

The Jewish Weekly



In Loving memory of
Mendy Klein
 ר' מנחם משה ז"ל
 בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא
 נפטר ל"ג בעומר
 י"ח אייר תשע"ח
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

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By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

A festive spirit pervaded the town of Sanz, Poland. Several Tzadikim (exceptionally holy Jews) had arrived and were staying with Rabbi Chayim Halberstam, who was the chief rabbi of the town and Rebbe of thousands of chasidim. But one morning, a day or two after Pesach Sheini ("Second Passover" - see Num. 9:1-14) in the middle of Shacharit (Morning Prayer Service), the spiritual atmosphere was compromised by a most unpleasant incident.

It began when the prayer leader completed the repetition of the Amidah ('standing' prayer). R. Chayim instructed him to skip Tachanun (penitential prayer - omitted only on festive days). When queried, he explained that his ruling was based on the holy Zohar (primary text of Kabbalah), which states that during the entire seven days following Pesach Sheini (i.e., Iyar 15-21), the Gates of Heaven remain continuously open.

Present was the oldest of his seven sons, Rabbi Yehezkel Shraga, who objected strenuously. "Excuse me, Father, but the Remah (Rabbi Moshe Isserles - the main Ashkenazic codifier of Jewish Law) writes clearly, 'On Lag b'Omer (Iyar 18) Tachanun is not said.' From this we derive clearly that on the rest of the seven days (3 days before and 3 days after Lag b'Omer) Tachanun is said!"

They debated back and forth, with R. Yehezkel insisting Tachanun must be said and R. Chayim refusing to budge from his decision and stated reasoning. In the end, R. Yehezkel stamped out of the building with a minyan of his own followers, so as not to be seen acting against his father's position in his presence. Outside, in the courtyard, they recited Tachanun and completed the prayers by themselves.

As soon as both groups had finished praying, R. Yehezkel re-ignited the 'debate.' Neither father nor son was moved a needle's width by the other's scholarly arguments. Their words became more and more heated, until finally R. Chayim proclaimed imperiously to his son, "I don't want you ever again to step over the threshold of my home!" As the shul was located in a dedicated room inside R. Chayim's house, R. Yehezkel climbed out the window of the shul in order not to disobey his father's command.

Also in the shul that day was Rabbi Mordechai Dov of Hornosteipel, the husband of Reitze, the oldest of R. Chayim's seven daughters. Like everyone else present, he was startled and shocked at the argument that had flared between the father and son, both Torah giants, and the harsh words they

had exchanged. It was even more bizarre in his eyes in that he knew well the great respect that R. Yehezkel had always displayed towards his father. His amazement increased exponentially when his father-in-law walked over to him and whispered in his ear, "I don't know what extraordinary merit I have that I should be blessed with such a holy son as this one."

R. Mordechai couldn't help wondering: "Such a holy son? Because he initiates a quarrel with his father and then disrespectfully walks out!" But he quickly recovered and replied to R. Chayim ambiguously, "In my opinion it is not so wondrous to think that you have such great merit."

A short time after returning home, R. Chayim prepared to sit at the table for his first meal of the day. He sent a messenger to summon R. Yehezkel for the meal. But his son refused to come! The chasidim and the Rebbe's household were all astounded. Sure the argument between father and son had been intense, but to such an extent? It seemed scandalous.

Many years passed. In 1876, Rabbi Chayim of Sanz departed to his heavenly reward, leaving sons and sons-in-law worthy to shepherd the chasidim. A few years later, Rabbi Mordechai Dov happened to be in Sanz, again during the week immediately following Pesach Sheini. His brother-in-law, Rabbi Yehezkel, the chief rabbi and Rebbe in Shiniva since 1856, was also in Sanz and in the same minyan as he for Shacharit. The prayer leader, who knew well R. Yehezkel's strongly held position about saying the Penitential Prayer even during these days, began saying Tachanun immediately upon his completion of the repetition of the Amida prayer.

How surprised the man was when R. Yehezkel went over to him and instructed him to skip the Tachanun and immediately recite the Kaddish which follows it.

The Hornosteipeler was astonished. He well remembered the fierce debate years before between father and son, and how obstinate R. Yehezkel was about the obligation to say it. He could still picture how his brother-in-law had walked out of the shul with a minyan of his disciples in order to say Tachanun away from his father's presence.

When they both finished praying, R. Mordechai approached his brother-in-law and requested an explanation. R. Yehezkel smiled. "I'll tell you what really happened that fateful morning all those years ago. It was not as it seemed to you and the other onlookers.

