



Ohr Yerushalayim News

25th May 2024 - Volume 16 - Issue 46

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to David and Eunice Wolfson on the birth of a grandson to Ben and Nechama Rapport in Israel

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Nesanel Davidson for the Yahrtzeit for his father on Shabbos, 17th Iyyar

Hurting People With Words

Rabbi J Rubinstein

We are accustomed nowadays, to learned works which tell us down to the last detail, how various Torah laws apply in practice. But there is one law in this week's Parsha, about which it is written, "And it is not possible to write in detail all the casesbut every individual must be careful as far as he can see" (Sefer Hachinuch 338). The author is talking about the prohibition in the Torah, לא תונו איש את עמיתו, "A person shall not aggrieve his fellow man" (Chap 25 verse 17), which in this verse means, aggrieving him by the words you direct towards him. The pain caused by using the wrong words to people, depends on the nature and circumstances of the people concerned. (An obvious example is to remind someone needlessly, of things he has done wrong in the past.) Therefore, it is not possible to write all the possible scenarios and situations in which this law could be broken. It is up to the person speaking, to perceive as far as he can, how he might cause pain, and avoid doing so.

Rav Avrohom Pam concentrates in his Sefer, called Atoroh Lamelech, on one area in which one can easily transgress this Mitzvah. It is when speaking to children. He writes, it is absolutely forbidden, to cause needless pain to children, by the words one says to them. He records that his mother was nearly ninety years old, when she told him the following incident which had happened to her when she was nine years old. She wanted to fast on one of the fastdays. She knew her parents would not agree to her fasting and she went to her friends house so that they did not find her and she could fast. That evening, when she came home a distinguished local personality happened to be there. He said "she deserves a few good slaps, I would teach her a lesson she would not forget about this fasting" Her mother ignored the comment. That night when she put her to bed she put her arms around the young girl and said to her, I know you wanted to do the Mitzvah like all the adults. But you should know, when you are not obliged to fast, it is a positive Mitsvah to eat and look after your health. P.G. when you are over twelve years old you will have the Mitzvah to fast and then you will fulfil it. Now you must be tired, sleep well, and have a good night! These gentle words calmed the upset girl. But the point is, she still remembered it when she was nearly ninety. Rav Pam adds, it is forbidden to shame a child, just as it is forbidden to embarrass an adult, unless it is necessary for the education of the child. "Certainly one should always act with thoughtfulness beforehand, because of the seriousness of the matter".

The Talmud says, the pain caused by verbal harm, is worse than that caused by monetary harm, because amongst other things, the monetary loss can be returned, but the pain caused by words cannot be retrieved (Baba Metzia 58b). In every situation and with people of all ages, one must, as the Sefer Hachinuch says, "As far as one can see" avoid causing them harm with one's words.

Taking Interest Diminishes a Person's Faith in the Master of the Universe

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

Parshas Behar is one of several places in Chumash where the Torah teaches the prohibition against taking interest (ribis): "Do not take from him interest and increase; and you shall fear your G-d – and let your brother live with you." (Vayikra 25:36) There is a mitzvah to lend people money, however, the money must be lent without interest. Transgressing this prohibition results in serious punishment. "Rav Shimon (bar Yochai) says: Those who lend with interest lose more than they gain." (Bava Metziah 75b).

What is Rav Shimon talking about? If he were talking about punishment or about loss of reward in the world to come, then the same comment can be made about any mitzvas lo saaseh: Don't eat chazir! Ay – it is geshmak! It doesn't matter – more than you enjoy it, you will suffer for that enjoyment in the World to Come.

What then is so special about the ribis prohibition that prompts Rav Shimon to say "More than you profit, you will lose?"

There is a beautiful Kli Yakar in this week's parsha that gives an interesting explanation as to why the Torah prohibits ribis. The Kli Yakar defines the reason for this mitzvah as causing man to lose faith in the Master of the Universe. How does taking interest diminish a person's bitachon in the Ribono shel Olam?

The Kil Yakar explains that in virtually every business venture, a person can either make money or lose money. People who are in a business where they do not receive a set salary, rather they work on commission, see this all the time. Likewise, this is true of people who invest money. The investment can go through the roof and become a phenomenal success. However, sometimes a product is a hot item but then a competitor comes out with something that is a little hotter. Everyone runs to the competitor and the first person loses his pants. Every person in business realizes that they need siyata d'Shmaya (Divine help) to succeed. Inevitably, they need to turn to the Ribono shel Olam to pray for their success in business, and this increases their emunah and bitachon.

This is not true, says the Kli Yakar, of those who lend out money with interest. Given, of course, that the loan is secure, it is money in the bank. If the debtor cannot pay, the lender will collect from the guarantor of the loan or he will foreclose a mortgage or take collateral. He has a high degree of security that he is in a "Win-Win Operation." Lending is a great business – like money in the bank!

Davening Times

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.25pm
זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	7.36pm - 7.50pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.00am
Mincha	2.00pm / 6.00pm / 9.25pm
Rov's Shiur	Following Mincha
Motzei Shabbos	10.30pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon Bank Holiday	7.10am / 8.10am / 9.30am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.30pm

As a result of this surefire way to make profit, a person may lose his bitachon. "I have been doing this business for the last who knows how many years. What can go wrong?" A person becomes distanced from the whole concept that the Ribono shel Olam runs the world. He thinks that he is running the show and forgets that He is running the show. If a person loses bitachon and thinks that the Ribono shel Olam doesn't run the world, when he hits a crisis, he has no peace of mind.

