

Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Emor

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To Understand or Not To Understand

R' Meir Lipschitz

When someone says, "I don't understand," that seems normal, but when the Torah tells us that Moshe - the leader and teacher par excellence! - did not understand, that should strike us as odd, if not unbelievable.

In Parshat Emor we are told of a man who went out into the camp and blasphemed, cursing the name of G-d. We know that the consequence for such a crime is capital punishment, but the Torah records that Moshe did not know what to do with this individual; Moshe did not know the appropriate halachic response. Rashi (Vayikra 24:12) explains that Moshe did not know the appropriate consequence for this individual - not only which manner of capital punishment he should receive, as with the m'koshesh (Bamidbar 15:34), but whether there should be capital punishment, at all.

Moshe's lack of understanding is a rare biblical occurrence, and so we should be bothered by Rashi's approach: Moshe was taught the entire Torah at Sinai, how could it be that he did not know this halachah?! It is difficult to suggest that Moshe was not a good student. It is even more difficult to suggest that the flaw was HaShem's, as though He was not a good enough teacher, or He had somehow neglected to teach this halachah. And so we are left to

wonder: Why did Moshe not know how to treat the blasphemer?

In his Ma'ayan Beit HaShoeivah, Rav Shimon Schwab attempts to resolve this difficulty by slightly altering our understanding of Rashi. He claims that it was not that Moshe did not know the halachah, but rather that he had forgotten the halachah. Of course, this simply begs another question: Why did Moshe forget this halachah? What caused Moshe to forget this particular law?

There are limited occasions on which we are told that Moshe forgot halachot, and each has a specific cause or reason—see Rashi to Vayikra 10:16-20, Bamidbar 20:11, 25:6, 27:5, and 31:21. What is R' Schwab's reason for citing Moshe's faulty memory regarding the laws of a blasphemer?

Rav Schwab suggests, and cognitive psychology agrees, that remembering something requires a proper mental construct into which it can fit. Information that is not contextualized, and therefore not fully understood, will be forgotten easily.

When HaShem taught Moshe the laws of a blasphemer, Moshe understood only superficially, since he could not conceive of such a person. The idea that someone could blaspheme, could deny the existence of G-d or could curse His Name,

was beyond Moshe's understanding. As such, claims Rav Schwab, Moshe never fully grasped the concept and so he forgot the laws, and therefore needed to wait for HaShem to tell him what to do with this individual. (Similarly, see Devarim 10:12 and Berachot 33b regarding Moshe's comments on awe of HaShem.)

With this interpretation of events, it seems that Moshe's lack of knowledge of how to deal with the situation is not pejorative, like the other instances, but rather it is complimentary. Moshe's only flaw here was his greatness and belief in HaShem.

Unfortunately, in our lives we encounter lacks of understanding the origins of which are not quite so complimentary.

We are currently in the period known as the Omer, a time that has become a period of mourning for the loss of the korban omer and korban shtei halechem resulting from the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash, and for the deaths of the 24,000 students of R' Akiva. Too many of us do not feel even the slightest pain when recounting these tragedies, or when enduring this time of mourning. We can explain this numbness through R' Schwab's approach to Moshe and the blasphemer: We lack the proper context for understanding these calamities. We never experienced life with 24,000 torah giants in our midst and so we cannot comprehend such a loss. We never encountered the glory and the grandeur that was the Beit HaMikdash and so we cannot truly appreciate what we lost. Like Moshe, we do not have adequate mental constructs to understand these events and so we fall short in our mourning, just as Moshe fell short in his ability to judge the blasphemer.

Hopefully, we will again be able to experience the Beit HaMikdash and become constantly aware of G-d's awesome presence. Then it will not be Moshe's lack of understanding that is perplexing, but rather it will be a blasphemer's disbelief that is inconceivable.

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Parshah Questions

R' Meir Lipschitz

(Sources are provided to help the reader research answers)

- Is there significance to the "him and his son" masculine formulation of the law of not slaughtering an animal and its offspring on the same day?
(Rashi, Ramban, and Chizkuni to Vayikra 22:28)
- What lessons may be learned from the words "וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בְּתוֹךְ בָּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" "I shall be sanctified among the Children of Israel?"
(Rashi, Ramban, Ba'al HaTurim, Seforno, Malbim, Torah Temimah, and R' S.R. Hirsch to Vayikra 22:32)
- Why do the laws of Yom Tov begin with the laws of Shabbat?
(Rashi, Ramban, Alshich, Malbim, Gur Aryeh, Netziv, Shaarei Aharon, R' S.R. Hirsch, Chanukat HaTorah, and Ner Uziel to Vayikra 23:3)
- For children: How do we know that our actions reflect on our parents and grandparents? (Rashi to Vayikra 24:11)

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Our men's summer program starts May 3, and our women's summer program starts May 6.

