

A Joke With A Lesson

Shmuel and his friend were caught stealing food and were brought before a judge.

The judge said, "In this town, if you steal food, you must pay for it, buy another one, and swallow it WHOLE! Shmuel, you stole a peach, so you must swallow a whole peach in ONE SHOT!"

Suddenly, Shmuel couldn't control himself and started laughing!

The judge looked confused. "WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!"

Shmuel could barely stop laughing. "Your Honor, my friend stole a watermelon!"

What's The Lesson? The Chafetz Chaim used to say we must be so careful not to steal from others; it's not just money, even the SLEEP of others!

R' Yankli Galinsky ztl said the same applies to someone about to start learning Torah. Going over to schmooze with them is stealing from their torah learning! There is a time and place for everything!

Short Stories and Inspiration.

A Rosh Yeshiva wanted to throw a bachur out of yeshiva because he was causing trouble. Before making his decision, he went to speak with R' Aharon Leib Shteinman ztl. "We tried everything to help him," the Rosh Yeshiva explained.

R' Shteinman asked, "What's his mother's name?" The Rosh Yeshiva was surprised. What did his mother's name have to do with the trouble he was causing? "I don't know," he answered.

R' Shteinman said, "You mean you didn't daven for him yet? How can you say you tried EVERYTHING to help him?"

Tried Everything?

What's The Lesson? We sometimes forget and don't realize the POWER of davening!

This connects to this week's parshah:

When Noach left the *teva*, the boat, after the flood, he called out to Hashem, "Where was Your mercy?"

Hashem answered, "You should have begged for mercy when I told you I would bring a flood to the world! I told you to build a *teva* for many years so you could daven for the generation, but instead, once you realized you and your family would be saved, you didn't daven for others. Only now, when you see the world's destruction, do you open your mouth to daven?" (Zohar)

In life, so many people need a shidduch, help with money, health issues, have been waiting to have children, or need help raising them and the list goes on.

Of course, if we can help someone, offer them a job, *redt* a shidduch, or do anything else to help, DO IT! But when we can't help in other ways, we can, should, and need to daven for people we know personally, and also keep ALL of Klal Yisrael in mind!

Let's Go Into The Teva!

The Satmar Rebbe ztl once met the Chazon Ish ztl and quoted the Rambam, who says, "It's human nature to follow the ways of our friends and neighbors. That's why a person should surround himself with good people and stay close to tzadikim. But if everyone around him is bad, he should run away to the desert!"

"Doesn't this apply to our generation so well? So why aren't we all running to the desert?" The Satmer Rebbe asked.

The Chazon Ish answered, "The desert of OUR generation is the yeshivos and the belts midrash!"

What's The Lesson? As yeshivas, cheders, and schools return to their regular schedules, let us, both parents and students, appreciate what a gift they are! A special thank you to the wonderful rabbim and teachers who day after day are teaching and raising the next generation, protecting them from the flood of outside influences, and helping them grow in avodas Hashem!

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

Hashem told Noach to go into the *teva*, the boat, to be saved from the flood. The Baal Shem Tov explained that the word *teva*, which means boat, can also mean 'word.' Hashem was telling Noach, and teaching all generations, that if they ever feel they need to go into a *teva* to protect themselves spiritually, they should go into the word. Which word? The words of torah and tefillah! Not just to learn or daven, but to live it, to breathe it, to actually go into it; it is so powerful, holy, and beautiful that one will be protected from the outside world, with all its rush and distractions, and will enter a beautiful spiritual world while still in this world! Shabbos is also like a *teva*, a boat that takes us away from the busy world once a week! But we have to choose to go into shabbos, leaving our weekday thoughts and worries behind, and finally enjoy a taste of the World to Come. Try it! It's Free!

ה"ס

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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. Who Was Your Favorite Rabbi?

Everyone has at least one rabbi they loved; for many, it was R' Baruch, who had taught in the yeshiva for many years.

R' Baruch was warm and friendly, but he also knew when to be strict if there was a need. Everyone knew that if a boy brought a toy from home and played with it during class, R' Baruch might take it away and put it in his closet.

One day, R' Baruch was in the middle of explaining a piece of Gemara. The boys were trying hard to follow along, but Yanky had opened his very own CAR PARKING LOT under his desk!

When by accident one of his spring-loaded cars slipped and went flying straight toward R' Baruch in the middle of the shiur!

The class laughed, and Yanky's face turned bright red. He didn't know whether to laugh, hide, or crawl under his desk! R' Baruch looked at the car, then at Yanky. "Well, Yanky, I think your car has reached its final destination. Now please bring me the rest of your cars!"

Yanky's cars joined a big collection in R' Baruch's closet. The boys joked that the closet had more toys than a toy store!

One morning, R' Baruch walked into class and stopped in shock! Someone had broken into his closet! Many things were missing, including all the toys he had taken away throughout the year!

Now that the toys were STOLEN, was R' Baruch responsible for paying his talmidim back?

Also, is a Rabbi allowed to take away toys from his talmidim? Isn't that considered STEALING? After all, we learn from Parshas Noach just how bad stealing is!

Who To Ask?

