

Vayera | Cheshvan 13 - 19 | November 14 - 20



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Kol Hanearim with
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starts at 6:40pm sharp



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
12:10pm and every 15 minutes until 3:00pm

4:18pm Candle lighting	4:28pm Mincha in tent א	4:28pm Chabad Mincha	4:36pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

6:06am <small>Vasikin, followed by a Daf Yomi Shiur 20 ↑</small>	8:00am Shachris 2 18 main	9:15am Shachris 3 Tent א	10:00am Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20 ↑	10:00am Shachris 5 18 main
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2:00pm Pirchei	4:15pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:36pm Shkiya	5:16pm Maariv 1	5:21pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
6:00 pm and every 15 minutes until 8:30pm | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of November 17-23

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

	Neitz	Shma Magen Abraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	6:47am	8:31am	9:14am	10:03am	11:41am	3:33pm	4:35pm
Monday	6:49am	8:31am	9:14am	10:03am	11:41am	3:33pm	4:34pm
Tuesday	6:50am	8:32am	9:15am	10:04am	11:41am	3:32pm	4:33pm
Wednesday	6:51am	8:33am	9:16am	10:04am	11:41am	3:32pm	4:33pm
Thursday	6:52am	8:33am	9:16am	10:05am	11:42am	3:31pm	4:32pm
Friday	6:53am	8:34am	9:17am	10:05am	11:42am	3:31pm	4:31pm
Shabbos	6:54am	8:34am	9:18am	10:06am	11:42am	3:31pm	4:31pm

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Living with Hashem *Part 1*

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

There is a famous Gemara in Shabbos that describes the experience Moshe Rabbeinu had in heaven when he went to receive the torah for the Jewish people. The Gemara describes how the angels wanted to burn Moshe for taking away the Torah. The Gemara relates an argument that took place between Moshe and the angels as to whether it makes more sense for the Torah to be given to the humans or to stay with the angels. One of the main arguments that Moshe makes is the fact that the laws simply don't apply to angels, especially that fact that they don't have a *yetzer hara* and we humans do. The common theme that Moshe argues is that the Torah seems to be a better match for us humans than for angels. Let's understand that a bit deeper.

The *midrash* in fact has a different picture of what happened that enabled Moshe to convince the angels to let Moshe take the Torah down to earth. The *midrash* describes how Moshe Rabbeinu's face turned into the face of Avraham Avinu and Hashem said to the angels didn't you eat with Avraham Avinu in his tent? Therefore, you should allow the Torah to be taken down to earth. The question is obvious; how did this convince the angels? The *midrash Tehillim* actually explains that the claim against the angels was that they eat meat and milk in Avraham Avinu tent, and therefore clearly the Torah is not for them.

I think we can explain all of the points mentioned above with an idea that came to me on Simchas Torah, and I saw recently a similar idea quoted in the name of Rav Simcha Bunim Auerbach, a grandson of Rav Shlomo Zalman z"l.

In our *shul* on Simchas Torah, *yedidi* Rav YY Jacobson, *shlita* shared a powerful message with us that he heard from the Lubavitcher Rebbe z"l. The Rebbe asked on the words of Rashi in *Parshas Pinchos* קשה עלי פרידתכם Hashem says that the reason why he wants us to have another day called *Shmini Atzeres* is because our leaving is "difficult" for Him. There is much commentary just on the exact *mashal* that Rashi quotes; however, the main difficulty is that how does adding another day for Klal Yisrael staying in the Bais Hamikdash help solve the problem of the Jewish people departing and leaving Hashem? The Rebbe said that the word פרידתכם can be interpreted differently than usually assumed; it is not referring to the departure of the Jewish people from Hashem. Rather it is referring to separation of the Jews amongst themselves. (Part of his proof is that it should have said פרידתנו - our separation not your separation.)

uring all of *Sukkos*, as *Chazal* tell us in the *midrash* in *Parshas Emor*, we are all like the four species. Although we are different, but we are all bound together. Even the arava, that represents a Jew with no Torah and no *mitzvos* is somehow connected to everyone else. Therefore, Hashem says it's difficult for me to see the separation between you now that *Sukkos* is over. Therefore, Hashem added another day on which Is not *Sukkos*; rather it's the day of Simchas Torah, on which everyone comes and lifts the Torah to their level and that is what will keep us connected even when we leave.

I hope I related correctly the beautiful message from the Rebbe.

To be continued

Logic and History *Rabbi Berel Wein*



The story of the miraculous birth of Yitzchak to his ninety-year-old mother Sarah is not only one of the highlights of the *parsha* but it is one of the foundation narratives of all of Jewish history. Without Yitzchak there simply isn't a Jewish people. The birth of Yitzchak is one of the triumphal moments of Jewish life, a reflection of God's mercy and guidance in creating His special people.

It is therefore all the more surprising – indeed shocking – that the story of Avraham sacrificing Yitzchak appears in this very same *parsha*. In effect, this story of the binding of Yitzchak on the altar of Mount Moriah completely negates the miraculous birth of Yitzchak. Of what necessity or purpose is the miracle of Sarah's giving birth to Yitzchak if the entire matter will be undone by the succeeding story of Avraham sacrificing Yitzchak? What is the point that the Torah wishes to teach us by unfolding this seemingly cruel sequence of events? Is not God, so to speak, mocking His own Divine Will and plans by this sequence of events, recorded for us in this most seminal *parsha* in the Torah?

Much ink has been used in dealing with this most difficult issue. It has been the subject of much commentary in Midrash and Jewish thought throughout the ages. Amongst the many mysterious and inscrutable issues that God raises for our analysis in His Torah, this contradiction between the miraculous birth of Yitzchak and the challenge of his being bound on the altar ranks high on that long list of Heaven's

behavior that requires Jews to have faith and acceptance.