The Chovos haLevovos notes that one of the tremendous attributes of a person who is a true believer (as opposed to someone who just pays "lip service" to the concept of emunah) is that he has a psychological safety net when unpleasant things in life hit him. "I know the Ribono shel Olam is with me; I know that He has been watching over me; I may not know why He is doing this to me, but I know that the Ribono shel Olam is in charge and He knows what He is doing and I have full faith in Him."

This has a tremendous calming effect on a person. There is a certain serenity that accompanies people who truly possess the attribute of emunah and bitachon. They lead serene lives knowing that the Master of the Universe is fully in charge. This is what Rav Shimon bar Yochai meant when he said, "More than they gain, they lose." Yes, they are making a profit and yes, the profit is in the bank. But they become less baalei bitachon. As a result, they may live troubled, worried, anxiety-filled lives. It is not worth it.

I recently heard a story involving a Rav Dovid Bleicher, who had been the Rosh Yeshiva in the Novardok Yeshiva during the war. As was typical in the Yeshivas in Europe, finances were very tight. He raised money and finally obtained food for the talmidim. A bit later, Pesach was approaching and there was no matzah. Where would he get flour for matzah?

After much effort, he was somehow able to procure enough flour to supply the whole Yeshiva for the entire week of Pesach. He put that precious flour upstairs in the attic of the Yeshiva. That night there was a terrible wind storm and part of the roof blew off. It rained onto the flour and the flour became chametz. "The City of Shushan was bewildered." (Esther 3:15) What is going to be?

Rav Dovid Bleicher brought in the entire Yeshiva and told them: I want to ask you four questions:

1. Who commanded us to eat matzah on Pesach?
2. Who helped me obtain the flour for the matzah?
3. Who brought the storm that caused the rain to leak through the roof?
4. Who caused the flour to leaven after it became wet from the rain water?

To each question the students answered unambiguously "The Ribono shel Olam." Rav Bleicher concluded, "So everything happened because of Him and He knows that we need flour for matzah on Pesach. Undoubtedly he will provide us with other flour." In other words, if Hashem is running the world and He is calling the shots, then if He wants us to eat matzah on Pesach, He will get us more flour.

The night of Bedikas Chometz, the mail arrived with a tremendous check. The Rosh Yeshiva was able to buy more flour for Pesach and they all had matzah. This is the serenity of a person who is a baal bitachon.

Last Sunday, the Ner Israel Kollel had their Chinese Auction fundraiser. The day before yesterday, when I was walking out of the office, I saw a kollel youngster carrying a box with five Playmobil sets. If you have children, you know that Playmobil is a very popular toy (like Tinker Toys or Lincoln Logs in our days).

I asked him "Did you win that at the Kollel auction?" He said, "Yes, and not only that, but I won a prize at Rabbi Berger's shul's auction for the past three or four years." I inquired of him, "What is the trick?" He told me "It is because I have been working of my midas habitachon for the last four years and therefore when my wife left for the auction, I told her, "You are going to win tonight!"

Now, does that mean that someone who has midas habitachon will always win auctions? No. Does it mean that if someone has midas habitachon, everything in his life is going to turn out perfect? No. But, this person had a certain confidence and serenity because

of his midas habitachon. It is an amazing phenomenon that this happened. Again, it does not follow that someone can say "Okay, I am going to work on my midas bitachon and then I am going to win the Power Ball." It does not work like that.

However, this kollel youngster made such a profound impression on me. "I worked on midas habitachon. I knew that I needed a Playmobil for my kids and I was confident that it would happen." The upshot is not "Have bitachon and you will win the lottery." The upshot is "Have bitachon and you will have a more calm and serene life."

Look After Your Own Torah Study And Prayer!

Benjamin A Rose (Shortvort.com)

"Because they are my servants – whom I took out of the land of Mitzrayim, do not sell them the way slaves are sold." Vayikra 25:42)

The Divrei Yisrael explains this verse that a person should not be enslaved to his work – that the job should not be his priority – day and night. Because G-d's contract is a person's priority – this contract is the Torah (Translators note: The Torah was created prior to the creation of the universe), written and sealed with the signet ring of the King. To apply this to one's daily life, a person should learn Torah prior to going to work – each person according to his capabilities, regardless of the amount.

The Imrei Shaul, in his commentary to the Divrei Yisrael, quotes his great-grandfather, Rebbe Yechezkel of Kuzmir, who tells us that this is alluded to in the verse in Shemos 5:19. There the Torah tells how the Egyptians stopped giving the Jews straw to make bricks. They were then told, "Lo sig'ru milivneichem dvar yom b'yomo – You shall not diminish from your daily quota of bricks," even though they had to get the straw themselves. The word for "from your bricks" (milivneichem) is the same as "from unto [or because of] your children." In other words, even though you have a responsibility to support your children and infants, the Torah is telling us that you are still obligated to put in time for – and not diminish from – your daily prayers and Torah study.



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