I arose very early, to prepare myself before entering my father's room. All of a sudden I was overwhelmed with tiredness; I had to close my eyes. Immediately I was asleep...and dreaming.

It Once Happened..

"In my dream I saw my father, sitting on his chair and surrounded by hundreds of chasidim. The next moment they all turned away from my father and faced me. They started chanting, 'Long live our Rebbe! Long live our Rebbe!' My father remained sitting in his chair, alone and abandoned.

"I awoke from the dream. My thoughts were disturbed and my whole body was trembling. I understood the dream to be a hint that my father was soon to transfer the scepter of leadership to me. And since our holy books state, 'one royal reign cannot overlap another,' the implication was that my father would soon have to depart from the world in order that his 'throne' would pass over to me. I was horrified at the thought and my heart felt crushed.

"The first thing I did was to undergo the 'Fast for a Bad Dream' (recommended in Jewish Law to help nullify a negative dream's effects), starting right then. After I calmed down a bit, I struggled to come up with a plan. And, praise G-d, with the help of Heaven I thought of something. I reasoned that the principle of 'one royal reign cannot overlap another' applies only when it is one and the same kingdom, but when it is two separate kingdoms the concept of 'overlap' is not relevant.

"So, I decided to initiate a division between myself and my father's court, starting with diverging customs, thereby declaring that in effect I and my followers were establishing a separate 'kingdom' - a different chasidic court. In that way both courts would be able to co-exist without any tragic loss of a leader.

"My actions turned away the Heavenly judgment hovering over my father and dissolved the Divine decree. However," added the Rebbe of Shiniva, "when my father, who well understood what I had done and why, requested my presence at his table later that day, I was still in the midst of the fast I had accepted upon myself, and thus could not participate in the meal in his house, as I usually would."

At last, after years, R. Mordechai Dov understood the perplexing remark of R. Chayim about the special holiness of his son, and also the reason for R. Yehezkel's seemingly inexplicable behavior that day many years before.

R. Yehezkel concluded his response by finally answering the Hornosteipeler's original question: "As for whether or not to recite Tachanun during these seven days here in Sanz, his city, G-d forbid that I would allow a change from the customs of my holy father of blessed memory," he exclaimed.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Emor

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:49	8:05	8:42
Tel Aviv	7:04	8:08	
Haifa	6:57	8:08	
Be'er Sheva	7:06	8:06	



The Failed Prognosis and the Excellent Advice
By Yechiel Ziskind

While I was studying in the Chabad yeshiva in 770 Eastern Parkway [in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, NY], I came down with polio at age 23. This was in 1955, the same year that the Jewish doctor, Jonas Salk, introduced the polio vaccine, but it came out too late for me. I caught a bad case of the disease, which started as a cold, but it progressed from there.

Polio, for those who are too young to remember, was a contagious disease that has since been totally eradicated in the Western World, but it used to kill a lot of people. It disabled the muscles, so the afflicted person could not walk or even breathe, and the standard form of treatment then was to put the sick into an iron lung and hope for the best.

I was taken to the Kingston Avenue Hospital (which no longer exists), but back then was the chief hospital for contagious diseases. I was put into an iron lung, which looked something like a large water boiler, with only my head sticking out. This iron lung did the compression work of my paralyzed chest muscles and thus got oxygen into my body. But I was very, very sick.

The doctor who was taking care of me had an arrogant way of speaking and he told my father and brother, "G-d knows if he'll live out the next twelve hours."

Hearing that, they went to the Rebbe and told him what my prognosis was. But the Rebbe just made a dismissive gesture with his hand. "He'll outlive the doctor," he declared. And he gave me many blessings for recovery.

I lasted longer than the doctor's prognosis of twelve hours, but I continued my confinement in the iron lung. My yeshiva colleagues - Kehos Wiess, Mottel Zajac and Berel Baumgarten - had been instructed by the Rebbe to visit me every day to make sure I had kosher food and to put tefillin on me. When the doctor saw them, he said, "Don't bother with him ... Just let him die in peace." They reported this to the Rebbe who told them the same thing he told my father and brother, "He will outlive the doctor."

And, tragically, that's exactly what happened. Two days later, the doctor caught polio himself and shortly thereafter died.

I stayed in the iron lung through the summer - June, July, August and September - and then was transferred to a hospital on Welfare Island (what is today Roosevelt Island) for recovery. During this period, whenever the Rebbe distributed wine from his Havdala cup for a blessing at the end of a holiday, he always gave some to my father to bring to me.

