

VAYIGASH | 5 - 12 TEVES 5783 | (DEC 29, 2022 - JAN 5 2023)

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PARASHOT VAYEGASH HAFTORAH

In the year 2964 - 797 b.c.e, following the death of Shlomo Hamel-ech, the nation was divided between Rechavam ben Shlomo and Yiravam ben Nivat. Rechavam ruled over Yehudah and Binyamin, and Yiravam ruled over the other 10 Tribes. Rechavam was a direct descendant of Dovid Hamelech, and Yiravam was a descendent of Ephrayim. In this week's Haftorah, Yichezkel Hanavi prophesied the time when the divided kingdom's of Yehudah and Yisroel would unite beneath the single banner of the family of King David. Yechezkel is instructed to take two pieces of wood and inscribe them with names of the Jewish kingdoms, Yehuda and Yosef. Hashem then said, "Bring them near one another to appear as one and they shall unite in your hands." Radak interprets this to mean that Yechezkel should hold the pieces alongside each other and they will miraculously unite into one solid piece of wood. He explains that this refers to the future miraculous unification of the Jewish kingdom. The individual pieces of wood represent the individual kingdoms of Israel. Although Hashem unconditionally granted Dovid Hamelech's dynasty the kingdom of Israel this did not preclude fragmentation. In fact, soon after Shlomo Hamelech's passing the kingdom suffered a severe split. Yeravam ben Nevat, a descendent of the tribe of Yosef led a powerful rebellion against the Judean dynasty and gained control over most of the Jewish nation. The split was so intense that the seceding camp of Yosef totally severed ties with its brothers never to return to them. Yechezkel prophesied that these kingdoms will eventually reunite and form one inseparable unit. The unification will be so perfect that it will leave no trace of any previous dissension. The entire nation's sense of kinship will be

so pronounced that it will be likened to one solid piece of wood, void of all factions and fragmentation. It is quite clear that the success of Am Yisrael is dependent upon total Achdut- unity. But can this be accomplished?

During Chanuka we expressed our Hallel and Hodah- praise and recognition to Hashem. We need to understand the difference between those two concepts. Hallel is the expression of "WOW", praise to Hashem on him being awesome. It's an uplifting experience to experience a miracle or when we see Hashem succeed our ambitions that we know would not have worked out on our own efforts alone. Hodah is a humbling experience when we feel indebted to Hashem and understand that we owe Him (big time!). Though we put these two expressions together, they are totally different emotions and experiences.

Hallel comes from when you are down and out and then become removed from the depths of negativity. Very much like the life of Joseph who was sold and enslaved, then imprisoned and finally rose to become second to king or grand visor of Egypt. Hodah is the name of Yehuda which begins at a high point and then you are lowered to a real perspective just as Yehuda had said "Tzadka Memeni" by the story of Tamar. It gives a person a painful reality check, but if they are strong they can grow so much from it. The two personalities meet in the middle and become one; Yehuda is lowered and Joseph is lifted. May we all be granted a life filled with Hallel and Hodah, Amen.

Rabbi Aaron Lankry

NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY

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

SHABBOS ZMANIM

Table with 2 columns: Activity and Time. Includes Candle Lighting (4:18 PM), Mincha Alef Tent (4:28 PM), Mincha Bais Chabad (4:28 PM), Shkiya (4:36 PM), Shachris Vaskin-Daf Yomi Shiur (6:42 AM), Shachris Ashkenaz 18 Main (8:00 AM), Shachris Main Minyan 18 Tent (9:15 AM), Shachris 20 Forshay Bais Chabad (10:00 AM), NEW Shachris 18 Forshay (NEW 10:15 AM), Mincha (1:45 PM), Pirchei (2:00 PM), Mincha Shalosh Seudos (4:15 PM), Shkiya (4:37 PM), Marriv (5:17 PM 18 Tent, 5:22 PM)

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

Table with 2 columns: Activity and Time. Includes Shachris (20 minutes before Neitz, S 7:00, M 7:01, T 7:01, W 7:01, T 7:01, F 7:01), Mincha & Mariv (12 minutes before Plag, S 3:28, M 3:29, T 3:30, W 3:31, T 3:31), Mincha & Mariv (12 minutes before Shkia, S 4:26, M 4:27, T 4:28, W 4:29, T 4:30), December 25 - December 30 (Neitz IS 7:20 - 7:21, Pelag IS 3:40 - 3:43, Shkia IS 4:38 - 4:42, Magen Avraham 9:04 AM - 9:06 AM, Gra- Baal Hatanya 9:40 AM - 9:42 AM)

Zmanim by our incredible Gabbi EPHRAYIM YUROWITZ TZVI BLECH : Gabbai



Mincha Mariv Minyanim. Includes winter 2022-2023 schedule for 18 Main and 18 Meriv, with times for various tents and locations (Upstairs, Main Floor). Also includes contact info for Bais Medrash Ohr Chaim.



Rabbi Coren

# LESSONS FROM CHANUKA AND PARSHAS VAYIGASH

Sometime during the past week of Chanuka a new appreciation of what we are really celebrating dawned on me. The revelation was inspired by a riveting speech given by Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik Z"l. After offering a brilliant explanation about two seemingly contradictory Gemaras, he proved that the real observance of Chanuka goes much deeper than we think. In his own words, there are two worlds: the hidden world and the revealed world. On the surface, Chanuka is the commemoration of the military victory as described by the author of Megilat Chashmonaim. However, according to the Rav, the author was providing only a superficial description behind the holiday's hidden message and bright light. (This is presumably why the book wasn't canonized as part of Tanach or at least instituted to be publicly read like Megilat Esther.)

The principle fact leading up to the Chanuka story, although difficult to accept, was that the majority of the Jews at the time were lost to Greek culture and philosophy. And tragically, it was the Jews who were instituting the restrictive decrees and searching for ways to defile the purity of the Torah and mitzvos that are still the bedrock of our heritage.

To emphasize this point even deeper, we find an incredible Targum Yonasan in the sixth chapter of Shir Hashirim that compares the Jews to a pomegranate. The Targum says most of the family of Chashmonaim were like pomegranates and were filled with Mitzvos but only Matisyahu and his family were truly righteous and pure.

As the Rav explains, the battle here wasn't a physical conflict; it was a spiritual struggle, one that would decide the fate of true Jewish tradition. Should the Hellenistic Jews take control, it would not take long before the entire existence of the Jewish people ceased to exist.

When we delve into this contrast between hidden and revealed or darkness and light we suddenly realize that we are all challenged with this test. If we don't consistently check the innermost intentions and excuses for our behaviors we may very easily miss the opportunities of true service to Hashem.

How does this relate to Parshas Vayigash? Throughout last week's Parsha and this one, Yosef makes considerable efforts to comfort his brothers regarding his actions and to convince them that he holds no grudge for what they did many years before. Yet a powerful statement is said from Rabeinu Bachye who writes that because Yosef didn't say explicitly to his brothers "you are forgiven" the pardon was incomplete and we as a nation continue to suffer the consequences of this disregard.

I would like to suggest that the problem is not about Yosef never saying I forgive because from everything he did to his brothers, it seems clear that indeed he did absolve them. However, hidden deep down in the crevices of Yosef's heart and which even he himself wasn't fully aware of, there still lurked some unresolved grudge that he felt for his brothers' acts against him.

Chanuka has come and gone, but hopefully we can carry the light of Chanuka with us throughout the year, assisting us in discerning any negative residue hiding within us and increasing our trust in Hashem that whatever happens to us is for the best. May we remember the dedication of the Chashmonaim to authentic Torah and emulate their purity to serve Hashem with truthfulness and sincerity.

