

Parshas Vayishlach | Kislev 11 - 17 | December 12 - 18



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Tzvi Blech



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
12:20pm and every 15 minutes until 3:00pm

4:10pm Candle lighting	4:19pm Mincha in tent κ	4:20pm Chabad Mincha	4:28pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

6:35am <small>Vasikin, followed by a Daf Yomi Shiur 20↑</small>	8:00am Shachris 2 18 main	9:15am Shachris 3 Tent κ	10:00am Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20↑	10:30am Shachris 5 18 main
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2:00pm Pirchei	4:10pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:28pm Shkiya	5:08pm Maariv 1	5:13pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
5:45 pm and every 15 minutes until 8:15pm | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of December 15-21

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	7:15am	8:48am	9:33am	10:19am	11:51am	3:30pm	4:28pm
Monday	7:16am	8:49am	9:33am	10:19am	11:52am	3:31pm	4:28pm
Tuesday	7:17am	8:49am	9:34am	10:20am	11:52am	3:31pm	4:29pm
Wednesday	7:17am	8:50am	9:34am	10:21am	11:53am	3:31pm	4:29pm
Thursday	7:18am	8:46am	9:35am	10:21am	11:53am	3:32pm	4:29pm
Friday	7:18am	8:51am	9:35am	10:21am	11:54am	3:32pm	4:30pm
Shabbos	7:19am	8:51am	9:36am	10:22am	11:54am	3:33pm	4:30pm

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The Month of MarCheshvan

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

In the beginning of the Parsha Yakov sends a message *עם לבן גרתי*. Rashi says Yakov was sending a message to Eisav: *אם לבן גרתי ותריג מצוות שמרתי ולא למדתי ממעשיו*. הרעים. In the past we have said over the Baal Shem Tov idea that Yakov was lamenting the fact that he didn't take lessons from Lavan – negative acts of how to serve Hashem in a positive way. One of the great stories that illustrates this idea is said of the Chafetz Chaim, who in his ripe old age woke up one morning and found himself arguing with the Yetzer Hara. The Yetzer Hara was trying to convince the Chafetz Chaim not to go to get up because he is old and needs more sleep. The Chafetz Chaim didn't have a good response until it hit him: wait you, the Yetzer Hara, are even older than me, and yet you still get up every morning like now to challenge me! So why should I be different? It's a cute idea, but today I want to share a different idea on the words of Chazal.

Yakov was teaching us the lesson of Chanuka. How so? For Yakov living with Lavan the trickster was a very big challenge, not just in doing what is right but also keeping it pure. So many times we might be doing the right thing, but with the wrong intentions. Many times we are convinced that we are doing the right thing, and in truth we are not, but our blind spots do not allow us to see our own fallacy. This was Yakov's message to Lavan

and, more importantly, to us: make sure our motives and actions are pure. It can take a real check in within ourselves, and many times it requires an outsider to be truthful and let us know if our actions are genuine or not.

I once had a couple that was fighting with a school regarding their internet use. The parents didn't want to give up their websites; it was their life, and they were willing to risk their children's education for it. This reminded me of the famous question they ask the father by a Pidyon Haben, *מאי בעי טפי*? What do you want more, your son or your money? The question is not just for the Pidyon Haben; it's forever and it applies to everyone on different levels.

The Chidush of the Chashmonim on Chanuka and the whole celebration of Chanuka itself is about purity. As the Pnai Yehoshua and the Meiri explain we really didn't need the miracle of the oil because *טומאה הותרה בציבור* who could have used impure oil however Hashem was sending a message about the nature of the victory of the Chashmonaim it was a message of purity they represented the pure approach to Torah versus the Jewish Hellenists who tried to change the authenticity of Torah and fit it in with the Greek culture.

May we be Zoche to the purity that shines through the lights of Chanuka and especially the hidden light of Mashiach.



Missed Opportunity

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

"and his eleven sons..." (32:23)

In his confrontation with Eisav, Yaakov's children are mentioned, but Yaakov's daughter Dina is not.

The Midrash teaches that Yaakov concealed Dina in order to prevent Eisav from having any aspirations of marrying her. However, since she might have been a good influence on Eisav, Yaakov was punished for his actions.

In last week's parsha, Leah is described as having "unattractive eyes" The Talmud questions why the Torah would make a deprecating statement regarding one of the Matriarchs. The answer given is that Leah's eyes were affected by her constant weeping over the prospect of having to marry Eisav. Therefore, this description shows a positive quality within Leah. Why is Leah's aversion to marrying Eisav praised, while Yaakov's actions to prevent Dina from marrying Eisav are condemned?

It is clear from Yitzchak's desire to bestow the blessings on

Eisav that Eisav possessed talents and abilities necessary for the survival of Bnei Yisroel. Since Eisav's intended soulmate was Leah, Divine providence arranged that many of Eisav's positive qualities would enter Bnei Yisroel through her. However, Eisav's actions made it impossible for him to marry Leah, for marrying her would have given him a Patriarchal position, making him the father of the Tribes. Therefore, Leah crying over the prospect of marrying Eisav, thereby conferring upon him a Patriarchal position in Bnei Yisroel, is commendable, for she understood that this would be destructive to the fledgling nation in its inception.

However, once all the Patriarchs and Tribes had been configured, Eisav's inclusion in Bnei Yisroel could have been tolerated and controlled. Dina, who possessed her mother's abilities to be assertive and direct her husband's energies, would have made a perfect mate for Eisav. She would have been able to allow Eisav's talents to be completely incorporated into Bnei Yisroel. Therefore, Yaakov's actions to prevent Dina from marrying Eisav are condemned.

Genuine Wholeness



Rabbi YY Jacobson

"Jacob arrived whole to the city of Shechem," the Torah states in this week's portion, Vayishlach. What a gift it is – to be whole, complete. To be wholesome, unified, integrated, holistic. How many of us can claim to be whole?

How did this happen? What was the secret behind Jacob's "wholeness" at this moment? He had been married for years, he had many children, and was a successful man. He had garnered much wealth and had dealt successfully with many an adversary. What transpired at this moment which conferred upon Jacob this condition of "wholeness"?

