



OUR BELOVED RABBI SOKAVA REBBE

# BET

BRINGING EVERYONE TOGETHER

# Journal

"E Pluribus Unum"  
Latin for "Out of Many, One" - Achdus



## בית מדרש אור חיים BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RABBI AARON LANKRY  
18 FORSHAY ROAD, MONSEY, NEW YORK 10952



**AVOS UBANIM**  
BEGINS THIS  
MOTZEI SHABBOS AT 6:30

SHABBOS MORNING MINYAN  
Starting at 8:00 AM  
18 Forshay Rd. - Main Shul  
נוסח אשכנז



**SHIURIM FOR ENTIRE COMMUNITY**

Separate Seating **RABBI YY JACOBSON WEEKLY CLASS**

<p><b>SHABBOS</b> 9:00 AM - CHASSIDUS AND SERMON BEFORE MUSAF 20 FORSHAY RD OPEN FOR MEN &amp; WOMEN</p> <p><b>SUNDAY</b> NO CLASSES THIS SUNDAY</p>	<p><b>EARLY BIRD</b> DAILY SHIUR TBA</p> <p><b>TUESDAY</b> TUESDAY MORNING 9:30 - 10:30 AM SHARP 20 FORSHAY RD FOR WOMEN ONLY</p>
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OUR BELOVED RABBI  
SOKAVA REBBE

# Dear Kehilla,

BET Parashat Chaya Sara

I find it fascinating that Avraham wanted so much to acquire the Me'arat Hamachpelah in Hebron and today you don't see a massive cemetery in the area. If it was such a desired place of burial for Avraham why is it not a popular place for us too, such as the Mount of Olives, or other contemporary cemeteries?

"ותמת שרה בקרית ארבע היא חברון בארץ כנען" The Torah teaches that it was a great privilege to be buried in the same burial ground reserved for such outstanding individuals as Adam and Chavah. A place which would later be called "The gateway to heaven" (in Yaakov's dream and not referring to the temple mount)

R' Bachya expounds; the area of Me'orat hamachpeila is in a section called "קרית ארבע" -the city of four, in the greater area of Chevron. This is due to the four couples that were buried there or the four giants that lived there Achiman, Shashai, Talmi, and their father. Another possibility is that it was in the land portion of Yehuda and he was the fourth child.

The mystical dimension of the name חברון is that the soul of everyone buried in that cave joins (מתחבר) the celestial city of Hashem, the four encampments of the שכונה. Our patriarchs would not have made great efforts to be buried there had they not been aware of a profound spiritual dimension involved. They knew that transfer to the עולם האמת from that site would be a crucial experience for them. It is the place from which the souls return to their origin, the throne of Hashem's glory.

Rabbeniu Bachya is not the only one with the opinion that the connecting point to heaven is through the Me'arat Hamachpelah but also the Megaleh Amukos 220,247 and Rama MiPano, Mamar me'ah Kesitah 30. However, in our world we connect through Yerushalayim the location of the Bais Hamikdash. All over the world when we wish

to connect in Tefilah we face Yerushalayim so how is it that Hebron and Me'arat Hamachpelah is the location of connecting to heaven?

We cannot conclude that it was the place of connection during those times and a different place for our time. Our Avos understood the correct place and established it for future generations.

The word "Machpelah" comes from the word "Kaful" which has two interpretations; double and folded. The Medrash said it was the resting place of the couples, indicating the interpretation of double. Additionally, being in Yehuda's portion is illustrating a double portion of inheritance as the fourth child he received also kingship that belonged to Reuven. As to the indication of the giants, why do we need to know that they lived there?

Chazal is teaching us the essence of Chevron. Chevron is the portal or the connector for an individual that has the ability to live simultaneously in Heaven and earth. The giants don't fit on earth but in Chevron, the Chebur of Heaven and earth, they are able to live and fit. Even more so our Avos, though they are buried there, they are very much alive and interact with our tefillos and requests made at the location of Chevron. This is only for the individuals that lived a life both in Heaven and earth and it's befitting they rest at that location. For us, mere mortals, we need to connect directly to Hashem in the location he bestowed to us, our precious Yerushalayim.

NEW

## Start your Day with Torah

Harav Ahron Lankry Presents  
8:15 Mishnayis - 8:30 Shachris with Rabbi Lankry  
Choik L'Yisroel for 30 minutes after Shachris  
Location: 18 Forshay upstairs

## Thursday Evening Shiur

An introduction to Kabbalah 8:00PM  
A fascinating primer to the mysteries of Kabbalah  
Location: 18 Forshay upstairs

# SHUL SCHEDULE



## SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLY MINCHA ON Friday AFTERNOON at 1:30 pm

SHABBOS NIGHT / DAY	Candle lighting	4:24pm	SHABBOS DAY / Evening	Shachris Bais Chabad	10:00am - 20 Forshay
	Mincha Tent	4:34pm		Mincha	1:45pm
	Shkiya	4:42pm		Pirchei - Bnos	2:00
	Mincha Bais Chabad 20 Forshay	4:52pm		Daf Yomi	3:40pm
	Shachris Vasikin	6:08am - DAF YOMI SHIUR		Mincha Shalosh Seudos	4:20pm
	Shachris	8:00am - Kiddush		Shkiya	4:41 pm
	Shachris	9:15am - 18 Forshay		Maariv	5:21 & 5:26pm

## SHACHRIS

20 Minutes before Neitz

S 6:20 | M 6:22 | T 6:23 | W 6:24 | T 6:25 | F 6:26

## MINCHA & MAARIV

12 Minutes Before Pelag

S 3:25 | M 3:24 | T 3:23 | W 3:23 | T 3:22

12 Minutes Before Shkia

S 4:27 | M 4:26 | T 4:25 | W 4:25 | T 4:24

## NOV 12 - NOV 17

NEITZ IS 6:40 am - 6:46 am

PELAG IS 3:37 pm - 3:34 pm

SHKIA IS 4:39 pm - 4:35 pm

סוף זמן  
קריאת שמע

MAGEN AVRAHAM

8:35 AM - 8:39 AM

GRA- BAAL HATANYA

9:11 AM - 9:15 AM

## WEEKDAY MINYANIM

WINTER '17-18 חורף תשע"ח

### שחרית

כתיקין	20 Forshay ↑	Brochos 30 min/Neitz 20 min	AT פלג	18↓	Repeat Krias Shma after nightfall
6:15AM	18 Forshay ↓	Shabbos Haetz	AT שקיעה	18↓	
7:00	18↓		30 MIN. AFTER שקיעה	18↑	
7:30	20↑		60 MIN. AFTER שקיעה	18↓	
8:00	18↓		7:30	18↓	
8:30	18↑		8:00	18↓	
9:00	18↓		8:30	18↑	
9:30	18↑		9:00	18↑	
10:00	18↓		9:30	18↑	
10:30	18↑		9:45	18↓	
11:00	18↓		10:00	18↓	

