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OUR BELOVED RABBI
SOKAVA REBBE

SUNDAY OCT. 17

רחל אמנו

יארצייט יא השון

SEE PAGE 16-17



RABBI YY JACOBSON

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Night Kolloel

בס"ד

שליט"א UNDER THE DIRECTION OF RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER
Chavrusa Learning in a Warm Environment

8:15-9:45pm

18 Forshay – Main Bais Medrash

הלכות יום טוב – הלכות חול המועד
Shiurim by Rosh Kolloel and Featured Guest Speakers
Come Join and Gain Clarity in these Fundamental Halachos

Shiurim Open to All

DAF YOMI 8:30-9:15pm Sun - Thurs	AMUD YOMI 9:00-9:45pm Sun - Thurs	MISHNA YOMIS 8:45-9:00pm Sun - Thurs
ZERA SHIMSHON 8:15-9:00pm Thursday	CHUMASH SHIUR 8:45-9:45pm Thursday	MAHARAL ON THE PARSHA 9:45-10:15pm Thursday

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO JOIN THE KOLLEL, PLEASE CONTACT:
Rabbi Nachum Scheiner | 845.372.6618 | RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com



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Kolloel Boker

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Currently Learning
מסכת מגילה

Summary Shiurim from Rosh Hakolloel
בענינא דיומא ובעניני הפרשה Erev Shabbos Halacha Shiurim

7:00-8:00am

18 Upstairs Bais Medrash

Shacharis

6:15 & 8:00am

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO JOIN THE KOLLEL, PLEASE CONTACT:
Rabbi Nachum Scheiner | 845.372.6618 | ohrchaim18@gmail.com



קהילת אור החיים רוצה לאחל כוס תנחומים לידידנו החשוב

ר' אבי רובנפלד שליט"א

על פטירת אביו ר' יחיא-ל אהרן זצ"ל

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

תנוחם מן השמים

באהבה והוקרה רבה

קהילת אור החיים

THE RABBONIM, STAFF AND MISPALELIM OF
BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM OFFER THEIR

DEEPEST CONDOLENCES

TO OUR ESTEEMED EDITOR IN CHIEF

ראש זראשון לכל דבר שבקדושה

DEVOTED AND DEDICATED

TO MANY ASPECTS OF OUR SHUL

REB AVI RUBINFELD

UPON THE PETIRAH OF HIS FATHER

REB MECHEL Z"l

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

ומחה ה' א-לקים דמעה מעל כל פנים

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כוס
תנחומים



Light up the night With the light of Torah

Come join the Daf



Hold on to Rosh Hashana for another 34 days!

Bais Medrash Ohr
Hachaim (Sheiner's)
Rabbi Coren's Office

8:30pm - 9:15pm

We'll try to keep you up!

Magid Shiur: **Rabbi Yanky Modell**



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Where?
18 Forshay Rd,
Upstairs in Rabbi Coren office

When?
Monday nights 8:00 pm
Starting after Sukkos

Given by: **Rabbi Daniel Aron Coren**

Contact info: WhatsApp or text Rabbi Coren 914 645 4199



JOY MOVES MOUNTAINS



*Reb Meir Elkabas from
Yerushalayim*

10.17.2021

Sunday | 10AM | Shiner's - Main Beis Medrash
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THE TOP SIGNS YOU'VE JOINED A CHEAP HMO

Directions to your doctor's office include, 'take a left when you enter the trailer park.'

Tongue depressors taste faintly of Fudgesicle.

Only item listed under Preventive Care feature of coverage is 'an apple a day.'

Your 'primary care physician' is wearing the pants you gave to Goodwill last month.

Patient responsible for 200% of out-of-network charges' is not a typo. The only expense covered 100% is embalming.

With your last HMO, your blood pressure meds didn't come in different colors with little 'M's on them.

LOST ELEPHANT

Zoo Keeper: "I've lost one of my elephants."

Other Zoo Keeper: "Why don't you put an advertisement in the paper?"

Zoo Keeper: "Don't be silly, he can't read!"

THE SILENT TREATMENT

A man and his wife were having some problems and were giving each other the silent treatment. The next week, the man realized that he'd need his wife to wake him at 5 a.m. for an early flight.

Not wanting to be the first to break the silence, he finally wrote on a piece of paper: "Please wake me at 5 a.m."

The next morning the man woke up, only to discover it was 9 a.m. and he'd missed his flight.

Furious, he was about to get angry when he noticed a piece of paper by the bed that said: "It's 5 a.m. Wake up."

DRY SPELL

occasionally you hear about a really dry spell in Texas.

I always thought the stories exaggerated until I got a birthday card last week.

They attached the stamp with a staple.

ONLY TOOLS YOU'LL EVER NEED

You only need two tools in life - WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.

OVERLOADED

Police officer: "Your truck is heavily overloaded. I simply cannot let you continue like that. I'm going to have to take away your driver's license."

Driver: "You're kidding me, right? The license can only weigh one ounce, tops!"

THE ACCIDENT

"What happened?" asked the hospital visitor to the heavily bandaged man sitting up in bed.

"Well, I went down to Margate at the weekend and decided to take a ride on the roller coaster. As we came up to the top of the highest loop, I noticed a little sign by the side of the track. I tried to read it but it was very small and I couldn't make it out."

"I was so curious that I decided to go round again, but we went by so quickly that I couldn't see what the sign said."

"By now, I was determined to read that sign so I went round a third time. As we reached the top, I stood up in the car to get a better view."

"And did you manage to see what the sign said this time?" asked the visitor.

"Yes."

"What did it say?"

"Don't stand up in the car!"

BURGLARY IN CHELM

Returning home from work, a women from Chelm was shocked to find her house ransacked and burglarized. She telephoned the police at once and reported the crime. The police dispatcher broadcast the call and a K-9 unit patrolling nearby was the first to respond.

As the K-9 officer approached the house with his dog on a leash, the Chelmer ran out on the porch, shuddered at the sight of the cop and his dog, then sat down on the steps.

Putting her face in her hands, she moaned: "I come home to find all my possessions stolen. I call the police for help, and what do they do? They send me a BLIND policeman!"

CONFUCIUS SAY...

He who jumps out of airplane without parachute, is jumping to conclusion.

"My Friday is ruined!"

"Why, what happened?"

"I realized today is Tuesday."

Late Maariv Minyan

Monday - Friday

20 Min before the עלות

פרשת חקת

3:50am

20 Upstairs

Shema should be said before Chotzos

Late Maariv Motzai Shabbos

One hour & One and Half hours after
Rabeinu Taam

18 Main Bais Medrash

בראשית	8:50 & 9:20
נח	8:40 & 9:10
לך לך	8:25 & 8:55
וירא	8:15 & 8:45

Daily Shacharis Vasikin

עדות המזרח Nussach
With Birchas Kohanim

Location: 18 Main



RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER

ROSH KOLLEL

SPOTLIGHT ON YESHIVAS BEIN HAZMANIM SUKOS 5782 - OUR 22ND SEASON!

While some people associate the Sukkos season with buying daled minim, building sukkos and dancing at Simchas Beis Hasho'evah, at 18 Forshay's Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim, there is much more! The melodious sounds of kol torah were heard every morning, throughout the last few weeks, including Chol Hamoed, with so many starting off their day with true Simchas Yom Tov.

As in the past years, Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim started right after Yom Kippur, with breakfast and lunch being served, with Matan Schara B'tzida and many guest speakers.

Among the many dozens of participants, there was a beautiful blend of all types and stripes from across the spectrum of the community, in the wonderful spirit of 18Forshay.

YBH also featured the esteemed Rabbi Simcha Bunim Berger, who was Sho'el U'meishiv, available to answer questions, as well as giving a small shiur. Rabbi Berger is well known for the various shiurim he gives at Ohr Chaim, including the Daf Yomi Shiur, the Thursday night Zera Shimshon Shiur, as well as the Monday night in depth shiur on Tefillah.

There were also many different shiurim given by renowned speakers, with a full crowd.

HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF SOME OF THE SPEAKERS:

Frid. Sept. 17 – Rabbi Shmuel Aba Olshin, Rosh Yeshiva Gedola Eitz Chaim of Hillside. His topic was analyzing the different levels of disqualifications in the Daled Minim.”

