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# שבת מברכים חודש כסלו



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night 28 minutes and 8  
Chalokim after 10.  
Rosh Chodesh is  
Thursday and Friday.**



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## PARASHAT CHAYA SARA

Heads or tails? That is the question that we ask when we flip a coin in the air, and the one that guessed correctly wins. But let's say the coin did not have a head or face but only words on both sides?

Berashis Rabba 39:11, "And I will make your name great" Hashem promised Avraham Avinu that a coin will be issued that will make his name great and define his life's mission. The Gemara in Baba Kama 97b quotes a Beraisa that asked the question, what is the coin of Avraham Avinu? It explains; there was a coin that had words written on one side, "Zaken V Zekana- old man and old woman", and on the other side, "Bechor v"Betulah-young man and a maiden". Tosfot explains that there were no images on the coin because it is against Halacha. The Pri Megdim states in Eitz Yoseph on Medrash that a picture with just a profile or one eye is not considered an image and would be allowed Halachically. Therefore, there is a possibility that there was an outline image of an older man and a lady and younger one on the coin.

Rashi explains the words Zaken and Zekana is referring to Avraham and Sara. The young man and maiden are referring to Yitzchok and Rifka. Some Achronim ask that how can Rivka be on the coin with Sara since Sara passed away before Rivka was born. This makes Rashi explanation difficult to understand. Furthermore, if the intent is to personify Avraham and why not just write Avraham and Sara on one side and Yitzchok and Rifka on the other? Why use the expression of old and young?

When Avraham bought the land from Ephron he paid four hundred shekel of silver coins that were of a special mint, and accepted universally (Over Lasocher). It was the most popular coin in the day. According to research, the first coins were one sided push out printed with the head of a lion. It was made 2,700 years ago from electrum, a natural occurring alloy of gold and silver from the city of Lydia. Avraham lived 3,800 years ago and his coin was made of pure silver and was stamped on both sides. Avraham

Avinu was far more advanced than the rest of the world! But even more so, Avraham made a coin that expressed the miracle of Hashem unlike most kings who only want to perpetuate their own glory.

The Ben Yehoyada explains that the coin indicates that Yitzchak and Rivka were equivalent to Avraham and Sara in greatness even at a younger age. This is challenging to comprehend. Perhaps, such a coin seems to express that Yitzchak and Rivka continued the same lofty mission of Avraham and Sara, to bring recognition of Hashem into the world.

In the world we live today we have newspapers, radio, internet, television and more in which to market and convey messages to the masses. In ancient times, the coin was not simply a currency but also a means to expose and identify leaders and their influences. Most kings would mint a coin with their image and year of reign. Avraham and Sara wished to convey to the world the new concept of monotheism and their belief in Hashem. This was their life's mission. Avraham and Sara were granted a miracle that at an old age they returned to their youth and had a child. This was an opportunity for them to share with the world another proof of Hashem's omnipotence and benevolence. They stamped a coin on both sides, for the first time, to illustrate this vital lesson and spread this message throughout the world. Therefore, Avraham and Sara did not write their own names on the coin but rather a reference to the miracle they received. They were not interested in self-glory rather to perpetuate the glory of Hashem.

The coin today is not in existence but its lesson lives on. We must focus on perpetuating the name of Hashem as a priority and not our own self aggrandization. This was the mission of Avraham and Sara, and it should be our mission as well.

So, what is heads and what is tails? Our Avos and Imahos have shown us.

Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Aaron Lankry

NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

**EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY**

12:12, 1:00, 1:30 ,2:00 2:30

## SHABBOS ZMANIM

CANDLE LIGHTING	4:16 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>ALEF TENT</sup>	4:26 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA <sup>BAIS CHABAD</sup>	4:26 <sup>PM</sup>
SHKIYA	4:34 <sup>PM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR</sup>	6:09 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN</sup>	8:00 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN <sup>18 TENT</sup>	9:15 <sup>AM</sup>
SHACHRIS <sup>20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD</sup>	10:00 <sup>AM</sup>
<b>NEW SHACHRIS <sup>18 FORSHAY</sup></b>	<b>NEW 10:15<sup>AM</sup></b>
MINCHA	1:45 <sup>PM</sup>
PIRCHEI	2:00 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	4:15 <sup>PM</sup>
SHKIYA	4:34 <sup>PM</sup>
MARRIV	5:14 <sup>PM</sup> <sup>18 TENT</sup> , 5:19 <sup>PM</sup>

## WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS	
<b>20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ</b>	
S 6:29 M 6:30 T 6:31 W 6:32 T 6:34 F 6:35	
MINCHA & MARIV	
<b>12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG</b>	
S 3:21 M 3:20 T 3:20 W 3:19 T 3:19	
MINCHA & MARIV	
<b>12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA</b>	
S 4:21 M 4:21 T 4:20 W 4:20 T 4:19	
<b>NOVEMBER 20 – NOVEMBER 25</b>	
NEITZ IS 6:49 – 6:55	
PELAG IS 3:33 – 3:31	
SHKIA IS 4:33 – 4:31	
MAGEN AVRAHAM	
8:40 AM – 8:43	
GRA- BAAL HATANYA	
9:16 AM – 9:19	

Zmanim by our incredible Gabbai  
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## Mincha Mariv Minyanim

**18 Main מנחה**

מנחה (12:10-12:41)

