

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

The simple meaning of the prohibition of לא תגודדו is that one may not cut or scratch oneself in anguish over someone else's death the way the Amorites used to do. The *gemarah* makes a different *drasha*, and learns from this that we should not splinter ourselves into different groups (לא תעשו אגודות אגודות). Rav Hirsh Rabinovich, the Kovna *dayan*, explains that in reality, both of these ideas are one and are connected to each other. The reason why the nations used to abrade themselves is because the separation from their beloved ones was so intense, to the point that they were not interested in life. This would be acceptable, if a person lived only for himself. However, the Torah teaches us that more than a person living just for himself, he was created in order to benefit others; if so, how can one despise himself and his life, when doing so will damage the public? Therefore, the Torah teaches us that we should not behave in the way of *goyim* when we feel separated from those who are dear to us, and by the same token, we learn that we should not break into separate groups. Since we were all created for the public benefit, it is prohibited for the individual to separate and detach himself from the *klal*.

An *avail* is not obligated to stand up for anyone, even for a prominent *talmid chacham*, but if he did stand up, we are not supposed to tell him to sit down, because it has a connotation of "remain in your mourning" (YD 376:1). As we mentioned last week, once the *avail* indicates that he accepted the consolation (he nods his head; because he is not allowed to greet and say שלום, Ramban in Toras Haadam) in a way that he conveys that he is dismissing the visitors, they are not allowed to remain and they must leave. Therefore, if the *availim* need to rest in the afternoon, or if it is late at night, we must be sensitive to their body language, and not overstay past a reasonable time (ibid). The *minhag* is not to take anything out of the house of an *avail* during the entire *shiva* because of the *ruach tum'a* that rests in the house (Rav Akiva Eiger ibid:4). One is not allowed to greet an *avail* by saying שלום עליכם, because שלום means שלימות - complete, and while in *availus* one is not complete in that one is behaving in a form that is respectful to the *niftar*, and therefore the Halacha is that during the first three days, even if someone greets an *avail*, he must inform the greeter that he is not allowed to return the greeting because of his mourning; from the third to seventh days, he does not greet others, but if someone else did greet him, he is allowed to answer back; from day 7 to day 30, he is allowed to greet others, but others are not allowed to greet him, and the *minhag* is that for someone who is an *avail* for their father or mother that he is not greeted for twelve months (YD 385:1). It is a good idea for the *avail* to preemptively say שלום עליכם to someone he has not seen in a while, since many don't know this prohibition, and they would possibly otherwise say שלום עליכם to him. Even though saying שלום is not permitted, nevertheless, it is מותר to wish an *avail* mazal-tov, *refuah sh'laima* or to wish him a long life, etc. (Gesher Hachayim §21). If someone meets a friend and finds out that he is an *avail*, if it is during the 12 months for one of his parents, or during the 30 days for other relatives, it is correct to console him, but after that time, one would just say תתנחם (you should be consoled) in passing, without mentioning the name of the *niftar*. If someone's wife was *nifteres*, one can offer consolation until 3 *yamim tovim* pass, but if he has remarried (when it is permitted, because he needs to care for young children), one would be allowed to do so only when he is alone and outside his house (YD 385:2). An *avail* is not allowed to be too hard on himself, and if he overdoes it, he may cause unnecessary *availus* on himself; rather, he should observe 3 days for crying, 7 for הספד (eulogy) and 30 days for shaving and laundering. Over תלמידי חכמים, the limit is 30 days for crying and 12 months for הספד (YD 394:1,2). We attend funerals and console the mourners of non-Jews, because of דרכי שלום (YD 367:1).



THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (*Y'shayahu 54:11-55:5*)

At the end of this week's haftara the Navi exhorts the people ואלכו שברו בלוא כסף ובלוא מחיר יין וחלב. We know that Chazal often compare Torah to water, so it comes as no surprise that the *mefarshim* all explain the *pasuk* accordingly. But where do wine and milk fit into the picture? The Abarbanel offers the following explanation: Each of these liquids has unique qualities. The human body generates a significant amount of heat. Water acts as a coolant for the body, ensuring that it doesn't overheat or dry out. A second benefit is the assistance water lends to the body's digestive system, helping soften the food and flushing it through the system. A person's spirit has similar needs. By nature, a person's mind is inquisitive and is challenged by the many mysteries of life. Often, a person will find his mind literally 'overheating' when his questions remain unanswered (see, e.g., the introduction to the Ramchal's Derech Hashem). The Torah offers the answers to these questions, allowing the mind and spirit respite. But sometimes these concepts are difficult to digest; and once again the Torah offers the spiritual 'water' that softens these ideas and allows the person to properly digest them. Wine is an excellent food that goes straight to a person's heart with ease. In fact, Chazal say that it is the perfect food to revive a person who has fainted. There are times when a person experiences a spiritual 'fainting spell' where a quick remedy is needed. Once again, Torah has within it nuggets of wisdom that offer a 'quick fix' to a person in need. Of course, just as wine must be used in moderation, so too these parts of Torah should be mixed with the proper amounts of 'water'. The first food a baby eats is its mother's milk. Besides being a pure and nutritious food, a baby has no choice but to have faith in his mother that she will supply him with his sustenance. We, too, look to Hashem and His Torah to instill within us a perfect faith to allow us to survive the darkness of our terrible *galus*. With that same simple *emunah* we pray that we merit seeing the great *geulah* described by the Navi in our haftara.



"A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

את הברכה The word את in this *pasuk* is essentially superfluous. Perhaps it is a *remez* that the *b'racha* will come upon keeping all the *mitzvos* of the Torah, written with the letters א through ת. Alternatively, it could allude to the *b'rachos* that precede the *tochacha* in Bechukosai, which begin with א (אם) and end with ת (קוממיות).



SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת				ערב שבת		
מעריב	מנחה	סוּזק"ש	שחרית	שקיעה	מנחה	הדלק"ן
8:45	6:15/7:25	9:33	7:00/8:50	7:56	6:16/7:00/7:41	6:34/7:15/7:38

ROSH CHODESH Thursday and Friday, Shacharis 6:50
SHACHARIS Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; **MAARIV** Mon-Th 9:30; **MINCHA/MAARIV** Sun-Thur 7:34; next Fri 6:08/7:00/7:31 (candles 6:26/7:15/7:28)

KNESSES NEWS
COMMUNITY CORNER

MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861
MINCHA at Tefilla L'Moshe, Sun. 1:30; S-Th 15m<shki'a; **שבת** 1:30/5:00/נ'ו; **הדלק"ן**; **MAARIV** M-Th 40m>shki'a/9:45
DAILY SHACHARIS at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; **SHACHARIS** at Tefilla L'Moshe Sun. 7:30/8:30; M-Fri 6:25/7:00/7:30
MINCHA at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) Sun. 1:40; Su-Th 7:30; **שבת** 6:00; **MAARIV** daily at 9:15PM; **SHACHARIS** Mo-Fr. 6:40/7:45; Sun. 6:30/7:30/8:15
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ONGOING SHIURIM

Daf Yomi: 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael
Maseches Chullin (by R' Apter) daily 1 hour before Shacharis; **Ahavas Chesed** (by Rabbi Schabes) Tues. 9:10PM, at Knesses Yisrael
Hilchos Shabbos chabura, Shabbos, after the early minyan; **ארחות שבת** (by Rabbi Schabes) after the 2nd minyan; **פרקי אבות** 5:45PM
Navi Melachim for men, by Rabbi Shmuel Moeller, Sundays 8:30-9:15, at Tefilla L'Moshe
Minchas Chinuch Sun. 8:30PM by R' Bronspigel at Zichron Yehuda
Maseches Brachos, Shabbos afternoon, half hour before Mincha, at Kehillat New Hempstead
Maseches Pesachim, Sun. 9:15AM; **Basar B'Chalav**, Wed. 8:45PM, by Rabbi Saperstein, at Cong. Ohaiv Shalom, 18 Bridle
Ladies Shiurim: Shabbos 5PM, Rabbi Barry Shafier, at Russak, 37 Fessler Dr.

