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Shabbos Zmanim **CANDLE LIGHTING 4:11 PM**

EARLY FRIDAY MINCHA: 12:15 PM & every 15 minutes until 3:00 PM | 18 Main

FRIDAY NIGHT MINCHA/KABALLAS SHABBOS

18 Main 4:21 PM	20 Upstairs Chabad 4:16 PM	Shkiya 4:29 PM
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SHABBOS

SHACHRIS	20 Upstairs-Vasikin 6:20 AM	18 Main-Ashkenaz 8:00 AM	Tent א 9:15 AM	20 Upstairs - Chabad 10:00 AM	in 18 Main 10:30 AM
MINCHA/MAARIV	Pirchei 2:00 PM	18 Main Mincha 4:10 PM	Shkiya 4:28 PM	Tent א Maariv :40 5:08 PM	18 Main Maariv :50 5:18 PM

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MINCHA: MINCHA GEDOLA

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12 MIN. before plag

12 MIN. before shkia

MAARIV: PLAG

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RABBI DANIEL COREN



In Honor of an Aufruf and an Upcoming Wedding

The *parsha* begins with Yaakov Avinu traveling toward Charan, leaving behind the holiness of his parents' home, and stepping into the unknown. Chazal reveal that he did not go straight there—he first stopped to learn in the yeshiva of Shem v'Eiver. But even more, the Midrash uncovers a profound spiritual test Yaakov faced specifically regarding finding a wife.

Chazal connect this moment with *Kapitel* 121, "Shir LaMa'alos, Esa Einai..." The Rama MiPano explains that this is the *segulah* to say when seeking one's *zivug*. Why? Because this very chapter is woven into the Midrash of our *parsha*, tied directly to Yaakov's quest to build his home.

The Midrash continues with the well-known story of Rabbi Yosi bar Chalafita and the Roman noblewoman who asked him:

"What has Hashem been doing since Creation?"

He answered: "Making *shidduchim*."

She mocked the idea. "That's difficult? I can do that myself!"—and paired a thousand men with a thousand women. By the next morning, there was chaos: broken bones and black eyes. The noblewoman conceded—there is indeed a Creator Who runs the world.

Rav Geli zt"l asked: What exactly changed for the noblewoman?

What did she suddenly understand? And similarly, what changed for Yaakov Avinu? He said, "Esa einai el heharim"—I lift my eyes—but then immediately asks, "Me'ayin yavo ezri?"

Chazal add his deeper words: "Ma ana me'abed sevri mi Bore?"—

"I will not lose my trust in my Creator."

Rather, "Ezri me'im Hashem"—my help comes from Hashem alone.

What shifted in Yaakov's mind, and what is the message for us?

The Answer: *Shidduchim* reveal our true lack of control.

If we are honest, in almost all areas of life, we human beings still believe—deep down—that we can run things. We plan, we calculate, we strategize. And often, it works.

But *shidduchim* are the one area where even the strongest human illusions collapse.

You can have the best suggestions, the most compatible profiles, the greatest conversations—and somehow it doesn't click.

Or you can have a *shidduch* that seems impossible—and suddenly everything falls perfectly into place.

Shidduchim teach a person something much deeper than *emunah*.

They teach *bitul*—surrender of the ego, humility before the Ribbono Shel Olam, a recognition that building a *bayis ne'eman* is not a human

project—it is a Divine masterpiece.

This is what the noblewoman saw.

Not that Hashem can make *shidduchim*, but that humans fundamentally cannot.

This is what Yaakov understood when he said, "Me'ayin yavo ezri?"

From where will my help come? From nowhere—nowhere except Hashem.

And we saw this clearly with the *shidduchim* of Yaakov, Yosef, and Tamar.

Every step revealed the hand of Hashem, every moment showed how little human beings truly control, and how beautifully Hashem guides the lives of His children.

And that is the gift: the knowledge, the clarity, the *emunah*, and the deeper *bitachon* that grows from the *shidduch* process.

A Bracha

May this *shidduch* be a *kiddush Hashem*, an everlasting source of light, health, happiness, and inspiration for many generations to come.

May the home built from this union be like the home of Yaakov Avinu—filled with the recognition that "Ezri me'im Hashem," and guided always by the loving Hand of the One Who continues—every moment—to make *shidduchim*.

SHIUR SCHEDULE

SEMICHAS CHAVER SHIUR
in R' Coren's office
every Sunday at 8:00 PM

RABBI YAKOV YOSEF SCHECHTER



Gan HaTorah

... והנה, והנה – "SURPRISE"

יחלם והנה סלם מצב ארצה וראשו מגיע השמימה, והנה מלאכי אלקים עלים וירדים בו. והנה ד' נצב עליו...

"And he dreamt, and behold, a ladder was set Earthward, and its top reached heavenward; and behold, angels of Hashem were ascending and descending on it." "And behold, Hashem was standing over him..." Yaakov Avinu had a dream (a vision, a *nevuah*) where he saw a ladder that was מצב, set Earthward, and its top reached the heavens. The next *pasuk* says that Hashem was נצב, standing over him. מצב and נצב have the same *shoresh*. What is the difference between these two forms of the word? Why does the Torah keep using the word והנה, and behold, in these *pesukim*?

The ladder is a metaphor for man himself. Man is formed from the ground and is set Earthward. Nevertheless, he is blessed with a G-dly *neshamah*. The *neshamah* is represented by the head, which reaches the heavens. When man allows his physical needs and existence to dominate him, they drag him down and he is "set Earth-

ward." However, if one infuses himself with *kedushah* through the Torah, the ladder can reach great heights, reaching all the way up to the heavens. (ישמח משה)

"נצב" means placed there by others. "מצב" (רשב"ם) means placed there by Hashem Himself.

