

Yisro | Shevat 15 - 21 | February 13 - 19



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## Shabbos Zmanim

2025 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main  
12:45pm and every 15 minutes until 3:00pm

5:11pm Candle lighting	5:21pm Mincha in tent נ	5:21pm Chabad Mincha	5:29pm Shkiya
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**SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:**

6:11am <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	5:10pm <small>Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos</small>	5:30pm Shkiya	6:10pm Maariv 1	6:15pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!  
6:45 pm and every 15 minutes until 9:15pm | 18 Main

## Weekday Zmanim

*Zmanim for the week of February 16-22*

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	6:49am	8:48am	9:29am	10:23am	12:10pm	4:25pm	5:32pm
Monday	6:48am	8:47am	9:28am	10:22am	12:10pm	4:25pm	5:33pm
Tuesday	6:47am	8:47am	9:28am	10:22am	12:10pm	4:26pm	5:34pm
Wednesday	6:45am	8:46am	9:27am	10:21am	12:10pm	4:27pm	5:35pm
Thursday	6:44am	8:45am	9:26am	10:21am	12:10pm	4:28pm	5:36pm
Friday	6:42am	8:45am	9:25am	10:20am	12:10pm	4:29pm	5:38pm
Shabbos	6:41am	8:44am	9:25am	10:20am	12:09pm	4:30pm	5:39pm



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## Mattan Torah and Purim

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

Chazal in *Maseches Shabbas* tell us that there is a very significant connection between Mattan Torah and Purim. Based on the *pasuk* קיימו וקבלו, we learn that Purim was also a form of Mattan Torah and, in a way, even more powerful. How so? Chazal say that the acceptance of Torah the first time was under duress, basically through the *middah* of *yirah* – fear. However, during Purim, there was a new acceptance, but with the *middah* of *ahava* – love, as Rashi in *Maseches Shabbas* says מאהבת הנס, because of the love the Jewish people felt when they saw the miracle of Purim take place before their eyes.

What was the secret that gave the Jewish people the merit to have a new and even upgraded giving and acceptance of the Torah? The *Ohr HaChaim* in this week's *parsha* delineates three key factors that are needed for being worthy to accept the Torah (see also *Sichos Mussar*, who expands beautifully on each aspect).

I would like to focus on one of the three aspects, which also connects with this year's unique timing of Purim. We have been discussing, both after *davening* in the *vasikin minyan* and on our daily videos, the interesting *halachos* that apply to anyone who is planning on spending Shabbas Purim in Yerushalayim – and hopefully, that includes all of us, with the building of the Bais Hamikdash. Since this year, the 15th of Adar is on Shabbas, the Purim holiday is called Purim Meshulash, which means it spreads over three days, beginning with the *laining* of the *Megillah* Thursday night and Friday morning and with *Al Hanisim* recited. *Parshas Amalek* is read on Shabbas, and Purim ends on Sunday, which

is when the main Purim meal is eaten and *Mishloach Manos* are given.

The fact that Purim is spread over three days makes it even more significant and powerful this year. This is based on a very interesting *Midrash Tanchuma* in this week's *parsha* פיסקא י. The *Midrash* lists many significant things that are *meshulash*, meaning that they act as a triple. For example, the leaders Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam led the Jewish people out of Mitzrayim, the name Moshe is a triple because it has three letters, and many other examples. The *Eitz Yosef* in his commentary explains that the number three has a spiritual and natural power. Purim – which every year has powerful *segulos* – is even more powerful in a year like this when it's a triple.

There is another example of a triple that the *Midrash* mentions, and that is that the Jewish people themselves are made up of Kohanim, Leviyim, and Yisraelim. Furthermore, the Gemara in *Shabbas* calls the Jewish people עם תליתי, a triple nation, and points out that the Torah, which is tripled (Tanach is Torah, Neviim, and Kesuvim) was given to a tripled nation in the third month. What is so powerful about the Jewish people being tripled? Unity, *achdus*. As the Ben Yehoyada explains, we are tripled because we are responsible for each other; we are bound with a triple knot, which is the strongest kind of knot. That is what happen before Mattan Torah, as Chazal tell us on the *pasuk* ויחן שם ישראל – באיש אחד. This was the prelude to Mattan Torah number 1, and it was the same and maybe even more powerful at Mattan Torah 2, during the Purim miracle.

Where do we see how significant our unity during Purim was? We will, *be'ezras Hashem*, discuss that next week.

## WINNING THE BATTLE BUT LOSING THE WAR

Rabbi Yaakov Lieder / Chabad.org

"I got my way in the end," a friend of mine announced proudly after emerging the victor in a long ongoing dispute he was having with a mutual friend of ours. "He'll never start with me again," he added. "Aren't you happy for me?"

Since this was the first time I had heard about this issue, I asked for more details. It became apparent to me that while my friend may have won the battle, he had lost the war. In his case, he has won the dispute but lost a friend. I shared with him the following saying: "It is our anger that gets us into a fight, and it is our ego that keeps us there." People tend to go on fighting about issues even when they are no longer relevant or when their original importance has diminished. They do this for the sake of proving a point and to demonstrate that they are the winners and, more importantly, that the other person is the loser. But often the one who loses the most in the long run is the "victor" himself.