Good Shabbos

RABBI BENTZION SNEH



רבים, ומידענו הבחור לא נרתע, וישב בליל שבת עד לפנות בוקר, ועמל להכין את הפרשה הארוכה, עד ששלט בה באופן מעולה. בבוקרו של יום השבת, מתעורר לו הבחור, והנה קולו אינו נשמע... הוא נצרך בצורה מוחלטת, עד שלא היה יכול להוציא הגה מפיו, וכמובן שלא היה ביכולתו לקרוא בתורה. ננסה לחשוב מה היתה תגובתו של בחור ממוצע, שלא היה חדור באמונה תמימה שהכל מאיתו יתברך, ובכך שכל מה שעושה השי"ת, לטובה הוא עושה. אין ספק שהיה מתרגז עד למאוד, ואומר לעצמו; אחרי שטרח ותרם מזמנו, ולפתע לוקחים לו את הקול, בצורה מזוהה ופתאומית!... ובאמת שהדבר היה לא מובן; רק מספר שעות קודם לכן הלך הבחור לישון, וקולו נשמע כרגיל, בלי זכר לצרידות כלשהי, והנה הוא קם ממיטתו ואין באפשרותו להוציא הגה... אלא שהבחור שלנו הבין, שדווקא בגלל הפתאומיות הזו, ובשל האירוע שעבר עליו, דווקא בשל כך ברור עוד יותר שהכל מכוון מן שמיא. כיום מותר כבר לגלות, שבאותה שבת הגיע לשיבה מי שגתיד להיות ה'שווער' חותנו של הבחור ההוא, שביקש לתהות על קנקנו של המשודך שהוצע לבתו המופלגת. עוד בטרם בואו לשיבה, קבע לעצמו כלל שהוא אינו רוצה שהבחור המוצע יתעסק בדברים אחרים, לבד מלימוד תורה, וגם אם ישמע שהוא בעל-קורא בישיבה, הוא אינו רוצה לקחתו לחתן לבתו. במציאות, זה היה השידוך שנקבע בשמים עבורו, והשי"ת גילגל את העניינים כך, שהבחור לא יקרא בתורה... השידוך יצא לבסוף אל הפועל, "וברור כשמש" - כך אמר ה'שווער' לאחר מכן - שאם הייתי שומע את הבחור קורא בתורה, הייתי פוסל את ההצעה על הסף. לא היתה ברירה אחרת, אלא להטיל צרידות בקולו של הבחור, כדי שה'שווער' המיועד לא יוכל לפוסלו מלהיות חתן לבתו. הסיפור המדהים הזה שהתרחש באחת הישיבות הגבוהות, וסופר בשמחת האירוסין (תוך הדגשת העובדה שהסכמתו לקרוא בתורה הינה חלק מאישיותו של החתן, הנרתם לכל דבר שבכוחו לסייע לציבור, ללא כל קשר לעמלו הכביר בתורה וביראה), מוכיח לנו בפעם המי יודע כמה, שהלוואי והיינו סומכים על בורא עולם בכל מה שעושה איתנו בעולם הזה, ולא היינו מתר-עמים על מאומה. צריך רק להאמין באמונה שלימה שהכל - הכל לטובה, ולטובה ממש, ואם הכל לטובה, הרי ברור שיש באפשרותנו לשמוח ולעלות בכל מה שקורה לנו.

ועתה אל תעצבו ואל יחר בעיניכם כי מכתם אותי... כי למחיה שלחני אלוקים (מה, ה). נמצאנו למדים מעלתו המופלאה והנשגבה של יוסף הצדיק, אשר לא די שמחל לאחיו שהשליכוהו לבור נחשים ועקרב'ים ואחר כך מכרוהו לעבד, אלא אדרבה, עוד ניחמם ועודד את רוחם ודיבר על ליבם כי מעשיהם גרמו לו ולהם טובה גדולה! ידועים דברי חז"ל (ראש השנה יז, ב) על מעלתו הנשגבה של המעביר על מדותיו ש"מעבירין לו על כל פשעיו". שנים רבות היה הרה"ק רבי יעקב זצ"ל (אביו של הרה"ק רבי אהרן הגדול מקרלין זצ"ל) חשוך בנים רח"ל. הוא שימש כש"ץ בבית המדרש בימים הנוראים. פעם אחת, בליל יום כיפור, האריך בתפלת הלחש של מעריב מעט יותר מהרגלו, והדבר עורר את כעסו של אחד העשירים שהיה מנכבדי הקהילה. כאשר פסע רבי יעקב ב"עושה שלום", ניגש אליו העשיר וסטר לו על לחיו לעיני כל והוסיף לגעור בו על ש"הטריח" את הציבור הקדוש המתין לו. מתפללי בית הכנסת שנדעזעו מהמעשה, רצו למחות באותו רשע, אך רבי יעקב השתיקם, וכאילו לא אירע דבר, שב לעמוד ופתח בנעימה את הפיוט "עלה תחנוניו". כך גם לאחר סיום התפילה לא התייחס כלל לאותו מעשה אלא בירך את המתפללים בברכת היום, וחזר לביתו. לאחר זמן מה דפק על דלתו אחד מעשירי העיר וביקש בתחנונים "לקנות" ממנו את זכות הבזיונות שנחל זה היום ברבים, אך רבי יעקב השיב בפשטות "איני יודע מה אתה סו... הרי "בתוך כדי דיבור" מחלתי וסלחתי לאיש שפגע בי, בלב שלם ובנפש חפצה, אין בליבי כל טינה והקפדה ח"ו. בלילה ההוא חזה רבי יעקב בחלומו שבשכר שהעביר על מדותיו יזכה להוליד בן שיאיר את עיני ישראל בתורה. ואכן התממש החלום ולתקופת השנה נולד לו בנו רבי אהרן הגדול זצ"ל שהאיר את העולם בקדושתו.

אחד המשגיחים סיפר, על מקרה שהיה בישיבתו עם בחור מוכשר ומצויין ביותר, ממנו אפשר ללמוד, כיצד מנהל הקב"ה את עולמו. בחור זה, לבד מהתמדתו העצומה בתורה, וכל יתר מעלותיו, מגלה איכפתיות למען כלל הבחורים בישיבה בתחומים רבים, ובכל מקום שבו זקוקים לעזרה, הוא נמצא בראש. שבת אחת, נאלץ בעל הקורא להיעדר בצורה פתאומית, כך שלא היה באפשרותו להודיע על כך מראש, והגבאי חיפש בעל קורא שיחליף את מקומו. כמובן, למי פונים, אל הבחור ההוא, שניאות על אתר להקדיש מזמנו בליל שבת, וללמוד את הפרשה בטעמיה ישר והפוך. היתה זו פרשת מטות-מסעי המכילה פסוקים

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# Why Asara B'Teves Is Different From Other Fast Days

*The fast of Asara b'Teves ("the 10th of Teves") is unique when compared to the other fast days that are mentioned in the Prophets. For example, exclusive to this fast is that it is the only one that we do actually observe as a fast on a Friday Next time this happens is next year. Even TishaB'Av, which commemorates the actual destructions of our Batei HaMikdash, gets pushed off. Another unique distinction is that when it comes to Asara b'Teves there is the unique opinion brought down by the Avudraham that even if Asara b'Teves would fall on Shabbas we would observe the fast on that day just as we would for Yom Kippur (see Beis Yosef, Orach Chaim 550). The reason for this is because the pasuk in Yechezkel (24:2) that describes Asara b'Teves says "b'etzem hayom hazeh," on this very day, indicating that an integral component of the fast is that it occurs on this very day. What is it about the fast of the tenth of Teves that sets it apart from the other fast days?*

## What is this Fast about

The reason given for fasting on Asarah B'Teves is that it is the day that the wicked Babylonian king Nevuchadnetzar started his siege of Yerushalayim, signifying the beginning of the end of the first Beis Hamikdash, which culminated with its destruction on Tisha B'Av several years later. Therefore, Chazal declared it a public fast, one of four public fast days that memorialize different aspects of the catastrophes and national tragedies associated with the destruction of both Batei HaMikdash.

