



## A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

### NO REALLY, IN G-D WE TRUST

THE STORY OF NACHUM ISH GAMZU IN THE GEMARA is approximately as follows: He was sent as a messenger of the Jewish people to bring a gift, a chest filled with precious stones and pearls, to the Caesar to find favor in his eyes. When Nachum Ish Gamzu was staying at an inn on the way, the valuable contents were emptied and replaced with dirt, and Nachum Ish Gamzu said: "Gam zu l'tova"—this is also for the good. In the end, Eliyahu performed a miracle and it worked out for the good of Nachum and the Jewish people.

In his explanation of this story, the *Maharal* shares an incredible insight. Why is the phrase *gam zu l'tova*, using a *vav* in the word *zu*, and not

*gam zeh l'tova*, with a *hey* in the word *zeh*? Both are seemingly appropriate, and both can refer to this incident which is perceived as good, despite its bad appearance. He explains the power of the letter *vav*, which has the numerical value of 13 when spelled out. It also represents the word *vai* (pronounced "vai" and spelled *vav vav yud*), which is the way one wails in *Lashon HaKodesh*. This is the observer's way to highlight his understanding of the evil that is before him, even if it is the worst of the worst, for there are 13 aspects of existence that can produce evil, directly correlating to G-d's 13 Attributes of Mercy. Thus, when one says *gam zu l'tovah*, he declares his confidence and trust in Hashem that the "evil" is for the good. Through this trust, it becomes good. This is a basic way in which Hashem shows that, even while maintaining the human capacity to choose, He watches over us and does not allow harm to come our way. In fact, the opposite is true: He transforms the perpetrators' evil intent into our success.

R' Yerucham Levovitz points out that in this week's *parasha*, we are privy to learn about an even greater level of care that Hashem has for us. Hashem doesn't have Bilaam go to sleep, or implement any other simple tactic that would prevent Bilaam from attempting to curse the Jewish people. Rather, He allows Bilaam to use his free will and try, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, changes the natural order (see *Brachos 7a*) and doesn't allow Bilaam to succeed. This struck me as truly amazing in light of the *vort* from the *Maharal*. In this case, we didn't even know of the evil which was to befall us! Hashem allowed free will to continue, and yet we remained absolutely protected and cared for! This display of protection, R' Yerucham says, lets us know that there is no need to fear, even from those who have the free will to harm us. How wonderful it is to be a yid! 🥰



RABBI  
EZRA  
STETTIN

## A TIMELY HALACHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

Last time we covered which *aliyos* go to the *Kohein, Levi*, etc. We now need to figure out, what happens to the rest of them?

Most often the *aliyos* are allocated in rotating order or at the *gabbai's* discretion. But it is a long-standing tradition which has become universally accepted to mark milestone events by receiving an *aliyah*. People marking such events are called *chiyuvim*, since custom dictates that they are obligated to receive an *aliyah*. Sometimes, however, there are not enough *aliyos* for all of the people who are *chiyuvim*. Based on the opinion of the majority of *Achronim* (quoted in the *Biur Halacha O.C.137*), the following, in order of priority (for Shabbos morning), is a list of the *chiyuvim* who are entitled to an *aliyah*:

- A *chasan* (who was never married before) on the Shabbos before his wedding (or on the Shabbos before he leaves his hometown to travel to his wedding).
- A child who becomes *bar mitzvah* on that Shabbos (the father of the child, however, is not a *chiyuv* at all; *Sha'ar Efrayim 2:10*).
- The father of a newborn boy or girl, if the mother is in shul for the first time since giving birth. (If the wife is not in shul, then the husband has an obligation to receive an *aliyah* when 40 days have elapsed from the birth of a male child, or 80 days from the birth of a female child.)
- A *chasan* on the Shabbos after his wedding, if the wedding took place on Wednesday or later in the week.

➡ CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ➡

## A RIDDLE FOR YOU

Where do we find the name "Korach" in the Torah other than in the *parasha* of Korach? 🥰

See reverse side for the answer

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## A TIMELY HALACHA

CONTINUED

- A Shabbos *yahrtzeit* (only for a father or mother; *Kaf Hachayim* 284:6).
- The father of a baby girl who will be named that Shabbos.
- The father of baby boy whose *bris* will be that Shabbos or during the coming week. (In some places the *Sandek* and *Mohel* are called up as well.)
- A *chasan* on the Shabbos after his wedding, if his wedding took place before Wednesday.
- A *yahrtzeit* during the upcoming week. (If two people have *yahrtzeit* during the week, the one whose *yahrtzeit* is earlier in the week has priority; *Kaf Hachayim* 284:6.)
- One who must recite the *Hagomel* blessing (though it can be made without an *aliya* as well).
- One who is embarking on or returning from a journey.
- An important guest.