As the wisest of all men, King Solomon, said: "Without strategies, a nation will fall, but salvation lies in much counsel." (*Proverbs* 11:14) To me, this means that we are so caught up by our egos and our opinions that we may miss some very important points and end up losing more than we gain. "What should I have done?" my friend wanted to know. "I didn't feel that it was an ego thing – I was convinced that

I was fighting for the principle!" I offered the following advice: "When you are having a dispute with someone, it is wise to seek out the opinions of three of your friends."

Obviously, the people you seek advice from should have an understanding of the issues involved. After all, you wouldn't ask for financial advice from a person who is bankrupt or relationship advice from a person who has a poor record of human relationships. They also have to be people whose egos are not involved and who have no axe to grind with the person with whom you are in the dispute. Their advice will, therefore, be based on what is best for *you* in this situation. But no less important is that they should be *real friends* — people who care for you enough to tell you what you need to hear rather than what you *want* to hear.

Remember that asking for advice does not show a weakness on your part, but, rather, the strength to realize that you are not perfect and that because you are so emotionally involved, you are seeking outside advice. While it is always pleasing to win an argument, it leaves a bitter aftertaste in the lives of everyone involved — the "winner" as well as the person who lost. My friend would have to decide whether the consequence of losing a friend is a price he is prepared to pay for the pleasure of winning the battle.

# Why Did Jethro Come?



Rabbi YY Jacobson

Note the question of the Talmud about Jethro: “Mah shmuah shama uba?” What did Jethro hear that compelled him to COME? Why would a person of such stature abandon everything in order to pursue an attraction to Torah? What compels an aristocratic spiritual leader to abandon his comfortable habitat and glorious lifestyle and come join a nation of nomads in a desert? Yes, the Torah tells us that he heard what G-d did for Israel and that He took them out of Egypt. But Jethro could have been content with hearing the stories from afar, watching them on CNN or Fox News, reading the blogs, and following the Jews on Facebook. What motivated him to say goodbye to his past and become one of three million Jews?

You can sit on your couch on Sunday and be a fan of one team or another; you can be an admirer, a cheerer, a supporter. But why did Jethro feel the need to undergo a metamorphosis from spectator to player? Why did he have to link his fate to the Jewish fate? For this, the Sages present three alternative answers. For one, Jethro witnessed the war of Amalek against the Israelites; for the other, Jethro heard of the Torah. For the third, he heard of the splitting of the sea. These three events capture the three timeless features that embody the Jewish story. Here, we’ll focus on the third.

“Rabbi Eliezer says: He heard about the splitting of the sea, and he came.”

The splitting of the sea demonstrated to Jethro a component of the Jewish story: The people of Israel transcended the laws of nature and the deterministic patterns of history. The largest seas, mightiest oceans, and fiercest tsunamis would not drown them. Throughout their history, they would encounter impossible odds, and yet they would cross every sea and come out on the other side stronger, more vibrant, more alive, and determined. A nation that endured Crusades, Inquisitions, pogroms, massacres, gas chambers, crematoriums, and suicide bombings and yet inexplicably emerged, pulsating with a love for life and a zest for peace, this is a people whose narrative transcends the formulas of natural history.

Jethro understood what the great Russian novelist, Leo Tolstoy, articulated in a 1908 article:

The Jew is that sacred being who has brought down from heaven the everlasting fire, and has illuminated with it the entire world. He is the religious source, spring, and fountain out of which all the rest of the peoples have drawn their beliefs and their religions. The Jew is the emblem of eternity. He, who neither slaughter nor torture of thousands of years could destroy, he who neither fire, nor sword, nor Inquisition was able to wipe off the face of the earth. He, who was the first to produce the Oracles of God. He, who has been for so long the Guardian of Prophecy and has transmitted it to the rest of the world. Such a nation cannot be destroyed. The Jew is as everlasting as Eternity itself.

Jethro understood that to experience this immortality, he must leave his mansion in Midian and join the nomads in the desert. To become part of a story that transcends nature, you must transcend your own nature and actively join the symphony of eternity.

Jethro was not Jewish. Yet, he made an awesome sacrifice in order to join the Jewish people and internalize Torah. We were given this gift by birth. Will we not leave our comfort zones to embrace it, celebrate it, study it, and make it part of 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.

# Lashon Hara Dilemma

Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

In the summer, I am a day camp counselor, and I work with a junior counselor. This year, my cousin Devorah applied to be a junior counselor in my camp. I heard that the head counselor is planning to have us work together since we’re cousins. But the truth is, I don’t want to work with her because I know she always ducks out of responsibilities. Even when someone calls her out on it, she just laughs and says, “So what? I’m lazy!” I can predict she won’t be much help, and I’ll probably end up being very frustrated with her.

Can I tell the head counselor that I’d prefer not to work with my cousin?

Rachel



Yes, Rachel may ask that the head counselor give her a different junior counselor. However, she should try to explain that she would prefer a different type of girl to work with, without saying anything negative about Devorah.