Sunday, Sept. 19 – Rabbi Yitzchok Lichtenstein, Rosh Yeshiva Torah Vadaas. Topic: “Naanui'im – Part of the Mitzvah or a Separate Mitzvah?”

NEW FOR THIS YEAR - LEARNING MOTZEI YOM KIPPUR!

This year we introduced a new learning program on Motzei Yom Kippur. The learning took place for one hour between 9:15 – 11:00, in 18 Forshay upstairs, with Matan Schara B'tzida. It is well known that learning on Motzei Yom Kippur is very precious, a great way to start off the year, following the wonderful day of purification, and a great segulah to merit a good year. Indeed, there were many gedolim who would be sure to set a time for learning immediately after this wonderful day.

What a Kiddush Hashem! Even after a long day of fasting and davening the Bais Medrash was filled. At a time when most people are tired and exhausted, a large group of diverse backgrounds took an hour to learn, fortifying our eternal bond with the entire Jewish nation and with Hashem and His Torah. This wasn't just an hour of learning; it was an hour to help solidify the connection they just attained on this awesome day of Yom Kippur.

HOSHANA RABA

Once again the Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim continued on the night of Hoshanah Raba, with approximately 50 people learning through the entire night, and dozens others joining

for parts of the night. There were 5 minyanim for the leining of Mishna Torah, as well as a minyan for reciting the entire Tehillim, led by Rabbi Coren. In the morning, there were hundreds of people, in 4 packed minyanim for Vasikin, as well as many other minyanim.

Other highlights were our very own Rabbi Coren, who spoke on Chol Hamoed, and our Mara D'asra, Rabbi Lankry. After Yom Tov was Rabbi Yosef Viener, Rav of Kehillas Shaar Hashamayim of Wesley Hills. Rabbi Viener has become a highlight of the YBH, when he shares his vast treasure trove of knowledge on a variety of timely topics, focusing on questions that are related to bochurim. Among the intriguing topics he discussed was when a bachur should be giving musar to others, learning vs. college and how much time and effort to spend on parnassa.

These shiurim – as well as many recorded shiurim on the topic of yeshivas sukah and daled minim from the many guest speakers we have had over the years – are available on MP3 at the shul, 18 Forshay Main Lobby, as well as on our website 18Forshay.com.

KOLLEL NEWS

As the winter begins, the Kollel Boker will be starting Meseches Megillah, a blatt a week, with the plan to finish by Purim. The Kollel Boker is every morning from 7:00-8:00.

The Night Kollel will be covering halachic topic, the halachos of Yom Tov. The Night Kollel is from 8:15-

9:45, with Maariv, available both before and after.

As in the past, we will b'ezras Hashem, have experts and professionals with featured shiurim on these fundamental topics. Now is the time to join one of our many learning programs and keep the momentum going! Come join the Ohr Chaim family, and the many that start off their day or end their day with some exciting and invigorating Torah learning.

MISHNA YOMIS

The Mishna Yomis shiur takes place every night – 8:45-9:00 PM, 18 Forshay – Upstairs. Seize the opportunity to learn several Mishnayos daily – with a magid shiur par excellence! For more info please call (845)323-6601 or Email kaliksteinr@gmail.com.

DAF YOMI

Here is a list of our Daf Yomi shiurim:

5:40-6:15am (Ivrit) – Rabbi Usher Benedict, 20 Upstairs

6:00-6:55am – Rabbi Yanky Model, 18 Upstairs – Office

7:00-8:00am – Rabbi Yossi Chesir, 20 Downstairs

8:00-8:55am (Yiddish) – Rabbi Yitzchok Y. Klein, 20 upstairs

9:00-9:45 AM – Rabbi Shea Stern, 18 Upstairs – Office

7:00-7:45pm – Rabbi Yanky Model, 18 Upstairs – Office

Rabbi Simcha Bunim Berger gives a number of weekly shiurim. On Thursday night he gives a Zera Shimshon Shiur, as well a shiur in Maharal. On

Monday night is his in depth shiur on Tefillah.

MISHMAR

Ohr Chaim's Mishmar program takes place every Thursday night, at 10:15, giving young men in the workforce an opportunity to get together and enjoy each other's company, in true spirit of ahavas chavirim, with kugel and cholent.

SEMICHAS CHAVER PROGRAM

Rabbi Coren's SCP shiur is a new and innovative halachic program carefully crafted for the needs of the 21st century, with a specialized focus on the ethical meaning of the Halacha. The program is rich with content that can easily be imparted to your family. Upon completion of each topic and successfully passing a written exam, every member will receive Baal-Habatim Semicha (Certificate of Accomplishment) from Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar and HaRav Hershel Schachter. The shiur takes place every Monday night at 8:00pm. For more information or to register: Rabbidac@gmail.com.

For more information about any of these many exciting learning programs – including the Kollel Boker, Night Kollel, and much more – please call 845 - 372 - 6618, or email: Rabbischeiner@18forshay.com.

RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER



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To Make your Yom Tov Experience even better

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Please let us know what we can do to modify, change or add to our programs that will enhance your Ohr Chaim Connection.

We value your input and take it very seriously.

If you can take a moment of time to drop me an email, WhatsApp or text it would be greatly appreciated

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

845-499-6354

ohrchaimmonsey@gmail.com



BET PARSHOT LECH LECHA HAFTARAH

Yeshaya Hanavi Ch 40-"Why does Yaakov say, 'My path is concealed from Hashem and my judgment alludes Him?'" This desperate plea is based on the tight control the nations exercise over the Jewish people during their seemingly endless years of exile. They exclaim in bewilderment, "If Hashem really cares, how could He allow the world to continue on its present course!?! Where is the Jewish nation's reward for their perseverance throughout the ages? Why doesn't Hashem respond to the nations' cruelty and deliver them their well-deserved catastrophic blows?" These emphatic cries reflect the Jewish people's deep-seeded feelings of pain and anguish during their difficult moments in exile.

Yet, this similar perspective is shared by the mighty powers of the world who perceive themselves in total control. They see Hashem as aloof from His world and incapable -Heaven forbid - of interfering with their vicious hatred towards His devout children. In this week's Haftarah, Hashem responds to the Jewish nation's plea and calls the world's mighty powers to task. Hashem engages them in heavy dialogue and invites them to defend their audacious position about Him. Hashem says, "Be silent distant nations and mighty powers recharge you. Draw near and speak; come together for judgment. Who inspired the (dweller) of the east to proclaim my righteousness with his every step; delivered nations into his hands and gave

him the control over the kings? Who transformed dirt into his sword and chaff into his bow? ... It is I, Hashem, who declares the generations from the beginning. I am the first and will remain with the final ones." (41: 1,2,4)

Has anything really changed in the past 3000 or 4000 years? The nations of the world seem to have the upper hand and always at the last moment Hashem saves us. It is from the beginning of time that we experience this confusion; we don't see Hashem in our everyday lives and people claim he is not there.

What give us Chizuk are events and stories of Hasegacha Pratik illustrating how things work out for the best. We believe Hashem allows certain things to happen because it is all part of a greater picture. When Moshe Rabinu asked Hashem to reveal his face, Hashem said you can see me from behind and not from the front. If man would see Hashem from in the front, he would surely die. To see Hashem from behind means that after the events have passed and all the dust has settled, only then we can understand why and what Hashem had planned. Only then can it make sense to us.