In fact, nowhere does the Bible describe a human being in such a way – that he or she was "shalem," whole. It is an extraordinary description for a human being, who from the genesis of time, is characterized by duality, fragmentation and conflict. Apparently, something extraordinary occurred in the life of Jacob, which made him whole, precisely at this juncture of his life.

The Preceding Scene

There is no escaping the juxtaposition between this statement "Jacob arrived whole" and the preceding scene in the Torah. In the previous scene, Esau finally made peace with his brother Jacob. After decades of estrangement, hostility and ire, and the fear of outright war between the brothers, they had at last reconciled, even if they would not live together.

This is a profound development. Twenty-two years earlier Esau vowed to kill Jacob, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother." Now, as they are about to meet again, we stand posed anticipating a harsh encounter. Upon hearing that Esau is approaching him with a force of four hundred men, Jacob is "very afraid and distressed." He devises an elaborate defense, including a strategy for war.

When Esau finally appears, something very different transpires. The Bible's description of the meeting is unforgettable: "Esau ran toward him, embraced him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him. And they wept." There is no anger, animosity or threat of revenge. Peace has at last descended upon the Abrahamic family. The next scene in the Torah reads: "Jacob arrived whole..."

The message to us seems clear; You may be a wonderful, accomplished and successful individual, but as long as you are not on speaking terms with your own sibling, you will not be whole. As long as a family is torn by mistrust and conflict, none of its members can be whole. You may be right or wrong in your arguments, but as long as the conflict lingers, you will remain broken. We cannot make ourselves whole, nor can we mend the world, if we lack the courage and vulnerability to create peace within our own families. The family is the nucleus of civilization.

Sometimes we have no choice but to create music out of torn chords. If we have tried whatever we can to reconcile and it

did not work, we must create wholeness within a fragmented state. We cannot change other people and each of us must learn to develop his or her own relationship with G-d. Yet, we must try to do whatever we can to create familial harmony. When we can't achieve this, we must know that there will be moments in which we will have to grieve over a terrible loss.

George Burns once quipped that happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city. It is often easier to get along with the "whole world" than with your own family. But it is only through family harmony that we can achieve genuine wholeness in our lives.

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.

UFARATZTA



Dating Advice

... In reply to your questions:

WHAT ARE THE GOOD QUALITIES TO LOOK FOR IN A SHIDDUCH?

The answer is that first and foremost the person should be trustworthy, so that he could fully be relied upon in all his promises relating to the establishment of a truly Jewish home, a Binyan Adei Ad...

The maximum assurance that he is indeed such a person is when he is religious, and his whole life, in every aspect of the daily life, is directed by the Torah and Mitzvos. For in such a case one can be fully certain that he is not motivated merely by the opinions of other people, but considers these matters as a sacred Mitzvah, commanded by G-d. Having ascertained this first and primary quality, it is then possible to consider also what additional qualities a person has.

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET TO KNOW A PERSON WELL BEFORE THE WEDDING?

The answer is that it is quite true that it is impossible to get to know a person before the wedding, as well as after. However, it is possible to get to know him in an adequate way by making sure that he has the primary quality mentioned above. This can be found out indirectly, in addition also to what he himself reveals. In other words, it is possible to find out about his family background, his upbringing and education, and his general conduct in daily life, for a person's character is a combination of all these factors and influences...

==== Chabad.org/therebbe/letters Practical Dating Advice





We have seen many similarities that we find between the menorah of Chanukah and the menorah in the Beis Hamikdash.

Here are some more:

1) The text of the brochah – “lihadlik”

In regards to the text of *brochos* recited for *mitzvos*, we sometimes preface the wording with “*al*” (e.g., *al netilas yada'im*) and sometimes “*l*” (e.g., *l'hafrish chalah*). The *Raavad* explains that the rule of thumb is: “*l*” is used for a Scriptural *mitzvah* and “*al*” is when the *mitzvah* is of a rabbinical nature. Based on this rule, candle lighting of Chanukah, which is a rabbinic mandate, should have been “*al*.” However, the *Raavad* concludes that the text of the *brochah* is based on the text used for the *brochah* when they lit in the *Beis Hamikdash*, which is a Scriptural *mitzvah*. Once again we see the connection between the lighting of the menorah of Chanukah and the lighting of the *menorah* in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

2) Hadlaka osah mitzvah –

The Gemara has a long discussion if the *mitzvah* is the actual lighting, or is it the placement of the menorah in its proper place. The Gemara concludes that it is the lighting that is the *mitzvah*. Rashi there explains that the reason for this is that it should be similar to the *mitzvah* in the *Beis Hamikdash*, where the main component was the lighting.

3) Burning the entire night

The *Yaavetz* mentions that since the lighting is similar to the *mitzvah* in the *Beis Hamikdash*, there is a *hidur* (beautification of the *mitzvah*) if the menorah burns the entire night, just as the menorah in the *Beis Hamikdash* was lit the entire night.

Ner Chanukah – a continuation of the menorah in the Beis Hamikdash

We can understand all of these connections to the menorah in the *Beis Hamikdash*, based on the famous words of the Ramban in *Parshas Behaloschah*. When Aharon felt “left out” of the inauguration of the *mishkan*, together with the *nesi'im*, Hashem told him that “*shelchah gadol mishelahem;*” your portion – the *mitzvah* of lighting candles – is even greater than that of the others, because it is forever. The Ramban explains that this is because the candle lighting continues even after the *churban*, with the menorah of Chanukah, as opposed to the *korbanos*, which we do not have today. The commentators explain that this is because the menorah of Chanukah is in essence

a replica, and a continuation of sorts, of the menorah in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

Rav Yehoshua Kutner, in his *sefer Yavin Shmua*, takes this a step further and proposes that the *mitzvah* of lighting the menorah on Chanukah was actually instituted only after the *churban*, the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, in order to have a continuation and remembrance of the menorah in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

This explains why we see so many similarities between the two, because, in essence, the *mitzvah* of lighting the menorah on Chanukah is a continuation of the candle lighting of the menorah in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

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

NIGHT KOLLEL | 8:15-9:45pm

- Chavrusa learning - Halacha
- Currently: 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

ADDITIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS:

- Yarchei Kallah / Shuirim on Legal Holidays - by acclaimed Guest Speakers
- Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim
- Yeshivas Kiyumu v'Kiblu / Purim Shushan Purim
- Shovevim Program / Early Friday morning learning b'retzfuz.
- Evening Shuirim in Halacha and Hashkafa by prominent Morei Horah



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The proper path to serving Hashem is not to rely on external inspiration, as this is only temporary. Rather, personal, daily, and consistent motivation—through contemplating your service to Hashem—is the true path.