"סלם" – The ladder represents the connection between heaven and Earth. One must strive to raise his level in *ruchniyos* step by step as he climbs the ladder of *ruchniyos*. "והנה סלם מצב ארצה" – While climbing the ladder of *ruchniyos*, one must always remember to "set Earthward." One must always remain humble. The only way to truly climb the ladder of *ruchniyos* is by remaining humble. (מהר"י שטייף)

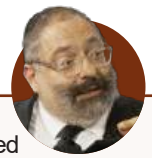
"אין הנבואה שורה אלא על חכם גבור *Nedarim* 38a – עשיר ועניו" – *Nevuah* only rests on one who is wise, mighty, wealthy, and humble. There is only one true qualification necessary, and that is to be humble. If one were poor, weak, or not smart, yet was humble, it would not necessarily demonstrate that he is truly humble. This person has no reason to be haughty. One who is wise, mighty, and wealthy, yet is still humble, that demonstrates that he is truly

humble. (בן יהודע)

"מצב" means placed there by others. The Ribbono Shel Olam places every person on the ground. It is only with the help of the Ribbono Shel Olam that one can accomplish anything in this world. The Ribbono Shel Olam gave us the *Torah Hakdoshah*. Through the *Torah Hakdoshah*, the Ribbono Shel Olam gave us the capabilities to raise our level in *ruchniyos*. The key words are "the Ribbono Shel Olam gave us." "והנה", and behold, is a *lashon* of surprise. One must not assume that it is coming to him and live with those expectations. Rather, one must strive to climb the ladder of *ruchniyos*, bearing in mind that he is truly unworthy. It is only because of the great *chessed* of the Ribbono Shel Olam and His help that we can achieve a higher level than the *Malachei Hashareis*. It says a *lashon* of "נצב" in reference to the Ribbono Shel Olam, because He stands by Himself.

May we be *zoche* to bring the *Shechina* down to this world and raise ourselves above the *Malachei Hashareis*.

RABBI YY JACOBSON



After 50 Generations

The late astrophysicist, Professor Velvel Greene, who worked many years for NASA, once related the following story:

Many years ago, Dr. Greene shared, a noted scientist delivered a lecture at a space science conference on the broader aspects of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration program in the USA. Among other things, the lecturer drew a parallel between the problems that will face space explorers in the future and our current conditions on Earth.

Using a hypothetical manned voyage to the nearest star, Alpha Centauri, as an example, he emphasized the remarkable engineering, biological, and sociological problems that would be encountered during the execution of this enterprise. Since the star is 4.3 light-years away, even a spaceship traveling at 1,000 miles per second would require more than 800 years to get there and another 800 years to get back. Any original crew we launched would not survive for even a fraction of the mission's duration. Instead, we would have to "man" the capsule with men and women who would have children who would carry on the mission. These children would themselves have children, continuing this for 1,600 years. Ultimately, after many generations, the remote

progeny of the original crew would complete the mission.

This interstellar spaceship would have to be completely self-sustaining and self-supporting. But the lecturer pointed out that the engineering and technical problems are only one side of the coin. In the spaceship, the crew would have to learn to tolerate each other, generation after generation. They would have to learn, and learn quickly, that you don't blow up only part of a spaceship.

And then the speaker touched on a key topic: Would the fiftieth generation, after a thousand years, still share the aspirations of their pilgrim fathers who set out from Earth so long ago? How, indeed, can you convey to a generation still unborn the basic information about where they came from, where they are going, why they are going there, how to get there, and how to get back?

One of the scientists stood up, and to my surprise and delight, declared: "If we could figure out how the Jewish people managed to survive these thousands of years, we'd have our answer!"

The scientist was on target. To a Jew, this story is no mere fantastic flight of imagination; it captures our millennia-long narrative. Almost four millennia ago, Abraham heard a call to become a blessing for all mankind. Over three thousand years ago, at

Mount Sinai, we were launched with specific instructions and suitable maps. And we were told that we ought to transmit this mission to our children and grandchildren, for generations to come. The task was to bring healing and redemption to the world.

We were charged with the mission to reveal that the universe has a soul, that humanity has a soul, that each of us has a soul. That we are living in G-d's world, and our mission is to transcend our superficial shells and reveal the infinite oneness that unites us all.

For more than a hundred generations we knew where we came from, where we were going, why we were traveling, who was the Project Officer, and how to get back. We had no real difficulty in transmitting this intelligence unbroken from generation to generation—even to generations who were not physically present during "take-off" at Sinai. How? Because the Torah, our Divine logbook, contained macro and micro guidance. Notwithstanding all challenges, this logbook has met the only real criterion of the empirical scientists—it worked. Our presence demonstrated that it worked.

As long as we did not allow an interruption in the transmitting of the Torah from generation to generation, the mission and the people remained intact.

SHIUR SCHEDULE

MONDAY & THURSDAY Chassidus Shiur 7:45 AM (18 Main) • **TUESDAY** Womens Shiur 9:30 AM (84 Viola Rd)
SHABBOS Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs) • **Morning 8:40 AM** (20 Upstairs) | **After Davening 12:00 PM** (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 RABBI SHALOM BER MUNITZ



Shidduch Advice

1. Knowing what is important, a lot of secondary matters become insignificant.

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2. First and foremost, the person should be trustworthy, so that he can be fully relied upon in all his promises relating to the establishment of a truly Jewish home, a *binyan adei ad*.

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3. In matters of a *shidduch*, as in any other thing, it is no good limiting oneself, or limiting G-d's help, to any particular and narrow objective.

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4. When it comes to marriage, this should not be tied in with

any expectation to educate, or re-educate, the would-be partner, especially where such education would be required at almost every step. Human nature is such that when a person is pressured into making concessions for the sake of another person — every day and many times a day — without as yet seeing any reason for doing it except to please the other partner, this is not a healthy situation, and it is bound to generate resentment and disharmony.

