הריני בא ללמוד תורה לשמה לעשות נחת רוח לאבינו שבשמים

OnegShabbos

NORTH WEST LONDON'S WEEKLY TORAH & OPINION SHEETS

A Torah publication that enables local Rabbonim and Avreichim to share their insights and Divrei Torah on a variety of different levels, to provide something for everyone

עונג שבת

28TH OCTOBER 2017

ח' חשון תשע"ח

KRIAS HATORAH: בראשית י"ב:א - י"ז:כ"ז

Shabbos Times	LONDON	MANCHESTER	GATESHEAD	
	5:27 PM	5:31 PM	5:24 PM	הדלקת נרות
	6:32 PM	6:38 PM	6:34 PM	מוצש"ק

KINDLY SPONSORED

לעילוי נשמת
הש"ץ **שלמה בן אברהם משה** ז"ל
לעילוי נשמת **חנה בת אלעזר** ע"ה

TIME4MISHNA

Time4Mishna is an international program which involves learning 4 new Mishnayos each day from Sunday to Thursday, reviewing that week's 20 Mishnayos on Friday, and going over the previous Masechtos on Shabbos. A time committment of just 15 mins a day, and finish Shas Mishnayos in 4 years - having reviewed it multiple times!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBOS
29 October - ט חשון	30 October - י' חשון	31 October - י"א חשון	1 November - י"ב חשון	2 November - י"ג חשון	3 November - י"ד חשון	4 November - ט"ו חשון
שבת ג:ג - ג:ו	שבת ד:א - ה:ב	שבת ה:ג - ו:ב	שבת ו:ג - ו:ו	שבת ו:ז - ו:י	שבת ג:ג - ו:י	שבת פרקים א-ד

To Sign Up for a 15 min daily Shiur visit the website time4torah.org

DAILY NACH

JUST A FEW MINUTES A DAY AND FINISH NACH IN JUST A YEAR AND A HALF! SIGN UP AT DAILYNACH.COM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBOS
29 October - ט חשון	30 October - י' חשון	31 October - י"א חשון	1 November - י"ב חשון	2 November - י"ג חשון	3 November - י"ד חשון	4 November - ט"ו חשון
משלי א'	משלי ב'	משלי ג'	משלי ד'	משלי ה'	משלי ו'	משלי ז'

Rabbi Yoel Steinberg

The Jerusalem Kolel

The Author can be contacted at ysteinberg1@gmail.com

The Jerusalem Kollel of Rav Yitzchok Berkovits
Uniting With Torah. Igniting Leadership. Inspiring Love.
www.thejerusalemkollel.com

Parshah

There was once a wise man out on a walk. His discerning eyes took in everything. He pondered the significance and meaning of all that he observed. All of a sudden, he noticed something. This wasn't something new; he had seen it countless times before. Yet he now noticed something interesting about it. It was natural, not man-made, yet this thing had many characteristics of a hotel. It provided shelter, heating and cooling, soft material for a bed, a place to sit, food, and sometimes some music during the daytime and a pleasant fragrance.

The sage contemplated these phenomena, and came to a powerful, life changing conclusion: this entity was created for the purpose of being hospitable to any wayfarers passing by, and therefore the creator of this thing must desire to be hospitable.

This wise man was none other than Avraham Avinu, and this thing was a tree. Its leaves provided shelter, shade, and a soft material to sleep on, it supplied twigs for a fire and fruit for food, its bark gave off a pleasant odor, its trunk supported the back of anyone sitting under it while birds sang praises to Hashem as the sun rose.

Avraham is called a נדיב[1] and רש"י explains נדבה לבו להכיר בוראו. He gave over his mind to become familiar with Hashem. He had no one teaching him other than Hashem himself through his creations. To Avraham, nature sang the greatness and goodness of Hashem. From a tree, Avraham came to the clear recognition that Hashem created this world for kindness. This was a novelty, as we know that Sodom preached that kindness is the destruction of civilization.

With this in mind, we can give a deeper understanding to an interesting discussion brought in the Gemara (Sotah 10a). Chazal are divided on the meaning of ויטע אשל at the end of פרק כא, some say it means Avraham planted an orchard of fruit trees, some say it means a hotel. We can say, however, that these two views are intertwined. Avraham built a place of hospitality, his famous four-door tent, but in his eyes he was just emulating his creator and planting a man-made tree.

