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Vayechi | Teves 9 - 15 | January 9 - 15



*Hachnasas
Sifrei Torah
at Ohr Chaim*
Pictures on
pages 10-11



RABBI YY JACOBSON
will be in town for Shabbos



Kol Hanearim with
Rabbi Fried
starts at 6:45pm sharp

Zmanim by our incredible Gabbaim

Ephrayim Yurowitz
Tzvi Blech



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
12:34pm and every 15 minutes until 3:45pm
plus 3:45 Sephardic Minyan with Birchas Cohanim

4:29pm Candle lighting	4:39pm Mincha in tent נ	4:39pm Chabad Mincha	4:47pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

6:41am <small>Vasikin, followed by a Daf Yomi Shiur 20 ↑</small>	8:00am <small>Shachris 2 18 main</small>	9:15am <small>Shachris 3 Tent נ</small>	10:00am <small>Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20 ↑</small>	10:30am <small>Shachris 5 18 main</small>
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2:00pm Pirchei	4:30pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:48pm Shkiya	5:28pm Maariv 1	5:33pm 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 12 - 18

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	7:21am	8:58am	9:42am	10:29am	12:04pm	3:50pm	4:49pm
Monday	7:20am	8:58am	9:42am	10:30am	12:05pm	3:51pm	4:50pm
Tuesday	7:20am	8:59am	9:42am	10:30am	12:05pm	3:52pm	4:51pm
Wednesday	7:20am	8:59am	9:42am	10:30am	12:05pm	3:52pm	4:52pm
Thursday	7:19am	8:59am	9:42am	10:30am	12:06pm	3:53pm	4:53pm
Friday	7:19am	8:59am	9:42am	10:30am	12:06pm	3:54pm	4:55pm
Shabbos	7:18am	8:59am	9:42am	10:30am	12:06pm	3:55pm	4:56pm

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The Gift of Life

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

The *Ohr Hachayim* and other *mefarshim* try to understand why the last seventeen years of Yaakov Avinu's life in *Mitzrayim* are termed alive - *Vayechi*. Yaakov obviously was alive for all his years prior to his last years in *Mitzrayim* and even if we will say that from the time Yosef was sold it was very difficult for Yaakov. In the same vein, all the years he spent in Laban house also weren't easy, but still he had plenty of good years, especially growing up in his father Yitzchak home with his illustrious grandfather, none other than Avraham Avinu.

I think that the Torah is teaching us a profound lesson here. The lesson is beautifully explained by Reb Chaim Shmulevitz in one of his *sichos* regarding the gift of life. Reb Chaim references the Gemara in *Maseches Kiddushin* daf 80 that quotes a *passuk* from *Eicha*. מה יתאוון אדם חי? גבר על חטאיו? Rashi deeply explains this *passuk* to mean that when a person taps into the appreciation of the gift of life, then there is no room to complain, even when one is suffering the worst *yissurim*, like those attributed to Iyov.

Of course, there are levels and levels that one can aspire to. And as we see from *Chazal*, one isn't expected to look for the test of difficulties and suffering. But when Hashem

sends them, they are nothing more than opportunities for growth and greatness.

For us it can start with a simple example. This coming Shabbos, if something or someone is bothering us, let's take a deep breath and focus on the fact that right now we have right now the gift of life. That means besides all the other gifts, the gift of life really supersedes and also includes all gifts, because if we weren't alive we would not be able to take advantage of all the other gifts and we would not have the opportunity to create a better future.

Perhaps this was also the case with Yaakov Avinu. On the one hand, *Chazal* tell us (see *Daas Zkeinim* on the conversation that took place between Yaakov and Paroh about Yaakov's age) that Yaakov was held accountable for complaining about his difficult life. However, on the other hand, after Yaakov reached *Mitzrayim*, everything came together; his son Yosef was back, the whole story of his sale suddenly made more sense, and at this point Yaakov had a new vision, not only about the present but also about the past. His challenges and journeys retroactively were viewed from a new perspective.

Let's try to tap into this message this Shabbos with a deep breath and contemplation of the gift of life – *Vayechi!*

The Missed Opportunity *Rabbi Berel Wein*



The conclusion of the book of *Bereshis* reaches its climax this week with the death of our father Yaakov and of Yosef. The era of the founders of our people ended in relative tranquility and contentment, albeit on foreign soil. It will be a long and arduous journey for the descendants of Yaakov to return home to the Land of Israel.

A dark and forbidding era is about to begin but, though still in the future, it was foretold already many years earlier to our father Avraham. From the simple meaning of the words of the Torah, it is apparent that the family of Yaakov found themselves comfortable and well settled in their home in Goshen.

The promise of Yosef that the Lord would take them forth from Egypt was certainly remembered and passed on from one generation to the next. Nevertheless, there was no sense of immediacy regarding this promise and its fulfillment, and the Jews would view Egypt as their home rather than the Land of Israel for a long time.

They hastened to return home after burying Yaakov in the Cave of *Machpela*, seeing Egypt as their home and the Land of Israel as a far distant goal and dream that would somehow eventually be realized but that had no immediate bearing on their day-to-day living.

This attitude remained constant throughout the long history of the Jewish people and its various exiles, in Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Europe and today the entire world, outposts that have hosted and still host the Jewish people in our far-flung diaspora. The Jewish people were never in

a hurry to leave any of these places and to return to the Land of Israel. This still seems to be the case in our time as well.

It is difficult to understand why the holy family of Yaakov seems so passive and unresponsive in relation to the Land of Israel. There are commentators who state that they were aware of the heavenly decree that they would have to be strangers in a strange land for many centuries and that they accepted their lot and decided to make the best of it under the circumstances.

