

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON VAYETZEI - 5758

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vayetzei.97 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Vayetzei (Shiur date: 11/18/75)

The Haftorah for Parshas Vayetzei (Hosea 12:13) ranges over several different topics. It begins with Jacob fleeing and working as payment for his wife and continues with the prophet (Moshe) who led the Jewish Nation out of Egypt and then the prophet who led them into exile. The prophet rebukes them for their idol worship and its leading ultimately to the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. The prophet concludes with the topic of Teshuva - Shuva Yisrael. The Rav asked what is the message of the prophet, where is the continuity of the prophet especially through the various transitions among topics and what is its connection to Vayetzei?

The secret of the Haftorah is in the way the prophet changes between the use of the name Jacob and Israel. Why didn't the prophet use one of the names consistently throughout? The Rav explained: at birth, Esau was given his name because it connotes that he came out complete, the Hebrew word Assuy. This advanced state of development is symbolized by Esau's pushing to leave the womb first, showing Gevurah or strength, similar to the birth of Peretz who pushed ahead of his twin brother Zerach. The kings that descended from Judah came from Peretz as he showed inner strength that a king must have. On the other hand, Jacob was born holding on to the heel of Esau, which symbolized military and political dependence on Esau. The Jew, from the perspective of Yaakov, is dependent on the non-Jewish world. This can be seen today in the relationship between Israel and the USA. Esau spent his time in the field hunting and engaged in the constant battle of life which made him tough, strong and secure. Yaakov, on the other hand was a Yoshev Ohalim, he was not schooled in the lessons of life's battles, as he had a radically different external personae and mission from his brother.

Isaac wanted to give Esau the blessing of Hevey Gvir Lachecha because he had the best chance of physically carrying out. Yaakov agreed, saying that Esau is a hairy individual while he is smooth skinned. Yaakov was saying that he is not the kind to derive benefit from the physical blessings of Vyiten Lecha and Hevay Gvir Lachecha, which should go to someone who displays the attribute of Gevurah, strength. After he takes the blessings, Rivka discovers that Esau wants to kill Yaakov and wants Yaakov to run away to the house of Lavan. Rivka realizes that Yaakov is no match for the physical strength of Esau. Even though Isaac himself was never ordered to go to Aram Naharyim on his own to seek a wife, Yaakov has no choice in the matter; as the weaker of the brothers he is forced to flee.

The Ramban comments that the name Yaakov implies weakness while the name Yisrael implies strength. The Jew has tremendous inner strength with which he can stand up to an entire world. The prophet says "Yaakov ran away to Sdeh Aram And Yisrael worked on behalf of a wife": he is pointing out this contradiction, that on the one hand Yaakov ran away out of weakness while on the other hand the same person, as Yisrael, portrays great inner strength. Even though he was working as a slave for his uncle Lavan, he was still Yisrael who was ever vigilant and ready to fight to protect the tradition of Avraham and the Jewish Nation that would perpetuate that legacy. When he faces Lavan after the latter caught up with him on his flight to return to Canaan, he stands up to him and protects his wives and children from Lavan's clutches and to preserve their identity as the children of Avraham and Yitzchak. The same weak Yaakov who was easy prey for Lavan to fool when it came to material and monetary considerations, was also the Yisrael who stood up to protect Bnay Yisrael with a resolute and strong spirit and defeated Lavan.

In Egypt, Bnay Yisrael were physically and economically weak, yet spiritually strong: they did not assimilate. As the Midrash says: Reuven and Shimon entered Egypt and the same Reuven and Shimon left Egypt, they did not assimilate. (The Rav noted that they did not assimilate in Egypt yet American Jews assimilate because they enjoy favorable economic conditions. They did not change their names, yet today American Rabbis use their secular names instead of their Jewish names.) As the prophet says: "And via a prophet, He raised the people out of Egypt". Even though we were physically weak and oppressed in Egypt, we still had the spiritual strength to produce prophets and leaders. We showed the same spiritual fortitude in Egypt that Yaakov showed years before when he stood up to Lavan.

Seventy two nations said that Israel should not exist; yet through the will of Hashem and our great spiritual strength, we have persevered and overcome great obstacles. The prophet also tells us U'bnavi Nishmar, that in the future Bnay Yisrael will continue to produce great leaders who will exhibit the great inner strength of Yisrael.

[Note: this shiur was given during the period when the UN resolution equating Zionism and racism. It is most interesting to read the following in light of the recent controversy that has erupted between Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Jews regarding the religious future of Eretz Yisrael.] The non-Jewish world might look at Zionism as racism if they look at laws like the Chok Hashevus, Law of Return. However if we show that Eretz Yisrael is a land of Kedusha, people can readily see that this is not the case. Eretz Yisrael is a viable concept and entity only if it is imbued with sanctity, Kedusha. Secular Zionism poses a great danger to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael [because it seeks to deny this Kedusha]. The prophet says that we will maintain the inner strength of Yisrael and realize that idol worship is folly, hence the continuation of the prophecy is Shuva Yisrael, the return of the people to Hashem which is the ultimate exhibition of our inner strength. We can see the aspect of Yisrael among the non-religious Jews in America who risk their own security to protect Israel. The "Yisrael" potential dwells in each and every Jew. The Jew may be weak politically, economically or militarily. Yet, the prophet has promised us that eventually this strength of Yisrael will burst forth, as the Jewish nation is destined to return to Hashem, Shuva Yisrael.

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DRASHA VAYEITZEI: SMOKE SCREEN by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

It just doesn't make sense. After more than twenty years of toiling in the house of Lavan (Laban), Yaakov (Jacob) wants out. He should have been entitled to. After all, he married Lavan's daughters in exchange for years of tending the sheep. He increased Lavan's livestock population many fold, and he was a faithful son-in-law despite a conniving huckster of a father-in-law. Yet when Yaakov leaves Lavan's home with his wives, children, and flocks, he sneaks out, fearing that Lavan would never let him leave. He is pursued by Lavan who chases him with a vengeance. But Yaakov is lucky. Hashem appears to Lavan in a dream and warns him not to harm Yaakov. Eventually, Lavan overtakes Yaakov and accosts him. "Why have you led my daughters away like captives of the sword? Why have you fled, secretly, without notifying me? Had you told me you wanted to leave I would have sent you off with song and music!" (Genesis 31:26-27) Yaakov answers his father-in-law by declaring his fear. "You would have stolen your daughters from me." Lavan then searched all of Yaakov's belongings looking for idols missing from his collection. Yaakov was outraged. He simply did not understand what Lavan wanted. Yaakov responds to the attack by detailing the tremendous amount of selfless work, through scorching heat and freezing nights, that he toiled in order to make Lavan a wealthy man. Reviewing the care and concern that he had for his wives and children, Yaakov declares that he is not worthy of the mean-spirited attacks made by his father-in-law, Lavan. And," Yaakov adds, "If not for the protection of Hashem, Lavan would have sent me away empty handed." (Genesis 31:38-42) Yet Lavan

is unmoved. Like a stoic, unyielding dictator, Lavan responds. "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flock is my flock and all that you see is mine." (Genesis 31:43) What can be going on in Lavan's mind? What motivates a man to be so selfish and unreasonable?

My friend Reb Yossel Czopnik told me the following true story about Yankel, a heavy smoker who went to see a certain hypnotist who had cured a large number of people. In a method that combined hypnosis, electrodes, and a little cajoling while placing little metal balls behind the ears, patients swore that the urge to smoke had been totally eradicated from their minds.

Yankel went to the doctor and underwent the entire ritual. The balls went behind his ears, the electrodes were attached to his temples, and the doctor began to talk. "Let me ask you, Yankel," questioned the doctor of the well wired patient, "every time you inhale a cigarette do you know what is happening? Close your eyes and imagine your lips puckered around the tail pipe of a New York City bus! Now, take a deep breath. Imagine all those noxious fumes filling your lungs! That is what the cigarettes are doing to you!" Yankel went home that night still wanting a smoke but decided to hold off. "Maybe it takes one night," he thought. The next morning nothing seemed to change. In fact, on his way to work, he had queasy feelings. As soon as he entered his office Yankel picked up the telephone and called the doctor. "So," asked the doctor, "How do you feel? I'm sure you didn't have a cigarette yet! I bet you have no desire for them anymore!" Yankel was hesitant. "Honestly, Doc. I'm not sure. One thing I can tell you, however. All morning long, on my way to work I was chasing city buses!"

Lavan just wouldn't get it. No matter how clearly Yaakov explained his case, twenty years of work, the devoted labor under scorching heat and freezing cold, Lavan just stood unmoved. "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, and whatever you have is mine." When the sickness of egocentrism overtakes the emotional stability of a human soul; one can talk, cajole, or persuade. The Almighty can even appear in a dream and do his part. It is helpless. Unless one actually takes the initiative to realize his or her shortcomings, anything that anyone may tell them is only a blast of noxious air.