One of the conditions of speaking *loshon hora* l’to’eles is that we must first speak to the subject about the issue. If that’s not possible, or the subject will not accept the rebuke, we can skip this step. That’s the case here because Rachel feels uncomfortable giving Devorah constructive criticism (and we can assume it probably won’t help). Also, Rachel might not be able to give her utmost to her campers if she has to deal with a junior counselor with whom she doesn’t work well.

# UFARATZTA



## THE POWER OF TEHILLIM IS IN THE LETTERS AND NEKUDOS

...The main holiness in the *Tehillim* is in the letters and vowels [*nekudos*] that Hashem our G-d gave us at Mount Sinai. And all those who say the chapters of *Tehillim* as it was given, [as it is written in *loshon hakodesh*] even if they do not understand what they are saying, it is considered in Hashem’s eyes as an *olah* and sacrifice. Hashem Yisborach should help all our brethren *sheyichyu* wherever they are with whatever they need, physically and spiritually.

==== The Previous Rebbe, RaYyatz. *Igros Kodesh Moireinu HaRaYyatz Volume 4, p. 459*

# The Importance of the Mitzvah of Kibud Av Va'eim

~Night Kollel~ ~Kollel Boker~



by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Night Kollel & Morning Kollel

As we learn about the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim* in Parshas Yisro, I would like to share some highlights about the importance of this unique *mitzvah*.

## Hakaras Hatov

The *Shulchan Aruch* tells us that one must be extremely vigilant in the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim*. The *Sefer Hachinuch* explains the importance of the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim*, that it is in order to demonstrate our appreciation for all that our parents have done for us since the very beginning of our existence. When one realizes how truly indebted he is to his parents, he will make every effort to please them and fulfill their every wish. Conversely, one who does not recognize the goodness that he has received from them is a disgrace in the eyes of others.

He then takes this to the next level and asserts that by inculcating in oneself this important *middah* of *hakaras hatov*, a person will come to understand and appreciate the tremendous kindness that we receive from Hashem. Once a person trains himself to think about how much he receives from others, he will realize how utterly beholden we are to Hashem for our very existence and for every breath that we take and every step that we go.

This concept is also spelled out in the *Yotzros of Shavuos*, which discuss how everyone must obey their parents because they do so much for their children. Just to mention a partial listing: davening for them, providing them with all their necessities, often staying up nights, and going the extra mile to take care of them, both when they are in good health and when they are sick.

The *Chovos Halevavos (Shaar Cheshbon Hanefesh)* elaborates on this point as to how much we must appreciate Hashem's kindness to us. He points to the following: Imagine that there is a child who was abandoned on the side of the road, and a couple found this child and took him into their home and took care of his every need. This child, when he realizes what they did for him and how they literally saved his life, will have untold gratitude to them forever. Certainly, we should feel the same toward Hashem, who takes care of us all.

Similarly, imagine someone who is in desperate need of a vital organ – such as a kidney – and finally found someone who was willing to donate the organ. The recipient would be beholden to his benefactor for the rest of his life and never cease to thank them for their benevolence. The fact that Hashem gave us a healthy body from birth, along with many other wonderful amenities, is all the more reason to be thankful.

## Mitzvah of Kibud Av Va'eim – Bein Adam Lamakom

Why is this *mitzvah* in the first half of the *Aseres Hadibros*, the place for the *mitzvos bein adam lamakom*, between a person and Hashem? Since we have seen that the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim* is to show *hakaras hatov* to one's parents and serve as a catalyst to appreciate the kindness of Hashem, it has a place among the other *mitzvos bein adam lamakom*.

Another reason can be found in the *Minchas Chinuch*. He suggests that the concept of *mitzvos bein adam lachaveiro* (interpersonal *mitzvos*) is only applicable when it is incumbent on all people alike. Since the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim* is something that only applies to one's children, it may fall under the category

of *bein adam lamakom*. According to this suggestion, it is understandable that the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim* is written on the first half of the *luchos*, since it is considered a *mitzvah bein adam lamakom*.

## Halachic Ramifications

This is not just a theoretical discussion; there may be *halachic* ramifications as well. When it comes to *mitzvos bein adam lamakom*, as soon as a person does proper *teshuvah*, he achieves atonement. However, in regards to *mitzvos bein adam lachaveiro*, there is a prerequisite; one will not attain atonement until he requests forgiveness from the person who was slighted. If a person slighted his parent, does he need them to forgive in order to get atonement? If it is a *mitzvah bein adam lamakom*, requesting forgiveness is not required. But if it is a *mitzvah bein adam lachaveiro*, the sinner will not attain atonement until he requests their forgiveness.

## Summary

This *mitzvah* is based on the all-important *middah* of *hakaras hatov* to one's parents and is the foundation and stepping stone to reach the proper level of *avodas Hashem* and appreciation of Hashem's infinite kindness. It is, therefore, also considered a *mitzvah bein adam lamakom*.

### Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

- Chavrusa learning - Gemara
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- Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics

NIGHT KOLLEL | 8:15-9:45pm

- Chavrusa learning - Halacha
- Currently: הלכות קריאת התורה

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## Is Gehinom Hot or Cold?