### מנחה

1:30PM	מנחה גדולה	18↓
2:00PM		18↓
2:30PM		18↓
3:00PM		18↓

### מנחה ומעריב

12 MIN. BEFORE פלג	18↓
12 MIN. BEFORE שקיעה	18↓
AT שקיעה	18↑
20 MIN. AFTER שקיעה	18↓
50 MIN. AFTER שקיעה	18↓

### מעריב

AT שקיעה	18↓	Repeat Krias Shma after nightfall
30 MIN. AFTER שקיעה	18↓	
60 MIN. AFTER שקיעה	18↓	
7:30	18↓	
8:00	18↓	
8:30	18↑	
9:00	18↑	
9:30	18↑	
9:45	18↓	
10:00	18↓	
10:30	18↓	
11:00	18↓	
11:30	18↓	
12:45AM	18↓	

↑ Upstairs  
↓ Main Floor

FOR MORE INFO: www.18forshay.com // ohrchaim18@gmail.com



## The Inspiration of Circumcision

We often merit in participating in the celebration of a Bris Milah and KN there are many such happy occasions in our communities. But aside from standing around waiting for the Mohel to perform the circumcision and listening for the name to be bestowed upon the baby, we usually don't put too much thought into the whole affair.

We all know, or at least sense, the enormity and greatness of the Mitzva of Milah and it isn't a surprise that circumcision appears in the news every so often. In fact the Zohar tells us that one of the main mitzvos which will delay or hasten the final redemption is Milah.

An additional connection is found in the Zohar where it says that in the end of days, the battle over the land of Israel will be based on the mitzvah of Milah and that both the Jewish people and the descendants of Yishmael will claim to be deserving since they were both circumcised. The Zohar goes on to say that at the end of the day the Jewish people will win the conflict because we keep both parts of the mitzvah which include Milah (the cutting of the foreskin) and Priah (pulling back the skin) while the descendants of Yishmael do not. It is fascinating that the entire redemption lies in this seemingly small distinction in the process of Milah. What is so special about this mitzvah and how does it connect to the final days?

A story was told of the Rashab who was only 4 years old when his mother Rebetzin Rivka took him to get a bracha by the Tzemach Tzedek. When he walked in he said he had a question for the Rebbe: why did Avraham Avinu merit a direct revelation of Hashem just for doing the mitzvah of Milah? After all, we do many mitzvos including Milah and we don't merit a visit from Hashem.

The Rebbe replied to the boy, "If you would circumcise yourself at the age of 99, you would merit a visit too."

I believe that there is a very poignant lesson here and it is actually based in an explicit Midrash Tanchuma. The Midrash asks the question, "Why did Hashem wait so many years to command Avraham to complete one of the most important mitzvos? Why at the age of 99 and not before? The midrash explains that indeed, Hashem could have asked Avraham to perform the Milah much earlier but he waited until just before he turned 100 (which is the designated age for a person to die) in order to teach us that a person can convert and become a Jew at any age--even right before his death at the age of 99.

This draws attention to those people in their 70's or 60's or even 50's and 40's and yes even 30's who believe that it is too late for them to convert and that there is little hope that they can have an impact in this world. This is one of the worst misunderstandings they can make. Our sages are teaching us the exact opposite here and are emphasizing that you can change yourself and create an eternal destiny even when you think you have lost all hope of accomplishing anything in life.

This belief in man's ability to introduce drastic life changes at any time is one that should accompany us at every bris and it is one that can push us into the last stage of Jewish history preceding the coming of Mashiach. Indeed, even as it looks like it is too late, even the smallest change made at the end of our days can make all the difference in bringing light and redemption into the world.



**A NEW YESHIVA WILL OPEN THIS WEEK IN THE MUSLIM CITY OF KAZAN, ON THE BIRTHDAY OF THE REBBE RASHAB, FOUNDER OF YESHIVAH TOMCHEI TEMIMIM.**

There is great excitement in the Jewish community in the city of Kazan, as preparations are underway for the great historical event that will take place this Wednesday.

The 20th of Cheshvan marks the birthday of the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab, who founded Yeshiva Tomchei Tmimim. On the eve of his birthday, yet another branch of this yeshiva will be opened and dedicated: this time in the capital city of the Republic of Tatarstan, which is Russia's largest Muslim republic.

The new yeshiva building is situated on the same parcel of land as the city's Central Shul.



**2 New WhatsApp Groups**  
**Shalom bayis for men**  
**Shalom bayis for women**

**Three times a week**  
**This is the perfect time to work on ourselves and bring Shalom to our home.**

**Send Rabbi Coren a WhatsApp request and he will add you to the Broadcast**



### New schedule in Rabbi Coren's Office

- 5:30 to 6:00 Minhag Yisroel Torah
- 6:00 to 7:00 Daf Yomi
- 7:00 to 8:00 Shachris
- 8:00 to 8:20 Tamid
- 8:20 to 9:00 Megilah
- 9:00 to 10:00 Daf Yomi
- 10:00 to 10:30 Mishna Berura
- 10:30 to 11:00 Pirush Tefilah



## Panim Chadashos

In Shulchan Aruch, Even Hoezer, siman samech bais, seif zayin and ches it says that one does not say the Sheva Brachos after bentching unless there is a panim chadashos (new person) who was not at the wedding. Some say that on Shabbos and Yom Tov panim chadashos are not needed since Shabbos and Yom Tov themselves bring the simcha of a panim chadashos. This applies to the meal at night and in the morning, but does not include seuda shlishis.

The following interesting question arises regarding a couple that got married before Yom Tov. Is panim chadashos needed if there is sheva brachos on Chol Hamoed? Is Chol Hamoed considered a simcha that would be sufficient or not?

The Sefer Yofo Lalev in chelek daled of Even Hoezer, siman samech bais, ois chof daled says that Chol Hamoed is considered like panim chadashos. The reason Shabbos and Yom Tov are exempt from panim chadashos are not because of the holiness and sanctity of the day, but rather because of the simcha that is observed on that day. The Bais Yosef writes that there is a special inyan to increase the simcha and eat bigger portions lichvod the simcha of Shabbos. If this is so, it stands to reason that there is a similar inyan to be besimcha on Chol Hamoed as we see in Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, siman taf kuf chof tes, seif bais and in the Chinuch in mitzvah taf peh ches.

The sefer Shailos Utshuvos B'tzeil Hachochma argues with the above position and says that yes, it is true that on Chol Hamoed there is an inyan of simcha, but it would not suffice as panim chadashos for the seven brachos after bentching. The Gemara in Ksubos daf ches, amud alef recounts the story that Rav Illa attended the sheva brachos of Rav Kahane. All seven brachos were said on the first day and from there onward they were only said if there was panim chadashos. We see from this that the panim chadashos of the day before is still a partial simcha, but not sufficient in order to make the seven brachos. The panim chadashos of the day before is only a hemshech (continuation) of the simcha. Similarly, Chol Hamoed is just a hemshech of the simcha of Yom Tov.

The Sefer Avodas Yisroel from the Kozhnutzer Maggid on inyanei Sukka writes a huge chiddush on this topic. If a sheva brachos falls out during Chol Hamoed Sukkos, then every day of Chol Hamoed would be considered like a panim chadashos since there is a different Ushpizin each day, so it is considered like a new guest for every day.

