



# Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Naso

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## The Nazir as Role Model

## Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Our parshah devotes considerable real estate to the laws of the *nazir*, describing the rites of a Jew who vows not to drink wine, shave or contract impurity from the dead. (Bamidbar 6:1-21) Certain talmudic sages contended that a *nazir* sins by swearing off wine, a permitted pleasure. (Sotah 15a) To the proponents of this view we must ask: Why did the Torah create *nezirut*? And why, as seen in this week's haftarah (Shoftim 13), did G-d instruct Hatzleponi that her son Shimshon, a future leader, should become a *nazir*?

Some suggest that *nezirut* can be a form of healthy sacrifice, a constructive act of self-engineering. (Toronto Torah 3:33 <http://bit.ly/2r4WS9o>) But we might also add that the community may learn

valuable lessons when its leader is a *nazir*.

By the time of our haftarah, the Jews had been in Israel for more than 300 years, but we had failed to dismantle the immoral Canaanite society. Instead, we had adopted Canaanite ways, and we had been punished at the hands of various nations. This generation was sent two reminders: The Plishtim, and Shimshon.

The Plishtim of Shimshon's era were raiders from Aegean Sea. They had evicted the Canaanites, established and expanded an empire, and even recast the Mediterranean as the "Sea of the Plishtim" (Shemot 23:31) and their region as the "Land of the Plishtim" (ibid. 13:17). Their dominant,

centuries-spanning culture demonstrated that one could refuse to become Canaanite.

Perhaps Shimshon's status as both *shofeit* and *nazir* was meant to likewise remind us to stand apart from Canaan. The *nazir* does not mix; he does not drink socially, he lacks proper grooming, and he shuns contact with people who might be impure. While Shimshon's life demonstrated the challenges of living up to this standard, his *nezirut* broadcast a message to the Jewish nation: Refuse to blend in.

In our own day, it is hard to know whether to extend a hand or withdraw, but Shimshon's *nezirut* teaches us that withdrawal can be the best course.

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## Lives of Israel's Rabbis: Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv

## Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

### Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv

1910 - 2012

Chief Rabbi of Ramle c. 1948

Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv was born in Belarus. He was the grandson of the famed Kabbalist Rabbi Shlomo Elyashiv ("the Leshem"). His family moved to Jerusalem in 1924. Even at that young age he was known as a budding scholar, having had his insights already incorporated into his grandfather's books. Rabbi Elyashiv spent many years studying Torah, but never in an official yeshiva.

Rabbi Elyashiv is mostly known for becoming the dominant halachic authority in the Charedi world after the death of Rabbi Elazar Menachem Man Shach in 2001. However, in his younger years he was close to Chief Rabbi Yitzchak Herzog. He studied in his home every Friday during the 1940's and 1950's along with other luminaries such as Rabbis Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Betzalel Zolty, and Ovadia Yosef. He was also close to Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook, who officiated at Rabbi Elyashiv's wedding. It was Rabbi Elyashiv's relationship with Rabbi Herzog that led to Rabbi Elyashiv's short stint as Chief Rabbi of Ramle following the War of

Independence, and later as a judge on the court of the Chief Rabbinate. Rabbi Herzog wanted Rabbi Elyashiv to help shape the halachic positions that would allow the new state to incorporate halachah into its identity. Professor Rami Reiner has analyzed the more lenient rulings that Rabbi Elyashiv penned during this period in response to questions sent his way by Rabbi Herzog, as well as the progression to his more stringent rulings later in his career.

Rabbi Elyashiv's positive relationship with the Religious Zionist community ended after his bitter dispute with Rabbi Shlomo Goren over the Langer Incident, a complicated *mamzerut* question. He is remembered by most as the foremost authority of the Ashkenazi, non-Chasidic Charedi community, and for his relatively stringent approach to halachah, rather than for his more lenient positions and his involvement with the Chief Rabbinate in his early years. His later influence over the appointment of Chief Rabbi Metzger is a fraught issue; regrettably, it is all most people know about his involvement with the Chief Rabbinate of Israel.

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### OUR BEIT MIDRASH

<b>ROSH BEIT MIDRASH</b>	RABBI MORDECHAI TORCZYNER
<b>SGAN ROSH BEIT MIDRASH</b>	RABBI JONATHAN ZIRING
<b>AVREICHIM</b>	ADAM FRIEDMANN, YARON PEREZ
<b>CHAVERIM</b>	MICHAEL IHILCHIK, SHIMMY JESIN, BJ KOROBKIN, ZACK MINCER, KOBİ NAUENBERG, RONI PEREZ, JOSH PHILLIP, MORDECHAI ROTH, DAVID SUTTNER
<b>WOMEN'S BEIT MIDRASH</b>	MRS. ORA ZIRING, MRS. ELLIEZRA PEREZ
<b>CHAVEROT</b>	YAKIRA BEGUN, NOA BORDAN, MAYTAL CUPERFAIN, MARA FINKELSTEIN, MIRA GOLDSTEIN, KAYLA HALBERSTADT, LEORA KARON, RIVKA SAVAGE, KAYLA SHIELDS, ARIELA SNOWBELL, SARAH WAPNER, MIRIAM WEISS



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We have seen numerous laws protecting borrowers from harsh treatment; to this we may add Devarim 24:17, “You shall not take a widow’s garment as collateral.” Sefer haChinuch codifies this as the Torah’s 591<sup>st</sup> mitzvah, prohibiting taking a widow’s clothing even if she is wealthy.

