



February 3, 2012

‘ שבט תשע"ב

פרשת בשלה

Candle Lighting 5:46PM

Rabbi Binyomin Luban  
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ראשי הישיבה

Issue 9



**Dvar Torah - Don't Bully Me by Rabbi Anton**

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Bullying is a prevalent problem in today's school system. It is harmful to the victim in many ways. The victim experiences potentially everlasting hurt and emotional pain, and often becomes a bully himself. Many schools are aware of this issue and are

proactively implementing anti-bullying programs. These programs educate both the bully and the victim. Bystanders are considered just as bad as bullies, since they allow the abuse to happen. A bystander should be proactive and challenge the bully or at least report the incident to someone who can do something about it. What some don't realize is that the bystander can also be a victim.

This can be observed in this week's פרשה. The בני ישראל witnessed tremendous ניסים at the time of ה' to שירה and were inspired to sing קריאת ים סוף. In the שירה they mention the fear experienced by the גוים both because of what they heard and what they saw happening to the מצריים. The גוים were concerned about their own wellbeing, afraid of being the next victims of ישראל. כלל therefore, they trembled. The פלישתים had reason to be

afraid since they had killed the בני אפרים when they left before the designated time. The nations of כנען also had reason for concern, knowing that they were living in the land promised to the בני ישראל which would now be conquered. The פסוק however, also says that אדום and מועב were afraid. The ספורנו says that these two nations knew that בני ישראל were not going to wage war against them. Why, then, were they afraid? The answer is that seeing the destruction of the מצריים unnerved them, making them feel uncomfortable and unsafe. Witnessing war as bystanders affected them emotionally. They didn't fear for their life but their tranquility was interrupted. This חז"ל teaches us that a bystander is also a victim. Seeing the bullying of a peer, even when you know you're not next, compromises the safety of the school environment. A potential bully should be informed that his friend, the bystander, is hurt in the process. The bystander must come to an understanding of the event and the resulting feelings, as well as how and why the security of his surroundings has changed.

This phenomenon is not limited to deliberate bullying. There are many other things that we do which make others feel uncomfortable. This is even true regarding a close friend. We need to realize how sensitive people are and how they are negatively affected by events that happen around them. We need to be careful of how we act when in the presence of others, especially our friends.

**Dvar Halacha - Saying קריאת שמע without a מנין by Moshe Vatch, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

The 248 words in קריאת שמע represent the 248 parts of the body. Included in these 248 words is ה' "אלוקיכם אמת" that the חזן repeats at the end of שמע. One who has not davened with a מנין, therefore, has only said 245 words, and must come up with an alternative way of saying another three words to make the required 248.

A couple of solutions are offered. The more common of these is to say the additional words "קל מלך" before שמע, which will complete the necessary 248 words. The second solution offered is to focus on the

beginning ווא"ו each of the first 15 words of the paragraph "ויציב" immediately following שמע. The sum numerical value of these 15 ווא"ו is 90, which is equivalent to 3 names of ה'; the numerical value of Hashem's name of הויה is 26, which added with the 4 letters of the name makes 30.

The משנה ברורה notes that although these solutions technically work, they are in no way equivalent to hearing the words "ה' אלוקיכם אמת" from the חזן.

## The Weekly Quiz

Q: Why is a chazzan called a chazzan?

Answers or ideas for future questions may be submitted in writing to the Spotlight office or emailed to [Quiz@ytcteam.org](mailto:Quiz@ytcteam.org)

The first correct answer submitted will be announced in the next Spotlight. You need not be a student to participate. *Hatzlochah!*

Answer to last issue's question:

Q. How long is the solar year?

Hint: the answer effects ברכת החמה.

A. About 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45.25 seconds (acc. to Wolfram Alpha)

This effects ברכת החמה because since the year is 365 days, 5 hours..., it takes a cycle of 28 years for the sun to reach the same position as it was in during the vernal equinox / תקופת ניסן.