But is this not the nature of things in today's Jewish world as well? After the most negative of extraordinary events of sadistic cruelty that we call the Holocaust, miraculous positive events have occurred to the Jewish people. The old woman of Israel, beaten and worn, was revived and gave birth to a state, to a vibrant language, to myriad institutions of Torah learning and good deeds, to the miraculously successful ingathering of the exile communities to their homeland, to a scale of Jewish affluence unmatched in Jewish history. In short, the story of the Jewish people in its resilient glory over the last seventy-five years defies rational and easily explained historical logic. And yet the danger and tension of open hostility to the State of Israel, the threats to its very existence, the attempts to delegitimize it and boycott its bounty, all are evident in our current world.

In the story of Yitzchak, the Torah teaches that we have to live in a world of almost absurd contradictions. Logic plays a very small role in the events of history that occur to the people of Yitzchak. Yitzchak is a product of miracles and his very maturation and survival is also a product of supernatural stuff. So too is this the story of the Jewish people in our age. Just as Yitzchak survived and proved successful, so too shall we, his progeny, survive and be successful and triumphant.

An Angel of G-d

I once read the following powerful story.

In the late 18th century, in Eastern Europe, there was a terrible conflict between the *Chassidim* and their opponents, the *Misnagdim*, who suspected the *Chassidim* in heresy and blasphemy. The chief opponent was the Vilna Gaon, the famed Rabbi Elijah (1720-1797), from the Lithuanian city Vilnius, who issued a ban (*cherem*) against *Chassidim*. He excommunicated them from the Jewish community. It was a terrible division which continued for decades.

The *Misnagdim* came to one of the greatest students of the Vilna Gaon, Rabbi Refael Hakohen Katz, the Rabbi of Hamburg and author of *Toras Yekusiel* (1722-1803), and asked him to sign the ban. He refused. They said: "But your own *Rebbe*, the Vilna Gaon, signed it, and your *Rebbe* is like an angel of G-d!"

This was his response:

There is a famous question on the story of the *Akeida*, the binding of Isaac, in Genesis. G-d instructs Abraham to bring up his son Isaac as an offering. Abraham complies. At the last moment, as he is about to slaughter Isaac, The Torah states: "And a heavenly angel of G-d called out to him, and said: Abraham! Abraham!... And he said: 'Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, nor do anything to him.'" At the last moment, Isaac is saved.

There is something strange about this story. The instruction to bring Isaac as an offering came directly from G-d. G-d Himself told Abraham to offer his son to Him. Why did the reverse stop-order come from an angel and not from G-d?

The answer, said Reb Refael, is this. If G-d wants to tell you not to touch a Jewish child, sending an angel will suffice. But if He wants you to "slaughter" another Jew, an angel can't suffice! G-d Himself needs to come and tell you to do it. If you are going to "slaughter"

another Jew, make sure you hear it from G-d Himself.

To let Isaac live, the instruction could be communicated via an angel. To let Isaac die, G-d needed to show up Himself.

"My *Rebbe* is an angel of G-d," Reb Refael said. "But I will not sign a ban against another Jew," even when an angel tells me to do so. To "slaughter" a Jew I need to hear it from G-d Himself.

[The source of the above story is *Toras Yechiel* by Rabbi Schlezinger *Parshas Vayeira. Chut Hameshulah*, a biography of the *Chasam Sofer*, page 27. In the latter the name of the student of the Vilna Gaon is given as Reb Zalman of Volozhin, who was one of the most beloved students of the Vilna Gaon. There he also adds that when the Vilna Gaon heard this response, he himself abstained from any further action against the *Chassidim*!

It is also interesting to note, that according to many sources, the famed Chafetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, who dedicated his life to increasing Jewish unity, and his works spread among all Jews, was a grandson of Reb Refael of Hamburg.]

Be Careful

Sometimes we get into fights with people over idealistic reasons. We "slaughter" people-with our words or actions-and we feel that we are acting on behalf of an angel. We feel angelic about our actions. Be wary, says the Torah! If you are going to cut someone off from your life, you want to hear it from G-d Himself. If not, let it go.

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.



Rabbi YY Jacobson

UFARATZTA



KO'EIS CHAYA... AND IT WAS PEISACH -Rashi Vayera 18,10

TABLE ETIQUETTE.

As told by a bochur helping at the Seder table.

After the histalkus of the previous Rebbe, the RaYYatz, father-in-law of the Rebbe, in 1950, until the passing of the Rebetzin Nechama Dina, the wife of the RaYYatz, in 1971, the Rebbe continued celebrating the Seder at the residents of the Rebbe RaYYatz, which was on the second floor of 770.

... That Passover, I helped with the pre-holiday cleaning, and then again, I helped serve and clear at the Seder. This meant that I also had the honor of sitting at the Rebbe's Seder table, alongside several venerable Chabad chasidim. Rebetzin Nechama Dina instructed me to put a full setting at the head of the table, for her late husband, the Previous Rebbe. Of course, nobody sat there, and the Previous Rebbe's two sons-in-law, the Rebbe and Rabbi Shmaryahu Gurary, sat on either side.

"The Rebbe made a point of saying THANK YOU every time I served him, and then again when I removed his plate. Of course, we served the Rebbe first, but he would not touch his food until he saw that everybody – including us waiters – had a portion."

==== Excerpt from Here is my story

Chof cheshvon yom holedes of the Rashab, 5th Chabad Rebbe, father of the Rebbe RaYYatz.

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IMPORTANCE OF THE SEUDAS BRIS

~Night Kollel~ ~Kollel Boker~



by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Night Kollel & Morning Kollel

Tosfos in *Pesachim* (114a) quotes a *Midrash* which states that one who partakes in a *seudas bris* will be saved from *Gehinom*. The *Chachmas Adam*, in discussing the importance of the *seuda*, refers to the *Gemara* that the *mitzvah* of *bris milah* is done joyfully, the source for the festivities after the *bris*. He also quotes the *Gra* who would protest against those who would get away with some cake and shnops.