However, as Maimonides points out regarding the Egyptian enslavement of the Jewish people, Egypt was not preordained to be the oppressor and enslaver of Israel. And, it was also apparently not preordained that those early generations of Jews living in Egypt were to fulfill the vision of Avraham to be strangers and slaves in a land that did not belong to them. Apparently, according to Maimonides, the Egyptians had a choice as to whether to enslave the Jews, and the Jews before their enslavement occurred had an equal choice of leaving Egypt and returning to their ancestral home in the Land of Israel

However we deal with this baffling issue, there is no question that this represents a template for all later Jewish exiles and for Diaspora Jewry in all times and places. Apparently, only tragedy moves the Jewish people, ...and throughout our history tragedies abound. Let us hope that somehow history does not repeat itself in our time as well.



Rabbi YY Jacobson

These are the culminating words of the first—and in many ways the foundational—book of the Torah, the book of Genesis: “Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; they embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.”

This ending is disturbing. Could Genesis have not concluded on a more inspiring note, just like the four following books of Moses? Even the fifth and final book, Deuteronomy, which concludes with Moses’ passing, culminates with a eulogy so moving that it leaves one with an unforgettable impression of Moses.

Even if the Torah felt compelled to culminate Genesis with Joseph’s death, it could have ended with the second-to-the-last verse of Genesis: “Joseph told his brothers: ‘I am about to die, but G-d will indeed remember you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob... You will bring my bones up out of here.’” At least that would have ended the book with a promise for future redemption. What indeed are the final words of the book? “Joseph died... and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt!”

Be Strong! Be Strong!

When the reader of the Torah concludes with these words, Jews will sing out: *Chazak! Chazak! Venischazak!* “Be strong! Be strong! Let us be strengthened!” But how can one glean strength, never mind triple strength, from this despairing end?

The Pain of Loneliness

Yet it may be that it is precisely this ending that grants us a deeply comforting message. Unfortunately, we cannot live life without pain. Every life comes with challenges. The very genesis of existence is rooted in a void and a vacuum—the concealment of the Divine infinite presence to allow for an egocentric universe. This means that life, whichever way you twist it, is a confrontation with a void, and thus a painful experience.

What a person must know is not how to get rid of his or her pain—that may not always be possible—but rather how to discover that they are empowered to deal with the pain, and that they are not alone in it

The Presence of Joseph

“Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; they embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.” In these very uninspiring words, one may sense profound inspiration. The Jewish people are about to become enslaved and subjugated to a tyrannical government that will attempt to destroy them one by one, physically and mentally (as recorded at the beginning of Exodus). This new Egyptian genocide program will drown children, subject all Jewish men to slave labor and crush a new nation.

What will give the people of Israel the resolve they will desperately need? What will preserve a broken and devastated people from falling into the abyss? The knowledge that one day they would be liberated? Certainly. The knowledge that evil will not reign forever? Absolutely. Indeed, this is what Joseph told the Jewish people before his passing, recorded in the second-to-the-last verse of Genesis: “Joseph told his brothers: ‘I am about to die, but G-d will indeed remember you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob... You will bring my bones up out of here.’”

But, then, when Genesis seeks to choose its final words, it provides us with a message that perhaps served as the greatest source of strength for an orphaned and broken Jewish family. “Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; they embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.” Joseph’s sacred body is not taken back to the Holy Land to be interred among the spiritual giants of human history: Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebecca; his father Jacob, or his mother Rachel. Joseph’s spiritual and physical presence does not “escape” to the heavenly paradise of a land saturated with holiness.

Rather, Joseph remains in the grit and gravel of depraved Egypt, he remains etched deeply in the earthiness of Egypt, together with his beloved people.

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



בני הם אשר נתן לי אלקים... [ויחי מחט]

CHINUCH ADVICE

I received your letter, in which you ask for my advice with regard to certain educational problems, especially how to influence the children to get rid of undesirable habits, etc.

... Experienced teachers and educators are usually their own best guides, for, as the saying goes, “None is wiser than the man of experience...”

... As for the problem of some children having a habit to take things not belonging to them, this may fall into one of two categories: A. The attitude mentioned in the Mishna in Pirkei Avos [P5, M10] “Mine is yours and yours is mine.” In this case the effort should be made to educate the child that just as it is necessary to be careful not to offend or shame another person, so it is

necessary to be careful not to touch anything belonging to somebody else. B. An unhealthy condition which should be treated medically by specialists who know how to handle such an aberration.

I would like to add one more point which is also emphasized in the teachings of Chassidus, namely, to be careful that in admonishing children the teacher and parent should not evoke a sense of helplessness and despondency on the part of the child; in other words, the child should not get the impression that he is good-for-nothing and that all is lost etc., and therefore he can continue to do as he wishes. On the contrary, the child should always be encouraged in the feeling that he is capable of overcoming his difficulties and that it is only a matter of will and determination.

==== Rebbe Responsa #79

Disposing of Leftover Oil and Wicks – Any Restrictions?

~Night Kollel~ ~Kollel Boker~



by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Night Kollel & Morning Kollel

Leftover Oil – Which Usage is Forbidden?

We have seen that according to many *poskim*, the leftover oil cannot be used. What is included in this prohibition? Using the oil to cook with is definitely forbidden, as that is considered deriving benefit. Similarly, using it for Shabbos candles is also forbidden, since that is also considered deriving benefit.

As far as using the oil for light in a shul, Rav Shlomo Kluger writes that it is allowed, since using it for a *mitzvah* is not considered having benefit, and on the contrary this is a way of honoring Hashem, and is not a disgrace to the *mitzvah*.