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

1) The poskim allow a rebbi to take things from students, and it's not considered stealing from the children or their parents, since parents who send their children to school rely on teachers' judgment to do what is necessary for their children's education.
(See *Mishnah Halachos VI 284.*)

2) Although the Rabbi did not plan to become a guard of the item he took away, he automatically became responsible for it since he planned to return it after a certain amount of time. In the meantime, he became a guard and is responsible for keeping it safe.

The question is how much responsibility he has:

The Torah makes a difference between the different types of guards.

If he is a paid guard and the item is lost or stolen, it doesn't matter whether he was careful, since he was paid to watch it; he must pay for it now.

An unpaid guard must be careful, but he isn't responsible for paying if it gets lost or stolen, unless he was careless and that's why it was lost or stolen; then he would have to pay.

In our case, the Rabbi receives a paycheck, but that isn't enough to make him a paid guard. He is paid to teach students, not to watch over items he took from them. Since he locked the closet, the items inside were considered safe, and he wasn't careless.

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Do You Know How To See?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, R' Menachem Mendel Schneerson ztl, was visited by soldiers from Eretz Yisroel who were seriously hurt, missing feet or other body parts. They were called the "disabled soldiers."

The Lubavitcher Rebbe spoke with them, giving them chizuk, and then he said, "I don't think you should be called handicapped, disabled, or crippled. I think you should be called *amazing and extra special soldiers*, because that is what you are!"

"You are extra special because the more a person is tested, the more tools they receive from Hashem to become greater! You soldiers have faced challenges most people don't, so it is you that can become even greater than many people!"

The Lubavitcher Rebbe looked at the world very differently. He always looked for the good in every person.

When the world was still calling children with special needs "retarded," he said we should not call them that; we should call them 'special,' because that is what they are! Special souls.

"Even if they aren't as socially skilled, they can be even more spiritually in touch with Hashem than others!" The Rebbe said. Sometimes, just watching them daven or perform any other mitzvah, you can see their beautiful, pure neshamos!

What's The Lesson? You are not less because of your challenges; they make you better and stronger!

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

After the flood, Hashem promised not to bring a flood ever again. The rainbow would be the reminder of that promise.

Question: Why specifically a rainbow?

Answer: The rainbow forms when light shines and pushes through moisture in dark clouds, creating a beautiful set of colors. The rainbow reminds us that sometimes that light is hidden deep inside, just covered by dark clouds.

Hashem was teaching Noach not to focus on people's outside, on their struggle, as he had before the flood, when he didn't daven for his generation.

Instead, he should look for the beautiful LIGHT hidden inside every person!

In life, look for the good in others and don't forget to look for it in ourselves too! Every one of us has a beautiful LIGHT to share with the world!

A Geshmaka Question & Readers Answers

This weeks Geshmaka Question:

The world's biggest zookeeper was probably Noach. Was this a punishment, having to take care of all the animals?

Last week's Geshmaka Question:

Adam Harishon was punished for eating the forbidden fruit, which led to the need to work hard to earn a living. Question: Are those in Kollel learning free from this punishment? Or is their learning counted as working?

S. Gold Answers: A kollel

Yungerman wife usually

works; finances may be very

tight, and he may have to

help more with the children

and housework than other

men. So even while sitting and

learning Torah, he certainly

feels the curse's effects!

Shaya Answers: All the money the kollel

Yidden receive comes from people working,

so, technically, all the money everyone has

comes from work, which is because of the

sin of eating the forbidden fruit.

C.F. Answers: Chazal say that a person who

accepts the yoke of Torah is removed from

the yoke of work!

Text your answer in by Sunday to (347) 669 0369 or by email to torahissweeter@gmail.com

Compliments - Positive Musser!

Yitzchak told his father that he was going OTD, off the derech. The father was shocked and heartbroken. With tears in his eyes, he began saying Tehillim!

The next day, his father watched Yitzchak get up and go to daven. He couldn't believe it! He was so happy and thankful to Hashem!

Later, Yitzchak came home, washed his hands, ate breakfast with a bracha before eating and davening after. The father said, "Look at all the beautiful mitzvos you're doing! I'm so proud of you!"

Yitzchak said, "Usually, all I hear is mussar about how I don't wake up early enough or what I'm doing wrong. This is the first time in a very long time that you've told me something GOOD about myself..."

What's The Lesson? We don't realize how important it is to give compliments!

R' Zechariah Wallerstein ztl used to say that when it comes to giving mussar, the best way is to give positive mussar!

Instead of saying, "You're a BAD kid because you came late, failed a test, or did something wrong!" One should say, "You're so GOOD! So why did you come late to class, fail that test, or make fun of someone else? That's not like you!"

Instead of putting them down, you are BUILDING THEM UP! Giving positive musser shows you really love and believe in them!

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

The Torah says that Noach was a tzadik in "his generation."

Rashi explains this in two ways:

1) Some of our Rabbis explain, "If Noach was a tzadik even in such a bad generation, imagine how much greater he would have been in a generation of tzaadikim!"

2) Then Rashi says that *some* explain: "Only in this bad generation, compared to everyone else, was he considered a tzadik, but had he been in Avraham Avinu's generation, he wouldn't have been considered such a great tzadik."

Question: Why does Rashi call only the *first opinion* "some of our Rabbis"?

Answer: Rashi held that our main rabbis and teachers, who should help us live our daily lives, are those who look for and focus on the GOOD in others! (Toras Chaim, the Kosover Rebbe ztl)