Through G-d's kindness, I recovered, even though it took over two years and, afterwards, I had to use a wheelchair for a while and then I couldn't walk without crutches. I was still in the wheelchair when my family accompanied me back to yeshiva. While we were still in the hallway, the Rebbe was heading to the synagogue for the Maariv (evening) prayer. When he spotted us, he immediately turned around and invited us into his office.

During that audience, he told me, "In my opinion, you will become completely healthy," and then he asked me, "Reb Yechiel, what are you doing to find a match for marriage?"

"The Rebbe means now?" I asked, surprised. Here I was, just out of rehab, getting around in a wheelchair, and the Rebbe was telling me to look for a wife?!

"Absolutely," he said, with a smile. "Not right now. Now is the middle of the night, so it's a little late. But tomorrow you should get on it."

"But I have debts," I countered, explaining that I had just bought a car, and certainly I didn't have the income to support a wife and family.

To this the Rebbe responded, "Don't worry. G-d sustains two and a half billion people in the world; he'll sustain a few more."

At this juncture, my father asked, "The Rebbe means in his current condition?"

I'll never forget the Rebbe's amazing answer: "His condition is obvious. The girl can decide whether it's for her or not. But I know of cases where the issues are not obvious, and people aren't open with each other. In his situation, there's nothing to reveal, it is what it is."

Then the Rebbe said to me (in Yiddish), "Es vet zain noch a trit in yam" - "It will just be another step in your journey." Just as G-d helped you to survive, He will help you to get married, as well."

Believe it or not, the very next day, a woman called my aunt saying she saw me and she thought she had a match for me, a girl who had also recovered from polio. Her name was Leah Lipkind, and she became my wife and the mother of our children.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



At the commencement of Parshat Emor, Moshe was instructed "אמר אל הכהנים בני אהרן ואמרת אליהם - say to the Kohanim the sons of Aharon, and say unto them". He's told twice to say something to the Kohanim. Why 'אמר and 'ואמרת' - why both?

The Ramban explains that here we have an important principle - it relates to the world of 'טהרה' and 'טומאה' - purity and impurity. Keeping the children away from contamination, guaranteeing that they lead a life of קדושה, of holiness, to be imbued with the sacred at all times. Therefore it is something that needs to be repeated, and repeated again - just saying it once won't be enough.

Our sages in the Talmud give a different suggestion 'אמר and 'ואמרת', saying and saying again, they say, is 'להזהיר על הקטנים גדולים' - to warn parents with regard to their children'. The first 'saying' is for Moshe to say it to the parents, and the second 'saying' is for the parents to say it to the children - to guarantee the continuity of that instruction through the ages. Rav Moshe Feinstein says something beautiful on this point. With regard to the impact that parents have on their children, it's not always about formal instruction - in fact, the primary impact that parents have is informally through the example that they set.

Sometimes one might have a particular persona in the workplace, in the community, or within society - and you hope that people will be suitably impressed by what they see. But when you come home, you wind down, you relax - that's when you become your real self. It's within the family circle, particularly at times of leisure, that children see their parents for what they actually are. As a result, children very easily size their parents up - are they sincere or insincere? Do they speak in a lovely way or do they shout and scream? Do they maintain high standards of morality or not? Are they truly ethical people? When it comes to mitzvot, do they try to cut corners, or are they the real thing?

Our children internalize what they see from the very youngest age. Therefore the primary arena within which Jewish children are raised and influenced is within the family home. 'אמר and 'ואמרת' is the instruction whereby we must study, we must learn and we must practice, and through the example we set hopefully we will inspire future generations to do just likewise.

I would like to end with what the Ramban wrote earlier about keeping our children away from contamination, what we are going through right now is not easy times, yet, the government and health ministries are setting restrictions and regulations, not because they want to, but in order to save lives, so let's follow their instructions and let's pray with all our hearts for the recovery of all those who are sick from the pandemic, as well as praying for our soldiers who go out to protect us and those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, sweet and happy Shabbat.

The Jewish Weekly's **PARSHA FACTS** *Yossi*

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 63
MITZVOT ASEH: 24
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 39

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 124
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1614
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 6106

HAFTORA:
Yechezkel 44:15 - 31

מיום ל"ג בעומר Lag B'Omer is Tuesday, May 12, 2020.

This week we study Chapter 4 of Pirkei Avot

אמור פרשת

This week is sponsored in honor of the second Yahrzeit of my close friend and mentor, **Mendy Klein**

ר' מנחם משה ז"ל בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא ז"ל
לג בעומר - י"ח אייר

אזכרה