

# THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
TAL Founder & Director

## PERFECT PRESENT!

Its always so exciting to open up gifts, they come in all shapes and sizes. There are two ways in which a person can pass on a valuable article to someone he loves. The first is through a present the second is through inheritance – Yerusha. Receiving a present is great and seeing as it is normally given out of appreciation could potentially have greater value than an inheritance. The advantage of an inheritance over a present is that no matter whether one really deserves it or not, everyone directly connected to the deceased automatically receives a portion.

Interestingly when Hashem tells Moshe in this weeks Parsha that He is going to give the land of Israel to Am Yisrael, He seems to use both languages; -Venatati Otah Lachem Morasha Ani Hashem – I will GIVE to you as an INHERITANCE I am Hashem. Why does the Pasuk use the form of both giving, and inheritance, surely they have opposing meanings?

Let's take a look at the word for inheritance that is used here. The Hebrew word for inheritance is YERUSHAH. The word used here is MORASHAH. The former means something you get. The latter implies something you give. The word Morasha appears in the Torah in reference to only two things. The first is Eretz Yisrael (as quoted in the Pasuk in

our Parsha) and the second is regarding the Torah itself.

The first words Jewish children are taught to say are "Torah Tziva Lanu Moshe, Morasha Kehilat Yaakov" -The Torah that Moshe commanded to us is an inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov. The usual word for heritage, "Yerusha ", is an heir one receives from his parents. "Morasha" a causative form, means that which a person causes to be inherited by his children. The Torah inherited from the past has to be passed on to the future. The children should regard it not only as received by tradition, and look backwards, but as something which they should use to build the future.

Chazal teach a tradition based on the Pasuk, "This Torah will not depart from your mouth or the mouths of you children or the mouths of your grandchildren forever" Yehoshua (1:8): If three generations are committed to learning Torah, then the Torah will never leave that person's family. The Gemara Bava Metzia (85a) summarizes this idea with the expression "The Torah returns to its host" (Torah Chozeret Al Achasania Shelah).

Someone once asked the Chofetz Chaim that we know people who descend from many generations of Torah scholars who are themselves ignorant of Torah. Unfortunately, we see millions of Jews that fit into this category. There are families that bear the name of prestigious Gedolim [Torah greats], who today may not even know what an Aleph looks

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Quiz

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like. What then does it mean "Torah Chozeret Al Achsanah Shelah"? The Chofetz Chaim explained that the Gemara's analogy is very precise. The Torah is like a guest seeking its host's home. Sometimes a guest knocks on one's door. If no one answers the door, the guest will not come in. "Torah Chozeret Al Achsanah Shelah" means that if Torah has been in a family for three generations, the Torah will come "knocking on that family's door" in future generations. But still, the younger generation must open the door for the guest. The guest must still be invited in by each new generation.

We can now understand why the Pasuk states that Eretz Yisrael and the Torah are both a present (Regarding the Torah the Pasuk states: Vayiten El Moshe Kechaloto Ledaber.....Shnei Luchot Habrit

(31:18).) and an inheritance. The inheritance the Pasuk refers to is an inheritance that faces both the past and the future; it is a Morasha and not a Yerusha. Hashem gave us these precious presents to enjoy. Their enjoyment will depend on our appreciation, and our merit. They are also an inheritance, since the beginning of time they have been designated to us. Yet we are told that they are not just any inheritance, they are a Morasha. Whilst they can be enjoyed by us, we have a duty to pass them down to our children. We must teach them the importance of Torah, the importance and holiness of Eretz Yisrael.

A Chasid once approached the Rizhiner Rebbe on return from a pilgrimage to Eretz Yisrael. He came to the Rebbe and told him that although he had been to the Holy

land, he had not really sensed anything especially holy about it. The Rebbe responded with the following Mashal. He said that a blanket is meant to provide warmth and comfort. The degree of warmth that it can provide, however, is dependant completely on the heat of the person being covered. Thus, if a dead person is covered with a blanket, it will not warm him. The same thing is true about Eretz Yisrael. If one comes to Eretz Yisrael and does not sense the Kedusha, it suggests the fact that there is a spiritual coldness that pervades his life. One who comes here and feels the warmth can be assured that the fire burns within him and is rekindled in the right surroundings. Let us work to make our Torah and our Land, a Morasha, let us lead by example, and pass this Kedusha to generations to come.



**RABBI DAVID BAADANI**  
*Director - TAL Chazanut Program*

**GENEROSITY BEFORE ALL**

The Sefer Hasidim teaches a striking principle about Jewish continuity: when choosing a partner, one should look carefully at lineage, not in terms of scholarship or prestige, but in terms of character. And among character traits, generosity stands at the forefront. This idea is not only ethical advice, it is embedded in the Torah itself and subtly highlighted in this week's parsha.