## Three Day Fast?

According to the special Selichos prayers said on the fast, a unique aspect of Asarah B'Teves is that we are actually fasting for two other days of tragedy as well; the 8th and 9th of Teves. In fact, both the Tur and Shulchan Aruch declare that if possible one should try to fast on all three days..

## The 8th of Teves

On the 8th of Teves, King Ptolemy II (285 - 246 B.C.E.) forced 72 sages separately to translate the Torah into Greek (the Septuagint). Although miracles guided their work and all of the sages made the same slight but necessary modifications, nevertheless this work is described as "darkness descending on the world for three days", and the world was dark for three days" (SA OC 480:2 from Megillat Taanit). Another source states that the day that Ptolemy first had the Torah translated into Greek was as harsh to Israel as the day the Golden Calf was made (Soferim 1:7, Sefer Torah 1:6) The reason for this is that it was now possible for the

uneducated to possess a superficial, and frequently flawed understanding of the Torah, as well as providing the masses with a mistaken interpretation of true morality.

## The 9th of Teves

Many sources, including the Kol Bo and the Selichos recited on Asarah B'Teves, as well as many later authorities, explain that this is the day on which Ezra HaSofer (as well as possibly his partner Nechemiah) died. Ezra, the Gadol HaDor at the beginning of the time of the Second Beis HaMikdash, had a tremendous impact upon the returning Jewish community of Eretz Yisrael. He drastically improved the spiritual state of the Jewish people and established many halachic takanos, many of which still apply today. With his passing, the community started descending from the great spiritual heights Ezra had led them. Additionally, since Ezra was the last of the prophets, his passing signified the end of prophecy.

The SeferHaToda'ah suggests that it's possible that "the darkness descended on the world for three days" alludes to the triple afflictions of these three days: the 8th, 9th, and 10th of Teves.

The Chasam Sofer (Toras Moshe, drasha l'zayin Adar) says that historically, on Asara b'Teves, the bes din shel ma'alalah, the Heavenly court, was adjudicating the matter regarding the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. It was on this day that the final verdict of its destruction was agreed upon, and it was then that the siege surrounding Yerushalayim began. However, this wasn't a one-time event. Every year on the tenth of Teves the Heavenly court reassembles and reassesses whether the Beit Hamikdash will be destroyed, as we are told that every generation in which the Beit Hamikdash is not rebuilt is as if it was destroyed in that generation (Yerushalmi, Yoma 1:1).

He adds, that, conversely, a proper fast on Asarah B'Teves has the potential to avert future Churbanos. We are not fasting exclusively due to past calamities, but rather, similar to a Taanis Chalom, a fast for a dream, to help prevent a tragedy from occurring. [He even refers to such a fast as an oneg, a delight.] That is why the fast of Asarah B'Teves, even though it is considered a minor fast, nonetheless has the potential to possibly override Shabbos. These explanations would also certainly elucidate why we would fast on a Friday for Asarah B'Teves.

The Rambam says: There are days on which all Jews fast because of the calamities that befell them. This is in order to awaken the hearts and open the ways of repentance, and to serve as a reminder of our evil deeds and the evil deeds of our fathers that were similar to our deeds that caused them and us those calamities. Through this reminder we will repent and fix our ways.

In this merit may the words of the Navi Zechariah, "The Fast of the Fourth (month, 17th of Tamuz), the Fast of the Fifth (month, Tisha B'Av), the Fast of the Seventh (month, Tzom Gedalyah), and the Fast of the Tenth (month, Asarah B'Teves) shall be (changed over) for celebration and joy for the household of Yehuda" be fulfilled speedily and in our days.





## HAPPY BIRTHDAY?

Should someone's birthday be celebrated by making a meal? Is it considered a Yom Tov?

The Ben Ish Chai in Parshas Re'eh 17 writes that some people have the minhag to make a Yom Tov on their birthday every year. They do so as a good siman. The Ben Ish Chai also had the minhag himself to do so. He also brings down a minhag to make a special celebration on the anniversary of the day of one's bris. The Ben Ish Chai says we do not have this minhag.

The Chasam Sofer in Toras Moshe, Parshas Vayeira writes that Avraham Avinu made a seudah every year on the day of his bris.

The Munkatcher Rov writes that we don't find any Rabbonim celebrating birthdays. The reason for this could be because the Gemara teaches us that it would have been better if one had not been born.

The Klausenberger Rov, in Divrei Yatziv in Likutim Vehashmatos 64 concurs with the Munkatcher and gives the same reason.

Some write that the reason for not celebrating birthdays is that since we don't find any birthday celebration in the Torah except regarding king Pharaoh, we therefore do not have a party on a birthday.

It is interesting to note that in Chabad and in Rizhin they did celebrate birthdays.

The Shailos Utshuvos Ginzei Yosef 4:2 says that some have the minhag to make a Shehechyanu on a new fruit on their birthday.

In the Gemara in Megillah 13b it is mashma that there is good mazel on a person's birthday. That was the reason that Haman thought he picked a good day to destroy the Jews. The day was the day that Moshe was niftar, but Haman did not know that it was also the birthday of Moshe!

There are certain birthdays that have specific significance. We find a Gemara in Moed Koton 28a that speak about Rav Yosef who made a Yom Tov on the day he turned sixty. He invited the other Rabbonim to celebrate with him that no longer was in the realm of receiving "kareis." According to one shitta in Tosfos, fifty is when one is out of koreis and sixty out of misa bidei shomayim.

The Trumas Hadeshen made a special siyum on his sixtieth birthday.

The Shailos U'teshuvos Chavois Yair 70 writes that one should make a shehechyonu with Hashem's name when one turns seventy. The Chasam Sofer disagrees with this and says that one should not say Hashem's name.

In conclusion, try to have as many birthdays as you can so you can celebrate again and again. Having a lot of birthdays is a segulah for long life!

*Do you have a topic or discussion you want to read about? Please send comments or questions to [hymanbsdhevens@gmail.com](mailto:hymanbsdhevens@gmail.com) or [rachsteinfeldscorner@gmail.com](mailto:rachsteinfeldscorner@gmail.com)*

leaders at that time. The words of the Chofetz Chaim flowed from his warm and pure heart as he spoke to the non-Jewish Prime Minister in Yiddish. In the midst of his speaking, the Chofetz Chaim became very emotional, and began to cry. One of those who accompanied the Chofetz Chaim arose to translate but the Prime Minister signaled him to be quiet and sit down. The Prime Minister said that it is not necessary to interpret. Although he did not understand one word that the Chofetz Chaim said, he was convinced to abolish the decree. This was because it was clear to him that the Chofetz Chaim's words came straight from his heart.

Yehuda's request to speak directly into Yosef's ears was a request to eliminate the interpreter. At this point in time, Yehuda was not on very good terms with Yosef. How did Yehuda have the Chutzpah to ask for a favor that he should speak directly into the ears of Yosef? The presumption was that Yosef did not know Loshon Hakodesh. There was an interpreter so that Yosef would understand what Yehuda was saying. If Yehuda thought that Yosef did not understand Loshon Hakodesh, then what did he hope to accomplish by speaking into Yosef's ears? Yehuda realized that the only way that he was going to be able to convince the viceroy of Mitzrayim to let Binyamin go home, was to plead for mercy. Yehuda spoke to Yosef about matters that had no bearing on the case in point: Binyamin has an old father, and his brother died. The language of the heart is understood in every language. It does not need elaboration, nor an interpreter. It was with this language that Yehuda wanted to convince Yosef. Yehuda wanted to plead his case to the viceroy with emotion straight from the heart. The viceroy would look at his face and understood what he was saying. There is a very powerful lesson for us to learn. We learn from what happened with Yaakov that we must always try to have a positive demeanor. One should have a Simchas Hachayim in everything that one does. We must accept everything from the Ribbono Shel Olam with a smile.