==== Excerpts of letters, *The Rebbe's Responsa*, Issue 80
Tes Kislev: The Yom Holedes and Yom Hilula of the Mitteler Rebbe, Admor DovBer, eldest son of the *Baal Hatanya*
Yud Kislev: We celebrate the day the Mitteler Rebbe was released from prison in Russia.

RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER



The Special Hiddur of the Mitzvah of Ner Chanukah

In describing the mitzvah of lighting *neiros Chanukah*, the Gemara (*Shabbos* 21b) tells us that the requirement is to light one candle per house, on each night of Chanukah. The *mehadrin* – those who seek to beautify the mitzvah – light one candle per person, and the *mehadrin min hamehadrin* – those who seek to beautify the mitzvah even more – add or subtract one candle each night. According to Beis Shammai, on the first night, we start with eight candles and go down one each night. On the last night, we light only one candle. According to Beis Hillel, we start with one candle and add on another candle each night, with the last night lighting eight candles.

The *Beis Halevi* and the *Chiddushei Harim* wonder why we have such a *hiddur* for the mitzvah of lighting the menorah more than in all other mitzvos. But at first glance, their question is puzzling, as *hiddur mitzvah* is, in fact, a concept found in regard to all mitzvos. The Gemara in *Shabbos* (133b) learns the concept of beautifying a mitzvah from the words "זה א-ל-י ואנוהו" this is my G-d and I will make [the mitzvos] beautiful." The Gemara goes on to give many examples of this, such as making a nice sukkah, or buying a nice *lulav* or nice *tzitzis*. Since there is a concept of *hiddur* in all mitzvos, what do they mean that the *hiddur* in the mitzvah of *ner Chanukah* is unique?

But in truth, there is something different about the *hiddur* of *neiros Chanukah*. The Brisker Rav points out that although the concept of *hiddur* is something we find in all mitzvos, the *hiddur* of *ner Chanukah* is unique in a number of ways:

When it comes to other mitzvos, one does not need to pay more than another third of the price in order to add to the beauty of the mitzvah. Yet, when it comes to *ner Chanukah*, the additional candles being lit are much more than a third of the price of the *mitzvah* itself, which is one candle.

When it comes to other mitzvos, although it is not a requirement to beautify the mitzvah, there is a mitzvah to do so. But when it comes to *ner Chanukah*, adding the extra candles is optional.

The *Avi Ezri* adds another point. When it comes to other mitzvos, we beautify the object of the mitzvah itself, such as having nicer *tefillin*, or a nicer *tallis*. Yet, when it comes to *ner Cha-*

nukah, the *hiddur* is not performed by enhancing the candle lit, but by adding on more candles.

So we see that although the basic concept of *hiddur* is found in other mitzvos, the *hiddur* of *ner Chanukah* is unique being that it is more than a third, it is only optional, and it is not in the mitzvah itself. We can now understand why the *Beis Halevi* and the *Chiddushei Harim* wondered about the special *hiddur* in *ner Chanukah*.

THE REASON FOR THE SPECIAL HIDDUR OF NER CHANUKA

The *Beis Halevi* answers that Chazal instituted a special level of *hiddur mitzvah* because this miracle provided them with a beautiful mitzvah. Since they had enough oil for one day, they could have made thinner wicks, which would only use an eighth of the oil each night, and leave them with enough oil for eight days. Yet, in order to beautify the mitzvah, they kept the regular thick wicks, to have a nice flame. The miracle of oil lasting for eight days helped them in their quest of beautifying the mitzvah. Since the mitzvah of *ner Chanukah* commemorates the miracle that helped them beautify the mitzvah, Chazal felt it appropriate to add a special *hiddur* to this mitzvah.

But one could ask on this explanation: How were they allowed to do this? If they had made thinner wicks, they would have had enough oil to last for all eight days, and by using thick wicks, they were relying on a miracle that the oil would last for eight days. How could they use thick wicks and rely on a miracle?

Interestingly, the *Chiddushei Harim* has a slightly different approach, which seems to address this problem. He suggests that in order to have enough oil for eight days, they actually made thinner wicks. But then a miracle occurred, and the light burned brightly as if there were thick wicks. Since the *mitzvah* of *ner Chanukah* commemorates this miracle of the bright light that burned, which enhanced the *mitzvah*, Chazal felt it appropriate to add a special *hiddur* to this mitzvah.

SUMMARY

Although the basic concept of *hiddur* is found in other mitzvos, the *hiddur* of *ner Chanukah* is unique. It is more than a third, it is optional, and it is done by adding on to the mitzvah.

Since *ner Chanukah* commemorates the miracle that helped them beautify the mitzvah, or the brighter light that burned, which enhanced the mitzvah, Chazal felt it appropriate to add a special *hiddur* to this mitzvah.

SHIUR SCHEDULE

KOLLEL BOKER 7:00-8:00AM

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

NIGHT KOLLEL 8:15-9:45PM

Chavrusa learning - Halacha
Currently: הלכות ניבוי אב ואם

SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

Daf Yomi | 8:45-9:45 PM
Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00 PM
Zera Shimshon Shiur | 8:15-9:00 PM

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הרב בן ציון סנה

SHABBOS STORIES

היושר של יעקב

ו"יצא יעקב מבאר שבע וילך חרנה (כח, י)". הרה"ק ר' דוד מטאלנא ז"ע היה פעם באיזהו מקומן והרגיש שם קדושה מיוחדת, וחקר על הדבר עד שנודע לו שהבעש"ט הק' היה כאן פעם, ונכנס ר' דוד שם לביהמ"ד, והרגיש איפה המקום המדוייק שהתפלל בו הבעש"ט בהיותו שם, ואז פירש הרה"ק דדוהו הפירוש ברש"י על הפסוק ויצא יעקב מגיד שיציאת צדיק מן המקום עושה רושם, היינו שמשאיר רישומא דקדושה במקום שהיה שם. תתן אמת ליעקב, הנאמנות של יעקב הוא אשר מלווה אותנו.