20:19 "אתם ראתם כי מן השמים דברתי עמכם"

Why does the Torah tell us that Hashem spoke to Moshe from שמים, the Heavens? The *Nefesh Hachaim* says that there are two types of *yetzer hara*: one is hot, and one is cold. When the *yetzer hara* provokes one to do an *aveirah*, he does so by heating up the fire of his desires. When the *yetzer hara* seeks to cause a person not to perform a *mitzvah*, he does not do so with fire, but rather, he does it with cold; he cools off the person's desire to perform his *Avodas Hashem*.

With this explanation, we can understand why the Torah is compared to אש, fire, as it says in *Yirmiyah* 23:29 "הלא כה" "דברי באש." At the same time, the Torah is also compared to water, as it says in *Yeshaya* 55:1 "הוי כל צמא לבו מים." Torah is the antidote for the *yetzer hara*, as the Gemara in *Kiddushin* 30 says, "בראתי יצר הרע בראתי לו תורה תבלין."

The *yetzer hara* comes with two *kochos*: the power of heat, which is fire, and the power of cold, which is water. The Torah is both hot and cold, to counteract both powers of the *yetzer hara*. The Torah is *meramez* to the same concept in this *posuk* - *Bamidbar* 31:23 "ואכל" "אשר לא יבא באש תעבירו במים" – If one can use the fire to fight the *yetzer hara*, good. If not, one needs to use water.

This was also why Hakodosh Boruch Hu revealed Himself from שמים on Har Sinai. *Bereishis Rabbah* 4:7 – The word שמים comes from אש and מים. Hashem spoke to Klal Yisroel from

מים, as a *remez* that the Torah, which is also אש and מים, is the antidote against the *yetzer hara*. "אלהי כסף" refers to the *koach* of the *yetzer hara* made from cold, which is water, and silver is compared to water. "ואלהי זהב" refers to the *koach* of the *yetzer hara* that comes from heat, which is fire, and is compared to gold. One should not allow the *yetzer hara* to use these two *kochos*. Rather, one should use the Torah to combat the efforts of the *yetzer hara* and follow in the ways of Hashem. (ברכת הרי"ח)

חזקיה אמר: משפט רשעים בגיהנם שנים עשר חדש – ששה חדשים "בחמה, וששה חדשים בצינה" – "Chizkiyah says: The judgment for the wicked is for twelve months – 6 months in heat, and 6 months in cold." Midrash Tanchuma *Parshas Re'ah* 13

The *shomayim* is made of fire and water, hot and cold. They are diametrically opposed, yet in their service to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, they work in tandem and become one unit – שמים. We must know that there is an exact accounting for everything that happens in this world, and Hakodosh Boruch Hu is *mashgiach* over all. We must serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu through the *Torah Hakdoshah*, with both hot and cold. The Torah has it all – all ways to fight the *yetzer hara*. *Chas v'sholom*, one who does not do so will be judged for it exactly – hot for hot and cold for cold. We saw at Matan Torah the direct connection, and our entire lives must be a work in progress fostering that connection with Hakodosh Boruch Hu so that we completely connect ourselves to Him.

## Is Anyone Listening? Is There Anyone Home?

וישמע יתרו... (יח, א)  
"And Yisro heard ... and he acted."

Nowadays, children are crying out from deep inside their souls:

- Do you hear me?
- Do I mean anything to you?
- Does my opinion count? Do my feelings matter?

Are we answering?

Reb Yechiel, a melamed from Bnei Brak, had the custom of taking one of his sons for a walk in the park every once in a while to see what was on their minds. Together, they walked down the paths, shmoozing, joking, and connecting with each other. One day during their walk, they stopped to sit on a bench. Across from them was a boy in a black leather jacket and spiked earrings, the son of a well-known family who had fallen from observance.

As father and son sat and laughed and talked, they heard the boy, who had been staring at them with sad eyes, suddenly break into uncontrollable sobbing. Reb Yechiel got up, walked over to the boy, put his arm around him, and tried to calm him down. Looking up at Reb Yechiel's

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



concerned eyes, the boy cried even harder. After a few minutes, he shocked Reb Yechiel with the following words:

"If only my father had taken the time to walk and talk and joke with me in the park like you are doing today with your son. *If only he had done that once*, I would never have joined the terrible world that I am a part of now. If only he had put his arm around me like you are doing now..."

These words cut like a knife straight through to Reb Yechiel's soul. He thought to himself, *What has happened to our world? Have we forgotten how to show that we care? Have we thrown affection to the winds in our straight-laced world? Have we distorted the love that was given to us to pass on to the next generation?*

Hug your children today and tell them that you love them. It will make them stronger, heal them, and protect them from the cold winds that blow without mercy in today's world.

# Moshol of the Week

Dubner Maggid

"Six days shall you work and accomplish all your work; but the seventh day is Shabbos to Hashem, your G-d..." (20:9, 10)

A poor villager was trekking many miles to his destination in the next village. He staggered along under the weight of his enormous pack when suddenly, a horse and wagon pulled up alongside him. "Climb aboard!" the driver of the wagon shouted down to him. The villager huffed and puffed his way up onto the back of the wagon, the driver shook his reins, and the horses obediently started to trot. A few miles down the road, the villager said to the driver, "I can't thank you enough. This is really very kind of you!" "Not at all," said the driver, turning to smile at the villager in the back of the wagon. It was then that he noticed that the villager was sitting crumpled forward with his heavy pack still on his back. Exclaimed the driver, "Why haven't you taken your pack off, you fool?" The villager replied in all innocence, "Well, you've been so kind carrying me, I didn't want to burden you with the extra weight of my pack as well!"