Three additional points to keep in mind:

- 1) A general rule is that members of a shul have priority over non-members, even if the non-member's *chiyuv* takes priority over the member's.
- 2) Whenever two *chiuyvim* lay equal claim to an *aliyah*, lots should be drawn
- 3) If the *gabbai* errs and calls up someone who is less of a priority, whoever was called should go up and take it (*Dirshu M.B.* in the name of the *Maharsham* 283:7). 🥂

## GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

BARUCH WAS A YOUNG ADULT WHO WAS, SADLY, terminally ill. He requested of his father that his second grade rebbe, Rabbi Morgenstern, should be the one to give a eulogy at his funeral. "May I ask why?" said his father. Baruch was an

## GLIMPSES OF THE KOLLEL

"Shivti" is a national program that unites dozens of communities in intensive textual learning of Halachic topics of interest.

## SHIVTI CHABURAH

The program is a project of Beis Medrash Govoha of Lakewood. Locally it is organized by Congregation Zichron Eliezer and hosted by the Kollel.



accomplished Yeshiva student; why would he ask the teacher all the way back from second grade to deliver a eulogy? Baruch directed his father to open his wallet and to take out a certain piece of paper. "When I was in Rabbi Morgenstern's class," began Baruch, "I didn't think of myself as an intelligent kid. I couldn't read like the other kids in my class and also did not feel popular. One day Rabbi Morgenstern came into the classroom and instructed everyone to write all the good things they could say about every member of their class. After everyone turned theirs in, Rabbi Morgenstern wrote everyone a list of what their classmates had to say about them. That list gave me so much encouragement through the years that I feel it changed my

life. I am so thankful to him and therefore I want Rabbi Morgenstern to be give my eulogy." When this story was shared while Baruch's family was sitting shiva, there were several of Baruch's classmates in attendance. And all of them opened their wallets and each one took out a paper. Each one was still holding on to that little letter from Rabbi Morgenstern, just like Baruch. They were still drawing encouragement from a simple classroom exercise done so long ago. 🥂

## RIDDLE ANSWER

A: Berzshis 3e:2 (One of the children of Eisav) 🥂

## BEYOND ELLIS ISLAND

### THE TRAILBLAZERS, TRIALS, & TRIUMPHS OF AMERICAN JEWRY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

With the discovery of the American New World, the Spaniards returned to Europe with many new things, among them a species of bird known as the wild turkey. The turkey was soon domesticated and spread across Europe. In fact, the turkey again crossed the Atlantic Ocean when the pilgrims brought it on their journey to America. The question remained—was it a kosher bird? Another bird whose kashrus was questioned some time later was the Muscovy duck. (Of interest, although the Muscovy duck does look like a duck and walk like a duck, it does not quack like a duck—it hisses.) When Rabbi Dr. Bernard Illowy, later a rav in Cincinnati, accepted a post in New Orleans, he found that the people were eating this unfamiliar species of duck which presented the same question as the turkey. *Halachic* discussion about these two birds concerns the ruling that no bird without a kashrus tradition, that is, a *mesorah*, can be consumed. Did it follow that these new birds lacked a *mesorah*, or were they perhaps similar to accepted birds and therefore permitted? Rabbi Dr. Illowy wrote to Rabbi Shmshon Rafael Hirsch of Germany, who forbade eating the Muscovy duck, and though there are authorities who did permit it (notably Rabbi Shmuel Salant of Jerusalem), the ruling of Rabbi Hirsch was accepted and kashrus organizations in America do not certify the Muscovy duck. Turkey, on the hand, was permitted by a majority of European authorities, albeit following a variety of reasons, and therefore common practice is to eat turkey. 🥂

SOURCES: Aronin, Rabbi Dovid. "Traditional Foods." *Kosher Connections* Issue Four. <http://www.crcweb.org> "OU Position on Certifying Specific Animals and Birds." [oukasher.org](http://oukasher.org), [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)

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