The *Bnei Yisaschar* (in his sefer *Derech Pikudechah*), in discussing the importance of the *seuda*, also decries the heretics who wish to stop it. The *sefer Bris Avos* quotes the *Apta Rav* who stated that if one does not make a proper *seuda*, the child will not grow up spiritually healthy.

HALACHIC DETAILS OF THE SEUDA

The *Rama* writes that it is customary to have a *minyan* by the *seuda*. But it is worth noting that a *minyan* is not a prerequisite, and even if one cannot have a *minyan* present, or even if one is alone, he should still make a *seuda*, celebrating this great *mitzvah*.

Chazal tell us that one who does not join a *seudas bris* deserves to be put in *cheirem*. This is quoted in the *Shulchan Aruch*. The *Pischei Teshuva* points out that this is why it is customary not to invite people to a *bris*. In case there is someone who is unable to come, we do not want him to be concerned of transgressing this important requirement to join.

CUSTOMS AT THE SEUDAS BRIS

Some have a *minhag* to light candles at a *seudas bris*. There is a source for this in *Tosfos* (*Sanhedrin* 32b), which according to the *Maharsha* is referring to lighting candles at the *seuda*. The *Maharsha*, however, writes that our custom, based on the *Yerushalmi*, is to light candles only at the *bris* itself, and not during the meal.

The *Machzor Vitri* writes that it is customary to sing *zemiros* at a *bris*. This is based on a *Midrash* in *Rus*, quoted by *Tosfos* (*Chagiga* 15a) which tells us that the people were singing at a *bris*.

The *Siddur Yaavetz* quotes the custom to sing at the *seudas bris*: "יום ליבשה נהפכו מצולים" – The day the deep waters turned into dry land," from the *Yotzros* of the 7th day of *Pesach*. Similarly, some have a custom to say this *pizmon* during davening, on the day of a *bris*. The *Mishna Berura* quotes the *Pri Megadim*, who writes that the text of *יום ליבשה* should only be used if a *bris* takes place on the 7th day of *Pesach*, which is the day that the water split. However, if the *bris* takes place on any other day, the text should be changed to "יום ליבשה" – the sea changed to dry land." According to that, when singing the *pizmon* at a *bris*

throughout the year, the text should be "יום ליבשה."

There is also a custom to recite "Nodeh L'Shimchah" when introducing the bentching. This *minhag* is quoted in the *Magen Avraham*. It is also customary to recite extra "Harachamans" at the end of bentching. This *minhag* is quoted in the *Shaalas Yaavetz*.

Summary

One should be sure to make a proper *seuda* after a *bris* and one who partakes in a *seudas bris* will be saved from *Gehinom*. It is customary to have a *minyan* by the *seuda*. We do not invite people to a *bris*, since one who does not join a *seudas bris* deserves to be put in *cheirem*. Some have a *minhag* to light candles at a *seudas bris*. It is customary to sing *zemiros* at a *bris* and recite "Nodeh L'Shimchah" when introducing the *bentching*, and extra "Harachamans" at the end of *bentching*.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

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

NIGHT KOLLEL | 8:15-9:45pm

- Chavrusa learning - Halacha
- הלכות קריאת התורה

SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

- Daf Yomi | 8:45-9:45pm
- Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00pm

• ZERA SHIMSHON SHIUR | 8:15-9:00pm Thursday Nights

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The existence of God is clear to the rational mind, but passions of the heart blind man from seeing that truth.

~ R' Elchonon Wasserman zt"l (1874-1941)

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Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

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THURSDAY NIGHT SHIUR



LEARNING IN THE KOLLEL BOKER



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”וימהר אברהם האהלה אל שרה, ויאמר מהרי שלש סאים קמח סלת לוש
– ועשי עבות”

”And Avrohom hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said: Be quick,
three seahs of choice flour – knead and make cakes.”

This is the first time that Avrohom Avinu's name is mentioned in the *parshah*. The Torah left out Avrohom's name in the previous *pesukim* to teach us here that Avrohom went himself to speak to Sarah, and did not send a *shliach*, a messenger. Avrohom ran to Sarah so in order to perform the *mitzvah* of *hachnosas orchim*, taking good care of his guests himself. One may have said that Avrohom only went himself to show honor to his wife, however, the Torah also says, “ואל הבקר רץ אברהם” – that he also ran to the cattle. He didn't run to the cattle himself to honor the cattle, nor did he run to Sarah to honor her, rather he did it for the *mitzvah*.

We see that Avrohom sought to do the *mitzvos* himself, and not through a *shliach*. If so, how do we understand the words, “ויתן אל” – “הנער, וימהר לעשות אותו” – “And he gave it to the lad, and he did it hastily?” Why did Avrohom give the calf to a *shliach*, and not do it himself? He should have done it himself to show his love for the *mitzvah*, as well as because he began the *mitzvah*, and the *Tanchuma* says – המתחיל במצוה אומרים לו גמור – if one begins a *mitzvah*, we tell him to finish the *mitzvah*. Additionally, Rashi tells us that the נער that Avrohom gave the calf to was Yishmael – why didn't the Torah just say that he gave it to Yishmael, why say, “נער”? (לקחת מוסר) “נער”

At this time, Avrohom was already elderly, and was even weaker, having just been circumcised. Everything that Avrohom was able to do himself with *zrizus* – alacrity, he did himself. However, to prepare the calf to be eaten, that was more difficult work for someone of his age. He therefore gave it to the נער, for he would be able to do it faster and better. The Torah says, נער instead of Yishmael to tell us that he did it because he was a נער, a young strapping boy, who would be able to do it better than Avrohom. The Torah then says, “וימהר לעשות אותו” – Avrohom stood over the lad to ensure that he did it with great *zrizus*. Rashi says that Avrohom specifically had Yishmael do it in order to be *mechanech* him. We can explain that the Torah adds the word, “אותו” – which is not needed, to teach us that while Avrohom Avinu could have in theory chosen any נער to do the *mitzvah*, he specifically chose Yishmael, in order to be *mechanech* him in *mitzvos*.

