish. Just like an eagle spreads its wings and soars effortlessly, we too should rise up energetically when it's time to daven, learn, or help someone. We

shouldn't say, "I'll do it later," but instead act immediately, with excitement and joy.

We then connected this idea to a beautiful pasuk from Sefer Yeshayahu (40:31):

"Those who hope in Hashem will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not become tired."

But here's an interesting point: why does the verse end with walking? If you can soar and run, why mention walking at all - and why place it last?

The answer teaches us a profound lesson about avodat Hashem.

Flying represents moments of deep inspiration - times when we feel uplifted and connected to Hashem. In those moments, we "fly" easily.

Running represents motivation - when

we're excited to do mitzvot and help others.

But walking - that is the greatest level. Walking means steady, consistent progress, step by step, day after day. Even when the excitement fades, even when we're tired or uninspired, we continue forward.

That is true greatness: not just flying in moments of inspiration, but walking with perseverance in the everyday moments.

So "קל כנשר" teaches us: when you feel a spark - FLY! Be light and quick to do good. But remember, the real hero is the one who also walks - who keeps going with consistency and dedication, every single day.

That is how we truly fulfill רצון אביך שבשמים - the will of our Father in Heaven.



RABBI BENJI STONE, TAL Chavruta Program

לְמַנְיַח עַל־מֵוֹת לְבָן: - Chapter 9 Tehillim for Our Times

DETECTING THE GOOD IN OUR LIVES - PART 1

Based on the commentary of the Malbim

Uncle Chaim arrived for his annual visit to our house. His visits were always welcome because, as the CEO of an extremely successful clothing manufacturer, he liked to share his wealth with his nieces and nephews. It was of course his warm personality which really drew his family to him, but the financial perks of the relationship did not go unnoticed. It was interesting to observe the different reactions of the teenagers as they accepted their wad of cash just before Uncle Chaim was to depart. Shaindel, only six years old, did not really

understand the meaning of money and would have preferred a new high spec doll to play with. Yanky, the Tzadik of the family at first refused the gift. "No Uncle Cham. I just like to see you! The gift is unnecessary!". Breindy gracefully accepted the gift with a polite smile. Trying to hide his impatience, Shmuli finally received his gift with a bright smile. There was something different about that smile though. It was overly-animated and accompanied by a strange glint in his eye which read "Uncle Chaim I am incredibly delighted with the gift! Please note this enthusiastic reaction and be encouraged to give me more next time!"

King David has just emerged victorious from a battle with a character named "Laben" (this is the only time he is mentioned in Tenach). When Laben flees from the confrontation he falls into a trap which he himself had set for King David. King David reflects on the

incredible hashgacha (divine providence) which caused this to happen. He calls to Hashem

"I will thank you with my whole heart" (9:2). What is the meaning of the phrase "my whole heart?"

King David's message should be understood like this; "when I express my appreciation I am not doing so in the hope that my reaction will encourage You to bestow more kindness upon me. If that would be my intention then my gratitude could not be complete. How can I thank you whilst at the same time hope to receive more in the future? If I am feeling the need to receive more of the same then by definition my satisfaction is not complete at this moment. The gift did not quite hit the spot".

Instead King David accepts Hashem's kindness with his "whole heart" - pure gratefulness and complete satisfaction.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Lighting a Candle in Memory of the Deceased (Part 2)

What's the explanation of this practice? How does lighting a candle benefit the soul of the deceased?

One explanation is that lighting a candle in itself brings no benefit to the deceased, but when candles are lit in the synagogue, this fulfills a Misva which brings merit to the deceased's soul. Generations ago, candles were needed for illumination, and so lighting candles in the synagogue was a very important Misva. Indeed, it was customary years ago for people to donate oil for the lights in the synagogue in merit of a deceased parent. More generally, lighting candles enhances the atmosphere of the synagogue, and this, too, constitutes a Misva which brings merit to the deceased. (Interestingly, one contemporary work suggested that it would be appropriate to donate towards the synagogue's electric bill as a merit for the deceased, just as years ago people would donate oil for the lights.) According to this explanation, the value of lighting candles is only when it is done for a Misva, meaning, when the candles are lit in the synagogue.

However, the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), in his Torah Li'shmah, writes that the lighting itself brings comfort and joy to the soul of the deceased. He

explains that a soul is like a candle, and similar entities are attracted to one another. Therefore, when a candle is lit at a place where the soul is present, the soul experiences some degree of enjoyment. However, the Ben Ish Hai emphasizes that this is relevant only in the place where the soul is present - namely, in the deceased's home during the Shiba period, or at the grave. According to the Ben Ish Hai, then, there is no purpose to light a candle in memory of the deceased in his or her home after the Shiba, or even during the Shiba if the mourning is observed somewhere other than the deceased's home.

