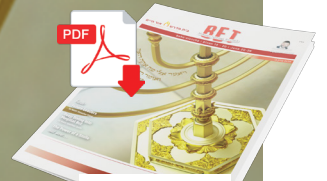


Beha'aloscha | Sivan 14 - 20 | June 20-26

אבות פרק ב'

וְאָמַר אֵלַי מִה אֶתֶּנִּי הַיְיָ
וְאָמַר רַאֲיִתִּי וְהִנֵּה
מְנֻדָּת זֶהָב כְּזָהָב



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
1:36pm and every 15 minutes until 5:00

8:14pm Candle lighting	7:15pm Mincha in tent א	8:24pm Chabad Mincha	8:32pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

4:45am <small>Vasikin, followed by 2 Daf Yomi Shiur 20↑</small>	8:00am <small>Shachris 2 18 main</small>	9:15am <small>Shachris 3 Tent א</small>	10:00am <small>Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20↑</small>	10:00am <small>Shachris 5 18 main</small>
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2:00pm Pirchei	8:10pm <small>Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos</small>	8:32pm Shkiya	9:12pm Maariv 1	9:17pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
9:45 pm - 12:15 | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of June 23 - 29

Shacharis — 20 min. before Neitz
Mincha & Maariv — 12 min. before Plag and more (see posted times)

	Neitz	Shma Magen Avraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	5:25am	8:16am	9:11am	10:27am	12:58pm	6:58pm	8:32pm
Monday	5:25am	8:16am	9:11am	10:27am	12:58pm	6:58pm	8:32pm
Tuesday	5:26am	8:16am	9:12am	10:27am	12:59pm	6:58pm	8:32pm
Wednesday	5:26am	8:17am	9:12am	10:28am	12:59pm	6:58pm	8:32pm
Thursday	5:27am	8:17am	9:12am	10:28am	12:59pm	6:58pm	8:32pm
Friday	5:27am	8:17am	9:13am	10:28am	12:59pm	6:58pm	8:32pm
Shabbos	5:27am	8:18am	9:13am	10:28am	12:59pm	6:58pm	8:32pm

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The Haftara of Behaaloscha

PART 1:

Hashem speaks via the Navi Zacharia giving him a prophetic vision of the end of time, the era of Mashiach. The daughters of Jerusalem (Am Yisrael) should sing and rejoice because the *shechina* is returning and will dwell among you. At that time there will be so many converts and they will all want a piece of the action and to connect with Hashem, but Hashem says I will only rest with my children in Jerusalem. You will all be able to tell from where Hashem's Presence does and does not rest, who is really his people. Zacharia explains to the nations that when this time arrives, they will never again have an opportunity or the ability to hurt the Jewish people.

PART 2:

Hashem shows Zacharia a vision of Yehoshua Kohen Gadol, standing in the heavenly court and an angel of Hashem begins to speak negatively about Yehoshua's children. His children have left the ways of Hashem and married non-Jewish women. Hashem comes to the Kohen Gadol's defense saying: soon his children will divorce those women. Additionally, Yehoshua has many merits, as his forefathers were also Kohanim Gedolim. Zacharia sees Yehoshua dressed in very dirty clothes, symbolizing being full of sin. The angel instructs other angels to separate those non-Jewish women from Yehoshua Kohen Gadol's children, and then they will turn pure, and clean. Upon seeing this, Zacharia prays that Yehoshua will continue to be the Kohen Gadol, and that also his children will follow in his ways to be Kohanim Gedolim. Zacharia is told if they will maintain the proper level of *kedusha* and will follow in Hashem's ways, they will merit to continue the chain of Kohanim Gedolim. The children repented and returned to the Torah's ways, and they too became Kohanim G'dolim.

It is fascinating to see the way Hashem judges us. Does our action in the future count for today? We see that Yishmael, the son of Hagar, when he was a child, was dying. The heavenly court requested that he die now, because in the future he will cause so much sorrow to the Jewish people. Hashem responded, "*Basher hu sham*" we only judge a person at that time of his action. Yishmael is innocent now, and therefore he can live on.

Here the children of Yehoshua are currently living in sin, but Hashem judges them as innocent because He knows that later they will repent. Why would this be so? If the premise is "*Ba'asher hu sham*" we judge a person by how they are today, why did Hashem judge them innocently by looking in their future?

We learn from this an incredible insight to Hashem's ways. The concept of "*Ba'asher hu sham*" always works in a person's favor. If a person is currently in sin, but in the future will be righteous, then Hashem will judge Him favorably. If, however, a person is currently innocent of sin, though the future might bring him to be evil, Hashem will then judge them favorably, as they are now.

The *haftarah* instructs, "Rejoice and sing the daughter of Zion because I have already come." That statement does not seem accurate as we are still in exile. Hashem is teaching us to "judge" Him as He "judges" us. Although right now we are living in the bitter reality of exile, the seeds of redemption have been planted. Hashem wants us to view our current situation with joy, internalizing the certainty of the imminent *geulah*.

May we merit the final redemption soon. Amen.



Follow-up

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

Aharon HaKohen is commanded to light and raise the flames of the *Menorah* each day. Rashi who seems to be addressing the choice of words for lighting "to raise the flame" says שתהא שלהבת עולה מאליה meaning it's not enough to light the wicks alone, one needs to make sure that the fire is able to catch and burn by itself.

The Chassidic interpretation is that the flame represent the soul of person, and the teacher is obligated to make sure that not only is he teaching his students, but he also must make sure that they understand enough to keep the information with them. I would add that perhaps it's not only for the purpose of the student keeping the information, but also to be able to teach others in the future.

Reb Moshe in his beautiful *Sefer al Hatorah* quotes this interpretation, and then adds another way of looking at these words of Rashi.

As we know learning Torah and the supporting of Torah go hand in hand. In fact, as the Rama writes in *Yoreh Deah*, the supporter is like the learner himself, meaning through his financial support, it's considered that the supporter is actually learning too. (See also Rav Yakov Kamenetzky *Al Hatorah* in *Parshas Vzot Habracha* regarding Zevulun and Yisaschar.)

Additionally, Reb Moshe adds another crucial point: he says that making sure the light is burning by itself means follow-up. This is true when we are speaking about teaching, especially when we speak about *kiruv*, and this is true when we are speaking about financial support for a Yeshiva and the like.

It's something special when one receives a follow-up call, because it's somewhat unusual and not always expected.