אז ירננו כל עצי יער. In the future, the song of the trees and all of nature will be deafening. ירעם הים ומלואו. The sea and all that is in it will roar praise to their creator. However, this same song exists now. הללו את ה' מן הארץ עץ פרי וכל ארזים. The trees are already singing their sweet melody. We just don't hear it so clearly because the darkness of *olam hazeh* and the numbness of habit make us deaf[2]. However, if we learn to emulate our forefather, to listen and look carefully, even we can hear it.

This art of hearing the silent song of nature is not just a nice way of being reminded of Hashem's constant presence all around us. To the Chovos halevavos, it's an essential prerequisite to Avodas Hashem. He puts his third chapter, the chapter discussing the service of G-d, after שער הבחינה, the chapter where he discusses the concepts of גדלו וטובו מלא עולם. Only after we recognise Hashem's greatness and goodness can we truly give ourselves humbly over to his service. Similarly, the Rambam[3] says that the way to achieve love and fear of Hashem, is to study his wondrous and great creations. We are physical beings, and seeing Hashem through the physical world talks to us.

In the זכות of following in the footsteps of Avraham may we be זוכה to together see the day when ישמחו השמים ותגל הארץ ויאמרו בגויים ה' מלך.

(Some of these thoughts are based on shiurim by R' Avigdor Miller).

1 חגיגה ג..

2 See חגיגה יד:.

3 Yesodei Hatorah 2:2.

PLEASE URGENTLY DAVEN FOR

שלמה טבלי בן שרה נ"י
שירה תמר בת שושנה דבורה תחי'
אריאל יהודה בן יהודית נ"י
חיה רוחמה בת אטא תחי'

לרפואה שלימה בתוך שאר חולי ישראל

Attention Shuls

THE HOUR

What will you do with it?

This week the clocks move back an hour on Motsai Shabbos in the UK.

Join hundreds of people who will be waking at their usual time to learn for an hour before Shacharis this Sunday morning.

Rabbi Zvi Teichman

Congregation Ohel Moshe, Baltimore, MD

The Author can be contacted at ravzt@ohelmoshebaltimore.com

SEDRA SUMMARY

THANK YOU TO CHABAD.ORG

Hashem speaks to Avram, commanding him, "Go from your land, from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you." There, Hashem says, he will be made into a great nation. Avram and his wife, Sarai, accompanied by his nephew Lot, journey to the land of Canaan, where Avram builds a mizbeach and continues to spread the message of a one Gd.

A famine forces the first Jew to depart for Egypt, where Sarai is taken to Pharaoh's palace; Avram escapes death because they present themselves as brother and sister. A plague prevents the Egyptian king from getting close to Sarai, and convinces him to return her to Avram and to compensate the brother-revealed-as-husband with gold, silver and cattle.

Back in the land of Canaan, Lot separates from Avram and settles in the evil city of Sodom, where he falls captive when the mighty armies of Chedorlaomer and his three allies conquer the five cities of the Sodom Valley. Avram sets out with a small band to rescue his nephew, defeats the four kings, and is blessed by Malki-Zedek the king of Salem (Jerusalem).

Hashem seals the Bris Bein Habersorim with Avram, in which the golus the bnei Yisroel is foretold, and the Holy Land is bequeathed to them as their eternal heritage.

Still childless ten years after their arrival in the Land, Sarai tells Avram to marry her maidservant Hagar. Hagar conceives, becomes insolent toward her mistress, and then flees when Sarai treats her harshly; a malach convinces her to return, and tells her that her son will father a populous nation. Yishmael is born in Avram's eighty-sixth year.

Thirteen years later, Hashem changes Avram's name to Avraham ("father of multitudes"), and Sarai's to Sarah ("princess"), and promises that a son will be born to them; from this child, whom they should call Yitzchock ("will laugh"), will stem the great nation with which Hashem will establish His special bond. Avraham is commanded to circumcise himself and his descendants as a "sign of the covenant between Me and you." Avraham immediately complies, circumcising himself and all the males of his household.