The Shailos Utshuvos of Rav Wosner in Shevet Halevi, chelek ches, siman resh peh writes that from Shas and the Poskim it is clear that on Chol Hamoed one would require panim chadashos. This would include Chol Hamoed Sukkos where we have Ushpizin; nevertheless, panim chadashos would be required during Chol Hamoed Sukkos. Practically speaking, since we don't actually see or enjoy the Ushpizin, it would be very hard to consider them panim chadashos.

Let us hope to see the face of Mashiach Tzidkeinu which would definitely bring a tremendous unprecedented simcha to all of Klal Yisroel.

## Chayei Sarah

Avraham negotiates with Ephron the Hitite to purchase the Cave of Machpelah as a burial place for Sarah. Tradition says that this is also the burial place of Adam and Chava.

Avraham sends Eliezar, his trusted servant, to Aram Naharayim, (between the Tigris and the Euphrates) to find Yitzchak a shiduch - a bride.

Leading a caravan of supplies and riches, Eliezar arrives in Nachor. While resting by "the well", he devises a test to ascertain the worthiness of a potential mate for Yitzchak. Rivkah (Yitzchak's 1st cousin once removed) meets all the criteria and Eliezar presents her with the appropriate gifts.

Eliezar is invited into Bisuel's home (Rivkah's father) and he relates the entire story of his mission and his encounter with Rivkah. Eliezar asks for her hand in marriage to Yitzchak. Bisuel and Lavan (Rivka's brother) agree.

Rivkah express her desire to depart immediately. Her family blesses her, and Eliezar brings her to Canaan. Yitzchak marries Rivka in the year 2108.

Avraham marries Keturah (some say she was Hagar) and has 6 more sons. Avraham dies in 2123 - 1638 b.c.e. at the age of 175. His two sons Yitzchak and Yishmael bury him in the Cave of Machpelah. Yishmael's 12 sons are listed and Yishmael dies at 137.

## Haftarah

Melachim Aleph 1:1-31

Even though it is not his place, King David's eldest sons, Adoniyahu (it was common to end Hebrew names with Ya'hu. Translated, it means "the [Jewish] G-d is the one") was trying to seize the throne away from his younger brother Shlomo. One of the wives of King David, Queen Batsheva (Bathsheba), Shlomo's mother and the Prophet Natan (Nathan), confer regarding Adoniyahu's will to become king. They decide to bring it to King David's attention. Natan confirms to David the news that Batsheva has told him regarding Adoniyahu's ambition. Bathsheba pleads with David to fulfill his promise of her son Shlomo (Solomon) being heir to the throne. King David promises Batsheva to rectify the situation. He takes action by anointing Shlomo as the next King of Israel.



## פרשת חיי שרה

השלימות של אברהם אבינו

ויבא אברהם לספד לשרה ולבכתה" האות כ"ף בתורה קטנה, וכתב הבעל הטורים וז"ל: "כ"ף קטנה, שלא בכה אלא מעט לפי שזקינה היתה עכ"ל, והקשה הראש ישיבה שליט"א וכי משום שזקינה היתה לא היה צריך להספידה רק מעט? ועוד הקשה הר"י שהרי היתה צדיקה אפילו יותר מאברהם ולמה א"כ מיעט בהספידה?

ידועים מה שביאר החתם סופר זיע"א ע"פ דברי החובות הלבבות ( שער יחוד המעשה פרק ה') שמבאר שמלחמת היצר הרע לא כמו מלחמה של בשר ודם, ב"ד שלוחם ומנצח את המנוצח אזי השני מרגיש מנוצח ובוה מסתייב החימה, אמנם במלחמת היצר אינו כן אפילו ניצחו והפילו ושוברו, שוב לא נרגע היצר עד שיפילו שוב ושוב, אפילו אם ניצחו בדבר גדול ימשיך להכשילו עד שיפילו לשאול תחתית, וזה אמרו ז"ל הוא היצר הרע הוא השטן הוא המלאך המות.

וכן מצינו בקידושין (ל:) אמר ר' יצחק יצרו של אדם מתחדש עליו בכל יום שנאמר "רק רע כל היום" אמר רשב"ל יצרו של אדם מתגבר עליו בכל יום ומבקש להמיתו שנאמר "צופה רשע לצדיק ומבקש להמיתו" ע"כ.

וביאר הר"י שליט"א הפשט בזה שזהו שני הדברים שדיבר החובות הלבבות לגבי היצר הרע, אחד שרוצה שוב ושוב להחטיאו וזהו מתחדש עליו, אבל יש עוד ענין שלא ינוח היצר הרע עד שנהיה גם המלאך המות וזהו מתגבר עליו להמיתו. והיינו שלא חולקים ר' יצחק ורשב"ל אלא הוא מוסיף כפי מהותו של היצר תחילה רק יצר ואחרי זה שטן ואחרי זה מלאך המות, וזהו סדרם של דברים. [ ובמאמר המוסגר התבטא הר"י שליט"א שמה שלא מרגישים את היצר הרע זה משום שאנחנו ישינים בתרדמת הזמן.]

ובזה ממילא מובן בטוב טעם ודעת לגבי אברהם אבינו, שהרי כתב רש"י למה נסמכה פרשת העקידה למיתת שרה אמינו, אלא עד ששמע הבשורה של העקידה מיד פרח נשמחה, ובוה אברהם אבינו עמד בנסינו העשירי וכמ"ש מהשב שמעתתא פרשת וירא שביאר על פי ספר העקרים שזה היה הביטול של כל אהבתו אפילו לבנו כלפי ה' יתברך, ולכן כששב לביתו ומוצא שאשתו שנפטרה, ירגיז אדם יצר טוב על היצר הרע, נכנס בו ח"ו הרהור על העקידה שזהו היה סיבת הפטירה והיה נכנס בו שמץ של חרטת על כל ההתבטלות שלו לבוא עולם ח"ו.

לכן כתב הבעל הטורים שמיטע בבכיה עליה, והיינו שלא יבא אפילו להרהר בעקידה שזה היה סיבת הפטירה, וזה שסיים "לפי שזקינה היתה" והיינו עצת היצר המלך זקן וסביל הנואף הזקן הזה, כל הזמן בא באמתלאות לפרשן כל מעשה בין לטוב בין למוטב לקרר ולהוציא החשק, בטענות משונות או מה תריוויח או מה יאמרו הבריות או מה יצא מזה, והדרך ללחום כמו"ש ז"ל ברכות ה. לעולם ירגיז אדם יצר טוב על היצר הרע, היינו לייצר אמתלאות הפוכות לבלבלו, וזהו לימוד נורא מאברהם אבינו כמו שמבאר הבע"ט שמיטע בבכיה שהיתה זקינה, והיינו לפי מה שביאר הר"י שליט"א ע"פ החת"ס שזהו אמתלא שתירץ עצת היצר.