If Hashem can 'carry' us all week, making sure that we have food to eat, clothes to wear, cars to drive, and even air to breathe, He can certainly bear the 'added load' of supporting us on Shabbos, even if we don't go into the office!



# Zera Shimshon

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

## What Did Yisro Hear About?

וישמע יתרו וגו' את כל אשר עשה אלקים למשה ולישראל עמו כי מוציא ה' את ישראל ממצרים.

*Yisro heard everything that Hashem did to Moshe and Yisroel, His people, that Hashem had taken Yisroel out of Egypt (18:1).*

Rashi, quoting the Gemara (*Sota* 12b), says that Yisro heard about the splitting of the Yam Suf and the war with Amalek, and these two events caused him to join the Jewish people.

The Zera Shimshon asks: How did Chazal know that it was specifically these two things that made Yisro join the Jewish people in the desert? Also, it seems that it was both of these happenings together that made Yisro come and that one or the other alone would not have made Yisro decide to come and join the Jewish people.

The Zera Shimshon explains that earlier (*Shemos* 1:10), Rashi explains that the Egyptians decided to get rid of the Jewish people via water. They chose this method because they were aware that Hashem punishes measure for measure, and He had already promised that He would never punish the world again with a flood. What they did not understand was that although Hashem promised not to bring a flood on the *entire* world, He never promised not to eradicate a country with a flood. As well, Hashem promised not to bring a flood upon dry land. However, He still could punish those who sinned with water by bringing them to the water itself.

The difference that Yisro saw between these two possibilities was that even though He had promised not to bring a flood, bringing a flood on only one country and not the world would be considered acting craftily (*chas veshalom*) to get around His promise, whereas not bringing a flood at all and just having the Egyptians come by themselves into the water and drowning would not be since Hashem didn't bring any form of flood.

When Yisro saw that Hashem chose to bring the Egyptians to the water as opposed to bringing a flood to Egypt, he was close to concluding that in other promises, Hashem would not do something (that Yisro deemed) crafty to get out of the promise He made, namely, the promise He made to the forefathers that He would not destroy the Jewish nation.

Technically, Hashem could have said that this promise was only if they acted properly, but if they stepped out of line, the promise was irrelevant. Now that Hashem chose to bring the Egyptians to the water, and they themselves entered the water, rather than bringing the flood on them in their own land, Yisro considered joining the Jewish people, because he was almost convinced that Hashem wouldn't evade His promise not to destroy the Jewish people.

This, however, was still unclear to Yisro since the Medrash (*Bereishis Rabba* 97:3) says that when Moshe Rabbeinu was taken out of the Nile, all the other babies that were thrown into the Nile came out alive. Thus, in reality, the Egyptians did not kill any of the Jewish children. For this reason, Yisro thought that perhaps that was why Hashem didn't bring the flood on the Egyptians in Egypt but, rather, brought them to the water. Therefore, Yisro was still undecided about how Hashem dealt with His promises.

However, this was firmly proven to Yisro when the Jews fought Amalek. At that time, the Jews were not in the best spiritual state, as the *passuk* says (*Shemos* 17:7) that they doubted Hashem by saying, "...Is Hashem among us or not?" Still, Hashem did not allow Amalek to destroy them. This proved to Yisro that indeed, even when the Jews were not righteous, Hashem did not look for a way out of His promise not to destroy them. That is when he decided to join the Jewish people.

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:

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 that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth*

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Thursday, February 20

4:15 PM

TENT ד'

## The Haftarah of Parshat Yisro

Rabbi Nachman Winkler

The vivid and dramatic vision seen by the navi Yishayahu in our haftarah is, as we have noted in earlier essays, the very first prophecy given to the prophet, despite the fact that it appears in the sixth perek of the sefer. The magnificent and awe-inspiring scene depicted by the prophet, the picture of Hashem seated upon His high and exalted throne with His "robe" filling the *Heichal* (Temple) was chosen as the haftarah for this *parsha* of Yisro, a *parsha* that depicts G-d's glory being revealed to all of Israel at Har Sinai.

And, while the theophany experienced by the entire nation would never again be repeated and was, therefore, the greatest divine revelation in history, the vision granted to Yishayahu included specific details of Hashem's throne and His accompanying angels not found in the revelation at Sinai. The prophet describes these accompanying angels – *seraphim* – as possessing six wings: two wings covering their faces, two covering their feet, and two used for flying. It is they who called to each other: "Holy, Holy, Holy (*Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh*) is Hashem Whose glory fills the Earth." The vision was so powerful that we, simple human beings, had their chant incorporated into our *tefilla*, hence, our "*Kedusha*."