מִקּוֹל פָּרָשׁ וְרֹמֵה קֶשֶׁת בֹּרַחַת כָּל הָעִיר... כָּל הָעִיר עֲזוּבָה...
(ירמיהו ד כט)

From the sound of horsemen and archer the entire city is fleeing... the whole city is abandoned...

The Prophet foretells of a time when the descendants of Yishmael will terrorise our people. The sounds of beating hoofs will raise suspicion of an approaching enemy. The fear of unknown arrows suddenly piercing them will cause them to run. The streets will be empty as people will run for their life.

Our current events are an ancient story. Fear of cars suddenly ploughing into crowds and of knives stealthily drawn, thirsting for innocent blood, and echo fears from a long history.

The Baal HaTurim points out, that there is only one other reference in the entire Torah to this same word בֹּרַחַת, to flee.

When Hagar flees to the desert from her perceived 'harsh' treatment at the hands of Sarai, an angel confronts her. He asks her "Where have you come from and where are you heading?" Hagar responds "אנכי ברחת", "I am *running away* from Sarai my mistress."

The Baal HaTurim indicates that since Sarai was the catalyst for Hagar to flee, we in turn would one day pay the price by having to run and seek refuge from Hagar's descendants.

But wasn't Sarai justified? Didn't the angel indeed tell Hagar to return and subject herself to Sarai's so called 'harshness'? Why then would we have to 'atone' for Sarai's behavior?

Upon realizing she was pregnant the Torah reports that Hagar suddenly lost respect for Sarai. Sarai senses this and turns, in seeming condemnation, to Avram, telling him that it's his entire fault. She reminds him how after all she was the one who contrived the whole plan for him to beget a child by submitting Hagar, her maidservant, to him. She wonders about his silence and why he didn't stand up for her honour.

Looking at things superficially, it would seem like a classic marital feud with Sarai incredulous over Avram's silence and Avram somehow unaware or disinterested with the matter at hand.

Parshah

In what seems like utter anger and frustration Sarai blurts out to Avram, "let Hashem judge between me and you!" Is it possible that Sarai could be so furious as to demand Hashem's immediate intervention in her 'feud' with Avram?

The Targums of Yonoson and Yerushalmi, seem to have a totally different take on what is being expressed here.

According to their version of the events what Sarai was conveying was much more of a prayer than a complaint. She first laid out before Avram the facts, reviewing how she left her home and family, loyally standing by his side, travelling to a foreign land, enduring the discomfort of their encounter with Pharaoh, and finally was willing to let another woman mother his child to promote his destiny. Yet this woman, Hagar, as soon as she finds out she is carrying Avram's child demeans Sarai's 'so called' stature and greatness. Sarai then turns to Hashem beseeching him not to 'judge' and settle the score between her and her husband but to make things 'right' by allowing Avram's destiny to carry on through a child they will both have and thereby restore peace unto them.

There seems to have been a realization here of a need for a change in the game plan. Sarai merely meant to demonstrate the flaw in the character of Hagar that would necessitate going back to 'Plan A'.

Why was it relevant for Sarai to give her own history of devotion in stating her case? It should have been sufficient to merely demonstrate Hagar's callousness in her demeaning Sarai?

Certainly Sarai wasn't looking for praise; her sole goal was the future health of the Jewish nation. But she understood that the only way one could be a worthy 'mother' of this nation would be if that mother possessed an ability to constantly remain self-critical and not consider one worthy merely by the yardstick of one's successes alone.

Hagar's knee jerk reaction in seeing herself as worthier than Sarai, remaining blinded to the super human sacrifice that Sarai exhibited over a lifetime, revealed a fatal flaw in Hagar's ability to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

RACHEL CHARITABLE TRUST

Rachel Charitable Trust

QUIZ TIME Living with Mitzvos livingwithmitzvos.com

1. Why does it bring the battle between the four and five kings in the Torah?

Rabbi Danny Kirsch

Rav of JLE Shul, Federation

The Author can be contacted at rabbikirsch@jle.org.uk

FEDERATION

לעי"נ דבורה בת אליעזר ע"ה

Parshah

THE GREATEST CHESSED OF ALL

The Chofetz Chaim ztl was a prolific author who was the mechaber of many seforim. In his introduction to his Sefer Ahavas Chessed he details the acts of kindness performed throughout Sefer Bereishis and beyond.

