

SCHEDULE

שבת קודש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	7:00 PM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush	8:30 AM
-Sof Zman K"ס- 9:29 גר"א < 8:43 מא	
Mincha I	2:15 PM
Pirkei Avos	6:45 PM
Mincha -	7:45 PM
Followed by Shalosh Seudos	
Maariv -	9:00 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Sunday

Shacharis I	6:50 AM
Daf Yomi- By R' Teichman	7:30 AM
Shacharis II	8:30 AM
Mincha / Maariv	8:00 PM

Monday Tuesday & Friday

Daf Yomi- By R' Teichman	5:45 AM
(Mon, Tues, Friday)	

Shacharis

Monday	6:40 AM
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Tuesday, Friday	6:45 AM
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Mincha (Mon, Tues Only)	1:45 PM
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MINCHA/MAARIV (Monday)	8:00 PM
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Daf Yomi (Monday Only)	9:00 PM
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Maariv (Monday Only)	9:45 PM
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Issue#283

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Can You Carry a Tune?

"אין לי כוח", *"Ich hab nisht kein koach!"*, *"I have no strength!"*

So often we find ourselves frustrated in our desire to accomplish our goals. We strive, yet find that we are waning in strength to carry them out.

"מאיפה הכוח?", *"Vi nemt mehn di koach?"* *"Where does one gain strength from?"*

Where can we access the strength? Is energy found in the gym? In a power drink?

The *Levi'im* were assigned the task of transporting the Mishkan and its vessels, as well as to serve as guards and singers in the Temple. The age requirement for their service was limited between the years of 30 and 50. In contrast, the *צבא*; those from other tribes who were to serve in the "military", were recruited from the age of 20.

Rashi informs that this service of "משא"; "carrying", required "כח"; strength, therefore only someone who is 30 has achieved sufficient power for the job, as it records in Avos (5:25) *בן שלשים* *לח* *a thirty year old attains full strength*. After fifty, Rashi adds, man weakens.

Does army service require any less strength? On the contrary it would seem the more rigorous of the two. Why then can one enter the army's ranks at the "weak" age of 20?

Rashi in *Bahaaloscha* points out an apparent contradiction from our portion that indicates the *Levi'im* were conscripted from the age of 30, and there where it states from 25. He cites the Talmud that teaches that this discrepancy indicates that although they were indeed drafted from 25 years of age, they were first "trained" for five years before being dispatched to their respective duties. *במדבר ה כג ד"ה מכן חמש* (עשרים)

Could the training to "carry" the *Mishkan* warrant more teaching time than the preparation needed to become an elite soldier?

The Torah first mentions these requirements of the *Levi'im* as it relates to the duties of the family of *Kehos*. Although not the firstborn, *Kehos* is listed prior to *Gershon*, since they were the ones entrusted with the unique task of carrying the "ארון"; the Holy Ark, and the other holy vessels. In *Naso* the Torah states regarding their duties: *בכתף ישא* (שם ז ט); *they carried on the shoulder*. In distinction to the wagons that were employed to transport other items in the *Mishkan*, the Holy Ark and the other holy instruments entrusted to the family of *Kehos*, must be borne solely on their shoulders.

From this verse the Talmud derives another responsibility of the *Levi'im* as well. The term "ישא" alludes to the service of *שיר*, to sing, as evidenced in a verse in *Tehilim* that uses this verb to infer singing: *שיר*; *"Raise" up a song*.

What parallel exists between "carrying" a tune and the "bearing" of the Holy Ark? Why would the Torah couch this other function of the *Levi'im* precisely here?

The original *בכור*, firstborn, *Reuvein* was destined to encompass the role of the *Levi'im* in addition to having received a double share.

Yaakov Avinu, prior to his death admonishes Reuvein by referring to his potential stature: *ית שאת*; *first in rank*, indicating that he possessed greatness that was squandered. The Yalkut Shimoni (ראשית טז) sees in this usage of the term *שאת*, an allusion to the hoped for role as the bearer of the Holy Ark upon his responsible shoulders, *בכתף ישא*.

Both ideas share the common implication of the root "נשא", raising or lifting, whether in the figurative, as in an elevated position, or in the physical sense, the carrying of the Holy Ark.

Remarkably the introduction to this reproach is preceded by Yaakov Avinu making the declaration: *ראובן בכורי אתה כחי וראשית אוי* (ראשית טז) *Reuvein, you are my firstborn, my strength and my initial vigor*.

Yaakov Avinu sought to bequeath the great "strength" Reuvein would need to "carry" out this special task, but found that in Reuvein's impulsiveness he was unworthy. In his stead Yaakov re-directed the "birthright" as *Yosef*, who evidently possessed the qualities that Reuvein was missing. Subsequently as a result of the Sin of the Golden Calf, the responsibility of service in the Temple would be placed into the hands of the tribe of Levi.