Some years ago, my colleague, Phil Chernofsky, pointed out that there was yet another part of Yishayahu's vision that was incorporated into our *tefilla*: the phrase describing G-d as One Who is seated upon "*kiseh rahm v'nissa*." A high and exalted throne is used each Shabbat and yom tov when we say, "*HaMelech HaYoshev al kishah rahm v'nissa*." Phil claimed, however, that the usual translation of the words as meaning that G-d sat upon a high and exalted throne was not correct. Rather, he argued, the phrase requires a comma after the word "*kiseh*," throne, because the meaning of the text is NOT that the throne was "high and exalted" but that Hashem Himself is being described in those words, i.e., Hashem sits upon a throne and He (G-d) is high and exalted.

I will admit that I was not convinced. I felt that the adjectives "high" and "exalted" referred to the throne itself. I am happy – and humbled – to have seen another source who understood this phrase as Phil did.

In the collected essays found in *Worship of the Heart*, HaRav Soloveitchik sees the two terms "*rahm*" and "*nissa*" as expressing an exaltedness and loftiness that is beyond the created universe, something that is transcendent. Therefore, writes the Rav, Yishayahu in this vision portrays a paradoxical view of G-d. In one aspect, Hashem remains distant from and far above His creations. He is "*rahm*." On the other hand, He is also "*nissa*," which Rav Soloveitchik understands as a passive verb – that is, He can be "acted upon," He can be "influenced" by others and impacted by them. This unique attribute of G-d is most evident in the act of prayer.

How remarkable it is that we refer to Hashem as One Who is "*Shome'ah Tefilla*," "sensitive" to prayer; One Who listens and responds to our supplications. How often during our *tefillot* do we realize the remarkable act of connecting to One Who is "*rahm*"? How common is our realization that we are able to speak to the very Creator Who stands far above His very creations who pray to Him? Do we really appreciate the fact that G-d is not only "*rahm*" but is "*nissa*," allowing Himself to listen to our entreaties? The "danger" of our daily prayer is that we become far too comfortable with it. How much more meaningful would our *tefillot* be if, every now and then, we remember that the "*RAHM*" bends His ear and becomes a "*NISSA*" to respond to His people?!



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# The Love of Torah Kinder Torah / ohr.edu

The Medrash *Tanchuma* relates that Yisro had seven names. One of them was Chovav, which means dear. Why was Yisro called Chovav? Because he cherished the Torah.

Rav Mordechai Gifter *zt"l* once went with his son-in-law, Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, to a diamond dealer in Manhattan. The dealer explained to the rav the details of the size and value of the diamonds. Some of the diamonds were so small that their beauty could only be appreciated with a microscope. Yet, the dealer was very careful with each and every diamond, no matter how small. Rabbi Feuer related that Rav Gifter valued each and every word of Torah as a great treasure in the same way that the diamond dealer valued even the smallest diamonds.

Once Rabbi Feuer told Rav Gifter a *chiddush* (original Torah thought) on *Mesecta Eruvin* from one of his congregants. Rav Gifter, upon hearing this, was so elated that he got up, took his son-in-law's hand, and began dancing around the dining room table singing, "*Tov li Toras picha me-alfei zahav vokesef.*" (The Torah of Your mouth is better for me than thousands in gold and silver. - *Tehillim* 119:72)

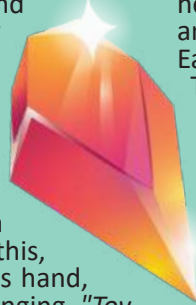
The rav was once giving a *shiur* (lecture) to the entire yeshiva.

His *shiurim* were very deep and complicated, and to interrupt him was unthinkable. A young student stood up in the middle of the *shiur* and asked a question. Rav Gifter walked several feet across the room and gave this young man a big kiss on the forehead. That is how much he valued the student's words of Torah.

The Radak explains the following verse in *Tehillim* (84:6): "The man whose strength is in You is fortunate; it forms paths in his heart." Constant learning and striving to increase the knowledge and wisdom of Hashem's Torah will make paths into your heart. Each day, you will traverse those paths and strengthen them. That is the secret to the love of Torah. Learn it constantly. It will enter your heart.

## KINDERLACH ...

Someone who loves another person cannot bear to be separated from them. They want to be together all of the time. A person who loves a particular place or thing also cannot bear to leave it. That is what we are striving for in Torah. Rav Gifter *zt"l* learned so much Torah with such fire that his love for it grew very strong, so strong that he and the Torah became inseparable. In his memory, let us strive to emulate him. Try to increase your learning. And try to learn with real enthusiasm. Keep in mind that the Torah that you are learning is more valuable than diamonds.



## This Is Personal Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

*And Yisro...heard everything that Hashem did to Moshe and to Bnei Yisroel...*" (18:1)

Rashi cites the Midrash on this verse, which states that upon hearing of the splitting of the Red Sea and the war waged against Amalek, Yisro is moved to join the Jewish people. Eight verses after this verse, when Moshe repeats the miracles that Hashem performed on behalf of Bnei Yisroel, Rashi again comments that he related to Yisro the splitting of the Red Sea and Bnei Yisroel's miraculous victory over Amalek. Rashi adds that this was done to bring Yisro closer to Torah. What is Moshe adding in his description of these two miracles that would impact Yisro in a stronger manner than previously?

