

A Joke With A Lesson

Shaya checked his phone and saw 45 missed calls from his wife. Panicking, he calls her back. "Is everything okay?"

She says, "I let me ask you something. When we got married, did we say 'you got married or I got married?' No. It was WE got married."

Shaya said, "Of course, we got married. Marriage means we are one! But are you okay?"

"I am okay, but if you crash the car or I crash the car, then let's remember "WE" crashed the car."

"Aha," says Shaya. "So WE crashed the car. But "I" am still the one paying...!"

What's the Lesson? This is similar to when R' Aryeh Levin ztl went with his wife to the doctor when she hurt her foot, and he said, "Our foot hurts." Not only in marriage, but Klal Yisrael as a whole, we are all one!

Yankel bought a new car, drove it home, and right away ripped off both windshield wipers.

His friend Binyomin couldn't believe it. "Yankel, have you gone crazy?" Why did you just do that?!

Yankel laughed. "I don't want to get parking tickets. Now the police have nowhere to put them...!"

What's The Lesson? Instead of looking for shortcuts to solve a problem, we can find true peace just by following the right path and doing what is right!

Short Stories and Inspiration.

R' Zechirah Wallerstein ztl once met a holocaust survivor and asked him how he stayed so strong in his Yiddishkeit and found the strength to rebuild his life?!

He said, "My emunah was strong, and I knew, even though I don't understand Hashem, he has His ways and reasons. But what I did have a really hard time with was that I knew 6 million yidden were killed, but Hashem made sure I survived. Why me? How am I special?"

I was so overcome with thankfulness to Hashem when I realized that Hashem wanted me to survive, and throughout my life, I want to repay Hashem for all the kindness He has given me.

Why me?!

What's The Lesson? From 8 billion people in this world, only around 15 million are Jewish; of these 15 million, only around 2 million are frum. Do you understand what this means? There are sadly 13 million yidden not frum, but if you are reading this, you are a survivor from the only ones in this world who are frum. How thankful should we be that we are Jewish, frum, and are from the ones trying to come closer to Hashem!

This Connects To The Three Weeks:

We have been in galus for so long, but we have not forgotten who we are: we are Hashem's children. Question: How will we bring Mashiach if we are in such a low generation? Answer: it's because we are in such a low generation, have so many tests, and we push ourselves to overcome them; this will bring Mashiach!!!!" (R' Zev Smith Shlita)

Hashem Wanted Something Else From Me!

R' Yaakov Meir Schachter Shlita once came to shul on erev Shabbos, and they were about to start davening Mincha, when he saw R' Moshe Shmuel Shapiro ztl just finishing saying Shir Hashirim in a sweet singing tune.

At first, he was jealous, as he would also have wanted to prepare for and come into Shabbos by learning and saying *Shir Hashirim*. But then he reminded himself that he also prepared for Shabbos. His avodas Hashem was to be busy preparing his house and children for Shabbos, since he knew that if he wouldn't help, it wouldn't get done.

R' Yaakov Meir Schachter Shlita said, "Hashem wanted from R' Moshe Shapiro a Shir Hashirim; that was his avodas Hashem. But Hashem wanted something else from me; the fact that Hashem gave me these things to be busy with shows I should be busy with them!"

What's The Lesson: Everyone has their avodah to do; some learn the whole erev Shabbos, while others need to help out more at home.

Everything in life can become part of serving Hashem, and everything can be done with a geshmak if we realize this!

This connects to this week's parshah:

Moshe was told to build the *Arel Miklat*, a place where someone can escape if he killed a person by mistake. Moshe was told that he would die right after setting this up. Moshe didn't wait to do what Hashem said, even though he knew he would die afterward; he did Hashem's will, no matter what it was. The same is true of life, we do Hashem's will, even if it isn't comfortable for us. And we do it with a geshmak!

"Perfect For The Shabbos Table, Always Something Sweet To Share "



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This is not meant to rule practical *halachah*; rather, it's to show the sweetness of learning.
Based on R' Yitzchak Zilberstein's *seforim*

Q. It Looked Really bad!

Bentzy flew to Eretz Yisroel and found himself sitting next to a famous, well-known talmid chocham.

On the flight, when everyone got their food, Bentzy wanted to watch how the talmid chocham would make a brachah. But he didn't make any blessings and just ate.

The whole flight, whenever he ate, he made no brachah before or after. And when it was time to daven Minchah and Maariv, Bentzy gently tried to wake him and tell him there was only one minyan left. But he didn't respond.

Bentzy couldn't believe it. He was so shocked. The whole flight, the talmid chocham didn't make a brachah or daven!

After everyone had left the airplane, he saw that he was still sitting there. He was the only one left. Bentzy went over to him and asked if he planned to stay on the plane. Everyone was already off.

What the talmid chocham said made Bentzy freeze: "I am waiting for them to take my mother's body from the plane."

His mother had just passed away, and the halachah is that from the exact minute a close relative dies until they bury the one who passed away, one is not allowed to do positive commandments (*mitzvos aseh*); he is called an *onen*. An *onen* does not put on tefillin, say Shema, daven, or recite blessings over food.

Bentzy felt so bad that he didn't judge him more positively. But he was wondering if maybe this person was wrong for the way he acted. Maybe he could have just said why he wasn't doing any mitzvos. From the outside, it looked really bad!

