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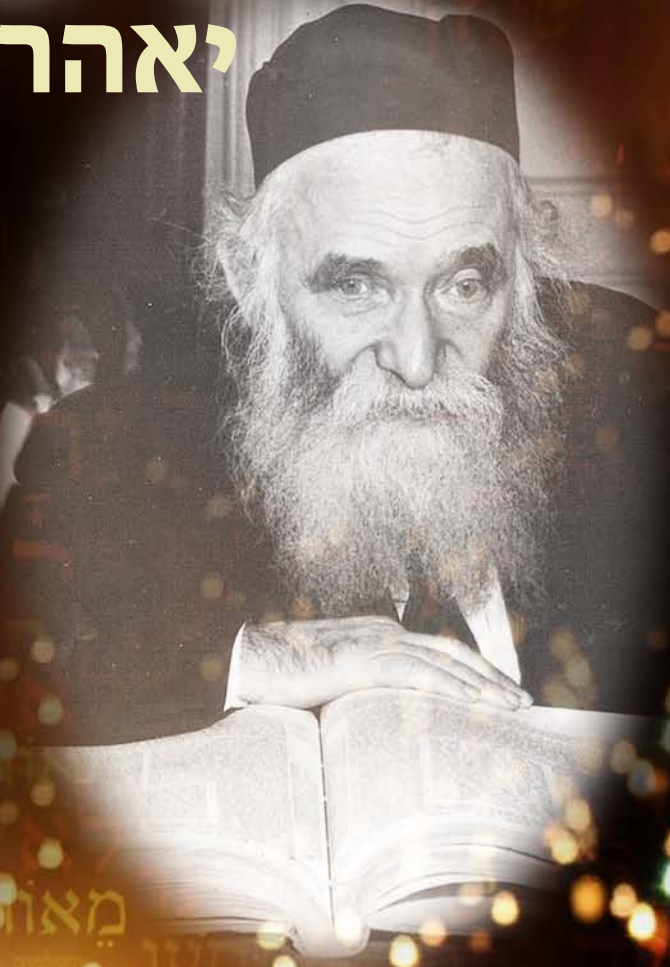
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RABBI LANKRY DEAR KEHILLA,

PARSHAT TOLDOT HAFTARAH

The Navi Malachi quotes Hashem saying how much he loves Am Yisrael, even though we are brothers with Esav. Hashem hates Esav, our eternal enemies, and he made his mountains desolate and his portion a desert. If the day will come and Edom will say let's rebuild, Hashem will say "I will destroy and I will call their land, the land of the wicked."

Malachi continues and rebukes the Am Yisrael. Hashem expresses his love for us with actions of love yet Am Yisrael does not do the same. We took everything that is holy and we destroyed it. The Kohanim in the second Bais Hamikdash violated the Kedusha of the Bais Hamikdash and the Korbanot.

The way of the world is that as we get used to something we become very relaxed and casual with it. Somehow when we become accustomed to things, we lose the proper respect for them, both spiritual and physical. For example we buy a new car and after a short while it loses its freshness. It becomes not good enough. The Navi Malachi explains that although the Jewish people enjoy a special closeness with Hashem, they are

reminded to approach Him with reverence. The prophet Malachi addressed them shortly after their return from Babylonia and admonished them for their lack of respect in the Bais Hamikdash. He said in Hashem's name, "I love you...but if I am your father where is my honor? The Kohanim disgrace my name by referring to my altar with disrespect."

How do we keep things in our life fresh and exciting? How can we avoid being bored with what we have and do? How can we obtain the attitude of Hashem of constantly reliving the creation? המחדש בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית.

I think the answer lies in ones perspective in life; is it about the here and now or the accumulated success of time? If we live in the here and now, we are concerned about instant gratification of our actions. We desecrated the Bais Hamikdash because we needed instant gratification from the eating of the Korbanot that we didn't care to do it b'kedusha. However, if we understand that we are working towards a goal that takes a lifetime to accomplish, then every day is a new opportunity to grow. Every day we can

face our challenges with a new vigor and try to renew and improve ourselves. This way we can never be bored with ourselves and our repetitive actions.

May we keep our eyes on the goal and experience a constant renewal in our lives.

Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Aaron Lankry



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SHABBOS ZMANIM

CANDLE LIGHTING	4:12PM
MINCHA ALEF TENT	4:22PM
MINCHA BAIS CHABAD	4:22PM
SHKIYA	4:30PM
SHACHRIS VASIKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR	6:16AM
SHACHRIS ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN	8:00AM
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN 18 TENT	9:15AM
SHACHRIS 20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD	10:00AM
NEW SHACHRIS 18 FORSHAY	NEW 10:15AM
MINCHA	1:45PM
PIRCHEI	2:00PM
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	4:10PM
SHKIYA	4:30PM
MARRIV	5:10PM 18 TENT, 5:15PM

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

SHACHRIS
20 MINUTES BEFORE NEITZ

S 6:37 M 6:38 T 6:39 W 6:40 T 6:41 F 6:42

MINCHA & MARIV
12 MINUTES BEFORE PLAG

S 3:18 M 3:18 T 3:18 W 3:17 T 3:17

MINCHA & MARIV
12 MINUTES BEFORE SHKIA

S 4:18 M 4:17 T 4:17 W 4:17 T 4:16

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NEITZ IS 6:57 – 7:02
PELAG IS 3:30 – 3:29
SHKIA IS 4:30 – 4:28
MAGEN AVRAHAM
8:45 AM – 8:48
GRA- BAAL HATANYA
9:21 AM – 9:24



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CHANUKA AND TOLDOS

This past Shabbas we spoke about the spiritual darkness that challenges us all. We discussed the brilliant explanation of the Meshech Chocham regarding why Lavan ran when he heard that Eliezer, the servant of Avraham, had arrived. We spoke about the negios - personal attachments that prevent us from being real with ourselves. We mentioned a solution on how to rescue ourselves from our blind spots. The solution was inferred from Eliezer who taught us the importance of prayer and how to communicate with Hashem. We pointed out an astounding discovery that the words of Eliezer are actually incorporated into the moving prayer on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur recited by the Chazan before Musaf.

In line with all of the above the month of Kislev seems to offer an opportunity to remove some of the darkness in our lives. Chazal expound on the Passuk וְחָשַׁךְ עַל פְּנֵי תַהֲם - זֶה יוֹן שֶׁהַחֲשִׁיכָה עֵינֵיהֶם שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל understand the depth of this darkness.

In this week's Parsha we encounter Eisav and Yaakov. Eisav represents Edom which together with Yishmael is the last part of the exile we need to contend with before Mashiach comes. Eisav is known as the man of the field. Although it seems clear that his father, Yitzchok, was well aware of his faults, he still believed in him and expected him to fulfill his potential. Eisav, however, essentially failed and quite dramatically disappointed his father as Rashi says that יִצְחָק רָאָה גֵהֶנוֹם תַּחְתָּיו --Yitzchok saw Gehenom beneath him. Yitzchok knew Yaakov was a tzadik who spent his days learning in a Bais Midrash. He envisioned Eisav also being the tzadik that would elevate the outside physical world and infuse it with spiritually. He believed Eisav had the potential as the bechora—the first born—to carry on the avoda that was done in the Bais Hamikdash of elevating meat, wine, and wheat. (See Malbim on Shir Hashirim the end of the third Perek who explains the above profoundly)

Because Eisav failed to do this job, his mission was given over to us, the descendants of Yaakov Avinu and hence we now have a dual duty: to dwell in tents while at the same time to support the fields which included animals, food and others physical objects that have spiritual sparks waiting to be elevated.

The Bnai Yissaschar discusses the numerical value of Chanuka as being the same value as guf - meaning body. There is a lot of secrets hidden in Chanuka and hopefully we will uncover some interesting gems this month. I believe the greatest treasure we can search for is discovering our true selves. This past week I was working with various couples and deduced a main common denominator that differentiated those that will succeed in finding and seeing the light of a healthy marriage from those couples that will unfortunately stay in their darkness for ever. The key is how conscious they are of their true selves and how willing are they to invest and work on changing to become a better and healthier person.