Dedicated In memory of our Zayde, Herbert Hauser Reb Avraham Yehoshua Heshel ben Reb Yehuda HaCohen by Miriam, Sorah, Tamar & Shlomo Hauser Mordechai Kamenetzky - Yeshiva of South Shore 516-328-2490 <http://www.yossel.org> for drasha <http://www.torah.org/learning/drasha> Drasha, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) 6810 Park Heights Ave. <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21215

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"RavFrاند" List Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Vayeitzei

A Ladder Is a Perfect Representation of the Jewish People The pasuk [verse] says, "And Yaakov left Beer Sheva and he went to Charan..."

Yaakov had a dream about a ladder whose feet were on the earth and which stretched all the way up to the heaven. The Medrash says that when the verse refers to the ladder "emplanted on the earth" it refers to the fact that Yaakov was (prophetically) shown Korach about whom it is written, "and the earth opened its mouth (to swallow Korach)". The Medrash goes on to say that when the pasuk says that the head of the ladder reached the heaven, it refers to the fact that Yaakov was (prophetically) shown Moshe about whom it is written "Come up to HaShem [G-d] (in Heaven)." What does this Medrash mean? Rav Mordechai Ilan comments that what G-d showed Yaakov was the essence of the nation who would descend from him. Klal Yisrael is like a ladder. The Talmud in Megilah says, "This nation is compared to the dust and compared to the stars -- when they go down they descend to the dust; but when they go up they ascend all the way to Heaven." A ladder is the perfect representation of the Jewish people. No one ever remains standing on a ladder. It is either used to go up or to go down. People sit on chairs, on sofas, or beds. Those are pieces of furniture used for stationary positioning. No body ever uses a ladder for simply standing. That is what the Jewish People are all about. We are a nation that cannot remain stagnant. Either we will ascend and achieve wondrous heights or we will go in the opposite direction -- to the dust! This is what

the Medrash means by saying that G-d showed Korach and Moshe to Yaakov. They were the two ends of the spectrum. On the one hand there was a person who was consumed with jealousy and what was his end? "The earth opened its mouth..." Because he was not ascending, he descended to the greatest depths possible. On the other hand, there was a Moshe Rabbeinu [our teacher], who demonstrated the far outer limits of what a human being is capable of achieving. There is no standing in the middle. Stagnation itself is descent. Klal Yisroel (and indeed life in general) is a ladder with feet on the ground and the top reaching toward the heavens. It is up to the individual to decide which direction he will be heading -- up toward Heaven or down to the greatest depths. This was the dream that G-d showed Yaakov about his future nation.

The Honesty of Our Father Must Foreshadow Our Own Honesty At the end of the parsha we find a seemingly insignificant event. A bunch of stones were piled up as a marker. Lavan called the pile of stones by an Aramaic name (Yegar Sahadusa) and Yaakov called it by a Hebrew name (Gal-ed). Sforno says that this pasuk teaches us that Yaakov never changed his language. This has tremendous significance. One of the main themes that occur throughout the book of Bereshis is that all the events of the Patriarchs foreshadow the events of their descendants (ma'aseh avos siman l'banim). All the actions of the Patriarchs laid the groundwork for the history of Klal Yisroel throughout the Diaspora and throughout its existence. When Avraham Avinu went down to Egypt and was able to survive, this burned the trail so that future generations would also be able to go down to Egypt and survive. Chazal tell us that one of the things that safeguarded the integrity of the Jewish people so that they did not assimilate and disappear during their many years in Egypt was the fact that they did not change their language, their names, or their style of dress. From where did they get this fortitude to keep talking in their own language -- Hebrew, the 'Holy Tongue'? Says the Sforno, it happened right over here in this seemingly insignificant act. The act of Yaakov - insisting to refer to the pile of stones by a Hebrew name, despite the fact that Lavan called it by an Aramaic name - was the act that gave the Jewish people in future years the strength to keep their own language in Egypt. If this is true, about a seemingly small act, let us for just a few minutes look at the totality of what happened in Parshas Vayeitzei and let us try to see the implication in terms of Ma'aseh Avos Siman LaBanim. Parshas Vayeitzei is the prototype of Yaakov Avinu going into Exile (Galus) and Parshas VaYishlach contains the prototype of his returning to Eretz Yisrael. The fact that in this parsha, Yaakov was able to go into Galus and come back is what enabled his children to repeat this unlikely phenomenon, generations later. It is instructive to look at this parsha and the dialogue at the end of the parsha between Yaakov and Lavan. After 20 years in Galus, what is the discussion that Yaakov has with his father-in-law? It all hinges on the issues of truth and integrity. Lavan does not accuse Yaakov of not being religious or meticulous in observance. He accuses him of not being honest, of cheating (Why did you steal from me? [Bereshis 31:30]). What is Yaakov's response? "...What is my transgression? What is my sin that you have hotly pursued me? When you rummaged through all my things, what did you find of all your household objects? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, and let them decide between the two of us. These twenty years I have been with you, your ewes and she-goats never miscarried, nor did I eat rams of your flock. That which was mangled I never brought you -- I myself would bear the loss, from me you would exact it, whether it was stolen by day or stolen by night. This is how I was: By day's scorching heat consumed me, and frost by night; my sleep drifted from my eyes..." [Bereshis 31:36-42] I never stole a thing from you. I gave you an honest days work for an honest days pay! I was with you for 20 years and I can say that I was honest! I did not cheat you. I did not rob you. I did not take anything behind your back. I was 100% trustworthy. That is the "ma'aseh avos siman l'banim" of Parshas Vayeitzei. What will the Jewish People have to say to G-d in the future, after a 2,000 year Exile? What this parsha tells us is that we will have to be able to say "We were honest (ehrllich)!" the gentile citizens of our host countries. We did not cheat

in business. We did not rob Goyim [the gentile citizens of our host countries]. We were not shysters. We were not all the things that sometimes, unfortunately, people accuse Jews of being. It is when Klal Yisrael will be able to say "We were ehrlich" that Klal Yisrael will finally be able to come back from Galus.

Sources and Personalities Rav Mordechai Ilan -- author of the Mikdash Mordechai Sforno -- Rav Ovadiah Sforno (1470-1550); Bible Commentary. Rome and Bologna, Italy. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Balt. MD dhoffman@clark.net RavFrاند. Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Y. Frاند and Project Genesis, Inc. learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. www.torah.org Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800 FAX: 358-9801

The Weekly Internet P \* A \* R \* A \* S \* H \* A - P \* A \* G \* E

by Mordecai Kornfeld of Har Nof, Jerusalem (kornfeld@virtual.co.il)

The Parashat Vayetze mailing has been dedicated to the memory of Reb Azriel ben Eliyahu Stern, whose Yahrzeit is on 7 Kislev, by Yitz and Gila Stern.

PARASHAT VAYETZE 5758 AFRAID TO ASCEND

[Yakov] saw in his dream a ladder standing on the ground with its head in the sky, and he saw angels ascending and descending it.

(Bereishit 28:12) Yakov saw the patron-angel of Babylon ascend and descend, the angel of Mede ascend and descend, the angel of Greece ascend and descend and the angel of Rome ascend and descend. Hashem then said to Yakov, "Now you, too, climb the ladder!" Yakov was suddenly fearful. "Perhaps," he said, "just like these angels descended after climbing the ladder, I too will, G-d forbid, have to descend if I climb it." Hashem reassured him, "Do not fear, for if you climb the ladder you will never descend from it." But Yakov did not trust in Hashem and he did not ascend the ladder.

"Nevertheless, they sinned again and they did not have faith in Hashem's wonders" (Tehilim 78:32)... -- this verse refers to our forefather Yakov, who did not have faith in Hashem and did not ascend the ladder. Hashem told Yakov... now that you did not have faith in Me, your children will have to undergo four exiles in this world, during which they will be subject to many forms of taxation. (Midrash Raba Vayikra 29:2; Tanchuma Vayetze #2)

Although the story of Yakov's famous dream is well known, not many know the strange epilogue described by the Midrash. Yakov refuses to ascend the ladder at Hashem's bidding. Due to this odd "sin," his descendants will be subject to many years of harsh exile. The words of the Midrash require further elucidation: (1) How can a person sin in a dream? (2) Why was Yakov afraid to ascend, and why were the consequences of his refusal so extensive? (3) The verse quoted in the second half of the Midrash clearly states, "\*they\* sinned... \*they\* did not trust..." How can it be referring to Yakov? In fact, it seems quite obvious from the context of the verse that it is referring to the Jewish People at the time of the Egyptian Exodus, and not to Yakov! Our Midrash undoubtedly contains within it numerous teachings. It was meant to be understood in many different ways, each consistent with a different Masoretic approach to the Torah. Let us try to understand it at least on a simple level.