ונה העצה להכיר את תחבולות היצר ללחום בו, ידוע שנהג החתם סופר זיע"א לפני כל שיעור שהיה מוסר כל יום מהשנה שיעור חוץ מתשעה באב ללמוד מהספר חובות הלבבות והיה קורא לו "רבי", ואמר שיום שלא לומד מהספר חובות הלבבות יורד לפי דרגתו ביראת שמים. וזה כל אחד יתחזק בלימוד המוסר להכיר את השונא אותנו ורוצה שנאבד את כל התכלית שלנו בהבלי הזמן.

שבת שלום ומבורך  
דוד יהודה פייסטון  
יורה דעה ליברטי

Erev Shabbos Plag MInyan for Mincha & Maariv  
**BLUEBERRY HILL AREA**  
**CHAYEI SORAH**  
**Mincha 3:18 Plag: 3:38**  
30 Dr Frank Rd. Entrance From Humbert

## Parshas Chayei Sarah

### Keeping Tabs on the Creator- Is He Paying Us Back Fast Enough?

Looking around we see a world of contrasts, a world of contradictions and a world that we cannot hope to understand. How can we fathom it's mysteries?

Rich people seem undeserving to us, cruelty seems to be rewarded. Straightforward and honest individuals are mired in poverty, while trickery zooms ever higher.

But, yes, there is a system of justice here. The same G-d who encourages us to be careful with our weights and measures, has certainly not forgotten to maintain His own Scales, those heavenly scales used to mete out reward and punishment. It's just that we are not privy to their inner workings.

As Eliezer the servant of Avrohom, our forefather, in this weeks Parsha, see's the fruits of his prayers realized before his eyes- he is "astonished" (MishTa'eh-in hebrew, notice the roots of both languages seem to match) upon meeting Rivkah, as she so closely resembles the girl he prayed for as a match for Yitzchok. Will the Master of the universe continue shining His countenance upon them? He waits to see....

There was once a very poor man who found his obligations growing at a pace he could not handle. Running out of ideas and at the end of his rope. He sat down and composed a letter to the Creator. "Dear G-d, he wrote " I have fallen on hard times, my family is suffering because we have no bread to eat. Can you find it in your heart to please send me 1000 dollars to pay off a relentless debtor- or I will surely face total collapse. I know this is a small request for You. Please send it to me at 1245 Crabapple Lane..

Addressing it to "the Master of the Universe- In the Heavens Above",- he dropped the letter in the big blue box near his home, and waited.

The interesting letter caught the eyes of a local post office worker. Near retirement, this mail sorter had made modest gains investing in several well-timed markets and was looking to make a difference in someone's life. Dropping 500 dollars in an envelope and signing off as the King of all Kings, he felt real good about helping a needy person and his family. Not long afterwards, the needy man ran into a brick wall again and churned out the letter that had helped him once before. "I thank you, dear G-d for helping me out last month and I hope you can come through again. I am overwhelmed with obligations, obligations I cannot possibly meet. My own health is suffering now.. Can I be so brazen as to ask you to please send me 1000 dollars again? But this time G-d, can you please send it to me in a different way, there seems to be someone in the Post Office who took some of what you sent me the last time."

We can laugh, but how many times do we hear ourselves saying.. Yes, I was supposed to get so much money but so and so.. "the crook" took it away from me! He caused me a loss.. He took some of my commission etc. Remember how foolish the sender of the letter sounded to us? We must once and

for all realize that one cannot take away from us, that which is rightfully ours. G-d is Ne'eman Leshaleim Schar- He pays all of His obligations! To be sure, having such an attitude in life takes a while to develop, but brings many rewards, not the least of which is; piece of mind.

But, it can also bring us huge gains.. The following is a true story that took place a few years back. "Mrs Fisher" the Shadchanis was upset. She was not invited to the citywide meeting of Matchmakers. It was an important meeting, because any Shadchan attending was guaranteed an extra bonus for every shidduch they made. A significant amount of money had been pledged by an out of town philanthropist. Whether it was an oversight or intentional- there was no way of knowing, but the plain fact is that she did not attend, because she did not know about the meeting, having just returned from an out of town trip. There was an ironclad rule to this bonus. If you did not sign up at the meeting, you would not receive the cash bonuses. She was forlorn.. Her family had watched her over the years spending many, many hours with each boy.. each girl- and of course, most of her suggestions did not pan out. She needed the money. It was not fair!

Instead of complaining and fighting for "justice", she redoubled her efforts quietly and worked extra hard, asking Hashem, in earnest to please help her. Her efforts were rewarded beyond her wildest dreams, when at the end of this year she counted 19 successful shidduchim. More than she had made her entire life!

Prayer helps in even the most dire circumstances. But we must believe in the power of our requests.

שפכי נמלים ליבך ונח פני ה'.

The popular Carlebach tune- "May our prayers flow like water from the depths of our heart", actually comes from Eichah, which we read on Tisha B'Av, the most somber day of the year. But its metaphors combine to give our prayers a meaningful direction. Why the comparison to water? Some have commented that, just as we would not hesitate to pour another glass of water, if we were to spill the first glass, we should never ever give up praying for what we need; over and over again- until we are answered. Similarly, why are our prayers compared to water and not wine or oil- much richer, deeper and more significant liquids?

The answer is simple and eye opening. When pouring wine or oil from a bottle- some of the contents inevitably remains on the bottom. Only when water is poured does the bottle empty out completely. In order for our prayers to reach their mark, they must be genuine and complete. We must pour out every last drop of our heartfelt pleas to the One who can surely help us.

May all of our prayers for this year and every year be answered speedily and for the good. And may we, our families, our communities and our nation be the recipients of good health, good children and all that we need to live, from a loving G-d who wishes only the best for all of us.

Good Shabbos!



# Do You Sleep During the Sermon?

## Time Is Not Money; It Is Life

### **Churchill Sleeping**

They tell this story about Winston Churchill. As Savior of the free world he felt himself entitled to grab a little shuteye (“schlof”, or nap) in the House of Commons. When a fellow Parliament member approached him and said “Must you fall asleep when I am speaking?” Churchill answered, “No, it is purely voluntary.”

The Lubavitcher Rebbe once noticed people sleeping during a public “farbrengen” address. He said that he takes some comfort in the story of the Midrash, to be discussed below, that Rabbi Akiva once noticed his students were falling asleep in his class. If one can fall asleep on Rabbi Akiva, the greatest authority on the entire Oral Tradition of Torah, who are we to complain?

Alas, it seems, Jews have been sleeping through sermons from the days of yore. Nothing has changed.

### **Rabbi Akiva’s Class**

Says the Midrash:

מדרש רבה בראשית נח, ג: רבי עקיבא היה יושב ודורש והצבור מתנמנם. בקש לעורר. אמר מה ראתה אסתר שתמלוק על קכ”ז מדינה? אלא תבוא אסתר שהיא בת בתה של שרה שחיתה קכ”ז שנה ותמלוק על קכ”ז מדינה

Once, as Rabbi Akiva taught a class, he noticed that the audience began falling asleep. He wished to awaken them. Rabbi Akiva interrupted his lecture and said:

Why did Esther, the queen of Achasverosh, the Monarch of the Persian Empire, decide to reign over 127 countries? Because Esther was a granddaughter of Sarah who lived for 127 years. Let the granddaughter of Sarah, who lived for 127 years, come and reign over 127 countries.