May Hashem grant us much light in this coming month.
Good Shabbas

Parshas Toldos

Can We Afford Being Too Comfortable?

וַיִּתֵּן לְךָ אֵת אֲבֵרָהּ לְךָ
וְלִזְרַעְךָ אֶתְךָ (כה, ד)

After Yaakov captures most of the blessings, Eisav is fit to be tied and out for revenge. Yitzchok and Rivka, urge their son to flee from his hateful brother immediately. But first Yitzchok gives Yaakov the eternal blessings of his own father Abraham, assuring him that this blessing will protect his family for generations.

What exactly is the blessing of Avrohom, that Yitzchok is extending?

The Dubno Maggid explains, once there was a noted Talmid Chacham who was forced to travel the world in order to collect money for his family's survival. He amassed many letters of approbation, carrying them along to show his benefactors. After years of travel, he returned home with enough money to support his family and a small amount to invest in a business. He was successful beyond belief in the venture and when the time came to bequeath his fortune, he designated it in 3 distinct manners. To one son he left all his real estate- the other his cash, and the third his valuable gold and silver. The wealth was beyond belief. After the division, which took place while he was still living, the man pulled out a stack of old papers.

"These are the letters that I carried around years ago when I went to raise money, these are my letters of approbation, does anyone want them?"

They chuckled silently." No thank you, we hope we will never need these letters..never be forced to go through what prompted you to leave home for all those years."

Suddenly a small voice was heard.. "Father I will take the letters... I do not need them now, but fortunes go up and down, the world can change.. I will take the letters just in case.

The Maggid explains, When Avrohom Avinu was asked to leave his home and travel in strange and dangerous lands, he needed miracles from Hashem to protect him from harm and provide for his needs. He was blessed, "Bako!", the

Torah tells us- with both wealth and miracles. This blessing was passed onto Yitzchok, who then bestowed it onto his son Yaakov setting out to travel in dangerous territory, now in need of the same protection.

With the tragedy in Pittsburgh and some of the subsequent anti-semitic acts, people are asking how we can truly be safe from harm.

The lesson is clear, despite our blessings of prosperity; we in America are in need of miracles in order to survive, no different than our forefathers were, in Spain, Europe, Russia and every other country that has hosted us throughout history. Relying on the success and power we have amassed might lull us into becoming too comfortable. Only through a close connection to Hashem, a connection that comes from realizing that we are nothing without Him- regardless of how successful we are- can we merit the miracles we need, in order to live through difficult times.

We must plan and do our hishtadlus, but there is more than just guns and ammunition in the arsenal of a Jew. Memories of the holocaust are still fresh as we enter what seems to be a new era of hatred to our people. Anti Semitic acts are on the rise R"L, all around the world and we are in need of Heavenly mercy to protect us. Avrohom Avinu filled his life with Chesed- we can avail ourselves of the blessing of Heavenly protection by engaging in acts of chesed with one another. More than that - we must be nice to and respect every Jew...even if they do not look like us. We must also do our best to once and for all stop petty arguments and in-fighting wherever they rear their ugly face, in our families and in our communities. Machlokes and division amongst our people have always led to disaster, whereas Shalom, friendship and unity are the key to blessing.

May Hashem continue to bestow both blessing and protection on His children.

Translated by Rabbi Reich
Good Shabbos!

Rabbi Aaron Lankry
Marah D'asra
305-332-3311 | alankry@yahoo.com

Rabbi Daniel Coren
דובני"ג - מגיד שיטור
914-645-4199 | rabbidac@gmail.com

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner
Rabbinic Coordinator,
Rosh Kollel, Kollel Boker & Night Kollel
845-372-6618 | rabbisheiner@18forshay.com

Uri Follman
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845 587 3462 | manager@18forshay.com



Rabbi YY Jacobson



The Sandy Path to Inspiration

Why Were the Founding Fathers of Judaism Enthralled by Wells?

Enthralled by Wells

It seems that our Patriarchs, the Founding Fathers of Judaism, were enthralled with wellsprings. First, the Torah tells us of Abraham's involvement in well-digging and his rebuke to the king of the Philistines for allowing his servants to seize one of his wells. Abraham performs an elaborate ceremony with the king, during which the king swears that the well would remain in Abraham's possession.

But Abraham's association with wells pales in comparison to his son Isaac's connection to wells. First, we learn that he is a frequent visitor at a spring named "Lachai Roei," where he meets his bride and later settles.

Isaac then engages in relentless digging to uncover underground springs. He reclaims the wells that his father dug but that were plugged after Abraham's death. In addition, we read of at least another four wells that Isaac's servants dig anew. We are even told the names Isaac granted his wells and of the battles he fought to hold on to them!

When the Torah describes in next week's portion his journey from Israel to the East, it tells us that "Jacob looked and behold, a well in the field!" Jacob spends time at the well, and it is there that he encounters and decides to marry his wife-to-be, Rachel.

Why were the fathers of the Jewish people so connected to wells? And why does the Torah, a book of instruction and teachings, a roadmap for life, dedicate a significant part of this week's portion Toldos to discuss the details of Isaac's struggles to discover wellsprings?

Two Water Sources

In Jewish thought, water represents

wisdom and inspiration. Just as water quenches the thirst of an arid body, rejuvenating its spirit and resuscitating its energy, the gifts of wisdom and enlightenment refresh a soul and grant it inspiration and vitality.

We have two sources of water in our world. The waters above the ground—oceans, rivers, lakes, streams, and rain, and water that flows below the earth, covered by grit. These latter waters seep out from sand and gravel, from amid soluble rocks and cleavage planes, as they struggle to emerge from beneath the earth that conceals them.

One would assume that the restricted flow of water fighting to emerge from rock and gravel would be inferior to the unrestricted and smooth beds of water that lay above the ground. Yet the reality is that there is something uniquely refreshing and clear about spring water. The very fact that these waters are hidden beneath the ground keeps them free from pollution and germs and grants them a freshness and sparkle not to be found in the above-ground waters. Plus, the journey through rocks filters and refines these waters, so rich in minerals and nutrients.

Two Sources of Inspiration

The two sources of physical waters in our world parallel two sources of wisdom and inspiration in our lives.

There is the wisdom and inspiration born above the mess of life's challenges. It comes to lucid people at lucid moments; it is straightforward, easy, and smooth.

These are the waters that emerge from the hearts of pristine spiritual individuals; men and women unsoiled by filth and muck.

But then there is the wisdom that emerges from life's grime, from amid struggle, pain, and failure; there is the clarity and passion born from hearts tarnished by toxicity. When a person, burdened by the daily pressures of earning a livelihood and raising a family, bogged down by trauma, fears, and anxiety; when a human being troubled by his earthly nature and his immoral urges, bursts out with a yearning to transcend his dirt and connect to Truth -- this small, restricted flow of water seeping out from a sandy and rocky psyche is more refreshing and potent than all of the serene waters located above the "ground."

When a Jew, feeling so distant, engages in a Mitzvah, cries out to G-d in yearning, or makes one move to excavate the inner faith, resilience and idealism that lay buried in his or her soul, he or she connected to this spring of Divine infinity flowing deep below our earthiness. This is the most sparkling and refreshing water to the soul, to the universe, and to G-d.

This is why the fathers of the Jewish people were digging and preserving wells. They taught us to fight for and to cherish those moments of truth, fleeting as they are, and those small sparks of idealism, buried within the deep rubble of trauma and confusion.

For this is the purpose of life, to discover heaven within the earth, to find your springs of joy, confidence, and wholesomeness that always flow beneath your surface.



