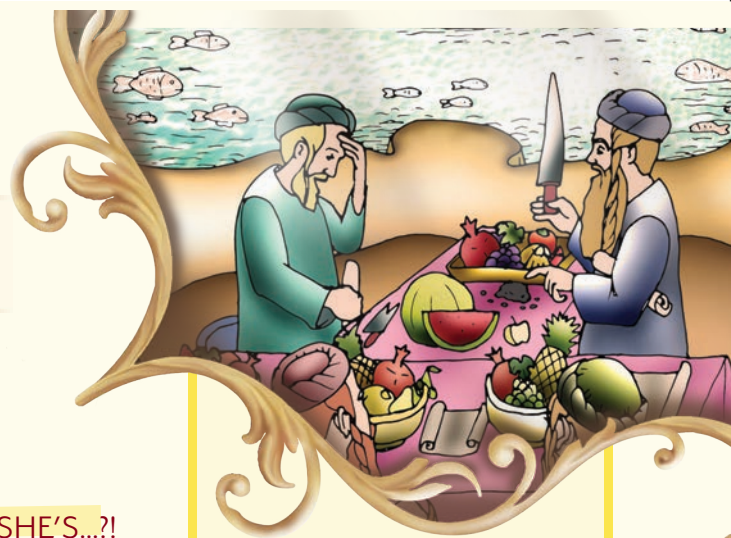


THE  
SWEETNESS OF SHABBOS

## מתיקות השבת

Published by: Yeshivas "Chayim shel Torah – Lublin" Yerushalayim.

Based on the lectures of the Rosh Yeshiva, Hagoon Harav Menachem Boruch Yaveh shlit"א talmid of Posek Hador Harav Shmuel Wosner ztz"l



## YISRO'S WORDS ARE FAVORED MORE THAN MOSHE'S...?!

**Pharaoh's Advisor Gives Advice to Moshe...**

This week's parsha begins, וַיִּשְׁמַע יְתֵרוֹ – “Yisro, the priest of Midian, Moshe's father-in-law, heard...” The Gemara explains (Zevachim 116a), “What tidings did he hear that he came and converted? Rabbi Yehoshua says, he heard of the war with Amalek. Rabbi Elazar HaModa'i says, he heard of the giving of the Torah and came.”

At first, Hashem went around asking all the nations if they wanted to receive the Torah, but they all rejected it. Hashem also offered the Torah to Midian who also wasn't interested in it. Only Yisro, who heard the sounds of the awesome occasion at Har Sinai, immediately decided to leave his family and high position behind, and travel to the wilderness to join the Jewish people.

The next day, Moshe was judging Am Yisrael when his father-in-law approached him and said, לֹא טוֹב לָאֲתָהּ הִרְבֵּךְ אֲשֶׁר אָתָה עֹשֶׂה, נָבַל תָּבַל גַּם אָתָה הָיָה, “The thing that you do is not good. You will surely become worn out, you as well as this people that is with you;” suggesting that different groups of officers be appointed to take care of the minor issues.

Let us understand, how could Yisro who was a priest for idol worship, and had just now corrected his ways,

criticize Moshe the greatest of all prophets?! Especially since Yisro was an advisor to Pharaoh, helping him with his plans to destroy the Jews, (Sanhedrin 106a, see commentaries).

**Why Were the Luchos Broken???**

Yisro, who came as an outsider, was able to understand the cause that made the people sin with the golden calf, which caused the breaking of the Luchos – because, during the forty days that Moshe was in heaven, Am Yisrael had no one whom they could consult with and learn Hashem's ways.



Moreover, even when Moshe was with them, it was hard for them to learn directly from him, because of his tremendous greatness.

And so, Yisro saw that these disadvantages made the people be influenced by the Erev Rav – “עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי גָדוֹל ה' – מְכַל הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי בִדְבַר אֲשֶׁר זָדוּ עֲלֵיהֶם” – when he saw the holy nation and their great love for Hashem, he said, “Now I know that Hashem is greater than all the gods,” and He has chosen a great and holy nation, and it was only the evil of the Erev Rav that misled them to sin.

Our sages teach that whenever the word “וַיְהִי” is used, it indicates a reason for sorrow. Here it says, וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרָת – “It was on the next day that Moshe sat to judge the people, and the people stood by

**MY STORY!****The Prohibition of Pas Akum...**

I'm an avreich, and for financial reasons I began working during the evening hours in a bakery. Luckily one of my fellow workers was a G-d fearing Jew and we quickly became good friends. We took advantage of the spare time we had during the breaks to learn together.