Destroying the Oil by Fire

We still must understand why there is a need to destroy the leftover oil through making a fire, and not just put it away for the following year? The *Mishna Berura* answers that this is to ensure that no one uses it by mistake, either to eat or to cook with. Even if one would put it in a dirty utensil, which would take away any concern of someone eating it, there still is a concern that it would be used for light.

But, why is there a need to destroy the leftover oil by making a fire, and not just by pouring it down the drain? Rav Elyashiv answers that since the Chachamim gave it the rules and regulations of the *menorah* of the Beis Hamikdash, we apply the same rule of the leftover oil of the menorah of the Beis Hamikdash, which was burned.

Using the Oil for Remedies Such as a “Roiz”

There is a practice brought in the *seforim* that the leftover oil was used to heal different maladies, and specifically cellulites, known in Yiddish as a “*roiz*.” This concept is alluded to in Maoz Tzur: “ומנותר קנקנים נעשה גם לשושנים – from what is left in the flasks, a miracle took place for the roses,” – an allusion to the remedy for the “*roiz*.” How is this practice of deriving benefit from the oil allowed?

There are those who use the leftover oil from the bottle for this, as referred to in *Maoz Tzur*: “ומנותר קנקנים – “from what is left in the flasks.” This is certainly allowed, since that oil was never set aside for the *mitzvah*, and all would agree that it can be used.

But even those who use oil left in the menorah, it is possible that it was the extra oil after the minimum half hour, which one can stipulate to use, as explained above. Even if one didn't make the stipulation explicitly, it can be allowed. Since this is a normal practice, it can be considered as if the stipulation was made. And even the oil of the first half hour, which a stipulation does not help, may be allowed. Using this oil is only a rabbinical *issur*, and the Rama (*Y”D* 155:3) writes that something which is rabbinically forbidden can be used as a remedy for someone who is sick.

Summary

Some hold that one cannot derive benefit from the leftover oil needed for the half hour of the actual *mitzvah*, and should be burned. Others rule that even the extra oil put into the cups cannot be used. And according to some, once the *mitzvah* is over, one can make use of the oil. Therefore, it is best to stipulate that he wants to use the leftover oil.

The reason for this *issur*, which we don't find elsewhere, is because a person sets the oil aside permanently, and they also gave it the rules of the *menorah* in the Beis Hamikdash.

Oil taken from the bottle can certainly be used for remedies. Even the extra oil put into the *menorah* can be used. Since this is the normal practice, it is as if a stipulation was made to use it. Even the oil of the first half hour which is rabbinically forbidden can be used for healing a sick person.

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

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- Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00pm
- ZERA SHIMSHON SHIUR | 8:15-9:00pm Thursday Nights

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מוהל מומחה

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Praise of Hashem

Melave Malka Stories

The Baal Shem Tov would approach men and women, old and young, and ask them how things were going? He would inquire after their health and their children's health and whether they were making an adequate living? The Baal Shem Tov was most gratified to hear the loving phrases with which the men, women and children would respond to his queries. They would respond with various expressions of praise for G-d.

One would answer, "Boruch Hashem – Blessed be His Name". Another would respond, "Praise the Lord". Still another would say, "the loving G-d does not forsake". "May the loving Creator continue His benevolence", "The sweet Father sustains us, praised is His Holy Name", "Blessed be He and His Holy Name", "He is the true healer of the ill". These and similar expressions of praise for G-d would be on the lips of the townsfolk. Men and women would respond, each in their own fashion, praising G-d for health and sustenance; and the children would praise G-d for giving them parents who provide for all their needs and teach them Torah!

In the various cities, towns, villages and hamlets that the Baal Shem Tov would visit during the course of his travels, he would meet the people in their synagogues, in the streets, in their homes and stores and in the marketplace. It once happened that the Baal Shem Tov visited a certain town and as was his custom he conducted himself in the above manner of sacred Divine service. He wished to make the Jewish people meritorious by their responses to his questions with the praise of Hashem!

There lived a very old and very great Jewish scholar in that town who for the past fifty years had been a porush, a recluse. During these years he constantly studied Torah day and night in abstinence and holiness. All his years he would sit garbed in his *tallit* and *tefillin* until the very late afternoon, fasting until after the evening prayer and then breaking his fast with a crust of bread and some water.

When the Rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov, entered this great scholar's seclusion chamber which was in a corner of the synagogue, he inquired after the man's health and as to whether his needs were being met. The recluse, seeing that the Baal Shem Tov was dressed as a simple villager, ignored him. The Baal Shem Tov repeated his questions a number of times. Finally, the great scholar became angry and motioned with his hand to the door, indicating that the Baal Shem Tov should leave.

The Baal Shem Tov turned again to the scholar and said: "Rebbe, why don't you provide G-d with His sustenance? You will, G-d forbid, make Him hungry and He will depart from the world." Upon hearing these words, the scholar became perplexed and bewildered. Here he saw in front of him a Jew, a villager who looked like a simple person; yet speaking of such matters about seeing to G-d's needs so that He would not become starved and depart from the world! What was going on here?!

The Baal Shem Tov read the man's thoughts and said to him: "Jews exist by virtue of G-d's sustenance. What sustains Him? This is answered by Dovid *HaMelech* in *Tehillim* where he says: '*veata Kodosh, Yoshev tehilot Yisroel*' – 'And You Holy One,' what is Your sustenance? 'He sits,' meaning He is sustained, 'by the praises of Israel', by the words of praise that Jews praise Him for their health and sustenance." (Chapter 22 verse 4) For these words of praise, Hashem repays us with children, health, and ample livelihood."