To sign up or for more information, call 416-781-1777 or e-mail summerkollel@torontotorah.com.



עם עשרים וארבעה אלף תלמידים. הראה לעתיד שלו, בולטת גם לאחר שהכל נרא אבוי, כפי שmobea במסכת יבמות (לעיל). וגם במכות כד ע' ב': שוב פעם אחת היו עולין לירושלים, כיוון שהגיעו להר הצלופים קראו בגדייהם. כיוון שהגיעו להר הבית, ראו שועל שיצא מבית קדשי הקדשים, התחליו הן בוכין ור' ע' מצחיק. אמרו לו: מפני מה אתה מצחיק? אמר להם: מפני מה אתם בוכים? אמרו לו, מקום שכחוב בו (במדבר א) והזור הקרב יומת ועכשו שועלים הלכו בו ולא נבכה? אמר להן: לך אני מצחיק, דכתיב (ישעיהו ח) זה עניינו של יום טוב זה, ושמחת הילולא, כשמחת אלא בשבייל ישראל כדי שיתעסקו בתורה. אמר להם הקבר ה"ה, שוטים שביעולם, כל מה שעשיתם לצורך עצמכם עשitem, תקנתם שוקרים להושיב בהןazonות, מרחצאות לעידן בהן עצמכם, הספר וזהב שלוי הוא.

ראשו מסתכל על המציאות במבט שלילי לעומת ר' יהודה שמסתכל על הדברים במבט הירבי. ובכן מי צודק? הגمراה במסכת עבודה זורה ב ע' ב' מביאת תאור של משפטשמי כנגד אומות העולם, הפiska הבאה מתארת את המשפט של מלכות רומי:

אמר להם הקבר ה"ה, بماי עסקתם? אמרם לפניו, רבש"ע, הרבה שוקרים תקנינו, הרבה מרחצאות עשינו, הרבה כסף וזהב הרבינו, וכולם לא עשינו אלא בשבייל ישראל כדי שיתעסקו בתורה. אמר להם הקבר ה"ה, שוטים שביעולם, כל מה שעשיתם לצורך עצמכם עשitem, תקנתם שוקרים להושיב להר' ע' ב' לכך היא נעשית לכבוד תורה שלימד תלמידיו ושיהיא כתובה על ספר הזוהר הקדוש...

בעומר נוסף לחגיגת היום השלשים ושלשה בעומר או כי שמעון בר יוחאי, שעשו יומא דhilola דרשב"י או כי שאומר ר' אליהו כי טוב בספר התודעה:

יום י"ח באיר שלשים ושלשה יום בספירת העומר, יום הילולא (כלומר, יום שמחתו של רב א מ צ ע י מ ה צ ע ר . . . עניינו של יום טוב זה, ושמחת הילולא, כשמחת החופה של התנא רשב"י שהוא קשורה עם יום רשב"י לכך היא נעשית לכבוד תורה שלימד תלמידיו ושיהיא כתובה על ספר הזוהר הקדוש... טעם תאrik סימן המגפה של תלמידיך רבי עקיבא כפי שמצוין בגמרה במסכת יבמות סב ע' ב':

אמרו: שנים עשר אלף זוגים תלמידים היו לו לרבי עקיבא, מגבת עד אנטיפרס, וכולן מתו בפרק אחד מפני שלא נהגו כבוד זה זהה, והוא העולם שמים, עד שבא ר' ע' אצל ר' יוסי שבדורות, ושנה לאם ר' מ' ור' יהודה ור' יוסי לרבי שמעון ורבי אלעזר בן שמואל, והם הם העמידו תורה אותה שעה. תנא: כולם מתו מפסחה ועד עצרת.

המאירי, בית הבחירה: וכבללה ביד הגאנונים שבאים ל"ג בעומר פסקה המיתה, ונוהגים מותך כך שלא להתענות בו. וכן נוהגים מותך כך שלא לישא אש מה פסח עד אותו הזמן.

ישנם מספר עניינים שצרכיך לשים לב עליהם. ל"ג בעומר על פי הרב כי טוב הינו יום שמחתו של ר' עקיבא התחל את דרכו בגיל ארבעים. כאשר ראה שתדריך נופלים עליה בכל יום אבן זו אמרו לו עקיבא אי אתה קורא אבנים שחקו מים (איבר י"ד י"ט). מיד היה ר' עקיבא דן ק"ו בעצמו מה ר' פסל את הקשה דברי תורה שקשין כברזל על אחת כמה וכמה שיחקקו את לבו שהואبشر ודם מיד הזור למדור תורה. (אבות דרבי נתן ח)

ר' עקיבא התחל את דרכו בגיל ארבעים. כאשר ראה את תוצאות המים, טיפה אחר טיפה, על האבן הבין כי יצילחו דברי התורה להזרו אף ללייבו, לא היום וללא אחר אלא בעוד שנים רבות. לאחר עשרים וארבע שנים ר' עקיבא הגיע למעמד של גודל הדור תורה שר' עקיבא העביר אליהם לאחר שמתו כל תלמידיו. לכבודה אפשר אולי לומר שאחרי

שבעה שנים וארבעה אלף תלמידיו של ר' עקיבא מתו מיתה משונה, ר' עקיבא עצמו נהרג על ידי מלכות

בבל, אם מגיעים למצב שבו תלמיד של ר' עקיבא מת מות טبعי בעיטה ולא במיתה משונה, הגענו למצב של שלוחה קלשוי וזו סיבה לשם.