~ Rabeinu Yona, Pirkei Avos, 1, 14.

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Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

מוהל מומחה

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The Creator should take up most of your mind. People are busy with going places, they have relatives they must visit. Now when people run around to all affairs and thinking of all kinds of undertakings in life, they have very little space left in their brains about the big pursuits that life is created for.



— *Climb To Kedusha #518*

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33:8 "ויאמר מי לך כל המחנה הזה אשר פגשתי"

"And he said: What did you intend by that whole camp that I met?" Rashi explains that Eisav was asking what was the purpose in sending so many messengers to bring the gifts to Eisav. Yaakov sent gifts to Eisav, but apparently sent many more messengers than was necessary. Yaakov Avinu responded to Eisav, "למצוא חן למצואי אדוני" – to find favor in my lord's eyes. What was Yaakov Avinu's answer to the question?

It says in Bereishis Rabbah that all the gifts that Yaakov Avinu gave to Eisav are destined to be returned by the nations of the world to the *Melech hamoshiach le'asid lavo*. We know this from the posuk in *Tehillim* 72:10 "מלכי תרשיש ואיים מנחה ישיבו" – "Let the kings of Tarshish and the islands return tribute." The *Posuk* doesn't say, "Shall bring tribute," rather it says they shall "return tribute," indicating that they are returning tribute that had been previously *Klal Yisroel's* – from Yaakov Avinu.

There were a total of 550 בהמות, animals, that Yaakov gave to Eisav. What is the great significance in this "news" that they will be returned to us when *Moshiach* comes – as if it is something great for *Klal Yisroel*? 550 בהמות for the entire *Klal Yisroel* is not much. Yaakov Avinu was careful to send as gifts three females and three males of every type of animal that can proliferate. Not only are *Klal Yisroel* going to receive the original 550 animals, but they will also receive all the animals that were born from those original animals. That will be a great abundance of animals; by the time *Moshiach* comes, the amount will be immeasurable. This is the good news that *Klal Yisroel* is being told.

With this *p'shat*, we can understand the conversation between Yaakov and Eisav. When Eisav saw that Yaakov gave him specifically males and females of each type of animals as the gifts, his *mazel* saw what Yaakov Avinu had in mind with these gifts. Yaakov was giving Eisav principal, so that he should receive a great abundance in the future. Thus, Eisav said to Yaakov, "מי לך כל המחנה אשר פגשתי" – what is your purpose in giving these gifts to me in a way that they are prepared to proliferate, to have offspring?

Yaakov responded that indeed he was doing this in order to profit from it, for he will benefit when these animals proliferate, and all of it will be returned to him. To this, Eisav responded, "אחי, יהי לך אשר לך" – brother – what is yours is yours, meaning that you will only receive the 550 *beheimos* that you gave me. To this, Yaakov Avinu responded, "אל נא" – no – it is not that way, meaning that I am not going to take it back from you in this generation, rather it will be taken back after many generations, so why should you care?

Yaakov Avinu sent many more messengers than was necessary, to show that the gifts that were being sent would in actuality be much more in the future. In truth, Yaakov Avinu wanted Eisav to do *teshuva*. Yaakov was saying that the focus was on *ruchniyos*, and in the end he would have much *gashmiyos*. The *gashmiyos* will be there to serve the *ruchniyos*. Unfortunately, Eisav responded that he had "רב" – had much; he had much *gashmiyos* now, and wasn't ready to give any of it up for any *ruchniyos*.

May we be *zoche* to see what is truly important in this world – *ruchniyos*.

The Battle for our Minds

They wrestled mightily, dust rising in the air. Two ideologies- Eisav's guardian angel and Yaakov, going at it all night. This battle has come to symbolize our historical journey through galus. One might think that we Jews are stuck in a holding pattern. Over 2000 years of exile from the majesty which was once ours and yet we are still traveling.

Almost annihilated by Eisav's descendants, we were chased from the land of Israel and thrown to the four corners of the world, where we remain, in fervent hope of returning to our previous glory. Even in Eretz Yisroel today we yearn for the geulah.

Let's see if Yaakov's battle can teach us a thing or two about living in today's world and how a small shift in our behavior can actually hasten the coming of *Moshiach*. It's been thousands of years that we have been forced to fend for ourselves and "make a living" in places that reject our ethics, enticing us to "join the fun." It hasn't been easy, but we have survived- "*Hein am levadad yishkon*" – we are a nation that lives apart, and that strengthens us.

The *Chofetz Chaim* wonders why the *yetzer harah* (disguised as Eisav's angel) waited to battle with Yaakov, not Avrohom or Yitzchok? What danger did Yaakov present that motivated the Evil inclination? The answer is simple. Our forefather Yaakov represents the study of Torah, honesty in business and the encouragement of a strong work ethic. These qualities, put quite simply, are a thorn in the side of the *yetzer harah*.

The study of Torah serves as a protection against negative influences, the ability to be honest in business, protects our nation from harm- at the same time, having a strong work ethic makes us more responsible, bringing out the absolute best in ourselves. Yaakov Avinu proudly

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



symbolized all three while living through conditions that were less than optimal. Our generation, more than any other, is plagued with the notion that one can become a millionaire in one minute.

Let's learn from Yaakov Avinu and his dedication to Lavan. Honest, hard work builds character. Approaching Chanukah, we are reminded of the battle once faced with the secular world - are we still fighting this battle? The answer is of course, yes- the world out there is so enticing, giving us more than we ever wanted and ever needed.

Who remains solid and vibrant in their commitment to Yiddishkeit? It's those of us who take the time to grow and learn Torah on a steady basis. This keeps us sane in the face of a society that condones any and all behaviors.

Maintaining honesty in business is challenging but no less of an important quality. So telling, it's a spiritual marker that reveals to us how much faith we have in G-d.

If we truly believe that Hashem will provide for all our needs- there is no excuse for shady behavior to achieve wealth. Learning Torah with a passion and love for our Creator will help us grow as Jews. Conducting our dealings honestly will give us Divine protection. And rebuilding a strong work ethic will help bring an end to this long exile.