II (1) It is clear from the Torah that Yakov's dream was a prophetic vision. As such, it is reasonable to assume that Hashem's command that Yakov ascend the ladder, and Yakov's punishment for not doing so, were not so much a sin as a prophetic \*warning\*. Yakov was just leaving the land of Israel for a stint in the Diaspora. He was being warned that there would come a time when he would be expected to, metaphorically, "ascend the ladder." Should he hesitate at that point due to a lack of faith, Hashem warned him, it would result in his children being sent into exile. When was that point? It would appear that it involved the period when Yakov returned to the land of Israel after 20 years of service in the house of his uncle Lavan. Hashem was warning Yakov to return proudly to the land that "leads to the sky." The word "ascend" is appropriate, since traveling towards Eretz Yisrael is called "ascending" ("Aliyah"), in the words of our Sages -- Zevachim 54b).

(2) When the Midrash continues, "Yakov did not trust in Hashem and he did not ascend the ladder," it is not referring to events that took place on the night of Yakov's dream. Rather, it is allegorically referring to the events that transpired when Yakov eventually did return to Israel. "He was afraid," says the Midrash. As the Torah tells us, upon approaching the land of Israel, Yakov saw his brother Esav coming to attack him, 400 strong. "Yakov was very frightened, and he was troubled" (Bereishit 32:8). Hashem had warned him in his dream, "Do not be afraid! I will be with you!" But Yakov did not realize the meaning of his dream until too late. Instead of unabashedly returning to his homeland, he makes elaborate plans to flatter Esav and to appease his anger. His strategies include bowing down to Esav and sending him a large gift with hundreds of heads of cattle. As Rashi explains (Bereishit 32:11), Yakov feared that although Hashem had previously promised him protection, he had since become tainted by sin and would not be deserving of Hashem's protection. His punishment is an appropriate one. For bowing down to Esav, Esav will be made his superior. Yakov will be \*subjugated\* to him during long years of exile. For showering his wealth on Esav needlessly, he will be \*taxed\* mercilessly during those years.

III (3) Why should his descendants suffer such an extensive punishment for Yakov's sin? Our strength as a nation is deeply rooted in the faultlessness of our great ancestors, the three Patriarchs. It was they who laid the foundation upon which the nation was built by imbuing in their offspring their love for and fear of Hashem. Even the tiniest fault in the foundation of a large structure can cause an enormous instability in its upper stories. Yakov's fear of Esav reflected an otherwise insignificant flaw in his fear of Hashem since, as the Chovas ha'Levavos writes, true fear of Hashem leaves no room for any other fears. This flaw was amplified in his descendants, and it eventually brought them to sin in such a way that many years of exile were required to rectify their sin. Thus, the Midrash is justified in suggesting that the verse, "\*they\* sinned... \*they\* did not have faith..." referring to a lack of faith among the Jews who had fled Egypt, at the same time reflects a flaw in our forefather Yakov.

IV Perhaps we can even single out exactly at which point this flaw in their faith affected the Jewish People. Just as Hashem promised to protect Yakov and to return him safely to the land of Israel, so did He promise his descendants. And just as Yakov's weakness was expressed at that point, the weakness of his descendants was expressed at that point as well. The Jews, already standing on the border of the Holy Land, suddenly got cold feet. They asked Moshe to send spies into the land to determine their chances for a successful conquest. Instead of encouraging the people that the land was as beautiful as had been promised, the returning spies cause the people's hearts to sink with their tales of the might of the fearsome natives. And just as Yakov had been thrown off by the fear of his brother Esav, the last straw in the spies' argument was that the infamous nation of Amalek, Esav's grandchild, was waiting in the South to attack the Jews as they enter the land of Israel (Bamidbar 13:29). "Why did Hashem bring us to this land," they wept, "to fall by our enemy's sword!" (ibid. 14:3).

We indeed find that the eventual exile of the Jewish People was related to this sin. As the Mishnah tells us (Ta'anis 26b), on the very same day of the year that the Jews cried over the discouraging reports of the spies, both the first and the second Temples were destroyed by the enemy. Any Jews who survived the enemy's merciless onslaught were exiled. However, along with the key to our defeat, Yakov's dream contains the key to our redemption. As the Midrash tells us, "We find that when the Jews are in exile, they will only return to their land in the merit of their \*faith\* in Hashem" (Yalkut Shimoni 2:519). May Hashem grant us the strength to merit the final return to Zion, speedily, in our days!

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## WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5758 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS VAYETZAY By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav. Deliver my wife... So Lavan gathered all the people of the place and made a feast (29:21-22)

### MARRIAGE IN HALACHAH

This week we present some of the lesser-known halachos and customs of marriage that do not fall strictly within the domain of an officiating rav, but are vital for a couple, their parents and their wedding guests to know:

**DURING THE ENGAGEMENT:** All of the restrictions of yichud and physical contact between men and women are in full effect for an engaged couple until after the chupah(1). An engaged couple may not live together in the same house even when there is no question of yichud(2).

It is an ancient and widely accepted custom for the groom to send(3) gifts to the bride during their engagement. To avoid the danger of the gifts being mistaken for a form of kiddushin(4) - a legitimate concern especially when a ring is given as a sign of commitment - (5) the following precautions are recommended: No witnesses should be present at the time the gifts are given to the bride or when the groom gives the gifts to the messenger to give to the bride. The groom should not say that the gift is being given as a token of commitment or as an engagement present; rather it should be given simply as a gift.

**THE PROPER TIME AND PLACE OF THE WEDDING:** If two brothers or two sisters [or a younger sister and an older brother(6)] are engaged to be married at the same time, the older one must get married first. It is permitted, however, for a younger brother or sister to become engaged and married before their older sibling becomes engaged(7). There is a custom followed by some people not to get married in the second half of the Hebrew month(8). If, however, this constraint will delay the wedding unnecessarily, almost all of the authorities agree that the custom should be sidestepped in this case(9).

It is improper to write a pasuk, or part of a pasuk, on a wedding invitation, since invitations are generally discarded(10). When scheduling a wedding, it is important to allow enough time to finish all the pre-chupah arrangements in time for the chupah to take place on the date which is written in the kesubah. Some poskim maintain that if the kesubah has a different date from when the kiddushin actually took place, the kiddushin is invalid(11). At the very least, it is important to make sure that the legal transaction of the kesubah (kinyan) takes place before nightfall(12). It is an ancient custom(13) to perform the chupah ceremony under an open sky(14). Several poskim mention however, that if the groom and bride insist on the chupah taking place inside, there is no reason to object and argue about it since it is not forbidden to do so(15).

**THE DAY OF THE WEDDING:** It is customary for the groom and bride to fast(16) on the day of their wedding until after the chupah(17). They are allowed to rinse their mouth or brush their teeth, even with toothpaste(18).

If the chupah is delayed well past nightfall and the groom and bride are hungry, they may break their fast before the chupah, provided that no alcoholic beverages are consumed(19). A groom and bride who find it very difficult to fast do not have to fast at all(20), but they should eat only a limited amount of food(21). If the day of the wedding falls on a day when the Torah is read, the groom must be called up to the Torah. This "obligation" supersedes any other, such as a bar mitzvah or a yahrtzeit(22).

Traditionally, the groom and bride recite aneinu(23) and add the viduy supplication at the conclusion of their Minchah service(24). The groom, however, should not forgo davening with a tzibbur for this or any other reason(25).

**UNDER THE CHUPAH:** Relatives of the groom, bride or each other, either by blood or marriage, are not valid witnesses for the kiddushin. Although certain distant relatives (e.g., a cousin's cousin, a brother-in-law's brother-in-law, a brother's father-in-law) may be allowed halachically, several poskim advise that no relative act as a witness for the kiddushin(26).

The groom should not speak between the blessing over the kiddushin and the placement of the ring on the bride's finger(27). The bride

and groom must have specific intent to be yotzei with the blessing over the kiddushin and the blessing of Borei pri hagafen(28). The ring must be paid for entirely(29) and belong to the groom exclusively(30). If the groom's parents or anybody else bought the ring, the groom must "buy" the ring from them in a halachically binding purchase (kinyan)(31).

**DURING THE MEAL:** It is a rabbinical(32) mitzvah to rejoice with the groom and bride at their wedding. Everybody in attendance is obligated to do so and may discharge their obligation in a number of ways(33):

Dance and sing along; Recite one of the seven blessings under the chupah or in birkas ha-Mazon; Praise the groom to the bride or vice-versa; Engage the groom or bride in small talk about the happiness of the occasion; Give a gift.

A dignitary discharges his obligation by merely being present. It is questionable if it is permitted to leave a wedding before sheva berachos is recited. For a full discussion of this issue, see *The Weekly Halachah Discussion*, vol. 1, pg. 112.