In Parshas Lech Lecha, he describes Avrohom Avinu's special concern for his nephew Lot and how even though Lot had chosen to live in a debased and immoral culture, Avrohom still extended kindness in rescuing his nephew.

The introduction also details many examples of pioneering chessed performed by Avrohom Avinu in both Parshas Vayera and Chayei Sarah. But let us ask a question, which was Avrohom Avinu's greatest act of chessed?

Towards the end of the sefer, the Chofetz Chaim introduces us to a posuk in Tehillim 41:2 "happy is he that considers the poor"(*dal*) Surely the most important thing the poor man needs is financial assistance! What is the meaning of the word considers? and what is meaning of *dal*?

"Happy is he that (wisely) considers the poor". The Chofetz Chaim explains that poverty comes in all shapes and sizes, in a myriad of situations and circumstances. The responsibility of each of us is to wisely consider the areas in which this individual is lacking, and in which way our assistance and intervention can help him.

The word *dal* – poor – can refer to many areas of life. The physically weak or sick, poor in wisdom e.g how to run a business or perhaps poor in their knowledge of how things work in the local market place. Our responsibility is to "consider" those individuals who are poor in terms of life skills or experience and then act wisely. Use your wisdom in those specific areas and act wisely in assisting them in overcoming their areas of poverty.

Then there is the more significant form of poverty, those who are poor in intelligence. In the simplest sense, a person who has no Torah education is truly poor. One who is fortunate and has knowledge , he who possesses a Torah education should consider ways to attract the " poor "to Torah. The Chofetz Chaim teaches us that this is of paramount importance citing a Gemara in Bava Metzia 85a.

R' Shaul Ben Nachman said in the name of R' Yonasan "whoever teaches his friends son Torah, becomes worthy of sitting in the heavenly academy". Or Sanhedrin 99b Reish Lakish said "whoever teaches his friend Torah is regarded by the Torah as if he created him".

At the end of the paragraph he describes Avrohom Avinu's achievements in bringing people closer to Hashem quoting the Avos de R Nosson chapter 12: "one should help mould men and bring them and lead them under the wings of the Shechinah" as it teaches us [in this week's parsha] Avrohom Avinu's caring for the spiritually poor is rewarded with the words found in chapter 12.verse 5

"and the souls that they had made in Haran".

The great chessed shown here is the teaching of Torah and the sharing of our precious heritage with others. "One should have the same degree of passion for such people as if he had seen someone so poor they hadn't clothes to wear" Indeed Avrohom Avinu instructed us all to do chessed – the Torah describes Hashem's special love for Avrohom seeing that "he would instruct his sons and his household to do righteousness"

We who are the proud children of Avrohom Avinu, are obligated to continue his example of true chessed by sharing our Torah with others.

What can be a greater chessed than teaching Torah to those who otherwise would not have any exposure to it?

"Happy is he that considers the poor!"

Wishing Rabbi Kirsch חיים ארוכים
on the Petira of his mother Devorah bas Eliezer a"h
המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

BUBBY'S BLOG

"The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything but they make the best of everything."

BUYING A NEW KITCHEN APPLIANCE?
MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO שבת OR כשרות ISSUES!
FEDERATION
www.federation.org.uk/fed-tech/ technology@federation.org.uk

NEW
TECHNOLOGY GUIDES
AVAILABLE FROM THE FEDERATION
Pre-purchase tips and information for ovens and fridges.

QUIZ TIME Living with Mitzvos livingwithmitzvos.com

2. What weapons did Avraham use against the powerful four kings?

Rabbi Daniel Fine

Community Rabbi, Stanmore and Canons Park US and the Hasmonean Beis Programme

The Author can be contacted at danielpfine@gmail.com

Stanmore & Canons Park Synagogue

THE EVENING BEIS בית מדרש

Parshah

THE CUTTING EDGE

At the end of parashas Lech Lecha, we come across the second mitzvah in the Torah: bris milah (circumcision). Hashem commands Avraham Avinu that all of his male descendants are to be circumcised, in order to enter the covenant between the Bnei Yisrael and Hashem (Bereishis 17:9-14). We shall discuss the essence of bris milah from a relatively halachic and also a hashkafic perspective.

