



A collection of
Torah thoughts
produced by the
Kollel

חידוש Chiddush

אין בית המדרש בלא

KOLLEL UPDATES

FAREWELLS

Two other Yungeleit have recently moved on from the Kollel to their respective Shlichus activities.

Rabbi Peretz Schapiro is now serving as the youth director at Central Chabad Shul - here in Melbourne.

Rabbi Yaakov Feiglin, will be remaining in Melbourne and continuing his involvement with local youth.

We thank them both for their contributions and wish them and their families much Hatzlocha in their Shlichus.

Public Holiday Learning

Tuesday November 5 is a Public Holiday. The Kollel will be hosting a special learning program for men and bochorim.

Join us at 9:15am in the Mezzanine for a full breakfast. After breakfast be stimulated with 2 amazing shiurim on contemporary halachic issues.

9:45am

"Cattle prod Gittin"

The issue of Coerced Divorces

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

10:30am

Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef ז"ל

His halachic approach

Rabbi Michael Stern



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Hashem's Shadchan

After the passing of his wife Sarah, Avraham turns his attention to making a Shidduch for his son Yitzchak. Eliezer, Avraham's faithful servant, is appointed as the Shaliach for this vital mission. Before departing, Avraham blesses Eliezer *ישלח מלאכו לפניך* - Hashem will send His angel before you to guarantee you success in your Shlichus.

With this assurance, Eliezer acts with total confidence, knowing that his mission has been divinely underwritten. He makes a condition with Hashem for a clear sign by which to identify Yitzchak's intended. After Rivka fulfills the condition, Eliezer gives her jewelry (which *meforshim* explain was the act of Kiddushin) even before asking from which family she comes.

Miraculous success is apparent throughout this episode. Eliezer's travel is miraculously hastened. Rivka arrives on cue as Eliezer davens. And later; when Besuel plans to obstruct the Shidduch, the *Malach* kills him so that he will not interfere.

When retelling the sequence of events to Rivka's family, Eliezer changes some of the details. Instead of saying that Avraham had said that the angel would go *ahead* of him, he says that the angel will go *with* him. This suggests a lesser level of involvement by the *Malach* in Eliezer's mission. Similarly, Eliezer relates that he first enquired about Rivka's family and only then gave her the jewelry. Clearly Eliezer was trying to downplay the miracles and make it all seem more 'normal'.

The story of the Shidduch between Yitzchak and Rivka is repeated in great detail, prompting Rav Achai to declare *יפה שיחתן של עבדי אבות מתורתן של בנים* - *the conversations of the servants of the Avos are more cherished than the Torah of their descendants*. The Torah is so sparing in its use of words, indeed some of the details of the most fundamental Mitzvos are merely alluded to. Yet this story was told and retold in all of its details.

Chassidus explains that this is because the marriage between Yitzchak and Rivka is the paradigm for the entire purpose of Torah and encapsulates the Avodah of the Jew in this world:

Rivka, the rose amongst the thorns, represents the sparks of G-dliness trapped in the world of Lavan, the forces which conceal G-dliness. These sparks must be extricated and wedded to Yitzchak, the embodiment of Kedusha. The Neshoma, like Eliezer, comes down into this world as Hashem's Shaliach to bring about this Shidduch between the world and G-dliness.

Before its descent, the Neshoma is given tremendous powers. Our sages teach that before the soul comes down into this world it is given an oath to be righteous - *משביעין אותו*. The Friedrike Rebbe explains that the word *משביעין* can also mean to be sated. The Neshoma is endowed and filled with G-dly faculties with which to accomplish its mission in a world which is fraught with challenges.

With this awareness, we must firmly believe and know that Hashem has given us the power for guaranteed success. No obstacle can stand in our way of keeping Torah and Mitzvos and transforming the world into a holy place. Any challenge that presents itself is merely illusory.

Like Eliezer, this knowledge, is for our personal awareness, to give us confidence and resolve. But when we engage with the 'outside' itself, our approach must be logical and natural. Why is this?

The ultimate objective of Creation, and the Neshoma's task in the world is to create a *Dirah betachtonim* - to transform our lowly physical world and those who inhabit it into a place which recognizes and radiates G-dliness. This transformation cannot be superimposed. Hashem's desire is that the world itself should naturally come to the conclusion and recognition of the existence of its Creator and His ongoing supervision.