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 Chelkas Mechokek E.H. 55:1. 2 Rama E.H. 55:1 and Knesses ha - Gedolah, ibid. See also Sdei Chemed (Choson v'Kalah 12). 3 Through a messenger - see Ta'amei ha-Minhagim 938. 4 See E.H. 45 for the many views and possible problems which may result.

5 Kisvei Harav Henkin (Pirushei Ivra 5:13). 6 There are conflicting opinion, however, if a brother must allow his older sister to get married before him, since the brother is commanded to get married while the sister is not - see Mahrsham 3:136, Avnei Cheftetz 25 and Chelkas Yaakov 1:125.

7 Shach Y.D. 244:13 as explained by M'harash Engle 6:102 and Igros Moshe E.H. 2:1. See also Igros Chazon Ish 1:166. 8 Rama E.H. 64:3. Others have a custom that a wedding may take place until the 18th day of the month while others allow it until the 22nd day. In addition, some do not follow this restriction in the months of Tishrei, Kislev, Adar, Iyar, Av and Elul. 9 Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 166:3. See also Aruch ha-Shulchan E.H. 64:13 and Igros Moshe E.H. 1:93 who maintain that most people do not follow this custom. 10 Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:135; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (Apiryon l'Shlomo, pg. 25). See also Mishnah Berurah 638:24 who prohibits writing a pasuk on fruit which will be used as a succah decoration. 11 Igros Moshe E.H. 4:105 -3; O.C. 5:9-2. See also written responsum from Harav S.Z. Auerbach (published in Kovetz Aharon v'Yisrael, Cheshvan 5755) that such a document is completely "false". 12 Beis Shmuel E.H. 66:7. According to Igros Moshe (ibid.) this is not valid. 13 Sefaradim, however, did not accept this custom - Sdei Chemed (Chasan v'Kalah 1). 14 Rama E.H. 61:1. Some insist that the chupah take place outdoors [not in an enclosed room with an opening in the ceiling like a skylight], and there is a valid source for their custom - Eizer Mekudash 55:1. 15 Imrei Eish O.C. 9; Igros Moshe E.H. 1:93; Yabia Omer 3:10. See above sources for a similar discussion regarding a chupah in a shul. Many poskim in Europe prohibited it for various reasons but others ruled more leniently. 16 No pre-acceptance of the fast is required - Mishnah Berurah 562:11; Be'er Moshe 3:75. 17 Rama O.C. 562:2 and 573:1. This custom, too, was not accepted in most Sefaradic communities since they considered the day of their wedding as a Yom Tov. Even today, Sefaradim should uphold their custom and not fast - Yabia Omer 3:9. 18 O.C. 567:3 and Mishnah Berurah 12. 19 Chochmas Adam 115:2; Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 61:21; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 146:1; Sdei Chemed (Choson v'Kalah 4); Harav Y. Y. Kanievsky (Orchos Rabeinu 2:164). See Aruch ha-Shulchan E.H. 61:21 who maintains that when possible, the fast should continue until after the chupah, even if it is after nightfall. 20 Aruch ha-Shulchan E.H. 61:21. 21 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 573:4. 22 Beir Halachah 136:1. It remains unclear, however, if this is so if the chupah will take place after nightfall.

23 Rama O.C. 562:2. 24 Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 61:9; Mishnah Berurah 573:8. These customs, too, were not accepted by the majority of Sefaradim - Yabia Omer 3:9. 25 See Sha'arei Teshuvah O.C. 562:2. 26 Harav S. Wosner (Apiryon l'Shlomo, pg. 40). See also ha-Nisuiin K'hilchasam 8:24. 27 Pri Megadim (Psicha, Berachos 14) - since some Rishonim maintain that the blessing over the kiddushin is a birkas hamitzvos. It is prohibited to speak between a blessing and the mitzvah which follows. 28 See Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 34:5 and Afikei Yam 2:2. 29 Avnei Miluim 28:33. 30 E.H. 28:1. 31 Aruch ha-Shulchan E.H. 28:84. See Otzar ha-Poskim 28:1-9,1-19. 32 Rambam Hilchos Avel 14:1. 33 See E.H. 65:1 and Eizer Mekudash for the many ways in which this mitzvah can be fulfilled. You've read the sheets every Shabbos; Now presenting: *The Weekly Halachah Discussion - The Book!* with additional halachic information, including an in-depth Hebrew appendix. New from Feldheim Publishers, this book of practical halachah by Rabbi Doniel Yehuda Neustadt is based on the Shabbos "sheet" that Jews in the U.S., Europe and on the Internet are so familiar with. Topics include issues relating to: Shabbos candlelighting, tzitzis, tefillah b'tzibur, yichud, honoring parents, adoption, visiting the sick, women and prayer, kashrus, blessings on cereals and much more, with extensive footnotes and a Hebrew section. The "Weekly Halachah Discussion" is guaranteed to enhance discussion at your Shabbos table, at shul (after davening, of course), or in the classroom.

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YESHIVAT HAR ETZION ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM) STUDENT SUMMARIES OF SICHOT DELIVERED BY THE ROSHEI YESHIVA PARASHAT VAYETZEI

## SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

On Menschlichkeit Summarized by Betzalel Posy

"And Yaakov kissed Rachel; and he raised his voice and wept." (Bereishit 29:11) When I was in kindergarten, my melamed explained this verse to me as follows: when Yaakov saw Rachel, overcome with emotion, he kissed her. His crying, however, stemmed from his repentance for this lapse. What have we come to, that we must react negatively to the display of emotion, passion, and even romance!? Romance has a positive connotation in our worldview. The Holy One, Blessed Be He, created angels, and he created people. He created people to feel emotions and use them for His service - both fear and trepidation, as well as joy and happiness. Part of divine service is to enjoy God's world, and pursue normal human activities within the framework of holiness and worship. One who loves people can also come through it to love of God and His commandments. If the Kadosh Baruch Hu had wanted to create only angels, He would have done so, and who are we to question His creation? The approach that I am opposing comes from some people's overestimation of their own worth and their place in the world. Some feel that their observance and knowledge gives them the right to say that, "My place is above everyone else; humanity is not for me." But when one does not care for others, when he cannot sympathize with their feelings and perspectives, one also cannot feel for the perspective of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. "There is no room in this world for both Me and the ba'al ga'ava (haughty person)," says God, according to the midrash. One of the things that personally hurts me the most is when I hear of yeshiva graduates using their yeshiva "credentials" as a licence to mistreat others. Who do they think they are!? Just because you are a "yeshiva bochur" you do not need to concern yourself with the feelings of others? While I know that this is not applicable yet to many of you, let me give you some advice on how to handle yourselves when the time comes for you to seek a partner - someone who is not just compatible with you, but who is important to your life. Do not focus only on your needs and wants, but also on hers. Call frequently, and do not blame her for your own faults. When things do not work out, do not simply say, forget it; but seek where the responsibility lies in yourself. And my wife tells me to add: never end a relationship over the telephone; even if an extra date is required, the mitzva involved is worth it. That way we can all lay claim to the legacy of Bnei Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. (Originally delivered at Seuda Shelishit, Shabbat Parashat Vayeitzei 5757.)

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## TORAH WEEKLY Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas

Vayeitzei <http://www.ohr.org.il/> Insights

Tears "And Lavan had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah and the name of the younger, Rachel. And Leah's eyes were weak." (29:16,17) It's three o'clock in the morning. The baby starts to cry. You know that if you leave her, she'll probably go back to sleep in a couple of minutes. After all, babies cry a good portion of their lives. You could turn over and go back to sleep. The baby will stop crying in a couple of minutes.

A baby stops crying because subconsciously she realizes that tears don't work. When your baby starts to cry and you pick her up, you are teaching her an invaluable lesson for life. Our Sages teach us that Leah's eyes were weak from constant weeping at the thought that, as Lavan's elder daughter, she would be married to Yitzhak's elder son, the evil Esav. However, in spite of Yaakov loving Rachel and working seven years for her, and in spite of all the precautions Yaakov took against Lavan tricking him into marrying Leah, Leah's tearful succeeded not only in reversing the decree that she marry Esav, but even that she be Yaakov's first wife. When all the gates of Heaven are closed, the gate of tears is forever open. You can teach that to a baby even at three o'clock in the morning.

Diamonds That Are Forever "And Yaakov kissed Rachel and lifted his voice and wept." (29:11) Have you noticed that when you buy presents for young children, after a few minutes they usually seem more

interested in the box that the present came in, than the present itself.

