



# OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI  
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## ***Thoughts on Parashat CHUKAT Year 24 by Dayan Abraham David***

Zot chukkat hatorah adam ki yamut baohel. The gemara in Berachot 63:2 says that the Torah is only fulfilled by someone who dies over it. This is not the simple explanation as we do not die over the Torah. It means we give our life for it and give up many things for keeping the Torah. Maybe we can also explain 'Zot Chukkat Hatorah Adam Ki Yamut Baohel' that the Torah accompanies a person even when he dies. As long as he is baohel of the Torah, in places of learning, as indicated in 'Ma tovu ohalecha Yaakov'. But we can say even more than that, the Torah will remain with us even when we pass away from this world and are in judgement. There is a very interesting story about Rabbi Yosef Kahanaman, the great Rosh Yeshivah of Ponevitz in Benei Brak. He built Batai Avot, homes where orphans could dwell and learn Torah. He used to visit them and give them chizuk, encouragement, usually in the dining room so as not to disturb their studies of Torah. On one visit he asked the boys, do you know the pasuk in Torah, Neviim, Ketuvim which indicates your name, which we say at the end of the amidah? The boys jumped up and said yes we know! He began to ask each boy his pasuk, he then asked if he knew why they were each given one. A boy answered that

the source was the Shela Hakadosh who said that when we stand before Hashem to be judged in the world to come, the fear of judgement would be so great that we will not remember our names. We say these pesukim to help us remember our names. Rabbi Kahanaman then asked them how often do you hear your name mentioned every day? Your teachers and friends repeat your name many times each day. So how come these pesukim that you mention only three times a day during the three tefillot will remind you of your name and not the many times you hear it mentioned by the people around you? The boys could not answer, so Rabbi Kahanaman said, I will explain it to you. Since you say it with pesukim which is Torah, we have a promise from G-d that Torah will never be forgotten by us. Hence, even when because of the fear of judgment we forget our names, that which we have repeated with the words of Torah indicating our names will remind us of our names, since they are divrei Torah and will never be forgotten. He continued, everything else in this world will pass and be forgotten; nothing material will accompany us forever, only Torah. Maybe that is the indication this pasuk in the Torah is trying to tell us. 'Zot Chukkat Hatorah Adam Ki Yamut Baohel', only the Torah will remain when a person passes away. Only the Torah will be there with him.

## TORAH GEMS

After the death of Miriam the travelling spring which accompanied them on their journey for 40 years dried up since it had been given in her merit. The people quarrelled with Moshe demanding water. The *'Shechinah'* appears and G-d commands Moshe *'Kach et hamateh vehakhel et haedah... vedebartem el haselah le'enehem venatan memav vehotseta lahem mayim min haselah'*. Take the staff, gather the people and speak to the rock before their eyes and it will give of its waters. Moshe gathers the people, he strikes the Rock twice and it gives out much water. Hashem then tells Moshe that he will not bring Am Yisrael into Eretz Yisrael because he had not believed in Hashem to sanctify His name in the eyes of the Bnei Yisrael. What did Moshe do wrong to deserve such a drastic punishment not to be allowed to enter the Holy Land? Many explanations are given for this in the commentaries on the Torah. The Or HaChaim quotes 10 reasons for this but is not happy with any of them. He then gives his own explanation that Moshe was in doubt as to whether he should strike the Rock with his staff since Hashem had commanded him to take his staff with him or not to use his staff, only use speech to perform the miracle. He decided to use his staff as he had done for Bnei Yisrael at the beginning of their journey in the desert at Refidim when he struck the Rock with his staff to bring out water. He had also been told to speak to the Rock and it would give water as it is written: *'Kach et hamateh vehakhel et haeda ata veAaron ahicha vedebartem el haselah le'enaheh venatan memav vehotsetah lahem mayim min haselah'*. So Moshe decided it was a combination of both; he would have to use the staff which had the name of G-d engraved on it and speak to the Rock with a command to give water. In fact

Hashem had meant Moshe not to use the staff but to take it with him as a power of authority to gather the people. The words *'debartem el Haselah'* was to study a portion of Torah as he had done before with the Bnei Yisrael and the Rock would give of its water without any action necessary. The power of the words of the Torah from Moshe could influence even inanimate objects. Even though Moshe understood the possibility of this explanation in the command G-d gave him, he chose the other possibility, to use the staff. He therefore missed out on a great Kiddush Hashem, that the power of the study of the Torah could move mountains and protect and bring them into the Land at the highest level. He would have also been able to come into the Land as the Mashiach to build the Beth Hamikdash which would never have to be destroyed. We should try to understand how Moshe made the mistake of choosing the option of striking the Rock. Rashi, at the end of Parashat Shemot, brings the Midrash that explains that, when he approached Pharaoh the first time and Pharaoh not only did not accept Moshe's request to let his people go, he increased their burdens and made them suffer more. Moshe remonstrates with G-d saying: *'Lamah hareotah leam haze lamah shelachtani?'* Why have you done bad to this people? Why have you sent me as your emissary? Hashem answered him saying: "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh". The Midrash catches on the word *'Ata Tireh'*. "Now you will see what I will do in my war with Pharaoh but you will not see the war with the 31 Kings of Canaan". The obvious question is that Moshe lost his chance to enter the Land not for this episode but because he struck the Rock and did not speak to it. It could be that really G-d was warning Moshe about a weakness that would cause him to lose out entering the Land

