

# THE KTM DAF PARASHA

## BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



### MEMORY, MEANING, AND THE MANDATE OF SINAI

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

What gives a mitzvah its power? Is it the story behind it - the meaning, the memory, the emotion - or the Divine command that obligates us? Few mitzvot spotlight this tension as sharply as the prohibition against eating the sciatic nerve - the gid ha'nasheh. The Torah points to Yaakov's injury. Rambam points to Sinai. Between them lies a profound question about how tradition lives, and why we follow the practices we do.

After his battle with an unknown figure, Yaakov emerges victorious but injured; he is limping. Therefore, the Torah tells us, we are proscribed from eating the sciatic nerve (Bereishit 32:32-33):

וַיִּנָּח לוֹ הַשָּׁמַשׁ כְּאֲשֶׁר עָבַר אֶת פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא צָלַע עַל יָרְכוֹ.  
עַל כֵּן לֹא יֹאכְלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת גִּיד הַנֶּשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר עַל כַּף  
הַיָּרֵךְ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי נָגַע בְּכַף יָרֵךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּגִיד הַנֶּשֶׁה.

**And the sun rose for him when he passed Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh. Therefore, the children of Israel may not eat the displaced tendon, which is on the socket of the hip, until this day, for he touched the socket of Jacob's hip, in the hip sinew.**

The Torah directly links the prohibition against eating the sciatic nerve with Yaakov's injury - but the commentaries diverge sharply in their understanding of what this link means.

Some see it as an eternal memorial to a miraculous triumph. As Rashbam writes: "To remember Yaakov's bravery, and the great miracle from God."

Others, like Chizkuni, view it through a moral lens: "As they should not have allowed their founding father to be exposed to hostile forces at night."

Sforno offers yet another angle, explaining that limiting the sciatic nerve signals that Yaakov's injury was: "Something that is not considered of significance to us."

The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 3) interprets it as a symbolic reassurance for future generations:

**It is to serve as a sign to Israel that they will suffer many troubles in exile by the hand of the nations ... they should trust that they will not perish, but rather that their descendants and name will stand firm forever...**

Despite these very different explanations, one thing seems clear: Yaakov's injury appears to be the reason for our prohibition. Radak states it simply:

**The sons of Jacob prohibited it upon themselves out of honor for their father, who was injured there. And they commanded their children, and their children [commanded] their children, until this very day.**

Yet, upon further analysis this intuitive understanding becomes far more complex. In his commentary to the Mishnah (Chullin 7:6), Rambam asserts a sweeping principle: Only mitzvot given at Sinai obligate us. Earlier practices, even those carried out by the Avot, become binding only if re-commanded at Sinai. He writes:

**Everything we avoid or perform today, we do only by the command of Moshe Rabbeinu ... We do not perform circumcision because Avraham Avinu ... Rather, we do so because the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded us through Moshe...**

**And so too regarding the sciatic nerve: We do not follow the prohibition issued by Yaakov; rather, [we observe it] because of the command of Moshe... '613 commandments were given to Moshe at Sinai,' and all of these are included among those commandments.**

If so, how do we understand the Torah's own words - linking the mitzvah directly with Yaakov's injury?

Enter Ralbag, offering a subtle yet transformative reading:

**"Therefore Israel was commanded at Sinai not to eat the sciatic nerve."**

According to this approach, Yaakov's wound does not create the prohibition. Rather, once God commanded the mitzvah at Sinai, the Torah framed that command within the earlier story. Rashi (Chullin 100b) goes even further, teaching that the Avot never kept this mitzvah at all. From the night Yaakov limped away until Sinai, the sciatic nerve was no more prohibited than any other part of the animal.

This leads to a striking tension - one that sits at the heart of Jewish life: What's more important in Jewish practice, meaning or commitment?

The prohibition of gid ha'nasheh bridges two powerful forces that shape our Judaism:

On one hand, tradition, story, and meaning - the emotional, symbolic memory of Yaakov's struggle.



תורה TORAH  
מציון MITZION

KTM MONTREAL

**PARASHAT VAYISHLACH  
16 KISLEV  
6 DECEMBER**

**CANDLE LIGHTING: 3:53 P.M.  
HAVDALAH: 5:01 P.M.**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A DAF PARASHA, PLEASE CONTACT  
RAVARI@KTMMTL.ORG.

**KTM CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF THE HOSTAGES! WE CONTINUE TO LEARN AND PRAY FOR THE RETURN OF THE REMAINS OF THE DECEASED, AND FOR A LASTING, ETERNAL PEACE.**

On the other, commandment, obligation, and commitment - the binding force of Sinai that ensures our practices endure.