MOTHER OR FATHER

PARSHAS TOLDOS

AVROHOM AVINU – EIRUV – ALL IN THE PREPARATION

ועקב אשר שמע אברהם בקלי, וישמר”
”משמרתי מצותי חקתי ותורתי

“Because Avrohom obeyed My voice, and observed My safeguards, My commandments, My decrees, and My Torahs.”

There was a famine in Eretz Kna’an, where Yitzchok lived. Hakodosh Boruch Hu told Yitzchok not to travel down to Mitzrayim, rather he should stay in Eretz Kna’an and Hakodosh Boruch Hu will heap Brocha upon him and his descendents because of His promise to Avrohom Avinu. The Torah tells us that it was because Avrohom listened to Hashem’s Mitzvos, Chukim and Torahs. Yuma 28b – The Gemara learns from this Posuk that Avrohom Avinu was Mekayeim the entire Torah, even Eiruv Tavshilin. It is learned from the word, “תורתי” – which is a Loshon Rabbim – meaning two Torahs – Avrohom kept both Torah Shebiksav and Torah Shebal Peh. Why does the Gemara choose the Mitzvah of Eiruv Tavshilin as the “Mitzvah” that demonstrates the extent of what Avrohom Avinu kept?

Yuma 28b – “קיים אברהם עירוב תבשילין” – It says in Reish Yuchsin a Girsra that Avrohom even fulfilled the Mitzvah of Eiruv Chatzeiros. The reason that Eiruvei Chatzeiros was selected is because it shows the power of Hakodosh Boruch Hu in this world, that He is Ruler over this world, and all is His. One needs to make an Eiruv to combine different locations for all is not his. However, I think that the Girsra is “Eiruvei Techumin,” for the Posuk says the word, “עקב” – “heel,” something which one uses his heel for – and that is what an Eiruv Techum is, for it allows one to walk further distances. (מהר”ץ חיות)

The Gemara uses the example of Eiruv Tavshilin for it is a Mitzvah D’rabonon, a Mitzvah that is part of Torah Shebal Peh, and the Chachomim derived this Eiruv from a Drasha. (רש”י)

The Gemara in Yuma 28b says that Avrohom Avinu was Mekayeim the entire Torah, even the Mitzvah of Eiruv Tavshilin. Why choose this Mitzvah of Eiruv Tavshilin, as opposed to just saying that Avrohom Avinu was Mekayeim even Mitzvos D’Rabonon. The purpose of the Eiruv Tavshilin is that by one beginning to prepare for his needs for Shabbos during the weekdays, that permits one to prepare on Yom Tov for Shabbos, for the preparation on Yom Tov is just an extension of what already began before Yom Tov. We have a Klal Gadol

that all Inyanim of the Torah come to us as a Mesorah from the Avos. Avrohom Avinu’s Kiyum Hatorah is the beginning of the Mesorah of Kiyum Hatorah for Klal Yisroel. The giving of the Torah to Klal Yisroel at Har Sinai was a continuation of the Mesoras Ha’avos. It was because the Avos Hakdoshim were Mekayeim the Torah before it was given at Har Sinai, that Klal Yisroel were Zoche to receive the Torah at Har Sinai. Just as by Eiruv Tavshilin, the preparations must begin before, so too, by the Avos being Mekayeim the Torah is what enabled Klal Yisroel to receive the Torah. The Gemara is teaching us that it was crucial for Avrohom and the Avos to be Mekayeim the Torah, for like Eiruv Tavshilin, they needed to be Mekayeim the Torah in order for Klal Yisroel to be Zoche in the Torah. (Shemos 12:21 “משכו וקחו לכם” – “צאן למשפחותיכם ושחטו הפסח” – Why does the Posuk say “הפסח” – “the Pesach” as if it was already known, when this was the first time that Klal Yisroel were commanded about the Pesach? It was already accepted as Mesorah from the Avos, as we find by Yitzchok Avinu as brought in the Pirkei D’Rebbe Eliezer 32). (מעין בית השואבה)

Now we can understand why the Gemara singled out the Mitzvah of Eiruv Tavshilin delineating that Avrohom Avinu even performed that Mitzvah – and why others say that it was Eiruvei Chatzeiros, or Eiruvei Techumin. The common thread between the three Eiruvim are that they are all something which needs to be done prior to something else – such as Shabbos or Yom Tov. The Mishna in Avos in the fourth Perek tells us, “העולם הזה דומה לפרוזדור, בפני העולם הבא. התקן עצמך בפרוזדור כדי שתכנס לטרקלין” – “This world is like the antechamber for the world to come. Prepare yourself in the antechamber so that you may enter the grand ballroom.” Avrohom Avinu was the carrier of the Mesorah. Although he did not actually receive the Torah from Hakodosh Boruch Hu, it is as if he did. He was prepared to fulfill the Ratzon Hashem no matter what it was. Avrohom’s Midah was a Midah of Chesed – Ahavah, yet he also served Hakodosh Boruch Hu with Yirah. He knew everything in the Torah Shebiksav and Torah Shebal Peh, and followed it to the letter, and was also able to elevate his performance to that of a מצווה ועושה. Avrohom Avinu stayed focused on what his Avodah was in this world and was preparing for the future. May we be Zoche to emulate Avrohom Avinu and seek to fulfill the Ratzon Hashem in all aspects of our lives, both through Ahavah, as well as Yirah.

In Bereishis 27:6 Rivkah told Yaakov that she heard her father talking to Esav etc. She ends off saying, “Listen to what I will tell you.” In Pirkei D’Reb Eliezer 32 Rivkah told Yaakov, “My son this night is where the storage of Tal is opened and up in Shomayim they are singing shirah, make some good food for your father, so he can bentch you while he is still alive.” Yaakov being a Baki in the Torah feared being cursed by his father so Rivkah told him, “If you get gebentched it will go on you and your children, but if you get cursed it will go on me.” As the passuk says, “Alai Killelascha- Beni.

In the Radal on the above Medrash he explains what is the meaning of the words that he is a baki in the Torah? It is based on the Gemara in Kiddushin 31a where a widow asked Reb Eliezer if a father requests a cup of water, and the mother requests a cup of water which one comes first? Reb Eliezer responded leave the honor of your mother and do the bidding of your father as both you and your mother are required to show respect to your father. This is the reason why Yaakov was scared and worried to listen to his mother against the wishes of his mother.

The question one can ask is why is there a requirement to listen to the father before the mother? The reason given is that both the son and the mother must respect the father. The problem is that there is a Gemara in Yevamos 62b that says a man must show respect to his wife. The quote is that if one loves his wife like oneself and honors and respects her more than himself, he is blessed that he won’t come to any sins. The Rambam in Hilchos Ishus 15:19 says that the Chachamim commanded a person to be mechabed his wife more than himself. If so the halacha should be the same as if one’s parents are divorced where the wife has no requirement to respect her ex-husband so the child could choose who he or she wants to honor first, as in that case the honor of his mother and father are equal. Now, in the case where one’s parents are happily married, they both need to show respect to one another so why is the halacha in the Gemara that the child must do the bidding of his or her father?

One answer is that in the case where both the child and the mother need to respect the father is regarding all the mitzvos of kibbud av where both the mother and son have a requirement to feed the father and to give him to drink and help him get dressed etc. But regarding the respect a husband must show his wife is to make sure she gets nice clothing and have her look respectable but that is not connected to the mitzva of kibbud av therefore one must carry out his or her father’s bidding before the mother.

Another answer is that the halacha is that a woman must be mechabed her husband al pi halacha. We see this in the Mishna in Kesubos 59b that lists of all the melachos a woman is required to do for her husband. We do not find the same halacha for a man that he is required to do for his wife mitzad halacha. It is just a preferred way of life as the Gemara says if one is mechabed his wife more than his own self he will not come to be chotei. It is just a midas Chassidus but not a chiyuv mitzad halacha therefore a child will have to listen to his father before he listens to his mother.

The Mitzvah of Kibbud Av Ve’Eim is one of the hardest to do. Let us all hope we are mekayem it properly and thereby zocheh to Arichas Yomim!