## The Power of Greed by Chaim Benson, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

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On December 1st 2009, Scott Rothstein, a distinguished lawyer and partner at Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler, turned himself into the authorities for a 1.4 billion dollar Ponzi scheme. Last Friday, Yeshiva Toras Chaim had the opportunity to hear from the whistle-blower Alan Sakowitz, who realized the scam and informed the FBI. He discussed how just by keeping his eyes and ears open and not falling for the charismatic Rothstein's charm, he was able to catch what some missed and what many others realized but did not act on. Additionally, Mr. Sakowitz explained in detail many positive lessons we can learn from this unfortunate situation.

Mr. Sakowitz understood that something was fishy simply by maintaining a cool head and not letting his eyes get too big for his head. While others were leaping to grab Rothstein's 207% percent and higher returns, Mr. Sakowitz knew something was amiss. It boggles the mind to think that other investors were answered no to when they asked to use their own attorneys or to see the case files Rothstein was selling. When Mr. Sakowitz was told no on both

accounts, he began to suspect that Rothstein was not all that he appeared. Furthermore, Rothstein had many other strange practices. He would support both sides of a political race, as he was desperate to bring in more investors. While others ignored the facts, Mr. Sakowitz knew that this was all just a scheme. After calling Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky in order to be certain he was acting in accordance with halachas of *mesirah*, which prohibit reporting on another Jew in certain situations, Mr. Sakowitz reported Rothstein to the FBI, toppling the billion dollar Ponzi scheme.

Although Mr. Sakowitz spoke of many lessons that we could learn, it is clear that one of the most important lessons we can learn is the power of greed. Greed corrupted an otherwise good man to steal money from his friends

and family knowing that he could never return it. It led Rothstein to put on a show pretending to be someone he was not. Greed led investors to blindly pour money into an investment that clearly made no sense and greed cost these people to be involved in a 1.4 billion dollar scam in which 300-400 million dollars were ultimately lost. As Mr. Sakowitz said, "Anyone could have figured it out but they were just too concerned with making money."

Another major message is to always do what is right and what is best for others, the community and what will sanctify G-d's name. Mr. Sakowitz put a lot on the line, as Rothstein had many significant connections in law enforcement, Sakowitz could have easily gotten in trouble for accusing someone who was regarded as a distinguished pillar of the community. Mr. Sakowitz explained that instead of following in Rothstein's self-center ways, we should put forth the effort to do what's right for ourselves and our communities.

The Yeshiva thanks Mr. Sakowitz for his excellent presentation.



Mr. Sakowitz, Lecturing the students of YTC on the outcome of a "Ponzi Scheme".

## 27th ANNUAL DINNER

Our 27th Annual Journal-Dinner, held on Sunday January 8th was a most memorable and successful event. Enjoying the delicious food and warm atmosphere, nearly 500 people shared in this outstanding evening showing appreciation to our Kesser Shem Tov Awardees, Rabbi and Mrs. Dovid and Shifra Sharfman, and the Young Leadership Awardees, Mr. and Mrs. Chaim and Bryna Roth and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Irving and Roslyn Seidel, A"H.

Once again, the dinner enhanced our feeling of pride for Toras Emes and Toras Chaim, and captured the essence of our ultimate goal – to imbue our talmidim with a love of Torah, Midos Tovos and intellectual growth.

The many parents who participated in the journal and attended the dinner are the linchpins of our success. We are sorry for those who were unable to attend the dinner – you missed a spectacular evening.

## Learn-a-thon 2012

The students of Yeshiva Toras Chaim are eagerly anticipating the upcoming annual learn-a-thon. Every Presidents Day, through a variety of shiurim/classes given by well-respected Rabbonim and one-on-one chavrusa learning, students have the unique opportunity to have some extra learn. Phone calls and meetings are being made as students seek out sponsorships for this amazing accomplishment. Sponsorships can be made in honor or memory of a loved one, and individual shiurim are available for sponsorship. This 16th annual event, which is open to the community, promises to be an unforgettable experience that will instill inspiration and love for Torah.

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