This is how Rabbi Akiva got the audience to wake up.

This is so strange of a story. It evokes a number of questions. We will discuss one.

Why did Rabbi Akiva choose this particular insights—from all the endless idea he could have shared—as the way of waking up his drowsy crowd? And why did he think that this statement would awake them? It does not seem to be such a humorous, dramatic or exhilarating statement as to awake a Jewish audience from their sleep during the Rabbi’s sermon? I mean, we all know that the get a Jew out of his slumber during a Rabbi’s sermon, is a unique skill, unheard of as of yet in the annals of Jewish history!

[At least I can speak for myself: In my years as a Rabbi I am still trying to master this skill, but to no avail.]

### **Cherish the Second**

The question was answered by the first Rebbe of Ger, the Chedushei Harim (Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Alter, 1799–1866), in a rather creative way.

Through this observation, Rabbi Akiva gently reprimanded his students for sleeping through the class. If Esther reigned over 127 countries, or provinces, in the large Persian Empire, corresponding to Sarah’s 127 years of life, it follows that for each year of Sarah’s life, Esther was granted kingship over an entire province or country. It follows then, that for each month of her life, she was given the gift of kingship over an entire city (a country contains at least 12 cities.) It follows then, that for each week of her life, she was rewarded with a town (a city has at least four towns). This would mean that for each day of her life she was rewarded with a neighborhood or section of the town. If we break it down even further, we will find that for every second of her life, she was rewarded with an entire block, over which her descendant, Queen Ester, ruled!

Rabbi Akiva thus sought to impress upon his students the value, potential and significance of every moment of life. Sarah received immense reward for each and every second of her life, because she devoted all her time and energy to living an honest, meaningful and good life. This was the subtle message that Rabbi Akiva, in his pedagogical brilliance, conveyed to his sleepy students. We cannot squander such a valuable resource as a time—not even a minute! Each moment is precious and laden with great potential.

### **The Gift of Time**

Imagine there is a bank which credits your account each morning with \$86,400.00, carries over no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day.

What would you do? Draw out every cent, of course!

Well, everyone has such a bank. It’s name is time. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds.

Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever

of this you have failed to invest to good purpose.

It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft.

Each day it opens a new account for you.

If you fail to use the day’s deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against the tomorrow.

You must live in the present on today’s deposits.

Time waits for no one. Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That’s why it’s called the ‘present.’

As the saying goes, to realize the value of ONE MINUTE, ask a person who missed the train. To realize the value of ONE SECOND, ask a person who just avoided an accident. To realize the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who won a silver medal in the Olympics.

### **What Time Is It?**

You know the story of the man who came to the therapist for a very serious problem.

“How can I help you?” asks the therapist.

Yes, says the patient. Please tell me what time is it?

Therapist: Three o’clock.

Patient: Oh, no! G-d help me.

Therapist: What’s the matter?

Patient: I’ve been asking the time all day. And everybody gives me a different answer!...

### **The Murderous Teacher**

Aristotle once asked his students: Who is the greatest teacher who kills all of his students?

The answer: Time!

### **Time Is Life**

The Lubavitcher Rebbe once told my late father, Mr. Gershon Jacobson: “The world says, ‘Time is money;’ I say ‘Time is life!’”

This is what Rabbi Akiva was telling his students: Don’t sleep through your life. If you are sleeping in my class, you are sleeping through life. Look at Sarah and see what she accomplished with one minute.



## Using the secular date

I would like to share with you some highlights of this week's Friday Morning shiur, given in the Kollel Boker, in connection to the new limud of Meseches Rosh Hashana. There is a fascinating topic addressed on the first daf of the Mesechta, "Using the Secular Date."

The Mishna in Rosh Hashana tells us that there are four "New Years." Although in regards to many things, Rosh Hashana is the Jewish New Year, in regards to counting the months, Nisan is considered the first. In other words, although the Jewish year starts in Tishrei, we start counting the months from Nisan.

This is based on the pasuk in Parsha Bo (12:2): הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֵאשִׁית הַחֹדָשִׁים רֵאשִׁוֹן הוּא לָכֶם לְחֹדֶשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה "This month [of Nisan] is for you the 'head' of the months; it shall be for you the first of the months." This is the very first mitzvah in the Torah: we shall not count the months from Rosh Hshanah, which is in Tishrei; rather, Chodesh Nisan shall be considered the first month.

The Ramban, there, expounds on this mitzvah and explains that the Torah wants us to use the numbers for counting the months in reference to yetzias mitzra'im, i.e., the 1st month from our redemption, the 7th month, etc. This is in order to constantly remember the great miracles that Hasehm did for us when we

were redeemed from mitzra'im. Therefore, he adds, there is no mention of any names of the months in the Torah: only the "first month," the "second month," etc.

He adds that that is the reason for the expression that is used: רֵאשִׁוֹן הוּא לָכֶם "This month is for 'you' the head," because it is not the beginning of the year per se, it is rather the beginning of the counting of the Jewish months. That is also, says the Ramban, why there are no names of months in the Torah, just numbers. This is all in order to constantly remember the great miracles that Hashem performed in Mitzra'im.

The Ramban continues that we find this concept in regards to counting the days of the week, as well. The Pasuk in Parshas Yisro states: זָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ "Remember the day of Shabbos to sanctify it." The more well known explanation of the pasuk is that one must articulate the great holiness of the Shabbos, which we do by reciting the Kiddush. The Ramban, however, quotes the Mechilta, who explains the pasuk to mean that the entire week one must remember the sanctity of the Shabbos.

This can be fulfilled by preparing for Shabbos, throughout the week. It is also a source for

calling each day of the week in its relationship to Shabbos. This is a requirement to say "yom rishon," "yom sheini," etc., as we do in the introduction to the shir shel yom. This gives us the ability to constantly remember our Creator. The Kaf Hachaim writes this, as well, in the name of the Arizal, that this is an opportunity to fulfill this mitzvah.

It is worth noting that, as we discussed in previous shiurim, when performing a mitzvah, one must specifically have in mind to fulfill the mitzvah. Consequently, when reciting the shir shel yom, one must have in mind to fulfill this mitzvah.

In conclusion, we count the days until Shabbos and count the months, starting from Nissan, thereby we will constantly remember Hashem's creation of the world and His wondrous miracles, when He redeemed us from bondage.

So, this being the case, why, today do we use names for the months, and what about the use of the secular date? This will be explored in the next article, b'ezras Hashem.

As always, the shiur is available on the shul's website 18Forshay.com, Torahanytime.com, and on MP3 in the shul.

Wishing you a wonderful Shabbos,

*Rabbi Nachum Scheiner*

בית מדרש אור חיים

BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM  
COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

18 FORSHAY ROAD, MONSEY, NEW YORK 10952  
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RABBI AARON LANKRY

On behalf of the entire kehilla,  
we send our condolences to our esteemed BET editor

## Avi Rubinfeld

upon the petira of his mother  
**Mrs. Adele Rubinfeld A"H,**

המקום ינחם אתכם

בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

May Hashem comfort you among the mourners  
of Tzion and Jerusalem. May the family only know of Simchos!