CRITICIZE OR CANCEL? ENGAGE OR ESTRANGE? SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT CONFRONTING ANTISEMITISM

One of the more disturbing trends we are experiencing today is the rise of antisemitic attacks, qualitatively and quantitatively, online with words and offline with physical violence. As we continue to watch and monitor closely, there are many who are confident they know the answer, they understand the correct approach, the appropriate response to each incident. I'm less sure. As each day passes and each new disturbing incident, statement, tweet, or God forbid violent act occurs, the following questions occur to me regarding how to respond, and I share them with you for your careful consideration:

If everything is antisemitism, isn't nothing antisemitism? We need to be discerning and judicious in our definition of, and what we call out as, antisemitism. Not everything that rubs us the wrong way, offends us, or is insensitive or unkind, is necessarily antisemitic. When we label something antisemitic that isn't, we lose credibility. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z"l explained it as follows:

First let me define antisemitism. Not liking Jews is not antisemitism. We all have people we don't like. That's OK; that's human; it isn't dangerous. Second, criticizing Israel is not antisemitism... Antisemitism means denying the right of Jews to exist collectively as Jews with the same rights as everyone else. It takes different forms in different ages. In the Middle Ages, Jews were hated because of their religion. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century they were hated because of their race. Today they are hated because of their nation state, the state of Israel. It takes different forms but it remains the same thing: the view that Jews have no right to exist as free

and equal human beings.

If nothing is antisemitism, can we survive? Throughout our history, persecution, oppression, expulsion, and attempts at extermination began with the normalization of Jewish stereotypes, slurs, tropes, and promoting distortions and lies about Jewish power and influence. If we dismiss everything elected officials, athletes, celebrities and public personalities say and post about Jews as benign, comedy, hyperbole or "not what it sounds like/not how they meant it," we are burying our heads in the sand, shirking our responsibility, and ultimately are accomplices to the spread of this pernicious and dangerous hate. While we need to be judicious in not labeling everything offensive as antisemitic, we cannot take the opposite approach and let anything and everything slide, either.

Where, by whom, and how should this be decided? After the Saturday Night Live monologue by comedian Dave Chappelle this week, Jewish social media lit up with a debate about how to characterize his rant. Some slammed it as popularizing and legitimizing antisemitism, while others saw it as humorous and completely ok, while others thought it wasn't objectively wrong but the timing and environment in which it was shared made it objectionable and irresponsible. For example, popular Jewish comedian Elon Gold tweeted: "I'm in Israel and my phone keeps going off about [Dave Chappelle]'s monologue. I watched it 3X. There's not a joke in there I wouldn't do myself. Just not as well written/performed as Dave." Is social media the place for Jews to debate among ourselves what qualifies as antisemitism? Is it decided by popular vote, or are there experts, leaders, and organizations dedicated to this cause that we should defer to? If I'm offended and you're not, or vice versa, is one of us "right"?

Do we only call out antisemitism when it's on the "other side"? Antisemitism is an ideology that transcends political affiliation. There are antisemites on the left, on the right, in both major political parties, and everywhere in between. Yet in this increasingly divisive political climate, there are many who are happy and eager to call out and take action against antisemitism coming from the "other side," yet remain silent and implicitly tolerant of antisemitism coming from their own. Make no mistake, if the only antisemitism that merits a response from you is antisemitism coming from your political opponent, your credibility is damaged and your ability to be an advocate in this area is compromised.

Engage or Estrange? Just because we can be offended doesn't mean we always have to be. While we often instinctively respond with outrage and calls for condemnation and cancellation, those aren't necessarily the best strategies or the most prudent responses to serve our greater and more long term interests. Sometimes, the answer is to engage and dialogue rather than to attack. If we can educate, inform and turn an adversary into an advocate, we accomplish far more than if we label someone and box them into becoming the very thing we seek to oppose. In 2017, I shared the story of Derek Black, a white supremacist who experienced a Shabbos meal and completely turned around his worldview and his activism. Recently, we hosted NBA veteran Meyers Leonard on Behind the Bima who made a terrible mistake using an antisemitic slur but immediately worked to educate himself, apologized genuinely, unconditionally, and profusely, and has spent 18 months making up for his mistake by being willing to recognize why his mistake was hurtful, learning about and talking to the community he hurt, and educating others to prevent future similar harm. When is there hope and we should therefore engage, and when is

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someone beyond repair and we should estrange?

Are all offenses and responses equal? Sensitivity to antisemitism remains critical, but are we nuanced in appreciating the difference between someone who knowingly promotes something inherently antisemitic that renders them an antisemite, versus someone who promotes something hateful, critical, offensive, illegitimate, but not necessarily antisemitic, versus someone who defends someone in either of the first two categories while not directly making antisemitic statements themselves? Do we treat an antisemite, an unknowing or negligent promoter of antisemitism, and someone who has a bad “take” about an antisemite the same, or should there be differences in how we respond?

Cancel or Criticize? Is there a place between accepting and being indifferent to antisemitism on the one side and seeking to cancel and boycott those who say and post objectionable things? Can’t we criticize, call out, ask for clarification, and demand contrition without calling to cancel? Insisting on the termination of employment or of an endorsement contract is the nuclear option. When and against whom should it be used? Can we, should we have a more varied tool box of responses, options and approaches? Would we be better served and understood if we offer more than a knee-jerk reaction? And do we recognize there could be different responses based on different degrees of offense?

My questions and doubts are not an excuse for me or you to withdraw from fighting and standing up to antisemitism. They are, I believe, critically important to consider in developing the best and most effective individual and collective strategy to be successful and to have an impact. Our goal is not to be “right,” it is to be effective.

We are at a critical and shocking crossroads, when it is more comfortable to express hate and even violence against Jews in the civilized world than anytime in my life. Whether you found Dave Chapelle’s monologue amusing or offensive, one thing is clear, antisemitism is no laughing matter, we must be thoughtful in our response.

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JOKES

PRISON INMATES

Two prison inmates were standing in the cafeteria line getting lunch...

One inmate said to the other inmate, "When I was governor, the food was much better!"

THE TIRED DOG...

An old, tired-looking dog wandered into the yard. I could tell from his collar and well-fed belly that he had a home.

He followed me into the house, down the hall, and fell asleep on the couch. An hour later, he went to the door, and I let him out. The next day he was back, resumed his position on the couch and slept for an hour. This continued for several weeks. Curious, I pinned a note to his collar: "Every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap." The next day he arrived with a different note pinned to his collar: "He lives in a home with four children -- he's trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?"

ANOTHER LAWYER JOKE

A lawyer was cross-examining the doctor about whether or not he had checked the pulse of the deceased before he signed the death certificate. "No," the doctor said. "I did not check his pulse." "And did you listen for a heartbeat?" asked the lawyer. "No I did not," the doctor said. "So," said the lawyer, "when you signed the death certificate, you had not taken steps to make sure he was dead." The doctor said, "Well, let me put it this way. The man's brain was in a jar on my desk but, for all I know, he could be out practicing law somewhere."

THE FORGETFUL ACTOR

An actor had been out of work for years because he always forgot his lines. One

day he got a phone call from a director who wanted him for an important part in a play. All the actor had to say was, "Hark! I hear the cannon roar!"

Opening night arrived, and while he waited in the wings, the actor muttered to himself, "Hark! I hear the cannon roar! Hark! I hear the cannon roar!" The time for the entrance finally came. As the actor made his appearance onstage, he heard a loud BOOOOM! He turned around and said, "What in the world was that?"

Sheldon K

A PAIN IN THE LEG

An old man goes to his doctor, complaining about a pain in his leg that doesn't heal, and wants a diagnosis and explanation. The doctor checks out his leg, but can't find anything wrong, so he gives the old guy a full physical exam, and still can't come up with any possible explanation for the pain.

The doctor hands the patient his bill and says, "I'm sorry, but the pain in your leg is simply caused by old age; there's nothing I can do about it."