May we be Zocha to see Hashem's hand in the world with clarity. Amen

Shabbat Shalom

NEW MINYANIM ADDED:

EARLY MINYAN MINCHA FRIDAY
1:12, 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, 3:30

Zmanim by our incredible Gabbi

EPHRAYIM YUROWITZ

Tzvi Blech : Gabbai Sheini



SHABBOS ZMANIM

CANDLE LIGHTING	5:57PM
MINCHA 18 TENT	6:07PM
MINCHA BAIS CHABAD	6:07PM
SHKIYA	6:15PM
SHACHRIS VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR	6:30AM
SHACHRIS ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN	8:00AM
BUCHRIM MINYAN 20	9:00AM
SHACHRIS - YOUTH 18 UPSTAIRS	9:30AM
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN 18 TENT	9:15AM
SHACHRIS 20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD	10:00AM
NEW SHACHRIS 18 MAIN	NEW 10:15AM
MINCHA	1:45PM
PIRCHEI	2:00PM
DAF YOMI	5:15PM
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	5:55PM
SHKIYA	6:13PM
MARRIV	6:53PM 18 TENT, 6:58PM

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS

20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ 30 ON YOM TOV

S 6:50 M 6:51 T 6:52 W 6:53 T 6:54 F 6:56

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 4:51 M 4:49 T 4:48 W 4:47 T 4:46

MINCHA & MARIV

12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 6:00 M 5:58 T 5:57 W 5:55 T 5:54

OCTOBER 17 - 22

NEITZ IS 7:10- 7:16
 PELAG IS 5:03- 4:58
 SHKIA IS 6:12 - 6:06
 MAGEN AVRAHAM
 9:20AM - 9:22AM
 GRA- BAAL HATANYA
 9:56 AM- 9:59 AM

702

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WEEKDAY MINYANIM

שחרית

20 Forshay ↑
18 Main Seder Minyan with Kirchas Kohanim

6:30 Tent א
6:45 Tent א
7:00 Tent א
7:15 Tent א
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11:30 Tent א
11:45 Tent א
12:00 Tent א

מנחה ומעריב

12 MIN, אשתי, אשתי 72 Tent א Summer only
12 MIN, אשתי, אשתי 72 Tent א
12 MIN, אשתי, אשתי 72 Tent א
10 MIN, אשתי, אשתי 20 ↑
20 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
30 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
40 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
50 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
60 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א

מעריב

At 18 Tent א
At later 18 Tent א Summer only
At שקיעה * Tent א
10 MIN, אשתי, אשתי 20 ↑
20 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
30 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
40 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
50 MIN, אשתי, אשתי 20 ↑
60 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א
72 MIN, אשתי, אשתי Tent א

7:30 Tent א 10:15 18 ↓
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8:45 Tent א 11:30 18 ↓
9:00 Tent א 11:45 18 ↓
9:15 Tent א 12:00am 18 ↓
9:30 Tent א 12:15 18 ↓
9:45 18 ↓ 12:30 18 ↓
10:00 18 ↓ 12:45 18 ↓

FOR MORE INFO: www.18forshay.com // Secretary@18forshay.com



LECH LECHA AND KITZUR YOMI

This year, after Sukkos we began the daily Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Yomi. If you have the old Hebrew version of the Kitzur you can find the Hebrew dates written inside or you can print out the schedule online. In fact, ArtScroll recently printed a beautiful translation of the Kitzur and the next edition will add the calendar days as well. I actually have a nightly Chaburah on Zoom and it's amazing how gishmack a 15 minute learning Seder which covers about 7 or so halachos can be. One of the guys I learn with told me he never would have dreamt that he could enjoy learning Kitzur so much. And he added that the structure and directness that it provides actually creates clarity and joy rather than what people tend to complain about which is that the laws are "limiting and debilitating." In truth this is one of the most important fundamentals of life and Judaism--that the Torah is not a bunch of laws and stories but rather it's what we say in davening every day--"Torahs Chaim" instructions for living. The Torah guides us how to have a meaningful connection with Hashem and what our thoughts should be when performing mitzvos. In fact, according to the Zohar, the word 'mitzvah' itself means to connect. While it is true that there are times when the Kitzur might reach a stringent conclusion, once in a while it comes back surprisingly lenient. Should your minhag not follow the proposed decision that's okay but when in doubt, you can't go wrong with following the Kitzur which was written by Rav Shlomo Gantzfried z"l who was one of the leading Poskim in the later 1800s in Hungary. It is interesting to note that although you would think that he was more "litvish," his best friend was none other than Rav Hershel Lisker who was the Rebbe of Reb Shayle Kerestir. Both these men would actually visit the Yismach Moshe, aka Moshe Teitelbaum, who was the Rebbe of Ujhely in Hungary in the mid 19th Century. In short, it's never too late to jump on the band wagon and join so many others studying the daily Kitzur.

I believe there is also an interesting connection to this week's Parsha and to the message that we can learn from Abraham Avinu. The Passuk begins with Hashem commanding Avram to 'lech lecha'--go (for you.) The words are strange and Rashi explains that for you means 'for your enjoyment and pleasure.' The Toshe Rebbe asks why Hashem offered Avram so many rewards when Avram has already shown his dedication to Hashem in several different ways: by jumping into the fire and by leaving his father and his home to go to an unknown land. Why the need for bribery?

The answer can best be found in the words of the Zohar. The Zohar questions the usage of the words "lech Lecha." Why did Hashem say 'go out'? Why the word 'go'? The Zohar basically teaches us the lesson of life, that life is about going, moving, adhering to a process. Life is about following instructions so that we can exist according to the ways Hashem's expects from us. The word lech-to go-- also reminds us of the commandment of והלכת בדרכיו--and go in his ways. When we follow Hashem's ways we develop spiritually and this leads us to enjoy life. Only then will it really be lech lecha for us because that is the purpose of these מהליכים. The purpose of Mitzvos is to give us a better מהלך .

כל שונה הלכות
בכל יום ... אל תקרי הליכות אלא הלכות .

Basically, we are taking the word הליכות which means behaviors and turning it into הלכות --laws. I think the message goes in both directions. Instead of referring to them as הליכות --behaviors--which could include many different approaches a person can select, rather call it הלכות --the laws set forth by Hashem. But keep in mind that these הלכות are really הליכות because if you learn to look deeper into each Halacha you will realize that each one is given to us in order to make our lives and the paths we choose meaningful and

effective.

This week's Parsha mentions את הנפש אשר עשו בחרן --the souls that Avram and Sara made. What inspired Avram to bring so many people close to Hashem? I think it goes together with Avram's methodology towards chesed. The great Reb Chaim of Volozhin is quoted by his children in the preface to Nefesh HaChayim that the most essential act we can do in this world is to act with kindness to others and the greatest kindness that one can do for another is to teach them the ways of Hashem.

Let's take the lessons of Lech Lecha with us: Study Hashem's ways. Do kindness. Share wisdom and life's traditions with others. Learn Kitzur daily.

Shabbat Shalom

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• Weekly Thursday Night Chabura •

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WHO WOULD ABRAHAM VOTE FOR?

A Palace in Flames

The Genesis of a Faith

How did the Jewish faith, the father of all monotheistic faiths, begin?

The Midrash (in this week's Torah portion) describes the birth of Judaism with the following cryptic parable:

The Lord said to Abraham, "Leave your land, your birthplace, and your father's house." To what may this be compared? To a man who was traveling from place to place when he saw a palace in flames. He wondered, "Is it possible that the palace has no owner?" The owner of the palace looked out and said, "I am the owner of the palace."

So Abraham our father said, "Is it possible that the world lacks a ruler?" G-d looked out and said to him, "I am the ruler, the Sovereign of the universe."

Abraham is the first Jew. His bewilderment is clear. This perceptive and sensitive human being gazes at a brilliantly structured universe, an extraordinary piece of art. He is stirred by the grandeur of sunset and by the miracle of childbirth. He is in awe of the respiratory system and of the bee dance when returning to the beehive from lunch. He marvels at the roaring ocean waves and at the silent, steady heartbeat of the human heart. The world is a palace indeed.

But the palace is in flames. The world is full of violence, bloodshed, injustice, and strife. Liars, thugs, abusers, rapists, terrorists and killers are continuously demolishing the palace and its royal inhabitants. Innocent people are beheaded; dissidents are tortured. Human life, in many regions, has no value.

What happened to the owner of the palace? Abraham cries. Why does G-d allow man to destroy His majestic world? Why does He permit such a beautiful universe to go up in flames? Can G-d have made a world only to abandon it? Would anybody build a palace and then desert it?

Some resort to easy answers. Some suggest that the palace has no owner. The entire palace is a product of random mutations. Others deny the reality of evil. It is all a delusion. In the next world, all will be good.

But the first Jew rejected both of these

perspectives. Abraham knows this world is a mansion; and he is perturbed to his core by the evil he encounters.

So "The owner of the palace looked out and said, 'I am the owner of the palace.' G-d looked out and said to Abraham, 'I am the ruler, the Sovereign of the universe,'" the Midrash records G-d's reply. Britain's former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks presents this compelling interpretation to G-d's response.

Where Is Man?

Note that the owner of the palace does not make an attempt to get out of the burning building or to extinguish the flames; he is merely stating that he is the owner of the palace going up in smoke. Why did he not leave the mansion? It is as if, instead of racing out, the owner was calling for help. G-d made the palace, man set it on fire, and only man can put out the flames. Abraham asks G-d, "Where are you?" G-d replies, "I am here, where are you?" Man asks G-d, "Why did You abandon the world?" G-d asks man, "Why did you abandon Me?"