I have a rule of thumb when it comes to deciding if I should do something or not; it's usually based on whether I'm motivated and excited to do it or not. As the Vilna Gaon explains in his commentary to *Megilas Ruth*, if you want to know if something is a good thing or not, see how much the *yetzer hara* is trying to stop you from doing it.

Next time your mind comes up with a name or an organization to contribute to, see if there is potential for positive follow-up. Check out how much resistance there is, and then take the challenge. You will be surprised how much good will come from a small act of follow-up.

May we merit to light and raise the flames of Torah and the *neshamos* of Klal Yisrael.

The Dual Canopy



Rabbi YY Jacobson

"On the day the Tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered the Tabernacle," the Bible records in the Torah portion of Behaalosecha. "Then, in the evening, there would be upon the Tabernacle like a fiery glow till morning." "From then on it remained that way," the Torah continues. "The cloud would cover it [by day] and a glow of fire by night." Two points require clarification. First: What was the significance and purpose of this dual miraculous canopy that hovered over the Tabernacle in the desert – a cloud during the day and a glowing flame during the night? Second: Like every episode recorded in the Bible, this one, too, contains a spiritual interpretation that continuously plays itself out in journeys of the human spirit. How can we apply the story of this Tabernacle canopy to our lives today?

Smugness Vs. Despair

The Tabernacle was the edifice erected by the people of Israel in the Sinai desert to serve as a home for the Divine presence. In Jewish writings, the Tabernacle represents the place in the human heart where the light of G-d resides. The Tabernacle, then, exists timelessly within the human soul.

This sacred and noble place within us, declares the experiences in his or her life "days" and "nights" -- moments of light and moments of darkness, times of happiness and contentment as well as times of agony and turmoil. For some, the days are longer than the nights; for others the nights sadly exceed the days. Yet most humans possess a share of both realities.

Now, when things are going well for us -- when we're paying the bills nicely, the kids are healthy, our spouses are there for us and we're satisfied with our lot -- we often forget how vulnerable we really are in this world. We tend to become smug, complacent and desensitized. We often become apathetic to other people's pain. We don't feel the need for genuine friendships, and certainly not for a relationship with G-d. We don't feel the urgent need to be real. At moments of bliss people often feel that they are on top of the world and they do not need anybody. They forget their humaneness and simplicity.

On the other hand, when things become (heaven forbid) difficult and painful – your company "is in der erd" (Yiddish for "is in the ground"), a loss in the family, illness of a loved one, a marriage goes sour, the bank is after us, our children are not doing well or we are overcome by inner mental or physical challenges – we often fall prey to feelings of despair and loneliness. We sink into the morass of life's hardships, as we say to ourselves, "it's dark and it's getting darker."

Maintain Perspective

Thus, the Torah this week teaches us a movingly profound lesson.

If you are to become a human Tabernacle, if you wish to discover the grace of G-d within your heart, you must recall the darker cloud hovering above you even during times of brightness and splendor. A person must always remember that ultimately he cannot claim ownership over anything in his life: Life is a gift, love is gift, parents are gifts and children are gifts. Financial success, too, is not a natural symptom of your brilliant investments; it is a gift. One ought never to become blind to the truth that everything can change in a single instance and that there is so much pain in the world. When you remember the clouds, you will never become arrogant, detached and false.

On the other hand, when night falls upon us, when life exposes its painful and darker side to us, we need to recall the glowing light hovering above us. We must remember that every experience we endure is part of our life's mission to serve G-d under these circumstances and to transform the world into a home for goodness and G-dliness. Every challenge contains an opportunity for deeper growth and for a deeper relationship with our soul and our G-d. Each cloud contains a flame within.

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:30am (18 Main)
Chassidus Shiur **Monday & Thursday** 7:45am (18 Main)
Shabbos: Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)
Morning 8:40 (20 Upstairs) | After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)
Please Note: Rabbi Jacobson's Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 am, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 am.

Learning Torah with A Minyan

UFARATZTA



The Sages, peace be upon them, taught in the *Mishnah*: "If ten people sit together and engage in the study of Torah, the *Shechinah* rests among them." "For this is the whole purpose of man." As the *Gemara** interprets this verse: "The entire world was created solely for this purpose." Moreover, [the soul's] very descent to this world was for the purpose of this ascent, which is accomplished through public Torah study, and no ascent is higher than this.

[The ultimate ascent of the soul, the reason for which the soul initially descended, is attained not only after it completes its descent, after it leaves the body; rather, through public Torah study, while the soul is still within the body, it causes the *Shechinah* to rest in this lower world, and is thereby elevated more than by any other means.]

For the *Shechinah* of G-d's might, which is in the supernal heights and Whose awesomeness "the heavens and the

heavens of the heavens cannot contain," dwells and becomes magnified among the Children of Israel, as it is written, "For I, G-d, dwell among the Children of Israel," as a result of [their] study of the Torah and observance of the commandments in groups of [at least] ten, for ten Jews constitute a congregation. Thus, for the holiness of the *Shechina* to be within you, it is necessary that the Torah be studied in groups of at least ten...

At the end of the *Siman*, the Baal Hatanya advises having a shiur with at least ten people...

==== Tanya, *Igeres Hakodesh, Siman 26*. Based on *chabad.org* and *Lessons in Tanya*.

* *Brochos 6,2*

Editor's Note: The bottom line is, Joining a shiur of 10 Yidden, Number one: It is the most powerful way to bring G-dliness into this world – "dirah betactonim." Number 2: A Shiur attended by ten Jews is usually very interesting.



Women Davening Mincha after Candle Lighting

~Night Kollel~ ~Kollel Boker~



by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Night Kollel & Morning Kollel

We have seen that there is a requirement to add on to Shabbos and *Yom Tov* – both a few minutes before and a few minutes after. Can a person still daven *Mincha* after he was *mekabel* Shabbos? This question applies to both women who accept Shabbos at the time of the candle lighting, as well as to men who wish to accept Shabbos before *shkia*, as they are required.

The *Shulchan Aruch* (O”C 263:10) quotes the *Bahag*, who rules that the lighting of the candles is considered a *kabalas Shabbos* and after candle lighting *melacha* cannot be done. The *Shulchan Aruch*, however, continues that many *Rishonim* disagree and rule that the lighting of the candles is not considered a *kabalas Shabbos* and one can continue to do *melacha* even after candle lighting. The *Rama* writes that the *minhag* is for the women who light the candles, to follow the *Bahag*, and accept Shabbos at that time.