When it comes to mitzvos, we are like children being given a present which is valuable beyond our wildest dreams. We have no idea what a mitzva is. We have no idea of its value. If you give a child a priceless Cartier necklace, he will pick it up and play with it. It's bright and shiny. But after a few minutes he will probably get bored with the necklace and start to play with the red velvet-lined box that the necklace came in. "And Yaakov kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept." Yaakov wept because he came to Rachel penniless. While on the way to Charan, Esav's son Elifaz, acting on his father's command, pursued Yaakov and was about to kill him. Elifaz, however, had been raised by his grandfather, Yitzchak, and he could not bring himself to kill his uncle Yaakov. Elifaz asked Yaakov what he should do: How could he let Yaakov live and yet fulfill the mitzva of honoring his father's command? Yaakov told him to take all his money. For the Sages say that someone who is poor is considered as though he were dead. In this way Elifaz would be able to fulfill the letter of his father's command and fulfill the mitzva of honoring his father. This is a very strange dialogue: If a person's father tells him to eat a Bacon/Cheeseburger, would he be penalized for failing to honor his parents by refusing to eat the burger? The limit of honoring one's parents is where they instruct you to violate the will of G-d. So why did Elifaz seek Yaakov's advice on how to honor his father? Clearly, there was no mitzva incumbent upon Elifaz. We can see from this how great was the love of those first generations for mitzvos. Even though Elifaz had no obligation to fulfill his father's command whatsoever, Yaakov spent all his money and impoverished himself so that Elifaz could fulfill the mitzva of "Kibud Av" (honoring one's father).

A tzadik realizes that the smallest gift that Hashem gives us is as important as the largest. Neither may be wasted or neglected. Even though Esav wanted Yaakov's death and not his impoverishment, nevertheless Yaakov Avinu gave up his entire fortune so that a mitzva could be fulfilled.

The Avos knew, as no one since, the value of "the diamonds in the box." They never would think twice about giving away the box -- spending all their money -- because the box is only to hold the diamonds. They knew that this world and all its riches are nothing more than a velvet-lined Cartier box.

Sky-Scraping "And behold a ladder with its feet fixed on the ground and its head reaching heavenward; and behold! Angels of G-d ascending and descending on it." (28:12) Man is like a ladder. Necessarily Man's feet are "fixed on the ground" in the physical world. He is obliged to involve himself in a material existence. Nevertheless, if whatever he does is for the sake of Heaven, his "head reaches the heavens." Our actions in this world directly influence the way the spiritual realm interacts with the creation. We can tip the balance to the positive or the negative -- "the angels of G-d ascend and descend on it." Even the angels depend on the ladder that man creates by his actions in this world. Man is the dominant force and the focus of the entire creation. He even has the power to lower the angles or to elevate them.

Sources: o Diamonds That Are Forever - Chidushei Halev o Sky-Scraping - Mayana Shel Torah  
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The Twice Promised Land  
by Rabbi Eli Baruch Shulman

Ha'aretz Asher Ata Shocheiv Aleiha Lecha Etnena Ulezaracha The land on which you lie, to you will I give it and to your descendants.. (28:13).

The Talmud (Chulin 91b) remarks, ôThis teaches that G-d folded the entireland of Israel and placed it underneath Yaakov, in order that it be easier for his descendants to conquer.ö We find a similar statement in the Talmud in regard to Avraham. G-d said to Avraham: Kum Hithaleich

Ba'Aretz Lerkah Ulerachbah Ki Lecha Etnenah Arise, walk in the land through the length of it and the breadth of it; for I will give it to you (13:17) The Talmud (Bava Batra 100a) rules that this was not a legal act of acquisition; rather: *ô*Out of affection for Avraham He told him so in order that it be easier for his descendants to conquer it. (R' Eliezer, however, quotes this verse as a source for his view that walking the length and breadth of a piece of property is an actual act of acquisition.)

We might ask: Why does Avraham pave the way for his descendants by traversing the land, while Yaakov does so by having the land fold up under him as he sleeps on it? (Parenthetically: Hashem later says to Avraham, "Lezarahah Natati et ha'Aretz Hazot" - "To your seed I have given this land" (15:18). Rash"i, following the Midrash, explains that the verse uses the past tense since G-d's promise is as good as done - prophetic past tense. But R' Yossi in the Yerushalmi (Challah 2:1) uses the past tense of this verse to prove that the Jews were in possession of the land of Israel from the time of Avraham and that, therefore, even grain that grew before they entered the land was obligated in challah. Why does Rash"i reject this explanation? If one examines the discussion in the Yerushalmi one finds that R' Yossi's statement is advanced on behalf of R' Eliezer, who holds that grain that grows outside of the land of Israel is normally exempt from Challah. Not surprisingly, then, it is consistent with R' Eliezer's own view in Bava Batra that Avraham performed a legal act of acquisition by traveling the land its length and breadth; according to this view, the past tense of the verse indeed implies that Avraham was already in legal possession of the land. Rash"i, however, follows the view of the Sages in Bava Batra that walking the length and breadth of a piece of land is not a legal act of acquisition; accordingly, he follows the Midrash and explains the past tense of the verse as being an example of the prophetic past tense.)

After receiving this promise Yaakov vows: "Vechol Asher Titein Li Aser A'asrenu Lach" And of all that You shall give me I will surely give a tenth (ma'aser) to You (28:22) We find that Avraham (14:20) and Yitzchak (26:12, see Rash"i there) also gave maaser; only Yaakov, however, makes a vow to do so. Why should this be so?

To answer these two questions we must preface several items of information: The Talmud in Yevamot (82b) states that the obligations of terumah and ma'aser took effect only after the Jewish people took possession of the land of Israel. This happened twice; first, at the time of Yehoshua, and again at the time of Ezra, after their return from the Babylonian exile. The Ramba"m (Shmita 6:16) distinguishes between these two acts of acquisition; the first was accomplished through conquest, whereas the second was accomplished through chazaka (a form of legal acquisition). (See there the ramifications of this distinction.)

Furthermore, the Ramba"m (Terumot 1:26) rules that at the time of the Second Temple the obligations of terumah and maaser were only Rabbinic, because only a part of the people were settled on the land of Israel. On a Biblical level these obligations require that all of the Jewish people be living in the land of Israel. The source for this ruling seems to be the Yerushalmi in Shevi'it (6:1; see Resp. Beit Halevi 3:1) which records the view that, at the time of Ezra, the people accepted the obligations of terumah and maaser of their own accord, rather than as a Biblical obligation. The Yerushalmi finds a source for this in the verse in Nechemiah (10:1ff), *ô*And because of all this we make a covenant and write it... that we shall bring the first portion of our dough and our terumah... and the maaser of our land...*ô*

In the light of the above, we can answer our first question by suggesting that when the Talmud in Bava Batra states that Avraham was told to traverse the land of Israel in order to pave the way for his descendants, the reference is to his descendants at the time of the first acquisition of the land of Israel. As the Ramba"m writes, this acquisition was accomplished through conquest. Furthermore, it was only completed at the close of the seven years of division in which the boundaries of the tribes were laid out. Avraham's travels throughout the land prefigured the campaign to conquer the land and the laying down of its boundaries. But when the Talmud in Chulin states that G-d collapsed the entire land under Yaakov in order to make it easier for his descendants, the reference is to his descendants at the time of the second

acquisition of the land of Israel. As the Ramba"m writes, that acquisition was accomplished through chazaka. Likewise, Yaakov's laying on the land was an act of chazaka, as we find bedding down on a piece of property is, under certain circumstances, an effective chazaka (hatzoat matzot; see Hil. Zechiyah u'Matanah, 2:4. Cf. Tzofnat Paaneach al HaTorah, Breishit 28).

Accordingly, we find an answer to our second question; we understand why Yaakov's giving of maaser was preceded by a vow, whereas Avraham and Yitzchak gave maaser without a vow. As the Yerushalmi in Shevi'it states, at the time of the second acquisition the Jews did not automatically become obligated in terumah and maaser; they made a covenant and obligated themselves. Likewise Yaakov, whose actions portended theirs, undertook a vow and obligated himself.

hk-nebenzahl@virtual.co.il The following is a translation of the sicha delivered by HaGaon HaRav Avigdor Nebenzahl every Monday night in the Beit Midrash of Yeshivat Hakotel. ... Nehemiah D. Klein Weekly Sichah of HaRav Nebenzahl - Parshat Vayetze

The Torah relates "Veinei Leah Rakot veRachel hayta yefat toar vifaf mare, vayehev Yaakov et Rachel" "Leah's eyes were tender, while Rachel was beautiful of form and beautiful of appearance. Yaakov loved Rachel" (Bereishit 29:17-18). The simple reading of the psukim seems to be telling us that what was of utmost concern to Yaakov was physical beauty. Physical beauty is not the sole determining factor in choosing a wife even for one of a much lower stature, how much more would we have expected of Yaakov Avinu. We obviously cannot interpret the words of the Torah in their simplicity. We are commanded "velo taturu acharei levavchem vecharei eineichem" "and not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray" (Bamidbar 15:39), we are not permitted to simply follow the dictates of our eyes. Does this commandment mean we must shut our eyes to what is in the outside world? Certainly not. On the contrary, the Gemara mandates regarding marriage "asur leadam lekadesh et haisha ad sheyirena" "It is forbidden for a man to betroth a woman until he sees her" (Kiddushin 41a). People mistakenly think that one must feel an attraction, a pull to the prospective spouse. What the Gemara means is that the person should check to make sure that there is nothing about this woman that repulses him. The attraction, please G-d, will form and continue to grow after they have married and are living together.