One of my jobs in the bakery was to turn on the ovens, so that the law of pas akum will not apply to the baked goods. One of the managing workers in the bakery was a low class, anti-Semitic gentile, Joe, who used to mock me, making spiteful comments when I would fulfill this job. He acted rudely towards me and my friend, trying to threaten us in all kind of ways.

One night after work, I had to stay in the factory for the night because I missed the last bus home, unaware that Joe noticed that...

In the middle of the night I awoke to the sounds of loud knocking. Looking through the peephole frightened, I saw Joe standing there with a heavy metal rod in his hand, threatening to harm me. I wanted to call for help but found that my phone had run out of battery. Joe continued yelling at me to open the door, while I prayed to Hashem to save me from all harm, until he eventually gave up and left.

The next morning, I told my boss about last night's events, pleading with him to fire this worker. My boss didn't take my stories too seriously, claiming that I'm exaggerating and there's nothing to fear. Eventually he gave in and sent him away for a month's time.

When Joe returned, he went straight back to his previous

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*Moshe from the morning until the evening.*” The word “יָדָה” is used here, because Yisro saw the disadvantages that caused the sorrowful breaking of the Luchos.

Therefore, he came up with the idea that many officers be appointed, and every individual would be able to be close to his mentor, consult with and take advice from him.

### **The Torah Scholar is Like an Earthenware Vessel...?!**

Another explanation for Yisro’s criticism is, because he saw that people were fighting with each other as they came before Moshe to reconcile them, which seemed very inappropriate. As the Gemara says, (Sanhedrin 99b) *“An epikoros... is one who treats another with contempt before a Torah scholar.”*

In another place (ibid. 52b) we learn, *“To what is a Torah*

*scholar compared before an ignoramus? At first, like a goblet of gold. Once he has spoken of him, he considers him to be like a goblet of silver. Once he received benefit from him, he is like an earthenware goblet in his eyes, which once broken cannot be fixed.”* The party that was acquitted at the judgment is the one who *“received benefit from him”*; and the guilty party, whom the judge spoke of his guilt, is the one that *“has spoken of him.”*

Yisro was worried that if the people keep coming before Moshe with their fights – *“You will become worn out, you as well as this people that is with you.”* That is, Moshe would become belittled in the people’s eyes, which would lead them to wither and be worn out forever, G-d forbid.

So, Yisro’s words weren’t meant to criticize Moshe disrespectfully, but just the opposite, Yisro wanted Moshe’s

## THE SWEETNESS OF THE RIGHT PATH...

When Yisro came to join Am Yisrael, and saw all the people lining up in front of Moshe to solve their fights, he advised Moshe Rabeinu to teach them how to get along and settle things between themselves without having to come to the judge.

Yisro advised Moshe to teach Am Yisrael the good ways – *gemilus chasadim, bikur cholim* and *levayas hames* – to be kind to one another, to visit and support the sick, and to accompany the dead to burial. Because, when a man goes to visit the sick and helps them out, or he accompanies the dead to be buried, this makes him humble; he sees how anyone can fall ill at any time, and he starts appreciating Hashem’s kindness, that He’s keeping him healthy and alive all this time.



All these *mitzvos* make him a more sensitive person, and he seeks to be kind to others too, rather than getting into fights with everybody. This way we can avoid going to *din-Torahs* in the first place.

That’s the special path which we have to go through before we start learning the Torah; and that is what Yisro taught our nation, which we must read every year right before we learn about the holiest of occasions – Matan Torah.



respect and admiration to grow in the people's eyes.

### Does Hashem Need the Angels' Advice???

Why did all this have to happen to Moshe – and be related in the Torah – right before Matan Torah at Har Sinai? Especially according to the opinion brought in Rashi on the pasuk "וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרַת" – that all this happened on the day after Yom Kippur, when Moshe descended the mountain with the second pair of Luchos; why is this story mentioned so early on, before anything else that happened at Har Sinai?!

Although Moshe was the most humble man on earth, but Hashem wanted to teach us a lesson for all generations to come – that in order to have the merit to acquire the Torah, we must first accept humility upon ourselves, and listen to and accept others' opinions too, just like Moshe accepted Yisro's comments. And so did Hashem, when at the creation of the world He said to the angels, "Let us make Man," even though He certainly didn't need anyone's help or advice.

This great lesson we learn over and over again each year before we begin reading about the giving of the Torah and the

Ten Commandments.