### PARSHAS VAYIGASH THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE – THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

יגש אליו יהודה ויאמר בי אדני  
ידבר נא עבדך דבר באזני אדני ואל יחר  
אפך בעבדך, כי כמוך כפרעה

"Yehuda approached Yosef and said, 'Please my master, let your servant speak a word in my master's ears; and do not be angry with your servant because you are equal to Paroah.'" Yehuda then goes on to tell Paroah that Binyomin has an old father, and his father already had one of his sons die. Why didn't Yehuda attempt to refute the charges against them?

"באזני אדני" - Yehuda was saying that his words should go into the ears of Yosef. (רש"י)

47:8 ויאמר פרעה אל יעקב, כמה ימי? - Paroah asked Yaakov, how many are the years of your life? Paroah asked Yaakov how old he was because he looked very old. Yaakov responded that he was not that old, he just had a very hard life, with much Tzara. When Yaakov said this, Hashem said to him - I saved you from Eisav and Lot. I returned Dina and Yosef to you. Yet you complain and say that your years have been few and miserable? Yaakov was supposed to live to the age of his father - one hundred and eighty years. Yaakov lost thirty-three years of his life for the words in this conversation. He only lived till one hundred and forty seven. (דעת זקנים) (מבעלי תוספות)

The count of thirty-three words includes the question that Paroah asked. Why did Yaakov get punished for Paroah asking the question? Apparently, Yaakov was responsible for Paroah asking the question. Evidently, one was able to tell by looking at Yaakov's face that he had a very hard life. He looked much older than he was, which prompted Paroah to ask him his age. (שיחות) (מוסר)

The Chofetz Chaim once appeared before the Prime Minister of Poland to request a cancellation of a decree from the Polish Ministry of Education which was troubling the Torah



## THE EPIDEMIC OF LONELINESS

Even before the Covid pandemic, an “epidemic of loneliness” was compromising our physical and mental health and even our life expectancy. Despite people being more connected than ever now—through smartphones, Facetime, WhatsApp, social media and Zoom—loneliness continues to rise. Among the most digitally connected, teenagers and young adults, loneliness nearly doubled in prevalence between 2012 and 2018, coinciding with the explosion in social media use.

According to the Census Bureau’s American Time Use Survey, a decade ago, the average American spent 15 hours per week with neighbors, friends and even clients, which shortened to 12 hours per week in 2019, and only 10 hours a week in 2021. On average, Americans did not transfer that lost time to spouses or children. Instead, they chose to be alone.

In a powerful and oft-referenced study, Julianne Holt-Lunstad of Brigham Young University found that the risk effects of loneliness and weak social networks parallel smoking fifteen cigarettes a day. Social interaction is not a luxury, it is a basic need. Holt-Lunstad compares the need for connection to our bodies need for food. A study published in Nature Neuroscience found similarities in brain scans between participants who had been socially isolated and those deprived of food for ten hours.

As connected as we are online, people are increasingly disconnected offline, creating feelings of loneliness and having a terrible impact on our health and wellbeing. While there is no vaccine for this epidemic, there is a solution that is much less expensive, less painful, and immediately accessible to all.

Eliminating someone’s feeling of loneliness can be as simple as saying hello. New research in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology found that people underestimate how much others like hearing

from them and how big a difference it can make to someone to simply receive a text or call from someone saying hi. Put differently, taking a moment to check in on someone can mean the same thing to them as giving food to someone who is starving.

Last summer, a young person posted on a WhatsApp group that he no longer wanted to live. As you can imagine, everyone on the group jumped into action. I was notified and reached out to him, his parents, and his therapist. An amazing father and son from our community went over to this person’s apartment to spend time, show love and, working with professionals, make sure he was safe. When I checked in on the young person a few days later, he apologized for all the commotion he had caused and explained, “I was feeling really lonely, really isolated and like I was totally invisible. I just needed connection and I knew that text would get it.”

Baruch Hashem, he was not serious about doing harm to himself, but others feeling that way are and a simple text, phone call, or check-in from us can mean the world.

The Mishna in Avos teaches: רַבִּי מְתִיא בֵּן הַרְרֵשׁ אָוִמֵר, הַיּוֹי מְקַדִּים בְּשֵׁלוֹם כָּל אָדָם. Upon meeting people, be the first to extend greetings. The Tiferes Yisroel comments: הרי זה ההצלחה היותר גדולה שתשיג בעולם הזה, this is the greatest success you can achieve in this world. The biggest title in a community, the most “successful” person, is not the one who has the longest Shemoneh Esrei, learns most diligently, or even gives the most tzedakah. It is the community’s biggest connector, the one who is friendly and warm, who smiles at people and creates connection with others.

If you don’t know what to text or say, it’s very simple. “Just saying hi.” “Checking in.” “Been too long, let’s catch up.” That connection, that social nourishment and nutrition, can make the difference between someone’s happiness or depression, success or struggle, and even literally between life and death.

In last week’s parsha, Mikeitz, Yosef is released from prison. What changed, what was the catalyst for his freedom? In last

week’s parsha, Yosef has been not only abandoned by his family, he has been sold into slavery, falsely accused and sentenced to prison. But instead of retreating to the corner of his cell and wallowing in his own sorrow, focused on his own suffering, he notices that his two cellmates look sad and he asks them, *maduah pneichem ra’im hayom*, why do you look sad today? Grateful for his asking, they confide about their dreams, Yosef successfully interprets them, and later one of them recommends Yosef to Pharaoh.

Not only did Yosef’s destiny change but the course of the Jewish people, the Egyptian empire, and arguably all of humanity changed because of four words, “why are you sad.”

If we want to get out of the prison of our lives, to break free of that which is holding us back and closing us in, like Yosef, we have to stop looking inward and being concerned only with ourselves. We must notice, care about, and inquire about the people around us.

As a young man, Yosef was concerned with himself. With vanity, he beautified himself in the mirror. He talked about his dreams instead of asking others about theirs. But then he grows up. This *na’ar* who struggled with narcissism, learns to turn outward, concern himself with others. Instead of obsessively looking in the mirror, he looks through the window and sees others. He matures to the point of asking fellow cellmates, why do you look so sad, what can I do for you, how can I make you feel better, tell me what is happening in your life, I am listening.

Like Yosef, too many of us flaunt our dreams and are obsessed with looking in the mirror. But like Yosef, we too can mature. We must learn to take an interest in others. When we see friends, family members or co-workers, instead of sharing our status or metaphorical selfie with them, let’s ask, *maduah pneichem ra’im hayom?*

Chanukah has ended but the with making the effort to be sure everyone is on fire and together we can end the pandemic of loneliness.

## RABBI YIGAL HAIMOFF HALF A CUP

יש לנו אב זקן

*We have an elderly father... (Bereishit 44:20)*

Years ago, one elderly gentlemen served as the shamash of his local shul. Given the responsibility to overlook the general upkeep and maintenance of the entire building, he devotedly carried out his job. He cleaned the floors, cleared the tables and made the shul look as respectable as it deserved. Yet that was not the entire scope of his work.