The old man replies with a look of disbelief, "That's impossible! That can't be!"

The Doctor says, "What do you mean? I'm the expert here; if you know so much, how can you say it's NOT old age?"

The patient answers, "I'm no doctor but it doesn't take a medical degree to tell that your diagnosis is wrong. Clearly you're mistaken. After all, my other leg feels just fine."

"So what?" says the doctor "What difference does that make?"

"Well it doesn't hurt a bit, and it's the SAME AGE!"

WHAT'S THE QUICKEST WAY?

An American tourist was visiting a small village in Newfoundland. He approached a local person and asked, "What's the quickest way to Marystown?"

The local, scratched his head, "Are ya walkin' er drivin'?" he asked the stranger. "I'm driving," said the stranger. "Well, that's the quickest way."

SUCCESSION PLANNING ...

The boss called one of his employees into the office. "David," he said, "you've been with the company for a year. You started off in the post room, one week later you were promoted to a sales position, and one month after that you were promoted to district manager of the sales department. Just four short months later, you were promoted to vice-chairman." "Now it's time for me to retire, and I want you to take over the company. What do you say to that?" "Thanks," said David. "Thanks?" the boss replied. "Is that all you can say?" "I suppose not," David said. "Thanks, Dad."

THE END IS NEAR!

Two local Rabbis were fishing on the side of the road. They thoughtfully made a sign saying, "The End is Near! Turn yourself around now before it's too late!" and showed it to each passing car. One driver who drove by didn't appreciate the sign and shouted at them, "Leave us alone, you religious nuts!"

All of a sudden they heard a big splash, looked at each other, and one Rabbi says to the other, "You think maybe we should have just said 'Bridge Out' instead

UFARATZTA

29TH OF MAR- CHESHVAN, 5,738 [1977]

... Regarding your mother tichyeh –
Do as advised by a doctor a friend. ...

==== excerpt of Rebbe's letter

Many times, the Rebbe advised to consult a doctor that is also a friend. Sometimes the Rebbe would advise to be healed by a doctor, a friend.

Rosh Chodesh – 5,738 \ 1977 – is when the Rebbe left his office at 770 for home. The Rebbe's office

was setup as a temporary hospital from when the Rebbe had a major heart-attack on the night of Shmini-Atzeres, during hakofos -- 1977. The Kinus-Hashluchim is always around Rosh Chodesh Kislev.





Rabbi Reisman

A THOUGHT BASED ON A YESOD OF HASHKAFAT FROM RAV PAM

I would like to share with you a Yesod in Hashkafa, a Yesod that I heard from Rav Pam and we will see what connection it has to do with this week's Parsha. Rav Pam used to say in the name of the Chazon Ish in Yiddish, "Mir Rai'st Nisht Mezuzos." We don't rip down Mezuzos. What is the context, what is the idea?

The Shaila is a person has a Mezuzah that is 100% Kosher. However, you could get a nicer neater Mezuzah that is more Mehudar. Should he replace the Mezuzah? To that, the Chazon Ish writes in one of his letters, Mir Rai'st Nisht Mezuzos. The way Rav Pam explained, if the other Mezuzah is Kosher according to more Shittos then of course as it is Mehudar in Kashrus, however, if it just a Hiddur Mitzvah in neatness then Mir Rai'st Nisht Mezuzos.

I saw a similar thing in the Igros Moshe in Orach Chaim Cheilek Bais Sof Siman Lamed Zayin (The Teshuvah is on page 225 of Krach Daled) where Rav Moshe writes the same thing about Yerios in a Sefer Torah that if the Yeria is Kosher and just you can get a nicer one you don't replace Yerios.

There is a Halachik source for this discussion in the Teshuva Seforim which has to do with the month of Kisleiv. He brings a discussion between the Shvus Yaakov and the Chacham Tzvi if someone set up his Menorah with candles because he had no oil and later they bring him oil, should he take away the candles and replace it with oil? The Shvus Yaakov held no. Once you have something that is Kosher you don't replace it, you don't change it. The Chacham Tzvi disagreed as you haven't yet started the process of lighting the Menorah. But everyone agrees that once you started you certainly don't change it to do it more Mehudar if you are doing it correctly. Mir Rai'st Nisht Mezuzos. What you do if it is good, it is good.

I used this as a possible answer to a big Kasha. I had a Kasha which I must have asked. Moshe and

Aharon are buried in Eiver Hayarden the same time that the Jews are carrying the bones of the 12 Shevatim to be buried in Eretz Yisrael. When Moshe and Aharon died they were busy carrying the Mitah of Yosef that he should be buried in Eretz Yisrael and then when Moshe Rabbeinu dies they bury him where he is. Why didn't they take him into Eretz Yisrael proper?

It may be the same idea. Yosef died in Mitzrayim so they took him to bury him in Eretz Yisrael. Moshe and Aharon died in Eiver Hayardein which is also Eretz Yisrael. For a bigger Hiddur of going across the Yardein that you don't do. Mir Rai'st Nisht. What you have is also good. What you have in front of you if it is good you do it.

We find a similar idea if a king dies and his oldest son is Rau'i to be king, even if the second son is more appropriate for king. If you do a better job if the first one is suitable and would do a good job, we accept him. The same idea, Mir Rai'st Nisht, you don't go and take something that you have and throw it out because you can get something better. No! If you have something you go with it. In the first place, when you are heading to do things, do it the best way you can. However, if you already have something in front of you don't be Mevaze it, don't embarrass it to get rid of it for something that is better.

Yitzchok Avinu knew that Yaakov is a Tzaddik Gamur, yet, since he thought Eisav was okay he went with Eisav. Everyone wondered did he not know the difference between Eisav and Yaakov? The Teretz is Mir Rai'st Nisht Mezuzos. The Teretz is you don't go shopping, you don't say well this one is good but look at that one. You don't go shopping. You do go shopping before you came to the Mitzvah, but once you are somewhere you do with the Cheftzah of the Mitzvah that you have.

Just like a king goes with his older son even though the second one might be Yaakov Avinu, so too, Yitzchok knew that Yaakov is better but he said look he is the B'chor and I should go with him. Mir Rai'st Nisht Mezuzos, Mir Rai'st Nisht Bechor. That would explain why once Eisav spilled the beans and he said, he took my Bechora and now he took my Berachos. Yitzchok said what? Yaakov is the Bechor then he should certainly get it. 27:33 (גַּם-בְּרִוּהָ יְהִיָּה). Of course Yitzchok understood what was going on, but he felt that if Eisav could do a good job that is adequate to that degree, he was fooled.

Stories for Shabbos

Oath for Life By Avrohom Barash

Rabbi Eliyahu of Vilna, the famed Vilna Gaon, was once accused of kidnapping a Jewish child who had been held in a monastery. The Jewish community fasted, prayed and pleaded with Hashem to have mercy. They begged for the release of the Gaon from jail, fearing what his punishment might be. The false witnesses appeared in court and had their say; no evidence was produced to the contrary.

The verdict was handed down finding the Rabbi guilty. "We give the Rabbi a choice of punishment," said the judge. "He shall either submit to having a cross tattooed on his forehead, or he must be hanged!" The Vilna Gaon shuddered at the first choice, which was not even an option for him. He would never consent to such a thing. The second choice was not displeasing to him; he rejoiced at the opportunity to give his life al kidush Hashem, in sanctification of G-d's Name. His thoughts were interrupted by the judge's next words. "However if the Rabbi is prepared to take an oath denying the witness' testimony, the court will accept his word and drop the charges."