Lessons for our time, from Yaakov Avinu.

Before confronting his brother Esav after many years of estrangement, Yaakov quietly transfers his four wives and eleven sons to the other side of the river Yabok. Rashi famously asks, "And Dinah - where was she?" He cites a *Medrash* that Yaakov had placed Dinah in a sealed box so that Esav would not lay eyes on her and seek to marry the young girl. Despite the fact that Yaakov was trying to protect his daughter from an evil man, Yaakov was punished for preventing his pious daughter from possibly influencing Esav and returning him to goodness. Instead, she fell into the hands of Shechem where unspeakable actions were done to her.

How could Dinah be made to suffer for Yaakov's failure to allow her to positively influence his brother? Does the Torah not state - "Every person is responsible for his own sin!" There is no such thing as an innocent person punished for the sin of another!

Rabbi E. Buchwald shlit'a provides an interesting insight in the name of the Darshan of Jerusalem. According to the *Medrash*, when Yaakov put Dinah in the box, she was six years old and Esav was 97 years old. How would it be possible for such a young girl to influence a grown man whose fierce attitudes had already been shaped? After all, his own father Yitzchok was unable to influence him, nor was his mother Rivkah, or his brother Yaakov? How then could this little child be expected to influence Esav?

The *Darshan* of Jerusalem answers with three simple words: "A *Yiddische veib!*" A Jewish wife. When a *Yiddische veib* - and a *Yiddische mama* (mother) for that matter - puts her mind to something, is there anything she can't accomplish? She has the strength of character, the wisdom of the ages, and the power of her position to get anything done! If she wishes to influence her husband, she has the ability to turn him from bad to good, from harsh to kind, from negative to positive. A Jewish wife can have more influence on her husband than even Yitzchok, Rivkah or Yaakov! Any Jewish wife - even one so young as Dinah - has the power to change the world!



Zera Shimshon

לזכר נשמת רבינו שמשון היים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל בעל הזרע שמשון זע"א

Serving Torah Scholars

And Yaakov was left alone (32:25)

Rashi explains that Yaakov Avinu went back to retrieve small jugs that he had accidentally left behind. Rashi elaborates that being that *tzaddikim* do not profit from theft, their money is extremely valuable to them, even more than their wellbeing since their money is holy, as it is not derived from theft.

The *Mishna* (*Avos* 6:5) enumerates forty-eight requirements that a person must have in order to properly acquire the Torah. One of the qualities is serving the *chachamim*, שימוש חכמים. The Zera Shimshon writes that each one of the forty-eight requirements teaches a person something which is important in order to properly be able to study Torah. The requirement of serving the *Chachamim* is necessary to learn how to properly deal with money. The Zera Shimshon cites the following Gemara to illustrate this idea.

The Gemara relates (*Gittin* 61a), that R' Kahana was on his way to Hutzal and he passed an individual who was cutting branches from a palm tree and throwing them down to the ground. As the branches hit the ground, dates would detach from them, and R' Kahana picked up a few dates and ate them.

The commentaries give a few explanations why R' Kahana did so. Initially it appeared to R' Kahana as though the individual only wanted the branches, and did not want the fruit. The *halacha* is that if one is knocking off fruit from a tree with the intention to collect those fruits, and the fruit fall under the tree, although he did not *halachically* acquire the fruits, the *chachamim* instituted that it is considered theft to take them. The reason for this is to keep public peace since the person knocking the fruits off the tree feels as though the fruits are already his from when he knocks them off the tree. Therefore, although these fruits were not halachically acquired yet by the person knocking them off the tree, the *chachamim* instituted, for public peace, that it is forbidden for anyone else to collect these fruits. Here however, this individual seemed to only desire the branches, and therefore the fruit that fell off were not even considered his for peaceful purposes. This was R' Kahana's reasoning.

The Gemara continues: The individual called out to R' Kahana and said, "Master! Take note that I intentionally picked the fruit with my hands and only then threw them to the ground. Thus, I fully acquired the fruit." This added piece of information now made it forbidden for R' Kahana to eat the fruit.

When R' Kahana heard this, he proclaimed, "You must be from the town of R' Yoshia, the *tzaddik* who is the foundation of the world." Rashi explains that R' Yoshia would teach the masses *halachos*, and that is why this individual knew what R' Kahana's reasoning was and was able to address why R' Kahana was wrong, instead of reacting like the average person who doesn't know the *halacha* and start screaming, "Thief!".

The Zera Shimshon learns from here that the benefit one has from being around Torah scholars - that the *Mishna* enumerates as a requirement to properly acquire Torah - is because they learn how to deal properly with money. Included in this, is the fact that those who practice *shimush chachamim* also learn how to stay away from any trace of theft in their monetary dealings, from the influence of the *chachamim* they are around.

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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Although this week's *parasha* describes the long-awaited reunion and rapprochement between Eisav and Ya'akov, it also indicates that there seems to have been very little subsequent relations between the two. Yes. They did part amicably... but they part, and except for the cooperative burial of their father Yitzchak, we never read any experience that they shared.

It is this very point that leads to the prophecy of Ovadya, the shortest book of *nevu'ah* in the *Tanach* and the one that makes up this week's *haftarah*. By the time that Ovadya offered his prophetic message, Edom, the nation of Eisav, had no positive relations with Israel, and exhibited no brotherly love toward Jacob's descendants. In fact, they had become an enemy of the Israelite people and the navi's prediction of the harsh punishments that would befall Edom is, in no small part, due to the fact that Edom WAS a brother, and should have reflected that relationship in their behavior toward Israel.

Indeed, the enmity displayed by Edom to Yisrael was so intense that they became the very symbol of every enemy of Israel, something to which Ovadya hints when, while speaking of Edom, he includes the punishments awaiting "all the nations" who opposed Hashem's chosen people. Additionally, it is interesting to note that when we study the prophecies of Yirmiyahu, Amos and Yechezkel, we find that the name "Edom" is often used as a general term for the foes of Israel – even those who, according to some commentaries, tormented Israel during the second Temple when the nation of Edom no longer existed!