Day after day, he took care of one other job. And that was preparing hot coffee and tea for those who would attend the early morning Torah class given by the rabbi. Rising soon after dawn, he would make his way over to the shul to ensure that hot water and tea would be ready for the attendees.

Yet, strangely enough, the shamash without fail always gave each man attending the class only half a cup of tea. He never, without exception, gave anyone a full cup. Although the men would say that they could use a full cup, he politely replied that he could not do so. While no one ever understood why that was so, they respected his decision and appreciated what he nevertheless did for them.

One morning, the shamash was feeling under the weather. Knowing that he would be unable to carry out his daily duty, he asked his son if he could wake up at 4am the next morning and cover for him. After his son agreed to take over for the day, the shamash thanked him and bid him good night.

The following morning, the son arrived at the shul and was met by an anxious group of men. Smiling, as they saw that today they had a substitute, they made their requests for their tea of preference. Yet, knowing that here stood a rookie, they requested that he please fill the cups to the top. "Finally," they figured, "we will be given a full cup." And with that, the boy headed back to the kitchen to begin preparing the tea.

Boiling some hot water and locating the necessary tea bags, he soon began to pour. And pour. And then pour some more. Each cup was now filled to the brim. Placing them on a large tray, he straightened himself out and began heading for the door. But then he heard his name being called.

Turning around, he saw his father. "Abba! What are you doing here? I thought you were sick?" "I am," replied the father; "I have a fever. But I came here because I remembered that I forgot to tell you something very important." Gently taking hold of the tray, the father placed it back down on the counter.

"The cups are too full," said the father. "Abba, what do you mean? They are perfect!" "Let me tell you something," explained the father. "Every day I give each man only half a cup of either coffee or tea. For years, I have been asked why I do so, yet I never told them why. But, the truth is because there are two elderly men who attend the class. And I know, that considering that the tea and coffee are hot, if one of the men shakes, he will accidentally spill the hot drink on his hands and burn himself. Besides that, he will become embarrassed. I therefore avoid filling their cups to the top." Listening to his father's secret, the boy just stood there surprised.

"But now you are probably wondering," continued the father, "why I don't simply give these two men half a cup, and everyone else a full cup. But, just imagine how they would feel if they find out that they are being treated differently because of their age. I cannot be sure, but I don't want to run the risk of hurting their feelings. And so, every day, I make sure to give each person only half a cup so as to avoid possibly embarrassing any one of these older gentleman."

That is what it means to think something through. While we may many times look for ways to help others, we can never forget to consider the repercussions of our actions as they affect all parties involved. It only behooves us to examine the entire picture and only then wisely make a decision. It will ensure that everyone remains happy and honored as they deserve. And surely if they would know the reason, they would be quite content with half a cup of tea. It would warm their heart and the hearts of all those around them.

## Ohr Chaim Chanukah

### Kollel Boker

On Monday night of Chanuka, the Kollel Boker at Scheiners Shul made a beautiful Mesiba at the home of Rabbi Nachum Scheiner. Feelings of achdus permeated the evening, as the yungerleit, baalbatim and their wives joined together to celebrate their early morning learning, the ultimate triumph over the Yevanim. There was much Torah discussion at the mesiba, making it a true Toradike Sevivah. Rabbi Schiener gave a beautiful dvar torah and words of chizuk and inspiration.

A Siyum on Maseches megilla was made by R' Yanky Lahm and R' Meir Genut. Lebedike dancing and Mazel Tovs followed. After the Siyum a Chanuka riddles game, run by R' Yerachmiel Soddin was enjoyed by all. Long time Ohr Chaim mashpia R' Shloymie Yundalf gave an inspiring speech to the men and ladies about early morning learning and the devotion a family has in order to enable the seder limud, A beautiful hakaras hatov present was given to Rabbi Scheiner in appreciation for all that he does for the Kollel. Everyone left with a lovely gift and with inspiration to finish Meseches Beitza in time for next siyum before Pesach  
*R' Yoseph Fried, Rosh Chaburah*

### Children's Event

The Scheiners Shul Chanukah event was a phenomenal family experience.

David Weltin astounded the audience with his cool magic and mentalist tricks. The hearty latkes, variety of doughnuts, and delicious fruit were enjoyed by all. Rabbi Frieds tehillim & TYH## hit the spot. Rabbi Coren was michazek the audience with a short great dvar torah & lighting of the menorah. The Chanukah music and glow in the dark glasses added a lot to the Chanukah spirit and atmosphere.

Can't wait to see what they have in store next year!

*Mrs. Dina Lehr, Coordinator*

### Night Kollel

The Night Kollel's Chanukah Chagiga was again graciously hosted by the Rosh Kollel Rav Nochum Scheiner. The members of the Kollel enjoyed a wonderful time. The guest speaker was the well-known entertainer Reb Shlomo HaDarshan Juravel. A lively game of Jeopardy was played based on different sugyas that were learned in the Kollel as well as Chanukah and random interesting ideas. The oilam came as one unit as described by the Rosh Kollel and left with a stronger sense of Achdus.

*R' Moshe Rubinovich, Rosh Chaburah*

### Erev Shabbos Mincha

As many have the minhag to daven Mincha on Erev Shabbos. Chanuka before candle lighting, Ohr Chaim added many minyanim, with Mincha available every 15 minutes.

### Zos Chanukah

There was another service available for anyone who wished to skip the hassle of burning the wicks at home and having their fire alarms going off. Ohr Chaim had a fire going the entire day of Zos Chanuka, and everyone was able to bring in their leftover wicks and oil, to throw into the fire.

*Akiva Pollack*

Director of Development

בית מדרש אור חיים  
BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM



Rabbi YY Jacobson

## Taking Responsibility for Our Children

### Transformation of a Brother

Joseph could not contain his tears, nor can we, when we read each year the story of how after a feud and separation that endured for twenty-two years, the Prime Minister of Egypt, Joseph, reveals his true identity to his brothers who once attempted to kill him and sold him into slavery.

No less moving is the speech—nay, ballad—presented by Judah, compelling Joseph to reveal himself to his brothers.

We are familiar with the story: After having his silver goblet placed in his brother Benjamin's saddlebag, Joseph accuses him of theft and claims Benjamin the "thief" as his slave. Judah, approaches the viceroy of Egypt, unknowing that this was Joseph, and explains to him that there was no way he could return to his aging father Jacob without young Benjamin.

The Torah transcribes Judah's exact presentation, the longest in all of Genesis:

"And now if I come to your servant, my father, and the lad [Benjamin] is not with us, and his soul is so bound up with his soul, when he will see that the lad is gone, he will die. And your servants will have brought down the hoariness of your servant our father in sorrow to the grave.

"Because your servant [Judah] took responsibility for the lad [Benjamin] from my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him to you, then I will have sinned to my father, for all time.'

"Now, please let your servant [Judah] remain in the place of the lad as a servant to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers..."

Twenty-two years earlier, the same Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain if we kill our brother [Joseph] and cover his blood? Let's sell him to the Arabs and not harm him with our own hands." The brothers consented. Joseph was sold and brought to Egypt as a slave, where, years later, he rose to become the viceroy of the country. Now, when Joseph's younger brother Benjamin is about to be taken as a slave, Judah offers himself instead.

A metamorphosis has occurred. The time is fertile for reconciliation

and renewal. Joseph can reunite with his family.

But there is more.

### The Gift of Royalty

Tradition has it that royalty in the Jewish nation belongs primarily to the descendants of Judah. Of course, there were many Monarchs who descended from other tribes of Israel, like King Saul from the tribe of Benjamin, or Yeravaam from the tribe of Joseph. The Hasmonean dynasty, responsible for the Chanukah festival, was from the Levite tribe. Yet, as Jacob tells his son Judah on his deathbed, the gift of royalty was specifically conferred upon him and his descendants; the quality of leadership was imbued in the DNA of Judah's descendants, producing over the generations numerous leaders and kings, from the monarchs of the Davidic dynasty to Moshiach (Messiah) who will also be a descendant of David, the great-great-grandchild of Judah.