After hearing Moshe's account of these miracles, the Torah says, "*Vayichad Yisro.*" Rashi offers the following two explanations for this expression: "And Yisro was happy (for the miracles performed on behalf of Bnei Yisroel)," from the Aramaic word "*chadi*" – "happiness," and "Yisro felt discomfort," from the word "*chad*" – "sharp," for his flesh felt as if it were covered with lacerations. Based upon the second interpretation, our Rabbis formulated the rule that a person is prohibited from speaking disparagingly about a gentile in the presence of a convert. Why do the Rabbis use the expression "*al tevazeh*" – "do not disparage"? How did Moshe speak disparagingly about Mitzrayim? Furthermore, if it is the downfall of Mitzrayim that causes Yisro distress, not only should disparaging comments be prohibited, but all comments describing the ill fortune of gentiles should be prohibited as well.

A just king who sentences his subject for committing a crime will mete out a punishment commensurate to the crime involved. However, if the crime is perpetrated against his own son, the king will inflict a much harsher punishment upon the

criminal for having caused his child anguish. Initially, Yisro is motivated to join Bnei Yisroel by the punitive measures taken against Mitzrayim for the crimes they perpetrated. When Moshe recounts the miracles that were punishments to Amalek and Mitzrayim, the verse states "*al odos Bnei Yisroel*" – "on account of Bnei Yisroel."

Whereas Yisro originally understood that Mitzrayim's punishment was *quid pro quo* for their wicked behavior, Moshe is adding that the punishment was meted out with additional wrath, for their crimes were committed against Hashem's children, Bnei Yisroel. It is this added element that causes Yisro distress, for Moshe is, in effect, declaring that Hashem's relationship with Bnei Yisroel is so unique that He will destroy any nation that mistreats Bnei Yisroel. This fact is disparaging to the nations of the world, and therefore, the rule forbidding us to speak disparagingly of a gentile in the presence of a convert is formulated from this incident.

The manner in which Hashem relates to Bnei Yisroel or to the nations of the world can be ascertained by the way He is described. "Elokim" is used when Hashem's judgment is being invoked, indicating punitive action, while the ineffable name "*yud-kay-vov-kay*" reflects Hashem's attribute of love or mercy. When the verse states that Yisro is motivated to join Bnei Yisroel because of what Hashem did to Bnei Yisroel's enemies, the name "Elokim" is used, for it is Yisro's understanding that this was a purely punitive action. When Moshe recounts the miracles to Yisro, Hashem's ineffable name is used, for Moshe is explaining that the impetus for the punishment is not the crimes perpetrated by Mitzrayim and Amalek but, rather, by Hashem's love for Bnei Yisroel, against whom the crimes had been perpetrated.

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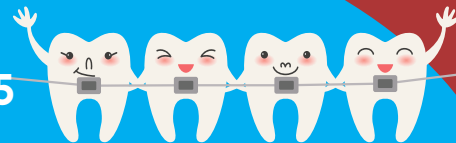
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# On the Wings of Eagles

Rabbi Efrem Goldberg



Before *Matan Torah*, Hashem spoke to Moshe and instructed him to convey to the Bnai Yisrael the basic terms of the covenant into which they would now be entering. Hashem introduced His remarks by recalling the miracles of Yetzias Mitzrayim: "You saw what I did to Egypt, and that I carried you on the wings of eagles, and brought you to Me." (19:4)

Rashi explains the metaphor "on the wings of eagles" to mean that God protected Bnai Yisrael from the Egyptians as an eagle protects its young. An eagle soars higher than other birds, so it places its young on its wings, where they are safe. If a hunter fires an arrow, it will pierce the body of the parent instead of harming the young. Hashem protected Am Yisrael the same way, shielding them from the arrows fired by the Egyptian soldiers as they pursued them after they left Egypt.

Rav Shaul Alter shlit"á, the Gerrer Rosh Yeshiva, offered an additional explanation of this metaphor. The Talmud Yerushalmi (Avoda Zara 3:1) relates that Alexander the Great flew to the heavens riding on the back of an eagle while holding a stick with an animal carcass in front of it. The eagle tried reaching for the carcass, flying higher and higher until it reached outer space. Alexander looked down at the Earth and was unimpressed. It appeared to him as a tiny orb, and he felt he could just hold it in his hand. This is why statues of Alexander commonly depict him as holding a globe in his hand – because when he reached the heavens, he looked down at Earth and saw it as a tiny, insignificant ball that he could just grab with his hand.

Of course, this experience should have had the precise opposite effect on Alexander. Flying into space ought to be humbling, as one catches a glimpse of the vastness of the universe and the smallness and powerlessness of man. However, in one sense, Alexander was correct. When we rise to the heavens, things that appear very large here on Earth suddenly seem tiny. Many of us experience this awareness when we fly in airplanes. We look down at the buildings and structures that are grand and impressive when seen down here, but from the skies, they seem minuscule.

Rav Shaul Alter explained that this might be the meaning of the phrase *Esah eschem al kanfei nesharim* as part of God's introduction to *Matan Torah*. One of the purposes of the Torah is to lift us high into the heavens, as it were, to give us a more accurate perspective on the world and on life. Many things that would otherwise seem large and critically important become trivial and hardly worthy of attention when seen from the prism of the Torah. When we immerse ourselves in the Torah, we are able to perceive events and experiences in our life from a different perspective, such that they become less troubling and less deserving of our time and energy.

