

Parshat Behar Bechukotai: Every Person Counts

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Hanoch Teller

The Torah writes “*Lo sirde boh b'ferech.*” Do not overtax him. The *mitzvah* in its original interpretation refers to an *eved ivri* (a Jewish slave). One should not overburden one's servants. For example, it is considered psychologically overburdening to tell someone to work without knowing when he will finish.

In the colloquial sense, the prohibition enjoins

to not to cause undue strain to an individual. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's nephew once sent him a letter with a long laudatory introduction. Rav Auerbach answered him and at the end he wrote that all the titles and honorifics were *me'od lo yafeh* (really not nice). When his nephew met him, he asked for an explanation. Rav Auerbach answered, “To write all those laudatory phrase on the letter was *lo yafe* (not

nice); to write it on the envelope so that the mailman has to struggle to find my name is transgressing the prohibition of ‘*lo sirde.*’ It's oppressing him and stealing his time. That's meod *lo yafe*, truly inappropriate.

Hashma'at Kol: Noise on Shabbat

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Shimon Isaacson

In the times of the Mishna, a *gezeira* was enacted prohibiting dancing, knee slapping, clapping, and tapping on the table on Shabbat. Rashi explains that these actions are usually done in the context of song and there is a concern that one will come to fix a musical instrument. This would be prohibited as a form of *makeh b'patish*. However, Tosfot writes that this *gezeira* no longer applies. In the times of the Mishna, people had primitive musical instruments, which they could repair themselves. In medieval France they already had modern instruments, which could only be fixed by a professional. The Beit Yosef finds this Tosfot difficult. A *gezeira d'rabanan* cannot be annulled because the reason is no longer applicable. It can only be uprooted by a formal *bet din* (court) that is larger in number or stature than the original *bet din* that enacted it. Therefore, the consensus of most Rishonim is that the *gezeira* still stands.

The Rambam in *Hilchos Shabbat* writes that one should not bang on the table in a rhythmic manner, shake a walnut to calm a baby, or play with a toy that generates sound. Knee slapping in a different way is permitted. This is in keeping with the opinion of the Yerushalmi that the *gezeira* only applies *k'darko* (if done in a normal way) but not *b'shinui* (in a different way). Knocking on a door in a rhythmic fashion is prohibited. Doing

so in a way that's not *derech shir* is permitted. The Rema writes that whistling without an instrument is ok. The Mishna Berura adds that one may even whistle a tune. One may not use a special hammer to wake people up for prayer on Shabbat. Similarly, the Rema prohibits the use of a door knocker because it is a device specially designed to make noise. A baby's rattle is considered a *keli shir* and may not be shaken on Shabbat. The Mishna Berura says one may clap one's hands in a non-musical way to quiet down a baby, but it's better to do it *b'shinui*. He quotes the Gemara in Eruvin that banging with a spoon on a row of glasses filled with different amounts of water is considered a *keli shir* and is therefore prohibited.

The Shulchan Aruch rules like the Mishna that one should not clap in a rhythmic manner, dance, or make noise with nuts on Shabbat. Yet the custom is not to protest if people do so. The Rema explains that it is better that they sin unintentionally rather than intentionally. Additionally, they may be relying on the opinion of Tosfot.

The Mishna Berura writes that it is better not to follow the opinion of Tosfot here unless it's for a *mitzva*. The Maharik mentions that dancing on Simchat Torah is permitted because there was never a *gezeira* on rejoicing with the

honor of the Torah. The Mishna Berura agrees that dancing and clapping for *kavod hatorah* is permitted, but one should not do so for other *simcha shel mitzvah* such as for a wedding. However, the Avnei Yashpa adds that simply walking around in a circle is not considered dancing and is permitted on Shabbat.

The Magen Avraham and the Taz disagree about the bells that adorn the crown of a sefer Torah. The bells are meant to signal that the Torah is in motion and that one should stand in respect. The Taz says that the bells are designed to make noise and are considered a *keli shir*. The Magen Avraham holds like the Maharik that *l'zorech kavod hatorah* it is permitted and the custom is to use it. The Munkatcher Rebbe ruled that the leniency of *kavod hatorah* can be extended to *kavod hamitzva*, so at a tisch singing and dancing that add to *kavod* and *oneg Shabbat* would be permitted. Rav Ovadia Yosef rejects this proposition.