With this understanding, we can also explain “ויקח חמאה וחלב ובן” ויקח “הבקר אשר עשה, ויתן לפניהם” – “He took cream and milk and the calf that he had made and set these before them.” Avrohom took the “calf that he had made” – despite the Torah telling us that he gave it to the נער to do. *Brachos* 6a – If one wants to perform a *mitzvah*, and is unable to because of something unavoidable, it is as if he did perform that *mitzvah*. Avrohom wanted to slaughter the calf himself, but he was unable to do it in the most optimal manner, so he gave it to someone else to do. Since he really wanted to do it himself, it is attributed to him – as if he made it – as the *posuk* says, “אשר עשה” – that he, Avrohom Avinu, made.

And the Winner Is...

We've just been through an election and a war for more than a year now. As mentioned in these pages, if we look closely we notice a similarity, a pattern- it's all about polarization. About not really respecting the other side. About moral or spiritual superiority. Taking the high ground is rare, a thing of the past.

But I'm thinking, there are other players here. Bystanders, neighbors, co-workers, people in the street who in the diaspora do not share our common heritage. How do they look at us? Do they see us as flag waving, perhaps fascist Trump supporters? Genocidal maniacs or supporters of gruesome events? Deeply religious members of a cult?

How do we see them? As blind or even brainless, brainwashed lemmings? Poor souls that don't know any better?

Now that there's a new reality in America as far as the leadership is concerned, they have to be looking at us, a group who were vocally and visibly at Mr. Trump's side throughout, and they might be scared. They also might be thinking “hey, these religious people are not so bad. They are nice to their parents, well behaved kids, and are community minded loving individuals. They're not *yimach shmo* Hitler-style followers or garbage.”

Things might even start to form a different light in Middle East events for them. And anti-Semitism might decline! We have a chance now to finally be judged favorably. One thing I can promise if we judge our fellow Jews, our families, friends and leaders favorably, then the world will judge us favorably!

A story will illustrate this point:

A Yemenite Rav entered a rich *gvir's* opulent home. Sitting at his table, he explained all that his *Yeshiva* and *Kollel* had been doing for the community. All the outreach was yielding fruit, he said. The youth especially, were catching fire with enthusiasm. The *gvir* was impressed.

“Please wait here as I go to my office and get a check,” he said.

While the host was in the other room the Rav glanced at a newly released *sefer* on the table. But as soon as the *gvir* entered the room, his demeanor changed.

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



“I cannot and will not give you one cent. Please leave my house immediately.”

Yemenite Jews are shy by nature. The Rav was shocked but quietly and shamefully picked up his belongings and started walking towards the front door. Summoning his last ounce of courage, he asked the furious *baal habayis* “What did I do, what did I say to cause you to act this way? Is there anything I can correct?”

“Well if you must know (as if you don't) I will tell you. You are obviously an ignoramus; you do not know even simple Hebrew. How can you be a *Rosh Kollel*?”

“How is that?” the Rav asked quizzically.

“When I came back from my study I saw you were glancing at the *sefer* on my table – but upside down. You do not know simple *Ivrit*!!!
“Adoni, let me explain” the Yemenite Rav responded.

“When we were children in Yemen, we had a *Rebbe* that taught us diligently and with *zerizut*, because we were afraid of the authorities. He had only one copy of each *sefer* we used to learn *kriah*, and every other subject, from.

“The lone *sefer* stayed on his desk as we, his students read from the *sefer*, but upside down.

“Now as well, I normally read everything right side up but, when I need to read fast, I hearken back to earlier times when the *Rebbe* only had one *sefer* and taught us at his desk with the holy *sefer* facing him and the upside down letters facing towards us!”

The Rav then proceeded to demonstrate his amazing skill in reading Hebrew upside down. The *baal habayis* retreated to his room and doubled the amount of his donation – for he had finally learned the true meaning of judging one's friend favorably.

Written by R' Avrohom Hillel Reich based on a lesson and story
by Harav Ben Tziyon Sneh Shlita

Avraham's Prayer

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

Shall I conceal from Avraham what I am about to do, and Avraham will surely become a great and mighty nation? (17:18)

Hashem's apparent deliberation concerning whether or not to share His plans about the destruction of *Sodom* with Avraham Avinu begs elucidation. The very statement implies that He had a legitimate reason to conceal this information from Avraham. Nonetheless, Hashem decided to share the information with Avraham. The Patriarch was destined to be the progenitor of a great nation. Thus, he should be made aware of the impending destruction. Obviously, something is happening of which the reader is not aware. Rashi explains that this is a rhetorical question, which should be read in astonishment. Nonetheless, it still does not clarify Hashem's reason for not informing Avraham and explain what prompted His ultimate decision to share the information with him.

The Belzer Rebbe, Horav Yehoshua, z"l, gave the following pivotal explanation. I use the word "pivotal," because the Rebbe is teaching us a seminal lesson in Torah hashkafah, perspective, concerning tefillah, prayer. Avraham prayed fervently for the people of Sodom, hoping beyond hope that they would be spared. Despite his supreme efforts, Hashem denied his pleas. Thus, it would make sense to question why Hashem told Avraham about Sodom's impending doom. Apparently, the verdict had been signed, sealed and delivered. What would Avraham's prayer achieve, other than – possibly – frustration? If prayer is futile, should one bother praying? Furthermore, the Torah provides the reason that Hashem informed Avraham of Sodom's bleak future: "And Avraham will surely become a great and mighty nation." What does that have to do with it? Why is Avraham's prayer contingent upon his status as progenitor of Klal Yisrael?