Meaning alone cannot sustain a mitzvah; stories fade, emotions change, and inspiration rises and falls. But obligation without meaning risks becoming hollow, disconnected from the soul of the tradition.

In gid ha'nasheh, these two worlds intertwine. We inherit the story of Yaakov's struggle - but we observe the mitzvah because God commanded it at Sinai. The tradition gives us depth, but the command gives us permanence. Perhaps this is the deeper message: Our Judaism is strongest when meaning inspires us - and commitment anchors us.

The legacy of Yaakov's injury lives on not only because it moved our ancestors, but because we chose - generation after generation - to carry it forward as a living expression of our covenant.

It is in that meeting point between story and command, between memory and duty, that Torah becomes Torat Chaim - a living Torah for all time.



## SHABBAT'S GREATEST HITS: SEMACH BENI

BY EVYATAR KERNER

There are Shabbat songs we sing out of habit. The words come out, the melody is familiar, and it's nice. And then there are songs that if you really listen to the words - they can change the entire way we live. "שמח בני בחלקך" (Be Happy, My Child, With Your Portion) is one of those songs. Written by 20th century Rabbi and paytan Yitzchak Suna in Jerusalem, this song encourages contentment and happiness.

**Rejoice, my son, in your portion**

**Do not take what belongs to others too**

**Joy will smile upon you**

**The world is before you...**

**Who is rich and who is joyful?**

**In this world, we are but guests**

**Not through might and not through power**

**Will money truly be yours**

Let's talk honestly. How many of us are truly happy with our portion? The neighbor bought a new apartment, a coworker got a promotion, someone on Instagram looks happier and more successful. And us? We feel stuck in place. This is the disease of our era - chronic dissatisfaction, always looking at what's missing rather than what we have, always running after something more and missing what's right in front of us. Then Shabbat arrives, and suddenly there's a simple song that tells us: "Be happy, my child, with your portion, don't take what belongs to others too."

This isn't just good advice - it's a complete revolution. The poet doesn't tell us "settle for less" or "don't aspire for more," but something much deeper: don't look at what belongs to others. Look at your portion. And the reason is both simple and profound: each person received their own portion, not by chance. When the song asks "who gave

all these to you," it changes everything. Suddenly it's not coincidence, not genetics, not luck - someone gave you your portion. The Creator gave you exactly what you need to do your work in this world.

And now comes the amazing part. "Joy will smile upon you, the world is before you, look and lift your eyes" - notice the order. The poet doesn't say "work hard and then you'll be happy," but the opposite: joy is already here, it's alive, it's present, it's right in front of you. So why don't we see it? Because we're not looking. "Look and lift your eyes" isn't a simple request, it's an instruction - stop looking at what others have for a moment, stop running for a moment, raise your eyes and look at what you have.

But how exactly do you do this? How do you move from the crazy race to real joy? The song gives us the precise formula: "If you only thank your Creator, then you will always have, joy will smile upon you." The word "only" is the key - not gratitude as a technique or to get more, but real gratitude, recognition that everything you have, even the smallest things, is a gift. And when you have real gratitude, something magical happens: joy becomes part of your life, not joy you need to chase after but joy that lives with you.

And here connects the famous and troubling verse: "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and a good heart" - from this come the curses. Why curses? We served God, kept the commandments, studied Torah. The problem is: without joy. Because when you serve God - in prayer, study, physical work, raising children - and you do it without rejoicing in your portion, without being grateful for what was given to you, without seeing God's presence in your work, you miss the entire point.

And here the song "Sameach Beni B'Chelkecha" opens the door for us to understand: satisfaction and seeing God in your work is what will make you happy,

and it is the presence of God in all your life. When you serve God with joy, when you look at your work and ask "who gave me this ability? Who gave me this opportunity?", you suddenly see God in everything you do. It's no longer just work - it's serving God. And when it's serving God, joy comes naturally.

So what really happens when we sing this song at the Shabbat table? First, we stop the race. All week we ran after success, money, recognition, and suddenly there's a song that says: stop, look at what you have, stop comparing. But that's just the beginning. The moment we sing "look and lift your eyes," we give ourselves permission to see - the family around the table, the food, Shabbat itself, the ability to sing. Then comes the important question: "who gave all these to you?" - not "what do I have," but "who gave." And with this question comes understanding: everything I have is a gift. And with understanding comes gratitude, and with gratitude comes real joy - not fake joy of "everything's fine," but joy that grows from gratitude, from seeing God in everything we have.

### Shabbat Mission

Give everyone around the table a chance to share: "What is the part of my portion I'm most grateful for this week?" It can be something small, something big, something simple. Just one thing that each person recognizes as a gift. Watch how joy begins to smile when everyone shares.