**מעריב**

מעריב

↑ Upstairs  
↓ Main Floor

12:30	Tent א	At 10 *	Tent א
12:45	Tent א	At 10:10 *	Tent א
1:00	Tent ב	6 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
1:15	Tent ג	10 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
1:30	Tent ד	12 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
1:45	Tent א	14 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
2:00	Tent ב	16 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
2:15	Tent ג	18 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
2:30	Tent ד	20 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
2:45	Tent א	22 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
3:00	Tent ב	24 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
3:15	Tent ג	26 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
3:30	Tent ד	28 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
3:45	Tent א	30 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
4:00	Tent ב	32 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
4:15	Tent ג	34 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
4:30	Tent ד	36 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
4:45	Tent א	38 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
5:00	Tent ב	40 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
5:15	Tent ג	42 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
5:30	Tent ד	44 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
5:45	Tent א	46 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
6:00	Tent ב	48 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
6:15	Tent ג	50 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
6:30	Tent ד	52 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
6:45	Tent א	54 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
7:00	Tent ב	56 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
7:15	Tent ג	58 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
7:30	Tent ד	60 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
7:45	Tent א	62 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
8:00	Tent ב	64 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
8:15	Tent ג	66 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
8:30	Tent ד	68 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
8:45	Tent א	70 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
9:00	Tent ב	72 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
9:15	Tent ג	74 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
9:30	Tent ד	76 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
9:45	Tent א	78 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
10:00	Tent ב	80 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
10:15	Tent ג	82 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
10:30	Tent ד	84 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
10:45	Tent א	86 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
11:00	Tent ב	88 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
11:15	Tent ג	90 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
11:30	Tent ד	92 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
11:45	Tent א	94 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
12:00am	Tent ב	96 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
12:15	Tent ג	98 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
12:30	Tent ד	100 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
12:45	Tent א	102 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
1:00	Tent ב	104 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
1:15	Tent ג	106 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
1:30	Tent ד	108 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
1:45	Tent א	110 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
2:00	Tent ב	112 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב
2:15	Tent ג	114 MIN. AFTER	Tent ג
2:30	Tent ד	116 MIN. AFTER	Tent ד
2:45	Tent א	118 MIN. AFTER	Tent א
3:00	Tent ב	120 MIN. AFTER	Tent ב

FOR MORE INFO: CALL 845-364-2424  
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# PARSHAS CHAYEI SARA

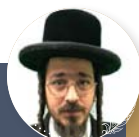
At the 8 am kiddush this past Shabbos, I shared a brilliant idea from Rav Schwab Z'L. The idea is a lesson for life that sheds light on many different situations, including our current Parsha, Parshas Chaye Sara. The Passuk in last week's parsha states, "ותחכש ותחכש לא כי צחקת". The simple translation implies that Sarah Imainu denied the fact that she laughed about the news (that she would give birth) and she did so out of fear. Rav Schwab says that it is obvious that Sarah would not just deny the truth, especially in front of Hashem who knows everything. The words of the Pasuk are teaching us that Sarah only laughed inside of herself. This means that Sarah did not laugh out loud about the wonderful news. Rather it was only inside of Sarah, in the deep crevices of her heart, that there was a tiny sense of doubt and laughter, and Sarah herself didn't detect its presence. This is what the Torah means when it says she denied her laughter out of fear; the emotion of fear masked that small sense of doubt and hence her reaction was to say, "I didn't laugh." Only Hashem knew that there was room here to work on more Emuna, even for Sarah Imainu.

Rav Schwab is teaching us a vital lesson about life. Many times we are convinced we know the truth about something, especially when it's about ourselves, and when someone is correcting us we immediately reject the information based on what we're convinced is the true reality. The key is to double-check deep down inside of us for the cause and motivation of our reaction.

In this week's Parsha, we encounter different personalities who are driven to take different actions based on their inner core. First, we meet Ephron who claims to be a benevolent person and is ready to give Avraham whatever he wants for free. In the end not only does he charge him an exuberant amount of money, but he also demands it be the best type of coin. This change, Chazal tell us, is based on his inner self. Ephron had a bad eye, and since he never worked on it he goes down in history as a greedy, negative-eyed personality. In direct opposition, the Torah lengthily describes the story of Rivka, whose inner core was to do kindness for others, and she went out of her way to do more for Eliezer than she was asked to do.

We certainly don't want to go down in history as someone who was a failure because of the lack of real introspection. There are essentially two methods to save our legacy. One is to learn and really study works like Mesilat Yesharim and Chovos Halevavos. However, sometimes it is not enough to study alone and one needs to "schmooze" it over with a Rabbi or a good wise friend.

Good Shabbas



## Parshas Chayei Sorah The Building Blocks of Our World

Every once in a while we need to step back and examine our priorities. We need to reset, get back on track...think about what Hashem really wants from us. What a powerful message we all received 3500 years ago. The Torah is a mandate- a guide for life, but it's more, much more than that. It's lessons pulse through our veins, every word holy, every letter a world of knowledge.

The Torah bonds us with our Creator. We must reflect His attributes. Just as Hashem is merciful and caring towards His creations, we must be just as caring to those around us.

If we are to truly absorb the essence of the Torah, we must make Chesed not only a priority but our guiding light..

When Avrohom Avinu, the progenitor of Chesed in the world was looking for a wife for his only son Yitzchok, the marching orders he gave the Shadchan, Eliezer, was to look closely for a kind and giving wife for Yitzchok. Only through such a fore bearer could the DNA of the Jewish nation be formed.

The Chofetz Chaim wonders, why does the Torah repeat the story of Eliezer and his search for sterling middos in a wife for Yitzchok, three distinct times while so many Halachos are only hinted at in the Torah, by the exclusion or inclusion of one little letter? What is the message for us here?

Our saintly sage tells us that Issur or Heter, being allowed to do something or not - may

be learned through a hint. It's message is heard clearly. The word of Hashem cuts through to our essence and resonates within our soul. But appreciating the importance of good middos and developing within ourselves a heart that cares - these lessons need to be constantly repeated, like a medicine that must be taken multiple times until it cures.

Chesed must be absorbed internally if it is to truly change who we are.

That is why chesed always starts at home with our spouse and children. Home is where we perfect our chesed by repeatedly performing acts of loving kindness with those who are nearest and dearest to us. It's a daily test, a daily exercise- and if you don't get it right, there's always tomorrow.

One must constantly ask himself, "Did I act well at home today? When I had the chance to, did I smile and listen to my kids? Did I hug them, or maybe play a game with them (with my phone turned off)? Did I show appreciation to my spouse for all they are doing for me?" If not, don't despair... there's a new opportunity for chesed every day, every minute!

It's a most important test for us, but one with big rewards, as it brings a healthy and loving atmosphere to our homes!

Translated by Rabbi Reich  
Good Shabbos!

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## Rabbi YY Jacobson

### 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 "farbrenge" 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 שתמלך על קכ"ז מדינה? אלא תבוא אסתר שהיא בת בתה של שרה שחיתה קכ"ז שנה ותמלך 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 hu-

morous, 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 MILLI-SECOND, 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.