The Belzer Rebbe explains that, when a Jew prays to Hashem during times of travail, even if it appears that his *tefillah* has

gone unanswered, it does not mean that Hashem did not listen. Hashem listens quite well and, while He might not apply the prayer to this person, it will nonetheless be saved, so that it yields results for someone else in need. It might be the petitioner himself at a later date, a member of his family, or someone else altogether unrelated – but it will be used.

We now understand why Hashem revealed to Avraham ahead of time that He was going to annihilate the city of *Sodom*. He wanted Avraham to pray, to extend himself, to exert the effort, to seek their salvation in the merit of ten tzaddikim. Unfortunately, the requisite number was not to be found. The *tefillah*, however, was shelved for a later opportunity, when it could be used to help someone in need. Furthermore, we now see the significance of Avraham becoming a large nation. His *tefillah* was not in vain. When necessary, his descendants could avail themselves of their Patriarch's prayers.

The Steipler Gaon, z"l, once said, "Do not be dismayed. There is no such thing as a sincere prayer that goes unanswered. Any heartfelt request addressed to G-d must be answered. It cannot be otherwise. If it is not answered today, it will be answered tomorrow. If not tomorrow, it will be answered in a week. If not in a week, in a month. If not answered in a month, it may be answered in a year, or in ten years, or in one hundred years – or more. If your prayers are not answered in your lifetime, they will be answered for your children or for your children's children. We cannot say for sure when a prayer will be answered, but we can rest assured that every prayer will be answered somehow, someday."



A True Disciple of Avrohom Avinu

Rabbi Yissochar Frand



The *pasuk* writes, "And Avrohom arose early to the place where he had previously stood..." [Bereishis 19:27]. After Avrohom's dialogue with G-d about Sodom in which Avrohom was unsuccessful in his petition to save the city, the *pasuk* tells us that Avrohom went back to the place where he originally petitioned G-d.

The Talmud learns from this [Brochos 6b] that "Whoever establishes a fixed place for prayer, the G-d of Avrohom will help him." The Talmud learns the importance of a fixed place for prayers from Avrohom. The Talmud states that one who does pray in a fixed place will not only be answered by the G-d of Avrohom, but when he dies, people will say about him "such a modest person, such a pious person, a true disciple of Avrohom Avinu."

The question can be asked: granted it is a nice idea to

pray in the same place, but why does the Torah place such great emphasis on this concept? I saw a wonderful interpretation from Rav Bergman in the Sha'arei Orah. The Mishneh [Avos 5:19] contrasts the disciples of Avrohom with the disciples of Bilaam: "One who has these three attributes is a disciple of Avrohom Avinu; one who has three other attributes is a disciple of the wicked Bilaam. A person who is generous, humble and not haughty, he is a disciple of Avrohom Avinu; but one who is stingy, arrogant, and haughty is a disciple of Bilaam the wicked." That is the contrast between a disciple of Avrohom and a disciple of Bilaam.

Bilaam also prayed. When Balak asked Bilaam to curse the Jewish people, Bilaam traveled to a certain location and he prayed and offered sacrifices, but he was not successful. G-d did not allow Bilaam to curse the Jewish

Elisha and Geichazi

Rabbi Gershon Winkler

The *haftarah* for this week's *parasha* is based upon the stories of Elisha and two righteous women whose sufferings (poverty/barrenness) were relieved through the miraculous deeds of the *navi*. There is, however, a difference between the *Ashkenazic* and *Sephardic minhagim* as to how much of the stories are read. According to *Sephardic* custom, the first 23 *psukim* of the 4th *perek* are read, which include the first story (of the impoverished widow) and the first half of the second story (of the wealthy *Shunamite*). The *Ashkenazim* read 38 *psukim* from the chapter, that include Elisha's resuscitation of the young lad, the end of that story.

Although we might wonder why the *Sephardic chachamim* would leave their readers "hanging" in the middle of the dramatic story, their approach is quite logical. They limit the reading to but 23 verses, following the tradition suggested by Chazal to keep the *haftarah* at a length of about 21 *psukim*, whenever possible, three verses for each Torah *aliya* (on *Shabbat*).

Ashkenazi scholars chose to complete the second narrative for more reason than providing a satisfying ending. The final section includes the recovery of the *Shunamite's* son from death, an event reminiscent of Yitzchak's "survival" from near-death at the *Akeida*.

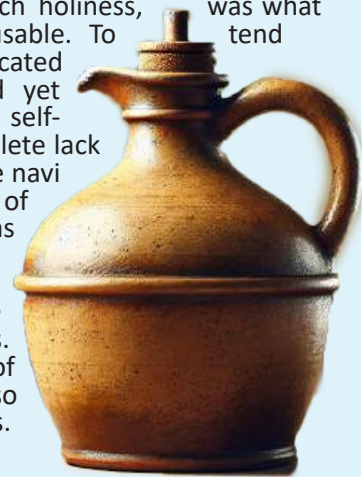
Rabbi Soloveitchik points to a salient lesson that we should learn from the events found in the final section of the *haftarah*. In wondering why the *Mishna* (*Sanhedrin* 10; 2) includes Elisha's attendant, Geichazi, as among the most wicked who had forfeited any share in *Olam Habah*, the Rav focuses upon the clear contrast between the saintly *navi* and his apprentice. Elisha, a prophet who used his gifts to help the downtrodden and the suffering, did so in the most modest and private way. He tells the impoverished widow to close the door of her house before the miraculous oil would fill the empty jars; he reveals the promise of a son to the barren *Shunamite* woman only in private, at the entrance to her house.