Who To Ask?

Of course to R' Yitzchak Zilberstein Shlita!

A. Who makes Torah Learning so sweet & geshmak!!!

1) The person should have gotten up and announced that he wasn't davening with them because he was an *onen* and wasn't allowed to daven.

A person shouldn't give others a reason to think he's doing something wrong.

The Torah says (Bamidbar 32:22), "and you'll be clean/innocent in Hashem's eyes and the eyes of Yisroel." (Yup, this is connected to this week's parshah!)

Chazal (Yoma 38a, Pesachim 13a) learn from this above pasuk that even if you're innocent, well-meaning, and not doing anything wrong, one should do things in a way that it doesn't look bad to other people.

2) However, there may be a reason he didn't announce that he was an *onen*: since some airlines don't want the other passengers to know, as it may make them uncomfortable.

If he told them he was an *onen*, they would start asking questions, and then everyone would find out that his mother's body was on the plane, which could damage the airline's future sales as fewer people would want to travel with them.

3) The best would have been that he should have gotten up and stood with them as if he was davening and moving his lips, simply repeating, "Hashem gave, Hashem took away, may the name of Hashem be blessed."

Knowing What, When, and How To Say It!

It was many years later, when a talmid, now an adult, met his rabbi, R' David Trenk ztl.

"R' Trenk, I want to remind you of a story back in the day. I was playing basketball and wasn't wearing my yarmulke. You were strict about this. Everyone had to wear a yarmulke.

Once I was playing, and you were watching the game when you said to me, 'Put on your yarmulke. I said I didn't know where it was.

You said to me, 'Maybe look in your pocket. Maybe you'll find it there!'

The talmid finished sharing his story, and R' Trenk said, "Oishi! I am so sorry for what I did!"

"There's nothing wrong. You were completely right. I needed to wear it."

"True," R' Trenk said, "But why did I need to answer you back the way I did and say 'Maybe look in your pocket'?"

You and I both knew it was there, and there was no need for me to make you feel bad when I had already gotten my point across."

The talmid was so impressed that even as R' Trenk grew older, he was still learning how to improve his chinuch, knowing what to say, when to say it, and how to say it!

What's The Lesson? No matter our age, we can always learn better ways to improve ourselves, whether in life, chinuch, or anything else!

Correcting someone and giving musser has its place, but it should be given at the right time and in the right way, and once the message is understood, there is no need to say more.

This connects to Pirkei Avos:

There is nothing better for the body than silence! (Pirkei Avos 1:17).
Words can cause pain, fights, loston hora, and much more.

Sometimes all we need to do to make the world a better place is to say nothing, keep quiet, and hold back words that do not need to be said.

Of course, one can, and should not stay quiet when there's a chance to say a good word.

But the power and greatness of being quiet when one wants to share something "bad" but holds oneself back is great!

The Vilna Gaon ztl said that controlling one's speech when one really wants to say a juicy piece of fashion hara brings a person great spiritual light!

Never Say It's Too Late!

The Bostoner Rebbe ztl once went to speak in Yeshiva Ohr Somayach and said to the students, "I heard that you just finished a shiur with R' Dovid Gotlieb.

You should know that when I first met R' Dovid Gotlieb, he was in college, and he once came for Shabbos to my house.

He asked many questions on yiddishkeit, and he was serious. We had a great Shabbos meal. Afterward, I told him I hope to see you again next week.

He said, "Nope, I realized today I'm too old and have missed too many years to start yiddishkeit from the beginning now; there are just too many things I don't know!"

The Rebbe said, "I told him that I too don't know many things about yiddishkeit, and let's learn together."

The rest is history; he started learning, became a big talmid chochem, and has been teaching for many years already at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach.

What's The Lesson? It's never too late!!

This connects to this week's parshah:

We learn in this week's parshah that one of the ways to clean a pot - for it to be kosher - is by burning it through a fire.

The Torah is compared to fire, and just like fire can make a non-kosher pot kosher. So too, learning Torah can change a person who feels non-kosher and bad into a holy, spiritual individual.

We can learn from this that even if someone has done too many sins and feels they're over and it's too late, they should know it's never too late. Not believing that one can fix their mistakes is one of the most dangerous mindsets to have. Remember, it's never too late! (Based on R' Moshe Feinstein ztl)

A Geshmaka Question & Readers Answers

This weeks geshmaka question:

Chazal say (Yoma 9b) that the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed because of hating others for no reason. Question: Why would someone hate another person for no reason?

Last week's Geshmaka Question:

What is the purpose and reason for fasting on Shivah Asar b'Tammuz (and Tisha B'Av)? How does not eating and starving help?

R' Avrum Rosenblum Answers: There is no restriction placed on a person that he thinks about consistently, such as the restriction of eating and drinking. Which means that as you think about it often through the day, it reminds you why we are fasting. Which is to remember the tragedies that occurred on those two days.

Yeshivas Ohr Shraga Answers: fasting makes us not focus on gashmiyus. Now we can connect to our neshamos and truly feel the pain of the churban.

Moshe Fishman Answers: Food makes us happy, but we need to put that aside to properly remember the loss of the Beis HaMikdash.

Ask your friend or Rav/Rabbi for an answer, and it may appear here.
Text your answer in by Sunday to (347) 669 0369 or by email to torahsweeter@gmail.com