The *Eliyahu Raba* (263:17) writes that, since they are accepting Shabbos with the lighting, they should be sure to daven *mincha* before candle lighting. The *Mishna Berura* (263:43) adds that if she did not daven *Mincha* and already lit, since she was *mekabel* Shabbos, she can no longer daven *Mincha* and would have to daven *Maariv* twice. The *Rivivos Ephraim* points out that this is a problem, since women would like to daven after candle lighting.

How about if she makes a stipulation that she still wants to daven – will that help for a woman to daven after lighting? This is based on the words of the *Rama*, who writes that since there is a difference of opinions if the lighting is considered a *kabalas Shabbos*, a woman can stipulate that she does not wish to accept Shabbos. But this is not so simple. The *Magen Avraham* rules that this stipulation is only allowed in a situation of necessity. Is the fact that she wishes to daven *Mincha* qualify as a bona fide need?

Many *poskim* – including the *Kaf Hachaim* (263:35), *Minchos Shlomo* (2:35:8), *Be’er Moshe* (1:15), and the *Divrei Yatziv* (1:121) – allow a woman to stipulate that she is not accepting Shabbos, and then she can daven. The *Divrei Yatziv* adds that this is only if she is vigilant to daven *Mincha* every day, making it a bona fide necessity.

The *Be’er Moshe* and *Divrei Yatziv* take this a step further. They point out that if a woman davens *Mincha* every day, it is self understood that she is planning on davening *Mincha*, and it is an automatic stipulation.

The *sefer Eishel Avraham* adds that a woman can stipulate specifically that she wants to daven *Mincha* and not do *melacha*. This is because a stipulation for davening *Mincha* is much simpler than to allow doing *melacha*. He explains that

davening a weekday *tefilla* is not a contradiction to Shabbos per se. He shows that we find this concept in regards to one who mistakenly started davening the weekday *shmoneh esrei* on Shabbos.

The *Shulchan Aruch* rules that if someone started davening a weekday *shmoneh esrei* on Shabbos, he should finish the *brocha* that he started and only then return to the Shabbos davening. As the *poskim* explain, the weekday davening is, in essence, appropriate on Shabbos as well, so it is not considered a *brocha* that is inappropriate on Shabbos. Similarly, a woman can stipulate that she wants to daven *Mincha*, as that is not really a contradiction to Shabbos.

In conclusion

Women who accept Shabbos at the time of the candle lighting should definitely daven *Mincha* before. If they did not, many *poskim* allow her to daven *Mincha* after she lit candles, if she stipulated that she is not accepting Shabbos. Some allow this only for a woman who always davens.

Questions to Ponder:

What about a man who davens *Mincha* on Friday evening right before *shkiah*, or even after sunset – Is that a contradiction to turning Friday afternoon into Shabbos?

This will be discussed, *b’ezras Hashem*, in a future article.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

- Chavrusa learning - Gemara
- Currently: מסכת מועד קטן
- Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics

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The main purpose of Tefila is not to get us out of problems. The purpose of problems is to get us into Tefila

-R Yitzchok Hutner

A REAL "LEVI!"

R' Avraham Goldstein, a well-known ger-tzedek living in Scranton, Pennsylvania, had a friend whose son started drifting from Yiddishkeit. The family reached out to R' Avraham to see if he could try to influence their son, Yaakov.

R' Avraham sought after Yaakov, hoping to influence him for the good. During their conversation, he thought of a great idea. Soon after, R' Avraham brought Yaakov to John's store, who greeted R' Avraham warmly and inquired as to who was R' Avraham's companion. R' Avraham introduced Mr. John to his young friend, Yaakov, and told him that Yaakov was a Levi, Levite.

Hearing this, John leaped from his seat and announced on the PA system that all workers should come and get a blessing from this authentic Levi. "We want all our people to be blessed by such a person."

Within moments, all seventy employees of John's store gathered around R' Avraham and Yaakov, seeking his brachah. Everyone lined up, bent their heads, as they were instructed, and Yaakov bentched them all.

As Yaakov and R' Avraham returned to the car, Yaakov started crying uncontrollably. "Why are you crying?" asked R' Avraham.

"All this time I never valued myself as a special Levi. This is the first time that the awareness is touching me!"

This episode stood for Yaakov as a life-changer, motivating him to redirect his life, to serve Hashem, to do His mitzvos, and to understand his intrinsic value. Most of us are not Leviim, yet we have a lot to learn from this story. We are the one and only chosen nation, chosen by non-other than the Creator, Hashem. This recollection gives us nobility and dignity. This in itself stands for us to take great pride in and to conduct ourselves in an uplifting manner.

A SON-IN-LAW LIKE R' AKIVA EIGER

A man once entered the Mir Yeshiva in Poland, seeking a new son-in-law for his daughter. He asked the mashgiach, R' Yerucham Levovitz, who the best boy was.

The mashgiach replied: "Who do you want? This boy is like Reb. Akiva Eiger, this one is a R' Yitzchok Elchanan, and the next is R' Paysach Pruskin. Which do you want as a son-in-law?"

At the time, these weren't necessarily top boys of the yeshiva, yet R' Yerucham gave each talmid the feeling that he's going to be the next gadol, empowering and infusing each of them with courage of greatness. Many of these bachurim grew to be great leaders in the past generation.

More than what R' Yerucham said was the inner chashivus, respect, that he gave to them. Empowering them with the capabilities gives a person the courage to bring forth their great potential.

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The Humblest of them All

12:3 “והאיש משה עניו מאד מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה”

“And the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person on the face of the earth.” How could Moshe Rabbeinu really be so humble? Didn't he know that he was the greatest amongst Klal Yisroel, that he was the one chosen to go up to *shomayim* for 40 days, and be the conduit for Klal Yisroel to receive the Torah Hakdoshah? Was he really so humble? Did he not know his obvious greatness?

Why does the posuk say, “והאיש” – and the man, when it could be left out and just say that Moshe was a great *anav*? Regarding a king of flesh and blood, it is said that those who are further away from him have more fear of him than those who are close to the king. This is not so of the King of all Kings, the Melech Malchei Hamlachim Hakodosh Boruch Hu, for those who are closer to Him have more fear of Him than those further away. The *lashon* of *והאיש* referring to that great man, is telling us that Moshe Rabbeinu was exceedingly close to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. He was closer to Hakodosh Boruch Hu than any other man, and he was therefore exceedingly humble.

