

## SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	7:00 PM
Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush	8:30 AM
Sof Zman K"Sh- מ"א 9:11 < גר"א 9:47	
Pirkei Avos-	6:45PM
Gemara Chabura-	5:00PM
Mincha- Followed by Shalosh Seudos	7:30 PM
Maariv	8:45 PM

Sunday

Shacharis	8:30 AM
~ Followed by Shiur	
Mincha / Maariv	7:35 PM

### Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Shacharis	
Mon , Thur	6:40 AM
Tue, Wed., Fri	6:45 AM
Mincha (Mon -Thur)	1:45 PM
Mincha / Maariv	7:35 PM
Maariv (Mon-Thur)	9:45 PM

Rabbi Teichman's Thursday Night  
Shiur After Maariv



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### Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

#### Gaboim:

Naftali Miller (Rishon) & Yossi Frydman (Sheni)- Gabbai@

#### Laining Schedule:

Gavi Cohn- Lain@

#### Kiddush & Shalosh Seudos Sponsorship:

Jeremy Schnittman- Kiddush@

#### Shul Upkeep and General Repair & Maintenance:

Dovid Wealcatch & Shuie Steinharter- FixIt@

#### Seforim & Sidurim Library Manager & Dedication Contact:

Dovi Becker- Library@

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י"א אלול

# אהל משה



Rabbi Zvi Teichman

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Issue#153

## RABBI'S MESSAGE

# The Torah's "Theory of Relativity"

The Torah portrays a wayward and rebellious son, בן סורר ומורה, who despite his youthful indiscretions is held accountable for his actions with death by stoning. The grave sins he committed consisted "merely" of stealing funds from his parents and purchasing with it a significant amount of meat and intoxicating wine, while ignoring his parents pleas to cease. The whole episode must transpire between the time he reaches the age of becoming a מצוה, a legally responsible adult, thirteen, and three subsequent months.

No capital crime has been perpetrated, yet he is punished for the inevitable result of such aberrant behavior.

As records from the Talmud, הגיעה תורה לסוף דעתו, *The Torah delved into the depth of his mindset. Inevitably he will totally consume his parent's money. In his desperation for more means to feed his needs, he will resort to armed robbery on the highways. The Torah therefore proposed that, ימות זכאי ואל ימות חייב, he be put to death as an "innocent" rather than "guilty".*

This is the only time the usage of the principle, "הגיעה תורה לסוף דעתו", looking at the end result as a cause for punishment, is implemented throughout all of Talmud and Midrash.

Shouldn't it have more accurately stated that the Torah peered, "לסוף מעשי", into the "eventual actions" he will be committing, rather than "דעתו", his ultimate "attitude"?

A famous question is posed on this idea, from the incident where Yishmael is dying of thirst, and an angel intercedes to rescue him despite the fact that by saving him he will thus enable Yishmael to father a nation that will persecute and murder Jews.

באשר הוא שם בראשיתו כא, In his present state, the verse declares. This is the rule by which one is judged on the merit of who he is now, not by what he will become.

This contradicts the notion of the rebellious son who is liable now for what he will ultimately develop into?!

The Ramban suggests that the wayward son is guilty of transgressing the injunction of (ויקרא יט,ב) *You shall be holy!* This is the positive command not to indulge in frivolous, albeit permitted behavior.

קדש עצמך במותר לך (רמבן שם), *Sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you*, refrain from what might be allowed but is not necessary.

The son's excessive involvement in consuming meat and wine which is "glatt kosher" but nevertheless a luxury, is a violation of this precept.

These seems even more confounding. Is the lack of this "measure of piety" deserving of such a fierce consequence?!

The Ramban expounds on this most fundamental principle of the Ramban and reveals a most profound idea with surprising and very challenging implications:

*מותר, luxuries, although they are [technically] "permitted", are really prohibited, such as indulgent eating, excessive intimacy, superfluous speech and other similar activities... and the fact that the Torah did not forewarn specifically like it does with all other injunctions is simply because it would be impossible to outline for every individual his precise guideline... every person has myriad of circumstances that govern his unique needs and strengths... it would require a personal Torah for each personality and every situation... one person may need only a small amount of food while another requires more... each being's needs fluctuates as well in accordance to the time and place he is in... the Torah therefore directs us, "be holy", and be critical in determining at any given moment what is a luxury and what is a necessity and refrain from that which is מותר, accordingly... a person who lives by this yardstick may think that he is going "beyond the letter of the law", but in truth it is imperative and obligatory!*

The Holy Sh'lah reveals for us a entire new understanding regarding our level of obligation in living the lives we do. Just because something is technically permitted doesn't necessarily mean that we may engage in that activity. If it is an endeavor that does not serve our "need" in the broader service of Hashem it is de facto prohibited! If we would be able to read the Torah through the prism of our distinct soul, we would hear it exhorting us "keep away it is forbidden for you"!

The rebellious son can only be prosecuted if all the circumstances of his life were optimum. If he is lacking a parent or healthy ones, is infirm, or a product of a home where there is internal strife, he can not be condemned. We attribute his deficiency to something external to his character that is missing, that perhaps can be cured, and he is thus guiltless. (see RSRH)

A child who has the perfect home environment, parents and accompanying "chinuch" is expected to be free of immoderation in his needs. In his "Torah", indulgence may indeed be a capital crime in light of the Sh'lah's theory. This then is the fate of the בן סורר ומורה.

It is therefore the Torah's insight "לדעתו", to his unique personality now, rather than to his inevitable future actions that he is being scrutinized and held accountable for.

Yishmael had a troubled upbringing, due to the interference of his mother Hagar, and her unwillingness to submit totally to the direction of Sarah, and was thus judged guiltless, באשר הוא שם, for the circumstance he found himself in.

Chushi HaArchi takes Dovid HaMelech to task for his inappropriately taking of a יפת תואר, a captive woman, asking him why he took her. It was from this union that he fathered his rebellious son Avshalom. King David incredulously responds, "a captive woman?!", the Torah permitted it! Upon which Chushi counters, "לא דרשת, סמוכין", "you have not interpreted the Torah based on the principle of juxtaposition". The Torah places the portion of the rebellious son after the paragraph discussing the laws of taking a gentile woman captive in war. This is to teach us that whoever marries a captive woman has a rebellious son. (סנהדרין קז)

Wasn't King David correct in his assertion that the Torah permits it? How can one be faulted for following in the Torah's ways?

The answer lies in each person's "juxtaposition" in life. What may be proper for one may be a capital crime for someone else. לא דרשת סמוכין, you didn't understand the theory of relativity! King David had a different "Torah" that disallowed this particular "permitted" act in accordance to his unique standing.

May we each raise our "personal bar" of avodas Hashem in discovering our personalized Torah. Yesterday's maximum must become tomorrow's minimum!

Let us realize it is not just about living by the rules, but more significantly it's about achieving our own personal greatness!

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