## PARNASS HAYOM: KISLEV

- 3 KISLEV | Adrienne and Shlomo Drazin, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his grandmother, Bertha Sand z"l
- 17 KISLEV | David Zukor, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Leslie Zukor z"l
- 18 KISLEV | Chaviva Lifson, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Sandra Katz z"l
- 20 Kislev | Susan Lieberman and family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her husband, Aron Lieberman z"l
- 22 KISLEV | Alex Spira, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Abraham Spira z"l





## HALACHIC Q&A

BY RABBI YOSEF ZVI RIMON - NASI, WORLD MIZRACHI

**Pesach in Israel. Can they plan for a wedding before Lag Ba'omer?**

**Answer:** The widely accepted minhag in Eretz Yisrael is to keep the days between Pesach and Lag Ba'omer (as opposed to Rosh Chodesh until Shavuot), and this is the proper thing to do. Sometimes there are weddings after Pesach before Rosh Chodesh, however, these should only be done if there is a specific need.

**Question: I used a meat knife to cut off the layers of an onion, and then accidentally grated the onion with a dairy grater. Both vessels were not used within the last 24 hours. What is the status of the grater?**

**Answer:** We can assume that hot dairy was not used on this grater. If that is true, and it is currently clean, the onion is kosher. The grater is kosher either way because vessels do not absorb without bishul.

**Question: We were out of the house and our children put both oven trays in the same oven. They baked dairy bourekas on one of them. We don't know which one was dairy/meat and which one was used for the bourekas. Both trays were not used for 24 hours before this happened. What should be done?**

**Answer:** Generally, libun chamur (to make red hot

with a live flame) would be required for the trays. Because both weren't used within 24 hours, this is in the category of "heter habalah" and can be kashered through libun kal: clean them and put them in the oven at 200°C for an hour.

**Question: When I eat a half kezayit of mezonot and half kezayit of shehakol, do I make a Borei Nefashot?**

**Answer:** The Mishnah Berurah paskins (200:1) that you make a Borei Nefashot. Some poskim disagree (see Yabiyah Omer) and think no bracha achrona should be made. When discussing a single food, however, which is half mezonot and half shehakol, all would agree that a Borei Nefashot should be made.

**Question: I accidentally used a meat cover on a dairy pot cooking on the stove. It's a glass cover with a metal ring around it. What can be done to kasher the cover?**

**Answer:** You can kasher this cover through the process of haga'lah. If the entire cover does not fit into boiling water all at once, you can put it in half at a time.

**Question: How do I calculate a kezayit of wafers? Do I count the chocolate?**

**Answer:** The Mishnah Berurah (208:48) writes that while we should only take into account the flour, the minhag ha'olam is to consider the other ingredients as well and make an Al Hamichya if there is a volume of a kezayit. However, this is true for cakes or foods where all of the items are

mixed together. Because wafers have different layers, we would not consider the chocolate layer as part of the measure. Therefore, Al Hamichya would only be made if one ate around 4 wafers.

**Question: Can one use music to get up in the morning? If so, Jewish music or even non-Jewish music?**

**Answer:** One can use music to get up in the morning. While there is a discussion about whether we can listen to music after the churban and that sugya may relate specifically to waking up/going to sleep (Gittin 7a), that clearly is not speaking about music from a phone. It is permissible to wake up to non-Jewish music, but it is better to get up to songs that awaken us to kedusha.

**Question: What are the limitations regarding listening to Jewish music in the bathroom? Is there a difference between whether someone is using the bathroom/taking a shower/brushing teeth? Is there a difference between a song and a niggun? Is there a difference between singing and listening?**

**Answer:** In a bathroom, one can only listen to Jewish music without words. Additionally, it cannot be music that will cause him to think of pesukim. Rav Ovadya Yosef paskins that one can listen to Torah classes (and most definitely would allow for Jewish music) when showering/bathing if the room does not have a toilet. The permissibility is only to hear but not to sing.