Thus begins the revolution of Judaism—humanity's courageous venture to extinguish the flames of oppression and violence and restore the world to the harmonious palace it was intended to be. Abraham's encounter with G-d in the presence of a burning palace gave birth to the mission statement of Judaism: to be obsessed with good and horrified by evil.

G-d created an imperfect world, one vulnerable to natural disasters, viruses, diseases, and of course man's destructive choices. This too is part of our mission: To do what we can to preserve life, to protect the weak, bring healing to the ill, and protection to all. To never allow political correctness, arrogance, or misplaced compassion to cause harm to the innocent.

Reclaiming Our

Mission Statement

For too long, many have succumbed to the lure of the popular notion that there is no such a thing as absolute evil behavior. "Thou shall not judge," became our cherished motto. We have been taught, instead, to probe and understand the underlying frustrations compelling the aggressor to follow his extremist route.

This sophisticated and open-minded point of view allowed to us sustain our ethos of boundless tolerance, accepting all forms of behavior, since at the core

of every mean act lies a crying heart.

Few ideas have been rejected in the Torah with so much passion. Because Judaism placed as its highest ideal the creation of a good and ethical world, while the refusal to take a stand on what is wrong results in its victory. A non-judgmental view of someone who beheads a woman in France, for example, may appeal to our sophistication, yet in reality; it is a display of extreme cruelty to the innocent victims who will die at the hands of frustrated militants.

Judaism, in its obsessive attempt to turn the word into an exquisite palace, created absolute universal standards for good and evil defined by the Creator of the universe, articulated in His manual for human living, the Torah. Taking the life of an innocent person is evil. No ifs, buts, or why's. The killer may be badly hurting but that never ever justifies the evil of murdering an innocent human being.

Yet, tragically, we have become numb to our mission statement. For many years the leaders across the world and in the Jewish State displayed tolerance toward terrorists, neglecting our most cherished doctrine that the preservation of human life reigns supreme over every other consideration. The results of our moral confusion were devastating: Thousands of innocent Jews and Arabs died. And terrorists the world over learned that they could continue their despicable work without serious consequences.

In recent years, the tide began to shift. We learned the hard way that, as Churchill put it, an appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last." Good people of the world are waiting to be inspired by our four-millennium long heritage of standing up to evil and banishing it from G-d's palace.

This is part of what to think about when you decide who to choose as a leader. Who will help keep our country and our world safer? Who will be more likely to take on the bad guys trying to destroy the palace? Who will define evil as evil and treat it such?

Abraham would ask us to reflect on the most important questions facing us: How do we create a world filled with kindness, goodness, and justice? How do we construct a society based on moral responsibility to man and to G-d?

Abraham, I would imagine, would say one more thing: Do not get petty, and do not allow arrogance and fear to rule you. Do what you must do to the best of your ability and trust the Creator to do the rest.



**Parshas
Lech Lecha**

R' Zishe of Anipoli (1718-1800) the brother of R' Elimelech of Liczensk and an early Chassidic luminary, declared, "When I reach heaven after 120 years, they will not ask me why I was not Avrohom Avinu or Moshe Rabbeinu, but I will be asked- why was I not R' Zishe.. Why did I not fulfill my role to the fullest?"

The process of finding out who we are and in turn, developing our unique talents requires much strength and the ability to break away from unhealthy peer pressure.

This strength says R' Shimshon Raphael Hirsch, one of our greatest thinkers, was given over to Avrohom Avinu in the the words "Lech Lecha". Journey deep inside yourself- Hashem says, everybody is responsible for their own relationship with their Creator.

Although our community may dictate the norms, we all have the ability and the obligation to develop our talents and use them to benefit others. We should encourage the individuality of our children, listening carefully to the song of their spirit. We ourselves must not get lost in the forest of our communities to the point where we cannot find beauty in the growth of our own individual trees.

But these times and the prevalent crowd mentality, has brought with it even more challenges.

Throughout our community we are witness to a phenom-

enon that has historically led us down a thorny path.

Striving more than ever to measure our success by the yardstick of secular society, financial achievement at all costs has become the goal. Society tells us- the difference between men and boys, is only the price of their toys. Ethics are forced to take a back seat to monetary gain, but this is not the heritage that has been passed down to us through the ages.

We have within us a clarion call to develop compassion for one another, and feel each others pain. We should aspire to be impeccably honest in our dealings. As we grow older we must also develop our emotional maturity and build each other up rather than belittle those who may not meet our "standards". We need to recognize that our relationships with our family and spouse are the most important relationships we have and act each day with this truth as our guide.

It is apparent that our values are not consistent with the values of the world around us. They never have been and they never will be.

R' Hirsch implores us to stand against this tide of false ideas and ideologies.

From the very beginning, being apart from the rest of the world has given us the strength to cultivate strong family bonds and a solid sense of who we are- precisely because we did not follow a crowd mentality. The truth of our tradition will propel the world to redemption- but we must first heed its call to return to our original values.

Good Shabbos!

EVEN WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN YOUR COMFORT ZONE, I'M ALWAYS WITH YOU"

Rabbanit Chagit Amayev

There was once a young man who was an only child born to his parents after many years of waiting. When he was born his parent's happiness knew no bounds but unfortunately they also raised him without setting forth proper boundaries for him. He grew up wild and unruly doing whatever he felt. He had no sense of delayed gratification and he ended up bringing great sadness to his parents.

After seeking much counsel they decided to take a drastic step. They called their 18 year old son over in deep pain but with equal resolve they told him to pack his bags for he was being sent away from the house. He packed up and they gave him some pocket money but he was still shocked that they were really asking him to leave. But the parents were steadfast in their resolve and the boy sulked and left the house as told.

"Where should I go? Where should I sleep tonight?" he asked himself. This was the first time he had to face the consequences of his actions; he understood that he was going to change and he would now have to take charge of his actions. Days passed, a week and then another. No one is checking up on him to see how he is doing and where he is as he wanders from place to place sleeping on park benches at night. At that time he began to really regret his wayward life and his harmful deeds. He remembered how his parent's home was so pleasant and how he was ungrateful to them with his behavior. His heart was broken with regret. He sat on a park bench which became his home recently and began crying bitterly. "Master of the World, I am all alone in this world. My parents left me and rightfully so! Woe is to me for all my misdeeds that brought me to this low point in my life. How much I regret what I did!"

His body is shaking from his sobs and his insides are churning when he feels a gentle hand on his shoulder. He looks up and he sees his father and he fills with happiness. He feels the warmth of his father's embrace and it's so reassuring. The son goes over all the things he did and he expresses his regret for each one.

His father told him: "You should know my son, when it hurts you it hurts me. You should know that you were never alone for even one moment. I was always not far away concealed and observing you from where I hid to make sure no danger would befall you. Without you knowing it I made sure to stand guard. But I only hid from you so you'd understand your mistake in order to correct your ways."

This parable is about the 'Go Forth' (Lech Lecha) that G-d tells every Jew. Go out of your ego-centrism, from your comfort zone, from your negative natures you got accustomed to, from your early childhood, in order to learn from your mistakes and move forward, develop and work on your character traits. Go up in spirituality and physically too for yourself and your children and all your descendants for all future generations.



An Insight into the Stars

Let's talk a little about a concept in the Parsha. (Ed. Note: This Dvar Torah was mentioned in 5775 as well). The Posuk says in 15:5 (הַבֹּט--אֵתֶם לִסְפֹר אֹתָם). (נָא הַשְׁמִימָה וּסְפֹר הַכּוֹכָבִים--אִם-תּוּכַל, לִסְפֹר אֹתָם). The Ribbono Shel Olam says to Avraham Avinu look heavenward and count the stars. Can you count all the stars? It is an old question of mine which I must have mentioned here already that the visible stars, the stars that are visible to the eye are generally at any one time roughly 1,200 stars maximum. Since at night you only see half of the sky the maximum number of stars in the heavens is the whole sphere of the heaven is well under 3,000 probably closer to 2,500 and this is confirmed in all science books. Visible stars are only in the 2,000 - 2,500 range. Zeh Hu! Until Galileo (in the early 1600's) perfected the telescope, the fact that there are so many stars all over was not known. So it is interesting that HKB"H said look at the heavens and count the stars is it possible to count them.

