



פרשת בשלה
שבת שירה
שבט תשע"ט

YUD SHEVAT

On the morning of Yud Shevat, Kollel hosted a morning of Hiskashrus program for boys.

Before davening, fathers and boys learned the Maamar Bosi Legani specially printed booklets.

After Davening, each of the boys wrote a Pan which was sent to the Ohel. They then enjoyed a delicious breakfast and learning Mishnayos.

YARCHEI KALLAH

This year's Yarchei Kallah Summer Learning Program was a huge success. Throughout the week, strong crowds of attendees came to enjoy the program of shiurim and presentations.

The shiurim were all of a high quality and the program was well presented.

Guest speaker, Rabbi Ari Shishler dazzled the crowd with his daily presentations

The line-up included local Rabbis and Rebbetzins and the Rabbis of the Kollel who addressed a broad range of contemporary topics, including; Infallibility of the Rabbinate, Techiyas Hameisim, Medical ethics, and more.

Special programs were run for the Young Anash community, including a ladies shiur hosted by the Kollel's women's division - Chana's Circle, and a Chof Daled Teves farbrengen for Yungeleit held in conjunction with Young Yeshivah.



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The path to happiness

For most people, happiness is one of their top wishes and life pursuits. But happiness seems to be elusive and society seems to struggle to find it. Perhaps we are looking in the wrong places.

There is a fascinating discourse in Torah Ohr on the opening of Parshas Beshalach which gives us an insight into where and how to find true and lasting happiness.

"And it was, when Pharaoh sent out the people, and Hashem did not lead them the way of the land of the Plishtim, even though it was close. Because Hashem said "lest the people reconsider when they will see war, and return to Mitzrayim." And Hashem turned the people around towards the way of the desert, to the Yam Suf."

In Chassidic thought, each of the nations of the world embody a different mood or character trait, Each of these traits exist in the side of holiness, but also have a counterpart in the side of impurity and negativity.

So who are the Plishtim? The opening Posuk of Tehillim reads; "Happy is the man who... has not sat in the seat of the scoffers." The Gemora explains that these scoffers refer to the Plishtim. The scoffers express their every desire, saying whatever comes to mind without a sense of right or wrong. Everything is funny and a joke; a subject of mockery. This is not happiness, but rather frivolity (*hollelus*).

The holy counterpart of the Plishtim is a spiritual excitement and ecstasy in having a connection to Hashem.

And Hashem did not lead them by the way of the land of the Plishtim even though it was close. When one seeks to leave their Mitzrayim, their personal restrictions, which includes the state of melancholy and depression, one cannot shortcut their way to true happiness—even spiritual happiness.

We look for quick fixes and instant highs. I'll be happy if I have more money, a new car, a bigger house. Advertising convinces us that if we purchase the latest gadget this will make us happy. Worldly pleasures and in the extreme, drug and alcohol abuse are pursued as the path to happiness.

Spiritually we seek ecstasy from external source of inspiration or 'experiences' that give us a high.

But Hashem did not lead Bnei Yisroel though the land of the Plishtim... Lest the people reconsider when they will see war, and return to Mitzrayim. Artificial happiness is short-lived and not real. The buzz may bring a momentary sense of happiness. But happiness which comes from without, from the pursuit of 'things' (even spiritual experience), cannot be lasting. The buzz (or inspiration) wears off and at the first sign of difficulty in life, challenges, struggle and difficulties, we fall back to our Mitzrayim.

And Hashem turned the people around towards the way of the desert, to the Yam Suf. Yam Suf is a reference to the Oral law which details the Mitzvos which we are required to submit ourselves to fulfil. The desert represents humility. And the end goal is to reaching Eretz Knaan, the word Knaan is connected to hachnaah, submission and surrender.

The Torah's message is that true happiness comes through surrendering ourselves to meaningful work; serving our Creator, serving others and working on refining our own character and desires rather than indulging them. To have true happiness (*שמחה*), there must be work (*עבודת*). It is a longer journey, taking much effort, but Simcha that comes without Avodah is meaningless and short-lived.

This happiness lasts because it is inner. It is the feeling of accomplishment and contentment which comes from doing right and good, not from doing whatever we please. Since our experience of happiness does not come from something external, nothing external can take it away.

It seems counter-intuitive. But think about it; So much of society's pursuit of happiness is in the Land of the Plishtim. We spend billions of dollars on experiences and 'things', but are we any happier as a result? All we are creating is a society which is becoming more narcissistic and more depressed. Ironically, previous generations who had far less than we do, were happier!

May we succeed in transcending our Mitzrayim completely and be blessed with true and lasting Simcha in our lives.

The best time to say Kiddush Levana

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Last Motzai Shabbos there was a discussion whether Kiddush Levana should be recited, as 7 full days had not passed from the Molad. Below we present the background and associated Halachos.

One who sees the moon in its renewal is required to recite the blessing of Kiddush Levana - אשר במאמרו ברא שחקים¹.

The Gemora teaches that whoever blesses the new month in its proper time, is considered as though they have greeted the presence of the Shechina. This is derived by linking two Pesukim. Concerning Rosh Chodesh the Torah says והחודש הזה and at the Yam Suf the people saw Hashem's presence and proclaimed זה א-ל

When is the proper time for Kiddush Levana?

Night-time

The Ram"o² rules that Kiddush Levana is only recited at night.

Even if the moon is present during daylight, Kiddush Levana is not recited because the moonlight is insignificant and we apply the Talmudic dictum "What does a candle contribute in daylight?"