The advertisement is a vertical poster with a dark blue background and a gold border. At the top, there is a logo for 'בית מדרש אור חיים' (Beit Midrash Ohr Chaim) and 'COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER'. Below that is the 'שובבים PROJECT' logo. The main text reads 'SHOVAVIM LECTURE SERIES' in large white letters. Below that is a decorative diamond separator. The speaker is identified as 'RABBI DANIEL COREN', Dayan of the Ohr Chaim Community. The topic is 'TAHARAS HAMISHPACHA HALACHA AND MACHSHAVA'. At the bottom right, the date and time are given: 'יום ב' פרשת שמות MONDAY, JAN 13' and '8:30-9:15 PM'. The location is '20 UPSTAIRS BAIS MEDRASH'. A photograph of Rabbi Daniel Coren, a man with a beard and a dark suit, is positioned at the bottom left of the poster.

גאולה - Double Lashon of "פקד יפקד"

וישבע יוסף את בני ישראל לאמר, "פקד יפקד אלקים אתכם והעליתם את עצמתי מזה"

"And Yosef adjured *b'nei Yisroel* saying: When Hashem will indeed remember you, then you must bring my bones up out of here." This *posuk* foretells that there will be a *geulah* – as the *lashon* of פקידה represents *geulah*. Why is there a double *lashon* of פקידה?

When Hakodosh Boruch Hu told Avrohom Avinu about the decree of Klal Yisroel being *enslaved* in *Mitzrayim*, the *posuk* also used a double *lashon* of "ידוע תדע כי גר יהיה זרעך" – implying that there is a double knowledge, the same way there is a double decree. Hashem runs this world with two basic *hanhagos*: *midas hadin* and *midas harachamim*. At times Hashem judges the world while sitting on the *הדין והמשפט*, and at times while sitting on the *הרחמים*. Generally speaking, the punishments and decrees come forth when He is judging from the *הדין*, while the goodness that comes to the world, and the forgiveness comes when He is judging from the *הרחמים*. However, the decree of Klal Yisroel's servitude in *Mitzrayim* did not stem from the *midas hadin*! It was not a punishment; rather, *Klal Yisroel* needed to go through the servitude of *Mitzrayim* as a purification process so that they could reach higher levels of *ruchniyos*.

It is similar to one who is sick and takes very bitter medicine, which heals him and makes him strong. Thus, while the *midas hadin* was needed, for it was ultimately a decree, it was also done with the *midas harachamim*. This was what Hakodosh Boruch Hu was

letting Avrohom Avinu know by the *bris bein habesorim*, when He used a double *Lashon* of "ידוע תדע" – know that the decree is coming from both the *midas hadin* and the *midas harachamim*. This also explains what many wonder about as to why Avrohom was quiet when he heard the decree. Why didn't he *daven* to Hashem to annul the decree? Were his descendants worse than the people of *S'dom*, for whom Avrohom did everything in his power to save them? Rather, Avrohom was told that this was not a punishment, but it was a purification process in order to prepare Klal Yisroel to be the Chosen Nation and receive the Torah. Avrohom was not *mispalet* for it to be annulled, for it was good for *Klal Yisroel*. (בניהו על התורה)

There were two parts to the *geulah*: the *geulah* of the *nefesh* and a *geulah* of the *guf*. Moshe Rabbeinu took us out physically, while Hashem Himself took out our *neshomos*. Everything that Hashem does is *nitzchiyus*, everlasting, and thus we will never be spiritually subjugated again. It may at times seem as if we are, but we have the choice – as we are not spiritual slaves. However, since Hashem did not physically take us out of *Mitzrayim*, it was not an eternal freedom, and thus we are in *golus* Edom.

If we utilize our time in this world properly, we will have the opportunity for our *neshomos* to be elevated even after we have passed on from this world. We must strive to make the greatest impact on this world, through our actions, so that we can have an eternal aliyah in *ruchniyos*. While we were taken out of *Mitzrayim*, we await the final *geulah*, the one which will be physically eternal. May we be *zoche* to see it speedily in our days!

When to Speak, and When to Refrain from Speaking

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



Living with others, we must measure our words. The *Meor Enayim*, tells us that the word for good character traits; *middos* – is the same as the word for measurements, because good *middos* are a direct outgrowth of how we measure our words in relationships with our family and friends. How nice we are to each other and how much we care. A healthy person is constantly reviewing: Could I have been nicer? Could I have rephrased that in a way that would have made my son/ daughter/ wife/ friend/ relative (take your pick) feel better?

A beautiful illustration of this is found in this week's parsha. When Yaakov Avinu arranges his hands in order to bless Yosef's younger child Ephraim with his right hand, Menashe, the oldest could have raised his voice in protest. Ephraim, who did receive the blessing, even though he was the youngest, could have mentioned to his father Yosef, to please not mention anything to Yaakov, when Yosef spoke up and protested, since "the zeideh" surely knows what to do." But yet we find no such murmurings ever took place...

The power of speech is important, but knowing when not to speak – that is a particular strength can help us achieve eternity. The story is told of a boy in the Old City of Jerusalem selling home-baked cookies in a public courtyard on a hot summer day. Unbeknownst to this boy, he was using a very rare antique gold tray to display his goods. This went unrecognized by everyone except for a less than scrupulous fellow vendor in the same public area.

Desirous of the tray, the vendor offered the boy 100 shekels for the tray and the remaining cookies. The young fellow woke up. "If he is offering me 100 – then it must be worth at least 200," he thought, refusing the man's offer. For fun, he decided to check just how high the man's offer would go.

"Maybe we can make a trade – your donkey for my tray?", the boy suggested.