Then we read Rashi. Rashi says (והגביהו למעלה מן הכוכבים). HKB"H picked Avram up off the earth and carried him in the heavens higher than the stars. The question is what is the Tzorech for this miracle. Hashem created a miracle that he took Avram Avinu who became the first recorded person up in the heavens. What is the need for such a miracle?

According to what we said it is very Geshmak. From the earth you can't see so many stars. Therefore, HKB"H (והגביהו למעלה מן הכוכבים) to be able to see all of the stars and the fact that there are so many stars that you can't count how many stars there are. This is the Pshat in Rashi and this Pshat in Rashi I found in Taima Dik'ra (page 21).

In Taima Dik'ra he makes mention that at any one time there are only a little over 1,000 stars visible and that is why HKB"H (והגביהו למעלה מן הכוכבים). As I mentioned in previous years, this is a big Yesod of Emunah. This is because for many generations after the Torah was given until the days of Galileo in the 17th century, Jews and non-Jews alike read this passage in the Torah where it says look at the stars and your children will be as many as the stars and they wondered, what? As many as the granules of sand on the earth, that is a lot. As many as the stars, the stars are finite. We know today when HKB"H said this to Avram that the stars are truly infinite.

Rav Druk on the difference between Hagar and Rus.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha. I would like to start with a riddle. Who is it in Tanach that was a princess and gave up the house of her father the king, to go and connect herself to a Jewish home even without the glory and wealth, just to connect to Klal Yisrael? Of course you all know the answer. However, there are two answers. Most famously it was Rus who gave up her father's house and wealth in order to connect to Klal Yisrael even though she lived in poverty in the time that she returned with Naomi.

There is a second such woman. Her name is Hagar. Hagar also as Rashi brings in Parshas Lech Lecha 16:1 (בת פרעה היתה, כשראה נסים) שנעשה לשרה אמר מוטב שתהא בתי שפחה בבית זה ולא גבירה בבית (אחר). Hagar also left the kings palace to come and to be a Shifcha in the house of Avraham. So that, Hagar was really a great woman as was Rus, yet, such divergent outcomes. The outcome by Rus is that Dovid and Moshiach come from her and the outcome by Hagar was that Yishmael comes from her. It is a Davar Pele.

It is also obvious that Hagar was a great woman because Sara offered Hagar as a wife to Avraham as it says in 16:2 (אולי אבנה ממנה). Maybe I will raise her children. My descendants will come through her. If Hagar was a person worthy of having a Yishmael, Sara picked the

wrong person. So we need an explanation what happened. We have two women with the identical Mesiras Nefesh, Rus who was drawn close and Hagar who sent away.

Says Rav Druk in his Sefer Darash Mordechai (on 16:4, page 119), one thing happened. (ותקל גברתה). There came a time where Hagar looked at Sara with a cynical eye. (ותקל גברתה בעיניה). Chazal say (In the Gemara Maseches Eiruvin 65b, 2nd line from the top) א"ר אילעאי בשלשה דברים) (אדם ניכר בכוסו ובכיסו ובכעסו) that a person is Nikkir B'koso, B'kaisa, B'kiso. When he drinks, when he gets angry and when he deals with finances, that is well known.

Rav Druk brings (ואמרי ליה אף בשחקו) some say also when he jokes around. (ותקל גברתה בעיניה). She joked around about Sara. Sara wasn't considered Choshuv in her eyes. From that you go from a mother of Moshiach to a mother of Yishmael? Yes.

There are things in the world that have sanctity, that have value that are spiritually important. There are people that represent Torah, Avoda and Yir'as Shamayim. The Penimios of a person is recognized (בשחקו), in what he jokes around about. The reverence that he has for things that are Kodosh. Hagar (ותקל גברתה בעיניה) in her Penimios, deep inside she did not appreciate the greatness of Sara and after that it all went downhill.

We live in a generation where people are cynical about those who are in power. When you look at the political world it is no surprise, the successful politicians are not the ones that command respect from anybody. And yet, Klal Yisrael always has reverence for Devarim She'bik'dusha, for people of Kedusha, the people who lead Kehillos or Yeshivos.

Unfortunately there are some Yidden who get sucked into the cynicism of the world. (ותקל גברתה בעיניה). The lesson of Hagar is that you can be at the door of being the mother of Klal Yisrael (אולי אבנה ממנה), but you can lose it all. You can lose it all with not having the right respect, reverence for Devarim She'bik'dusha. What a lesson. I can just see Rav Druk talking about it. It was exactly up his alley.

These shiurim have been transcribed from an actual drasha. As speed is of the essence, spelling and grammar may be compromised

UFARATZTA

RAIN SYMBOLIZES PARNASA

"If you go in my statutes... I will give your rains in their season..." Torah-study and Mitzvos-observance are the wedding-ring with which Hashem betrothed Israel and obligated

himself to provide them with sustenance and livelihood. === Hayom Yom



GAN

HATORAH

Rabbi Yakov Yosef Schechter

Do Angels Stand, Walk, or Fly?

12:1 "וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֶל אַבְרָם לֵךְ לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאֲךָ"

"Hashem said to Avrom, 'Go for yourself from your land, from your relatives, and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.'" Hakodosh Boruch Hu told Avrohom Avinu to leave his homeland, but did not tell him where to go. Instead, Hakodosh Boruch Hu just told Avrohom that he should go to a land that Hakodosh Boruch Hu would show him. Why didn't Hakodosh Boruch Hu tell Avrohom where he would be going?

Malachim are called, "עומדים" – "standing" for being that they do not have a Yetzer Hara who tries to convince a person to sin, they have no reason to sin, and therefore have no challenge in their serving Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Thus, the Malachim are always "standing" – not going up or down. When they serve Hashem, there is no praise heaped upon them for that is what they were created to do, and they have nothing which holds them back from doing so. Conversely, man is called a "הולך" – he is always moving. Due to man's constant battle with the Yetzer Hara, he is moving from level to level in Ruchniyos. Hopefully he wins the battle, and moves up, and if he Chas V'sholom loses, he goes down.

"לך לך" – Hakodosh Boruch Hu told Avrohom Avinu that he needed to know that he was constantly, "לך" – moving. One must know that at all times in life he must constantly seek to move up the ladder of Ruchniyos. One must never think that he has reached the top, that he is complete, and there is nothing more for him to do. Someone had a dream with a ladder that had one thousand steps. The king was on that ladder, and he reached the 500th step. In the morning, the man told the king about his dream. The king was happy about the dream the man had, and gave this man one thousand gold coins. A neighbor's wife heard about her neighbor's husband telling this dream to the king and the king giving him a gift of 1,000 gold coins. She told her husband that he should go to the king and tell him he had a dream

– but he should say that the king reached the top step, and then surely the king will give 10,000 gold coins. The man listened to the advice of his wife and went to tell the king of his dream. The king was not happy with his dream, and commanded that he be thrown off a roof into a courtyard. The king explained that the first dream was good, for he had reached 500 steps, which was quite an accomplishment, but at the same time he had much room for more greatness. He therefore rewarded him. The second man who supposedly had a dream with him at the top step was not good, for the king could not go up any farther – that is not good. He therefore, had the man thrown off a roof to demonstrate that once one reaches the top, there is only one way to go. This is the message Hakodosh Boruch Hu was giving to Avrohom, and a message for all of his progeny – "לך לך" – always seek to be moving up, for if one thinks he has reached the top, it will cause him to have a great fall. (עוד יוסף חי)

This world is like a person who is trying to go up an escalator that is going down. Inherently the escalator is taking him down – thus, if one is not moving up, he is automatically moving down. If a person thinks that he is good where he is in Ruchniyos, and is no longer striving to go up, that person is going down in Ruchniyos.

Hakodosh Boruch Hu didn't tell Avrohom Avinu which land he would be headed to for that was not the main point. The message that Hakodosh Boruch Hu wanted to impart to Avrohom Avinu was to know that he must always be a הולך in this world. He must be seeking to move up the ladder of Ruchniyos, and never think that he has reached the top. Avrohom needed to completely conquer his Gashmiyos, and recognize that the purpose in this world is to fulfill the Ratzon Hashem. Wherever Hakodosh Boruch Hu would lead him to in this world, would be good if he followed Hashem – for if he was following the command, that would mean that he was climbing up the ladder of Ruchniyos. Avrohom needed to know that wherever he ends up, Hakodosh Boruch Hu is guiding him there, and in that place, there is an opportunity for an Aliyah in Ruchniyos. We must all constantly strive to climb the ladder of Ruchniyos.