*Translated from Hebrew by Yaakov Panitch.*

## KEEPING UP WITH KTM

- **FAMILY LEARNING** has begun! Join us tonight, Motzei Shabbat December 6 - and two additional weeks on December 13 and 20th for learning, pizza and prizes! Contact [ravari@ktmmtl.org](mailto:ravari@ktmmtl.org) for more information or for sponsorship opportunities.
- **Women's pre-Chanukah Program:** Please join KTM with BA and TBDJ for an evening of enlightenment with our shlichot- words of inspiration by Kochava Rozenbaum, and a candle making workshop with Elinoy Chen.
- KTM has been active across the community: in addition to regular programs at Hebrew Academy, Herzlia and Akiva School, our team has been running special programming the past few weeks at Solomon Schechter Academy at UTT.
- Last Shabbat, our bachurim joined the Herzlia seniors' Shabbaton adding Jewish and Israel content and lots of Ruach!
- KTM has been running a weekly **Lunch & Learn** on campus in conjunction with Federation CJA and **Chabad of Dawson**. This week we also had a special L&L with **Hillel of John Abbott College!**
- **Bekiut Club** has gotten off to a great start! Each week students come after school for an immersive and interactive learning program with the Bachurim and B'not Sherut.
- Our weekly **Women's Morning Beit Midrash** continues to inspire! Thanks to Kochava Rozenbaum and Rabbi Poupkov for the past two shiurim! Please join us for a different speaker for this women's-only shiur each Wednesday morning 9:10-10:00am
- **Night seder continues:** Join R' Moshe Rozenbaum's Hebrew Gemara shiur on Tuesday (8:00-9:00pm), or English Gemara shiur on Thursday (8:00pm-9:00pm). Rav Ari's "Life Insights from the Parasha" shiur is also on Thursday (8:00pm-9:00pm). To arrange a chavruta with one of our bachurim, please contact [ravari@ktmmtl.org](mailto:ravari@ktmmtl.org).
- **Kindly note that Maariv at Hebrew Academy has been moved to 9:30pm, except for Thursdays when it is still 9:00pm.** (KTM holds night Seder on Tuesdays and Thursdays)





# THE TRIBE SCRIBE

VAYISHLACH: SLAM DUNK!

IN THIS WEEK'S PARASHA, **YAAKOV** (JACOB) WRESTLES WITH AN ANGEL ALL NIGHT AND WON'T GO UNTIL HE GETS A BLESSING!



SOUNDS FAMILIAR? MEET **TAMIR GOODMAN**. HE WRESTLED WITH PRESSURE, INJURIES, AND BIG CHOICES, BUT HELD TIGHT TO HIS FAITH... AND CAME OUT A WINNER.

**Tamir Goodman** AKA the Jewish Jordan, grew up in **Baltimore** and loved basketball more than anything!



BASKETBALL IS NOT JUST A GAME FOR ME - IT'S MY LIFE! I'LL PLAY BIG ONE DAY - BUT NEVER ON **SHABBAT**!

I'M GOING TO KEEP AT IT UNTIL I GO PRO! I'LL PLAY FOR MY TEAM AND FOR **GOD**. MY MISSION IS TO MAKE **GOD** PROUD THROUGH THE GAME.



WE'RE BEHIND YOU ALL THE WAY!

THAT WAS BRUTAL. I'M DONE!



THEN YOU'VE GOT TWO CHOICES, KID! GIVE UP... OR GET UP!

GUESS WHICH ONE HE PICKED.

WOW! THE **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**! MY DREAM TEAM! ONE THING, THOUGH... I DON'T PLAY ON **SHABBAT**.



OH... YOU CAN'T CHANGE THAT? THEN I GUESS **GOD'S** GOT A DIFFERENT TEAM FOR ME.

**TOWSON U** CHANGED THEIR SCHEDULE SO YOU CAN PLAY - NO GAMES ON **SHABBAT**! WELCOME TO THE TEAM!



WOW, THANKS COACH! TALK ABOUT TEAMWORK.

DOESN'T BEING **JEWISH** MAKE IT HARDER TO BE AN ATHLETE?



NO WAY! **JUDAISM** IS MY TRAINING. IT TEACHES ME DISCIPLINE, TEAMWORK AND BOUNCING BACK. THAT'S HOW YOU WIN - ON THE COURT AND OFF!

I WAS LIVING THE DREAM, PLAYING PRO BASKETBALL IN **ISRAEL**. WHEN I GOT INJURED, I THOUGHT IT WAS GAME OVER. BUT **GOD** WAS JUST CHANGING MY POSITION. NOW I'M A COACH, A HUSBAND, A DAD - STILL PLAYING FOR TEAM **GOD**, BUT WEARING A NEW JERSEY.



TODAY I COACH KIDS, INVENT COOL BASKETBALL GEAR, AND HELP FANS TO PLAY, CONNECT, AND WIN. MY BOOK, **LIVE YOUR DREAM**, SHOWS THAT YOUR CHALLENGES CAN BE YOUR SUPERPOWERS.

NEXT TIME LIFE THROWS YOU A TOUGH MATCH, DON'T QUIT - THINK OF **TAMIR**, AND SCORE ONE FOR **GOD'S** TEAM!





## tribe

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Tribes is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.

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