The boy was stunned when the man immediately agreed to the deal. The boy continued: "Maybe you would like to show us all here exactly how a donkey sounds when he brays?" The man started to cry out like a donkey! At this point, the boy figured that the tray must be worth much much more than he originally thought, if the man would embarrass himself to that extent.

"Not enough!", the boy exclaimed, "Do it on all fours."

The man, in hopes of getting this great "bargain," proceeded to crawl around in front of all the tourists – down on all fours, braying loudly. Realizing that he was in possession of something truly valuable, the boy then turned to the man and said, "it's okay, you can get up now. I don't do business with donkeys!"

The vendor thought as he left "What a fool I was! if I only would have remained quiet, the tray would have surely been mine. Instead, I shouted like a donkey and remained a donkey."

Many times we have just the right word – a verbal comeback – to say in an argument, or we may have sharp words for those around us. It is our job as spouses and parents, as caring members of a community- to stop and consider if these words should be said at all in any situation.

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

Public and Private

Rabbi Yisroel Reisman



At the beginning of the *parsha* we find that Yaakov Avinu called his trusted son Yosef and asked him to make a *shevua*, to take an oath that he would bury him in Eretz Yisrael, and Yosef agreed. Then Yaakov bowed at the head of the bed. *Poshut pshat* in the *posuk* is that Yaakov gave thanks that Yosef agreed.

Rashi is obviously bothered by this, because Yaakov surely knew that Yosef would agree. So Rashi brings a *pshat* that Yaakov bowed because he gave thanks to HKB"H that all of his children were *tzadikkim*. Yosef was the one who went out among the non-Jews. He was the one who was a king in a foreign nation and he is still *omed b'tzidko*, he is still righteous. Thus Yaakov gave thanks to HKB"H.

Rav Druk in *Darash Mordechai* asks: Yaakov had known Yosef for 17 years now, and this was his son. Yaakov certainly knew what was going on with his son, so didn't he know he was a *tzaddik*? Only now he gives thanks that Yosef is a *tzaddik*? This needs an explanation.

Rav Druk answered that there are many people that are *tzaddikim* when everyone is looking. There are many people who daven sincerely when many people are looking. What do they do when they are alone at home? Do they take out a *Sefer* after dinner, or do they do something else that is less worthwhile. The true measure of a person is what he does when he is himself, just him and the *Ribbono Shel Olam*. It is hard to know. How can anyone else know?

When Yosef swore, when he took an oath, Yaakov Avinu was able to see the sincerity, the *yir'as shamayim* with which he promised. Yosef could have promised in an easy-going style. He could have said "You want me to swear? Okay I'll swear; no big deal." When Yosef swore, Yaakov was able to see the *aimah* and the *yir'a* that a *tzaddik* has when he swears. Yosef's oath was something that was not done in the public eye.

There are moments when you see the real sincerity of a person, and then you say "Wow! This is the real person, this is an eved Hashem, this is a *yir'ai shamayim*." So the *posuk* says the oath and Yaakov's thanks were connected. Yosef swore to Yaakov, and then Yaakov gave thanks to the *Ribbono Shel Olam* that his son was a *tzaddik*.

The barometer of how much a person is connected to HKB"H, is what he does in private. והצנע לכת עם אלוהיך (Micha 6:8) - *Hatzneah leches*, what you do *b'tzin'a*, what you do privately, im Hashem *Elokecha* tells us how close you are to the *Ribbono Shel Olam*.

Zera Shimshon

לזכר נשמת רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

Who Are These?

וירא ישראל את בני יוסף ויאמר מי אלה וגו' אשר נתן לי אלקים בזה (מ"ח ח')

And Yisrael saw the children of Yosef and he said, "Who are these?" etc. which Hashem has given me with this (48:8)

Rashi explains that the exchange between Yaakov Avinu and Yosef was that Yaakov Avinu wanted to bless Efraim and Menashe and the *Shechina* left him due to the fact that Yeravam and Yehu, who were very wicked individuals, would descend from Efraim and Menashe. Because of this he asked Yosef who are these children - from where do they come that they are not worthy of a blessing? Yosef responded by showing Yaakov his *kesuba* to prove that they were kosher children and with that Yaakov Avinu blessed them.

The Zera Shimshon asks - what did Yaakov Avinu mean by who are these children? He saw them regularly and knew very well who they were? He even had said that they were to him as Reuven and Shimon? And even though he meant to ask about their descendants, why did he direct his question about Efraim and Menashe. Also, how did Yosef's showing of his *kesuba* answer Yaakov Avinu's question? The Zera Shimshon answers these questions as follows.

The *Parashas Derachim* (*drush* 4) says that even though Hashem knows that the Jewish people will eventually sin, as long as he also foresees that they will do good as well, Hashem gives the Jewish people *bracha* and does not allow the future sins to block the good He wants to give them.

This we see by *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. Although Hashem foresaw that the Jews would sin with the *egel*, still, because they would also accept the Torah he did not refrain from taking them out of Egypt. Hashem only conducts Himself with this type of attribute towards the Jewish people. The non-Jews do not merit this type of benevolence. If Hashem sees that eventually they will sin, they do not merit blessing based on their good deeds, rather Hashem factors in their future deeds as well.

The *Parashas Derachim* writes that Yaakov Avinu was doubtful of his status before the giving of the Torah. Was he considered a *Ben Noach* or a full-fledged Yisrael? Based on this, the Zera Shimshon explains that when Yaakov Avinu saw that the descendants of Efraim and Menashe would be sinful individuals, he did not know if he should bless them since perhaps their status was that of a *Ben Noach* who doesn't merit grace that a Jew does.