We see that Chazal, in any event, require of us to use our eyes when checking out a spouse. What then is meant by "velo taturu acharei levavchem vecharei eineichem" "and not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray" (Bamidbar 15:39)? What the Torah meant was that what one sees must not be the sole determining factor in choosing a spouse. One's eyes should not be the sole factor, but rather one should use one's intellect. One must ascertain whether or not this woman possesses the appropriate level of "Yirat Shamaim", fear of Hashem, character traits, what is her lineage, etc. Although one must make sure he does not find this woman physically repulsive, he must not be misled by her beauty into thinking that this is all that matters. Moshe Rabbeinu sent spies to scout out the land of Israel, to view it with their eyes. They brought back a report that the land was full of giants, thus they became frightened. Their mistake was that they let their eyes determine for them whether the Jewish nation should proceed to the land of Israel, rather than using their intellect which would have dictated that Hashem, who took us out of Egypt, will have no difficulty conquering this land of giants.

Rashi tells us that when Eliezer was searching for a prospective wife for Yitzchak, he spotted Rivka by the well and observed that the water rose up towards her. Nevertheless, Eliezer saw the need to ask Rivka if she could provide him with some water. One would have thought that the water rising towards her is a sufficient indication of her piety and righteousness. Eliezer, however, felt that she may have had tremendous fear of Hashem, she may have been able to serve Hashem despite having been in the house of Lavan and Betuel with all of their idols, yet he wished to ascertain whether she possessed the proper attributes worthy of becoming Yitzchak's wife.

Although fear of Hashem must be the basis for everything, without which one cannot have proper character traits, nevertheless this fear is much easier to master than proper character traits. R' Yisrael M'Salant claimed that it is easier to master the Talmud in its entirety than to change a trait. Perhaps if Eliezer saw the opposite, that Rivka had good character but did not yet know whether or not she possessed the proper fear of Hashem, he may still have brought her back as a wife for Yitzchak, for the worst case scenario would have been that just as Avraham and Yitzchak converted many others, they would have succeeded in converting Rivka. A woman lacking proper character traits is unsuitable for Yitzchak.

A support for the above supposition may be brought from the Torah's commandment "lo yavo Amoni uMoavi bikhal Hashem gam dor asiri lo yavo lahem bikhal Hashem ad olam" "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the congregation of Hashem, even their tenth generation shall not enter the congregation of Hashem, to eternity" (Devarim 23:4). One may note that we are not commanded to obliterate them as we are with Amalek, as we are commanded "timche et zecher Amalek mitachat hashamayim" "You shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from under the heaven" (Devarim 25:19). On the other hand, we are commanded to obliterate the name of Amalek yet a descendant of Amalek who converts has the status of any Edomite and may marry into the Jewish nation after three generations. Whose sin is considered greater? That of Amon and Moav, thus their punishment is that they may never marry into the Jewish nation, or that of Amalek whose name must be obliterated?

Amalek's sin was "velo yare Elokim" "and he did not fear Hashem" (ibid 18). Although this is a very serious offense, for fear of heaven is the basis for everything, a descendant of Amalek who converts is displaying a deviation from the path of his forefathers. The Amalekite convert, one with fear of Hashem, is now no different than any Edomite. Amon and Moav, on the other hand, with regard to fear of Hashem were no worse than other idol worshipping nations. Their attributes, their lack of performing acts of "chesed", lovingkindness, their lack of acknowledging the good done them, are so difficult to uproot that even after ten generations the potential change in them is insufficient to permit entry into the Jewish nation.

It is now understandable why Eliezer was not satisfied with the mere fact that the water rose towards Rivka. The decision to take her as a wife for

Yitzchak cannot be finalized until ascertaining her character traits. It would be wrong of us to say that Yaakov Avinu was solely concerned with Rachel's physical beauty. Surely, he checked to see her level of fear of Hashem, her attributes. It is in Rachel's merit that Hashem proclaimed that the Jewish nation will eventually return to Zion. Rachel posed a question to Hashem, that it seems He had no response to, for she claimed that if she were able to allow Leah to marry Yaakov without being jealous, why then should Hashem be so angered that idols were brought into the Beit Hamikdash by the Jewish nation? At which point Hashem promised "veshavu banim ligulam" "and your children will return to their border" (Yirmiyahu 31:17), only through the merit of Rachel, whose righteousness was clear to all. Leah was also a totally righteous person, yet Yaakov did not see it at first. Leah was more hidden, as Chazal tell us, whereas Rachel was more public. Her father, Lavan, also did not realize what he had. Had Lavan realized who Leah was, he would not have given her to Yaakov. We are told "Lavan bikesh laakor et hakol" "Lavan wished to uproot everything", how is it then that he gave away the woman destined to be the mother of six of the tribes, not to mention two additional ones born to her maidservant. How would the Jewish people have looked without Leah, the foremother of Moshe Rabeinu, Aharon, and Dovid Hamelech. Leah built the mainstay of the Jewish nation.

Lavan gave her away because her true value was hidden, so much so that even a prophet of the stature of Yaakov did not realize who she was. Chazal bring as one of the reasons Rachel was buried on the road "bederech Ephrata" "on the road to Ephrat" (Bereishit 35:19), whereas Leah was buried in the Maarat Hamachpela, was that Rachel's righteousness was revealed to all, thus so was her grave. Leah, on the other hand, was a woman whose righteousness was hidden, thus she was buried in a cave. Yaakov checked everything out, but only to the best of his ability. Not realizing who Leah was, the depth of her righteousness, caused him to choose Rachel as the mainstay of the house. Perhaps that was fitting, for Rachel was so selfless that she provided Leah with the signs that allowed her to marry Yaakov. Despite all this, it seems to have been decreed in the heavens that Leah play a key role in building the house of Israel. The help from above, was that Lavan, the one who desired to uproot everything, decided to give Leah to Yaakov rather than Rachel. Perhaps once Yaakov found Rachel, he was forbidden to search further and see whether or not Leah was appropriate, for his father instructed him to go to Charan "vekach lecha misham isha" "and take a wife from there" (Bereishit 28:2), one wife not two. Yaakov really did take only one wife, for the other was given him by Lavan. These two women were the ones "asher banu shteihem et beit Yisrael" "both of whom built up the house of Israel" (Ruth 4:11).

Chazal tell us that "veinei Leah rakot" "Leah's eyes were tender", yet "matnoteha arukot", the gifts she received were everlasting. The temporary kingdom was that of Rachel, but the eternal one was that of Leah. The Torah, the priesthood are eternal. Perhaps this can answer the following difficulty. Mordechai is described as "ish Yehudi haya beshushan habira ushmo Mordechai ben Yair ben Shimi ben Kish ish Yemini" "There was a Jewish man in Shushan the capital whose name was Mordechai the son of Yair the son of Shimi the son of Kish, a Benjamite" (Esther 2:5). Mordecai, is initially described as "ish Yehudi", implying that he descends from the tribe of Yehuda, he is then described as "ish Yemini", implying a descendant from the tribe of Binyamin. One of the answers given by Chazal, is that Mordechai was a descendant of Binyamin, but Yehuda played a role in his lineage, namely Dovid's not killing Shimi ben Gera. Had Dovid killed Shimi ben Gera, his descendant Mordechai would not have been born.

Assuming the above is true, is Megillat Esther the appropriate place to make mention of this, is the story not already related in the book of Shmuel? Yet it is relevant to Esther, for Purim is an everlasting gift as we are told "vimei haPurim haele lo yaavru mitoch haYehudim" "and these days of Purim should never cease among the Jews" (Esther 9:28). The story of Purim, must make mention of the tribe of Yehuda. For if it were only brought about by the children of Rachel, it would not have been eternal. The children of Leah were responsible for the "kimu vekiblu" "the Jews confirmed and undertook" (ibid 27), referring to the eternal Torah. Hashem has many attributes that are visible to us and many that are not. Leah, through attaining her high level of "vehatznea lechet" "to walk humbly" (Micha 6:8), emulated the attributes of Hashem that are in the upper strata, whereas Rachel emulated the visible ones on the lower strata. We have no right to evaluate the attributes of the mothers, but these seem to be the words of Chazal. Moshe gave us six hundred thirteen Mitzvot. The Gemara tells us that Micha later came along and hinged everything on three Mitzvot "asot mishpat veahavat chesed vehatznea lechet im Elokecha" "to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your G-d" (ibid). Leah's completeness was the "hatznea lechet" that was not appreciated even by Yaakov Avinu. Our Tefillin consist of one that is placed on the head and one on the arm. The one on the head must be revealed, whereas the one on the arm must be hidden. Perhaps the reason for this distinction, is that the Tefillin on the head, represents one's intellect. One's thoughts and ideas must be clear to all, one may not hide the fact that he believes in Hashem and in the thirteen principles of faith. There should not be even a shadow of a doubt regarding one's belief. The arm, on the other hand, represents one's actions. Actions should be done privately. The Gemara explains that the pasuk "vehatznea lechet" refers to the Mitzvot of Hachnassat Kallah and Levayat Hamet, caring for a bride and for the deceased. The connection is that weddings and funerals are described by the word "lechet" as it says "tov lalachet el beit evel milechet el beit mishte" "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting" (Kohelet 7:2). At a funeral and wedding one publicly displays his kindness to his fellow man. The Gemara is telling us that even these public displays of kindness should be performed in as understated a way as possible. One's belief in Hashem must be displayed publicly, one's actions, on the other hand must be performed in as private a manner as possible.