Even during twilight (בין השמשות) when the sky is darker, Kiddush Levana is not recited because it is still considered daytime³.

The Ram"o further qualifies that the blessing should be at a time when the moon has risen and one benefits from its light. Aruch Hashulchan⁴ measures this by being the point in time when the moonlight casts shadows on the ground.

Until When?

The Talmud requires that the blessing be recited when the moon is in its state of renewal. When does this period extend to? The Gemora⁵ teaches that Kiddush Levana can be recited until the time that the moon's blemish (cavity) has been filled.

Rav Yehuda rules that this means up until 7 days of the month. Halacha follows the Nahradeans who rule that the blessing may be recited until 16 days of the month. "Until" the 16th of the month is not inclusive of the 16th day itself, since on the 16th the moon has already reached its fullness and is now waning⁶. The days are counted from the Molad (which may or may not be on Rosh Chodesh).

The Mechaber⁷ and Tur rule simply that Kid-

dush Levana can be recited until 16 days from the Molad but not including the 16th day i.e. 15 days. The Magen Avraham⁸ explains that these 15 days are counted as fifteen 24-hour periods (360 hours) from the exact time of the Molad.

The Ram"o rules slightly differently. A lunar month is actually 29 days, 12 hours and 783 chalackim (each chelek being 1/1080 of an hour). Technically the moon will reach its fullness at the midway point of this measurement. Hence Kiddush Levana may only be recited until that point and not the entire 15th day period⁹.

From When?

The Gemora in Sanhedrin does not qualify the earliest time for reciting Kiddush Levana.

The Rambam¹⁰ writes that one may recite Kiddush Levana already on the first day. Talmidei Rabbeinu Yonah¹¹ write that because the moon is too small, one should not recite the blessing on the first day but may do so anytime after.

The Mechaber¹² rules that one should only recite Kiddush Levana after 7 days have lapsed. The Mishna Berura writes that most of the Poskim, including; the Bach, Magen Avraham, Taz, Pri Chadash, allow Kiddush Levana to be recited already after 3 24-hour periods from the time of the Molad. Already from then one is able to benefit from the moonlight. They challenge the Mechaber's ruling based on the fact that according to Rav Yehuda (in the Gemora quoted above) the seventh day is actually the end-time for Kiddush Levana!

The Mechaber's opinion of waiting 7 days is based on Kabbalah since the moon has now received from all of the seven Sefiros. Elya Rabbah¹³ explains that according to this view one may recite Kiddush Levana from the beginning of the seventh day and need not wait for the full 7 days to elapse. The position of the Elya Rabbah is disputed. The Alter Rebbe in the Siddur writes that we wait until 7 full days have passed from the Molad.

Motzai Shabbos

Meseches Sofrim teaches that Kiddush Levana should be recited on Motzai Shabbos when one is in a state of joy and dressed in their Shabbos clothing. This is brought in the Shulchan Aruch.

Maggid Meisharim writes that if one recites Kiddush Levana on a Motzai Shabbos that month will be successful. Mishna Berura¹⁴ rules that Motzai Yomtov has the same status.

An additional reason for this hiddur is that on

Motzai Shabbos more people will be present and the Mitzvah can be performed ברוב עם הדרת מלך

Whilst the literal reading of the Shulchan Aruch suggests that Kiddush Levana can only be recited on Motzai Shabbos, the Poskim explain that it is only a hiddur¹⁵.

The Ram"o writes that this hiddur is only followed if Motzai Shabbos is before the 10th of the month. After this one should not wait for Motzai Shabbos since one runs the risk of a few consecutive cloudy nights and missing out altogether.

Shaar Hakollel records that during the winter, the Tzemach Tzedek was not makpid on waiting 7 days. He explains that this is because the hiddur of 7 days is not found in the Kabbalah of the Ariza"l.

A Clash of Two Hiddurim

For those who follow the Kabbalistic practise of waiting for 7 days, what happens when Motzai Shabbos falls on the 3rd, 4th, 5th or 6th day?

To wait for the 7 days would be sacrificing the hiddur of reciting Kiddush Levana on Motzai Shabbos. Waiting until next Motzai Shabbos would be too risky due to the concern of clouds quoted above.

In such a case the Levush rules that the hiddur of Motzai Shabbos takes precedence.

Through learning the halachos of Kiddush Levana and being mehader in its observance, may we merit the fulfilment of the assurance והן עתידין להתחדש כמותה, that in the times of Moshiach, the Jewish people will be renewed like the moon.

1. Shulchan Aruch OC 426:1. Sanhedrin 42a
2. ibid. Based on the Agur
3. Mishna Berura 426:2
4. OC 426:5
5. Sanhedrin 41b
6. Kneses Hagedola interprets the Talmud literally as being inclusive of the 16th day. Pri Chadash relies on this opinion to permit someone who has not yet recited Kiddush Levana to do so on the 16th albeit without Hashem's name in the Blessing בלא שם ומלכות
7. 426:3 This is the opinion of the Rambam Brachos 10:17
8. 426:12
9. If one did not recite Kiddush Levana before this point one may rely on the Mechaber to recite it as long as the 15th day has not lapsed.
10. Brachos 10:17
11. Brachos 21a as quoted in Aruch Hashulchan
12. 426:4
13. See Shaarei Teshuvah 426:10
14. 426:5
15. The Bach challenges the hiddur based on the premise that we do not push off Mitzvos. Therefore Kiddush Levana should be recited at the earliest opportunity irrespective of the day of the week.