

## A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI  
MOSHE TZVI  
CRYSTAL


## THE MODEL LEADER

WE EXPECT A LOT FROM OUR RABBINIC LEADERS, yet our Sages seem to have even higher standards, seemingly placing them in a Catch-22. On the one hand, our Sages say in the tractate of *Kesubos*, "Any rabbinic leader whom the people of his city love, it is because he does he not reproach them for their wrongdoing." Sounds like if people are happy with him, he's not doing his job. On the other hand, we are taught in the tractate of *Avos*, "Who is beloved to the Omnipresent, he who is beloved to the populace." This implies that if he does his job of reproaching his city and people don't like him for it, G-d is not pleased with him! What's a person to do?

Chasam Sofer gives us the answer based on a comment of Rashi in this week's parsha. The Torah relates the story of the Jewish people avenging those who died in the plague caused by the Midianite women. All tribes were to volunteer one thousand men to fight in battle. The Torah tells us that the

men did not go willingly. Why? They knew that the death of Moshe was contingent on completing the battle with Midian, and they did not want to be a part of hastening the death of Moshe. On this Rashi comments, "Praiseworthy are the shepherds of the Jewish people; when they are alive, what does it say? [Moshe said] 'They are close to stoning me.' And when they pass on, the Torah tells us they did not want to follow the directive of Moshe to wage war on Midian and only went against their will."

At first glance it seems that Rashi has it backwards. It would seem that being angry with their leader, yet still appreciating and not wanting to lose him, is a praise of the Jewish people, rather than of the leaders themselves. Says Chasam Sofer, our Sages' teachings mentioned earlier provide the answer. The job of a Rabbinic leader is to help the Jewish people improve their ways. We, the people, have an evil inclination that hardens our hearts and may cause us to resent those who admonish us to improve. When we are in danger of losing the one

who wants to help us improve, our hearts are humbled by the possibility of loss, and we realize what we have. The two statements of our sages then refer to different points of the life of the leader. If we feel resentment while he is with us, it might just be because he is doing his job. The test is when we are in danger of losing him. If at that time, the populace shows its dormant love and appreciation for its leader, you know that he was in fact attending to his duties properly and was beloved to Hashem all along as well. 

*Tuvia Gilbert delivering a  
chabura in Kollel Dirshu*



## THE RABBI WAS ASKED

ADAPTED BY RABBI DOVID TZVI MEISSNER  
FROM ME'AH SHE'ARIM  
BY RABBI YITZCHOK ZILBERSTEIN

A group of people traveled to Morocco to pray by *kivros tzaddikim*, tombstones of the righteous. They arrived at a hotel in the evening, and in the morning they packed their suitcases and left the hotel, planning not to return there.

The group began driving to the cemetery, and a half hour in, one of the passengers jumped up and exclaimed that he forgot a very expensive item in the hotel. He then asked the bus driver if he could please turn around to return to the hotel.

One of the group members protested, saying that the entire group would lose an hour of praying by the *tzaddikim*, because it would take a half hour to go back to the hotel, and another half hour to return to where they are now. Although there is a *mitzvah* of *hashavas aveida*, returning a lost

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## A PARASHA Q 4 U

RABBI DOVID SPETNER

*Parshas Mattos: Were nose rings fashionable in Midian?*

*Parshas Masei: What date from this past week is mentioned in the sidra?*

*Bring this question to the Shabbos table and see who knows the answer!* 📖

## GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

RAV GAVRIEL KLATZKO WAS AN EXUBERANT, outgoing person who was on a mission to do his best to make a difference in this world. Once, after getting on a bus in Israel, he extended his hand to his erstwhile seatmate, who was a *chareidi* man, and gave him a hearty *shalom*. Not knowing what to think, the man answered in kind. Then Rav Gavriel puzzled the man even more by immediately asking, “what do you do for the Jewish people?” The man remained silent, not sure how and if to answer. Rav Gavriel summarily exited the bus and left puzzled man behind. The man could have dismissed the whole encounter. But he didn’t. It began to gnaw at him. What are you doing for the Jewish people? He decided he had to do something. He signed up to give classes for Arachim, an Israeli organization dedicated to bringing the beauty of Judaism to Israelis who are disconnected from their roots. After some time, the former seatmate became a popular traveling lecturer for Arachim, inspiring Jews across the State of Israel.

## At the Kollel

DAILY

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Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....  
Monday–Friday 6:55–7:20 AM

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two mishnayos and some mussar  
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Rabbi Meir Minster .....  
Sunday–Thursday 8–8:45 PM  
Shabbos (at CZE) 1:00 pre-mincha

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in the Annex Library  
(Maseches Avodah Zara)  
led by Rabbi Tzvi Fishman

Sunday–Thursday 9–9:55 PM  
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## THE RABBI WAS ASKED

CONTINUED

object, he did not want to turn around.

**Q** Is the group obligated to return to the hotel to fulfill the *mitzvah*?

**A** If the one opposing was working and returning for the “lost” object would make him lose money, then the one who lost it would be obligated to reimburse him for his time spent away from his job as the *mishna* in *Bava Metzia* (30b) rules.

Here, however, we’re not discussing a worker losing money, rather a “spiritual loss” of losing time to *daven* by the graves of *tzaddikim*. Therefore, it would be better to return for the object, for the *tzaddikim* themselves would say (had

they been living), “What are you, a holy Jew, doing here in the cemetery? Go do the *mitzvah* of *hashavas aveida* which is incumbent upon you!” With that merit, the *tzaddikim* would pray on his behalf.

Conclusion: One should not give up the biblical commandment of *hashavas aveida* to daven by the *kivros tzaddikim*, which Hashem didn’t explicitly command us to do. 📖

## COMING UP

“Responding to the 3 Weeks”  
KWL women’s class, with  
Rabbi Minster - this Shabbos,  
at the Minster residence.

## TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On the 25th of Tammuz, 5675 (1915), the deadliest non-tornado storm in Ohio history hit Cincinnati and its environs. The death toll in Cincinnati was thirty-eight, with monetary damage of over one million dollars in Cincinnati alone. All the major damage took place in the span of approximately 15 minutes. The storm took a heavy toll on the Jewish community. Three different families, the Rumis of the Turkish community and the Tennenbaum and Cohen families of the congregation of Rabbi Lesser, were either wiped out or came close to it, with 15 Jews in total losing their lives. Two of the families, the Cohens and Tennenbaums, were actually relatives, as Mrs. Esther Cohen was a sister to Mr. Israel Tennenbaum. Their families together made up 11 of the Jews killed. The Cohens and Tennenbaums actually lived three blocks apart from each other, with each of their apartment buildings collapsing while all the neighboring buildings of both remained standing. Eerily, in the stable where the Cohens kept their horse, only their horse was killed in the storm while all others in the stable were spared. 📖

SOURCES: “1915 Cincinnati Windstorm.” *Ohio History Central*, [www.ohiohistorycentral.org](http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org). Accessed July 10, 2018.

“Storm Fulfills Woman’s Fear That House Might Fall; Rabbis Seek to Explain Fate at Funeral of Ten Victims.” *The Cincinnati Post*, 9 Jul. 1915, Vol 76: No 8.

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