Perhaps this division between the nations should not have been unexpected, given that the blessing of Yitzchak to Eisav stated that the two future nations would never rule at the same time. They would rather dominate or be dominated by the other. In light of this, we understand more fully why Edom became the symbol of all Israel's enemies, for the success of Israel would only come with the weakening, and eventual destruction, of "Edom."

Ovadya, however, is not content relaying a *nevu'ah* of the punishment that would be meted out to Edom. In the final *psukim* of his *Sefer*, he offers powerful words to all of the "Edoms" throughout history – to all of Israel's enemies. "*Ki karov Yom Hashem al kol hagoyim*", G-d's day of reckoning of those nations is approaching, Ovadya warns, when He will repay their wickedness by punishing them with the same evil that they visited upon Israel. But he then tells Israel these comforting words: "*Uv'har Tziyon t'h'yeh pleita*," – after all your suffering and persecution, know well that those who remain will find refuge on *Har Tziyon*, in Jerusalem. These prophetic words have been realized in our very time. The remnants, the survivors of the worst of all evils, found refuge and built new lives in *Tziyon*!!

Many years ago, I heard a well-known story told about the great Chafetz Chayim, Rav Yisrael Meir Kagen, zt"l, who passed away in 1933. In the final year of the Chafetz Chayim's life, the Nazi party had grown in power and the Chafetz Chayim expressed his concern. One of his students asked what would happen to the Jews and the Chafetz

Chayim responded prophetically: "*uv'har Tziyon t'h'yeh pleita*," the future Jewish survival would be found in *Tziyon*.

As we face the Edom of today, we are reminded of how we have enemies that face us in every generation. But we should also be aware that, very soon, we will mark G-d's victory over the "Edom" that the *Chashmona'im* faced. How fitting, therefore, that our annual reading has us hear Ovadya's words only a week or two before Chanukah so that we be reminded that "*V'hayeta LaSham Ham'lucha*" – that ultimately, Hashem alone will judge all of the "Edoms" as He reigns over all of mankind, which is what we hope to witness in our own days!

When Praise is a Problem

Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

Moishie, Eli, and I (Gavi) all live on the same street and go to the same shul. I was making a bar mitzvah, expecting 100 guests, when 20 minutes before Shabbos my freezer died. Luckily, I happen to know that my friend Moishie, a teacher, is also great with his hands and a whiz with appliances. I called Moishie. "You've gotta save me! My freezer is broken. Can you take a look?" Moishie grabbed his toolbox and bolted to my house. He opened the backboard, replaced a wire, and put the whole thing back together. My freezer worked better than ever and the bar mitzvah was saved.

A few days later in shul, Eli told me, "I don't know what to do. My freezer just stopped working. It's such a waste to call out a repairman just to find out that it's not worth fixing—but I'd like to avoid replacing it." Can I tell Eli that my friend Moishie helped me?

THE DILEMMA

THE HALACHAH

No, because Moishie is likely to resent Gavi for having put him in such a position; Moishie probably doesn't want to be known as the local repair guy. However, helping people in areas where they are lacking is a part of *chesed*. Therefore, Gavi should call His friend Moishie himself to see if he is willing to help Eli. If he is, then Moishie could suggest that Eli call him.

People think that speaking *loshon hora* and *rechilus* always means saying negative words. But sometimes, praise is forbidden under the category known as *avak loshon hora* or *avak rechilus*, because it will cause someone harm or loss. An example is letting others know that someone lends money to many people. Even if this praise will save someone else from a monetary loss, as with Eli, it is not considered a *to'eles* if it will cause the subject to resent the praise.

Reviewed by Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy, shlita. For discussion only; pls consult a rav. From Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation's Shabbos Menu info@powerofspeech.org.

National Pride Rabbi Herschel Schachter

In the days of Yehoshua, *Eretz Yisroel* was divided among the *shevatim*. With the exception of *shevet Levi*, each of the *shvatim* got an equal share in the land. When *Bnai Yisroel* crossed over the Jordan, it took the first seven years to conquer the land from the thirty-one kings, and then another seven years to divide the land among the tribes, families, and individuals. The Rabbis had a tradition that the *mizbeach* in the *Beis Hamikdosh* may not be located in the section that belonged to *shevet Yehuda*. While the kings were to come from Yehuda, the *mizbeach* represented the religion, and it was deemed inappropriate that the religion be under the control of the government. (This is one of the weak points of the Chief Rabbinate in Israel; since it is a branch of the government, it is basically under its control.)

This should have left the possibility open for the *mizbeach* to be located in the area of any of the remaining eleven tribes. But the tradition had it that only the area of *shevet Binyamin* qualified. This was already ordained by Yaakov *Avinu* and by Moshe *Rabbeinu* when each of them expressed their blessings to each of the *shvatim* before they died.

Why was Binyamin singled out? The *Medrash* gives two suggestions, which perhaps really blend together to become one: 1) When the entire family of Yaakov met up with Esav, they all showed their respect by bowing down to him, except for Binyamin (who was not yet born.) 2) All of the other children of Yaakov were born outside of *Eretz Yisroel*, except for Binyamin, who was born in *Eretz Yisroel*; he was the only "*sabra*".

As long as the Jewish people lived in foreign lands they had no choice other than to be respectful and conciliatory to their enemies. Everyone had to bow down to Esav. But as soon as the Jewish *medinah* was established, they could no longer be conciliatory to these enemies. An independent sovereign state must act with pride! Yes, the *possuk* in *Tehillim* describes

Eretz Yisroel as "*geon Yaakov*", "the pride of the Jewish people", and sometimes they are even obligated to go to war (and obviously, to sacrifice human lives) to maintain their sovereignty over the *medinah*! Many will ask, does it really make any sense to lose human lives merely for the sake of "pride"? And the answer is "yes!" The *Tehillim* refers to *Eretz Yisroel* as "the pride of the Jewish people." Every country in the world has the right to go to war to maintain sovereignty over its land; the Jewish people not only have the right, but even the obligation.

Hashem considers "arrogance" to be an abominable trait. But Binyamin who was born in *Eretz Yisroel* was a "*sabra*", and he had "national pride." This "national pride" was what was needed to have the *mizbeach* built in his section. Arrogance pushes one away from Hashem; but a healthy sense of independence and national pride brings one closer to Hashem. The individual who is subservient to other human beings cannot fully be subservient to Hashem.