In another striking parallel, it is by Yosef HaTzadik, the interim inheritor of the "power" of his father, that the Torah makes reference to his ascension to a position of authority in Egypt at the age of 30, *בן שלשים* *לח*, *a thirty year old attains full strength*.

Now Yosef was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. What "כח" is implied, in this underlining of his exact age at this juncture, that was required of Yosef in this role?

In the Book of Daniel it describes how Chanaya, Mishihoel and Azaryah were taken captive by Nevuchadnezzar and educated by him. He observed their remarkable qualities and appointed them to the highest positions in his mighty empire. Among the many traits enumerated there it describes how: *ואשר* *and such as had strength to stand in the king's palace*.

The Talmud (מנחות צג:) explains that the strength here refers to their ability when in front of the king to refrain from joking, conversing, sleeping, nor to go relieve themselves, due to fear of the king. It seems that it takes great power to be able to control the instincts that come so reflexively. Even the natural functions of the "matter" of our physical body can be controlled by our "mind" and attitude.

Might this be the same "כח"; *strength*, that Yosef too possessed, as remarkably portrayed in an earlier episode with the conniving wife of Potiphar who sought to arouse the natural inclinations of Yosef in her efforts to seduce him, but was foiled by the "might" of Yosef to maintain absolute control of his "matter" through a clear and controlled "mind". The Midrash indeed asserts that his raiments of royalty were attained perforce his exhibition of supernal self control. (בר"ר צ ג)

The *ארון הקודש*, the Holy Ark, required extraordinary concentration when transporting it. One had to maintain absolute focus and a sense of awe lest in that lapse of consciousness the sanctity of the Ark would effect one harshly.

The Prophet (שמואל ב ז), records how when in the time of King David the Holy Ark was once being transported. It began to slip, and Uzzah, who was in charge, instinctively reached out to grab it from falling, forgetting the principle that the *ארון* *נשא* *את* *השמי*, the Holy Ark not only supported itself but its bearers as well, and could certainly not fall to the ground. He died as a result of this error.

The Talmud (סוטה לה) states an opinion that Uzzah deserved to die because he had *עשה צרכיו בפניו*, relieved himself in front of the Ark.

There are those who aver that he wasn't so brazen as to do such a despicable act. Rather it means that he wasn't sufficiently trained in the control of mind over matter, and in the instinctive fright and horror of seeing the Ark fall, he lost control of his bodily function instinctively. (ספר כרם נטע עני מל' סוטה)

He lacked the "כח" that was key to this noble mission.

Yaakov in his introductory assertion of "כחי", we are taught, is referring to his having never experienced even accidental impurity. Yaakov personified the ability to maintain total control of one's thoughts that prevented even a subconscious reflex that might bring about impurity.

Reuvein in his noble but misguided effort to stand up for the honor of his mother reacted instinctively without proper control, and dishonored his father by tampering with the placement of his bed. He lacked the requisite "כח", vital to the role he might have assumed.

The *בכורה*, right of the firstborn, was thus transferred to those who were equipped to represent the might of their illustrious father.

Perhaps it is not enough to simply be in control and free from the bonds of physical instinct. It also requires an emotional state of joy despite the difficulty involved. One must never be influenced by the forces of challenge and trouble that so often impact our mood and attitude, even as we remain committed to the task.

The family of *Kehos* were capable of "bearing" the burden of their arduous task yet still "carry" the *שיר*, the tune of joy, that erupted in a song of spontaneous happiness, celebrating their fortune in serving their Creator no matter how difficult it may seem.

(Based and inspired by a *Sicha* of the *Tolna Rebbe Shlit" a Bamidbar 5770*)

The Midrash (שהש"ר ב א) reports that at Har Sinai we sang the *שיר*, song, of *נשמע* *We will do, We will hear*.

This wasn't merely a declaration of allegiance to commit to do regardless of our understanding. It was an expression of love, happiness and joy declaring that despite any obstacles we might face that are incomprehensible to us, we would never let the "matter" influence our commitment to persevere with with the thrill of swerving Hashem.

This secret power of *נשמע* *We will do, We will hear*, that we usurped from the angels is encapsulated in the verse:

...*גבר כח עשי דברו לשמע בקול דברו* (תהלים קד ב) *mighty in strength, who do his bidding to obey the voice of His word*. First doing then listening.

This is our ultimate strength that assures us that in that commitment we are promised that G-d will provide us continued strength to honor His Name.

וְהָיוּ כָלֶם בְּכֹרֶיֶת יְהוָה, נְעֻשָׂה וְנִשְׁמָע אֶמְרוּ כְאֶחָד.

וְהָיוּ עֲנֵי יְיָ אֶחָד, בְּרֹחַ הַעֲזָרָה לְעַמּוֹת כָּלִל.

Then they all joined together in a covenant-

'We will do and we will listen' they said as one.

Then they opened their mouths and called out 'Hashem is One!'

Blessed is He Who gives strength to the exhausted!

בברכת הג' שמואל!

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&

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