The Vilna Gaon had always been careful never to swear, out of fear of taking Hashem's name in vain., but he realized that he must now do so in order to save his life. He swore that he was telling the truth and was indeed innocent, and was released. His prime disciple, Rav Chaim of Volozhin, related the episode along with his interpretation of why such a thing had come to pass. It was ordained by heaven that he should undergo such an ordeal, because the Vilna Gaon had fulfilled every possible misvah in the Torah in his lifetime, except for that of swearing in Hashem's Name. Due to his lofty level, it was deemed proper for him to fulfill this command with no concern that any element of untruth would be involved, and thus would be put into such a situation. (*A Mazeldig Voch, ArtScroll*) *Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace.*

The \$3 Lottery Ticket

Rav Meilich Biderman once related a story. A man once borrowed fifty thousand dollars from a Gemach. He gave the Gemach fifty signed checks, for a thousand dollars each, so that the Gemach would be guaranteed payment. However, he requested from the Gemach's secretary not to cash the checks. He said, "I will bring a thousand dollars in cash to the Gemach's office each month. Hold on to the checks for security, but please, don't use them. It will cause my bank account to bounce." The secretary agreed. However, he apparently forgot about their arrangement, and he cashed the first check. This man discovered this when he was traveling home from a long trip. He was driving on the highway and stopped to fill up his car with gas. The gas station attendant tried swiping his debit card, but it didn't work. He returned it to the man and said, "There is no money in the account, sir, and your debit

card was denied." The man wondered, "How could that be? I just deposited a thousand dollars in the bank." Then he understood that the Gemach must have used the check he left as a deposit, and that was why his account was empty. This left him stranded on the highway. He thought to himself, "Do I have to spend the entire night in the gas station, because the secretary accidentally cashed my check?" The attendant said to him, "I suggest you check your car. Sometimes people find money hidden in the glove compartment or under the seat." The man followed this advice, and he found twenty- three dollars. He filled his car with twenty dollars' worth of gas, which would be enough to bring him home, and he remained with three dollars cash. The attendant then said, "We're selling lottery tickets for three dollars each. Maybe you want to give it a try?" The man agreed. He gave the three dollars and bought a ticket. He started scratching off the numbers, and he was astounded to see that he won fifty thousand dollars! The exact amount he borrowed from the Gemach! He then understood that what he thought was a problem, was actually entirely for his benefit! *Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace.*

Far Reaching Effects of an Expected Mitzvah By Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser

Shmuel lived in Eretz Yisrael and was the seventh boy in his family. All his brothers had attended a major yeshiva, and it was expected that he too would attend that yeshiva when he became of age. Yet, although he had a solid reputation, Shmuel was not accepted after taking the entrance exam. His parents tried to intervene, but with their limited connections they were unsuccessful in changing anything. Shmuel was understandably quite disappointed to have to follow a different trajectory than his brothers, who had lived at home until they married. He was especially let down when the only suitable yeshiva found was far from home and would require him to stay in a nearby dormitory. Erev Shabbos of the first week at yeshiva, Shmuel was stopped by an elderly woman in the neighborhood, who wanted to know where he learned. When he informed her that he stayed in the dormitory for Shabbos, she told him that she hosted a weekly shiur for older men on Shabbos, and they were looking for someone to give a shiur in Pirkei Avos for one hour every week. She asked whether there was any possibility that he would be able to accommodate the group. Shmuel curiously contemplated the situation, cognizant of the fact that his course in life so far seemed very different than that of his brothers'. He was inclined to refuse the offer, but then realized it was a unique opportunity to do a mitzvah and he agreed. Shmuel began giving his shiur the following Shabbos and made a quite favorable impression on his group. As the weeks progressed, Shmuel diversified the shiurim, and the learning sessions covered topics in Navi, the parsha and the like. The participants eagerly looked for-



ward to the shiurim as the highlight of their week. He was so successful that Shmuel continued to give his weekly shiurim for the next five years. When Shmuel looked to get married, a shidduch was suggested with a girl from a very poor family. Once again, he felt he was getting a bad break. Unlike his brothers who had each married a girl of means and owned an apartment, he would have to rent a garage apartment in an out-of-the-way neighborhood. The loyal members of the shiur were delighted to hear Shmuel's news that Shabbos and heartfelt mazel tov wishes resounded in the apartment. On motzoei Shabbos, the woman who hosted the shiur called Shmuel and asked to meet him with his kallah in person. When they met, she explained that her husband had done very well in business, and she now owned several apartments in Yerushalayim. She noted that Shmuel had been giving his shiur all these years without any remuneration, and now that he was getting married, she wanted to give the couple a wedding present. This time Shmuel was overjoyed to be different than his brothers. Unlike his brothers, Shmuel and his kallah were gifted with a beautiful, completely paid off apartment in the heart of Yerushalayim, with no monthly mortgage payments to make. Our sages tell us that Hashem does not withhold the reward for the performance of the littlest mitzvah that one does in this world. *The Jewish Press*.

Kindness in the Supermarket

A single mother of three young children was shopping at a kosher supermarket located in the tri-state area. Recently divorced, after her husband had walked out on her taking their bank account and savings with him, she was relegated to living off the government programs which provide support for the needy. After ten years of marriage, her suspicions were realized when she discovered that her husband was an addict of sorts. To support his habit he needed money, which he took from his wife. When the issue of a get came up, he immediately acquiesced, wanting to get as far from the marriage as possible. That day, the woman filled up her cart with necessities, the basic foods that she would turn into nourishing meals for her three children. According to her calculations, she still had a few hundred dollars remaining on her food stamp card. Thus, she was shocked when the reader informed her that her food stamp balance was zero. How was she going to pay the one hundred thirty dollars for her groceries? Just then a kind-looking, well-dressed woman appeared. With a big smile, she said, "Here, let me lend you the money. You can pay me back whenever." The woman handed the cashier her credit card to scan and disappeared as quickly as she had appeared. As the act of kindness began to sink in, the woman reminisced about her life the last few years. Her husband had been considered a "good catch" until he fell in with other men of similar background who had fallen prey to the acceptable lifestyle of the secular society

outside of the frum/yeshiva world. One thing led to another. At first, she had no idea that money was missing, that their checkbook balance was always coming up short. It was only after his ugly lifestyle became evident that everything began to fit in. Her life was a shambles, with no one to whom to turn. Her parents had been killed in an accident when she was but a child. She grew up as an orphan, raised by an aunt and uncle who were loving – but very controlling. The discipline was rigid and strict. Introduced to her husband shortly after seminary, it seemed like a relationship that would blossom and bear fruit. At first it did, until her husband became addicted. What followed was a series of ugly disagreements and constant discord. Life now became two-faced: the congenial, happy confident face she presented to her children and community; as opposed to her private, inner face – filled with turmoil and doubt, doubt in her faith and doubt in herself. It all changed that afternoon when that kind woman reached out and announced that she was a person worth caring about. She now felt ready to move forward, to break the shackles of insecurity and self-doubt that had until now encumbered her. That woman did much more than give tzedakah; she saved a life, and, by extension, a family. *Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum's Peninim on the Torah*.

Would Our Avos & Imos Be Accepted?

The director of a certain cheder in Beit Shemesh came to consult with Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman zt'l regarding the acceptance of children from a certain family into the cheder. Other parents in the school were pressuring the administration not to accept the children. R' Aharon Leib was incredulous. "It is gayvah to insist that you are better than another person and to reject a child based on such haughtiness!" he exclaimed. "But the father is acting crazy!" the principal countered. "He's using any and all means possible to push in the children!" "Other parents in the school also want the best chinuch for their children" R' Aharon Leib countered, "Why isn't the principal calling them crazy? The parents pushing the school to not accept these children are full of gayvah!"

He then repeated several times, "Gayvah, gayvah, gayvah!"

R' Aharon Leib continued, "With the criteria some schools are setting up today, even Avraham Avinu would not be accepted to a 'good' school! After all, he was the son of Terach, an idol merchant! "Rikva Imeinu would definitely have trouble getting accepted as well, with Besuel for a father and Lavan for a brother! And our Imahos Rachel and Leah, daughters of Lavan the swindler, would not get accepted either. In fact, a good portion of our Patriarchs and Matriarchs would not be able to get into our schools today! In Brisk, when I was growing up, there was one central cheder for those who wanted a Jewish education - we all learned Torah together"

(Reb Aharon Leib, Artscroll, p.151-152). Rebbetzin Michal Horowitz's A Short Vort.