So, like Eliezer, we have to channel our supernatural strengths through very natural means; to engage and interact with the world on its terms; at work, in school, in the street or wherever we find ourselves.

In marrying the world with G-dliness we know that the 'Shidduch' is a done-deal even before the 'first date'. But as Shadchan, our job is to ensure that the world gives its voluntary consent to a perfect match. ■



Shiurim Schedule

AVOS UBONIM

After an incredible Winter program, Avos Ubonim is now on for the Summer months under the exciting leadership of Rabbi Centner.

Boys from year 2 and up are invited to join us with their fathers for learning, refreshments and raffles.

6:30-7:15pm every Sunday in the Mezzanine.

SHULCHAN ARUCH SHIUR

This shiur is one of the best-kept secrets in town... And now is the perfect time to join!

Join master maggid shiur, Rabbi Mottel Krasnjanski, in studying the Shulchan Aruch like never before.

Thursday nights, 8:00-9:00pm in the Kollel Menachem Beis Medrash.

Starting a new topic this Thursday, October 31st - Cheshvan 27th

Halachos of the Seudah:

Starting with the halachos of Netilas Yodayim

TAHARAS HAMISHPOCHA CHABURA

All Yungeleit are invited to join a group learning the Sefer Taharas K'halacha.

Review on the halachos and understand their basis. Ask questions and get answers.

Facilitated by Rabbi Y. Johnson

Sundays 7:40-8:30pm in the Kollel Menachem Beis Medrash.



Q. In the last Chiddush you wrote about not saying Tachanun when a Chosson or Baal Habris is present in the Shule. I have noticed that some communities, particularly Chassidish ones, don't recite Tachanun on the Yartzheit of Tzaddikim. In Chabad however they do recite Tachanun on the Yartzheit of their Rebbeim. What is the basis of not reciting Tachanun on a Yartzheit of a Tzaddik and why do Chabad say Tachanun?

A. This custom is generally followed in Chassidic circles on the Yartzheit of a Rebbe. The reason is because the Tzaddik's neshoma has an *Aliyah* on the day of the Yartzheit.

Proof for this practice is brought from a Rashi on Yevamos 122a. Rashi quotes the Geonim that the days referred to as *ריגלא דאמוראים* are "the day on which a great man passes away which is established in his honour. Each year when this day arrives, the Talmidei Chachamim gather from around to visit his gravesite". Since this is referred to as *ריגלא* - a festival - we see that the day of the passing of a Tzaddik is like a Yomtov when Tachanun is not recited. (See Mishmeres Shalom¹).

Others explain that the basis for this custom is from the Zohar². On the day of his passing, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai instructs his Talmidim to celebrate and rejoice on this day since it is his day of joy. As his bed was miraculously carried to burial, a heavenly voice announced "come and gather for the *Hillulah* of Rabbi Shimon." The word *Hillulah* means a wedding. From this we see that the day of the passing of a Tzaddik is a joyous day, akin to a wedding. Just as Tachanun is not recited on the day of a wedding, so too it is not recited on the Yartzheit of a Tzaddik.

But what does this mean? Every day is bound to be the Yartzheit of a particular Tzaddik in history! Should we never recite Tachanun?

Following this logic, many Poskim vehemently challenged this practice.

In Yabia Omer³, Rav Ovadiah Yosef z"l writes very strongly against this custom. On the contrary, the day of the passing of a Tzaddik is a sad day; a day of rebuke and a day of fasting⁴. If

Tachanun on a Tzaddik's Yartzheit

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

one is in a Shule where Tachanun is not recited on the Yartzheit of a Tzaddik and he cannot protest and change the practice, he should recite Tachanun on his own. He needn't be concerned for either *יוהרא* (arrogant piety) or *לא תתגודדו* (separateness created through observing a different custom to those around him). Rav Moshe Feinstein issued a similar ruling.