And, as the story proceeds, we learn of how Elisha's revival of the young son was performed only in his upper chamber, without even the presence of the mother. He also instructed Geichazi to hurry to the stricken child and greet no one nor respond to anyone. No one should know where or why he was going – it would be a secret, a private miracle, performed in the most modest way. But Geichazi failed in his mission, as the child remained lifeless, despite the attendant's placement of Elisha's staff on the boy, as he had been charged to do.

The *chachmei kaballa* contend that Geichazi did indeed inform others of what would occur. Upon his return to summon Elisha (following his inability to revive the son), Geichazi told everyone what miracle he was about to perform, so that, when Elisha arrived back to *Shunam*, he found the house surrounded by curious onlookers who were told of the impending miracle. It was clear that the miracle was not wrought by the staff – but by the righteous person!

Geichazi's failure to learn from Elisha, despite the many years he served in the presence of such holiness, was what our *Tanna'im* saw to be inexcusable. To tend to a man whose life was dedicated to quietly giving to others and yet to use G-d's gifts as a tool for self-aggrandizement, reflected a complete lack of sensitivity to the holiness of the *navi* who was the very personification of sanctity. His inability to see that was unforgivable.

Hashem grants each of us divine gift to better the lives of others. Indeed, this was the story of Avraham as well. Learning to do so will bring us closer to true holiness.



people. Bilaam had to bless them. What was Bilaam's immediate reaction? Bilaam changed the location. "Let's go to a different place and pray." They went to a new place. They built new altars, and they brought new sacrifices. What happened when Bilaam tried again? He failed again. What was his reaction? "Change the place again!" Bilaam went to a third location and started the same procedure all over again... Again Bilaam was unsuccessful...

What do we find by Avrohom? Avrohom pleaded with G-d for Sodom. But when Avrohom was not successful, what did he do? He went back to pray again at the exact same location where he originally prayed. What is the significance of the fact that Avrohom went back to the same place and Bilaam changed places? The difference between Bilaam and Avrohom is haughtiness. Bilaam is haughty. A haughty person cannot accept "It's my fault!" A haughty person must rationalize, "If my prayers were not successful, there must be something wrong with the location. There must be some kind of extraneous factor. It couldn't be me. Nothing could be my fault." When a Bilaam is not successful in his prayers, he goes

to another place, because he cannot accept the fact that he may be responsible for his own failure.

However, when a disciple of Avrohom Avinu is not successful with his prayers, he says, "It's my fault; I am not worthy enough; I didn't pray well enough." It has nothing to do with the place. That is a feeble excuse. A disciple of Avrohom Avinu, who has a humble and modest spirit can own up and say the words "It's my fault."

When our Rabbis say, "He who establishes a fixed place for his prayers, the G-d of Avrohom will help him..." they are not only referring to a person who always prays in the same place in the same synagogue all his years. Our Rabbis are speaking of a person whose ego is healthy enough to say, "It is my fault; it is my lack; I will not look for extraneous places or things to blame it on." If a person has this attitude throughout his life and his behavior reflects this, then we can truly say at his eulogy, "There goes a pious person, there goes a humble person, he is a true disciple of Avrohom Avinu."

Make Yourself at Home

Rabbi Asher Sinclair, ohr.edu

"And behold - three men were standing over him!" (18:2)

There are some people who look like they are giving but they are really taking. And there are some people who look like they are taking when they are really giving. Anyone who buys a \$5,000-a-plate charity dinner is giving a lot of charity, but he is also getting a lot of status mixed in with his sushi.

On the other hand, there are people who look like they are takers but they are really giving. Once there was a Jewish traveling salesman who found himself in a largely non-Jewish town on Friday afternoon. His business had delayed him way beyond his expectations and there was now no way he could get home for Shabbat. He had heard that there was just one Orthodox family in town where he could spend Shabbat, and as the sun was starting to set he made his way there.

The owner of the house opened the door to him and showed him into the living room. "May I stay here for Shabbat?" asked the traveling salesman. "If you like," replied the host. "The price is \$200." "\$200!" exclaimed the traveling salesman. "That's more than a first-class hotel!" "Suit yourself," replied the host.

Realizing that he had no option, the salesman reluctantly agreed. In the short time left before Shabbat, the host showed the salesman his room, the kitchen and the other facilities for his Shabbat stay. As soon as the host left the room, the salesman sat down and thought to himself. "Well, if this is going to cost me \$200, I am going to get my money's worth." During the entire Shabbat he availed himself unstintingly of the house's considerable facilities. He helped himself to the delicious food in the fridge. He had a long luxurious shower, both before and after Shabbat. He really made himself "at home."

When he had showered and packed, he made his way downstairs and plunked two crisp \$100 bills down on the table in front of his host.

"What's this?" inquired the host. "That's the money I owe you," replied the salesman. "You don't owe me anything. Do you really think I would take money from a fellow Jew for the *mitzvah* of hospitality?" "But you told me that Shabbat here costs \$200."

"I only told you that to be sure that you would make yourself at home."

When a guest comes to your home, his natural feeling is one of embarrassment. No one likes being a taker. When a guest brings a present, the worst thing you can say is, "You shouldn't have done that!" Rather, take the bottle of wine (or whatever it is), open it, place it in the middle of the table, and say, "Thank you so much!" By allowing him to contribute to the meal, you will mitigate his feeling of being a taker and you will have done the *mitzvah* of hospitality to a higher degree.

The *mitzvah* of hospitality is greater than receiving the Divine Presence. We learn this from the beginning of this week's Torah portion. G-d had come to visit Avraham on the third day after his *brit mila*, the most painful day. G-d made the day extremely hot so that Avraham should not be bothered by guests. When G-d saw that Avraham was experiencing more pain from his inability to do the *mitzvah* of hospitality than the pain of the *brit mila*, He sent three angels who appeared as men so that Avraham could do the *mitzvah* of hospitality. When these "men" appeared, Avraham got up from in front of the Divine Presence to greet his guests.