The closer one gets to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, the more recognition he has of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and this causes him to be even more humble. Since Moshe Rabbeinu was the closest of all people to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, he was also the humblest of all. (ברכת הרי"ח)

Moshe Rabbeinu knew that he was a great individual. He knew that he was the one *zoche* to go to *shomayim* and to receive the Torah Hakdoshah. He knew that he was the messenger to bring Klal Yisroel out of Mitzrayim. Moshe Rabbeinu certainly knew of his greatness. However, there was a key point that Moshe Rabbeinu knew clearly, and that was what made him a truly great man, a true *Anav*. To Moshe, it was all a gift from Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Hakodosh Boruch Hu could have given those gifts to someone else, but He gave them to Moshe. There is nothing to be arrogant about when one has wisdom, wealth, or anything else for that matter, for one must know that it is all from Hashem, by the good grace of Hashem, and if Hashem so desires, it can be taken away at any moment. Thus, there is really nothing for anyone to ever be arrogant about.

Moshe Rabbeinu was always cognizant of this. He saw it as a great responsibility of being chosen, that he needed to live up to the position as best as he could, and at the same time, always be cognizant that every step of the way was all with Hashem's help. If Hashem were to step away, so to say, even for a moment, Moshe would have fallen. Moshe Rabbeinu knew who he was and was exceedingly humble, knowing ever so clearly at every moment, that it was all from Hashem. May we be *zoche* to be truly humble, and realize that everything we are and have is all from Hashem.

The Right Stuff RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



In *Pirkei Avos*, Shamai says: One must learn Torah, making it the most important thing in one's life. Speak little and accomplish much. But lastly, treat all people with respect and honor them no matter who they are.

We can learn much from the juxtaposition of all of Shammai's statements.

Yes, we must learn Torah, understanding that it is important. So important that the world itself rests upon our learning of the Torah.

We must not brag about our learning, we must speak little and accomplish much, Shamai tells us. *Middos* are important- don't think you are better than everyone else if you take the time to work on yourself. Remember, humility is a worthy goal, sterling *middos*, and *kabbalos* or resolutions – are all wonderful and praiseworthy, the right things for us to concentrate on.

But, once we start to grow, we should never become haughty and think that we are better than others who have not undertaken to learn and to correct their *middos*, because that would be inconsistent with the Torah itself!

We must treat all people with respect. If we honor and love our fellow Jews we will accomplish much. Our Torah learning and the good *middos* we strive to perfect should never ever lead to us demeaning anyone!

Sefirah is over. But we still need to work on our *middos*. Let's work on one important one. Being nice!

Good Shabbos! Good Shabbos!



It is Always a Journey Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein

Every word of the Torah is eternal. There are no exceptions. The purpose of every section of the Torah is to show us how to live our lives according to the Will of Hashem. Here, too, we can expect consistency. Every section of the Torah, every event recorded, should impact our behavior.

Every person is charged with erecting his own *mishkan*. (The Torah commands, after all “They shall make for me a Sanctuary and I will dwell within them.” Hashem does not endeavor to dwell within the Sanctuary, but to cause His Presence to dwell within us. Each of us must create the space, fashion the inner environment that can successfully invite an indwelling of the Divine.) Note that the Torah does not say, “On the day that Moshe set up the *Mishkan*,” which would have been more direct and more accurate. It opts instead for the passive voice – on the day the *Mishkan* was set up. This broadens the *pasuk* beyond Moshe’s *Mishkan* to the personal ones that we all labor to construct.

Our passage warns us about some of the pitfalls along the way. On the very day that a person brings the *Shechinah* to a firm standing within him, he can expect dark, obscuring clouds to envelop him. Hashem will send challenges that seem to darken his clarity, to shroud it in murkiness. The night – the natural time of darkness and hiddenness – will bring an unwanted fire: flare-ups of passions and desires that his *yetzer hora* has prepared for him. “So it will always be. The cloud will cover it, and an appearance of fire by night.”

This is the way of the world, the lot that a Jew can expect. He must know that there will always be challenges, tests that hide Hashem from him, and inflame him. “And whenever the cloud was lifted from atop the *Ohel*, afterwards the *Bnei Yisrael* would journey.” It is always a journey. The challenges, the darkness, the struggles – they all lead a Jew to a better place. The darkness will lift, and the cloudiness will dissipate. When that happens, a Jew will either rise to the next level, or

at least begin on the road to achieving it.

The Torah hints as well at a very nuts-and-bolts suggestion about how to time our self-induced journeys to higher places. “The fool walks in darkness.” The fool wishes to walk, to travel onward while shrouded in darkness. But darkness is not a time for traveling, but for staying put. We should not attempt to reach new spiritual levels when we can detect that our internal *Mishkan* is clouded over. Our *avodah* in such times is to remain firm and resolute, to hold on to what we have. We must react to the darkness with strength and conviction to stay the course, to keep at our appointed tasks loyally and steadfastly, despite the gloomy nocturnal mists. Such a time, however, is not auspicious to setting off on expeditions to conquer new spiritual heights; it suffices at such times that we try our hardest not to fall.

However long it takes, as long as the darkness hovers, any marching we do must be marching in place. Our job at such times is to maintain Hashem’s charge, not to charge onward. It is sometimes His Will that we serve Him in darkness, that we continue to do His bidding while He hides His countenance from us. We should not blame ourselves for these periods of time, but understand that they are orchestrated by Hashem Himself. Sometimes, He simply asks of us that we serve Him in such a state.

The *parshah* suggests to us an important component of our *avodah*. A Jew must be able to discern at all times what tasks Hashem requires of him, what purposes He wants him to advance, what He asks of him at each particular moment. The messages we get from Him may differ from time to time. But there always is a message, and it always draws us closer to Him.

Based on Nesivos Shalom pgs. 47-48

Self-discipline Torah Tavlin

Rashi quotes the words of the *Sifri*: “And Aharon did it so” to tell us the praise of Aharon in that he did not deviate.” Many *meforshim* comment on this quality of Aharon Hakohen – that he listened to the Word of Hashem and did not so much as change an iota – why did the Torah find it necessary to even mention something as basic as this?