Yosef countered this by showing Yaakov Avinu his *kesuba* which proves that his status was that of a Jew since a non-Jew is considered married even without a *kesuba* or *kiddushin*. Only a Jew needs a *kesuba* and *kiddushin* to be considered married. Yosef's argument won and the *shechina* returned to rest on Yaakov Avinu, and he blessed Efraim and Menashe.

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman 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:

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...

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

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King David's Final Message

Rabbi Gershon Winkler

How can we understand the harsh message that David HaMelech delivers to his successor, his son Shlomo, before David dies?

He warns the newly anointed King to deal harshly with two individuals who, we would think, were not deserving of such treatment. In fact, David says clearly *"lo tarid seivato b'shalom sheol,"* not to allow Yoav ben Tzruya, David's former chief of staff, to die of old age but rather *"v'asita k'chochmatecha,"* use your wisdom, or better, your cleverness, and find a reason to put him to death!! David then goes on to use almost the exact wording in charging Shlomo how to handle Shim'i ben Geira, a leader of the tribe of Binyamin! It just doesn't seem to be fitting for a personality such as David, the *"na'im zmirot Yisrael,"* the "sweet singer of Israel."

Among the traits for which we often praise David is his military prowess. David was Shaul's chief of staff at a young age. His legendary defeat of Golyat (Goliath) was but the beginning of his many exploits. He defeated the enemies of Israel who surrounded and threatened them including the Plishtim, Moavim, Aram Tzovah, Aram Damesek, Edom and Ammon. Indeed, David was never defeated in battle.

And yet, David was not a militant. He eschewed violence in taking the throne. He twice refused to kill Shaul who was pursuing David in order to kill him; he punished the two men who assassinated Shaul's successor (Ish Boshet) in an attempt to place David on the throne; he publicly cursed the murderer of Avner, a military leader of Shaul and Ish Boshet who, at the time, was arranging for a peaceful transfer of power to David. David even refused to punish Shim'i who publicly cursed David and he refused to forcefully take back his throne, waiting, instead, for the tribes to invite him back.

But his general Yoav, whom he said was a danger to Shlomo, believed differently, preferring might over diplomacy. So, who was it who urged David to kill Sha'ul, and who wanted to kill Shim'i and who murdered Avner? Yoav, who believed that military strength should be used to solve problems. And in fact, who was one of the leaders who supported Adoniya in his attempt to replace Shlomo and take over the throne? Yoav!

But Yoav was not a threat to Shlomo alone. Rav Moshe Lichtenstein argues that behind it all was David's commitment to Hashem's promise of establishing a Davidic dynasty over all of Yisrael. David did not see these men as political enemies but rather as spiritual ones. They did not pose a danger to the new king but to the very spiritual destiny of all of Israel. Ignoring the menace posed by Yoav would encourage opponents who would agree with him to deny that Shlomo was the chosen son of David through which the dynasty would flourish. Ignoring the actions of Shim'i, an opponent of David and a member of Sha'ul's family, would allow people to believe that the true dynasty should have continued through Sha'ul and his tribe, not David and his tribe.

King David was far more than a military hero, more than a righteous king, more than a unifier of Israel and a sweet singer of Israel. He was a man of peace who worried about the spiritual future of his beloved nation and, therefore, passed on that concern to his son.

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Do What You Want Done

Rabbi Yaakov Lieder / Chabad.org

"My husband keeps criticizing me", a woman complained bitterly. "No matter what I do, it's not good enough for him. I can't cook as well as his mother did, the house is never clean enough for him, and so on. I don't know how to satisfy him anymore, so I have given up and stopped trying."



Knowing that there are three sides to each story; his side, her side and the real side, I spoke with the husband. He explained to me that his complaints are justified and he has to bring them to her attention so she can change. "Have you managed to change her in the last ten years?" I asked "No," he replied. "In fact, the situation has become worse."

One of the ironies of life is that we do the same things over and over again, but expect different results. "If you do what you always have been doing," a wise man once said, "you will get what you always have been getting." If what you're doing doesn't give you the right results, stop doing it and try something different! People do not change as a result of criticism. If anything, it makes them bitter towards the person criticizing them.

The couple in question was caught in a negative, downward spiral. He kept criticizing her and instead of building up the relationship, every criticism created another barrier between them. The situation had reached such a stage that she started avoiding him because she knew that any conversation would end up in a criticism. "If only my husband would look at my good qualities," she said, "our relationship would be much better."



I suggested to the woman that if she wants her husband to appreciate her good side, perhaps she should begin by doing what she wishes her husband would do to her. I advised her to be on the constant lookout for any positive words that come out of his mouth and compliment him for being so positive. "The more praise you give him for being positive and for focusing on the positive," I said, "the more chance there is that he will eventually pick up the habit of doing so."

A relationship can sometimes get stuck in a dead end where each party is waiting for the other to change. The way to break out of this impasse is by one party taking the initiative and acting out that positive characteristic that they wish their partner would have. The more we become a living example of a positive trait, the greater the likelihood that our partner will follow suit and reciprocate the desirable behavior.

Try it — it works!

A Peaceful Home

Torah Tavlin



It was through the behavior of Yosef that the brothers "saw" clearly that Yaakov Avinu had died. Rashi points out: "They were accustomed to dine at Yosef's table, and he was friendly toward them out of respect for their father, but as soon as Yaakov died, he was no longer friendly toward them." Since Yosef was the king, Yaakov insisted that Yosef sit at the head of the table, and he did. The *Medrash* points out that after Yaakov died, Yosef stopped inviting his brothers because he felt it was inappropriate for him to sit at the head of the table as he was from the youngest of the *shevatim*. Out of respect for his father, he did so as long as his father was alive, but now that Yaakov had passed away, he thought it would be wrong to sit at the head.