בגליון שלום לעם, הם הסבירו זאת במשל. החופש הגדול הגיע, ואפרים החליט לחפש לעצמו עבודה. הוא היה זקוק מאוד לכסף. אחרי כמה ימים של חיפושים בלוחות המודעות, הגיעה לאפרים הצעה מצוינת, מהדוד ראובן. 'הצלחתי לסדר לך עבודה באחד ממשרדי העירייה', אמר הדוד, 'יש לי חבר שהוא פקיד בכיר בעירייה, המלצתי לו עליך, והוא מוכן לקבל אותך לעבודה'. 'אני מאוד שמח', ענה אפרים, 'מה העבודה שהוא מציע לי?' 'צוארון לבן, חביב', ענה הדוד. 'אתה יושב כמו אדון גדול וחשוב בתוך משרד ממוזג, ומסדר מסמכים'. למחרת הגיע אפרים לבניין העירייה. הפקיד הבכיר מר זבולוני הכניס אותו לחדר ענקי, ובו שורות של מדפי קלסרים כמו בספרייה.

'תשמע בחור', אמר זבולוני, 'האחרונות הללו מלאים באוגדני מסמכים. אתה מרוקן את כל המדפים, בודק את הנושאים בקלסרים, ומסדר את הקלסרים במקומם לפי הנושאים שעוסקים בהם. גני ילדים, תברואה, תחבורה, ושאר הנושאים. כשתסיים את העבודה תפנה אליי'. אפרים, שהיה חרוץ בטבעו, ניגש לעבודה במרץ. הוא החל לרוקן את המדפים, הדביק עליהם מדבקות, וסימן אותם בצבעים שונים לפי הנושאים. לא עברה שעה ואפרים שמע דפיקה בדלת. 'אפרים, החברה יורדת לקיוסק, אתה מצטרף?' 'אבל זה לא זמן ההפסקה עכשיו?' תמה אפרים. 'על חשבון אבא שלך? זבולוני יודע מזה ולא אכפת לי'. 'לא בא בחשבון, אני לא אוהב תחמומים כאלו'. 'אל תהיה קשה, אלו הכללים כאן בעירייה'. 'לא מתאים לי, תרדו לקיוסק בלעדי'.

כעבור שלושה ימים הזמין אפרים את זבולוני. הוא פתח בפניו את הדלת, והמראה המרהיב נגלה לעיניו. כל האוגדנים היו מסודרים על המדפים בסדר מופתי, על פי המחלקות השונות, ובצבעים שונים. 'אוי, מה עשית?' נבהל זבולוני, ופניו החווירו כסיד. 'מה רע?' נבהל אפרים. 'איום ונורא, סיימת עבודה של שלושה חודשים בשלושה ימים'. נאנח זבולוני. 'אם תמשיך לעבוד בקצב הזה, יפטר אותך כל העובדים במחלקה'. 'איך רצית שאעבוד?' שאל אפרים. 'בכל יום מדין, או מקסימום שניים. ככה עובדים פה כולם. אתה מסכן אותנו! אם ראש העיר ייכנס לכאן במקרה, הוא יבין שאפשר לעשות את העבודה הזו הרבה יותר מהר, ויפטר את רוב העובדים'. 'אני מבין שהגעתי לעבוד במחלקה של אוכלי חינם?' שאל אפרים בכעס. 'למה אוכלי חינם? אנחנו משלמים לקיוסק על מה שאנחנו אוכלים, ככה עובדים ברוב העיריות, אנחנו לא יותר גרועים מאף אחד'. 'אני לא מסוגל לעבוד בצורה כזו. אני הולך לחפש עבודה אחרת', אמר אפרים ויצא לביתו. 'מה קרה?' שאלה אמו, 'לא הצלחת בעבודה?' 'הצלחתי יותר מדי'. 'אני לא מוכן להיות אוכל חינם', ענה אפרים, וסיפר לאמו את המעשה. 'אני מבטיח אותך, חפש לעצמך מקום אחר'.

אפרים מצא עבודה בתור עוזר במכולת, ועשה את עבודתו ביושר וחריצות. בסוף החודש הוא קיבל משכורת מבעל החנות, וגם מן העירייה שלחו לו צ'ק על עבודה של חודש שלם. אפרים הכניס את הצ'ק למעטפה, וכתב מכתב לעירייה: 'עבדתי אצלכם רק שלושה ימים, נא לשלם לי בהתאם, אפרים'. 'כשאגדל, אנסה בעצמי להיבחר לראשות העיר, ואז אשים קץ לבחוז המשווע של כספי הציבור', אמר אפרים בלב. עברו שנים. אפרים הפך לאיש חינוך מוביל בעיר. ההקפדה שלו בקטנות, כביכול, גרמה לרבים לראות בו את המנהיג שלהם. איש לא התפלא כשאפרים הגיש את מועמדותו לראשות העירייה, ואף זכה בה ברוב קולות. הדבר הראשון שעשה היה לצמצם את כוח האדם באגף המסמכים... אדם המתעקש על היושר שלו, יגלה, בסופו של יום, שהחברה מסביבו מעריצה אותו ורואה בו מנהיג. בפרשת השבוע, מספרת התורה על עבודתו של יעקב אבינו כרועה צאן אצל לבן הארמי, ומתארת את היושר של יעקב. יעקב אבינו היה העובד המצטיין. על אף שלבן רימה אותו, והכריח אותו לעבוד שבע שנים נוספות עבור רחל, יעקב לא רימה את לבן כנקמה. גם בשבע השנים הבאות הוא עבד באותה חריצות, כפי שעבד בשבע השנים הראשונות. יעקב אבינו מעיד על עצמו כשעונה ללבן על טענתו: 'זה עשרים שנה אנכי עמך רחליך ועדתי לא שכלו ואילי צאנך לא אכלתי' כלומר, אף על פי שדרכם של רועי צאן לעשות לעתים 'מנגל' מאחד הכבשים של הבעלים, יעקב אבינו לא נהג כך: הייתי ביום אכלתי חרב וקרח בלילה ותדד שנתי מעיני. מרוב מסירות נפש כלפי הצאן, פעמים רבות היה יעקב ישן בשטח המרעה, על מנת לדאוג לכבשים. מיעקב אבינו ניתן ללמוד מוסר עבודה מהו. ברגע שהוא מקבל על עצמו עבודה, הוא לא עושה לעצמו הנחות, אלא לוקח אחריות מלאה על התוצאות, ועובד ביושר וחריצות. בסופו של דבר הקב"ה ראה את יושרו וחריצותו של יעקב, לעומת הרמאות והתככים של לבן, והעביר את כל העושר אל יעקב, וגם הציל אותו מפני לבן הרשע.