## DAVENING FOR A SHIDDUCH

A man with a daughter in shidduchim has his eye on a certain bochur. He wants this boy as a son-in-law. He knows that there are many reasons this shidduch will not work out under normal circumstances. May he daven that the shidduch should work out, or is this not proper?

In Parshas Chaya Sora, which is the parsha of shidduchim, we see that Eliezer davened for a shidduch for Yitzchok. He did not daven for a particular person. He could have made inquiries about Nachor's family and find out which girl would be appropriate and then daven that she should be the girl. We see that a person should not daven for a particular person; he should daven that Hashem should help that the right girl should marry the right boy.

The Gemara in Moed Koton 18b states: Shmuel said one is allowed to get engaged on Chol Hamoed due to the fact that someone else may get engaged to that girl first. The Gemara questions, how is that possible? We know that every day a bas kol comes out and says bas ploni liploni. The Gemara answers that we are worried that maybe someone else will get the girl first via tefillah. The Gemara brings a case where a person davened that he should marry a particular girl and Rava told him, don't daven this way because if it is bashert, then you'll marry her without the tefillah, and if it is not bashert then you are being a kofer baHashem. We see from this Gemara that tefillah does help and therefore a couple may get engaged on Chol Hamoed, but tefillah is not the preferred way.

Reb Chaim Kanievsky spoke about a Yerushalmi in Taanis that is quoted in two places in Perek 1:8 and in Perek 4:6. The Yerushalmi asks the same contradiction as Bavli. How could someone be makdim a shidduch if it is bashert? The Yerushalmi answers the same tirtutz that with tefillah things can change. However, the Yerushalmi adds that "afilu kein lo kayma" (despite the tefillah this shidduch will not last). One of the two members in this shidduch will die. We see the danger in davening for a particular boy or girl in a shidduch.

Rabbi Mendel Sporn adds that while it is true that one should not daven for a particular boy or girl, one may daven that if this is a basherte shidduch, they should be successful in getting this shidduch facilitated in an easy manner.

The shidduch crisis can be averted with the right tefillah. Don't talk, just daven. Let Hashem run the world, and everyone do their individual hishtadlus and tefillah.

## PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH DOZE IN SHIUR, OR IN LIFE

ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים, "שני חיי שרה"

"Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years; these were the years of Sarah's life." The Posuk says "years" after each of the numbers. Rashi explains that each number teaches us something. When she was 100, she was free of sin like a 20-year-old. (B'dinei Shomayim, one does not get punished until after he is 20 years old. She was pure from Chet.) When she was 20, she was beautiful like a 7-year-old. Why does the Posuk repeat, "These are the years of Sarah"? Rashi explains that this teaches us that all of her years were equally good. The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic, and perhaps support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.

R' Akiva was giving Shiur, and his students were dozing. R' Akiva wanted to awaken their spirits and get them to listen to his words of Torah. He said, Esther Hamalka ruled over 127 provinces because she was a granddaughter of Sarah Imeinu, who lived 127 years. (בראשית רבה)

Why was Esther Hamalka Zoche to rule over 127 provinces? Sarah lived 127 years, but presumably she did not fully serve the Ribbono Shel Olam all of the years of her life. How did she serve the Ribbono Shel Olam when she was in the first years of her life which then caused Esther to receive provinces for those years as well? A child of 1 or 2 does not have Da'as. The Medrash says that Avrohom included the Perek of אשת חיל מי ימצא (Mishlei 31) in his Hespel on Sarah. 31:15 - "לתקם בעוד". Sarah had a tremendous Ahava for the Ribbono Shel Olam. She wanted to make up for those lost years when she was too young to appreciate and serve the Ribbono Shel Olam. She would get up in the middle of night and prepare food for her guests, people she was bringing to the recognition of the Ribbono Shel Olam. Being that night is a time for sleeping and rest, by doing Mitzvos L'shem Shomayim during the night, she was Mesaken her early years. Sarah had a complete 127 years, and that is why Esther was Zoche to 127 provinces. According to this we can understand why R' Akiva chose to tell the people about Sarah, to inspire them to wake up and learn Torah. Sarah not only used her days for Avodas Hashem, she even utilized her nights. R' Akiva was saying that the people should wake up and certainly not waste their days. (חתם סופר)

The Gemara in Avodah Zara 10b says - "יש י"קונה עולמו בשעה אחת" - One can acquire Olam Habah in one moment. If one does Aveiros his entire life and in the last moments of his life he does Teshuva and is ready to serve the Ribbono Shel Olam, he receives Olam

Haba. If one does Mitzvos all of his life and then in the last moments of his life renounces everything that he did, he does not receive any Schar for any of his good deeds. Why? Let each one get Schar for all of their good deeds, and punishment for their bad deeds. R' Reisman explains that in this world, life is a work in progress. One must continually try to make himself a better person. What one is and does in the last moments is indicative of what he was working towards his entire life. The person who did Aveiros his entire life up until the end but then has Charata, regret, and does Teshuva, he was fighting a battle against the Yetzer Hara and finally won. All of his Aveiros are seen as a conduit to his ultimate goal of being an Eved Hashem. One who has Charata on the Mitzvos that he did all of his life demonstrates that his ultimate goal was not to be an Eved Hashem.

When the Posuk tells us the years of Sarah's life it says "Shana" after 100 and after 20. It says "Shanim" after 7. Why did the Posuk switch to "Shanim"? The Torah is telling us Sarah's plan for staying humble. When she was 20 years old, and when she was 100 years old, she thought about what she was when she was one a year old, Shana. A one-year-old cannot do anything without the help of others. They dirty themselves without any embarrassment. They have nothing to be haughty about. Man comes from dust and returns to dust. Man has nothing to be arrogant about. When the Torah wrote 7, it writes Shanim, years. A young and weak person needs to look at himself as if he is older, stronger, and wiser and see all of the potential "years". He must not shirk his responsibility of being a true Eved Hashem. He is responsible for all of the details in the Torah to the best of his ability.