Regardless, the Poskim accorded great importance to this custom. It is mentioned in the major works on mourning (Gesher Ha'haim, Ma'abar Yabok). In fact, the Mishna Berura (261) writes that during the period of Ben Ha'shemashot after sundown on Friday afternoon, when it is permissible to ask a gentile to perform a Melacha (forbidden activity) on one's behalf when there is a great need, one may ask a gentile to light a Yahrzeit candle. Meaning, if one forgot the light the candle before Shabbat, he may ask a non-Jew to do so during the period of Ben Ha'shemashot, because this is considered a matter of great need.

Likewise, Hacham Bension Abba Shaul (Israel, 1924-1998) writes that if one has Yahrzeit on Yom Tob and forgot to light the candle before

Yom Tob, he may light it on Yom Tob (from a preexisting flame). This is considered a significant enough need to permit lighting a candle on Yom Tob.

When lighting the candle, the Ben Ish Hai writes, it is proper to declare that the candle is being lit for the "Menuhat Nefesh" ("rest of the soul") or "Iluy Nefesh" ("elevation of the soul") of the deceased, mentioning the deceased's name. It is also proper to give some charity at the time the candle is lit.

Some opinions say it is preferable to use oil for this candle, because the word "Shemen" ("oil") has the letters of "Neshama," whereas others say wax should be used, because the letters of the word "Sha'ava" ("wax") represent the verse, "Hakisu Ve'ranenu Shocheneh Afar" - "Awaken and rejoice, those who lie in the earth," the verse which speaks of the resurrection of the dead in the future.

Summary: There is a time-honored custom to light a candle in memory of a deceased loved one during the Shiba mourning period, and on the Yahrzeit. According to one view, the candles are lit in the synagogue as a merit for the deceased, whereas others explain that a candle lit in a place where the deceased's soul is present brings joy and comfort to the soul. Therefore, according to many opinions, the candles should be lit only in the deceased's home during Shiba, at the grave, or in the synagogue.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Behalotecha

Aharon is taught the method for kindling the Menorah. Moshe sanctifies the levi'im to work in the Mishkan. They replace the firstborn, who were disqualified after sinning through the golden calf. The levi'im are commanded that after five years of training they are to serve in the Mishkan from ages 30 to 50. Afterwards, they are to engage in less strenuous work.

One year after the Exodus from Egypt, Hashem commands Moshe concerning the korban Pesach. Those ineligible for this offering request a remedy, and the mitzvah of Pesach Sheini – allowing them a "second chance" to offer the korban Pesach, one month later – is detailed. Miraculous clouds that hover near the Mishkan signal when to travel and when to camp. Two silver trumpets summon the princes or the entire

nation for announcements. The trumpets also signal travel plans, war or festivals. The order in which the tribes march is specified.

Moshe invites his father-in-law, Yitro, to join the Jewish People, but Yitro returns to Midian. At the instigation of the eruv rav – the mixed Egyptian multitude who joined the Jewish People in the Exodus – some people complain about the manna. Moshe protests that he is unable to govern the nation alone. Hashem tells him to select 70 elders, the first Sanhedrin, to assist him, and informs him that the people will be given meat until they will be sickened by it. Two candidates for the group of elders prophesy beyond their mandate, foretelling that Yehoshua instead of Moshe will bring the people to Canaan. Some protest, including Yehoshua, but Moshe is pleased

that others have become prophets. Hashem sends an incessant supply of quail for those who complained that they lacked meat. A plague punishes those who complained.

Miriam tries to make a constructive remark to Aharon, which also implies that Moshe is only like other prophets. Hashem explains that Moshe's prophecy is superior to that of any other prophet and punishes Miriam with tzara'at, as if she had gossiped about her brother. (Because Miriam is so righteous, she is held to an incredibly high standard.) Moshe prays for Miriam to be healed, and the nation waits until she is cured before traveling.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com

Q

1. Toward which direction did the wicks of the Menorah burn, and why?
2. From what material and in what manner was the Menorah made?
3. Moshe was commanded to cleanse the levi'im by sprinkling on them "mei chatat." What is "mei chatat"?
4. Which three "t'nufot" (wavings) are in the parsha?
5. Why did G-d claim the first-born of the Jewish People as His possession?

A

1. 8:2 - They leaned toward the middle wick so people wouldn't say that the Menorah was lit for its light.
2. 8:4 - It was made from one solid piece of hammered gold.
3. 8:7 - Water containing ashes of the para aduma.
4. 8:11 - The wavings of Kehat, Gershon and Merari.
5. 8:17 - Because in Egypt He spared them during makat bechorot.

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