Rabbi Mordechai Gifter Aboard a Plane in Distress

Once, an airplane carrying Dovid, a Telshe Yeshivah student, back to Cleveland began experiencing severe turbulence. The young man became quite nervous, but after seeing that his own *rosh yeshivah*, Rabbi Mordechai Gifter zt"l, was sitting in front of him, he felt secure. "After all," thought the young man, "with such a *tzad-dik* (righteous man) on board, what could possibly go wrong?"

Suddenly, the captain's voice was heard over the intercom. "We are experiencing some difficulty with the plane's hydraulic system and may be forced to make an emergency landing. Everyone please return to your seats, fasten your seatbelts, and follow the instructions of your flight attendants."

The student quickly leaned forward towards his *rebbe*. "Perhaps, we're in danger. I have a *Tehillim* (Psalms) in my carry-on. Are there any particular chapters or prayers to recite?"

Quickly, Rav Gifter reassured the young man and suggested to him a few appropriate chapters to recite. Then, he urged him to quickly buckle up and prepare for landing.

His advice was interrupted by shouts coming from a frantic passenger who sat next to Dovid. "Stewardess, quick! Get over here! Make me a double scotch on the rocks. Make it Johnny Walker Blue Label! Better make it fast, and better make it good, 'cause it may be my last drink before I die!"

Comment: The transaction in which Eisav gave up his birthright for a bowl of lentil soup was preceded by those very words: "Behold, I am going to die, so why do I need my birthright?" (*Bereishis* 25:30)

Death is the ultimate motivator. Some people see the transience of this world and say, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Others, however, look at death and say, "We need to cover ground before the ground covers us," and spur themselves to change the world...by learning Torah, or reciting *Tehillim* and changing themselves for the better.

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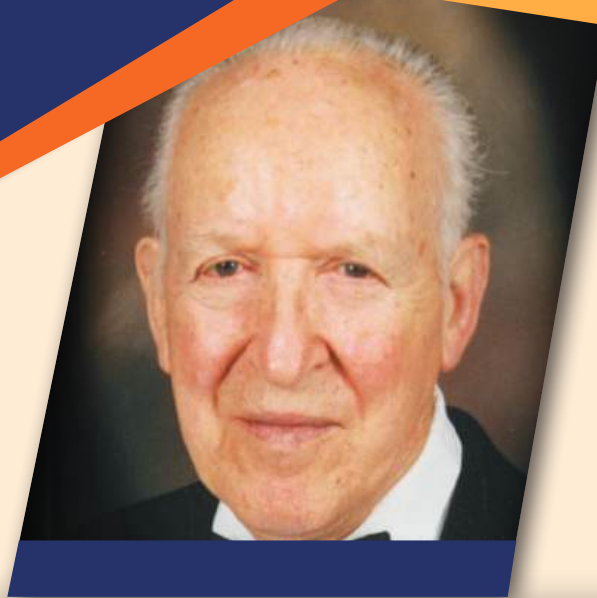
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RABBI DR. MORDECHAI SCHIFFMAN



Making Time Fly ANCIENT WISDOM & MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

While every minute has 60 seconds, and every hour has 60 minutes, our perception of time can change, making some minutes feel like hours and some hours feel like minutes.

Yaakov, who loved Rachel very deeply, offered to work seven years for her father Lavan so that he could marry her. How would you predict the passage of time would feel if you had to wait seven years before marrying the person you loved? Presumably, for most of us, those seven years would drag on and feel like “forever.” Interestingly, we are given a glimpse into Yaakov’s subjective time perception when the verse states, “They seemed to him but a few days (*“ke-yamim achadim”*) because of his love for her” (*Bereishis 29:20*). Somehow, the seven years “flew by” for Yaakov, which flies in the face of our hypothesis that the seven years would feel excruciatingly slow.

In fact, Rabbi Moshe Alshich is so convinced that because of Yaakov’s love and

longing for Rachel, “every day would feel like a thousand years,” that he contends that it is only in retrospect that he could say that the time went by quickly. During the seven years, it was painful and agonizing. It is only afterward that the power of his love and connection to Rachel made him forget the excruciating anguish of the wait time.

Other commentaries disagree. They assume that Yaakov’s perception of the seven years was quick, even while he was still waiting. Abarbanel suggests that Yaakov’s love for Rachel was so great that he thought that seven years was a great deal for him; he would have been ready and willing to spend even more time in pursuit of her. Consequently, the time frame did not seem daunting for him, and he went through it with a positive mindset.