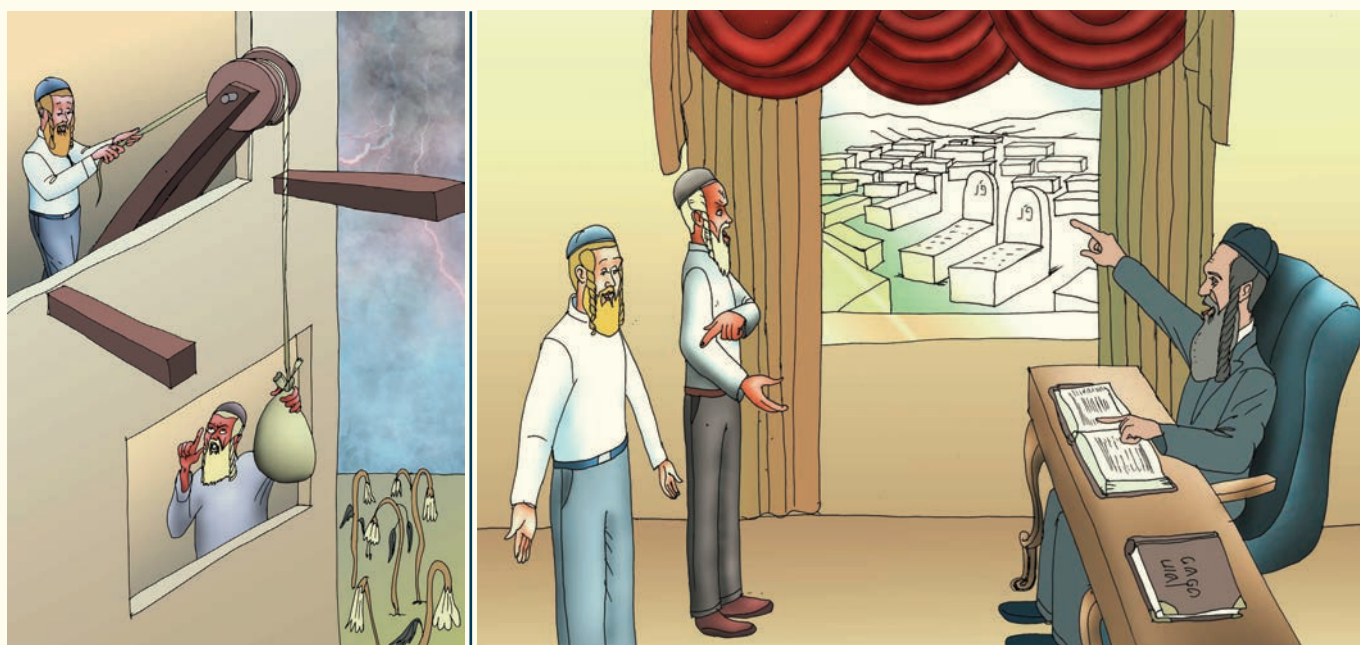
### Keep Away From the Gentiles...

Yisro then continues and says to Moshe, "וְהִזְהַרְתָּ אֹתָם אֶת הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת הַתּוֹרוֹת וְהוֹדַעְתָּ לָהֶם אֶת הַדֶּרֶךְ לָלֶכֶת בָּהּ וְאֶת הַמַּעֲשֵׂה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשׂוּן" "You shall caution them regarding the decrees and the teachings, and you shall make known to them the path in which they should go and the deeds that they should do."

The Gemara explains (Bava Metzia 30b), "and you shall make known to them, that is the structure of their livelihood." Yisro tells Moshe, teach them a clean profession (Rashi), so that they won't be too bothered and busy with making money; and also in order that they won't have to interact with the gentiles and do business with them, so they should stay away from them and won't learn from their bad ways and culture. Also, they would learn to keep away from the sinful Erev Rav among them, and not be influenced by them to sin again.

This should be a lesson for us, not to mingle and do business

### THE BITTERNESS OF BAD MIDDOS...



Yankel is angry at Shimon who started building a porch right above his own window, thereby blocking some of the sunlight from reaching his house and distracting him from his learning because of all the noise.

They come before the judge, who taught them to always remember their final destination,

when they will pass away from this temporary world. Because a man who insists always that anything anybody does should be according to law, will end up withering and drying up, from all his fights and hatred to the people around him. Therefore, we should always surrender from our own thoughts and act beyond the letter of law.

with the gentiles. And one who has to work for his livelihood, should make sure to have good surroundings, with *tznius* and *yiras shamayim*; and whatever job it may be, he should be careful to always be honest, and have in mind to do what he's doing as an act of *chesed* to others.