Why? What did Judah do to deserve this? Was it because he was the one who ultimately saved Joseph from dying in a pit by selling him as a slave? Was it because of his courage to confess publicly that he was the person who cohabited and impregnated Tamar?

Certainly, but perhaps there was something else. It was Judah's declaration in this week's portion, Vayigash, "Because your servant took responsibility for the lad," that more than all demonstrated that the gift of leadership belonged to this man's soul.

You see, notwithstanding his unwavering promise to his father to bring back Benjamin, Judah could have returned without the lad with a book filled with great excuses. "There was no way we could have fought the viceroy of Egypt, the superpower of the world;" "I know I promised to bring him back, but our brother decided to steal the silver majestic goblet from the second to the most powerful person in the world, so what exactly was I supposed to do?" Or, "G-d apparently wanted Benjamin to remain there; after all the viceroy's goblet did 'miraculously' end up in Benjamin's bag;" "being a slave by Egypt's viceroy—our brother Shimon can report to us—is not that bad, he treats his workers with dignity." "Yes it's terrible, but what should I have done? Self-sacrifice can help you jump from the roof to the ground, not to jump from the

ground to the roof!"

These are part of the excuses Judah could have given, and he would have been (at least partially) correct. There is little one can do to battle reality. They did find the goblet of the Prime Minister in Benjamin's bag and Judah was not the culprit.

But Judah was a leader. He had it in his bones to take absolute responsibility for a situation and never pass the buck to others, not even to what can be perceived as "reality." As a genuine leader, Judah stood up and proclaimed: "Because your servant took responsibility for the lad!" Yes, I can find many ways to vindicate myself, but the job will not get done. This is not about me—my innocence or guilt, my merit or fault; it is accomplishing the mission: Benjamin must return to his father.

And that is what makes a leader.

### Excuses vs. Action

Today, too, we desperately need the leadership that will not only search for causes but will implement solutions to ensure the safety of our loved ones and our people.

The most important solution might be a paradigm shift in our mindsets, habits, and lifestyles.

From anti-Semitism to mass assimilation we face many challenges. We live in a generation when many good excuses have been given for our bleak demographics and for Jewish continuity becoming an endangered species. Many a sociologist has, over the course of the past half-century, explained some of the causes for mass assimilation, intermarriage, ignorance, sexual impropriety, abuse, dysfunction, apathy, and strife within families or communities. The Holocaust, secularism, modernity, failure of institutionalized religion, anti-Semitism, the hypocrisy of religious leaders, the monotony of ritual, trauma of all sorts, and the extraordinarily successful integration of Jews into the mainstream of American life. The walls of the ghetto, physical and conceptual, have at last crumbled.

As a frequent traveler to Jewish conventions and retreats around the globe, I am privy to hearing lectures and workshops analyzing the unique challenges of our times and the various crises that threaten our future. They all make good and sound points.

Yet I also had the privilege of seeing



a “Judah,” who a number of years after the incomprehensible destruction of Auschwitz and Treblinka, rose and declared: “Your servant took responsibility for the lad.” I, your servant, have taken personal responsibility for the collective Jewish community and for every individual Jewish lad.

For the following four decades this man, a biological scion of Judah, would not sleep nor allow anyone else to sleep. Single-handedly he empowered thousands upon thousands to stop passing the buck or relieve their conscience by merely making a contribution to a noble cause. He inspired them to take personal responsibility for the welfare, continuity, and eternity of the Jewish people. Do not allow “reality,” he always taught, to decide the future of the Jewish people. Take responsibility for the lad! Do not rest until every Jewish child the world over is given the opportunity to be liberated from spiritual slavery, from his (or her) subjugation to forces alien to his essence, and, just like Benjamin, to be able to return to his father in heaven.

Each year on this Sabbath when I hear the words “Your servant took responsibility for the lad” read aloud from the Torah scroll, my eyes swell up in tears. In my imagination I still see my Rebbe, his face aglow, teaching for hours, but always culminating with this resounding message:

“You and I must take responsibility for the lad!” Do not lament, kvetch, sigh and write a check. Do not organize conferences to analyze all of the problems. Instead, go out of your comfort zone and touch the heart of another person. Build communities, schools, synagogues, and yeshivas. Get involved and make a difference in people’s lives. Give every Jewish child the gift of a Torah education. Help people get in touch with their Jewish souls and spiritual inheritance. Most of all, care about the other as though he or she was your own brother.

“You may have good excuses for your inaction,” he would always say, and nobody will blame you.” But the bottom line is that after all of your rationalization, the child, Benjamin, will remain enslaved to Egypt and its culture.

In our times, often leaderless and aimless, we must make Judah’s call our own. “Your servant took responsibility for the lad.” So shall we.



RABBI FRAND

## PARENTS LOVE CHILDREN MORE THAN CHILDREN LOVE PARENTS

**T**he Shaloh Hakodesh writes a concept (which is also found in secular circles): One parent can take care of ten children but ten children cannot take care of one parent. The Chiddushei HaRim finds a source for this idea in this week’s parsha. When Yehudah made his impassioned plea to the Viceroy in Egypt (who he did not yet realize was his brother Yosef) to release Binyamin, he made the argument — “How can you not let him go? If his father finds out that he did not return, he will not be able to survive!” The Chiddushei HaRim points out that at that time, Binyamin had 10 children. Why did Yehudah not use the argument — how can you not let Binyamin go, you will leave 10 orphans, they will not be able to survive without their father? Apparently, says Chiddushei HaRim, 10 children can somehow manage without a father, but a father cannot manage without one of 10 remaining sons.

This concept that a father’s attachment to his children is stronger than the children’s attachment to their father is the source for the Shaloh’s comment and for the similar concept that circulates in the world at large.

This may be an upsetting idea to all of us who are parents, but that is the truth. Our children love us and respect us, etc., but it is not the same as our love for them. I once saw a very interesting explanation for this phenomenon. Every single human emotion that exists is something we received from Adam, the first human being. Adam had children and therefore he had in him the emotion of a parent’s love for his children. However, Adam did not have a father. He is the only person in the history of the world who did not have parents. Consequently, the emotion of love of child for parent was something he did not possess. It was an acquired skill developed in later generations, but it never had the strong genetically passed down roots that existed in the emotion of love towards children, which is innate in our personalities.

For this reason, Yehudah recognized that the stronger argument for the release of Binyamin would be “his father can’t survive his loss” rather than “his children will not be able to survive his loss.”

The Shemen HaTov uses this concept to interpret a Rashi in our parsha. The last part of Pasuk 29 in Perek 46 is very ambiguous. The pasuk reads: “Yosef harnessed his chariot and went up to meet Yisrael his father to Goshen; and he appeared to him, fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively.” Who appeared to whom? Rashi says that Yosef is the subject and Yaakov is the object in this sentence. Yosef appeared to Yaakov. How does Rashi know this? Why was Rashi so sure that the interpretation is not that Yaakov appeared to Yosef?

The Shemen HaTov explains, based on the earlier stated concept, that the emotion of Yosef appearing to Yaakov was far more dramatic and powerful than the emotion of Yaakov appearing to Yosef. The love of parent to child is much deeper, much more profound, much more intense and innate than the reverse relationship. Therefore, the Torah emphasizes the more dramatic of the two relationships in this reunion: Yosef appeared to his father.