Only the Jews who live in *Eretz Yisroel* have the *mitzvah* of *aliyah laregel*; to come closer to Hashem. The Jew with the *galus* mentality cannot be fully subservient to Hashem, and thus only the free men in *Eretz Yisroel* have this *mitzvah*. The Torah expresses itself by stating that three times a year all the Jewish men must come to visit "the Master" Hashem. The Talmud understood this to mean that slaves who are subservient to their human masters don't have this *mitzvah*. They cannot succeed in becoming fully subservient to Hashem, which is the purpose of the *aliyah laregel*.

Binyamin, of course, must be careful that his "national pride" does not lead to the abomination of "arrogance". If the *sabra's* independence and "national pride" will bring him closer to Hashem, there will be no room to develop any arrogance. The closer one comes to Hashem, the more humble he will become.

Completely Different Perspectives

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

"I have plenty... I have everything" (33:9,11)

In addition to differences in their chosen vocations, Yaakov and Eisav had completely different perspectives on life. Yaakov *Avinu* was totally immersed in spiritual pursuits. The life of Eisav *Ha'rasha* was all about the physical and the material. Spirituality did not play a role of any sort in Eisav's world view. Satiating his physical desires, fulfilling his material needs, was what made life worth living. One powerful difference exists between the physical/material and the spiritual, with regard to satisfaction.

One who is focused on the physical/material can never satisfy his physical/material hunger. One who is focused on spirituality, however, is satisfied with his physical/material lot in life. We observe their disparate outlooks from the manner in which they spoke. We find Yaakov attempting to appease Eisav by sending him a generous gift prior to

their subsequent encounter. At first, Eisav declined the gift, claiming, *Yeish li rav*, "I have plenty" (33:9). Yaakov, however, prevailed upon him when he said, *Yeish li kol*, "I have everything" (33:11). *Kol* – everything – *rav* – much; is there really a difference? Yes.

One who feels he has it all is satisfied. He has amassed all that he needs, all that he wants. One who says, "I have plenty," is indicating that he does not have it all; he wants more. One who is immersed in spirituality requires very little materialism. To him, the purpose of material bounty is to help others. Thus, after allowing himself whatever he needs for sustenance, he views whatever is left as extra – something to be shared with those less fortunate than he. The Eisavs of the world [and most go by other names] are never happy, because they never have enough. *Mi she'yeish lo manah – rotzeh masaim*; "He who has one hundred (now) wants two hundred."

CHASSIDIC STORY

Rabbi Hillel Baron

R' Nisan was the beloved Torah teacher of the children in Charki, Belarus. As a devoted disciple of the Baal Shem Tov, he was used to fulfilling missions for his Rebbe. At one visit, the Baal Shem Tov handed him a sealed envelope and instructed: "When Count Radziwill comes to Charki for his annual hunting trip, you are to open this envelope and follow the instructions it contains. He is usually accompanied by his lifelong friend Pierre Louis, who was born a Jew. On the following day, after you've done what the letter tells you, you are to tell Pierre Louis that he is a Jew and that his pious mother saw to it that he had a *brit milah* and was named after her grandfather, Pesach Tzvi. It was his father, on the other hand, who wanted him to grow up not even knowing he was a Jew and sent him to the French boarding school where he met Count Radziwill. You are to tell him it is time to return to his people."

R' Nisan returned home, and, in due course, the count arrived for his hunting trip which was the talk of town. On the first day, he and his entourage went out, but when they returned a terrible calamity occurred.

The count had stopped for a few drinks following the long day on the hunt, and upon entering his lodgings, he stumbled and tripped over the threshold. The gun he was carrying went off, and the bullet pierced his shoulder. All the doctors in the area were called to tend to him but to no avail. His condition continued to worsen.

The next day, as promised, R' Nisan opened the Baal Shem Tov's envelope. Much to his surprise it contained instructions for treating a bullet wound, after which he was to tell the count that the cure had come from the Baal Shem Tov and that he should be kind and fair to the Jews of the region.

He quickly formulated the medicine per the instructions and made his way to the count's lodgings, informing them that he could cure the visiting noble. Pierre Louis refused to let him enter, questioning his credentials. The physician, however, said that whatever he tried couldn't hurt as there was nothing else

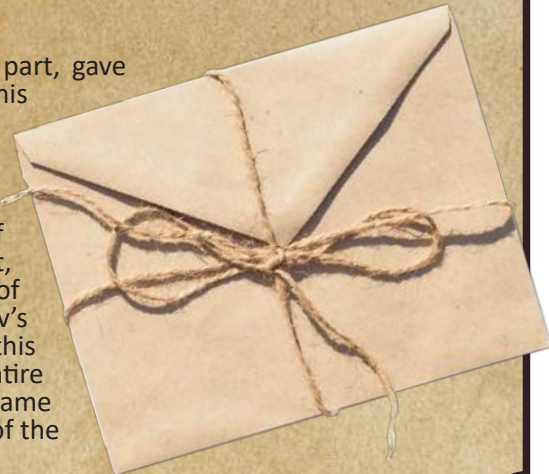
the doctors could do to save the count.

R' Nisan proceeded to administer the medication prescribed by the Baal Shem Tov, and by the afternoon the count was showing significant signs of improvement. The count and his entire entourage were full of gratitude. R' Nisan informed them that the cure was from the holy Baal Shem Tov and that he instructed the count to be good to the Jews in his jurisdiction. He then gave Pierre Louis the Rebbe's message: You were born a Jew, your name is Pesach Tzvi and it is time to return to your Jewish heritage.

When the count had fully recovered, they left Charki. Several weeks later, R' Nisan heard a knock at his door. There stood Pierre Louis, who introduced himself as Pesach Tzvi.

He told R' Nisan that he had not had any peace of mind since hearing the Baal Shem Tov's message. He shared this with his dear friend the count and they both agreed that he should return to the Jewish community in Charki. R' Nisan arranged for a personal tutor, and within a short time, Pesach Tzvi had learned to pray as a Jew and could even study some Torah.

The count, for his part, gave a land grant to his friend and even gifted him the land upon which the homes of all the Jews of Charki were built, in fulfillment of the Baal Shem Tov's request. After this incident, the entire town of Charki became ardent supporters of the Baal Shem Tov.