In the Talmud (Bava Metzia 115a), Rabbi Shimon argues that one may attempt to “read the mind” of the Torah, and apply that deduction to shape halachah. According to him, the Torah’s concern here is that an impoverished widow will need her garment back on a regular basis, and the lender’s frequent visits will lead to gossip. Based on this logic, Rabbi

Shimon argues that one may take collateral from a widow who won’t need it returned. On the other hand, Rabbi Yehudah contends that the text makes no mention of concern for gossip, and therefore the mitzvah applies to all widows.

The Sages (Mishnah Bava Metzia 9:13; Rambam Hilchot Malveh v’Loveh 3:1) understood this prohibition to extend beyond clothing, including taking anything from a widow as collateral. Minchat Chinuch (591:1) contends that this is a logical extension of Rabbi Yehudah’s approach.

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**Weekly Highlights: June 3 — June 9 / 9 Sivan — 15 Sivan**

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
<b>שבת June 2-3</b>				
<b>After hashkama</b>	Adam Friedmann	Parshah Analysis	Clanton Park	
<b>Before Avot</b>	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Daf Yomi	BAYT	<b>Rabbi’s Classroom</b>
<b>After minchah</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Gemara Avodah Zarah	BAYT	<b>Simcha Suite</b>
<b>Sun. June 4</b>				
<b>8:45 AM</b>	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	
<b>9:15 AM</b>	R’ Shalom Krell	Book of Shemuel (Bet)	Associated North	<b>Hebrew; Rm 206</b>
<b>Mon. June 5</b>				
<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>R’ Mordechai Torczyner</b>	<b>Medical Ethics w/CME Stress in Judaism</b>	<b>Shaarei Shomayim</b>	<b>Laypeople welcome</b>
<b>7:00 PM</b>	Adam Friedmann	Jewish Philosophy	Terraces of Baycrest	
<b>8:30 PM</b>	<b>R’ Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Modern Ribbit 2 of 3: Verbal Ribbit</b>	<b>Shomrai Shabbos</b>	<b>Men Only</b>
<b>Tue. June 6</b>				
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Ezra: Intermarriage	Shaarei Shomayim	
<b>Wed. June 7</b>				
<b>2:30 PM</b>	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Narratives of Vayikra	carolleser@rogers.com	
<b>8:00 PM</b>	Adam Friedmann	Why do we do that?	Shaarei Tefillah	
<b>8:45 PM</b>	Yaron Perez	Parshah: הפרשה ואני	Shaarei Shomayim	<b>Hebrew</b>
<b>Thu. June 8</b>				
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Shoftim: Hatzlelponi’s Vision	49 Michael Ct.	<b>For Women</b>
<b>Fri. June 9</b>				
<b>10:30 AM</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Ribbit	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<b>Advanced</b>

***This week, our Men’s Beit Midrash for University Students at Yeshivat Or Chaim offers:***  
 Sunday 10:00 AM Gemara Chullin, Rabbi Aaron Greenberg  
 Sunday 11:00 AM Kuzari, Rabbi Elan Mazer  
 Tuesday 8:30 AM, Nefesh haChaim, Rabbi Jonathan Ziring  
 Friday 8:30 AM, Yeshayah, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

***Our Women’s Beit Midrash for University Students at Ulpanat Orot offers:***  
 Monday 9:30 AM to Noon, Middot haNefesh through Chassidut, Mrs. Elliezra Perez  
 Tuesday 9:30 AM to Noon, Gemara Chullin / Hilchot Kashrut, Mrs. Ora Ziring  
 Wednesday 9:30 AM to Noon, Hilchot Bein Adam laChaveiro, Mrs. Ora Ziring  
 Thursday 9:30 AM to Noon, Netivot Shalom on the Parshah, Mrs. Elliezra Perez

***Coming up!***  
***Shabbat June 9-10: Shabbaton at BAYT—Jews on Vacation***  
***Sunday June 11: Midreshet Yom Rishon for Women with Mrs. Lori Grysman and Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner***  
***Sunday June 11: Remembering a Holy Generation, in memory of Dr. Edmond Yehuda Lipsitz***