100 BILLION MESSAGES A DAY

Most of us have become accustomed to using WhatsApp to communicate and in some cases manage our family, social, and professional lives. Indeed, WhatsApp is used to send more than 100 billion messages a day (although most of those are just in the group my wife and I have with our children). To give you a sense of how dependent we are on WhatsApp for working for and with the BRS community, for example, Rabbi Moskowitz and I are currently in 206 groups together including our BRS staff group, groups for organizing shiva minyanim and chesed, sharing Torah, and much more.

A year and a half ago, a virus forced us to socially distance, quarantine, and lockdown physically. This past week, a bug in technology, at least temporarily, put a wedge between us and kept us apart from one another for several hours. Both were terribly unpleasant, uncomfortable, and even painful. But they also both presented opportunities to reflect, reset and recalibrate, the former on our connection with people and the latter on the role and dependence on technology in our lives.

While our generation is struggling to navigate the unprecedented proliferation technological breakthrough, we are not the first to confront what progress should mean, how it should impact how we spend time, and what our ultimate goals should be.

The central story of our Parsha is the “hard reset” that God performed on the world, undoing all that He had created and restarting the world anew. Hashem took such a drastic measure because, the Torah tells us, the world had become filled with corruption and moral depravity.

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 108a) makes a mysterious comment – “the generation of the flood became corrupt as a result of the great blessing that God had bestowed upon them.” Which blessings are the rabbis referring to and how did they corrupt humanity?

The great Rav Avraham Pam zt”l suggests that the key to understanding this Gemara and what happened to Noah’s

generation can be found in his very name. The Torah tells us that Lemech named his son Noach saying, “This one will bring us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands from the ground which Hashem had cursed.” Rashi explains that until that time, the world had continued to suffer from the curse that God gave Adam, “b’zeias apecha tochal lechem, you will have to work with the sweat of your brow to draw bread from the ground.” Until Noach was born, man labored from morning to night and worked tirelessly with his bare hands just to have food to eat, leaving no recreational or down time.

Lemech saw prophetically that Noach was destined to invent the plow and other agricultural tools that would make man much more efficient and would ease his burden. Lemech therefore named him Noach from the root nu-ach, to rest, because his Noach would provide tremendous relief to an over-worked population.

Rav Pam explains, the inventions of the plow and other tools were the great blessing that rabbis referenced. Yet, instead of becoming empowered, liberated, or enriched by these innovations, they became corrupt. These inventions, these gifts from God increased productivity, improved efficiency, and yielded more free time. This time could have been used constructively, productively, and meaningfully. Instead, the generation used their newfound downtime for corrupt activity. The breakthrough and advancement could have brought spiritual ascent, instead they brought moral decline.

We are blessed to live in the greatest era of technological breakthrough of all time. Simple tasks that used to eat up our time can now be accomplished in seconds, or through automation or even speech recognition, in no time at all. We long ago became accustomed to the washing machine, dishwasher, bread machine and microwave, but we now even take things like GPS navigation systems, or the ability to Facetime or WhatsApp video with multiple people in multiple destinations across the world, for granted.

Every single day, something is invented which is meant to make our lives more noach, easier. They are designed to free up precious time. The question is, do they? Do we fill that time meaningfully and mindfully or is that time squandered on mindless behavior?

Perhaps it is no coincidence that Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp were first wiped out and then flooded with messages in the week we read Noach as a reminder that a generation is defined by what it does with the blessing of progress it experiences and the free time it discovers.

The Mishna in Pirkei Avos (3:1) quotes Akavya ben M’halalel who teaches that a person should always keep in mind, “Before Whom he will have to give Din V’cheshbon, judgment and reckoning.” What is the difference between din and cheshbon?

The Vilna Gaon explains that din refers to judgment for mistakes, indiscretions, and poor decisions we made. Cheshbon is not about what we did wrong with our time, but what we could have done right during that time. We will have to give din for mistakes we made but we will also be held accountable even for the cheshbon, the calculation of what we could have accomplished if we had only taken advantage of the time we claimed we don’t have.

Do we use the gift of greater time to binge watch, to pursue frivolous activities and to indulge in hedonistic experiences? Or, do we use the time we are gaining with each breakthrough for meaningful, productive, and constructive activities? Are our greater comfort and expanded time leading to moral decay and decline or moral development and progress?

Technology can either enslave or liberate, free up time or eat up our time, move us forward, or take us backwards. Moments like a worldwide outage can and should be opportunities to consider our own relationship with technology and time, and hopefully inspire us to bring us closer to a place of true, earned noach.



PARSHA OVERVIEW

Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

Avram is forced to relocate to Egypt to find food. Realizing that his wife's beauty could cause his death at the hand of the Egyptians, Avram asks her to say that she is his sister. Sarai is taken to Pharaoh, but G-d afflicts Pharaoh and his court with severe plagues and she is released unmolested. Avram returns to Eretz Yisrael (Canaan) with much wealth given to him by the Egyptians. During a quarrel over grazing rights between their shepherds, Avram decides to part ways with his nephew Lot. Lot chooses to live in the rich but corrupt city of Sodom in the fertile plain of the Jordan. A war breaks out between the kings of the region and Sodom is defeated. Lot is taken captive. Together with a handful of his converts, Avram rescues Lot, miraculously overpowering vastly superior forces, but Avram demurs from accepting any of the spoils of the battle. In a prophetic covenant, G-d reveals to Avram that his offspring will be exiled to a strange land where they will be oppressed for 400 years, after which they will emerge with great wealth and return to Eretz Yisrael, their irrevocable inheritance. Sarai is barren and gives Hagar, her Egyptian hand-maiden, to Avram in the hope that she will provide them with a child. Hagar becomes arrogant when she discovers that she is pregnant. Sarai deals harshly with her, and Hagar flees. On the instruction of an angel, Hagar returns to Avram, and gives birth to Yishmael. The weekly portion concludes with G-d commanding Avram to circumcise himself and his offspring throughout the generations as a Divine covenant. G-d changes Avram's name to Avraham, and Sarai's name to Sarah. G-d promises Avraham a son, Yitzchak, despite Avraham being ninety-nine years old and Sarah ninety. On that day, Avraham circumcises himself, Yishmael and all his household.



Rabbi Steinfeld

NEDARIM AND KIBBUD AV

In Bereishis 12:1 the posuk tells us that Hashem commanded Avraham to leave his land,

his birthplace, and the house of his father and go to a land that will be shown to him by Hashem. The Panim Yafos in the end of Parshas Noach asks; why did Hashem tell him go to the land I will show you, and did not tell him to go to Eretz Canaan? The Panim Yafos answers that if we analyze it, Avraham should have stayed home to do kibbud av; nevertheless, he left his father Terach for two reasons. The first reason was because Avraham had made a neder to go to Eretz Canaan. A neder is mevatel a mitzvah. The second reason is that even though Terach did teshuva, as we find in Rashi 15:15, nevertheless, Terach still served Avoda Zora beshituf with Hashem; believing that Hashem designated the Avoda Zora to rule. This therefore takes away the mitzvah of kibbud av. This explains why Hashem did not tell him where he is going; to show us that the reason he can go is not because he made a neder, but rather he is patur from kibbud av. We see from this Panim Yafos that the fact that Avraham started traveling to Eretz Yisroel constituted a neder as we learn from nidrei tzedakah that the machshava of a person can be mechayev the person with a neder. The following question then arises; the mitzva of kibbud av was already in effect even before he made the neder, so how could the neder even begin to take effect and undo the existing mitzva of kibbud av? The question can be extended in this way. Even in a case when he made the neder he had no mitzva of kibbud av, and only after the neder was made did the mitzva come about, this would not constitute a neder for a mitzva as now he has a chiyuv of kibbud av, so his neder is not a neder for a dvar mitzva. A case in point would be if a person is expecting a choshuva visitor so he makes a neder he will put on Shabbos clothing and then he finds out that the person is not coming. Provided it was not a mistake, but rather a change of plans, does he have to put on Shabbos clothing as he promised, or since the choshuve person is not coming and there is no mitzva of kibbud Talmid Chochom so he does not need to put on Shabbos clothing? This will be dependent on whether we decide based on the time when one makes a neder to do a mitzvah. Since it was a mitzva at that time,

perhaps he is chayev, even though circumstances changed afterward. Do we base it on the time he fulfills the vow, and at that point it is no longer a mitzva?