Similarly, Samuel David Luzzatto (*Shadal*) suggests that his love for Rachel infused each day with peace, enjoyment, and hope. It is pain, discomfort, and negative emotions that make time seem longer, but peace and positive emotions make time fly by.

The Chatam Sofer approaches it not

from an emotional standpoint, but from a goal-oriented perspective. Only someone who is waiting for time to pass would feel that time is slow. However, to Yaakov’s credit, despite the fact that he loved her so much, he was able to treat each day with the proper reverence, taking advantage of his time, acting productively, and being mindful of his task each day. Rabbi Aharon Kotler takes the concept one step further. Not only did Yaakov not squander his time, but he used the time to work actively toward a goal. He knew that he still needed to develop himself personally and spiritually in order to build a family and fulfill the destiny that was outlined in his dream. He used this time to continue to cultivate his strengths.

Combining the approaches together, we learn from Yaakov two essential ingredients for leading a purposeful and engaged life that doesn’t feel like it is dragging on: savor the experience of positive emotions while simultaneously planning and implementing meaningful goals.

RABBI SHALOM ROSNER



Written All Over His Face

וירא יעקב את פני לבן, ואנה אינו עמו כחמול
שלשום

The *pasuk* tells us that Yaakov saw the face of Lavan and noticed that Lavan’s general appearance differed from his usual appearance. In *Growth through Torah*, Rabbi Zelig Pliskin writes about the power of facial expressions. Lavan reveals his true emotions without mentioning a word, just by his looks, and this teaches us a powerful lesson. In fact, it is interesting to note that the word for face in Hebrew is *panim*, which means inward. The face is actually the only part of the body that is not covered. It should therefore be called *chut-zim*, outward, rather than *panim*, inward. Perhaps the term *panim* is used since you can tell one’s inner feelings based on their outer facial expression (a smile or a frown). One’s facial expressions reveal their inner feelings.

This concept goes both ways. We have

to pick up on other people’s feelings based on their facial expressions, and we also have to realize how our facial expressions can affect the people around us. As Rav Pam once said, a person’s face is a *reshus harabim* (public property), and you can’t be *mazik* (cause damage) in a *reshus harabim*. Just because we are having a bad day does not give us the right to adversely affect the mood of those around us.

The Mishnah in *Avos* states, והוי מקבל, את כל האדם בסבר פנים יפות, “And receive every man with a pleasant temperament.” The word בסבר, “*b’sever*,” seems superfluous. It would have sufficed to simply state that one should receive others *b’panim yafos*. What does the word *b’sever* add? The *Meiri* has a beautiful interpretation. He says the word *b’sever* is derived from the word סברא (*sevara*), which is a thought. At least make the other person think you’re happy, even if it is not so.

The Gemara in *Meseches Taanis 22* relates a relevant story. Rav Broka Chozaa

was in the marketplace and asked Eliyahu Hanavi if there was anyone in the *shuk* who was worthy of *Olam Haba*. Rav Eliyahu pointed to two individuals who were dressed as clowns. These individuals spent their time bringing happiness to those who were sad. That itself is worth a ticket to *Olam Haba*. This is another instance that shows how important it is to do what we can to make others happy. At the very least, we need to take great care so as not to appear upset and to greet each individual with the proper respect and with a pleasant disposition, “*besever panim yafos*.”

We learn from the looks of Lavan what he felt, and we should take care in how we greet, treat, and address others. Just because we may be having a difficult day is no excuse to take it out on others. They are not to blame. They deserve a sincere smile and due respect, irrespective of our disposition.

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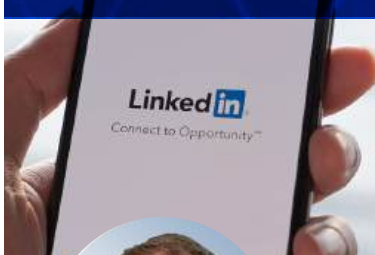
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Glory, Beauty, and Glow

And Yaakov went out from Be'er Sheva and went to Charan. (28:10)

In a well-known statement, Rashi teaches that the departure of a *tzaddik* from a community leaves a void. When a righteous person is in town, he comprises its glory, beauty, and glow. When he leaves, its glory, beauty, and glow leave with him. This is derived from the word *Vayeitzei*, and “he (Yaakov) went out (from Be'er Sheva).” It is not necessary to write his point of departure. That is obvious, since he had been there until this point. All that is required for the reader to know is his destination – unless his departure creates a void. The question is: Although undoubtedly, Yaakov’s departure from Be'er Sheva impacted the community, what about Yitzchak and Rivkah? They were both holy people who remained in Be'er Sheva. Yaakov was one out of three. Rashi seems to be ignoring the fact that these two giants remained in Be'er Sheva. Simply, we must say that each and every *tzaddik* contributes to a community’s beauty. While two *tzaddikim* remain, the presence of one less holy person leaves an impressionable void.

Harav Gedaliah Shorr z”l (quoted by Harav Yisrael Belsky, z”l), offers another explanation that provides us with a window on how to survive spiritually in a world whose moral compass is antithetical to Torah dictate. The Rosh Yeshivah made this observation at a time when the entire world was focused on the moon landing. It was a sensational moment in history, as man finally conquered space. Did he really, however, conquer it? Nothing about the moon had changed – it was still not human-friendly. Indeed, the only reason the astronauts were able to maneuver and survive in its hostile environment was that they brought a “mini-Earth” with them: oxygen and food upon which to subsist. They brought pressurized spacesuits, weighted boots, and a whole array of scientific data-collecting devices, just for the short time that they would be there. Without their complex life support systems, they certainly would have died.