The holy Rebbe, R’ Yerachmiel Yisroel of Alexander *zt”l*, offers a novel approach: When a *tzaddik* does a *mitzvah*, often his fervor and enthusiasm overcome him and he cannot proceed out of sheer zest and excitement. Yet the Torah tells us that *Aharon Hakohen* was able to control his emotions, to subjugate his will to the command of Hashem in order to ensure that the *mitzvah* is done accordingly.

“Had the *Ribono Shel Olam* given the *mitzvah* of lighting the *menorah* in the *Mishkan* to R’ Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev *zt”l*,” joked the Rebbe of Alexander, “he would

undoubtedly have spilled the oil and probably would have even broken the *Menorah* out of sheer zealousness to perform the *mitzvah*.” Control and self-discipline in the performance of *mitzvos* was a praiseworthy characteristic of *Aharon Hakohen*.

The following story illustrates this idea:

One night, a group of *bochurim* were studying diligently in the *Radin Yeshivah*. The hour was late, past midnight, when suddenly the door to the *Beis Medrash* opened and in walked the holy Chofetz Chaim, R’ Yisroel Meir Hakohen Kagan *zt”l*, accompanied by his son-in-law, R’ Tzvi. Of course, the sight of the great *tzaddik* spurred the young men to study even more diligently, and it took a few minutes for all those present to realize that the Chofetz Chaim had raised his arms in a motion indicating that he would like to say a few words.

Sleeping Soundly Rabbi Ozer Alport

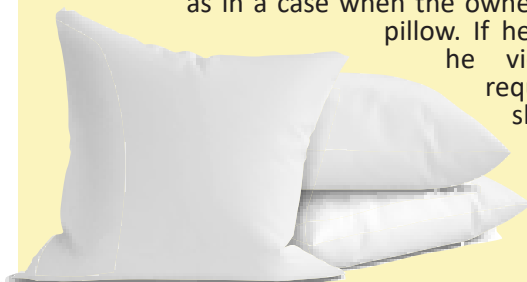


In the spring of 1943 Rabbi Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, known as the Ponovezher Rav, established an orphanage in *B'nei B'rak* to absorb and care for the many orphaned children who had been rescued from the Holocaust and were sent to the Land of Israel. Unfortunately, with the first group of children scheduled to arrive on a Sunday, the Ponovezher Rav found himself without any linens or pillows for the children to sleep on due to the dire situation in Israel at that time. On Friday, with two days remaining until their arrival, Rabbi Kahaneman announced that he would be speaking on Shabbos afternoon in the largest synagogue in town.

He began his speech by citing the *Talmud* in *Bava Metzia* (62a), which discusses a case in which two people are lost in the desert with only one flask of water. If they split the water between them, both will die before they are able to reach the nearest settlement, but if one of them drinks it, he will be able to survive. Rabbi Akiva derives (Leviticus 25:36) that your life takes precedence over that of your friend, and therefore the one with the water should drink it all.

On the other hand, the *Talmud* (*Kiddushin* 20a) teaches that a person who acquires a Jewish servant in a sense acquires a master for himself, due to the Torah's requirement to equate the servant's standard of living to his owner's level of comfort.

Tosefos adds that sometimes even this is not sufficient, such as in a case when the owner possesses only one pillow. If he takes it for himself, he violates the Torah's requirement to give his slave equal treatment, and he therefore has no choice but to give his only pillow to his servant, leaving himself with



nothing on which to sleep.

Rabbi Kahaneman noted that this ruling of *Tosefos* seems to contradict the teaching of Rabbi Akiva. Just as the person who is lost in the desert is permitted to drink all of the water due to the principle of "your life takes precedence," shouldn't this same reasoning allow the master to keep his sole pillow for himself?

The Ponovezher Rav explained that the two rulings are in fact compatible, as the requirement to give the pillow to the servant actually emanates from the Torah's concern for the primacy of the owner's well-being. If the master were to keep the pillow and lay down in comfort while observing his servant tossing and turning, his conscience would bother him so much that he wouldn't be able to enjoy the pillow and a good night's rest.

Therefore, precisely in order to allow the master to be at peace with the arrangement, the Torah requires him to give the pillow to his servant for his own well-being so that he can sleep soundly through the night.

Similarly, the Ponovezher Rav continued, in only one day a large group of Jewish children would be arriving at the new orphanage in *B'nei B'rak*, which was completely lacking pillows and sheets on which they could sleep.

Questioning how any of those present could go home and enjoy a comfortable night's sleep now that they were aware of this situation, he advised them that for their own well-being, they should immediately donate the only pillows and linens in their possessions, a suggestion which was fulfilled by the inspired and touched listeners as soon as Shabbos was finished.

"My dear students," began the Chofetz Chaim in a soft voice, "Please go to sleep! It's past midnight. One is not permitted to over-exert one's body to the point that it will affect his learning for the next day. Please go to your rooms and go to sleep – this is what the Torah wants of you." These were the all-important words of the great *tzaddik* who had come to speak to the *bochurim* after midnight. R' Yisroel Meir, as well as many *Gedolei Yisroel*, believed that everything has its limit, even Torah study, and one is not permitted to overstep his physical bounds. A *masmid* (one who studies diligently) is one who utilizes his time wisely and never wastes a minute, not one who pushes himself until he causes a detriment to his health.

For some reason, however, a strange thing occurred. The short speech of the Chofetz Chaim had the opposite effect on the *bochurim*. Rather than get up and leave the *Beis Medrash*, they threw themselves into their learning with even greater gusto, and their voices rose to a new crescendo, louder than before. It would have appeared as if the *tzaddik*

had just delivered an inspiring message exhorting them to study with even greater enthusiasm, as opposed to a short heartfelt plea urging them to go to sleep! Such was the power of influence that the great Chofetz Chaim had on people, and especially on young innocent *bochurim* who misunderstood the intentions of the great man.

But the Chofetz Chaim would not let it be. Without another word, he climbed up on a bench and began extinguishing the kerosene lamp that was burning on the wall. One by one, he climbed up – no small feat for a man already in his seventies – and put out each lamp until the entire *Beis Medrash* was dark. Then, in a voice filled with love and concern, he called out, "My dear children, please go to sleep."

Aharon Hakohen was praised for kindling the lights in the *Mishkan* with self-control and discipline. The Chofetz Chaim employed the same discipline to extinguish the lights, all for the benefit of his students.