There are several differences to analyze here. The first one is if someone made a neder to eat bread lesheim mitzva i.e., for a Shabbos meal and then he finds out the bread was never ma'asered, thereby causing the bread to be forbidden to be eaten. Does he need to get his vow annulled, as the Shach 215:20 says that if one swears to be oveir an issur DeRabanan he must get the shvuah annulled? Based on the first tzad that discusses the time the neder was made, then one would need to annul it; whereas if you go by the time of being mekayem the neder, at that point it is no longer a mitzvah, since it is assur. One would then not need to annul the neder. Another difference is based on the Ohr Zarua Hilchos Tzedaka 7 that discusses a scenario if one promised tzedakah to a particular person who is poor and in the interim the person became rich, the Ohr Zarua says that the person would be exempt from giving the money. The reason for this is that it is considered a neder beta'us (mistake.) But in the event where he would have given him the money in any case, then he would be required to give it to him, even though when you are giving him the money there is no mitzva. We see that since the neder was made and at the time of making it, it was a mitzvah, therefore you are chayev. Another difference would be based on the Arugos Habosem in Orach Chaim 19 discussing if someone was noheig to go to the mikva three times for tevillas Ezra, it is considered making a neder lidvar mitzva and he would need to continue this minhag. In the event his father tells him not to do it anymore, he would have to listen to his father and have the neder annulled. We see that despite the father telling him not to do it, it is still considered a d'var mitzva. If we go based on the first way that while he made the neder it was a mitzva it stays a mitzva, even if later he does not have a mitzva, it is still considered a neder. If we look at it at the time of the kiyum, at that point it does not have the status of a mitzva anymore.

There is no concrete answer here and I welcome any answers

May we all be zocheh to be mekayem kibbud av veaim with all the hiddurim!

PARSHAS LECH LECHA

Can you figure out what each picture has to do with the parsha?



KEY TO Lech Lecha parsha Pix

String/Shoelace – Avrohom told King of Sodom he wouldn't accept either of these things from him 14:23

She's my sister – What Avrohom told the guards at the Egyptian border 12:13

Counting sand/stars – Hashem told Avrohom his children would be as numerous as the sand 13:16 and stars 15:5

Town aint big enough – Avrohom and Lot parted ways 12:8-9

World War 1 – the war of the 4 kings against the 5 kings 14:1-2

Bird of prey swooping down – during b'ris bain habesarim 15:12

318 – the amount of men Avrohom took with him when he went to battle the 4 kings (Rashi says it was Eliezer who was equal to 318 men) 14:14

New name – Hashem changed Avrom to Avrohom 17:5 and Sarai to Sarah 17:15
400 years – hashem informed Avrohom at the b'ris bain habesarim about the length of the exile 15:13

Rabbi Dani Staum

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Our Mother Rachel

by Dina Coopersmith

What is so special about Rachel that we commemorate her death more than any of the other matriarchs and patriarchs?

The 11th of Cheshvan marks the *yahrzeit* (day commemorating the death) of our matriarch, Rachel.

By learning more about who Rachel was, perhaps we can reach an understanding of why Jews make a point of commemorating her death more than any of the other matriarchs and patriarchs.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

We first meet Rachel in Genesis, Ch. 29, when she is outside tending her father's sheep. In fact, her name "Rachel" means "a small sheep" in Hebrew. She seems to have a connection with this domestic animal of the fields. At the same time, the text mentions her physical appearance:

"And Rachel was beautiful of appearance and beautiful of form."

These facts gain significance when compared to the impression we have of her sister, Leah:

"And Leah's eyes were weak."

The name "Leah" means "tired" or "weary" in Hebrew. The Talmud tells us that Leah's eyes were soft and weakened by her incessant crying over the assumed destiny that she would marry the evil Esau, Jacob's twin brother.

Rachel seems to be at home in the outside world, beautiful to those who see her, realistic and adjustable, and taking part in the family's chores and livelihood. Leah, on the other hand, seems to have a darker, more complex personality. Her eyes, which represent "the window to the soul," bespeak a rare repudiation of her destiny, a weariness borne from her struggle to avenge the evil in the world at all costs.

Rachel, we might say, represents this world - the revealed aspects of this world and its inhabitants, whereas Leah may symbolize a hidden world - one that is not meant to behold the crude realities of this world, one that is revolted and disgusted by all that was represented by Esau.

(A deeper appreciation of Rachel's complex relationship with her sister Leah and the trials and tribulations of her life with Jacob are topics for an upcoming article.)

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

Jacob immediately loved Rachel. Although it might seem that it was her external beauty to which he was im-

mediately attracted, we may assume that our third and most complete patriarch saw more than that when he "fell in love."

The following quote from the Talmud tells us Rachel's most outstanding trait which must have given Jacob the green light to say "this one's for me":

"Jacob asked Rachel: 'Will you marry me?' She said: 'Yes, but you should know that my father's a trickster and he will outwit you.' 'And what is his trickery?' 'I have a sister older than I and he will try to marry her off first.' So he gave her signs (signals by which he would ensure the bride was Rachel). Come the night of the wedding and Rachel saw Leah being led to the chuppah. She thought: Now my sister will be humiliated? And she gave over the signs." (Talmud Megilla 13b)

By giving over these "signs," Rachel was basically allowing her sister, Leah, to marry Jacob instead of her. As far as Rachel knew, she may never wed Jacob at all. Indeed, even though she eventually did become a wife to Jacob, sharing him and her future with her older sister was not always a picnic! What drove Rachel to make such a selfless decision?

Rachel was driven to prevent her sister's humiliation even if it meant forsaking her own love and destiny.

Total, all-encompassing compassion. Rachel was incapable of tolerating the thought that her sister would be humiliated, and was driven to prevent it even if it meant forsaking her own love and destiny.

Rachel was to be the perfect match for Jacob. According to traditional and Kabbalistic sources, each of the patriarchs embody a primary trait that created the foundation of the Jewish people. Abraham, the first patriarch, is known for his *chesed* - lovingkindness whereas Isaac is known for the opposite trait of *gevura* - self-restraint.

Jacob's main character trait is *emmet*, truth. Jacob is the composite whole, the one who combines the essence of both extremes that were embodied by his father and grandfather. Thus he represents the trait of truth which is a composite of the whole picture.

As such, Jacob's mission is to find whatever truth the world has to offer and integrate it. It is Jacob who lives in a physical world and finds the holiness within it, even in exile, thereby sanctifying the world and using it for its true purpose. It is Jacob who transmits this ability to "gather the sparks" of truth in the world to the spiritual genes of the Jewish people.

This being his mission, he saw two components which were essential for

their shared life and destiny. On the one hand, Rachel seemed easily adjustable to the physical world, beautiful of form and appearance, thus relatable and approachable to the world as well. More importantly, Jacob must have seen her tremendous compassion, perhaps through her treatment of the sheep in her care or through her relationships with the people around her.

Compassion enables one to see past himself, beyond his own selfish subjectivity and into someone else's reality, without judgment or resistance.

Compassion enables one to see past himself, beyond his own selfish subjectivity and into someone else's reality, with acceptance, without judgment or resistance. Thus Rachel is the perfect woman with whom Jacob could forge through life, finding the whole picture, the "emmet" in the world - using the positive elements available in the person or situation in order to enhance his understanding of the truth.

Together they would join to contribute the spiritual genes to us, the Jewish nation, from which we would obtain the ability to withstand the few thousand years of exile and gain a more full understanding of reality and truth therefrom.

"GOD IS YOUR SHADOW"

When Rachel died, Jacob buried her "on the way to Beit Lechem." Later, when explaining the choice of burial to their son, Joseph, he clarifies that this particular place was a very strategic spot for the quintessential "Jewish mother" - the boundless source of undeserving mercy and compassion.