There is a concept called the "5-by-5 rule," which says that anything that will not bother us in five years should not occupy our minds for more than five minutes now. Sometimes, upsetting things happen, and it is natural to feel troubled and frustrated. But if something happens that will not upset us in five years, it is not worth our attention. It is only natural to keep it in our minds for five minutes, but not any longer. Such matters are simply undeserving of our mental or emotional energy.

The Torah helps us develop this "5-by-5" perspective. When our priorities and concerns are molded by the Torah, upsetting and frustrating situations become smaller and less significant. They weigh less on our minds and hearts because we see them from "the wings of eagles," from the perspective of the lofty ideals and values of the Torah, such that the day-to-day problems and frustrations become so much less important and so much easier to handle.

# Yisro's Escorts

Torah Tavlin

When Yisro arrived in the desert, he sent a message to Moshe saying: "I, Yisro, your father-in-law, am coming to you, as well as your wife and her two sons. If you will not come out for my sake, come out for your wife's sake, and if you will not come out for your wife's sake, come out for the sake of her two sons." (Rashi) Doesn't this seem a bit presumptuous on the part of Yisro to demand that Moshe "come out" to escort him, his daughter, and his grandchildren into the Jewish camp? Was this Yisro, demanding that his son-in-law show him some respect? No, relates the *Medrash Tanchuma*, Yisro was not looking for respect. Rather, he was forced to request that Moshe come get him since the camp of Bnei Yisroel was encircled by the ענני הכבוד - the Heavenly Clouds of Glory, which prevented unwanted visitors or objects (like enemy missiles) from entering. He simply couldn't get in!

Thinking fast, Yisro wrote his message on the length of an arrow and sent the arrow soaring through the clouds (which parted temporarily to allow this important message to get through). The *Medrash* further relates that Uziel, the uncle of Moshe and Aharon, found the arrow and brought it to his nephew. When Moshe realized who was waiting for him outside the camp, he quickly made his way outside, followed by Aharon, his sons, and the Elders. When people saw the impressive group walking, they, too, followed suit, and Yisro was greeted with great respect by the huge throng of people.

Chassidim have a way of becoming ecstatic in their adoration of the Rebbe. On one occasion, the Bobover Rebbe, R' Benzion Halberstam zt"l (the *Kedushas Tzion*), came to a town where a throng of his admirers came out to greet him. In their fervor, they unhitched the horses from the Rebbe's coach and put the harness over themselves, dragging his wagon into town. The Rebbe protested vehemently. "No, no," he pleaded. "You're missing the point. My life's work is to convert animals into *mentschen* (people of integrity), and instead, you are making *mentschen* into horses."



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# JOKES

## Job Interview

**Applicant:** (Shows up 45 minutes late for interview to be a cable installer)

**Interviewer:** "You're hired."

**Employer:** "We need someone for this job who is responsible."

**Applicant:** "Sir, your search ends here. In my previous job, whenever anything went wrong, they said I was responsible."

steps. Putting her face in her hands, she moaned, "I come home to find all my possessions stolen. I call the police for help, and what do they do? They send me a BLIND policeman!"



## Easy answers:

**1. Why don't skeletons fight each other?**

They don't have the guts.

**2. What do you call cheese that isn't yours?**

Nacho cheese!

**3. Why did the scarecrow win an award?**

Because he was outstanding in his field.

**4. What do you get when you cross a snowman and a vampire?**

Frostbite!

**5. Why don't eggs tell jokes?**

They'd crack each other up.

**6. What do you call fake spaghetti?**

An impasta!

**7. Why did the math book look sad?**

Because it had too many problems.

**8. What do you call a bear with no teeth?**

A gummy bear!

**9. What do you call a fish wearing a bowtie?**

Sofishticated

## The Black Eye

One night, a lady stumbled into the police station with a black eye. She claimed she heard a noise in her back yard and went to investigate. The next thing she knew, she was hit in the eye and knocked out cold.

An officer was sent to her house to investigate, and he returned 1 1/2 hours later with a black eye.

"Did you get hit by the same person?" his captain asked.

"No," he replied. "I stepped on the same rake."

## Good advice...

A mother mouse and a baby mouse are walking along when, all of a sudden, a cat attacks them. The mother mouse goes, "BARK!!" and the cat runs away.

"See?" says the mother mouse to her baby, "How important it is for you to learn a foreign language?"

## The Burglary

Returning home from work, a Chelmer women was shocked to find her house ransacked and burglarized. She telephoned the police at once and reported the crime. The police dispatcher broadcast the call on the radio, and a K-9 unit patrolling nearby was the first to respond.

As the K-9 officer approached the house with his dog on a leash, the Chelmer ran out on the porch, shuddered at the sight of the cop and his dog, then sat down on the

## Who's calling?

Breindy, a teenager, had been talking on the phone for almost half an hour and then hung up.

"Wow!" remarked her father, "That was short. You usually talk for 2 hours or more. What happened?"

"Oh," Breindy smiled, "It was a wrong number."



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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