Sarah's entire life was a work in progress. Her first few years of life may not have seemed to be years of Avodas Hashem. She may not have had the Da'as to properly serve Hashem. However, from the end of her life, we see what she was always striving for. Till the very last day of her life, she was striving to elevate herself in Ruchniyos. This elevated her first years, and she is credited with the same S'char for those years as well. Perhaps this is what Rashi means when he says that her years were "all equal for good". Even her first years were good. The most precious commodity that man is given in this world is time. אבן עזרא - "אדם דואג לאיבוד דמיו ואינו דואג" - "לאיבוד ימיו, דמיו אינם עוזרין ימיו אינם חוזרין" - "A man worries about losing his money, but not about losing his days. Money does not help, and his days will not return." Sarah understood this and utilized every moment of her life to further her Avodas Hashem. Perhaps that is why the Posuk repeats, "These were the years of Sarah". Her years were complete years.



## STOP BOWING TO BUSYNESS

When is the last time you asked someone how are they are doing and they didn't answer, "Busy?"

In his article "The 'Busy' Trap," Tim Kreide writes:

If you live in America in the 21st century you've probably had to listen to a lot of people tell you how busy they are. It's become the default response when you ask anyone how they're doing: "Busy!" "So busy." "Crazy busy." It is, pretty obviously, a boast disguised as a complaint. And the stock response is a kind of congratulation: "That's a good problem to have," or "Better than the opposite."

Look around and you'll notice it isn't generally people pulling back-to-back shifts in the I.C.U. or commuting by bus to three minimum-wage jobs who tell you how busy they are; what those people are is not busy but tired. Exhausted. Dead on their feet. It's almost always people whose lamented busyness is purely self-imposed: work and obligations they've taken on voluntarily, classes and activities they've "encouraged" their kids to participate in. They're busy because of their own ambition or drive or anxiety, because they're addicted to busyness and dread what they might have to face in its absence.

One study from the Monthly Labor Review found that people estimating 75-plus hour workweeks were off, on average, by about 25 hours. It mentioned that a young man reported working 180 hours a week, which is quite literally impossible, since that is twelve more hours than a week contains. How many hours a week do you work?

In last weeks parsha, when angels in the guise of men appear before Avraham he offers them water to wash their feet. The Chizkuni explains - "This all occurred during the season of the desert winds, known as sharaf. Hashem had made the day especially hot, so that the feet of travelers would be soaked in sand and sweat."

But Rashi quoting the Gemara (Bava Metzia 86b) has a different understanding: He believed they were idolators who bowed down

to the dust of their feet and therefore Avraham didn't want them bringing that idolatry into his home.

The Shelah HaKadosh (Torah Ohr) wonders, what kind of idolatry is this? Of course, it is wrong to worship anything other than God, but who would be so foolish as to worship the dust of their own feet?

The Divrei Yechezkel, the Shinover Rav, says not only is it not lunacy, but many of us in fact worship in the same way. These "idolators" were merchants. They travelled and ran around doing business, selling their wares, growing customers. All of that activity and "busyness" kicked up dust. The idea that they were worshiping the dust of their feet, says the Shinover, is that they were bowing down to their busyness, they were kneeling to their efforts and initiative. These merchants were obsessed and addicted to running around, staying busy, and kicking up dust. They mistakenly attributed success to the level of their activity, they assumed their determination and work, their busyness yielded results, not Hashem. That is avoda zara, idolatry.

Many people tie their self-worth to how busy they are, or at least appear to be. When people ask us how things are going, many of us are in the business of busyness and instinctively talk about how little time we have, how much we have going on, how busy things are. Leisure time used to be viewed as a status symbol. Now, free time has come to be looked down on as idleness. Instead, hectic busyness has become the symbol of achievement.

Avraham told his guests: וְהִצֵּדוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם, wash your feet, get rid of that dust, eliminate the addiction and worship of busyness, and enjoy some slow living.

The Mishna in Avos (1:4) says: יוֹסִי בֶן יוֹעֲזָר אִישׁ יֹשֵׁב בְּבֵיתוֹ וְהָיָה בֵּיתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ לְחֻכְמִים, וְהָיָה מִתְאַבֵּק בְּצַדֵּי הָאָדָם אוֹמֵר, יְהִי בֵּיתִי בְּיָדוֹ לְחֻכְמִים, וְהָיָה שׁוֹתֵה בְּצִמָּא אֶת דְּבָרֵיהֶם: "Make your home a gathering place for Chachamim, sit in the dust of their feet, and drink in their words with thirst." The simple understanding is that the Rebbe, the teacher, used to sit on a chair, surrounded by students on the floor at his feet. Alternatively, it can refer to being humble in their presence. But why then didn't the Mishna say so explicitly, why connect it to

making yourself dusty with the dust of their feet? And do Talmidei Chachamim really "kick up dust" with their teaching, aren't they sitting down?

Based on the insight of the Shinover, the current Rosh Yeshiva of Ger, R' Shaul Alter, suggests that maybe the Mishna means if you are going to attach yourself to busyness, it should be to noble activity and movement, to making a difference and finding meaning, to not just making a living, but living.

So what is the antidote to worshipping at the altar of busyness? Don't we need to remain super active to get everything done these days? After telling them to wash their feet, to stop bowing down to being active and working excessively, Avraham then told them, וְהָשְׁעוּנוּ תַּחַת הָעֵץ, rest under the tree." Says the Shinover, Avraham was telling them, "Lean under the tree, put yourself under the protection and support of Hashem's protection. Yes, take initiative, work hard, but then put your trust in Hashem. If Hashem wants you to be successful, He can bring the success after a reasonable amount of work; if you continue to work excessively, you are in fact not trusting in Hashem and have diminishing spiritual returns."

Yes, there are seasons and periods of busyness. Of course, we have responsibilities, obligations, dreams and ambitions. But we must stop worshipping the idolatry of dust, bowing down to busyness.

We must not only remember that it is acceptable to slow down, it is a value and a virtue, it is the true badge of honor. I was recently talking with someone that would be defined by most people as highly successful. I asked him about his daily schedule and he was telling me that he starts working early in the morning, tries to finish most days in time for when the kids come home from school, makes sure to find time to exercise and learn each day, and to spend time with his wife in the evening. When he finished describing the balance and boundaries of his life, I was more impressed, not less.