Hospitality is greater than receiving the Divine Presence.

DONATIONS FOR REB ARYEH'S DAUGHTER

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Rabbi Aryeh Levine *zt"l* was known throughout the world for his unlimited *ahavas Yisrael*. One of his great acts of kindness was to *daven* on Shabbos with a group of Jewish prisoners, members of the Jewish underground, imprisoned in the Central Prison of Jerusalem in the Russian Compound during the British Mandate. The prisoners felt uplifted being around him, and they were touched that he wanted to spend Shabbos with them. One Shabbos, a messenger burst into the prisoners' "*Beis Knesses*."

"Rabbi—you must come!" the man shouted. "Your daughter! Something terrible has happened." Reb Aryeh hurried home and was sent to *Shaarei Tzedek* Hospital. There, his wife tearfully told him that she had found their daughter in bed, nearly comatose and burning with fever. The doctors had not yet found the cause.

Soon, around-the-clock *Tehillim* vigils were organized, and Reb Aryeh stayed by his daughter's bedside. By the following Shabbos, nothing had changed. Reb Aryeh decided to leave the hospital to join his prison *minyan*. How could he keep from them the one thing that fed their *neshamos*?

The prisoners, who knew about Reb Aryeh's daughter, were shocked to see him. When they asked about her condition, the Rav answered with all his heart, "Hashem will help."

Shacharis moved along and the Torah reading began. The first *aliyah* went to Uri, a prisoner. The *gabbai* waited to hear what Uri would donate for his *Mi Shebeirach*. Peering at Reb Aryeh, Uri made a shocking offer – one day of his life to the Rav's daughter. Reb Aryeh's amazement at this outpouring of love kept growing as the "donation" repeated itself with each new *aliyah*.

When tough-talking Dov Tamari rose for *Maftir*, the room went silent. Would he, too, offer a day of his life? "What is our life in prison worth compared to the pain of Reb Aryeh and his daughter?" Dov asked. "I give the rest of my life to his little girl!"

Reb Aryeh looked around at these men. Whatever mistakes they had made, today they were like angels. When he returned to the hospital that day, he learned that his daughter had inexplicably opened her eyes. But to Reb Aryeh, it was not inexplicable at all.



Just What the Doctor Ordered

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig



“And Hashem appeared to him...” (18:1)

The Torah relates that Avraham, after having fulfilled the *mitzva* of circumcision, was visited by Hashem. The *Talmud* explains that Hashem’s purpose for the visit was to perform the *mitzva* of “*bikkur cholim*” – “visiting the sick”. The subsequent verses depict Hashem’s revelation to Avraham of the impending destruction which would be unleashed upon *S’dom* and the surrounding vicinity. How do *Chazal* know that Hashem’s purpose for the visit was to perform the act of *bikkur cholim*? Perhaps the only reason for the visit was to inform Avraham of the destruction of *S’dom*?

The Rambam teaches that no person will ever attain the prophetic level of Moshe Rabbeinu. The Rambam explains that whereas Hashem’s communication with Moshe occurred while Moshe was fully conscious, all other prophets receive their Divine communication in a trance-like state. How could Avraham have communicated with Hashem while awake?

When Avraham saw the angels disguised as men approaching, he excused himself from before the Divine presence and rushed to invite the wayfarers into his home. Based upon this incident the *Talmud* formulates the dictum “*gadol hachnasas orchim mikabalas pnei Hashechina*” – “Inviting guests into one’s home is a greater feat than receiving the Divine presence.” In modern times the *Shemoneh Esrai* is our most intimate mode of communication with Hashem. The laws governing situations which allow for an interruption in the *Shemoneh Esrai* are very strict; it is prohibited to communicate with any person while reciting the *Shemoneh Esrai*. Why is there no dispensation for the invitation of guests while in the midst of reciting the *Shemoneh Esrai*?

Chazal understand that since Avraham received the Divine presence in a state of complete awareness, there had to be a purpose for this visit other than the transmission of information. The purpose of *bikkur cholim* is to ensure that all the needs of the patient are met; the patient must be the focus of the visit, for offering him this respect helps him with his convalescence. Therefore, it was imperative that Avraham be awake for this visit so that Hashem could fulfill the *mitzva* of *bikkur cholim*. Rashi comments that to spare Avraham the burden of receiving guests, Hashem raised the temperature so that the heat would keep travelers away. When He saw Avraham’s distress at being unable to perform his daily *mitzva* of hospitality, Hashem sent angels, catering to Avraham’s needs in the most personalized manner.

Since the purpose of Hashem’s visit was for Avraham’s benefit, Avraham showed no disrespect by leaving the Divine presence in order to cater to his guests’ needs. If the purpose of the visit would have been solely for the transmission of information, it would have been prohibited for Avraham to break off the communication in order to cater to a human being. Similarly, it is prohibited to communicate with another person when reciting the *Shemoneh Esrai*, for it would be highly disrespectful to turn away from Hashem, especially after having initiated the communication.

Zera Shimshon

זכר נשמת רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל בעל הדורע שמשון זיע"א

Following Local Custom

Rashi cites the Gemara (*Baba Metzia* 86b) that says that the angels only appeared to be eating but in reality they did not eat the food that Avraham Avinu served them. R’ Tanchum says that we learn from here that one should never deviate from the custom of the place in which he finds himself. When Moshe Rabbeinu ascended to Shamayim to receive the Torah, he refrained from eating (since that is the ‘custom’ in Heaven) and when the angels came down to Avraham Avinu, they ate, as is the ‘custom’ down here.