Can you set an alarm clock to ring on Shabbat? Rav Shechter in Eretz Hatzvi maintains that *gezeirot d'rabanan* can apply passively even if no action is done on Shabbat. Even if you set the process in motion before Shabbat it is prohibited. The custom is not to rule this way and one may set an alarm to go off on Shabbat.



The Meaning of Trust: Depend Solely on G-d #3

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

How do you apply the principles of *bitachon* to real life? The first thing is to know that Hashem has more compassion for us than we have for ourselves. He knows exactly how hard things are for us and if we make life mistakes he will still help us. If we close the door, He'll open it for us. The second thing is to recognize that everything good that happens to us, although it may happen through people, ultimately comes from Hashem. Hashem owes us nothing. Everything we receive from Him is a gift. People can only give what they have. Whatever they have, whether spiritual, physical, or emotional, is from Hashem. All of the gratitude and love we feel towards anyone, we should also feel towards Hashem.

One of the biggest blocks to *bitachon* is thinking that things depend on people. No person can take away anything that Hashem wants us to have. Neither can a person make things happen earlier or later than Hashem wants them to be. Since the more *bitachon* we have, the more of Hashem's abundance comes down to us, we have to be real about it. Hashem knows if we are truly putting our hearts in His hands or if we are just going through the motions. If we claim to trust Hashem, it has to be backed up by doing His will. We must believe that *olam habah* is a place and time where many things will look different to us than they do in this world. The final idea is to accept that all the different efforts we have to make are for our *tikun* (rectification).

Every person encounters periods of loneliness in their life. It would be a tragedy to look back and think of it as wasted years. This period can be an opportunity to develop one's inner life and to form a real and lasting bond with Hashem. Loneliness gives a person inner

space and time to work on himself. These can be constructive years, during which a person can acquire everything that will last him forever.

People tend to get anxious about *pamasah*. One should believe that if one is doing appropriate *hishtadlut*, then what you have is what you need. People sometimes develop almost oppositional relationships to people. They feel that their family is draining them and that there's nothing left for themselves. You have to believe that all you really need to give is what Hashem gives you to give. This is important for women to realize about their husbands. If a husband tries his best to give his wife and she still feels that she is lacking, then she is meant to either not have it, or not now, or not through him.

Giving out of love is wonderful. Giving for the sake of receiving respect, appreciation, validation, or control is not as good. Our only motivation should be to fulfill Hashem's will. True giving is when you want to talk to your husband after a hard day and he wants to go to a shiur and you say, "Go." It's when he comes home after a day of work and he's exhausted and you want him to take the kids off you and you let him rest.

People may not live up to our expectations. In truth, they are only Hashem's messengers. Things are as they have to be. You can love people and trust that they want to do their best, but don't trust that they can give you what only Hashem can give you. Ultimately it's all from Him. If you ask something from a person and he refuses, don't hold it against him. Hashem has many ways and means. If you're supposed to have something, it will come through someone else.

Sometimes what we think we should have is not what we really need. King David said about Hashem, "He took me in circles of righteousness." David's life was circuitous. He was happy being a shepherd, but then Hashem took him in a different direction. Each step took him to a higher level that he couldn't have reached without the struggle, until he was able to see that it was all *tzedek*. Hashem had taken him exactly where he needed to go.

A person should always pray for two things. You should pray for strength of heart to be devoted to Hashem. Don't let yourself get distracted by the burdens of life. We ask that we not forget why we're on the road and where we're going. The second thing to pray for is that Hashem should strengthen our bodies and limbs so we will be able to serve Him. We can only ask this when we realize how small we are and how reliant we are on Hashem's *chesed*. The opposite is thinking that we have it all and that we are in control.

You have to believe that in *ruchniyut*, if you're trying your best, you'll succeed. If you want to help people, Hashem will give you the means. Honor, validation, and control are all real *nisyonot*, even as a person wants to do good. The fine line that separates *chesed* from manipulation is almost invisible and is called ego. You have to do it all for Hashem. So to keep yourself on track, try to hide your good deeds. Whether it's giving or organizing *tzedakah*, teaching, or doing *kiruv*, avoid getting praise if you can. If it comes to you, don't take pleasure in it because it's all from Hashem who gave you the opportunities to do good. You have to bear this in mind. Otherwise you can end up worshipping yourself instead of Hashem. May we be *zoche* to attain complete *bitachon*.