It's time to wash our feet of the illusion that busyness equals productivity and to start leaning under the tree and enjoying the shade of Hashem.



Rabbi Reisman

## A THOUGHT FROM RAV AHARON KOTLER ON THE WORD BAKOL

HKB”H as it says in 24:1 (בְּרַךְ אֶת-אַבְרָהָם, בְּכָל). Avraham got everything. The Ramban is Marich on what (כָּל) is. He says it is a Remez and a Sod of HKB”H of what (כָּל) is. What is (כָּל)? He says there is a Middah of Hashem of (כָּל) and he goes off on an explanation which is Kabbalistic. Artscroll doesn’t translate it, no one translates it because it is Kabbalistic.

Rav Aharon Kotler in the Mishnas Reb Aharon in Cheilek Aleph on page Kuf Daled has a brief explanation Nigla of what the Midda of (כָּל) is and he says Gevaldig. He says there is a Midda of Histapkus, a feeling of I have what I need. Not being jealous of others, being happy with what you have. He says there are two types of being happy. One type of being happy, a person says look Baruch Dayan Ha’emes, I would really like to have more but I accept what HKB”H gave me as G-d knows what is good for me. This is the Emes. That is one Middah.

The Middah of (בְּכָל) is a higher Middah. The Middah of (בְּכָל) is when a person understands that he has everything that he could possibly have. L’mashal to someone who is writing a Sefer Torah and he gets to the last letter, the Lamed. He says I finished everything. He is asked don’t you want more? There is no more. There is nothing else. That is the Middah of (בְּכָל). There is nothing else. I have everything. The Middah of Histapkus, HKB”H blessed Avraham (בְּכָל). The Middah of satisfaction, of Histapkus. What he had was (בְּכָל). Wow! What a wonderful Middah.

With that I want to wish everybody an absolutely wonderful Shabbos, a meaningful week to come and B’ezras Hashem as we march into Kisleiv we see Chanukah on the horizon and we start to prepare for that Ohr of Chanukah. We should be a Klei Kibbul. We should be people who are ready to be Mekabeil that special Ohr that comes to the world on Chanukah.

A Gutten Shabbos to all!

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לך לך	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00
וירא	6:05	6:20	6:35	6:50	7:05	7:20	7:35	7:50
חיי שרה	6:00	6:15	6:30	6:45	7:00	7:15	7:30	7:45
תולדות	5:55	6:10	6:25	6:40	6:55	7:10	7:25	7:40
ויצא	5:55	6:10	6:25	6:40	6:55	7:10	7:25	7:40

18 Main Bais Medrash

## Shabbos Shacharis Minyanim

Vasikin	20 Upstairs
8:00	18 Main
9:15	Tent א
10:00 Chabad	20 Upstairs
10:30	18 Main

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2:30pm

3:30pm

4:30pm

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6:30	Tent ג	
6:45	Tent ד	
7:00	Tent א	
7:15	Tent ב	
7:30	Tent ג	
7:45	Tent ד	
8:00	Tent א	
8:15	Tent ב	
8:30	Tent ג	
8:45	Tent ד	
9:00	Tent א	
9:15	Tent ב	
9:30	Tent ג	
9:45	Tent ד	
10:00	Tent א	
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> 1:00

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> 1:30

> 2:00

> 2:30

> 3:00

18 Main Bais Medrash



## Rabbi Yisroel Majeski

# A MATCH MADE IN CHEVRON

In this week's Parsha, Avraham Avinu deals with Ephron in order to purchase the Me'aras HaMachpeila. What's notable is that the Gemara (Kiddushin 2a) derives from here that when a man gets engaged to a woman, it can be through money. In relation to the transaction between Avraham and Ephron, the Pasuk states, "The money which I gave you, take from me," and the Torah later states in the context of marriage, "When a man takes a wife." The similar use of the word "take" in both Pesukim imply a similarity and connection between the two, which derives the Gemara, is that money can be used to marry a woman, just as it was done in the transaction between Ephron and Avraham.

From all places where we can learn about the parameters of marriage, why do we do so from Ephron? A marriage represents two people coming together to build a home where the Shechina is going to rest, two souls combining to become one, and we learn of this concept from Ephron, who had a bad, stingy way to him and "talked a lot and did a little"? Why of all places is it here that the laws of marriage are taught?

The Bover Rebbe explains that specifically and only here is there a profound lesson embedded for a successful marriage. When Avraham walked away from this business deal, he felt to himself, "I got the best deal of my life! For just four hundred Shekalim, I purchased the Me'aras HaMachpeila, the burial site of Adam and Chava and the eventual holy, resting place of the Avos and Imahos." Ephron himself felt afterwards, "I got the best deal of my life! I sold just a simple cave, a plain piece of land, and I was given a huge sum of four hundred Shekalim for it!" Both Avraham and Ephron believed that they got the better end of the deal. So too, when a man and a woman join together in marriage, they each believe that they got the better deal! "I can't believe she is my wife! I'm the luckiest man alive!" "I can't believe he's my husband! I got the better deal; I'm the luckiest woman in the world!"

The key to marriage is to always see and believe that you got the best deal. When a couple does this, it's a sure recipe for a great life together. It's colloquially been said that the best time to

plant a tree is twenty years ago, and the second best time is right now. It's never too late to prepare for marriage. When we are younger, we want to prepare our middos, and once we are married, it is the opportunity to implement everything which we cultivated and learned to create a fantastic marriage and family together.

But this is not the only message for marriage hidden within this interaction between Avraham and Ephron. The Torah repeatedly uses some form of the word "And he listened" to describe Avraham's actions in relation to Ephron and those he interacted with. To have a good marriage, you must be a good listener.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach mentioned at the funeral of his wife that he doesn't need to ask mechillah, forgiveness, from her, because he never fought with her. How could this be? It doesn't mean that he never disagreed with his wife. Rather, although they disagreed, it never turned into a heated argument. He carefully listened to her, as did she to him, and they arrived at the best solution.

Moreover, Avraham was charged a steep price for the Me'aras HaMachpeila. However, Avraham was mevater, he conceded, because he knew the true value inherent in what he was purchasing. The little, petty fights in a relationship are just not worth it in comparison to building a happy home.

