



A Taste of Torah Loving Rebuke

By Rabbi Levi Lebovits

In this week's parshah, the Torah enumerates all of the travels of the Jewish people in the desert. Rashi explains that the reason the Torah goes to such length to list all of the travels is to teach us the kind manner in which Hashem dealt with the Jewish people throughout the time they were in desert. Of the 42 travels of the Jewish people during the 40 they were in the desert, 22 of them took place within a 2 year period. During the remaining 38 years they only traveled 20 times!

The Torah tells us that Hashem's decree that the Jews remain in the desert for 40 years was His reaction to their acceptance of the slander of the spies about the Land of Israel and the Jewish people's subsequent reluctance to enter the land due to those reports. Although the desert exile was certainly

a punishment for their sin, it was a lesson as well. The point of Hashem's retribution is not simply a "payback" for our sins, but in order that we learn from our mistakes and become greater than we were before. But for us to be attentive to Hashem's message we must know it is coming from His love.

Have you ever been reprimanded? When are you willing to take the rebuke to heart - when you feel that the other person needs to "get it off his chest", or when you understand that the other person cares for you and wants you to become better? The latter, of course. Rashi is explaining to us that although in essence the wandering through the desert was a punishment for the Jewish People's actions, there was love and kindness wrapped all around it, for only then would they really be receptive to the message Hashem had in mind for them.

Ask the Rabbi My Pet Question

Josh from Maryland writes:

Is a blind person allowed to bring a seeing-eye dog into a Synagogue so that he can pray?

Norm in Newark writes:

I have a couple of questions which I need clarified relative to handling pets from a Jewish point of view.

Firstly, I am told that there are certain things that can and cannot be done on Shabbos with a pet. Can you give me some directions on whether pets can be handled, walked, petted, etc., and/or direct me to some literature for clarification?

Along a similar line, as I understand

it, it is acceptable to feed a pet non-Kosher food. However, what is the situation on Pesach? The pet food which is fed to pets is not normally for human consumption but it is still technically chametz. Any thoughts which may help me?

Dear Josh and Norm,

The Jerusalem Talmud quotes Rav Imi telling his assistant that if a scholar should visit and need to sleep in the Synagogue, he should let him, and allow him to bring his donkey and other objects in as well. Rav Moshe Feinstein in his responsa writes, concerning a seeing-eye dog: "Certainly a dog is no

Stories For The Soul

Cry My Beloved Country

In 1967, Jews from all over the world flocked to Israel to see the Kosel (Wailing Wall), which had been off limits to Jews for many years.

The Israeli army set up guards near the wall. During one particular shift, there were two soldiers standing guard, watching the steady stream of people of all Jewish backgrounds pouring their hearts out at the holy wall.

One of the soldiers started crying.

The other soldier asked, "Lama ata bocheh?", "Why are you crying?"

When the first soldier didn't immediately respond, the second continued, "I can understand all of these people being emotional over the Kosel because they are religious Jews; but you and I were brought up on a nonreligious kibbutz. Religion has no meaning or significance to us. So why are you crying?"

The first soldier answered, "Ani bocheh al mah she'ani lo bocheh," "I am crying over the fact that I am not crying."

"As I see these people, I realize that there must be something very special - something very deep and profound - about the Kosel and about the whole religion," he continued. "I know that there is something very beautiful that I am missing. It is for this that I cry."

This Tisha B'Av, may we recapture an appreciation of the spirit and significance of the Bais Hamikdash, the Holy Temple. May we recover that missing something.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.

Kollel Happenings

FATHERS-AND-SONS AT ZERA AVRAHAM

The next M.B. and Shana Glassman Foundation Fathers-and-Sons Sunday morning learning program will be on Sunday, July 31st at Cong. Zera Avraham. Davening begins at 8 a.m., with learning from 8:50 - 9:35, followed by hot breakfast. For information, contact Rabbi Yehuda Amsel at 303-820-2855 or rya@denverkollel.org.



'QUESTIONABLE UNIONS' FOR WOMEN AUG. 7

Miss Dasi Indich will be leading a pre Tisha-B'Av class for women entitled "Questionable Unions: The Surprising Origins of Moshiach" at 7:45 p.m. on Sun., Aug. 7, at the home of Leah Mehler at 101 Grape St. in East Denver. To RSVP, contact Mrs. Tzippy Sommers at 303-257-1089 or at pit@denverkollel.org



KNOW THY ENEMY TUES. AT AISH

Join Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers in studying the tactics and strategies of the Yetzer Hora, and develop your own battle plan for the greatest challenge of your life - the war against the Evil Inclination. Based on the classic work Chovos Halvevos. Tuesday mornings 7:55-8:25 at Aish. For information, please contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at rmh@denverkollel.org or 303-820-2855

Interpersonal Issues Making it Work Part V

Payment with a post-dated check, credit card, or merchandise is not valid for bal tolin purposes. However, if the worker specifically accepts this as payment, bal tolin is not transgressed. Nonetheless, the employer has passed up

the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

continued from front

worse than a donkey, and there are no greater extenuating circumstances than this, for if we don't permit him [to bring in the dog] he will never be able to pray with a minyan nor hear the reading of the Torah...but it would be best if he sat near the door so as not to create confusion for the congregation."

Due to a technicality regarding the differences in the assumed-intents when constructing a Synagogue in Eretz Yisroel as opposed to Chutz L'aretz, Rabbi Feinstein wrote a decision only for Synagogues in Chutz L'aretz ~ although he also offered an argument that would allow a seeing-eye dog in a Synagogue in Eretz Yisroel as well.

You are right about pets on Shabbos. Technically, pets are considered "Muktza." Muktza is a category of Rabbinic law which forbids handling objects on Shabbos for a variety of reasons. A main concern which prompted the Sages to consider something Muktza is that if one is not vigilant when touching or using the object, he may come to transgress a Biblical commandment. What Biblical commandments are relevant here? The Torah states: "The seventh day is a Sabbath for the L-rd your G-d, you shall not do any creative work, you, your son and daughter, your servant and maid-servant, your animals, and the stranger that is in your midst."

This means that an animal is not allowed to transgress one of the laws of Shabbos, just as a person must not.

Obviously, animals are not obligated to monitor their own Shabbos observance, but their master is. For example, he may not allow his animal to carry something in a public area. An animal is allowed to walk in a public area with protective clothing or a leash which has a protective purpose, just as a person is allowed to walk outside while wearing clothes. However, something that is an extra burden is forbidden.

Another issue of concern for the pet owner is pet food. A Jew is forbidden to derive any benefit from either a mixture of milk and meat throughout the year, or from chametz on Pesach. Your pet food does not have to be certified-Kosher, but it cannot contain these ingredients.

As long as we are on the topic of pets and pet food, I thought to mention Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair's donkey. According to the Talmud, his donkey would never eat untithed grain. It could sense that the food was inappropriate and would decline of its own accord, without being told that it was forbidden. The Jerusalem Talmud tells us that this is an indication of a righteous person ~ that not only will he never accidentally eat something that is not proper, but even his animal will not.

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