In other words, the astronauts brought Earth up to the moon. This is exactly what Yaakov Avinu was compelled to do if he were to survive in the spiritually hostile environment of Charan. The members of Rivkah’s family were idol worshippers. Her brother was the paragon of a swindler. How could Yaakov maintain his spiritual status quo in such a place? Only if he brought Be'er Sheva’s *hod*, glory; *hadar*, beauty; and *ziv*, glow with him. Yaakov’s body was in Charan, but his mind was ensconced in Be'er Sheva.

This is what Rashi means when he writes that when Yaakov left, he took the city’s *hod*, *hadar*, and *ziv* with him. He had to! Thus, he was able to build a spiritual cocoon around himself so that he could survive Lavan’s spiritual onslaught. As a result, Be'er Sheva was left devoid of these qualities.

Is it any better in our lives, when we leave the protection of our homes, our shuls, or our *yeshivos* and enter the secular world that surrounds us? While I will not identify exactly how the secular world differs from our lifestyle, because this *dvar Torah* is read by a vast audience, everyone has their opinion concerning what defines “secular” and what dictates “modern.” Therefore, it is best left unsaid. Nonetheless, we must maintain a semblance of vigilance in our relationship with the outside world in order to protect ourselves and our children. We must monitor this exposure by “wearing” the proper protective gear so that the far-ranging effects of contemporary secular society does not leave us spiritually traumatized.



Yaakov at the Well

When Yaakov finally arrives close to his destination, he encounters the neighbors and the daughters of Lavan, who are unable to water their flocks because of the great rock that seals the opening to the well of water. The Torah then describes for us in great detail how Yaakov greets the people and the family of Lavan, and in a selfless gesture of help and compassion to others, whom he has just met, singlehandedly removes the rock from the mouth of the well.

It is interesting to note that the Torah lavishes a great deal of space and detail on this incident at the well, while the Torah tells us nothing about the fourteen years of Yaakov’s life that passed between his leaving home and arriving at the house of Lavan. Rashi, quoting Midrash, tells us that Yaakov spent these fourteen years in spiritual study and personal growth at the *yeshivah* academy of Shem and Ever. So, if this is in fact the case, why does the Torah not tell us of this great feat of spiritual challenge and self-improvement – fourteen years of sleepless study – while it does seem to go into mystifying detail regarding the incident at the well of water? Certainly, it would seem that the years of study would have a greater impact on the life and persona of Yaakov than rolling a rock off the mouth of a well would have had.

As we see throughout the Book of *Bereishis*, if not indeed regarding all of the Torah generally, the Torah places utmost emphasis on the behavior that one exhibits towards other human beings. Not everyone can study for fourteen years in a *yeshivah* day and night. Yet everyone can care about others, can demand justice for the defenseless, and can provide, to the best of one’s abilities, to help those who so obviously need it. Though Yaakov, like the great figures and founders of our people who appear here in *Bereishis*, is unique in spiritual stature and blessed with Divine vision and revelation, he is also essentially every man. His actions are meant to be a template of attitude and behavior for his descendants and the people who bear his name.

While we can never personally be the equal of our ancestors in their exalted spiritual state and accomplishments, we can and should attempt to emulate their values and behavior. We can all help those in need to roll the rock off of their wells and thereby nurture an environment where the Yaakov within all of us can grow and expand.

JOKES

What runs around a yard without moving?

A fence

What goes on and on and has an I in the middle?

An onion

What can you catch but not throw?

A cold

What is at the end of a rainbow?

The letter W

Jim got up bright and early one Sunday and headed to the local river. He fished all day long but didn't catch a thing. On the way home, he stopped at the fish market. "I want to buy the three biggest fish you've got," he said to the owner.

The owner starts to bag up his order when Jim says, "No need for that, just throw them at me."
"Why would I do that?" the owner asked.
"So I can tell my wife that I caught three fish today!"

A man had had a few too many to drink and decided to go ice fishing. He grabbed his gear, stepped out onto the ice, and started to cut a hole when he heard a booming voice shout:

"THERE ARE NO FISH UNDER THE ICE!"

The man jumped up and looked around, but he didn't see anyone. He carried on cutting into the ice, and again, the voice boomed:

"THERE ARE NO FISH UNDER THE ICE!"

Still nobody. Was he going crazy? The man stumbled to a new spot and started drilling another hole, when the voice shouted for a third time:

"THERE ARE NO FISH UNDER THE ICE!"

The man looked up into the blinding light and said, "Is that you, Hashem?"

The voice answered, "NO, YOU IDIOT. IT'S THE MANAGER OF THE ICE RINK!"



Brought to you by Uncle Benjy, author *Laughter is the Best Medicine: Kosher and Jewish jokes for the whole family, 1 & 2*, and Jewish joke book for kids available on Amazon.

ZERA SHIMSHON

Divine Protection

And the angels of Hashem encountered him (Yaakov) (32:2)

The *Meforshim* ask: Why did Yaakov need to be accompanied by angels? Hadn't Hashem promised Yaakov Avinu (28:15), "I will be with you and watch over you"? Furthermore, in Yaakov Avinu's dream, Rashi explains that the angels descending the ladder were in order to accompany him in *Chutz la'Aretz*. Nevertheless, it was in that very dream that Hashem informed Yaakov Avinu that He would be with him and protect him. The *Zera Shimshon* asks: Why did Yaakov Avinu need two forms of protection?

The *Zera Shimshon* answers these questions with a very interesting concept.

The protection given by angels is different than that given by Hashem Himself. The angels that protect a person are those created by his own good deeds. They are obligated to protect him from all harm. This kind of protection does not subtract from his merits. However, the protection he receives from these angels is only in accordance with the laws of nature. They will not protect him in a supernatural fashion.

On the other hand, when one merits being protected directly by Hashem, the protection is above the laws of nature, and one is protected in a supernatural manner. The result of this is that this protection diminishes from his eternal reward, as the Gemara (*Shabbos 32a*) teaches regarding one who is saved by a miracle.