הגمراה במסכת שבת לג ע' מספרת לנו את סיפורי של ר' שמעון:

ואמאי קרו ליה ראש המדברים בכל מקום? דיתבי רבי יהודה ורבי יוסי ורבי שמעון, ויתיב יהודה בן גרים גביהו. פתח רבי יהודה ואמר: כמה נאים מעשיהם של אומה זו: תקנו שוקרים, תקנו גשרים, תקנו מרחצאות. רבי יוסי שתק. נעה רבי שמעון בן יוחאי ואמר: כל מה שתקנו - לא תקנו אלא לצורך זמן, תקנו שוקין - להושיב בהןazonות, מרחצאות - לעידן בהן עצמן, גשרים - ליטול מהן מכם. הילך יהודה בן גרים וספר דבריהם, ונשמעו מלכות. אמרו: יהודה שעילה - יתרעל, יוסי ששתק - יגלה לצייפות, שמעון שנגינה - יהרג.

וזה הייתה התחלתו המנוסה של ר' שמעון בר יוחאי. מקטע קצר זה אפשר לראות כי ר' שמעון במבט

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The 613 Mitzvot – Mitzvah 33 : Honour your parents (& elder siblings)

The 33rd mitzvah, honouring one's parents, is frequently described (such as Yerushalmi Peah 1:1) as the most difficult mitzvah in the Torah, because there is no limit on the efforts required to repay our debt to those who partnered with HaShem to give us life, and who devoted years of their lives to raising us.

This mitzvah is divided into two categories: כבוד (Awe) and כבוד (Honour). כבוד refers to displays of respect, such as not using our parents' seats and not contradicting them.

refers to actions which actively provide honour, such as providing meals or dressing them.

Ketuvot 103a teaches that one is also obligated to honour an older brother. According to Ramban, this is specifically while the parents are alive, because they wish for him to be honoured. However, the Minchat Chinuch understood Rambam to require such honour even after the parents have passed away. One is also obligated to honour an older sister; see sources cited in Torah Temimah to Shemot 20, note 86.

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Ha'Am V'Ha'Aretz

Yisrael diTrani—Tosafot Rid

Russell Levy

Bet She'an

Torah in Translation The Two Day Rosh Chodesh Phenomenon Shut Tosafot Rid 32

You asked why Rosh Chodesh is sometimes two days, and it is good question.

Know that the reason for this is not the same as the reason for celebrating two days of Yom Tov [outside of Israel RL]. We observe two days of Yom Tov due to a doubt [as to which day is truly the holiday RL], whereas Rosh Chodesh has two days for a different reason. If it was due to that doubt, we should have two days of Rosh Chodesh every month, including for a thirty-day month!

Rather, I believe the reason is the following: It is known that the lunar cycle is 29.5 days, and the thirtieth day should be split between the previous and the coming month. Since we are not allowed to do so, the Sages ruled that some months would be 29 days, and others thirty.

Logically, we should have sanctified Day 30 [alone]. Since part of that day [after the moment of the New Moon] is sacred, the rest of the day should also be sacred, and then the following day, Day 31, should not be sacred. However, since the sages enacted that all of Day 30 should be considered part of the previous month, we also sanctify Day 31, to count it as the first day of the new month. Nonetheless, despite the fact that we sanctify Day 31, we also retain the sanctity of Day 30, because it does include the moment of sanctification – half of that day would properly have been part of the new month, and we need to sanctify that moment of the new month. That is the time of sanctification. In addition we sanctify the following day [Day 31] to use it as the start of the count, starting the month from Day 31 instead of Day 30.

For this reason, we announce on the preceding Sabbath, "Rosh Chodesh of month XX will be on day A of the week," to announce that we sanctify Day 30, early, in order to sanctify the month at its proper time, and we also sanctify Day 31

Rabbeinu Yeshaya ben Mali (Rid), one of the premiere Italian Torah scholars, was born in Trani circa 1180.