There are, of course, exceptions to the above where one must employ the principle of "et laasot laHashem heferu toratecha" "For it is a time to act for Hashem; they have voided Your Torah" (Tehillim 119:126). It would seem that this principle was evoked by Matityahu and his sons, descendants of Leah, who won an eternal victory for Israel's Torah. Until Matityahu decided to fight the Greeks he was not well known. He most probably sat in a Beit Midrash in Kfar Modiin and went to the Beit Hamikdash when his turn came to serve. The family was not well known until it was "et laasot laHashem" and they had to go and sanctify Hashem's name. They were not army people and probably had not been trained. The merits of their actions were such that the Torah was reestablished eternally in the Jewish nation. In many sichot of previous years prior to Chanuka we discussed why it is that this very dear family, that merited sanctifying Hashem's name, was destined to eventually be lost to the Jewish nation. The five brothers were killed by the Greeks, while the others became "Tzdukkin", being killed by Hordus. One may explain the final obliterating

of their name, by the fact that they became wicked "Tzdukkin", but that itself poses difficulty, how could Hashem have made it such that they became "Tzdukkin". These were the same "Tzdukkin" who were responsible for the civil war between Hircannus and Aristobulus that brought about enslavement by the Romans. Rashi cites this fact in his commentary on the pasuk "lo yadati nafshi samanti markevet ami nadiv" "Alas I knew not how to guard myself from sin! My own devices harnessed me, like chariots subject to a foreign nation's mercies" (Shir Hashirim 6:12), I brought about the Roman enslavement.

The Ramban cites this in Parshat Vayishlach and uses it as an example of "maase avot siman levanim" "the actions of the forefathers are a sign for the children". When Yaakov told the messengers "ko tomrun ladoni leEsav ko amar avdecha Yaakov" "Thus shall you say, to my master, to Esav, so said your servant Yaakov" (Bereishit 32:5). This, says the Ramban, that Yaakov referred to Esav as his master, was responsible for the enslavement of the Jewish nation by Rome.

In the past, we have offered different answers as to why the family that was responsible for bringing salvation to the nation, to the Torah, and to Beit Hamikdash met a tragic end. We have given many answers in the past, perhaps this year we can offer a different approach.

We know that two sets of tablets were brought down from Har Sinai. It is clear that the first set, the ones that were "vehaluchot maase Elokim hema vehamichtav michtav Elokim hu charut al haluchot" "The tablets were G-d's handiwork, and the script was the script of G-d, engraved on the tablets" (Shmot 32:16), were holier. The Gemara tells us that the word "charut" should be read "cherut", meaning freedom. The first tablets freed us from the angel of death. Chazal add that had it not been for the breaking of the first tablets, one would not forget the Torah one learned. One would have been able to learn the entire Shas once and remember it. We would not be required to stay in Yeshiva so many years. Obviously upon learning the Shas we would be required to study the works of the Rambam, Rashba, and other giants, but the Shas would have been mastered after learning it but once.

The second tablets, although having a high level of sanctity, were clearly not the same. These tablets may have been "michtav Elokim" "the script of G-d", yet they were made by Moshe, they were not the "maase Elokim" "G-d's handiwork" that were created at twilight of the first Erev Shabbat. If this is so, it would seem that the second tablets, the man made ones, were more apt to be breakable. We see, however, that the first ones, the ones made by Hashem Himself, are the ones that were not eternal. The Maharal explains that anything which is too holy cannot last in this world, perhaps this is the explanation. Rashi seems to imply otherwise. The first tablets were given in public. While Moshe may have brought the second ones after forty days ending on Yom Kippur, the first tablets were given at the big gathering at Har Sinai. This gathering is referred to by the Torah as "yom hakahal" "the day of the congregation" (Devarim 18:16). The Torah is filled with praises of this gathering "ata haretta ladaat ki Hashem hu haElokim ein od milvado min hashamayim hishmicha et kolo leyasreca veal haaretz heracha et isho hagedola udvarav shamata mitoch haesh ... hashama am kol Elokim medaber mitoch haesh kaasher shamata ata vayeichi" "You have been shown in order to know that Hashem, He is the G-d! there is none beside Him, from heaven He caused you to hear His voice in order to teach you, and on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire ... Has a people ever heard the voice of G-d speaking from the midst of the fire as you have heard and survived" (Devarim 4:35-36,33).

Despite the tremendous words of the Torah describing this momentous event, Rashi claims that the first tablets were destroyed due to being in public. Whatever has too much publicity cannot be eternal, for then the "ayin hara", the evil eye, rules. What "ayin hara" could there have been? We know that the other nations did not covet the Torah for they were offered it and had no desire for it. We are told that when Bilaam announced to the nations of the world that Hashem was giving the Torah to the Jewish nation, they exclaimed "Hashem oz leamo yiten Hashem yevarech et amo bashalom" "Hashem will give might to His nation, Hashem will bless His nation with peace" (Tehillim 29:11). Perhaps what is meant is that even the other nations who did not wish to bless the Jewish nation, were exclaiming that Hashem should leave them alone and just give the Torah to the Jewish nation. In fact, I am not certain as to what "ayin hara" Rashi is referring to, perhaps that of the Satan. Regarding the second tablets, Moshe is instructed "veish lo yaale imach vegam ish al yera bechol hahar" "No man may ascend with you nor may anyone be seen on the entire mountain" (Shmot 34:3), it must be inconspicuous, this is how they will be eternal. There will be no Divine Revelation, no fire, and no great gathering. The second tablets were given privately and were thus made to last.

Perhaps this notion may be used to explain the tragic end of the Chashmonaim family. The "et laasot laHashem" "For it is a time to act for Hashem" (Tehillim 119:126), caused them to emerge in public, thus being given the status of the first tablets. This may have resulted in them sanctifying Hashem's name, for they died sanctifying His name, yet this publicity was their downfall. Only something performed in the fashion of "vehatznea lechet" "to walk humbly", something in the fashion of Leah whose gifts were eternal, is made to last. Rachel is visible to all, thus her gifts do not last. If not for the fact that this is based on Rashi, perhaps we would not be permitted to make such statements. The first tablets, despite having been broken did leave a lasting impression. This does not only refer to the fragments having been placed in the Ark, but rather that day, that momentous gathering left an impression. One of our three festivals is Shavuot, the day the Torah was given. The Gemara says about Shavuot "hakol modim debeAtzeret bainan lachem, mai taama, yom shenitna bo Torah leYisrael" "All agree with respect to Shavuot that we require it to be for you! too. What is the reason? It is the day on which the Torah was given" (Pesachim 68b). Our entire existence stems from Shavuot, the day the Torah was given, for these broken tablets left for us a lasting impression. The same may be said about the Chashmonaim, they may have been destroyed, but they left us with an impression.

Every year we celebrate Chanuka and announce Hashem's power that "masarta giborim beyad chalashim verabim beyad meatim ... vetiharu et mikdashecha vehidliku nerot bechazrot kodshecha" "You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few ... they cleansed Your Temple, purified the site of Your Holiness and kindled lights in the Courtyard of Your Sanctuary". Megillat Taanit in its entirety was declared null and void with the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash, with the exception of Chanuka. The reason provided is that the miracle of Chanuka was publicized. The same publicity that was detrimental to the Chashmonaim family, was also the reason that their achievements left us with an impression. We can learn from this that the concept of "vehatznea lechet" does not necessarily mean that one should flee from publicity, but to the best of one's ability one should be humble. The Chashmonaim who emerged into the public eye for the purpose of "et laasot laHashem" "For it is a time to act for Hashem" (Tehillim 119:126), merited reestablishing the Torah eternally and purifying the Beit Hamikdash. In addition, as the Ramban

writes, the kingdom returned to Israel's hands for over two hundred years. The miracle of Chanuka is referred to as a "tshua gedola upurkan kehayom haze" "a great victory and salvation as this very day", the salvation brought upon by the Chashmonaim left us with an everlasting impression.