The gemarra[1] proves from a passuk that women are exempt from the mitzvah of bris milah - they have no obligation to perform a bris milah on their children - the obligation rests solely on the father. Many commentators were bothered by the following question: why do we need a passuk to exempt women? Surely they should be exempt anyway because bris milah is a time-bound positive commandment, as one can only perform milah during the day, and women are exempt from such mitzvos! We shall cite three answers to this question.

1) The Ramban and the Ritva answer that although milah is indeed a positive time-bound mitzvah, nevertheless without the passuk women would have been obligated to circumcise their children because they have the same status as Beis Din. In other words, if the father fails to circumcise his son or appoint a *mohel* to do so for him, the Beis Din is charged with ensuring the child receives a bris milah. Thus, without the exemption from the passuk, the child's mother would have been obligated to have the bris performed, just as Beis Din would be obligated.

2) A second approach is suggested by the Maharach Ohr Zarua[2] and the Tosafos Rid. They write that bris milah is not a time-bound mitzvah whatsoever, but for different reasons. In order to appreciate this approach fully, we need a brief introduction.

The following *chakirah* ('investigative question', for lack of a better term) is ascribed to the mitzvah of milah: is the mitzvah the *act* of performing the bris, or the *end result* that the child is now circumcised. There seem to be two main practical differences between these two understandings of bris milah. First, who is principally obligated in the mitzvah of milah - the child or the father? It depends on our two understandings. If the mitzvah is the *act* of performing the bris, then the father is principally obligated in the mitzvah (at least until the child grows up, when, if the father has failed to do it, then the child must arrange the bris himself). But if the mitzvah is the *end result* of being circumcised, then the principal mitzvah of milah is on the child - the father just ensures that this is arranged. Second, does one receive continuous reward for bris milah throughout one's lifetime? If the mitzvah is the *act* of milah, then there would not be a constant reward; the *act* of milah is a one-off act and after it has been performed, there is no more reward for it. However, if the mitzvah is the *end result* of being a circumcised person, then you can constantly receive reward for having a bris milah - you are constantly fulfilling the mitzvah by *being a circumcised person*. We are now ready to go back to the gemarra and the answer of the Maharach Ohr Zarua.

The Maharach Ohr Zarua understands that the mitzvah of milah is in the *end result* that the child is now circumcised, and thus explains that the mitzvah of bris milah is not time-bound whatsoever - for even though there are time limitations as to when the *act of circumcising* may take place (for example, not at night), there is always a mitzvah for the child to have the *end result* of being circumcised.

3) The Tosafos Rid takes a slightly different approach. He agrees with Maharach Ohr Zarua that the mitzvah of bris milah is the *end result*, but it is not that being a circumcised person is a positive thing per se. Instead, he understands that being a circumcised person means that the spiritually negative foreskin has been permanently removed. Therefore, the Tosafos Rid goes on to say that the reason bris milah is not a time-bound positive mitzvah is because the father is constantly (not just during the day) obligated to prepare the materials and arrange the bris so that the child should have his foreskin removed. Indeed, the Tosafos Rid explicitly says that the child is the one who gets the mitzvah of the *end result* of having been circumcised. However, the Ramban and Ritva, who both maintain that milah is a time-bound positive mitzvah (for it cannot be done at night) hold that the mitzvah of milah is in the *act* of circumcising the child.

In summary, there are three opinions regarding what the mitzvah of milah is: 1) the act of circumcising (Ramban and Ritva), 2) the result that the child is now positively circumcised (Maharach Ohr Zarua), or 3) the more negatively-focused result that the child has no foreskin (Tosafos Rid).