However, when a *tzaddik* merits a special promise from Hashem that He will protect him, as Yaakov Avinu did, this kind of protection is above the laws of nature and does not subtract from one's merits, since otherwise, of what benefit would such a promise be?

When a person indeed merits protection directly from Hashem, in reality, there is no need for the angels to protect him. The only reason they do is as we find in the Bais HaMikdash. The Mishna (*Middos 1:1*, see the *Bartenura*) says that the need for guards in the Bais HaMikdash was not to ensure that robbers and the like didn't plunder the wealth found in the Bais HaMikdash, since Hashem Himself watched over it. Rather, the 'guards' of Kohanim and Levi'im were in reality an 'honor guard.' When Hashem protects an individual, the angels accompanying the person also only serve as an 'honor guard.'

Another difference between the protection given by angels versus that given by Hashem is what the Gemara (*Sota 21a*) teaches, that since one's sins can wipe out his mitzvos, the angels that were created by his mitzvos protect him from sin for their own good, since they do not want to be rejected from their posts. However, when Hashem protects a person, even though He saves him from the *yetzer hara*, He doesn't take his free will away from him. Instead, Hashem strengthens the person's *yetzer hatov* to overpower his *yetzer hara*.

Yet another difference is that once a person does sin, the angels that protect him distance themselves from him, and he thus loses their protection. When Hashem protects an individual, even after he sins, out of His mercy, Hashem gives the person room and time to repent before He punishes Him and removes His protection.

There are differences between the protection that one gets from angels versus that which one receives from Hashem, and the *Zera Shimshon* says that in some cases, one protection benefits the person over the other. This is why Yaakov Avinu merited both forms of protection, to have the benefits of both.

SHIUR
SCHEDULE

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BY RABBI SIMCHA BUNIM BURGER
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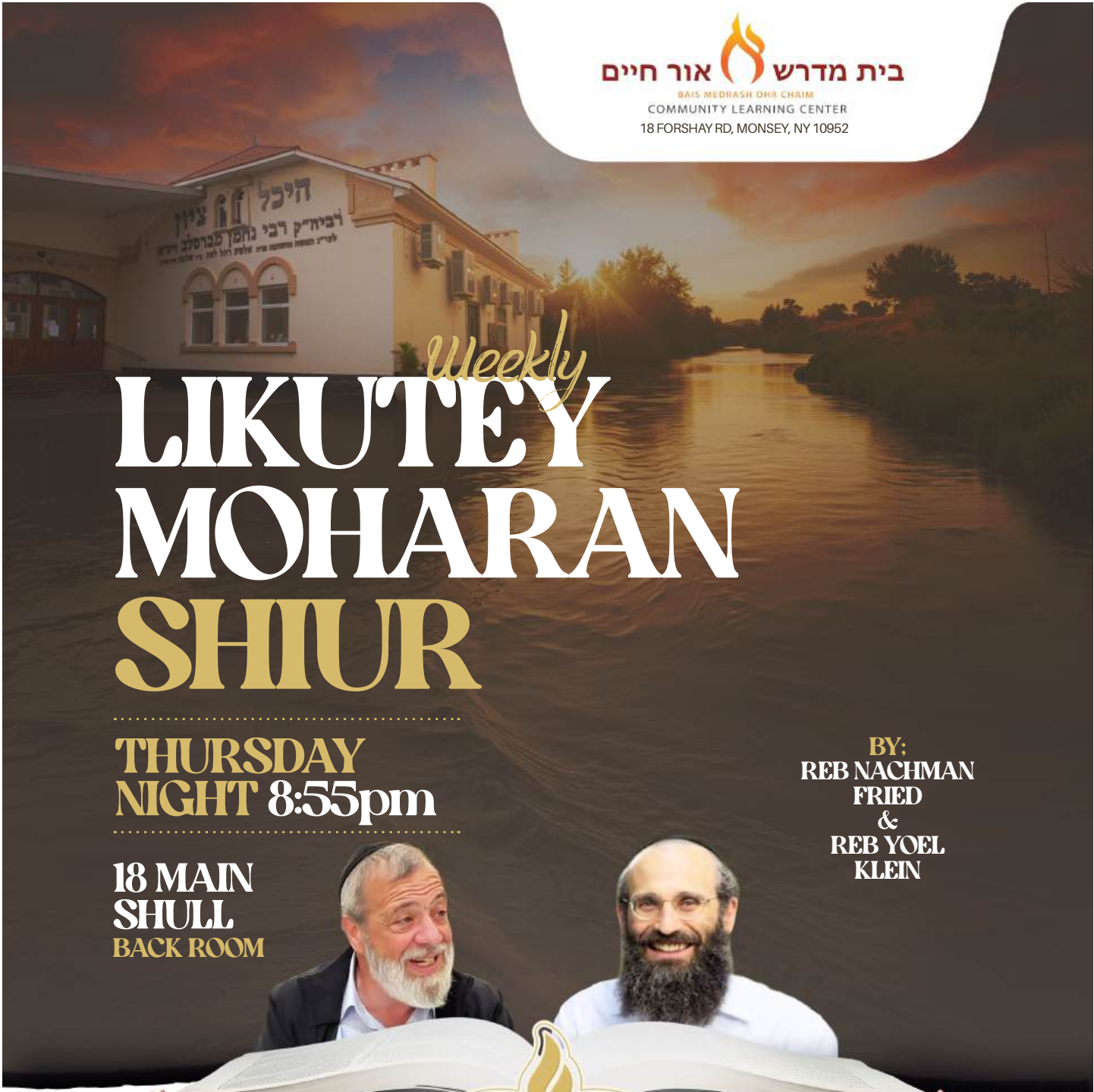


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