which was caused by an underlying feeling in Moshe that he was inadequate for the job. He blamed himself and his inadequacy when Pharaoh did not listen to his words, as he told Hashem: "Why did you send me?" Hashem warned him then that in the future because of this feeling he would make a wrong decision and lose his opportunity to enter the Land, as we see in this Parasha. He misinterpreted G-d's command to make the Rock give its waters through his words of Torah, to interpret His command as to strike it with the staff, for the staff had the name of Hashem on it and it showed a direct power from G-d. How could his words compare to that, especially with his impediment of speech? Again he was doubting his ability as the Shaliach of Hashem as before and missees and on a Kiddush Hashem has his reckonings and if a person is chosen for a job then G-d gives him the power and help to do it. One must not confuse humility with this. Humility is not denying one's ability.

### ***STORIES OF TZADDIKIM***

"This is the Torah, if a person dies in a tent....." (Chukat: 19:14)

The Gemora in Berachot 63b says that the Torah lasts with those who die over it. This seems very puzzling since the Torah is for the living as it says in Vayikra 18:5 "and you shall live with them".

The Chofetz Chaim gave the following story to explain this. A very successful merchant was so busy taking care of the customers who came to his shop that he had

no time for Torah study. He noticed one day that his hair was turning grey and he realised that he was getting older. He knew that the day he would leave this world was getting closer. He therefore decided that he would go each morning to the synagogue to pray with a minyan and to study Torah after that.

When he came late to the store, his wife was frantic: "People have come to the shop while you were there and would go away because no one would serve him, we would lose customers". He calmly told his wife, "What would I do if the Angel of Death came to me and told me that my time in this world was up? Could I tell him that I can't go yet since I'll miss out on customers? If I were already dead I would not be able to come to the shop. Therefore each day I imagine for an hour or two I have already died. This way I do not think about the shop and I am able to study Torah each day."

This said the Chofetz Chaim, is what the Gemora is telling us. You might be very busy and feel that you do not have any time to study Torah. But if you will just view yourself as if you were already dead, you will find time to study Torah which gives life to those who study it.

***Shabbat Shalom***

**HALACHOT**  
**Basar ve chalav (cont)**

17) We are stringent to wait six hours between eating a food cooked with meat (even when we do not eat the actual meat) and eating food cooked with cheese (even when we do not eat the actual cheese). This stringency would apply even after a clear chicken soup.

18) Vegetables or rice cooked in a clean meaty pot used to cook meat even within 24 hours could be eaten with milk or cheese according to Maran (Sephardim).

19) If the meaty pot was not cleaned and there might be residue on it, we would have to estimate that the parev food cooked in the pot is 60 times the residue to allow eating it with milk, normally we could say the food is 60 times the residue stuck to the pot unless we know otherwise.

20) If the residue would be more than sixtieth of the parev food then one should wait an hour after eating it to have milk or cheese. To chew bread or other non sticky food and have a drink to wash our mouth before we eat the cheese or milk. Some are stringent to wait 6 hours.

21) Tasting meaty food and spitting it out needs chewing some food and washing the mouth as above but does not

need any time in between to have milk.

**We have a regular Youth  
Minyan organised by  
Jordan Moses followed by a  
kiddush**

**Regular Nightly Shiurim in the  
Beit Hamidrash Programme not  
to be missed**

**Sunday to Thursday  
From 20:00 to 21:10**

**For full details see the notice  
on the Shul Board**

**If you wish to sponsor a  
Kiddush  
Please contact  
Nathaniel Bendayan 07825  
871749  
For Seuda Shlishit  
or to rent the  
Nancy Reuben Hall  
for a Simcha  
Please contact  
Yanky David 07725 408724**

**SHABBAT TIMES**

Shabbat commences	8:59 pm
Shabbat terminates	10:25 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	7:15 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Shiur	7:35 pm
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit	8:35 pm
Followed by Arbit	
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50am
Shacharit Sundays	7:00am
Mincha followed by Arbit	7:30pm