Rav Aharon Kotler

Recreating The Lost World In a Least Likely Place



Rav Aharon Kotler pulled off a historic accomplishment by opening one of the first European standard Yeshivos on the shores of America. Rav Aharon was not one to compromise and build a Yeshiva within the framework of what America had to offer. No, he wanted an authentic Yeshiva and that is what he got; post high school intense Torah study with no secular studies and a Kollel to boot!

Rav Aharon was born in Svislovitz, Poland in 1891. He studied in the famed Slabodka yeshiva in Lithuania under the legendary Alter of Slabodka, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, and Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Epstein. After his marriage to the daughter of Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, the Rosh Yeshiva of Slutsk, Rav Aharon moved to Slutsk and began to give shiurim in the yeshiva. In the wake of World War I he moved the yeshiva from the Soviet-controlled area to Kletzk in Poland. There he became one of the best-known figures in Polish rabbinical circles. He was the youngest member of the Moetzes Gedolai HaTorah of Agudas Yisroel.

With the outbreak of World War II, Rav Aharon and the yeshiva relocated to Vilna, the major refuge of most yeshivos as it was under control of an independent Lithuania and not subject to either Nazi or Russian rule. Rav Aharon ultimately emigrated to the United States via Siberia in 1941 to join Rav Moshe Feinstein in building post Holocaust Yiddishkeit in America. It is told that he performed a Goral HaGra to help determine if he should move to Eretz Yisroel or America. It took him to the Pasuk in Shemos 4:27 "And Hashem said to Aharon go towards your brother Moshe in the desert." The desert referring to America

which was desert compared to the lush and fertile grounds of the European Yeshiva world. His brother Moshe he understood as Rav Moshe Feinstein.

In 1943 Rav Aharon opened the doors of Bais Medrash Gevoha in Lakewood, New Jersey. He chose Lakewood, New Jersey, as the site for his new Yeshiva in America, far from the distractions of New York City. From humble beginnings and against all odds with only a handful of talmidim, the Yeshiva grew by leaps and bounds. The dream was realized. The intense Torah study that had prevailed in eastern Europe was successfully re-created in the United States. By the time Rav Aharon passed away, there were hundreds of talmidim who had a major impact on Torah education in America.

Until his sudden death in 1962, Rav Aharon had a hand in most successful frum ventures, including helping establish Chinuch Atzmai, the independent religious school system in Eretz Yisroel. He was the chairman of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah of Agudath Israel. He also chaired the Rabbinical administration board of Torah Umesorah and was on the presidium of the Agudas HaRabbonim of the U.S. and Canada. Yehi Zichro Boruch

His character traits were so perfected that they were like diamonds.

One day he left his apartment and then told his driver that he has to go back home. He forgot something. The driver offered to go in the house for him. Reb Aharon refused, and said it is something that he has to do. Reb Aharon walked up three flights of steps and the driver followed him to figure out what was so important. He went into

the apartment, walked over to his wife and told her in Yiddish, "Have a good day." He turned around. "Now we can go."

He went raising funds, and many businessmen helped him, but many wouldn't. He never got insulted or took it personally. He knew that supporting Torah is a privilege and not everyone understands that privilege.

He always carried around a volume of the Mishnah Brurah with him. When asked why, he explained that he wanted the merit of the Chofetz Chaim to be with him.

He once had nothing to eat a whole day besides one fruit. He was busy fund raising. But he didn't throw the core or the peels on the floor or out he window. Rather he held them in his hand or in a bag until he could throw them away. When he came home late at night, he bemoaned that he didn't study the whole day.

His wife brought out a bowl of soup, but Reb Aharon said to give it to the driver. "He's been out a whole day and is hungry." For himself his studying was what he needed to do.

It once happened that Reb Aharon was preparing to travel to Israel. His students planned to accompany him to the airport. Reb Aharon demurred saying it was better that they should stay in the yeshiva and not take time away from their learning.

The students called Reb Moshe Feinstein and asked him what to do. He said, "You should indeed accompany Reb Aharon to the airport. To honor Reb Aharon is to honor the Torah itself."

The World of Reb Nosson^{Zt'l}



Rav Nosson Wachtfogel, the Mashgiach Ruchni of the Lakewood Yeshiva, wrote in his list of Kabalos to learn Shmiras HaLashon every single day. When the Rosh Yeshiva became sick, he organized the tzibbur to learn two halachos of Lashon Hara each day, in order for the Rosh Yeshiva to merit a speedy recovery. (B'Yad Ha'Lashon pg 263)

I recently heard from a very reliable source that Rav Elya Svei z'l said that in 1939, Rav Elchanan Wasserman said that Moshiach would come in seventy years. After I heard that story, I "happened" upon another story that Rav Elya Lopian said over (in his sefer Lev Elyahu) from Rav Elchanan Wasserman that he was with the Chofetz Chaim in the beginning of World War I (circa 1914) and the Chofetz Chaim said that WWI was the first of three Gog Umagog wars. The next would be in twenty five years. That story ends there, but clearly Rav Elchanan Wasserman was someone in the know.

Someone showed me a similar story in a sefer that quoted Rav Nosson Wachtfogel z'l, who said that at the beginning of World War I, people were coming to the Chofetz Chaim asking him if that was to be the war of Gog Umagog, and his response was that it was the first of three, as he told Reb Elchanan.

When Rav Wachtfogel was asked how we would survive a possible nuclear war, his response was that in Egypt, the Jew and Egyptian drank from the same cup of water, but the Egyptian drank blood, and the Jew drank water.

What's also interesting is that World War II actually began on the first of September in 1939, which was still 5699, seventy years ago, and Kristallnacht, which many consider the beginning of Hitler's final solution occurred the previous year (38) in November, which was also 5699.

ed.note (I heard from Reb Nosson himself in the name of Reb Boruch Ber that America will me saved from the war of Gog Umagog. When I questioned him as to the source of this statement all he would tell me is that it was a very obvious Ramban.

Who Will Survive?

The world is arming to the hilt and nations are daring one another; Armageddon and Gog-Magog appear to be eventual realities. Will anyone survive a push-button war?

By: Rabbi Lazer Brody

The world is arming to the hilt and nations

are daring one another. Will the West call Putin's hand in the Ukraine? Will global Jihad get its hands on dirty nukes? Will Iran use its nuclear wild card? Will a missile battle in the Middle East trigger a global conflict? Any of these are likely scenarios; with such an international backdrop, Armageddon and Gog-Magog appear to be eventual realities. Will anyone survive a push-button war?

The famed mashgiach, or spiritual dean of the Lakewood Yeshiva in New Jersey, Rabbi Natan Meir Wachtfogel of saintly and blessed memory, heard from the Lakewood Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Aaron Kotler *osb"m*, that during World War I, many people went to the holy "Chafetz Chaim", Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan of Radin *osb"m*, and asked him if this terrible conflict would be the final war. They thought that this might be the war of Gog and Magog.

The "Chafetz Chaim" in his spirit of holiness and humility replied, "After this war, there will be an intermission of several years. Then, there will be another war, much worse than this. Afterwards, there will be another intermission of several decades. Then, there will be another war that makes the previous one look like nothing. Moshiach will come with this war!"

On another occasion, Rabbi Aaron Kotler told the Lakewood Mashgiach that the "Chafetz Chaim" said that the third war will be the beginning of the Geula, the full redemption of our people; despite the utter severity of this global conflict, the true "sons and daughters of Torah" will survive. These are the people who live their lives according to Torah, severed completely from the ways of the nations. The Lakewood Mashgiach added that he has a promise, handed from teacher to pupil all the way back to Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin *osb"m*, that in the final war before the coming of Moshiach, all the ehrlicher yidden - the G-d fearing Jews - will survive.

Who is an ehrlicher yid - a G-d fearing Jew?