We all have dreams which reflect our personal aspirations. Some of us dream because we do not have the tools for realizing our dreams. We lack self-confidence, determination and resolve, strength of character, to bring fruition to our dreams. Thus, the dreams remain mere fantasies – leaving the dreamer an unhappy, sometimes bitter person.

First, one must transform his dream into a vision, concretizing his dream to a certain extent. A vision is more structured and rooted in daily living. A dream is usually wishful thinking. A dream does not impose anything on the dreamer, while a vision, having gone to the next step, makes subtle demands on the dreamer to stop dreaming and do something about realizing the dream! Rav Wolbe suggests that often our dreams remain mere fantasies because we do not know how to begin.

A man once came to Horav Abba Grossbard, *zl*, and asked for the *mashgiach's* guidance concerning the proper focus

in Torah study. Twenty years later, the two met up again, and the questioner expressed his previous dilemma. On what should he focus his Torah study?

Focus is what success is all about. When one is unfocused and thus unable to clearly delineate and define his ambitions – he will have nothing! In order to achieve success, one must have concrete aspirations and goals, and he must designate time for realizing these ambitions. All too often, the individual gets bogged down in wavering about what he should focus on, rather than determining the area in which he seeks to advance and allotting time to this objective. In other words, some people just want to spend time talking – but not doing. Once the designated time has been determined, it should be adhered to – without fail, with no room for excuses. Otherwise, one will not pass the first rung of the ladder. Furthermore, one should stick to doing one thing at a time – not five. When one accepts on himself to do many things, he will do nothing.

The Sinew That Keeps On Taking

Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein



Therefore, the Bnei Yisrael do not eat the gid hanasheh... to this day.

The 613 *mitzvos* are often seen as corresponding to the 248 body parts and its 365 sinews. This structure, which we see manifested in the human form, only starts there. It is expressed as well, says the Raavad in his commentary to *Sefer Yetzirah*, in three different realms: those of the macrocosm, time, and the inner self. In the realm of time, the 365 show themselves as the days of the solar year. One sinew – the *gid hanasheh* – corresponds to Tisha B'Av. While the other sinews function to engage *kedushah* frontally and directly, the *gid hanasheh's* role is retrograde. It therefore is the locus to which *kelipos* can attach themselves.

In consequence, Tisha B'Av is the day that permits, like no other, the nations to have some place in the yearly calendar, and to wield power over Am Yisrael. Thus the pattern of catastrophic displays of non-Jewish dominance over us on that day: the destruction of both Temples, the conquest of Beitar, the plowing over of the destroyed Yerushalayim. (Tisha B'Av is the opposite of Yom Kippur – a day of so much *kedushah* that it overflows into the entire year. On that day, even the Soton has no power over us.) Our *pasuk* hints at this. “Therefore, the Bnei Yisrael do not eat *תא/es gid hanasheh*.” The word *תא* as an acronym stands for *אב תשעה*.

When the Torah speaks of a man's wrestling – *vayei'avek* – with Yaakov, it uses a grammatical form that denotes continuous action. The dust-up between Yaakov and his adversary did not end that morning. The Soton/*yetzer hora* never ceases his accusations against Yisrael, nor his attempts to distance them from HKBH. The struggle will only cease with *alos hashachar*/the dawning of a new day. Then, the bright and clear light of *Am Yisrael*, deriving from the imminent messianic age, will begin to break through. The world will be purged of all its *tum'ah*; all of its *kedushah* will become clarified and visible. As Amalek is drained of its strength, the relationship between *Klal Yisrael* and its Creator will be “face-to-face” – direct and clear – rather than in a more backhanded manner.

When Esav's angel injured Yaakov's *gid hanasheh*, he established his ability to wage war with *Klal Yisrael*. All *galus*, both national and personal, stems from this power. The latter means that the *neshamah* is estranged from its Creator. Darkness blankets the *ohr* of comprehension. Completeness of *daas* – such as that which we experienced at the giving of the Torah – is therefore lacking. The profound understanding that we experienced there retreated into the *kelipos*. We are denied this *daas* until the same *alos hashachar*, when it will be liberated from its own exile.

Only then will we be restored to the direct and clear relationship with Hashem. “Face to face Hashem spoke with you at the mountain. May it happen soon, in our days!

— Based on *Sefer Meor Einayim*, Rav Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Yishmael's Resentment

Rabbi Yissachar Frand



The very end of this week's *Parsha* [*Bereishis* 36:43] contains a type of verse that we typically read through without giving it a second thought: “The chief of Magdiel and the chief of Iram; these are the chiefs of Edom by their settlements, in the land of their possession — he is Eisav, father of Edom.” What lesson can we learn from this *pasuk*? Who ever heard of the chief of Magdiel or the chief of Iram? What is their significance?

Although the meaning of such a passage escapes us, it did not escape the likes of Rav Yitzchak Hutner (1907-1980), *zt"l*. In the late summer of 1970, Rav Hutner was returning to New York from Eretz Yisrael when Palestinian terrorists hijacked his return flight and two other jets. The planes and passengers sat on a hot runway in Jordan for over a week, while the PLO negotiated for release of Palestinian prisoners being held in Israeli prisons.

When Rav Hutner emerged from that experience, he spoke publicly about the ordeal. Among other things, he explained the difference between the descendants of Eisav and the descendants of Yishmael. Rav Hutner said that even though both of them have persecuted Jews and we have suffered miserably and horribly at their hands, there is a difference between the two cultures. The descendants of Eisav never thought of taking our land. The Torah clearly spells out that the descendants of Eisav were given Mt. Seir [*Devarim* 2:5]. Eisav knew that he had his own land to the East of the Land of Israel. Although Eisav's descendants killed us and tortured us, they never wanted our land — because they had their own inheritance.

Yishmael, however, was thrown out of Avraham's home without an inheritance [*Bereishis* 21:10]. This profoundly affected the development of history. Yishmael still feels as if we have his land.

Magdiel and Iram had their own settlements, in the land of their own inheritance. They had their own land, and so they did not have their eyes on ours. But the *pasuk* regarding the children of Yishmael says, “These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names by their open courtyards (*chatzeirehem*) and their strongholds (*tirosam*)” [*Bereishis* 25:16]. They are nomads. They are left with tents and refugee camps. They may have hundreds of thousands of square miles in the Middle East, but they do not have what they think is their land. They think that “their” land is a small piece of real estate called Palestine and they continuously “want it back.”