The Shevet Yehuda points our attention to the Torah's description of Aharon HaKohen's wife, Elisheva. The verse introduces her as Bat Aminadav, Achot Nachshon, the daughter of Aminadav, the sister of Nachshon. At first glance, this order seems almost surprising. Nachshon was a towering figure, the Nasi of the tribe of Yehuda, a leader of exceptional courage and

faith. One might expect the Torah to emphasize that distinction first. Yet the Torah deliberately begins with her being the daughter of Aminadav.

Why? Because names in Torah are never incidental. The name Aminadav is rooted in Nedivut, generosity, willingness to give freely. Before we are told about her connection to leadership and greatness, we are told about her origin in generosity. The Torah is quietly teaching us what it considers foundational.

Leadership can inspire, wisdom can guide, and courage can move history forward. But generosity shapes the soul. A generous person gives not only money, but attention, patience, emotional space, and time. Generosity creates life around it; it allows others to grow without fear of scarcity. It is the trait that makes a home possible and a future sustainable.

This is why the Torah prioritizes "daughter of Aminadav." Elisheva's

greatness did not begin with her brother's status, it began in the atmosphere she was raised in. A home where giving is natural produces people who can carry holiness without arrogance and leadership without domination. Aharon, whose entire role was to bring peace and connection, needed a partner whose roots were generosity itself.

The message is quietly radical. When the Torah evaluates lineage, it is less concerned with titles and more concerned with tone. What kind of human being does this family cultivate? Is there room for others? Is there a reflex to give rather than to guard?

In a world obsessed with achievement and recognition, the Torah whispers a different priority. Before greatness, before brilliance, before influence, look for generosity. Because generosity is not just a virtue; it is the soil from which all enduring holiness grows.



## RABBI BENJI STONE, TAL Chavruta Program

*Tehillim for Our Times; Chapter 16: מכתם לדוד שמרני אל ביחסייתי בך*

### YOU HAVE TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT (PART 2)

#### 1. QUALITY OF LIFE

*"My portion has fallen to me in pleasantness; my inheritance is beautifully fitting for me" (ibid;6)*

The "portion" referred to here is the possibility of true spiritual satisfaction. One does not walk away from an extended session of digital entertainment with a real glow in their eye. If however one truly appreciates the value of each mitzvah and the fact that in its performance they can connect to the creator of the world they will surely feel elevated and joyous.

In contrast, the "inheritance" referred to here is the enjoyment of material goods. The Torah Jew who recognizes the superiority of spiritual pleasure does not seek anything over and above that which he needs. He appreciates the finer things in life, but these are not his real focus. He is happy with his lot and feels no great lacking if he does not manage to experience the "riches" which this world has to offer.

This point is made again towards the end of the chapter where King David writes that as a result of his commitment to Torah;

*"My heart is happy, my soul rejoices, even my flesh will dwell in security" (ibid; 9)*

*"My Heart is Happy" – One who subscribes to a culture of materialism endures an unpleasant existence. He feels he must have*

the most comfortable car and the most exquisite food. But that may not always be possible. Furthermore, each time he experiences a certain level of physical enjoyment, he opens up new vistas of indulgence which in turn demand that he attains even greater material satisfaction. The pain generated by the chasm between where he is and where he wants to be permeates his whole existence. In contrast one whose intellect rules over his various lusts and desires is truly free from the struggle for material gain, enabling his heart to be free of conflict and truly happy.

*"My soul rejoices" – The soul of a person who is unaffected by internal struggles and unrestrained desires has the potential to soar up to the heavens and enable the individual to grown in his avodah.*

*"even my flesh will dwell in security". Someone who is controlled by his instinctive desires may be lead to harm himself through dangerous indulgences such as smoking and excessive alcohol intake. Furthermore one who lacks proper trust in Hashem feels hatred and jealousy of others and this in itself can cause a person to "eat himself up". This idea is seen in Tenach where the verse states "envy brings rotting of the bones" (Mishlei 15;30) and also in Pirkei Avot where it states that "jealousy, lust and glory extract a person from this world".*

#### 2. WITHIN OUR GRASP

*"I will bless Hashem who has advised me; even at night my innards chastise me" (ibid;7)*

We might think that a life of Torah demands

a level of consistency we simply do not have. How can we resist the flow of temptation which comes upon us on a daily and even hourly basis? Kind David assures us that Hashem has made provision for this in two ways. Firstly Hashem has "advised" us in His Torah of the path we are to take and the consequences which we might face for veering of that path. This "mussar" serves to strengthen our resolve to stay committed to the Torah life. Secondly and quite remarkably, Hashem has planted within every Jew a natural conscience, an instinctive feeling of right and wrong which sits by his side preventing him from sinning. His "innards" "chastise" him constantly, working to keep him strong in his mitzvah observance.