In addition, Avraham spent money. Specifically in the realm of money, sometimes we need to let things go. We know things will cost money and we do it with an appreciation for the value it creates in generating goodwill and happiness within the home.

Lastly, Avraham Avinu's wife has just passed away, and understandably so, he would be out of sorts and in turmoil, and yet throughout the entire dialogue recorded about the Me'aras HaMachpeila, Avraham speaks in a calm, gentle voice. Avraham carried himself with the right respectful and calming context, even amidst the inner turmoil that was generated by what had just happened to Sarah.

In business and life, we can get very stressed. But when we walk through the doors to our home, we must put everything behind us and carry the right context in that we are entering our home – a special place where the Divine Presence resides.

Avraham Avinu taught us so much. The rest is up to us.

# JOKES

## LOOSE FITTING CLOTHING

I signed up for an exercise class and was told to wear loose fitting clothing...

If I HAD any loose fitting clothing, I wouldn't have signed up in the first place!

## GOLDBERG MOURNS HIS DOG

Goldberg lived in upstate NY with only a pet dog for company. One day, the dog died, and Goldberg went to the Shul Rabbi and said, "Rabbi, my dog is dead. Could you say a kaddish for the poor creature?" The Rabbi replied, "I'm afraid not. We cannot have services for an animal in the shul. But there is a new denomination down the lane, and there's no telling' what they believe. Maybe they'll do something for the creature." Goldberg said, "I'll go right away by the way Rabbi. Do ya' think \$5,000 is enough to donate for the service?" The Rabbi exclaimed, "Oy vey iz mir Why didn't you' tell me the dog was Jewish?"

## A DYING MANS WISH...

A dying man gathered his Lawyer, Doctor and Clergyman at his bed side and handed each of them an envelop containing \$25,000 in cash. He made them each promise that after his death and during his repose, they would place the three envelops in his coffin. He told them that he wanted to have enough money to enjoy the next life.

A week later the man died. At the Wake, the Lawyer and Doctor and Clergyman, each concealed an envelope in the coffin and bid their old client and friend farewell. By chance, these three met several months later. Soon the Clergyman, feeling guilty, blurted out a confession saying that there was only \$10,000 in the envelop he placed in the coffin. He felt, rather than waste all the money, he would send it to a Mission in South America. He asked for their forgiveness.

The Doctor, moved by the gentle Clergyman's sincerity, confessed that he too had kept some of the money for a worthy medical charity. The envelope, he admitted, had only \$8000 in it. He said, he too could not bring himself to waste the money so frivolously when it could be used to benefit others.

By this time the Lawyer was seething with self-righteous outrage. He expressed his deep disappointment in the felonious behavior of two of his oldest and most trusted friends. I am the only one who kept his promise to our dying friend. I want you both to know that the envelope I placed in the coffin contained the full amount. Indeed, my envelope contained my personal check for the entire \$25,000.

## GOOD JOKES- WINDY

I was traveling with my wife in Kanyakumari, India, one of the windiest places on Earth. Braving our way through the crosswind, we made our way to the tollbooth where I asked a bespectacled attendant, "What do you guys do in Kanyakumari when the wind quits?"

Adjusting his rims, the guy answered, "We take the rocks out of our pockets.

## DOWNED 22 RUSSIAN FIGHTER JETS

My brother just broke the record by downing 22 Russian jets in Ukraine...

He'll forever be remembered as the worst mechanic in the Russian Air Force!

## HEARING AID

A man realized he needed to purchase a hearing aid, but didn't want to spend a lot of money. "How much do they cost?" he asked the salesman.

"Anything from \$2 to \$2,000." "Can I see the \$2 model?" said the customer.

The salesman put the device around the man's neck, and said: "You just stick this button in your ear and run this little string down into your pocket."

"How does it work?" asked the customer.

"For \$2, it doesn't work," said the salesman. "But when people see it on you, they'll talk louder."



## UFARATZTA

### SHLICHUS EDICATE

The request of your honor to give your Pidyon-Nefesh to Kevod-kedushas, Mori Vechami, Admur Shlyt"a [The RaYYatz], I fulfilled. And in

accordance with the Maamar RaZa"l (Mechilta Shmos 19,8) that taught us that even though the Meshaleiach [The sender] knows it, you still let him know about the Shlichus that you did for him. Therefore, I am writing to let you know....

====Part of Rebbe's letter to Hagoan Rabbi A Yales 18 of Cheshvan 5,704 \ 1943

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# Stories for Shabbos



## Do They Tell Such Stories about You?

Rav Yerachmiel Krohm relates that the Chofetz Chaim, zt"l, was once summoned to testify in court as a witness for one of his students. This occurred during World War I, & the student was suspected of spying for the German government. The charges were made up, but that was the way of life in Eastern Europe back then. The Chofetz Chaim Davened fervently that his Talmid be spared, & the entire Yeshivah fasted & Davened as well on the day of the court case. The Chofetz Chaim was called before the judge & asked to offer testimony concerning the character of the suspected spy. The Chofetz Chaim spoke the truth. He said, "This is a young man who spends his entire day engrossed in Torah study. There is nothing else that matters to him, certainly not spying for the enemy!" Then the prosecution contended that there was no proof concerning the truth of what the Chofetz Chaim said. "How can the court determine that what the Chofetz Chaim had claimed was, in fact, true?" One of the student's defense lawyers asked to speak. He said, "I would like to relate an incident to the judge that occurred concerning the Chofetz Chaim, & then I will allow his honor to be the judge of whether this sage can be believed or not. One day, the Chofetz Chaim was in the railroad station in Warsaw, when a thief came over and stole his briefcase. Do you know how the Chofetz Chaim reacted? As the thief was running away from him, he declared loudly, 'I forgive you for what you did! You may have the briefcase as a gift!'" When the judge heard this, he looked at the defense attorney with skepticism, & asked, "Do you really believe that story?" The attorney looked right back at the judge & replied, "Judge, it makes no difference whether I believe it or not. The question is, would anyone say such a story about you?" The judge reflected on that comment & announced that the court is to believe everything the Chofetz Chaim has said, & the charges were dropped against the student! *Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.*