The Abarbanel on Parshas Beha'aloscha Rabbi Pinchas Kasnett

Chapter eleven in this Torah portion begins with a very enigmatic verse: "And the people were like complainers; evil in the ears of G-d. And G-d heard, and His wrath flared, and a fire of G-d burned them, and it consumed at the edge of the camp." Curiously, they are not referred to simply as "complainers." Rather, they are described as "like complainers." Furthermore, we are not told what they were complaining about.

Abarbanel explains that despite the fact that Jewish People had spent an entire year at Mount Sinai where they had received the Torah with its teachings and Divine admonitions, they never really abandoned the heretical beliefs that they had absorbed in Egypt. Similarly, they had imitated the crass Egyptian character, especially in regard to eating and drinking. Here, at Mount Sinai, in a place where the Divine Torah should have straightened out their crooked beliefs and character, the Egyptian influence was not yet completely erased. Despite the fact that they were accompanied by the Ark of the Covenant, and led by the Clouds of Glory, the two episodes that begin this chapter illustrate the failure of belief and character which remained with them.

The Hebrew word that is usually translated as "complainers" actually means, in the context of our text, "those who sought a pretext to complain." *Abarbanel* then transfigures the rest of the verse so that it reads as follows: "They sought pretexts to prove that G-d's ears were bad;" that is to say, that G-d did not pay attention to the everyday words and actions of the people. This is similar to the verse in Psalms 94:7: "And they said that G-d will not see, G-d will not understand." Their belief was that G-d was not aware of, and did not relate to, the

details of everyday, lowly, physical existence. They expressed this belief now because Moshe had just said in the previous verse (10:36): "Arise, G-d, and let Your foes be scattered, let those who hate You flee from before You. And when it (the Ark) rested, he (Moshe) would say, 'Reside tranquilly, O, G-d, among the myriad thousands of Israel'."

The people were essentially mocking Moshe's words. They didn't believe that G-d really resided amongst them, that He was attuned to them. Yet they are still described as like those looking for a pretext because they were not totally denying the concept of Divine Providence. They understood that it applied to well-known and publicized miraculous interventions in nature. Rather, they were looking for a pretext to deny G-d's providence in regard to the details of everyday life.

Since their transgression does involve an overtly public action, the Torah does not go into further detail. Rather, to counter their claim that G-d does not hear, the Torah says explicitly that G-d heard. To counter their claim that G-d was not personally involved on an individual basis, G-d made sure that they would recognize Him through the punishment of fire, which was directed miraculously and specifically against only those who were guilty. The fire burned only at the "edge" of the camp, indicating that it was a miraculous fire, not a natural one which would have normally spread further. The people cried out to Moshe, who then prayed to G-d. To further demonstrate the uniquely personal and providential nature of the fire, it was then immediately absorbed into the ground.

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We Are Connected Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

"Moshe heard the people weeping concerning their family groups..." (11:10)

The Talmud relates that any commandment which we initially accepted with rejoicing, such as *bris milah* – circumcision, would be performed joyously in later generations. However, any commandment that was received with resistance, would be fulfilled in later generations with aggravation. Specifically, since Bnei Yisroel wept over being prohibited from marrying their family members, the result was that there would never be a *Kesubah*, a marriage document that records the couple's financial obligations to one another, written that did not involve some form of dispute.¹ Why are circumcision and prohibited relationships the two examples utilized?

The Maharal questions why, in fact, it became prohibited to Bnei Yisroel to marry their family members; according to the Talmud, in preparation for receiving the Torah, Bnei Yisroel underwent complete conversion i.e. circumcision, ritual bathing, and the bringing of sacrifices. By Torah law, when a person converts he severs all preexisting family relationships. Therefore, technically, if a brother and sister were to convert, as Jews they would be permitted to marry one another, based upon the dictum "*ger shenisgayer kikan shenolad dami*" – "A convert has the status of a newborn child." Therefore, asks the Maharal, why did the conversion process of Bnei Yisroel not sever all preexisting family relationships, permitting them to marry their family members?

The reason why conversion severs preexisting family relationships is that when a person becomes a Jew, he disconnects himself from his previous heritage, and connects himself with the heritage that began with our Forefather Abraham. This is the reason for the custom of naming converts "ben Avraham" – "the son of Abraham". The conversion of Bnei Yisroel at Har Sinai did not sever their previous heritage; on the contrary, it reaffirmed and reconnected them back to their ancestry. It is because of their connection to their ancestry that they merited to receive the Torah. Therefore, all previous family relationships remained intact.

The *misonenim* were complaining that since they had undergone conversion, they should have been permitted to maintain relationships with family members, as is standard for the laws of conversion. Their mistake was that Bnei Yisroel's conversion was not a standard one; rather, it was akin to the circumcision which they had to undergo. The function of circumcision is to reconnect us to the covenant of Abraham, as we recite in the blessing for circumcision "*lehachnisu bevriso shel Avraham Avinu*" – "to enter him, i.e. the one being circumcised, into the covenant of our Patriarch Abraham".

It is for this reason that Chazal compare Bnei Yisroel's reaction to the precepts governing prohibited relationships and circumcision. They are alluding to the source of Bnei Yisroel's mistake; although they underwent conversion, this process did not serve to sever their preexisting heritage, rather to reaffirm it.

No More Pencils, No More Books

Rabbi Yaakov Neuberger



Uncannily timed to coincide with the June chants of "no more pencils - no more books" which resound throughout America, this week's *medrash* describes the Jews departing from *Har Sinai* as "as children happily bolting forth from school". Their eagerness to be free from the sobriety and responsibility which attended at *Har Sinai* apparently caused one of the great lapses of communal consciousness and public decorum of the desert generation. According to the Ramban's reading, their flight was born of the fear that should they remain, they might hear more laws, more restrictions, more uncompromising goals. Additionally, Ramban suggests that they were duly punished and their otherwise immediate entry into *Eretz Yisrael* was delayed.

Thus the seemingly simple phrase, (10, 33) "And they traveled away from the Mountain of Hashem [on] a three-day journey" is in fact a strong censure which, as Rashi explains, has to be set apart with bracket-like inverted "nuns" from the ensuing stories of complaints and woe. How is this seen in the *pasuk*? Perhaps because of the striking contrast to a similar passage recording the Jews departure from the shores of *Yam Suf*. There we read, (*Shemos* 15,22) "And Moshe caused the Jews to travel..." prompting Rashi to comment that Moshe Rabeinu had to force the Jews to leave the booty of the *Yam Suf* behind them.