The *Medrash* continues that Yosef calculated that since their father wanted him to sit at the head, his brothers would wish to continue this practice and insist that he sit at the head. In order to avoid this perceived affront to their *kavod*, Yosef simply stopped inviting them to his house. The brothers became afraid, because they did not understand his intention. They said to themselves, "Surely Yosef hates us and only treated us well because our father was alive!" They were afraid that now Yosef surely wants to kill them. We can only imagine the level of grief, pain and fear that this miscommunication caused.

The Tolna Rebbe, R' Yitzchok Menachem Weinberg *shlit'a*, in his *sefer* *בית במוצאי שבת*, points out how often this occurs in families. Major family fights that sometimes last for years, begin with good intentions and bad communication! Had Yosef simply told his brothers the reason for his change of behavior, they would have understood him and even respected him for it! Instead there was terrible friction and pain. If we want *shalom* in our lives, says the *Rebbe*, we all must learn to explain why we do things to those that we love. Don't assume they will understand. Communicate! It is a great way to create a peaceful home!

A Ganenet Who Delivers Information to the Parents

Mishmeret Shalom

I run a private Gan and, often, when a mother comes to pick up her child, she asks, "Did he sleep today?" If I tell the truth - that the father brought the child in late, so he didn't nap - this will be a derogatory statement about the husband to his wife. Am I allowed to tell the truth, or do I need to veer from the truth to protect the husband's dignity? What if the mother will pin the blame on me and be angry at me?

QUESTION

ANSWER

Parents who send their child to a private Gan seek the maximum benefit for his growth and development. The Ganenet needs to achieve this goal to the best of her ability, and to do so, she must inform the child's parents how much he ate and slept, what toys he played with, and so on. Therefore, the Ganenet shouldn't conceal these important details due to tangential concerns. She should say the truth - that the father brought the child in late, so he didn't have time for a nap. This report is *l'toe'eles*, for the execution of her job.

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Yehuda - What's in a Name?

Rabbi Mordechai Willig

In the Torah our people are called *Bnei Yisrael*. In *Megillas Esther* and since, we are called *Yehudim*. This change can be explained historically. After the ten tribes were exiled, the tribe of Yehuda comprised the majority of *Am Yisrael*. As such, all of us are called *Yehudim*. However, the *Targum Yonasan* in *Parashat Vayechi* (*Breishis* 49:8) offers a different explanation. He explains that Yaakov Avinu blessed Yehuda, "Your brothers will acknowledge you (*yoducha*) as their ruler," and that this blessing is a reward for Yehuda's response to Tamar. "Yehuda," the *Targum* has Yaakov telling his son, "you admitted to the story of Tamar. Therefore, your brothers will acknowledge you ('*yodun achayich*') and will be called *Yehudim* after your name." The *Targum* thus links Yehuda's admission of his sin to his being acknowledged by his brothers, and to the fact that we are called *Yehudim*.

Perhaps these two explanations, the historical explanation, as well as the *psbat* of the *Targum*, can be reconciled. We are called *Yehudim* ever since the time that the ten tribes were scattered, because most Jews that were left from that time forward descended from the tribe of Yehuda. The reason the tribe of Yehuda is the one that survived is because they admitted to their mistakes. Admitting to mistakes enabled Yehuda himself to be acknowledged as the ruler of the family, and it also enabled his descendants, who followed his example, to survive.

One example of the historical phenomenon of the Jewish

ability to admit to our mistakes is found in the very story of Esther. Why did the Jews of that time deserve extinction? According to the Talmud, it was because they partook of the party of the wicked Achashverosh (*Megillah* 12a). However, they were spared when they repented after Haman's decree (*Yalkut Shimoni*, Esther, 4:16; see *Michtav Me-Eliyahu*, Vol. 1, p. 77). Admitting their mistake and repenting enabled the *Yehudim* to survive and return to *Eretz Yisrael* by the decree of Esther's son Darius (*Rashi*, *Chaggai* 1:1). The ten tribes, by contrast, have not yet returned.

A third association with Yehuda's name, besides that of admission and acknowledgement, is that of thanks. When Yehuda was born to Leah as her fourth child, Leah said "This time I will thank Hashem. Therefore, she called his name 'Yehuda'" (*Bereishis* 29:35). As Rashi explains, Leah was saying, "This time I took more than my share. Hence I must thank [Hashem]."

Combining these themes of admission, acknowledgement, and thanks, we learn a valuable lesson. Only by admitting one's mistakes and shortcomings can one be in position to give proper thanks. Otherwise, our feelings of gratitude are hindered by a feeling of entitlement. Only by realizing our imperfections and our sins can we express the proper thanks and gratitude and thereby be worthy of acknowledgement by others (see R. Yitzchak Hutner, *Pachad Yitzchak*, Chanukah 2:5).

True Kindness Rabbi Eli Mansour



In the beginning of *Parashat Vayehi*, Yaakov summons Yosef shortly before his death and has him make an oath promising to bring his remains back to *Eretz Yisrael* for burial. Yaakov here asks his son to perform "*chesed ve'emet*" – "kindness and truth" (47:29). Rashi famously explains that the kindness performed with the deceased is "true" kindness because there is no expectation of reciprocity. Generally, even when we perform favors out of a sincere desire to help somebody, we also think in our minds that "what goes around comes around," and that by doing favors for others we put ourselves in a position where we can expect favors from them.