*Rabbi Ahron Lankry*

*Rabbi Daniel Coren*

*Rabbi YY Jacobson*

*Rabbi Nachum Scheiner*

## WHEN A SETBACK IN LIFE CAN BE FOR ONE'S GOOD

In the 1930s, Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky was Rav of a small, sixty-family community in a town called Tzitevien. His family lived in dire poverty and he could not even afford to buy a suit for his son Binyamin for his Bar Mitzvah. Unable to subsist on the income he earned, Rav Yaakov applied over the course of several years for rabbinical positions in larger towns.

The last one for which he applied was in Vilkomir, the third largest Jewish community in Lithuania. After several interviews, Rav Yaakov was offered the position. He returned home to tell his wife the great news, and the household erupted

in jubilation; finally their crushing poverty would be alleviated.

Three weeks later, the jubilation turned to grief when Rav Yaakov received news that the position had gone to someone else. The Rebbetzin cried bitter tears over the loss of the rabbanus in Vilkomir, recognizing that it virtually ensured that Rav Yaakov would have to seek some means of support abroad.

The failure to win that position, as well as the others, profoundly affected Rav Yaakov's own strong sense of Divine Providence. The successful candidates and their families eventually fell into the hands of the Nazis.

In counseling people undergoing difficult tests, Rav Yaakov would often point to his own experience as an example of how that which is perceived at the moment as the greatest tragedy may, with the passage of time, be revealed to be the greatest salvation.

(Editor's Note: Because of his being unable to support himself as a rav in Lithuania, Rav Yaakov came to America where he became a rav in Toronto and was able to bring over his wife and children, thus saving them from probable annihilation in Churban Europe (the Holocaust.)



# LESSONS FROM THE PARSHA THE TRUE ROLE OF WOMEN

Rabbi Yosroel Reisman

JOKE OF THE WEEK



At the end of the Parsha after Shishi in 25:6 the very last thing Avraham Avinu does before the Posuk says that he passed away. The last thing he does is to send away the Bnei Ketura (with gifts). Avraham Avinu had many more children than Yitzchok and Yishmael. He had the Bnei Ketura here at the end of the Parsha which were quite a number of additional children. In his lifetime he has a sudden change of heart and sends them away (וְיִצְחָק מֵעַל יְצִיחָק בְּנוֹ, בְּעוֹדָו חַי), as they would not have a proper influence on his son Yitzchok.

The question is that Yishmael was a person who certainly would have less than a positive influence on Yitzchok. Yet, Avraham was reluctant to send him away and it was Sarah who compelled him to send Yishmael away.

Here he has other children and he sends them away on his own. Why?

Rav Hutner in the Pachad Yitzchok on Mamarei Pesach 83 brings a thought from the GRA, the Vilna

Gaon. We are all familiar with the fact that there is a Bris Avraham, Bris Yitzchok, and Bris Yaakov.

HKB"H has a covenant with the Jewish people which comes from each of the Avos. The GRA says that

when the Torah says that Hashem remembered Es Brisi Avraham, V'es Brisi Yitzchok, V'es Brisi

Yaakov, the rule is that the word Es attaches to something and indicates a second dimension to it, something in addition to it.

What is added by Es Brisi Avraham, V'es Brisi Yitzchok, V'es Brisi Yaakov? The Gra says there is a Brisa Imahos as well. The Imahos too have a Bris which is a specific Bris to the Imahos. What is that? That Bris is that the Imahos, the Jewish mother is a woman who is a Geder, a Choma. Somebody who protects the home. The husband typically goes out into the world and the mother even in a society where she goes out into the world, has as her job the protecting of the home from outside influences.

A woman is called a Choma, a wall, a protective wall around the home. Under the Chuppah, a Kallah walks around her Chosson 7 times and the language that is used is that she is the Choma,

she is the wall, she is the barrier to the home. The Bris of the Imahos was to protect the home from outside influences.

Sarah made sure that Yishmael was sent away. Rivka made sure that Yaakov was protected from the influence of Eisav. Rachel and Leah were the ones who left the house of Lavan, left the influence of Lavan behind, and each of these Imahos had this role, the role of being a Choma.

When the Bnei Ketura were born, there was no Sarah. Sarah had passed away already. The Bris of the Imahos did not exist. Here Avraham Avinu had to undertake the role of the Jewish mother and he understood that he had to do what Sarah would have done. That is the role of the mother of Klal Yisrael.

It is not the way we typically look at it. Typically, when one looks for a wife, a person is not necessarily looking for someone that is protective or shy from the influence of the street. To the typical young man today, a woman who is in style, who is very attractive, very desirable, she has a style, she is in the world.

Even a man who finds himself susceptible to the influences of the world, should be happy to have a wife who is a barrier to the house, who doesn't want the smart phone, who doesn't want the outside influences in the home.

That is the role of the Imahos. It bothered Avraham Avinu Kavayochel. The Posuk says that he was unhappy with Sarah's recommendation. The Ribbono Shel Olam had to say that to all which Sarah tells you, you should listen. Similarly, Rivkah had to engineer a scenario so that the berochas went to Yaakov.

The men who are lucky enough to have wives that want such a protection in their house should not resist it. They should listen to the word of the Ribbono Shel Olam. You may say say that your wife is not Sarah and that may be true but neither are you Avraham Avinu.

And thus, the Pachad Yitzchok gives us an insight into the role that the Imahos played in developing Klal Yisrael. This role of Choma Misaviv, of protecting their children from the outside influences.



Fall has got to be the most artistic season of the year. When I walk outside and look around me, I am speechless before the beauty of the

developing season. Everywhere you go, you can hear nature screaming out with personality. Beautiful colors everywhere. Each tree with its unique flavor - it's truly a gorgeous scene to behold.

Recently, I heard a very interesting question during a shiur, on my way to work.

If one has ever been near a person on his/her death bed, they know it is not a pretty scene. As people get older and start to depart from this world, the process in which they leave is frightening. (I'm going to avoid details). The same is true for all

other living beings. Except for when it comes to the trees. WHY did HaShem, in his reasonable ways, change the process with the trees? Why do trees tend to look so beautiful right before the moment they lose their leaves for the winter? Of course, it would make sense to reveal their magical colors at some point during the year. But in the Fall, right before they die, would it not be logical for them to shrivel up as all other life does?

His answer to this fantastic question, to me, wasn't enough. So I asked around until I heard an answer that I was satisfied with. I would like to share it with my readers.

During the Summer season, the leaves collect falling rain drops for the trees' nourishment, offer shade to those who pass by, and give way to fruit. But as winter approaches, all these purposes have already been completed. Perhaps the wondrous color of the Fall is meant to signify that true beauty is achieved through completing one's tafkid.