Rid lived in Italy and eventually started a Yeshiva in Trani, where he employed the Tosafist methodology of Talmud study. He retained close contact with scholars of Germany, including R' Yitzchak ben R' Moshe of Vienna, the author of the *Or Zarua*, who often cites R' Yeshaya's responsa. Rabbeinu Yeshaya left a son and daughter; he is often confused with his grandson, R' Yeshaya ben Eliyahu di Trani. To distinguish between the two, Rid is often referred to as Rabbeinu Yeshaya di Trani "HaRishon" (the First) or "HaZakein" (the Elder).

Rid authored numerous works, including *Piskei HaRid*, a collection of Halachic decisions, many of which are cited by contemporary authorities. He also authored a work on the *Chumash*, as well as numerous piyutim. Perhaps he is most well known for his *Tosafot HaRid*, his commentary in the form of *Tosafot* on 19 tractates of the Talmud.

Rabbeinu Yeshaya died circa 1255.

to count [the new month] from that day. Both of these are called Rosh Chodesh, the first for sanctification, and the second for calculation. Rosh Chodesh has been calculated in this manner since the times of the Prophets, as it is written regarding David (*Shemuel I* 20:27), "On the second of the chodesh celebration."

Granted that the calculated moment of the New Moon may not occur on Day 30 [thus defying Tosafot Rid's explanation of why Day 30 is sanctified], we follow the dates fixed by the courts and not the calculated moment of the New Moon.

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Bet She'an is situated on the road leading from the northern part of Israel down to Derekh ha'Avot, the path leading to Jerusalem and south of Be'er Sheva, where our ancestors walked. The Bet She'an junction has played an important role throughout history.

When Avraham Avinu journeyed through the land, he may have seen a Canaanite fortress in Bet She'an. Years later, when Bnei Yisrael were commanded to conquer the land, it is stated that the tribe of Menashe did not conquer Bet She'an. At a later period, in the time of King Shaul, the Philistines ruled Bet She'an, and Saul's body, along with the bodies of his sons, were hung on the wall surrounding the city. Only after King Yannai's successful conquest did Bet She'an become, for a short period, a Jewish city.

During the Roman era, Bet She'an became a central city, filled with bathhouses and markets. During the period prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, the city of Bet She'an was little more than a junction between Tiberias and the Kibbutzim that lie at the foothills of Mount Gilboa.

During the 50's and 60's, the city of Bet She'an began to develop as an immigrant city. Most of the olim were from North Africa; one of the most famous of these was David Levi, who served as a minister and MK for many years.

When the construction of housing for those new olim began, both the ancient Roman city and the Canaanite mound were discovered. Today, a section of Bet She'an has become a national park, where one can observe the ruins of the Roman city and learn of Roman architecture.

Adapted from an article originally published by *Torah miTzion*

בサ"ד



Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University



Congregation Ayin L'Tzion and Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University
Welcome Scholar-in-Residence



Rabbi Meir Goldwicht

Rabbi Meir Goldwicht, a prominent Israeli scholar, educator, and a Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva University's Mazer School of Talmudic Studies, is the head of the Stone Beit Midrash Program.

May 8, 2010

פרשת בהר-בזקוז

Shabbat Drasha:

"Between Yom Ha'atzmaut & Yom Yerushalayim: The Present and Future in the Eyes of Chazal "

Shabbat morning after tefillah
Shacharit: 9 am

Hot kiddush to follow

Congregation Ayin L'Tzion
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Schedule for the Week of May 1, 17 Iyyar

Friday, April 30

9:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Torah High Oneg, BAYT

Shabbat, May 1

6:00PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Who invented Rashi Script?
Home of Nina and David Bernstein, 5 Theodore

Sunday, May 2

9:15AM Itamar Zolberg, Shiur B'Ivrit Zichron Yisrael

Tuesday, May 4

11:00AM R' Azarya Berzon: Pesachim, Clanton Park Men
1:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Sefer Amos with Mekorot,
Shaarei Shomayim Women
7:00 PM R' Meir Lipschitz, Megilat Ruth, Shaarei Tefillah
8:30PM Russell Levy: Big Questions, Westmount
8:45PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Minchat Chinuch

Wednesday, May 5

9:15AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Pirkei Avot, 239 Franklin, **Babysitting provided** Women
7:30PM R' Meir Lipschitz, Ramchal's Derech Hashem, Kehillat Shaarei Torah Men and Women

Thursday, May 6

11:00AM R' Azarya Berzon: Masechet Sukkah (Advanced), Clanton Park Men
3:40PM R' Azarya Berzon: Hilchot Muktzah (Advanced), Clanton Park Men
8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Halachah and Life Issues, Clanton Park Men
9:00PM Russell Levy: Contemporary Halachah, B'nai Torah
9:15PM R' Azarya Berzon: Halachic Man, Clanton Park Men

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

9:00AM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Tevilat Kelim, from the sources, Clanton Park Men

We would like to thank koshertube.com for filming our shiurim!

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