"I didn't even take her into Beit Lechem itself which was in the land, and I know that you feel badly about this. But know that God told me to do this, so that she will be a help to her children. When Nevuzaradan, the King of Babylonia, will exile them and they will pass by her grave, Rachel will come out and cry, and beg God for mercy. God, in turn, will answer and respond to her: 'There is reward for your actions, so says the Lord, and your children will return to their borders.'" (Rashi, Genesis 48:8)

Only Rachel, who alone exhibited true mercy and selfless devotion to another, can demand and receive similar compassion from the Almighty:

When the Temple was destroyed and the Jews were being led into exile, Abraham came before God and said: "Master of the universe, when I was 100 years old you gave me a son and when he was 37 years old you told me: 'Raise him as a

sacrifice before Me.'" And I was able to overcome my natural mercy and even tied him down myself. Will You not remember my devotion and have mercy on my children?"

Next came Isaac and said: "When my father said: 'God will show us the sheep for a sacrifice, my son,' I did not hesitate and accepted my fate and even extended my neck to be slaughtered. Will You not remember my strength and have mercy on my children?"

Next came Jacob and said: "I worked for 20 years in the house of Laban and when I left, Esau came to harm me and I suffered all my life raising my children. Now they are being led like sheep to the slaughter in the hands of their enemies? Won't you remember all my pain and suffering and redeem my children?"

Next came Moses and said: "Wasn't I a loyal shepherd for Israel for 40 years? And I ran before them in the desert like a horse. And when the time came to enter Israel, You decreed that I would die in the desert. And now they go into exile - won't You listen to my crying over them?"

At that point Rachel, our matriarch, came before God and said: "Master of the universe, You know that Jacob loved me most and worked for my father for seven years in order to wed me. And when the time of my marriage came, my father switched my sister for me and I didn't begrudge my sister and I didn't let her be shamed. If I, who am only human, was not willing to humiliate my sister to get what I wanted, how could You - the eternal, living, compassionate God - envy idol-worship which has no true existence and cause my children to be exiled?!"

Immediately, God's mercy was awakened and He said: "For you, Rachel, I will bring Israel back to its place, as it is said: '...Do not cry and let your eyes not tear, for there is reward for your actions ... and there is hope for your end, and your children will return to their borders.'" (Introduction to Midrash on Lamentations)

On the 11th of Cheshvan, the anniversary of Rachel's death, we commemorate and try to learn from the intense compassion a human being can express towards another. A compassion that allows for the development of a true, objective perspective on life by seeing the positive sparks of holiness inherent in humanity and in the world. A compassion that does not question the deservedness of the recipient to receive mercy, but rather emulates God's boundless mercy, thus allowing God to respond in kind, showering us with compassion and ultimate redemption.

Rochel Imeinu – Getting More Out of the Yahrzeit

(By Rabbi Yair Hoffman for the Five Towns Jewish Times)

Let's not just let a yahrzeit date pass by without improving ourselves significantly. The 11th of Cheshvan, marks the yahrzeit of Rochel Imeinu, and it presents an opportunity.

What specifically? Aside from observing the yahrzeit, it is important to ask ourselves how we can improve ourselves by emulating her. Below is an analysis of how we can accomplish just that.

"And behold in the morning it was Leah." Rashi points out that in the evening it wasn't Leah - because Rochel had given the signs to her sister that she not be embarrassed.

SAVING OTHERS FROM

HUMILIATION

We learn from Rochel to be concerned about the kavod, the honor of other people and to save them from embarrassing and humiliating moments. Certainly we learn from Rochel Imeinu not to ever be the cause of embarrassing or humiliating someone.

She gave up her future not thinking that Yaakov would also take her in addition to Leah. Rather, she had thought that she was destined now to be the wife of Aisav. All this, Rochel Imeinu had done in order to avoid causing someone humiliation.

THE POWER OF PREVENTING SOMEONE'S HUMILIATION

The destruction of the first Bais HaMikdash and our exile into Bavel was primarily fueled by our Avodah Zarah. The Midrash cited by Rashi (Yirmiyahu 31) tells us regarding the Avodah Zarah of Menashe that Rochel said to Hashem, "I was not jealous of my co-wife and gave away my Simanim (secret codes with my groom), You too Hashem - be not jealous of Avodah Zarah! The Midrash explains that it was in her merit that Hashem restored us to Eretz Yisroel and rebuilt our Bais HaMikdash.

We see what a very powerful idea it is to prevent someone else's humiliation or embarrassment.

YAAKOV AVINU REALIZES HER ABILITIES

Rochel Imeinu was buried on the road to Bais Lechem and was not buried in Maaras HaMachpeilah with the rest of our patriarchs. Yaakov Avinu buried her there because he knew of the role she would eventually have in davening for us and restoring Klal Yisroel to Eretz Yisroel. He had the ruach hakodesh to utilize this tremen-

dous merit that Rochel had.

When Nevuzaradan exiled Klal Yisroel from Eretz Yisroel, they passed by her grave, Rachel Imeinu emerged and cried, (Yirmeyahu 31): "Thus did the L-rd say, a voice is heard on high, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeps for her children, she refuses to be consoled for her children, for they are not." And Hashem answers: "Thus did the Lord say, mini kolech mib-



echi - refrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for there is reward for your labor, said the Lord, veshavu vanim ligvulam - and the children shall return to their borders" (Rashi in Vayechi, Radak, Yirmeyahu 31).

ANOTHER ZCHUS SHE HAD

Rochel Imeinu also had another zchus that is not often discussed. She passed away in the performance of a Mitzvah - that of bringing the nation of Klal Yisroel into the world. Indeed, it is like that she passed away in a breach labor birth. How so? The pasuk says that the midwife spoke to her in the middle of her labor. She informed Rochel that she was having a boy. How could there be time to say so many words to her? The psukim are much clearer if we understand that the baby was a breach baby. The point is, however, that she passed away while doing a Mitzvah. The gemorah tells us that this is a remarkable zchus.

THE KIRUV Z'CHUS

Let us also not forget the third thing that Rochel Imeinu did. Her father, Lavan, was a rasha, an evil man immortalized in the Hagaddah as the villain of "Arami Oved Avi - an Aramean tried to destroy my father, Yaakov Avinu." And yet, Lavan was Rachel Imeinu's father and she had compassion for him. He was addicted to Avodah Zarah. So what did she do? She tried

to take away the tools of his addiction from him. If he no longer had his trafim, his avodah zarah, he would not sin so grievously. She took them away from him.

But Lavan was angry. He came to find them. Rochel apologized for not getting up, explaining that she was indisposed. We think that that was the end of it, but Rabbi Yochanan, in the Midrash, tells us that Lavan did not believe her. Lavan made her get up. Hashem caused a miracle then and there. He changed the trafim into small pachim. These miraculous items were the pachim ketanim that Yaakov Avinu went after. He went after them because they were so very precious to him - they demonstrated the remarkable miracle that was performed for Rochel Imeinu.

OTHER LESSONS

So what other lessons can we learn from Rachel? Give your all for the sake of Klal Yisroel! Daven fervently for them, always. That's what she did. But also, let us be inspired by Mama Rachel's remarkable tzidkus. Let us immerse ourselves in Avodas Hashem and do Chessed like no one else. Let us strive and reach for that lofty level of chessed that Rachel Imeinu achieved - that she had implanted within the genetic fiber of her descendants.

There is something unique and irresistible to Hashem about the Tefilos of nashim Tzidkaniyos, the righteous women of Klal Yisroel. Yaakov Avinu could not have done it, nor the other Avos, nor Moshe Rabbeinu. This applied then in the time of Galus Bavel and now as well in the longest of exiles, the Galus of Edom - Rome - which includes both Aisav and Yishmael. Let us then take inspiration from the acts of Rochel Imeinu on this day of her Yartzzeit and increase our Kavana in our Daveming and also our acts of genuine complete and selfless chessed.

CONCLUSION

There were three remarkable zchusim discussed here. There was the selfless prevention of the embarrassment of another - giving up her entire future. There was the mesiras nefesh of continuing the legacy of Klal Yisroel - at the cost of her life. And there was the kiruv efforts to bring back her evil father from the abyss. It was perhaps the combination of these three remarkable zchusim that allowed her to play such a significant role in ending galus Bavel and the re-establishment of Klal Yisroel in Eretz Yisroel.

B'Ezras Hashem, she will help us in ending our current state of galus and re-establishing Moshiach tzidkeinu in Eretz Yisroel, bim'heira b'yameinu, Amain!

OHR CHAIM

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