The *Minchas Elozor* of Munkatch⁵ similarly writes that by following this custom one would never recite Tachanun, since among the thousands of Tzaddikim throughout history every day would be a Yartzheit of a Tzaddik. Indeed there are calendars printed which list the names of Tzaddikim who passed away on each day. The entire *siman* in the *Shulchan Aruch* would be irrelevant. The uniqueness of Lag Baomer is that it was also the day when the Talmidim of Rabbi Akiva stopped dying. It also has the unique status of being called a *Hillulah*.

The Munkatcher writes about a Rabbi who justified being lenient in reciting Tachanun so as not to arouse accusations and *Dinim* against the Jewish people. On the contrary says the Munkatcher (quoting the *Ariza*"I): By reciting Tachanun one has the status of someone who is *Modeh* - who confesses to his wrongdoings and is therefore exempt from a *Knas* (penalty). Further, through Tachanun the sins of Klal Yisroel are forgiven.

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Skipping Tachanun is not something to take lightly. Whilst we mentioned last week that Tachanun is a *reshus*, according to the *Ariza*"I, based on *Kabbalah*, Tachanun is a *Chiyuv*. The Munkatcher points out that *Maariv* is also technically only a *reshus*, but we would never use this as basis to skip it. The Zohar speaks about the tremendous power of reciting Tachanun in gaining atonement. The Baal Shem Tov taught that the words *מענה* at the end of *Parshas Vayeira* is an acronym for *יודיו אחר תפילה מגעת עד כסא הכבוד* - confession recited after *Shemoneh Esrei* reaches to the *Kisei Hakovod*.

Nonetheless, there are poskim who do not discount the custom entirely. *Mishmeres Shalom* explains that it is limited to the Tzaddik's followers, who were subservient to his will and would spend time in the Tzaddik's presence during his lifetime.

Similarly Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach⁶ is quoted as saying that the dissatisfaction of the Poskim towards

this practice does not include the followers of the Tzaddik who are connected to him - "go by his light". This is particularly so when a *Seudah* is made in honour of the Yartzheit. (Other Poskim suggest that where a *Siyum* is being made on the Yartzheit Tachanun may be skipped.)

Darkei Chaim Veshalom (Minhagei Munkatch), based on the Rashi quoted above limits the dispensation of Tachanun to the city itself where the Tzaddik is buried and people travel to his gravesite to daven there on the day of the Yartzheit. On any other Yartzheit, Tachnun should be recited.

In Chabad, the minhag is that Tachanun is *davka* recited on the day of a Yartzheit such as Yud Shevat. In a letter, dated 9th of Tammuz 5713, the Rebbe writes that he asked the *Friedrike Rebbe* concerning reciting Tachanun on the Yartzheit of a Tzaddik. The Rebbe's response was: "When is there a better time to request and to be answered as on these days?."

In another letter, dated 17th of Nisan 5717, the Rebbe responds to the question what one should do if he is in a Shule which is not reciting Tachanun such as on the Yartzheit of a Tzaddik. The Rebbe responded that in general, conduct in a way that stands out as being overly pious is not favourable.

The Rebbe explains the possible reason for the deviance of custom between Chabad and other Chassidic circles: Other groups of Chassidim follow the path of *צדיק באמונתו יחיה* - אל תקרא יחיה אלא יחיה - That the Tzaddik through his lofty service elevates and vitalises those who are connected to him. Therefore Tachanun is not recited on the Yartzheit since the Chassidim are elevated along with the neshoma of the Tzaddik. Chabad Chassidim demands that the Chossid grow from his own efforts, not relying on the Rebbe. As such, the *Aliyah* of the Tzaddik's neshoma is merely a catalyst for our personal *Avodah*. ■

¹ Siman 12:4

² *Idra Zuta*, Haazinu

³ Volume 3, *siman* 11:9.

⁴ Such as the Yartzheit of Moshe Rabbeinu 7th of Adar. See *Orach Chaim siman* 580 for other dates of *Taanis Tzaddikim*. Concerning why we rejoice on Lag Baomer but the minhag is to fast on *Zayin Adar*, the Rebbe explains that there is a difference between the Yartzheit of those who were connected to the dissemination of the hidden parts of Torah such as the *Rashb"i*, and those connected to the revealed aspects of Torah.

⁵ *Nimukei Orach Chaim* 131

⁶ *Halichos Shlomo* 131