

Young Israel of the Main Line

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Parshas Matos-Masei

פרשת מטות-מסעי

Stone Chumash page 900; Haftarah: 1193.

July 20-21, 2012

ב' אב תשע"ב

Weekday Shiurim

Mussar Chabura: 15 mins before Shacharis.
 Mishna Brura: Mon and Wed after Maariv
 Nefesh HaChaim: Thursday at 10:10pm
 Mussar Shiur for Women: Mon at 9:30am at 8 Concord Circle.

Chevra Mishnayos

The Chevra Mishnayos is learning Seder Kodshim . Sign up on shul bulletin board or email eisenber@pol.net with your name and the masechta and chapters you intend to learn.

Community Announcement

Chai Career Connections is a volunteer organization to help employers and job-seekers in our community connect. If you know about a job opening or are seeking employment, contact Joan Betesh at coordinator@chaicareerconnections.org.

Shabbos Schedule



Earliest Candle Lighting:	6:54pm
Light Candles:	8:07pm
Mincha and Kabbalas Shabbos:	7:00pm
Parsha Chaburah given by Naftali Perlberger:	7:55am
Rabbi's Mishlei Shiur:	8:15am
Shacharis:	8:45am
Sof Zman Krias Shema:	9:28am
Shabbos Groups, upstairs, for ages 2 and up.	9:45am
Kiddush is community sponsored.	
Mincha:	7:55pm
Shalosh Seudos is community sponsored.	
Medical Halacha Shiur given by Dr. Daniel Eisenberg.	
Maariv:	9:09pm

YIML Cookbook

The Young Israel of the Main Line cookbook, At the End of the Fork, is back in stock. The cost is \$15 per book (payable to YIML Women's League). To preview or purchase, contact Janet Eisenberg (eisenber@pol.net or 610-664-8554).

Sun, Jul 22	Mon, Jul 23	Tue, Jul 24	Wed, Jul 25	Thu, Jul 26	Fri, Jul 27
Shacharis 8:00am Mincha/Maariv 8:10pm	Shacharis 6:40am Mincha/Maariv 8:10pm	Shacharis 6:50am Mincha/Maariv 8:10pm	Shacharis 6:50am Mincha/Maariv 8:10pm	Shacharis 6:40am Mincha/Maariv 8:10pm	Shacharis 6:50am Light Candles 8:01pm Mincha 7:00pm
3 Av	4 Av	5 Av	6 Av	7 Av	8 Av

Thought of the Week

"For he must dwell in his city of refuge until the death of the Kohen Gadol, and after the death of the Kohen Gadol the killer shall return to the land of his possession." (35:28)

The Torah makes the length of an unintentional killer's sentence in an ir miklat (city of refuge) contingent upon a most peculiar condition: the death of the Kohen Gadol. The Talmud (Makkos 11a) relates that mothers of Kohanim Gedolim were concerned that those killers might pray that their sons should die, and they would therefore bring food and clothing to the arei miklat in an effort to make its residents happy so they should not wish death upon the Kohen Gadol.

The Talmud wonders why they had to undertake such action. A verse in Mishlei (26:2) states clearly, "A gratuitous curse will not come upon him"; one need not fear a curse issued for no reason. Why, then, should the Kohen Gadol's mother be concerned that her son would die as the rest of a killer's curse? Talmud Yerushalmi explains that there is a difference between a curse and a tefillah (prayer). An unprovoked curse will not come to pass, but there is no guarantee that an unjustified and unprovoked tefillah will not be answered.

There is another halachah involving a Kohen Gadol that points to this very same teaching. We read during the avodah of Yom Kippur Mussaf that in the times of the Beis HaMikdash, as the Kohen Gadol exited the Kodesh HaKodashim, he would utter a short tefillah. What was he davening for at that exalted time?

One of the things he said was, "Please ignore the prayers of wayfarers."

The Kohen Gadol was concerned that someone would be in the middle of a road trip and he would feel a couple of drops. In fear of getting caught in a downpour, he might pray, "Please, Hashem, let it stop raining." Since that selfish prayer would be detrimental for farmers and society at large, the Kohen Gadol had to expend some of the uplifted moments as he exited the Kodesh HaKodashim to pray that Hashem ignore that tefillah, because he realized that Hashem might just listen to this single wayfarer! To understand how and why it is so, we must analyze a story in the Gemara.

The Talmud relates that a demon was injuring members of the yeshivah of Rav Acha bar Yaakov, and all attempts to rid themselves of the demon failed.

One day, Rav Acha bar Yaakov heard that Abaye would be visiting their town, and he came up with a plan. He issued orders that no one should invite Abaye to stay with them in their homes, which would compel him to sleep in the shul (where the yeshivah learned) that night. Acha figured that Abaye would meet the demon and daven to have it removed once and for all.

Indeed, that is exactly what happened.

The Maharsha poses a question on this story. How could Rav Acha bar Yaakov endanger Abaye's life under the assumption that he would somehow emerge alive and well? How did he know that a miracle would save not only Abaye, but the entire city from danger? Even assuming that one is allowed to rely on miracles — which we are not allowed to do - a person who has enough merit to warrant a miracle may not want to waste his merits on having a miracle performed for him.

How did Rav Acha have the right to make Abaye lose some of his merit in heaven?

The Maharsha answers that Rav Acha bar Yaakov felt that Abaye would be able to stop this demon through tefillah, not through a miracle. Prayer, he explains, is part of the natural order of the world, and since it is a law of nature, one does not lose merit when using it.

The same applies to the prayers of unintentional killers in an ir miklat or of a wayfarer.

True, there is no reason for Hashem to grant their wish that a Kohen Gadol die or that there be no rain because one person will get home with wet clothing. But prayer is a natural part of the system this world was built on, and it can be accepted even without a reason.

When we see how potent prayer is even when the person davens for outrageous things (that the High Priest should die; there should be no rainfall), we realize how much more potent our prayers are when we daven that we should be able to learn better, to be better parents, better spouses, and better members of our community!

Adapted from <http://torah.org/learning/ravfrand/5772/matos.html> by Rav Frand.