There is a gemarra which appears to support the Maharach Ohr Zarua and the Tosafos Rid. The gemarra[3] tells the story of how David Hamelech would express his gratitude for the fact that he was always surrounded by mitzvos - we have tefillin on our heads and arms, mezuzos on our doors, and tzitzis on our garments. We are constantly earning reward to put into our spiritual bank accounts upstairs (accounts which cannot crash by the way). When David went into the bathhouse, however, his joy turned to despondency – "Woe to, me, for I am bereft of mitzvos," David said, for he was 'naked' of the mitzvos of tefillin and tzitzis (and mezuzah) - one does not bathe with tzitzis or tefillin. The gemarra reports, however, that when he remembered his bris milah his joyful mood returned to him. Now, if the mitzvah of milah is the one-off *act* of milah, why was David cheered up when he remembered his bris? Surely he was not earning reward for it, so it would not be of any consolation! However, if the mitzvah is the *end-result* of being circumcised, then we can understand why the consequent constant reward of bris milah cheered up David Hamelech. That supports the approach of the Maharach Ohr Zarua and (perhaps) the Tosafos Rid, but how can the Ramban and Ritva explain this piece of gemarra? After all, they understand the mitzvah of bris milah to be in the *act* of circumcising which means that there is no continuous reward. If so, why was David Hamelech's gloom alleviated?

It seems that the Ramban and Ritva would have to understand David's initial melancholy as nothing to do with reward whatsoever. David was not upset at the fact that he was missing out on the *reward* of tefillin for the duration of his bath, but was simply upset at the fact that he was not physically surrounded

In memory of
LESLIE AND FREDA AARONSON

QUIZ TIME Living with Mitzvos livingwithmitzvos.com

3. **When first listing the four kings (14:1) it mentions Amrofel first, yet later (in 14:9) it mentions Kedorlo'omer first. Why the change in order and who was really in charge of the others?**

by mitzvos, especially these particular mitzvos (tefillin, tzitzis, and mezuzah) which make us more aware of Hashem, preventing any urge to sin. This would also explain why David was upset that he was without the mitzvah of mezuzah in the bathhouse. Even if he was upset about not earning reward, why should the fact he was in the bathhouse prevent him from earning reward for having mezuzos up at home? Rather, David was bemoaning the lack of mitzvah objects in his close proximity, and his bris milah was a welcome reminder that he had a mitzvah object wherever he went.

However we understand the mitzvah of bris milah, it is certain that bris milah is a physical symbol of the fact that we are Hashem's servants, as Hashem Himself says to Avraham in our parashah (Bereishis 17:11). We have a sign on our bodies which essentially says 'property and people of Hashem'. This is one reason why we perform bris milah so early in a baby's life - instead of waiting for him to have the choice to have a bris which would increase his reward, we give him a bris without his consent or knowledge. As the Maharal[4] points out, the most essential things in life are beyond the realm of choice. I cannot choose to breathe – it happens automatically. I do not choose if I am hungry either - food is essential, so my body automatically reminds me to eat. Similarly, becoming a true servant of Hashem by having His mark on your body is not something you can or should be able to choose - it lies above the realm of choice. That is why we perform it before an age which can involve choice.

The bris milah should serve as a constant reminder that we are Hashem's People with much to live up to in fulfilling our Divine mission in this world. May our learning about the bris milah have the same effect.

[1] Gemarra Kiddushin 29a
[2] Shut Maharach Ohr Zarua siman 11.
[3] Gemarra Menachos 43b
[4] Gur Aryeh on Rashi Shemos 19:2

CONT FROM PAGE 2: RABBI ZVI TEICHMAN

ever rise to any possible role in the destiny of Avram's legacy.

Hagar we are taught was no slouch. The illustrious Rosh HaYeshiva of Slobodka, Rav Yitzchock Issac Sher, alleges that the terms used to describe Hagar as a maidservant is used in a similar vein as the term servant is utilized to label Avraham's primary disciple, Eliezer, who we are told 'drew' and 'poured' the fountains of wisdom he learned at the feet of Avraham.

Hagar too was an esteemed and promising student of Sarai. But as she blossomed she began to espouse ideas of her own without humbling herself before her teacher Sarah. That sense of total self-determination and 'freedom of thought' were the seeds that would turn out that פרא אדם, wild-ass of a man, Yishmael, who on the one hand bore elements of humanity but possessed the desperate need for the independence of a wild-ass that would never allow those seeds of decency to sprout healthy and responsible behavior.

Hagar had risen to great heights in the academy of Avraham and Sarah. But she lacked a proper perspective of who she accurately was because her need for independence wouldn't allow her to accept criticism. By refusing to examine herself objectively she developed a distorted sense of entitlement and superiority and seeking to prove it with the evidence of her becoming pregnant.