The whole trouble stems from this point. Eisav received his inheritance – Mt. Seir – but G-d ordered Yishmael sent out of the house of Avraham without an inheritance, causing the inheritance to go only to his younger brother Yitzchak. This is something that Yishmael has never gotten over. Unfortunately, this is something he will never “get over” until the end of days. He will always want to take back the land that he thought should have been his rather than Yitzchak's. Unfortunately, we are still suffering from this resentment to this day.

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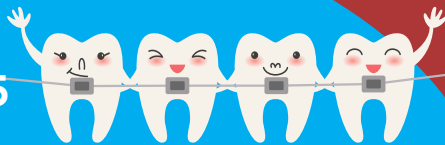
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JOKES

At a Shabbos table, a little boy asks his father, "Totty, why do we put salt on the challah?"

The father explains, "Because the Beis Hamikdash had korbanos with salt, and this reminds us of the Mizbeach."

The boy thinks for a moment and says, "But Totty, the Mizbeach was huge! I think it would need more than this tiny pinch!"

Two girls are playing in the backyard, practicing brachos. One says, "Baruch Atah Hashem... Hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz."

The other interrupts: "What are you doing? There's no bread here!"

She replies, "I'm just practicing for when my mother finally bakes challah!"

Two yeshiva bochurim are flying to Eretz Yisroel for bein hazmanim. Midway through the flight, the plane hits some turbulence. One bochur grabs his Gemara and starts learning furiously.

The other says, "What are you doing?!"

He replies, "Davening is good, but this is pilpul in the skies!"

Why did the boy bring a ladder to shul?

He heard it was a "elevated" davening!

Two Bais Yaakov girls are on a graduation trip to Washington, D.C., visiting the White House. As they're walking through the halls, they see a big painting of George Washington.

One girl says, "Wow, it's amazing! George Washington—what a tzaddik! He was so honest, he couldn't tell a lie!"

The other girl looks at the painting and says, "Eh, it's nothing special. If my mother caught me cutting down a cherry tree, I couldn't tell a lie either!"

Two Bais Yaakov girls are on a Shabbaton and get lost in the woods. One says, "What should we do?!"

The other replies, "Don't worry, I learned in Navi that if we're stuck, we just blow a shofar and someone will find us!"

The first girl sighs. "Great idea, but unless you brought your machzor and a shofar, we're gonna be here until Rosh Hashanah!"

A yeshiva boy comes home from school and says, "Abba, guess what! Today we learned about the ten makkos."

His father smiles. "Ah, the ten plagues! Which one is your favorite?"

The boy thinks for a second and says, "I like the frogs the best. I'd train them to jump into my brother's room and make sure he cleans up!"

At the Shabbos table, a little girl asks, "Totty, why do we drink grape juice for Kiddush?"

Her father replies, "Because wine and grape juice remind us of the simcha in serving Hashem!"

She nods thoughtfully and says, "Then can I make Kiddush on chocolate milk? That would make me very happy!"

A boy is walking home from shul with his Zaidy. He asks, "Zaidy, how did you know when it was time to start wearing a hat and jacket for davening?"

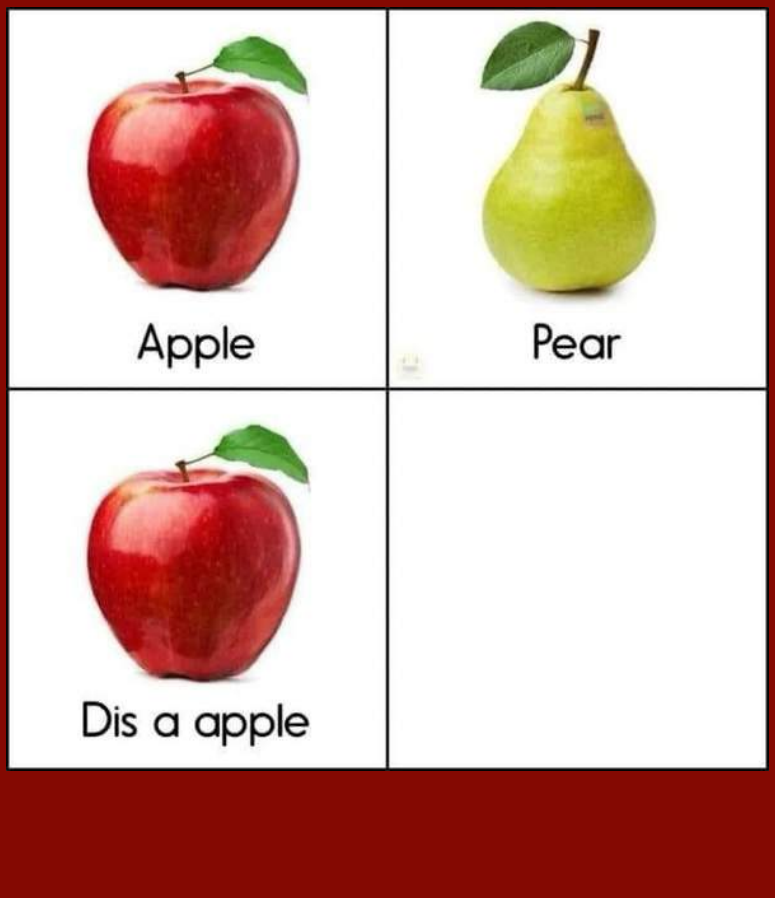
Zaidy smiles and says, "Simple—when I was your age, my Rebbi said if I want to stand like a prince before the King, I better dress the part!"

The boy thinks and replies, "That makes sense... but does that mean I also need to wear a crown?"

A group of boys are walking home from yeshiva on Erev Shabbos, talking about their favorite mitzvos. One boy says, "I love lighting the Chanukah menorah—it's so exciting!"

Another boy says, "I like hearing the shofar—it's such a powerful sound!"

The youngest boy pipes up, "My favorite mitzvah is eating the challah on Shabbos. It's just like the lechem hapanim—but with peanut butter!"



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**For Siyum Details and
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