Think about it, Yehuda Grodtko

1. It's hard to explain puns to kleptomaniacs because they always take things literally.
2. A soldier survived mustard gas in battle, and then pepper spray by the police. He's now a seasoned veteran.
3. What's the best thing about Switzerland? I don't know, but their flag is a huge plus.
4. I'm addicted to brake fluid, but I can stop whenever I want.
5. "This is your captain speaking, AND THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SHOUTING."
6. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
7. I hate Russian dolls...so full of themselves.
8. "I stand corrected," said the man in the orthopedic shoes.
9. My granddad has the heart of a lion and a lifetime ban from the Bronx Zoo.
10. I went on a once in a lifetime holiday. Never again.
11. They all laughed when I said I wanted to be a comedian. Well, they're not laughing now.
12. I used to be addicted to soap, but I'm clean now.
13. Have I told you this deja vu joke before?
14. Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks
15. Despite the cost of living, have you noticed how popular it remains?
16. Energizer Bunny arrested and charged with battery.
17. Few women admit their age. Few men act theirs.
18. For every action, there is an equal and opposite criticism.
19. For Sale: Parachute. Only used once, never opened, small stain.

# Hashem Loves You

Rabbi Dovid Orlofsky

It would seem that the life of Avraham Avinu reaches its crescendo in last week's parsha with the Akaidas Yitzchok. Overcoming all doubts, preconceived notions and beliefs, Avraham Avinu manages to reach a level of complete attachment to Hashem so that even a request that seems to defy everything his life has stood for becomes an unquestioned observance.

And yet, Rashi provides us with what appears to be a postscript to this incredible encounter at the beginning of this week's parsha. Avraham returns home from the Akaida to find that his beloved wife Sorah, his advisor and partner for over a century, has passed away. According to Rabbaynu Yonah this event is even harder than the Akaida and serves as the tenth test. One can only imagine the letdown Avrohom experienced after having climbed to the heights of Har HaMoriah and then come home to this unexpected tragedy. But, if this was not the tenth test, as Rabbaynu Yonah maintains, and in fact Avraham had finished his work, what is the connection of the death of Sorah and the Akeyda?

Rashi, of course, (I say of course because everyone is of course learning the parsha with Rashi every week. If not, this would be a great time to start so the next time I quote an obvious Rashi you can nod your head as you're reading this instead of saying to yourself "Rashi says what?") brings the Chazal that says that the Sotan told Sorah about the Akayda and she died from the shock. The Akaida, which served as Avraham's zenith would prove the source of Sorah's holy neshoma departing from this world.

Now this poses many problems. Can the Sotan just fly around scaring people to death? Let's answer simply that it was Sorah's time to go and the Sotan needed some way to take a tzaddakis who as Rashi tells us "was like a twenty year old without sin". But perhaps the bigger question is the one posed by Reb Chaim Shmulevitz, the Mirrer Rosh Yeshiva. We know from the story of the sending away of Hager and Yishmoel that Hashem felt that on some level Sorah was greater than Avraham. How exactly she was is for another discussion, perhaps at your Shabbos table. But if Sorah was greater than Avraham, how is it that Avraham hears about the Akayda, wrestles with the Sotan for three days as they journey to Har HaMoriah, climbs the mountain and passes the test, but Sorah dies from just

hearing about it. If she was greater than she should have been able to handle it as well as Avraham.

Reb Chaim gives three answers and I want to focus on the third. The reason Sorah couldn't handle it was because it wasn't her test! Hashem never gives us a test without giving us the strength to pass it. Avraham had the strength to do what needed to be done because it was his test. Sorah could die from just hearing about it.

In Yiddish they say everyone has their own pekela, their own special bundle of problems. And if everyone would sit around the table and take out their pekela and put it on the table, after you looked around, you would pick up your own package. Not necessarily because yours is easier, but because you know inside that you have the strength to handle your problems. But you could die looking at someone else's problems.

Years ago on an Eruv Yom Kippur I got a phone call from a young man I knew. He asked if I had any time to meet with him. I told him it was Erev Yom Kippur and my schedule's kind of tight. What is it about, maybe I can tide you over till after Yom Tov. He tells me he's out of faith. Now Erev Yom Kippur is a bad time to be out of faith, so I asked him why he felt that way. He told me a story which was perhaps one of the saddest I have heard in my whole life. He was adopted by his grandparents after his father had been institutionalized and his mother tried to kill him. His grandparents weren't well off so he had to help them during most of his free time in his grandfather's store. That's why he was there when the robbers shot his grandfather. He was the one who had to clean up the blood. He had one or two other relatives who all passed away during a short period of time.

Eventually he made his way to Eretz Yisroel and became frum. He had a very hard time finding a shidduch because he had health problems. Finally, he found a wonderful frum girl, got married a few years before and now, Eruv Yom Kippur, he got the results back from the doctors that he and his wife could never have children. He was out of faith. I told him I needed a little time and would call him back.

They tell a story with Reb Moshe Feinstein that once while he was speaking with

an almana, there were some Yeshiva Bochurim waiting to speak to him. Since the door was ajar, they ended up eavesdropping on the conversation. They heard her telling Reb Moshe a tale of woe that had them all in tears. When she finally left, it was their turn to go in, but how could they face Reb Moshe knowing the emotional pain he had just experienced? Finally they entered, only to find Reb Moshe waiting for them with his usual pleasant and unperturbed countenance. They were stunned and it wasn't difficult for Reb Moshe to deduce what had taken place. First, he upbraided them for listening in on the conversation. Then he explained to them that if you are to succeed in Klal work you must have one part of your heart that is closed and that no one can enter. Otherwise you will burn out and lose your effectiveness.

I have managed to maintain that standard through most of my career and my wife has at times been surprised how I manage to pull myself together almost instantly after a difficult meeting or conversation. So when she saw the look on my face when I hung up the phone she knew this must have been something pretty bad. I summed up the conversation for her and she said "Oh no, what are you possibly going to tell him?" I said "I already know what to tell him, I just need the strength to say it".

When I finally called back I said to him, "I really don't have a right to tell you what I am about to say, but I'm telling it to you because you know it's emes. Rashi at the beginning of Parshas Toldos says that Yitzchok and Rivka were childless for ten years because Hashem loves the tefillas of tzaddikim. You and your wife must be very special people, because Hashem is pushing the two of you pretty hard. But you know that you have the strength inside to handle this." He said to me that he already knew that, he just needed to hear it from someone.

I felt comfortable saying what I said, because I knew what Reb Chaim said, no one gets a nisayon without also getting the strength to pass it. But the rest of us can die sometimes from hearing the pain other people have to endure. Let's hope that Moshiach comes soon and "אז ימלא ארץ יראת ה' ונשחוק בנינו", we'll finally be able to fill our lives with joy because we'll have seen all the tests passed and the Name of Hashem one in the world.



## KIDDUSHIN: MITZVAH OR NOT – HALACHIC ANALYSIS OF THE BROCHA

Before we discuss the halachic details of the actual kiddushin, it is appropriate to start with the brocha recited before the kiddushin and explore its function.

There are various categories of brochos that we recite: There are some brochos that are birchos hamitzvos, a brocha recited before performing a mitzvah; there are some brochos that are birchos ha'shvach, a brocha recited praising Hashem for something that He does for us or His wonders in the world; there are also brochos that are recited before partaking of the enjoyments of this world. What status does this brocha have; to which of these categories does it belong? Indeed, all of these possibilities are correct, as there is an opinion that holds of each one.