### **Yisro Teaches the Right Path...**

Yisro tells Moshe to teach the nation how to correct their ways, in a way that would prevent them from coming to the judge for disputes altogether. *"Teach them a clean profession"* – what better profession could a person have in his house than the service of Hashem and learning His ways?!

*"The path,' that is referring to acts of kindness"* (ibid.) – teach them how to be kind to each other, to be lenient and give up of their property and honor for others. This will stop many disputes and they will live peacefully with their wives and neighbors.

### **Mitzvos Make You More Sensitive...**

*"They should go,' that is referring to visiting the ill"* – they should learn the mitzvah of visiting and supporting the sick, for this makes a person humble, especially if it's a close relative who is laying ill. This would make them more sensitive to others and they will refrain from getting into fights. Likewise, when a person sees another suffering from an illness, he learns to appreciate his own health, and that Hashem protects him from being infected from all the germs and viruses that are all around him.

*"In which,' that is referring to burial"* – the mitzvah of *levaya*, to accompany the dead on their final way to burial, will remind them to *"know from where you come, and where you are going... To a place of dust, of worm and of maggots,"* (Pirkei Avos 3:1); and this

would quiet down their desires to fight for their honor or for any other reason.

One can also use this advice, when he is hurt by somebody: to imagine as if that person is struggling with a sickness, and this way he will feel pity for him rather than revenge. If this is still not enough, he should imagine as if that person is dead, G-d forbid, and this will calm him down from his anger.

### **Proper Behavior Precedes the Torah...**

*"And the deeds,' that is referring to acting according to the law; 'that they should do,' that is referring to acting beyond the letter of the law"* – Yisro continued telling Moshe that he should teach the people to get along with each other without coming before the judge, they should know how to compromise between themselves (*din*) and give in beyond the letter of law (*lifnim m'shuras hadin*).

All these fundamental principles we had to learn from Yisro, because only he who came from the lowest of places, knew how far bad character traits could take a person; how many bad *middos* one can come to only from insisting that everything anybody does should be according to law, and how much a man can hurt and cause fights against another Jew, only because he thinks it's the right thing to do.

These wonderful lessons were taught to Am Yisrael, so that if they follow them, the Luchos will never have to be broken again. And, so too, we have to learn for our generation, to correct our habits before learning the Torah – *"Proper behavior precedes the Torah;"* which therefore we go through the story of Yisro right before we learn about Matan Torah and the Ten Commandments, although it took place, in some opinions, much later.

>>>Continued from pg. 1

behavior. One day during the lunch break he dragged a heavy metal board towards the room where I'd spent my time learning with my friend, and he leaned it against the door in a way that it would fall in when the door would open. Unbeknownst to him, just that day our boss needed that room and we were learning in a different place.

When I walked by the room and saw the metal board, I quickly notified my boss inside not to get out, and I ran to get my friend to carry the board out of harm's way. The boss checked the cameras to see who had done it, finding that it was Joe. That's when he finally decided to fire him.

I breathed a sigh of relief, happy that I had finally gotten rid of him, but I didn't know that the story was not over just yet...

Last week I left the bakery late at night and went to wait at the bus stop that was located in a remote place. Suddenly, I heard heavy footsteps, I turned around to see Joe walking quickly towards me, clutching a heavy metal rod in his hand.

Frightened, I jumped up and began to run away with Joe hot at my heels. When the gap between us grew and Joe realized he wouldn't catch up with me, he decided to throw the rod at me, striking my hand. I continued to run with my hurt hand, not looking back, until I reached a house with a *mezuzah* at the doorpost. The owner let me in, and when I told him what happened, he quickly called Hatzalah.

They took me to the hospital where my broken arm was bandaged. The doctor told me that I was very lucky, that my hand could have been damaged for life in the good case; and in the bad case, if the rod had hit me on my head, than my life would have been in great danger.

*Baruch Hashem*, I found out today that Joe was sentenced for a long period in jail.

Now I really understand why *Chazal* told us not to eat *pas akum*, bread baked by a gentile. The true reason behind it is to distance from the *goyim* and their bad ways. It is my hope that the readers will learn from this, the danger of associating with *goyim*, spiritually and physically.

**S. G. Beitar, Israel**