Such thoughts are perfectly legitimate. It is indeed a sign of a healthy society or community if people do favors and feel comfortable asking for favors. Nevertheless, the kindness performed for a deceased person is special, in that it is done out of complete, pure sincerity, as one does not expect anything in return. For this reason, Yaakov refers to the favor he requests from Yosef as "*chesed ve'emet*."

There is also an additional reason why Yaakov used this term specifically in this context. In the next section, we read that Yaakov tells Yosef about the circumstances surrounding the death and burial of his mother, Rachel. He explains that Rachel had died on the road, as Yaakov was journeying, and he felt compelled to bury her along the roadside, rather than give her a proper burial in the family

plot in Hebron. Rashi explains that Yaakov conveyed this information to Yosef because he suspected that Yosef may have harbored hard feelings toward him on account of this perceived slight to his mother's honor. Yaakov explained to Yosef that the roadside burial was necessitated by circumstances, and, moreover, in the future, when the Jewish people would be driven into exile, they would pass by Rachel's grave along the road and pray. Her soul would then petition G-d on their behalf, and it will be in Rachel's merit that the Jews will ultimately return. Yosef therefore had no reason to feel slighted over Rachel's roadside burial, as it was specifically arranged by G-d for the sake of her descendants.

With this in mind, we can return to the phrase "*chesed ve'emet*." Yaakov anticipated some uneasiness on Yosef's part with regard to this request he is now making. Yosef might think to himself, "Why is my father asking me to do for him what he did not do for my mother? Why should I go through the trouble of bringing his remains from Egypt to Canaan if he did not bring my mother's remains to Hebron?" Yaakov therefore emphasized that he was requesting *chesed ve'emet* – true kindness. When one performs true kindness, he does not try to rationalize whether the favor is "deserved." He does it solely out of a desire to fulfill the wishes of another person, without making calculations. This is the kind of "true kindness" that Yaakov was asking Yosef to perform, and this is the type of "true kindness" that we should aspire to perform for other people.

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JOKES

An Apple A Day

They say that an apple a day will keep the doctor away...

Why stop there?

An onion a day will keep everybody away!

Surrounded by Nitwits

I was signing the receipt for my credit card purchase when the clerk noticed that I had never signed my name on the back of the credit card. She informed me that she could not complete the transaction unless the card was signed.

When I asked why, she explained that it was necessary to compare the signature on the credit card with the signature I just signed on the receipt.

So I signed the credit card in front of her. She carefully compared that signature to the one I signed on the receipt. As luck would have it, they matched.

NITWIT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

I live in a semi-rural area. We recently had a new neighbor call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the Deer Crossing sign on our road.

The reason: many deer were being hit by cars and he no longer wanted them to cross there.

NITWIT SIGHTINGS

Sighting #1:

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate, when the airport employee asked, "Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?"

I said, "If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?" He smiled and nodded knowingly, "That's why we ask."

Nitwit Sighting #2:

When my husband and I arrived at an automobile dealership to pick up our car, we were told that the keys had been accidentally locked in it. We went to the service department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver's side door.

As I watched from the passenger's side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered it was open. 'Hey,' I announced to the technician, 'It's open!' 'I know,' answered the young man. 'I already got that side.'



Fairy Tale Beginnings

How do you start a fairy tale in the modern era?

"If elected, I promise..."

Golf Game

"How was your golf game, dear?" asked Jack's wife.

"Well I was hitting pretty well, but my eyesight's gotten so bad I couldn't see where the ball went."

"Well you're 75 years old now, Jack, why don't you take my brother Scott along?" suggested his wife.

"But he's 85 and doesn't even play golf anymore," protested Jack.

"But he's got perfect eyesight. He could watch your ball," his wife pointed out.

The next day Jack teed off with Scott looking on. Jack swung, and the ball disappeared down the middle of the fairway.

"Do you see it?" asked Jack.

"Yup," Scott answered.

"Well, where is it?" yelled Jack, peering off into the distance.

"I forgot."

Lawyers (a shout out to Ari Z)

A man went to his lawyer and said "I would like to make a will but I don't know exactly how to go about it."

The lawyer says "No problem, leave it all to me".

The man looks somewhat upset...

"Well I knew you were going to take the biggest slice, but I'd like to leave a little to my children too!"



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OF ROCKLAND COUNTY**

תומכי שבת ד'ראקלנד קאנטי

לזכר ר' חיים בן שמואל צבי • IN MEMORY OF CHAIM MUNZER Z" L



**THIS SHABBOS HAS
BEEN SPONSORED
IN MEMORY OF**

**ALLEN
NUSSBAUM ע"ה**

**אשר בן
אליעזר ע"ה**

יהי זכרו ברוך

MIRIAM NUSSBAUM

לזכר נשמת
משה בן החבר יחזקאל הלוי ע"ה
קילא בת החבר יצחק ע"ה
אליעזר בן אשר ע"ה
קילא בת אברהם ע"ה

To sponsor a Shabbos for any occasion,
please call, **845.356.0202 x210**
or email ads@tomcheshabbos.org

בית מדרש אור חיים
 BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM
 COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

שובבי"ם
 PROJECT

סדר לימוד שעות רצופות בערבי שבתות

שובבי"ם

שמות - וארא - בא - בשלח - יתרו - משפטים

לפנות בוקר

משעה 4:00 עד 7:00

בבית מדרש אור חיים

18 Forshay Road - Tent ב

מתן שכרה בצדה

יחלק בכל שבוע

ליתר פרטים נא להתקשר

(845) 200-3720 *2

TRANSPORTATION
 AVAILABLE

לע"נ ר' אפרים בן ר' יהושע שאהנפעלד ע"ה