### ROSH – BIRCHAS HA'SHVACH

In regards to the birchaas ha'eirusin, the Rosh (Kesuvos 1:12) asks four questions on the presumption that it is a brocha upon the mitzvah of getting married:

1. If this is a regular brocha on the mitzvah of getting married, why is it that we don't use the same text as other birchos hamitzvos and not just the simple text "asher kidshinu b'mitzvosuv al ..."?
2. Why do we add to the text of the brocha that it is forbidden to live with an arusa, before the chupa takes place? We do not mention what is forbidden in regards to other mitzvos, such as sh'chita (that we are forbidden to eat without sh'chita), so why do we mention it here?
3. Why is the topic of arayos, forbidden marriages, mentioned in the text of the brocha?

4. If it is a brocha on the mitzvah of kiddushin, why is the chupa mentioned?

The Rosh proves from these questions that, in fact, there is no birchas hamitzvah on getting married, simply because there is no mitzvah to get married, per se. Rather, the mitzvah is for one to have children, which is not necessarily dependant on getting married; each one can be done without the other. It is possible for one to marry a woman who cannot bear children. On the flip side, under certain circumstances, one can live with a pilegesh, which does not have the same binding as a bona fide marriage and thus bring children into the world.

The Rosh asserts that the brocha is actually a birchas ha'shvach, thanking Hashem for the opportunity to get married, and we mention the greatness of the Jewish marriage. Once we have this appreciation of the brocha, we can understand that the text of the brocha should, indeed, reflect on the greatness of a Jewish marriage. The Rosh continues, by pointing out that, based on this understanding, all of the questions are answered: Since this is a birchas ha'shvach about the greatness of the Jewish marriage, it is quite appropriate to mention who one may marry and that the marriage is only completed with the chupa.

Tosfos in Pesachim (7a) seems to concur with this understanding that it is a birchas ha'shvach, similar to the brocha of "lihachniso bivriso shel avraham," recited at a bris mila. This is quoted by the Taz (Y"D 1:16), in discussing the various types of brachos. The Taz explains that, based on this understanding – that it is a general praise to Hashem and not a brocha on the choson's performance of the mitzvah – we can understand how the mesader kiddushin can be the one to recite the brocha before the kiddushin.

The Taz, here in Even Ha'ezer, also explains the brocha that it is a birchas ha'shvach.

Rambam – birchas hamitzvah

The Rambam (Ishus 3:19, 23), however, maintains that Kiddushin is, in fact, a mitzvah and that the brocha is a birchas hamitzvah. Thus, he is arguing on the Rosh on two accounts: he opines that the kiddushin itself is a mitzvah, regardless of whether it facilitates having children and he also posits that the brocha is a birchas hamitzvah. The Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzvah 552) concurs with this opinion of the Rambam, as well as the Rivash (398).

In conclusion, there is a difference of opinions if the birchas eirusin is a birchas hamitzvah or a birchas ha'shvach. B'ezras Hashem, next week we will explore some of the nafka minos, the halachic differences between the two perspectives.

### COMMUNITY KOLLEL NEWS:

As in the past, I give a shiur on Friday mornings, on various topics. This week's shiur will be on the topic of using the secular date. See "Halacha Corner" for some highlights of the shiur.

The Night Kollel started the topic of hilchos kiddushin, nisu'in, and sheva brochos and will be hosting an introductory shiur, from the renowned maggid shiur, Rabbi Zev Smith. The shiur will take place tonight, Thursday, November 9, at 8:45pm, followed by Q&A session. Rabbi Smith will give a step by step practical guide to what goes on at a Jewish wedding.

Wishing you a wonderful Shabbos,

*Rabbi Nachum Scheiner*



Night kollel Gemara shiur for young working individuals.



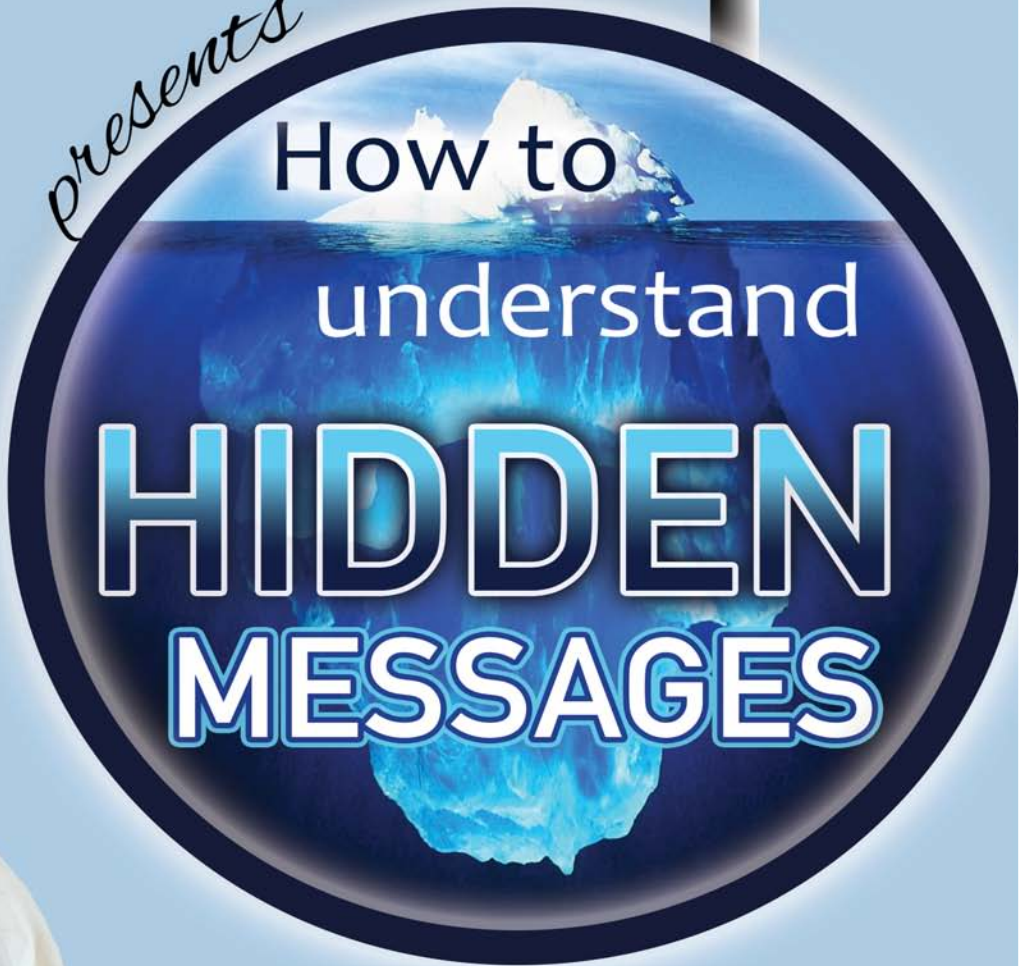
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