## The Unusual Jewish Burial

An elderly woman (whom we will call Mrs. Goldman) was a resident in a health care facility for the aged. For all intents and purposes, she was in good health. Thus, it was a shock to her son (who made a point to visit her twice weekly) to receive a call from the director of the home to report that, sadly, his mother had passed away during the night. Shimon (also a random name) was bowled over. As the only son, he had had a special relationship with his mother. With great sadness, he made arrangements to have his mother's body taken to the local funeral home where a proper taharah, purification, would be made by the Chevra Kadishah, Jewish Burial Society, followed by burial in the family plot. His mother had been a private person, so a large crowd did not attend her funeral. Only her few remaining friends and members of the community who either knew her or were close to Shimon's family were present. During the shivah, seven-day-mourning period, Shimon's cell phone rang. Lo and behold, it was his mother, "Where have you been these last few days: no visit, no phone

calls?" Words cannot describe the shock and relief, the low and high, experienced by Shimon during that phone call. His first call was to the director of the home. First of all, how could this have happened? The people in charge were intelligent and quite capable of reading. Such an error was almost unforgivable. Second, if the deceased was, in fact, not his mother, then someone else with a similar name had passed away. Her next of kin must be notified. The director explained the apparent similarity in the names of the two women, who incidentally had been housed in the same wing, two rooms from one another. He now had the difficult task of conveying the sad news to the son of the "real" deceased. He made the call and explained to the son, whose impatience was evident from the tone of his voice, "Why are you bothering me with news about my mother?" he asked. "I am a busy man, and I do not have a premium of time to waste." Clearly, this man did not harbor an abiding love for his late mother. The director continued, "About ten days ago, your mother became ill and, despite the efforts of the physician and staff, your mother passed away. Another woman in the same wing bore a similar name. By mistake, we buried the right person, but with the wrong name. Veritably, nothing can be done; your mother received a fine, traditional funeral and burial. We are sorry for your loss and for the unpleasant manner in which the news has been conveyed to you." The son's reaction was totally unlike what the director had expected. No screaming; no finger pointing; just seething anger. Shockingly, the anger was not directed at the facility's administration, but rather, at the deceased. "Tell me something," the son asked. "Was she buried in a Jewish cemetery?" "As I told you earlier, she was availed a traditional funeral and buried in a Jewish cemetery," the director said, hoping to assuage the man's anxiety. "Did they say Kaddish for her?" The director replied, "Of course. Everything was carried out in a halachically correct manner. She was even lovingly and admirably eulogized. They even sat Shivah for her." Suddenly, the son began muttering to himself, "She won. She was right, and I was mistaken. I thought I would have the last word, and, ultimately, she did." "Is something wrong?" asked the director. "Let me explain," the son replied bitterly. "From the moment that my mother became a resident in the nursing facility, the two of us fought. I informed my mother that I believed in nothing – not in G-d, not in religion, not in an Afterlife. I promised her that if I have my way, she will not be buried in a traditional manner and in a Jewish cemetery. I would have her corpse donated to the local medical school, so that science can benefit from her death. She begged me to reconsider. I said, 'No way. Religion has no place in my life.' One day, she cried out to me, 'Fine, if you will not concern yourself with me, then our Heavenly Father will take care of me! He will see to it that I receive a proper burial in a Jewish cemetery.' I guess I erred, and she was right. She won," the son said, this time quite shaken. He hung up the phone as he muttered, "I will have to reconsider my life." *Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum's Peninim on the Torah.*

## The Beauty of Mesiras Nefesh

Rav Shlomo Brevda related a story he heard from Rebbetzin Greineman, who was the Steipler Rebbetzin's sister, and both wom-

en were sisters of the Chazon Ish. Rav Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky, zt"l, the Steipler Gaon, was about to become engaged to the Chazon Ish's sister, but before the Shidduch was finalized, he felt that it was important that he share with her an incident that had taken place while he was in Siberia. The forced labor in Siberia was backbreaking. In addition to the bitter cold and blinding snow, the actual labor required extreme exertion. The Steipler Gaon had been inducted into the army against his will, and yet, regardless of the terrible conditions and the impossible work, he knew in his heart that only one task mattered— serving Hashem. One of the first obstacles the Steipler had to overcome was the army system itself. The army dictated that everyone must work seven days a week. To the Steipler, that was absolutely unacceptable. He approached the officer in charge, an evil anti-Semite, and asked that he be granted permission to not work on Shabbos. The official paused for a moment and answered that he would grant the request on one condition, that the Steipler would first have to prove himself to be a valiant warrior. The Steipler would have to 'run the gauntlet'. The officer quickly ordered 100 soldiers to form two facing rows, and arm themselves with sticks. The Steipler watched the soldiers move into formation and heard these words of the evil officer, "Kanievsky, here is the deal. If you are able to make it through these lines and survive the blows from my officers, then you may rest on your Shabbos. However, if you don't..." His voice trailed off, and he laughed. Clearly, he was enjoying his little game. Usually, the victim did not reach the end of the gauntlet alive, from the blows, kicks, and punches of the vicious soldiers. The Steipler did not flinch. Instead, he whispered a heartfelt Tefilah to Hashem to help him survive this difficult test. He knew that he could give up and the game would be over. But if he admitted defeat, then his attempt to be released from working on Shabbos would be over as well. The guards motioned to their commanding officer that they were ready, and the officer and his comrades stood back to watch the fun. The Steipler approached the path and murmured one last plea to Hashem. He held his hand over his head and ran between the rows of guards. With all their might they began to pummel him and beat him incessantly. The pain was unbearable, but the Steipler persisted and kept trudging forward. Blood trickled into his eyes but he continued to move forward. Step by step he inched ahead until finally, he reached the end of the treacherous path. He collapsed at the finish line. With Hashem's compassion, the Steipler came out of the ordeal alive. No one offered to help the Steipler get up from the ground, but it did not matter because he had survived. As he lay there, a smile formed on his lips. He had won. He was in incredible pain, but the Shabbos was still holy, and he would be able to observe it! The commanding officer grudgingly informed the Steipler that he would not have to work on Saturday. From the repeated blows to his ears, the Steipler suffered an 80% loss of his hearing for life. When the Steipler finished recounting his tale to his soon-to-be Kallah, he explained that this was his level of Mesiras Nefesh, self-sacrifice. "The blows hurt, but I was happy to have the privilege to suffer for the sake of Shabbos." He then asked her if she was prepared to join him in his continuous sacrifice for the Torah. She relayed that indeed she was, and they then became Chassan and Kallah. Incidentally, many years later, when the Steipler Gaon was older, a young Rav asked the Steipler what the best day in his life was. The Steipler answered, "The day I 'ran the gauntlet' in the Russian Army. I imagined that with each blow, I was offering my life for the Kedushah of Shabbos. Nothing is sweeter than Mesiras Nefesh, dedicating one's whole life to the

fulfillment of Hashem's Mitzvos!" *Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.*