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The Weekly Daf Shabbos 2-8 (Vayetze) By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Inst.

**A Right to Question** When the Sage Rav posed a question to Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi, generally referred to as Rebbie, he received an immediate response. Rav's uncle, Rabbi Chiya, reprimanded him, however, for asking Rebbie a question in a mesechta which he was not currently studying. "Haven't I told you," he said, "that when Rebbie is studying one mesechta you should not ask him something in another mesechta. If not for the fact that Rebbie is such a great scholar you could have caused him embarrassment by forcing him to give you an inaccurate answer." On the basis of this statement Rambam rules (Laws of Talmud Torah 4:6) that a student of Torah should not ask his teacher a question related to a subject which he is not currently studying, for fear of embarrassing him. What about the other way around? May the teacher challenge his student with a question related to a subject which he is not currently studying? Regarding this, Rambam states clearly that the teacher may certainly do so in order to stimulate his student to be more perseverant in his study and review. The source is the oft repeated cases of the Sage Rabba doing unusual things in order to test the awareness of his disciple, the Sage Abaye. If the teacher can even say or do unusual things in order to test his disciples' memory of what they studied, reasons Rambam, he can certainly ask them direct questions in areas not currently being studied in order to test their memory, without consideration that he might thus embarrass them. Shabbos 3b

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INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Har Nof Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld ...

Shabbos 4 1) PUTTING BREAD IN THE OVEN TOWARDS THE END OF SHABBOS [1] OPINIONS: The Gemara tells us that in order to be obligated to bring a Chatas, a person must be unaware of the Isur that he did from the beginning until its end. Therefore, if one placed dough in an oven on Shabbos and remembers -- before the bread is baked -- that baking bread on Shabbos is prohibited, he is not obligated to bring a Chatas. What is the Halachah in a situation where the bread was placed in the oven on Shabbos, but only became baked after Shabbos? (a) The AVNEI NEZER (OC #48-5; IGLEI TAL, Zorei'a #8) debated with Rav Yoav Yehoshua of Kintzk (the CHELKAS YOAV) what the Halachah would be if one puts bread in the oven on Shabbos and it becomes baked after Shabbos. The Avnei Nezer insisted that one is exempt, for it is not logical that the results of an action that occur after Shabbos should retroactively cause a person to have transgressed Shabbos. Otherwise, when a person lights a candle for a very sick person on Shabbos, immediately after Shabbos ends he should have to extinguish it so that it not continue to burn the fuel because of an action done on Shabbos for the sick person and retroactively cause his act of kindling a flame on Shabbos to be an Isur d'Oraisa (since the sick person no longer requires the Chilul Shabbos once Shabbos is over). (b) The CHELKAS YOAV argued that one is liable when the bread becomes baked after Shabbos. His position is based on the logic of the NEMUKEI YOSEF (Bava Kama 22a, DH Esho Mishum Chetzav) who writes that a person is permitted to light candles before Shabbos even though they remain lit when Shabbos arrives, and it is not considered as though he is continuing to light them on Shabbos even though they are lit as a result of his action (i.e., Esho Mishum Chitzav). The reason, says the Nemukei Yosef, is because the original act of lighting the candle "contains" in it all the consequences of that act. Similarly, suggests the Chelkas Yoav, the original act of cooking \*on Shabbos\* contains within it even the cooking that occurs after Shabbos. [2] This argument seems to revolve around whether the Melachah includes only the act of \*placing food\* on the fire, or whether the \*baking process\* is part of the actual Melachah. If it is part of the Melachah, the baking itself must also be done on Shabbos, and not just the act of placing the dough into the oven. If the baking process is only a condition that is stipulated in the Melachah (that is, one bakes on Shabbos is only liable if that condition is fulfilled), then the person may be liable if the bread is baked (the condition fulfilled) even after Shabbos. RASHI (DH Techilasah v'Sofah) states clearly that the transgression of baking is \*not finished\* until the bread is baked. This seems to support the hypothesis that the baking process is part of the Melachah, and the Avnei Nezer's ruling that the bread must be baked entirely on Shabbos. (Rav Hillel Ruvel) The Avnei Nezer (in Iglei Tal) points out that one is liable for performing the Melachah of Zorei'a even before the plant grows (which occurs only long after the Melachah was done), while to be liable for performing the Melachah of cooking or baking, the food must be cooked right away in order for one to be liable. Why is that so? Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that food is normally baked on the same day as it is placed in the oven, while food does not normally grow until long after it is planted. It is logical to assume that the Torah does not mean to leave a person hanging indefinitely until it will be determined whether he has transgressed a Melachah or not; after Shabbos is over it should already be clear that he has (or has not) done a Melachah.

4) WHEN DOES "KELUTAH" WORK? QUESTION: According to Rebbi Akiva, whenever an object passes through the air of Reshus ha'Rabim, it is considered as though it is resting ("Kelutah k'Mi sh'Hun'chah Dami"). The Rishonim ask, according to Rebbi Akiva how can anyone ever be liable for throwing something four Amos through the air of Reshus ha'Rabim, if it is considered resting at every point through which it travels? (a) TOSFOS (5b, DH b'Shleima) answers that it is a Halachah l'Moshe mi'Sinai that "Kelutah k'Mi sh'Hun'chah Dami" does not take effect when an object is thrown four Amos in Reshus ha'Rabim (as the Gemara says on 96b, that carrying or throwing an object four Amos in Reshus ha'Rabim is learned from a Halachah l'Moshe mi'Sinai). (b) The RAMBAN (5b) and TOSFOS YESHANIM (4b) explain that the concept of "Kelutah" is only said l'Chumra, to make a person liable, but not l'Kula, to exempt a person from transgressing. (c) The RAMBAN (5b) and Rishonim offer another answer. The concept of "Kelutah" applies only after the object has entered into a new Reshus. Within the same Reshus, though (such as Reshus ha'Rabim), "Kelutah" does not apply. daf@shemaisrael.co.il Mordecai Kornfeld

THE DAFYOMI DISCUSSION LIST of Kollel Iyun Hadaf, Har Nof, Jerusalem Rosh Kollel:

Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld daf@shemaisrael.co.il

SUBJECT: Berachos 52b: Candles of a non-Jew and a Choleh cshulman@cahill.com asked:

Question: Ner Shel Nachri Diloh Shovas one cannot use for Havdalah. What is the difference between this and a Ner of a Choleh that is permissible? I see the Achromim deal with this, but I have not found a satisfactory answer. chaim ozer shulman The Kollel replies: Rav Yosef Engel (Asvan d'Oraisa 10) suggests that it is evident from here that the Torah not only prohibits the \*action\* of lighting a candle on Shabbos, but it even prohibits the candle from being lit (unless the Torah specifically permits it, in a positive manner, as is the case with the Choleh. Not so with the non-Jew, where the Torah simply does not prohibit it, but does not permit it). This is why the non-Jew's candle is classified as Melechtes Aveirah. However, there are a number of problems with this interpretation, though. The simple understanding is that the candle must have not been used for a purpose which is prohibited for \*Jews\* to use on Shabbos, since they are the ones making Havdalah. It makes no difference who lit it, as long as it was permitted for Jews to do so. BE well, -Mordecai

SUBJECT: Berachos 63b: Your concern bnewell@gobblernet.dyndns.com asked: I have a pretty serious concern raised by Berachos 63 with the admonition that one who studies Torah alone is foolish and likely to suffer consequences. In my situation, where I happen to live, in the middle of North Dakota where there is virtually no Jewish community, it is impossible to study Torah with others. Does Berachos 63 imply that I should not study? That would be hard to believe! Is it an adequate substitute to seek out commentaries, study materials and discussion groups such as this one on the Internet, and thereby "not study alone" even if electronically at a distance? I think you can understand my concerns! B'shalom, Bob Newell Bismarck, North Dakota The Kollel replies: The Gemara is specifically referring to those who purposely isolate themselves from others, even though there are others around with whom they could study. This is implicit in the wording of the Gemara, "Destruction to those... who sit \*alone and alone\*," the repetition of "alone and alone" ("Bad v'Bad") indicates that there are two people in the same place who could study together, but they purposely isolate themselves. This is also implicit in the verse from which this concept is derived, "Cherev Al ha\*Badim\*," "Badim" being in the plural construct. Many of the greatest Torah sages of history learned by themselves, either because they had no choice due to their circumstances, or because they simply learned better that way. However, they were not learning by themselves in the sense that they associated with others in learning and spoke or wrote with others about what they learned. Certainly one who lives in North Dakota who studies from the classic commentaries can, in a sense, be considered to be actually learning with those great sages, and is not learning by himself. We, at Kollel Iyun ha'Daf, are proud to have someone like that joining us. Hatzlachah Rabbah! daf@shemaisrael.co.il Mordecai Kornfeld kornfeld@virtual.co.il Tl/Fx(02)6522633 6/12 Katzenelbogen St.