Tosfos quotes from the Seder *Eliyahu Rabba* that one shouldn’t learn like those who say that the angels only appeared to be eating, rather, the correct version is that they actually ate the food Avraham Avinu served them! Tosfos ends off – and this disagrees with what the Gemara says here.

The *Zera Shimshon* asks that Tosfos’s last words are absolutely unnecessary. Anyone reading the Gemara and then reading the Seder *Eliyahu Rabba* that Tosfos cites can see for himself that they don’t agree. Why does Tosfos find it necessary to point out that they disagree?

The *Zera Shimshon* explains that Tosfos pointed out the seemingly apparent, to bring to our attention what is really not so evident. Although the difference between the Gemara and the Seder *Eliyahu Rabba* is noticeable, that is not the only difference that exists here. In fact, there is a Halachic difference that ensues from whether or not the angels actually ate!

The Gemara (*Pesachim* 50a) says that one should not change from the custom of the place in which he finds himself, to avert strife. The Ran learns that since the reason given is to avert machlokes, therefore, in private, one does not need to be concerned about keeping to the custom of the place.

The *Zera Shimshon* explains that this is only true if the angels merely pretended to eat. Since the eating of the food was in public, everyone agrees that they were required to follow the custom of the land and do the action of eating. However, what happened to the food after it entered their mouth is where the difference lies. If the angels only pretended to eat the food so as not to change from the custom of this world, then we can learn that on the outside one must not change from the custom of the place but privately, he does not need to adhere to the custom.

However, according to *Seder Eliyahu Rabba*, the angels actually made themselves eat, even though they had an alternative option – they could have merely pretended to eat, as the *Gemara* holds they actually did, this entails that even privately, where no one would know the difference, still one must follow the custom of the place in which he finds himself, differing with the aforementioned Ran.

This, explains the *Zera Shimshon* is what Tosfos means by writing that the Gemara and the Seder *Eliyahu Rabba* disagree. *Tosfos* did not mean to point out the obvious. Rather, *Tosfos* meant to imply that based on this argument there is another *machlokes* in the ensuing *halacha* that is derived from the angels’ actions, as explained.

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachmon Michael Nachmani, was born in 5467 (1706/1707) into an illustrious family with great Rabbinical lineage. He served as Rav of Modena, Pisa, Sayna and Reggio, Italy. His Seforim were named, Zera Shimshon (al HaTorah) and Toldos Shimshon (Pirkei Avos). He passed away on the 6th of Elul 5539 (1779). His passionate plea and promise regarding learning his Chiddushim:

I implore of you with ten terms of supplication to choose from my Chiddushim (novella) the piece

that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth my soul etc...

This righteousness will stand by you forever - to eat in this world, and be satiated in the next. In this merit, Hashem will repay you with children, health and sustenance.

...and now my brothers and friends etc. do a true kindness, and with your eyes you will see children and grandchildren surrounding your table, houses filled with all that is good, wealth and honor will not cease from your children...

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JOKES

Style

A woman isn't feeling well and goes to the emergency room.:

Nurse: "have you experienced a sudden loss of taste?"

Patient: "No, I've always dressed this way."

Quotes

I just taught my kids about taxes by eating 38% of their ice cream.

A new report says that last year Colorado collected \$44 million in marijuana taxes. Unfortunately, they can't remember where they put it. When all else fails, there's always delusion.

Ventriloquist Career Change

There was a ventriloquist who had no work for six months. He went to his agent and told him he needed work badly.

The agent said, "There's no call for ventriloquists, but if you were a psychic I could get you plenty of work." So this ventriloquist went home and hung out a psychic sign.

An hour later a woman knocks on the door: "I want to talk to my deceased husband—how much will it cost?"

The ventriloquist says, "If you talk to him, \$50; if he talks to you, \$100; and if you talk to each other while I'm drinking coffee, that's \$200."

Rising Fast

The boss called one of his employees into the office. "Rob," he said, "you've been with the company for a year. You started off as an office clerk, 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 the employee. "Thanks?" the boss replied. "Is

that all you can say?"

"I suppose not," the employee said. "Thanks, Dad."

Deep Observations

There are breathtakingly beautiful sights on uninhabited planets all over the universe that no one will ever see.

Poor kids realize they are poor well before rich kids know they are rich.

Calling yourself an AI artist is almost exactly the same as calling yourself a cook for heating readymade meals in a microwave.

People are forever looking at scratched screen protectors to avoid using scratched cellphone screens.

Not having an opinion about most things is better for your mental health than having an opinion about most things.

Makeup shouldn't be allowed in beauty contests.

No one describes their children as average. Even though, by definition, most of them are.

People tend to mix up right and left, but they never up and down.

Complaining about the younger generation has been a thing for all of human history.

Red onions are clearly purple.

It is far too easy to bite the sides of one's mouth.

A few more generations and no one will know what clockwise is anymore.

New Computer

"I've created a new computer that is almost human."

"You mean that it can think, feel, and reason just like a human would?"

"No, but when it makes a mistake it blames it on another computer."

"Thanks," said the employee.

"Thanks?" the boss replied. "Is



BRAIN TEASERS

1

I have keys but no locks. I have space but no room. You can enter, but you can't go outside. What am I?

2

What has a heart that doesn't beat?

3

What is always in front of you but can't be seen?



Answers: 1. A keyboard 2. An artichoke 3. The future

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When the sun sets on their childhood, be secure in the knowledge that their fond memories won't fade with their tan. Having an Amish made, custom swingset as a fixture in their childhood, will provide hours of safe play and an eternity of warm memories.

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BNOS



"WHERE EVERY GIRL IS A BAS MELECH"

INVITES

ALL GIRLS AGES K & UP

SHABBOS DAY

2:30 - 3:30PM

AWESOME BNOS LEADERS

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NOSH, GAMES & FUN
ACTIVITIES



INFO:

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