## Lighting Up the Darkness By Rabbi Yechiel Spero

As Refael and Chani Mendlowitz were flying over Connecticut on their return trip from Eress Yisrael, they sensed that something was terribly wrong. The stewardesses were whispering and running to the front of the cabin. What the passengers didn't know was that most of the Northeastern United States was in the same panic; a huge blackout had struck many states, and most citizens were sure that this was another terrorist attack. The passengers' frantic attempts to contact relatives proved futile as cell phones were rendered utterly useless. The initial fear lasted only a short while, until they received word of what had happened and were assured that most likely terrorism was not involved. The more immediate problem was landing the plane without any guidance from on-ground lighting. At first, airport traffic control intended to divert their El Al flight to Washington D.C., and while that was certainly closer to where the Mendlowitzes lived – Silver Spring – it did not help them because their car was in New York at a relative's home, awaiting their return. In the end, the passengers were told that theirs would be the last plane allowed to land at Kennedy Airport. Once they landed, they were informed that airport security would not allow them to disembark for at least an hour. Hot, anxious, and very thirsty, they were finally released into a darkened airport, where finding their luggage was quite an adventure. Tired and exhausted, they finally exited the terminal and attempted to get a cab. And then the full impact of what had happened hit them. It was an eerie, discomfoting sight: All of New York was pitch black. No street lights. No building lights. Nothing! The taxi line stretched for blocks, and since all traffic in the area was slowed due to the lack of traffic lights, they realized that they would be waiting for a cab for hours. While they were pondering their next move, a shuttle bus pulled up, offering to take them where they needed to go for \$18, a bargain compared to the \$100 the taxis had been charging. They were completely exhausted as they settled in for the short drive. When they reached their relative's home they paid the kind driver and thanked him for his assistance. But when Refael tried the key he realized it did not fit; either he had been given the wrong key or had misplaced the right one. Now what would they do? It was midnight of this never-ending day, and they were at their wits' end. It was then that they noticed a car parked down the street with people in it. Maybe these people live on this street and will let me in so that I can make a few phone calls, he thought. Refael cautiously approached the car. The sight that he beheld brought tears to his eyes. Inside were two men – a father and his son – learning together. They had a set time for their learning, and were determined not to let the blackout change their plans. They had decided that learning in a car, however dimly lit it was, was better than canceling. As for Refael, these men were a sight for sore eyes; and of course, they were more than happy to help the desperate couple. For a long time afterward, Refael could not get the sight of this father and son out of his mind. Imagine, he thought to himself, in a world of utter darkness, a tiny light-shines through like a beacon – the light of Torah. "Ki ner misvah veTorah ohr – A misvah is a candle, and Torah is light." (Touched by a Story 3) Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace.

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# TEVILAH FOR EXTRA PURITY

The sefarim bring that there is a benefit in going to the mikvah, even if someone is pure, as brought by the Shela. The Reishis Chochma writes that the purity of the mikvah helps a person come close to Hashem. The Yesod V'Shoresh Havodah writes that immersing in the mikvah brings more kedusha to a person, both on a weekday, and on Shabbos. It is brought that the Chasam Sofer would immerse in a mikvah every day.

### MAYIM SHEUVIM AND POURING NINE KAVIM

The Gemara in Brochos discusses the different options that can be used for becoming pure. In some situations one can immerse in a body of water which is not a mikvah or by having nine kavim of water poured over his body. The Magen Avraham and the Mishna Berura mention this option. Therefore, if someone is in a place that has no mikvah, he would be allowed to use a swimming pool.

Similarly, the Mishna Berura quotes the poskim who allow pouring nine kavim of water over his body. This can be done by taking a shower, an option that was used by many as a backup during the coronavirus, when mikvaos were closed.

### TEVILAH BEFORE A MITZVAH

The Maharil writes that a sandak should go to the mikvah, since his feet are like the mizbeach. The Shelah adds that the mohel who is performing the mitzvah itself should certainly go to the mikvah.

The Chida writes that it is nice for a sofer to go to the mikvah before writing a sefer torah, tefillin, or mezuzos.

The Mordechai writes that before practicing shechita one must be pure, and if one did not go to the mikvah his shechita is invalid. However this is not the accepted ruling.

### PURIFICATION THROUGH WATER

Why does water have the power to purify? The Sefer Hachinuch explains that just like the world was just full of water before the world was created, similarly a person should

feel like he is just created anew, and will also turn a new leaf to follow the path of the Torah. The Zera Kodesh adds that it is similar to a child in his mother's womb, which is full of water, and when he is born he pops out of the water, fresh and clean from sin. The Sefer Hachinuch adds that water is also a cleansing material, which is to remind the person to cleanse himself from sin.

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*Recorded shiurim are also available on CD at the shul - 18 Forshay Main Lobby. All shiurim delivered at the Kollel Boker, Night Kollel, or any of our various programs, such as Legal Holidays and Yeshiva Bein Hazmanim are open to all. Come and join the many who enjoy these informative and intriguing shiurim!*

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Reb Chaim Rabinowitz, Shoel Umeishiv giving shiur at the Night Kollel Sunday Night

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### EVENINGS

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For more info on the above shiurim as well as all our current learning opportunities please contact Rabbi Scheiner Rosh Kollelim & Rabbinical Director at [RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com](mailto:RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com) or 845 372 -6618

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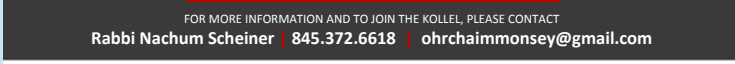
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