Jewish Tribune – Teruma

**Apples and …**

The Gemoro in Menachos (28a) says that all the **כלים** (vessels) of the Mishkan were made **לדורות** (for all generations), except for the **חצוצרות** (the silver trumpets used to communicate to Klal Yisroel) which had to be made anew for each generation.

Why the difference? Why could the menorah, the shulchan, the mizbeach and all the other **כלים** be used for all generations and not the **חצוצרות**? What was special about these trumpets?

I once heard a magnificent idea from my dear friend Rabbi Malcolm Herman in the name of Dayan Abramsky ztl.

The function of the **חצוצרות** was to communicate to Klal Yisroel. It was the PA system used in the midbar. The lesson is that the message of Torah is eternal, but the method of transmission has to change to fit each generation. **חצוצרות** used for one generation would not be suitable for another generation.

Chalk on blackboards may have worked two generations ago and whiteboard markers for the previous generation, but interactive whiteboards and chrome books are the new norm. We may be teaching the same parsha in Chumash or the same Bava Metzia but the method of communicating our eternal truth needs updating in each generation.

Dayan Abramsky’s answer is as important as it is timely and timeless.

BH I have now been teaching for a number of years (some of my former talmidim are now my colleagues – an exquisitely sweet nachas) and I think of my own experiences. In the early days, photocopying parts of seforim and sticking together source sheets to now using Microsoft Office with Otzar Hachochma, Bar Ilan and DBS.

And then there is Google classrooms. Everyone wants to be back in a real Beis HaMedrash but for the meantime we are still online. At Hasmonean we are using break-out rooms in Google classrooms. After each shiur, I (figuratively!) drag each student with his chavrusa across the screen to their breakout room and we have a virtual Beis HaMedrash. I can pop in and out and visit every chavrusashaft. A strange world indeed.

While the method of transmitting our mesorah may change, the very fact that the mesorah that we are privileged to transmit, remains constant, is a comforting anchor in a volatile world.

Many growing up in the decades after the war, were taught by Rebbeim who lived in Europe before the war. It was an enormous cultural gap. But as wide as the gap may have been, I feel that the gap today between Rebbe and talmid is even wider. Yes, we try to use the latest technology to engage educationally, but to teenagers today, we are technological dinosaurs. We are a relic from a different age and speak a different language. The gap is bigger because the world is moving faster than ever before.

I sometimes share an idea of Rav Avrohom Gurwitz before Pesach with talmidim. In short, Rav Avrohom says that the purpose of “Echod mi yodea” that we sing at the end of the seder, is to test the success of the night. To relay this idea, I pick a student and play word association. I normally start with the word “knife” and get “fork” in response. It shows our initial instinctive association. After a powerful seder, what do associate with the various numbers? If matters spiritual, then the night has been effective. One year, instead of starting with “knife”, I said “apple”. Expecting to hear “orange” in return, I instead got “iPhone”. A different world indeed.

But the message of Dayan Abramsky should comfort us. The message of Torah is eternal, but the method of transmission has to change to fit each generation.

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