Why did Chazal compare the singular generation of the desert – the "*dor de'ah*" – to school children? Were they not the ones who reached the *madrega* that earned them the unquestionable revelation of *Yam suf* and *Sinai* and the daily *mon* and guiding pillars of fire and clouds? Moreover, why should delaying entry into Israel be a suitable way of rebuking a generation that accepted its all-encompassing obligations with enviable dedication that left it totally overwhelmed?

HaRav Simcha Zisel Broide zt"l, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Chevron*, is quoted as commenting that the *medrash* is pointing out that the Jews did not appreciate the sublime significance of the mountain of Sinai – that is the very physical Mount Sinai. I believe that the *Chevron Rosh Yeshiva* was suggesting the following interpretation of the analogy in the *medrash*.

The immature student flees the hallways of the *yeshiva* because he sees them as the place of ongoing demands, and relentless and inflexible adherence to institutionalized structure. Not so the mature or graduating student, who honestly acknowledges the skills and information he gained and the attitudes distilled in the very same study hall. For him, the desks, walls and floors will remind him of maturing experiences, though sometimes painful, and moments of great insight. The accomplished student will leave the *beis hamedrash* very slowly, and his appreciation will bring him back frequently.

Members of a generation who spirited away from the mountain, who did not want to take note of every rock, nook, and peak and associate it with the soulful changes that G-d's greatest revelation wrought, were not yet ready to fully value the Land of Israel. The fear that a generation may experience the great miracles of the conquest of *Yericho* and not see them as part of the very terrain of Israel delayed their entry.

The privilege of inheriting *Eretz Yisrael*, it would seem, is contingent in part on our full appreciation of every aspect of the Land and its contribution to each generation of Jews who were privileged to walk through it or even yearn for it.

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New Every Day

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman



This week's *parashah* begins with the *mitzvah* of lighting the *menorah*. The Torah testifies (8:3), "Aharon did so... he lit the lamps."

Rashi explains, "The pasuk is telling Aharon's praise that he didn't change (לא שינה). He lit the *menorah* exactly as Hashem instructed. שינה can also mean "repeat." Aharon's praise is that although he lit the *menorah* every day for forty years, he never repeated the same deed. Each day he performed the *mitzvah* of lighting the *menorah* with renewed fervor zeal. He never repeated the same *mitzvah*. It was never dull because it felt like a *mitzvah* every day.

Let us discuss some ways to achieve this level.

One key is imagination. Rebbe Mendel of Vitebsk *zt'l* would envision each Shabbos as if it were the first and the last Shabbos of his life. With this thought in mind, he utilized every Shabbos to its fullest extent.

Another way is to constantly increase awareness of Hashem's greatness. He lit the *menorah* exactly as Hashem instructed. שינה can also mean "repeat."

Reb Saadyah Gaon *zt'l* was a guest in someone's home, and his host wasn't unaware he was hosting one of the greatest people in his generation. When he found out, he asked for forgiveness for not honoring him properly. Reb Saadyah Gaon responded that he had properly honored him, and that there was no reason to apologize. The man replied, "Had I known who you were, I would have honored you much more!"

Reb Saadyah Gaon *zt'l* learned an important lesson in *avodas Hashem* from this episode. Each day, he perceived Hashem more clearly than the previous day. Each day, he understood the greatness of Hashem on a deeper level, and therefore, he did *teshuvah* every day. Although he had honored Hashem yesterday, now that he understood even more about Hashem's greatness, he realized that yesterday's *avodah* was insufficient.

These might have been the ways Aharon HaKohen lit the *menorah* every day. It could be with the path of Reb Mendel Vitebsker, imagining each day that it was his first and the last time lighting the *menorah*. It could be with the approach of Reb Saadyah Gaon, who every day perceived Hashem better than before. Similarly, Aharon lit the *menorah* each day with greater awe.

We can also explain that it has to do with Aharon's intentions. Each day, Aharon had new intentions when he lit the *menorah*. One day, he may have intended that the *menorah* should shine the light of the Torah throughout the world. Another day, he might have thought that it should shine the light of *teshuvah* into the world, and so on. It was never the same, as Rashi writes, he never repeated the same deed twice. Each day was different.

This is something we should strive for. There are *mitzvos* that we do every day. They become routine, and we must find ways to keep them new. Either with imagination, improved awareness of Hashem's greatness, or new intentions, we should discover newness in our *avodas Hashem*.

It says in *Koheles*, "Futility of futilities, says *Koheles*. Futilities of futilities, everything is futility" (*Koheles* 1:2). The *Midrash* states, "The seven הבלים that *Koheles* mentions correspond to the seven stages of a person's life. When a child is a year old, he is like a king sitting on a throne. Everyone hugs him and kisses him...When he's old, he is like a monkey. But that applies only to עמי הארץ, those who don't study Torah. But about Torah scholars, it states (*Koheles* 1:3) ודוד זקן והמלך – even when Dovid was old, he was a king."

The Rebbe of Kotzk *zt'l* asks why the *Midrash* insults the elderly so much as to call them monkeys.

He answers that monkeys imitate others. When serving Hashem, one must be true to his personality, talents, and style. If he just copies what others do, he's like a monkey.

One shouldn't copy others, and he shouldn't copy himself, either. Instead, one should strive to make his *avodas Hashem* new each day.

Loshon Hora Dilemmas

Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

Your friend is at the Lag Ba'Omer bonfire at the corner of your street with a large group of neighbors. They are all standing together waiting for the music to start and giving their opinion about the new house going up in your neighborhood, which is the size of a small hotel. The owner of the house is a businessman who supports every *tzedakah* in town. "He seems like a big *tzaddik*, but do you know what it's like to work for him?" says one man. "My cousin was his warehouse manager until he quit because he couldn't take the boss's temper tantrums anymore."

"Sounds like our new neighbor is going to be someone to steer clear of," your friend tells you later. "One of the guys says he has a really bad temper."

May you repeat this information, that originated in a group of three or more people?

THE DILEMMA

THE HALACHA

Apei t'lasa doesn't apply unless you hear the *loshon hora* with your own ears. If someone who did hear it in those circumstances passes it on to you, you may not rely on this leniency to repeat the information.

Sefer Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos Loshon Hora 2:3.



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JOKES

Broke the case

A lawyer's son wanted to follow in his father's footsteps, so he went to law school and graduated with honors. Then he went home to join his father's firm.