#### 3. STILL NEED TO PRAY

Despite all the controls put in place to enable us to succeed in our avodat Hashem, King David still finds the need to pray for divine assistance in his journey. He asks

*"Teach me the ways of life" (ibid;11)*

The life in which we invest so much time, worry and effort is in fact only temporary in nature. True life begins at the time when our soul is able to shed the body which clothes it and enjoy the genuine simcha of the world to come. However, it is so easy to get completely immersed in the experience of this world and forget the bigger picture. King David asks of Hashem that He should guide him towards the correct "ways of life"; to assist him in making the right choices so that he can remain on course for the true good, to live life as it is meant to be lived.



## HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

### If the Minyan is Lost In the Middle of the Tefilla (PART 1)

Halacha is very critical of people who depart the synagogue in the middle of the prayer service, leaving the others without a Minyan. If there are only ten men present in the synagogue, one should not leave before the end of the Tefilla.

Sometimes, however, it happens that, for whatever reason, one or more individuals need to leave, and there is no longer a Minyan present in the synagogue. If this happens during a section of the service requiring a Minyan, that section may be completed without a Minyan. For example, if the Minyan is lost during the Hazara (repetition of the Amida), the

Hazan may complete the Hazara even though fewer than ten men are present. As long as at least six men – the majority of a Minyan – remain, that section of the service may be completed, since it began in the presence of a Minyan. This applies even if the Minyan was lost during the first blessing of the repetition of the Amida.

Another example is where people begin leaving during the Kaddish toward the end of Arbit, before Alenu. As long as ten men were present when Kaddish began, the Kaddish may be completed after the Minyan is lost, provided that at least six men remain.

Importantly, only that section of the service – which began in the presence of a Minyan – may be completed. Other portions of the Tefilla, however, may not be recited, since the Minyan was lost before they began. In the case of the Hazara, if the Minyan was lost at some point during the first three Berachot, before Nakdishach, the congregation may nevertheless recite Nakdishach, because it is considered part of the repetition of the Amida. However, they cannot recite Birkat Kohanim, as Birkat Kohanim is viewed as a separate recitation, and not part of the Hazara. The Hazzan would thus recite "Elokenu V'Elokeh Abotenu"

just as he would do if no Kohanim were present. Different customs exist regarding the recitation of the Kaddish Titkabal following the Hazara in such a case. Ashkenazic practice views the Kaddish Titkabal as integrally connected to the

repetition of the Amida, because, after all, in this Kaddish we pray that our prayers will be answered, referring to the Amida prayer which had just been recited. Therefore, according to Ashkenazic custom, if the Minyan was lost during the Hazara, the Hazzan completes the Hazara and

also recites the Kaddish Titkabal afterward. Sephardic custom, however, views the Kaddish Titkabal as separate and apart from the Amida, and therefore it cannot be recited if the Minyan was lost during the Hazara.

*Continued next week...*



## WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

### Parshat Va'era

Hashem tells Moshe to inform the Jewish People that He is going to take them out of Egypt. However, the Jewish People do not listen. Hashem commands Moshe to go to Pharaoh and ask him to free the Jewish People. Although Aharon shows Pharaoh a sign by turning a staff into a snake, Pharaoh's magicians copy the sign,

emboldening Pharaoh to refuse the request. Hashem punishes the Egyptians, sending plagues of blood and frogs, but the magicians copy these miracles on a smaller scale, again encouraging Pharaoh to be obstinate. After the plague of lice, Pharaoh's magicians concede that only Hashem could be performing these miracles. Only the Egyptians, and not the Jews in

Goshen, suffer during the plagues. The onslaught continues with wild animals, pestilence, boils and fiery hail. However, despite Moshe's offers to end the plagues if Pharaoh will let the Jewish People leave, Pharaoh continues to harden his heart and refuses.

**Rabbi Sinclair,**  
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### Q

1. Did G-d ever appear to Avraham and say "I am G-d"?
2. What cause did the forefathers have to question G-d?
3. How was Moshe commanded to act towards Pharaoh?
4. How long did Levi live?
5. Who was Aharon's wife? Who was her father? Who was her brother?

### A

1. 6:9 - Yes.
2. 6:9 -- Although G-d swore to give them the land, they never actually had control over it.
3. 6:13 - With the respect due a king.
4. 6:16 - 137 years.
5. 6:23 - Elisheva, daughter of Aminadav, sister of Nachshon.



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