Mondays 8:40 PM, **Sefer Shoftim (new series)**, by Mrs. Aviva Orlian, at Levy, 29 Fessler

Wednesdays 10:45-11:45AM, **Pareshas Hashavua**, by Mrs. Sussi Brecher, at Lazar, 2 Tracey Ct. (corner of South Gate)

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MECHOCHMAS HAS'FORNO ... By Rabbi Shmuel Burstein

In this week's parsha S'forno uses ingenious power of *chiddush*. He is most interested in illuminating the symbolism of the lunar calendar in Jewish life, but along the way he touches on several themes in Yiddishkeit. The Torah opens (chapter 16) with the *halachos* of Pesach:

שמור את חודש האביב. S'forno, borrowing an idea that we find in Rashi in the עשרת הדברות (cf. Rashi on יום השבת), learns that "שמור" here is an obligation to protect the memory of Pesach throughout the year. He learns that the function of *all the leap months* (as well as leap years) is to help us remember the reality of יציאת מצרים. It is not simply the extra Adar, as most other Rishonim learn, that is the focus of adjusting, both our calendars and our minds, to the upcoming Chodesh Nissan. According to S'forno, all year long, as we adjust months to 30 days, it is a protective measure ("שמור") to remember the greatness of יציאת מצרים. Rashi connects the *mitzvah* of guarding ("שמור") the month of Nissan to the *mitzvah* of korban haOmer (see Rashi in our *paresha*); not so S'forno. Adding a second Adar is tied to remembering יציאת מצרים, every bit as much as adding an extra day to other months. S'forno points out that if there had been a different point in mind, Hashem could easily have avoided the whole problem by simply giving Am Yisrael a solar calendar, ensuring without fail that Nissan would always fall in the spring (while also ensuring a korban Omer at the proper time). But this would have prevented the Jewish people from constantly recalling the Exodus. In a simply marvelous use of symbolism, S'forno shows how Hashem's arranging the Exodus is an illustration of just how unreasonable and unpredictable the turn of events was. The lamb ('טלה'), as we know, was an important symbol of Egypt's power, a 'god'. Just when Egypt, "טלה", was at its apex (as the sun in the center of the sky, says S'forno) on the 15th of the month, the Jewish people were 180 degrees away at their very lowest level (as the moon in its total absence), both physically and spiritually. Yet *just then*, as the world was ready to declare the Jewish people dead, Hashem rescued us by turning the חפזון of baking לחם עוני (the poor slaves' bread) into a חפזון of freedom (כי בחפזון יצאת מצרים). I can hardly resist comparing the situation as the S'forno describes it then, to that which our nation faced sixty years ago. Though clearly there are important differences, at the end of the Holocaust the world thought us dead, both physically and spiritually. (Many Jews felt so as well.) World leaders gave eulogies and cried pious tears over dead Jews. Just then Hashem was readying Eretz Yisrael to receive Jews from all around the world, בחפזון, in order to build for the world a future center of Torah, *chessed* and *geulah*. S'forno teaches us that we, as the Nation of God, have a sacred obligation to *always* remember ("שמור") how quickly and totally He turned the חפזון of suffering into a hastening of *geulah*. It is a powerful message of hope. May we surely see Hashem's hastening our *geulah* very soon, and drying the tears of *galus* through the leadership He promised in our Go'el Tzedek.

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ON LANGUAGE ... By R' Moshe Orlian

די (D'varim 17:10): **מַסַּת** is interpreted three different ways. Rashi understands it to mean די, "enough", based on the Targum of די מחסורו (D'varim 15:8), who translates די as כמסת. Ibn Ezra argues that **מַסַּת** is from the word נס (similar to נשא), meaning something that is lifted or raised, akin to the word תרומה, which also reflects the "raising" concept as applied to a gift. According to this, the *dagesh* in the ס is in place of the נ that falls out. R' Hirsch and others claim that **מַסַּת** is from the word מס, tax. He notes that this reflects the dual nature of these *korbanos* as both voluntary and obligatory. With a cute play on words, Rashbam, against this view, writes המדמה מסת אל מס הוא חמס.

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