At the end of his first day at work, he rushed into his father's office and said, "Father, father! In one day I broke the Smith case that you've been working on for so long!"

His father yelled, "You idiot! We've been living on the funding of that case for ten years!"

Price of a beer

A neutron went into a bar and asked the bartender "How much is a beer?"

He answered "For you, no charge."

Kid Quotes

"Everyone has feelings, except for snakes and principals."

- Donnan/Maria G, age 9

"Laugh and the world laughs with you, cry and the world laughs at you"

- Rob P, age 8

"If life gives you nothing but lemons, make up a better shopping list for it"

- Steven B, age 8

"Moses came down with the Ten Amendments, which were God's Bill of Wrongs."

- Susie F., age 7

"Doctors automatically know what's wrong with you. They have a sick sense"

- Beau M., age 10

Travel

I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder.

- Steven Wright

My fear of flying starts as soon as I buckle myself in and then the guy up front mumbles a few unintelligible words then before I know it I'm trust into the back of my seat by acceleration that seems way too fast and the rest of the trip is an endless nightmare of turbulence, of near misses. And then the cabbie drops me off at the airport.

- Dennis Miller

In Paris, they simply stared when I spoke to them in French; I never did succeed in making those idiots understand their own language.

- Mark Twain

In a Mexican restaurant, everything on the menu is the same dish. The only difference is the way it's folded.

- Billy Connolly

Seasickness: at first you are so sick you are afraid you will die, and then you are so sick you are afraid you won't die.

- Mark Twain

A sure cure for seasickness is to sit under a tree.

- Spike Mulligan

I like terra firma. The more firma, the less terra.

- George S. Kaufman

A tourist is a fellow who drives thousands of miles so he can be photographed standing in front of his car.

- Emile Ganest

A Hollow Leg

Old Morty Mandelbaum went to the doctor complaining of a terrible pain in his leg.

"I am afraid it's just old age," replied the doctor, "there is nothing we can do about it."

"That can't be," fumed old Morty, "You don't know what you are doing."

"How can you possibly know I am wrong?" countered the doctor.

"Well it's quite obvious," the old man replied, "my other leg is fine, and it's the exact same age!"

A Higher Power

Mrs. Rosenberg was teaching her Hebrew school class an important lesson.

"We have been learning about how powerful the kings and queens were in Biblical times, haven't we class?"

"Yes, Mrs. Rosenberg," they children answered dutifully.

"But there is a higher power, isn't there? Who can tell me what it is?"

Little Moishie Weinberg blurted out, "I know, Aces."



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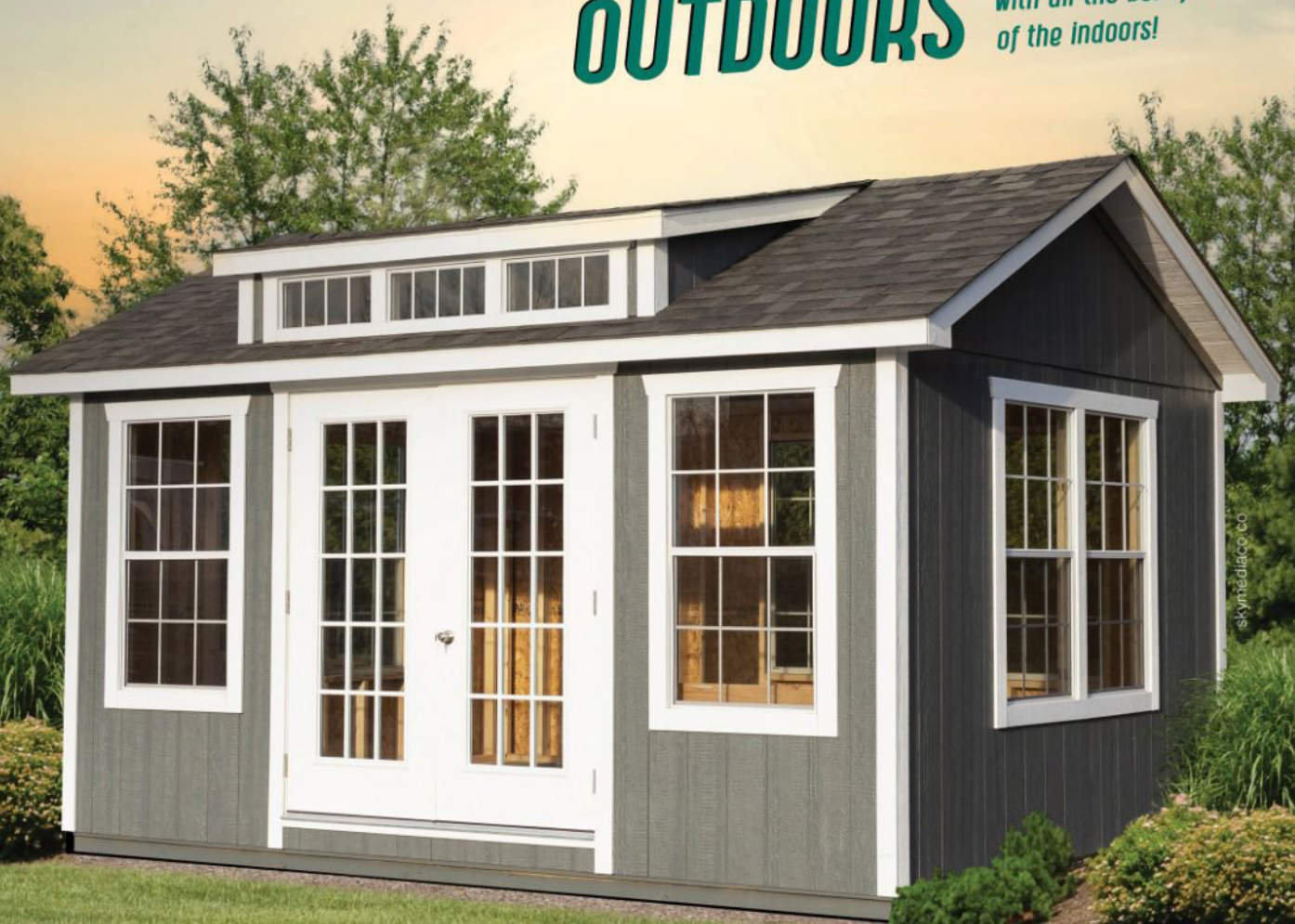



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