# Stories for Shabbos

## Trying to Get Admitted to Chachmei Lublin Yeshivah

The Tchebiner Rosh Yeshivah, Rav Baruch Shimon Schneerson, zt"l, was a child prodigy, & he was accepted in the top European Yeshivah of Chachmei Lublin, which was run by Rav Meir Shapiro, zt"l. He was a student there for some time. As a young man, he was selected by the Rosh Yeshivah to be a tester, and test those students who were trying to enter the Yeshivah. The entrance exam included a thorough test on the prospective student's knowledge of Shas, his analytical skills and intelligence, as well as a complete investigation of his level of Frumkeit, his observance, his Yiras Shamayim, and also, what type of Middos he had. They sought only the best, and this meant that each student excelled in every aspect of what a true Ben Torah should be. One day, a young man came to the Yeshivah administration, and asked -exceptional, and his analytical skills were lacking. Unfortunately, this extraordinary young man was not Chachmei Lublin material, and the first group of testers signed off on him with a rejection.

When Rav Baruch Shimon's turn to test this student came around, he was very impressed with the young man's demeanor, his Yiras Shamayim, and his overwhelming desire to learn Torah. But what could he do? The other Roshei Yeshivah had already rejected him. Rav Baruch Shimon was very upset. To him, Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin was founded for the purpose of providing a high standard of Torah education, specifically for such students as this young man. How could they reject him? He was a unique student with incredible potential. True, he had a long and difficult road ahead of him to achieve this goal, but the passion and the desire were there! That night, Rav Baruch Shimon could not sleep. He decided to go to the Bais Medrash and spend some time learning. It was two o'clock in the morning, and no one was in the Bais Medrash, or so he thought. He entered the Bais Medrash, and heard a commotion. He was confused. He thought that no one was there. What was the source of the noise? He looked around and followed the sound of the noise, until he made his way to the back of the building. In the corner, he found the young man who had been rejected earlier that day, weeping uncontrollably. He was repeating over and over to himself how much he had

wanted to attend this Yeshivah, regretted his lack of ability, and he was Davening to Hashem to please help him. He wanted so much to learn Torah in Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin! Rav Baruch Shimon could no longer contain himself, and he too burst into tears. How could they turn away such a Ben Torah?

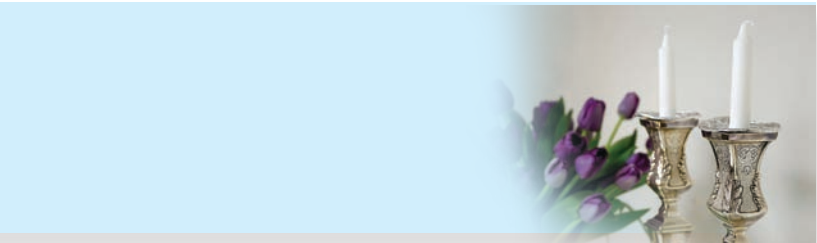
He decided that although the hour was late, he was going to the home of one of the Rosh Yeshivah whose decision carried great weight, and demand that this Bachur be accepted. He woke up the Rosh Yeshivah, and with great emotion, made his argument about this boy, and asked for the Rosh Yeshivah to please accompany him to the Bais Medrash to see for himself, the Bachur's yearning and Davening for the opportunity to grow in Torah. The Rosh Yeshivah went to the Bais Medrash and saw the scene that had captivated and moved Rav Baruch Shimon. His heart melted at the sight of this young man pouring out his heart to Hashem. They very next day, the Roshei Yeshivah had a meeting and decided to accept this Bachur to the Yeshivah, and he did not let them down. Within a short time, he was counted among the Yeshivah's outstanding students. Nothing stands in the way of one's strong desire! *Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.*

## In the Midst of a Howling Wind

Rav Mottel Weinberg, Rosh Yeshiva of the Yeshiva Gedolah of Montreal, was once seen by a passing driver, standing alone on the outskirts of Boro Park in the midst of a howling wind. The driver offered to give him a ride. Rav Mottel declined the offer, and replied, "I am trying to convince someone to agree to give his wife a get and he insisted that I meet him out here." Rav Mottel then told the man to quickly drive away so that the hesitant husband would not be frightened off. Though Rav Mottel zealously defended Kavod HaTorah on numerous occasions, he would sensitively make great sacrifices to protect the honor of an individual. (*Torah Luminaries*) *The Weekly Vort*

## A Volcanic Explosion & the Israeli Teenage Torah Scholar

Rabbi Duvi Bensoussan told a story about a Ben Torah who



was rewarded for his learning. About ten years ago, there was a 17-year-old boy from Israel who was extremely dedicated to his learning in kollel. He lived and breathed Torah. One day in 2010, he wasn't feeling well, so he went home to his mother, who knew he wouldn't have left the kollel in the middle of the day if it wasn't urgent. She drove him to the hospital, where they did extensive tests and learned that the boy was in desperate need of a kidney- and not just a regular kidney, but a kidney suited for a teenager. They told him to go to Belgium, the kidney transplant capital of the world, but warned him that Belgium had a law that priority will be given to European citizens for kidney transplants, ahead of citizens from other countries. If no one on the European list qualified to receive a transplant, due to blood type, location, or some other reason, then they would look at the list of citizens from other countries.

The boy went to his Rosh Yeshivah to ask what he should do, if he should risk going to Belgium knowing he may never receive a kidney. The rabbi looked at his beloved and prized student and said, "Your life revolves around Torah, and Hashem will make the world revolve around you. Go to Belgium. Hashem will give you the perfect kidney." The boy flew to Belgium with his father and arrived at the hotel near the hospital to wait for kidney that matched. He was told there were hundreds of European citizens that were on their list, and they would be obligated to go through the entire list of names before reaching his, should a kidney become available. He went to the Belgium kollel to resume his learning.

The next day, an incredible miracle occurred. Huge plumes of volcanic ash coming from an Icelandic volcano at Eyjafjallajökull floated into the air, and every single European flight was grounded. No one was able to fly in all of Europe! It was chaos. Some kidneys became available for donation, and the hospital began calling the people on the European citizen list to find a match. They called number after number, name after name. No one could fly in to receive the transplant! They finally called this young kollel boy and informed him there was a perfect kidney waiting for him, but he would have to be in town within 24 hours. He went straight from the Belgian kollel to the hospital. The kidney took really well, and this boy's life was saved!! *Jack E. Rahmey as based on the Torah teachings of Rabbi Amram Sananes*



Rabbi Scheiner Mohel at the Bris of the son of Rabbi Yanky Model



Zera Shimshon shiur  
Siyum on Yerushalmi Yevomos  
Rabbi Berger shiur

# JOKES

## A CHELMER VACATION

A Chelmer walks into a Restaurant, and goes straight to the bulletin board in the back. The Chelmer is looking at the bulletin board and sees a piece of paper that says "Ocean Cruise Only 5\$" He pulls the piece of paper off the wall and goes to the address listed on the back of paper. He walks into the building and hands the secretary the piece of paper. The secretary nods and asks if he had the five dollars. The Chelmer nods and pulls five dollars out of his pocket and hands it to the secretary. The secretary looks over to a burly guy reading a newspaper. He nods to the guy. He stood up and knocks the Chelmer unconscious. When the Chelmer wakes up he's tied to a log and is floating down river. He started to think that this was a bad idea. When he sees one of his friends (who is also a Chelmer) tied to a log floating right next to him. In a Joking manner the Chelmer looks at

his friend and says "So do you think they're going to serve us some food on this trip?"  
The other Chelmer replies "They didn't serve any last year."

## THE MARRIAGE VACATION

My friend Jim told me that when he asked his wife where she wanted to go on vacation, she said that being married to him was a vacation.  
When I commented that was a nice thing to say to him, Jim replied, "Well, actually, what she said was I was the 'last resort.'"