The Lakewood Mashgiach answered, "He who is separated from the nations is a G-d fearing Jew! Such an individual has no connection to their culture, their society, their behavior, their music or their books. He or she doesn't read their magazines and newspapers. They're completely disconnected from them, their thoughts, their outlook, their manner of speech and their dress."

Once, the Lakewood Mashgiach heard a group of boys in the yeshiva talking about the prospects of a nuclear war. They asked each

other, "Who can possibly survive a nuclear attack and an atom bomb?" The Mashgiach then gave a shmooz, an ethics lecture for the whole yeshiva and said, "How can a 'son of Torah' ask a question like that? A 'son of Torah' is separated from the nations so he has no danger to fear! It's guaranteed one-hundred percent that he'll survive!!! There's no room for doubt or for nervousness (B'ikvata D'Moshicha, Rabbi Yaacov Yisrael Lugasi, pg. 132).

Much effort is required if we want to be Bnei Torah and ehrlicher yidden - children of Torah and G-d fearing Jews. We must cleanse ourselves of any influence that is foreign to Torah.

Once, while saying his morning blessings, the "Chafetz Chaim" stood in silence for ten minutes before reciting the blessing, *shelo asani goy* - thank You, Hashem, for not making me a gentile. When asked why he hesitated so long, he answered, "I had to first check myself and make sure that I am free of any gentile influence; only then, did I proceed to make the blessing..."

One of the married students in Lakewood asked the Mashgiach, "My friend and I were both candidates for the same teaching position in the yeshiva; he was accepted and I was not. Why?"

The Mashgiach, who knew both students well, answered: "You friend never learned or read any foreign books; that's why he received the teaching position in the yeshiva."

The other young men in the yeshiva, who overheard the conversation between the Mashgiach and their peer, exclaimed, "Mashgiach, we all have our share of foreign influence."

The Mashgiach, in his characteristic candor and humility replied, "So do I."

If the Lakewood Mashgiach, a tzaddik of tremendous stature, claimed to suffer from foreign influence, then what can we say? The Torah commands us to avoid the ways of the nations (Vayikra 20:23), for it's the key to our survival and our redemption. The Midrash teaches us that our redemption from Egypt was by virtue of the fact the our ancestors did not change their language, did not change their names, preserved personal holiness and didn't speak slander (Yayikra Raba 32:5). In other words, they followed Torah and not Hollywood. We'd be wise to follow in their footsteps, for there's no better insurance policy in the world.



TASHLUMIN IF ONE FORGETS TAL UMATAR ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON

As we approach the time of year when we start to recite Tal Umatar, I would like to discuss an interesting question that comes up. Generally speaking, if one missed Tal Umatar, he must daven over again, and if he didn't realize until the next tefillah, he would need to daven shemonah esrei twice, the second one being a tashlumin, a make-up tefillah. What if someone forgot to say Tal Umatar on Friday afternoon during Mincha, and it is now Friday night, when Tal Umatar is not recited? Since he will not recite Tal Umatar in the Friday night tefillah, is there any point in davening shemonah esrei twice?

In order to address this question, let us first discuss a similar question: If one forgot to recite Yaaleh V'yavo at Shachris, and didn't realize until Mincha, he definitely davens twice. But if he forgot to recite Yaaleh V'yavo during Mincha of Rosh Chodesh, and only realized before Maariv, which is no longer Rosh Chodesh, should he daven Maariv twice?

This case is a machlokes between the Rishonim. One opinion is that skipping Yaaleh V'yavo invalidates the shmoneh esrei, and since he didn't daven properly, he must recite a second shmoneh esrei at Maariv, even if it is without Yaaleh V'yavo. The others maintain that the shmoneh esrei was valid, and the only reason shmoneh esrei would be repeated is to recite Yaaleh V'yavoh. Since Yaaleh V'yavoh will not be recited at Maariv, there would be no reason to repeat shmoneh esrei.

Being that there is a machlokes if one davens a second Maariv, on a weekday night, one can daven another shmoneh esrei, and have in mind that, if this is not required, it should be a nedavah – an extra tefillah. However, if Rosh Chodesh was on Friday and it is now Friday night, this is not an option, as one is not allowed to daven a nedavah on Shabbos, and he cannot daven over again.

What about if someone forgot Tal Umatar on Friday afternoon during Mincha, and it is now Friday night? At first glance the same machlokes should apply, since Tal Umatar is not recited on Shabbos. However, in the very first piece of the Grach al Hashas, Rav Chaim Brisker asserts that there is a big difference

between the two cases. When it comes to the added tefillah of Yaaleh V'yavo, some say that since he missed the extra part, the tefillah is a proper tefillah. However, Tal Umatar is part of the text of the actual davening, and all would agree that skipping these words is considered as if he did not recite shmoneh esrei at all. Therefore, according to all opinions, he is definitely required to daven a second shmoneh esrei on Friday night, even though he will not be reciting the words of Tal Umatar.

Others (Har Tzvi and Halichos Shlomo) take issue with this ruling and maintain that missing Tal Umatar is the same as missing Yaaleh V'yavo, and the only option is with a tefilas nedavah, which cannot be done on Shabbos. The Har Tzvi proves this from the Mishna Berura, who writes that if one forgot Tal Umatar at Mincha, he davens Maariv twice, since he will be able to add Tal Umatar in both shmoneh esreis. We see that we only recite another shmoneh esrei if he will be able to add Tal Umatar, whereas according to Rav Chaim, one must repeat shmoneh esrei, simply because his tefillah was invalid.

The Har Tzvi brings another proof that Tal Umatar is an addition – similar to Yaaleh V'yavo – from the fact that it can be filled in during Shomeia Tefillah. If it can be recited later, it must be that it is not an integral part of the brocha of Bareich Aleinu. This proof, however, is not so simple, because the Biur Halacha writes that if one omitted an integral part of any brocha, it can, indeed, be filled in during Shomeia Tefillah. So it is possible that Tal Umatar is part of the brocha of Bareich Aleinu, but can still be recited later.

So, we have a machlokes if Tal Umatar is similar to Yaaleh V'yavo, and is something added on, or it is considered a part of the text of the actual davening. If the reason to repeat shmoneh esrei is merely to fulfill the requirement to recite Tal Umatar, but the shmoneh esrei is valid, one should not do so on Friday night. But if it is equivalent to one who did not daven at all, he would be required to recite a second shmoneh esrei, even though it is without Tal Umatar.

Rabbi Scheiner

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SUMMARY

If one forgot Tal Umatar on Friday afternoon, there is a machlokes if he should repeat shmoneh esrei. If it is part of the text of the tefillah, and skipping it is equivalent to one who did not daven at all, he would be required to recite a second shmoneh esrei. If we repeat shmoneh esrei just to fulfill the requirement to recite Tal Umatar, one would not do so on Friday night.

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Winter 2022/23

➤ מנחה גדולה (between 12:10 - 12:41)

➤ 12:30

➤ 1:00

➤ 1:15 **NEW!!**

➤ 1:30

➤ 1:45 **NEW!!**

➤ 2:00

➤ 2:30

➤ 3:00

18 Main Bais Medrash

Late Maariv Motzai Shabbos

After Rabeinu Tam

	15 min	30 min	45 min	1 hr	75 min	90 min	1 hr & 45 min	2 hrs
לך לך	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00
וירא	6:05	6:20	6:35	6:50	7:05	7:20	7:35	7:50
חיי שרה	6:00	6:15	6:30	6:45	7:00	7:15	7:30	7:45
תולדות	5:55	6:10	6:25	6:40	6:55	7:10	7:25	7:40
ויצא	5:55	6:10	6:25	6:40	6:55	7:10	7:25	7:40

18 Main Bais Medrash

**Shabbos Shacharis
Minyanim**

Vasikin	20 Upstairs
8:00	18 Main
9:15	Tent א
10:00 <small>Chabad</small>	20 Upstairs
10:30	18 Main

בס"ד

בס"ד

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