## ADVANCED MEDICINE

An Israeli doctor says: "Medicine in my country is so advanced that we can take a kidney out of one man, put it in another, and have him looking for work in 6 weeks." A British doctor says: "That is nothing; we can take a lung out of one person, put it in another, and have him looking for work in 4 weeks." A Canadian doctor says: "In my country, medicine is so advanced that we can take half a heart out of one person, put it in another, and have them both looking for work in 2 weeks." A Chelmer doctor, not to be outdone, says: "You guys are way behind..... We just took a man with NO brain, made him President, and now the whole country is looking for work."

## A CHELMER WATCHES THE NEWS ...

A Chelmer and a Litvak met in a bar after work for a drink, and were watching the 6 O'clock news. A man was shown threatening to jump from the Brooklyn Bridge.  
The Chelmer bet the Litvak \$50 that he wouldn't jump, and the Litvak replied, 'I'll take that bet!'  
Anyway, sure enough, he jumped, so the Chelmer gave the Litvak the \$50 He owed. The Litvak said 'I can't take this, you're my friend.'  
The Chelmer said 'No. A bet's a bet'.  
So the Litvak said 'Listen, I have to admit, I saw this on the 5 O'clock news, so I can't take your money'.  
The Chelmer replied, 'Well, so did I, but I never thought he'd jump again!'

## THE WILL TO LIVE

A man went to his lawyer and said "I would like to make a will but I don't know exactly how to go about it."  
The lawyer says "No problem, leave it all to me".  
The man looks somewhat upset ... "Well I knew you were going to take the biggest slice, but I'd like to leave a little to my children too!"

## CHELEMER PIZZA STORE

A Chelemer ordered a pizza and the clerk asked if he should cut it in six or twelve pieces. He responded, "Six, please. I could never eat twelve pieces."

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**UFARATZTA**

### ALWAYS LISTEN TO YOUR PARENTS – EXCEPT

The Rebbe once answered a Bachur pertaining a Shidduch: There are 2 things that you don't have to listen to your parents. One – A person

should always learn in a place that his heart desires. Two – Regarding a shidduch\*.  
====Sipurim M'cheder Ha-Rebbe P96. \*[Shulchan Aruch Hilchos Kibbud Av V'aim. Yoyreh De'ah, Siman 240,25, Rama.]  
Note: both things, you are following your heart.

Learning, as mentioned above. Shidduch, will follow up in the next Ufaratzta.

**DIDAN NATZACH: Hay Teves, the day we celebrate Seforim.**

An article about our exceptional shul in Mishpacha Magazine

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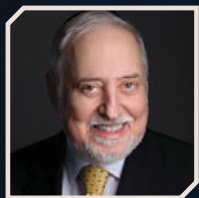
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# SOMEONE NOT FASTING – CHAZZAN OR ALIYAH

As we approach the fast of Asarah B'Teves, I would like to discuss an interesting question that comes up, regarding someone who is not fasting. If someone is not able to fast, is he allowed to get an aliyah or be the chazzan?

As far as serving as a chazzan, there is a machlokes. Rabeinu Nasan – one of the Rishonim – rules that one who is not fasting cannot be the chazzan, since he is unable to recite Aneinu, which mentions fasting. The Tur wonders about this, as the text of Aneinu just makes mention that it is a fast day and does not mention the specific individual fasting. The poskim explain that that in order for a chazzan to recite a tefillah on behalf of the tzibur, he must be required in the tefillah, so someone who is not fasting cannot recite the Aneinu on behalf of others. The Shulchan Aruch (O"C 566:5) rules that one who is not fasting should not be the chazzan.

Similarly, the Shulchan Aruch (O"C 566:6) writes that some say that one who is not fasting cannot get an aliyah to the Torah and, if he is Kohen, he should walk out before they start leining. The Mishna Berura (O"C 566:20) quotes the Derech Ha'chaim that applies this ruling even to someone who did not break his fast yet, but knows that he will not be able to fast the entire day.

What if, at the time of the davening he is still fasting, but he is concerned that he may not be able to finish fasting? The Sho'el U'meishiv (Mahadura Tinyana 2:58) rules that, in this case, he can daven for the amud. He explains his ruling as follows: As mentioned, the reason someone not fasting cannot be a chazzan is because one must be required in the tefillah to recite it on behalf of others. Since this person is still hoping to fast the entire day, he is still considered one who is required in the tefillah and he can daven for the amud. The same idea should apply to getting an aliyah.

### Options when it would be allowed

There are, however, some situations that even one who is not fasting can still get an aliyah or daven for the amud.

1. One option for someone who is not well, but wants to get an aliyah or daven for the amud is if he eats only small amounts at a time. The Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa (Perek 39, He'arah 122) quotes Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, who rules that if one is unwell on Yom Kippur and is eating small amounts at a time, he is still considered as if he is fasting and can still get an aliyah. We can extend this to other fast days, as well. Although one who is sick on other fast days can eat in the regular manner, if he wishes to get an aliyah or daven for the amud, he can eat small amounts at a time. That way he is still considered fasting and is allowed to get an aliyah or daven for the amud.

2. Another possibility to get an aliyah is if the fast falls on a Monday or Thursday. The Magen Avraham (O"C 566:8) rules that, on Monday and Thursday, since there is already a requirement to lein, even if it would not be a fast day, even someone not fasting can get an aliyah. However, the Eliyahu Raba (O"C 566:6) and the Maamar Mordechai question this ruling. Since we are reading the specific leining for a fast day (Vayichal), it is possible that only one who is fasting should get an aliyah. The Mishna Berura rules that it is preferable not to give an aliyah to someone who is not fasting, even on a Monday or Thursday. However, if they already called him, all agree that he can get the aliyah.

### IN CONCLUSION

One who is not fasting should not daven for the amud or get an aliyah in the reading of vayichal. Some allow an aliyah on Monday and Thursday. If someone hopes to finish the fast, or if he ate small amounts at a time, he can daven for the amud and get an aliyah.

*Comments and questions are welcome and can be sent to: RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com.*

*To receive updates of upcoming shiurim, to receive a link to current shiurim, or to access archived shiurim, please send a request to: Secretary@18forshay.com, or follow the prompts on our website 18Forshay.com.*

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Tuesday Jan 3

מנחה ומעריב

פולג 3:42  
שקיעה 4:40

**מנחה**

12:29 מנחה גדולה	18 Main	2:45	Tent X
12:45	Tent ב	3:00	18 Main
1:00	18 Main	3:20 פולג מנין	Tent א
1:15	Tent א	3:15	Tent ב
1:30	18 Main	3:30	18 Main
1:45	Tent א	3:45	Tent א
2:00	18 Main	4:00	18 Main
2:15	Tent א		
2:30	18 Main		

**מנחה עם מעריב**

3:20 פולג מנין	Tent א
4:20 20 min before שקיעה	Tent א
4:30 10 min before שקיעה	Tent ב
4:40 at שקיעה	Tent ג
4:50 10 min after שקיעה	Tent ד
5:00 20 min after שקיעה	Tent א
5:10 30 min after שקיעה	Tent ב
5:20 40 min after שקיעה	Tent ג
5:30 50 min after שקיעה	Tent ד

**מעריב**

3:42 at פולג	Tent א
4:40 at שקיעה	Tent א
4:50 10 min after שקיעה	Tent ב
5:00 20 min after שקיעה	Tent ג
5:10 30 min after שקיעה	Tent ד
5:20 40 min after שקיעה	Tent א
5:30 50 min after שקיעה	Tent ב
5:40 60 min after שקיעה	Tent ג
5:50 72 min after שקיעה	Tent ד

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בס"ד

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