When she flees to the desert from Sarai the angel calls out to her, "Hagar , maidservant of Sarai, where have you come from...", and Hagar responds, "I am running away from Sarai my mistress."

The Talmud derives from this exchange the following piece of advice: *If your friend calls you a donkey, put a saddle on your back!*

Hagar was seeking to escape the clutches of her mistress and certainly didn't see herself any longer as the 'maidservant of Sarai', nevertheless when facing the fiery truth of an angel of G-d, she had no choice but to face up to his assertion that she was indeed still the subservient disciple of her towering teacher Sarai, and promptly 'saddled up' in absolute agreement, by stating clearly that Sarai is clearly her superior.

Although she ultimately returned to her mistress, accepting her primacy, that seed of dissent within her that she never fully quashed, found its full blown expression in the persona of that 'wild-ass' of a man, Yishmael.

The descendants of Yishmael proudly display a belief and allegiance to G-d that deservedly rises above the other religions of the world in its assertion of a monotheistic belief of G-d. But that instinct to roam free like the wild-ass of the desert coupled to their arrogant sense of moral superiority, refusing to submit to any self-criticism or sound logic, compels them to remain forever 'unsaddled', leaving our nation and an entire world exposed to the violent consequences of religious belief bereft of values and morals.

Isn't that the nature of the 'בורחת', the one who is constantly on the run with no destination other than fleeing from truths that seek to 'saddle' one to responsibility and decency? Because someone who refuses to take stock of themselves will forever be running away from himself!

Hagar when asked where she is coming from and where she is headed, responds prophetically to both questions with only one answer: "אנכי ברחת", I am the eternal fugitive, merely running away with no destination, because I refuse to accept truth and responsibility, and there is never any refuge from that.

To a certain extent we are all guilty of 'running away'. We create for ourselves a convenient relationship with our beliefs and commitments to Torah that we find comfortable, but often refuse to re-evaluate where we are truly holding and hesitate to up the ante in our *avodas Hashem*.

Sarah's successful trade-off of abandoning the plan for Hagar's progeny to promote Avraham's legacy in favour of her son Yitzchok to become the inheritor of that role, comes with a caveat.

The moment we slip into the flaw that expelled Yishmael from our ancestry we become vulnerable to the taunts and threats of the ultimate בורחת, the 'runner'.

4. When talking about the four versus the five kings it also mentions other battles of the four kings. What relevance does it have to be mentioned?

Rabbi Yissochor Frand

Rosh Yeshiva, Ner Yisrael Baltimore

Ner Israel Rabbinical College

Parshah

DON'T DOUBT MY G-D

Shortly after Avram came to the Land of Canaan, he needed to descend to Egypt "because the famine was intense in the Land" [Bereshis 12:10]. In Egypt, Sarai was forcibly taken in the palace of Pharaoh. Finally, Sarai is released, the famine passes, and Avram began his return trip back to Canaan.

"So Avram went up from Egypt, he with his wife and all that was his – and Lot with him – to the south. Now Avram was very laden with livestock, silver, and gold. He proceeded on his journeys from the south to Beth-el to the place where his tent had been at first, between Beth-el and Ai." [Bereshis 13:1-3]

Rashi quotes the statement of chazal that on his return trip, Avram made a point of staying at the same places where he stayed on his way down to Egypt. This teaches proper etiquette that one should not change his lodgings where he has received hospitality [Erchin 16b].

I know of a contemporary application of this Talmudic teaching. Rav Elya Svei zt"l and yblch"t Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky of the Philadelphia Yeshiva used to travel to Toronto to raise funds for their Yeshiva. In spite of the fact that they later had children who lived in Toronto, they still stayed in the home of the same supporter who provided lodging for them in the city before they had their own married children living there.

The Oznaim L'Torah by Rav Zalman Sorotzkin says that in the case of Avram Avinu, there was an added reason for him to go back to the same places where he stayed on his way down to Egypt.

Avram was promised that going to Eretz Yisrael was going to be a windfall for him. "I will make of you a great nation; I will bless you, and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing, etc." Spiritually, financially and economically, good would come out of it.

However, ten pesukim later, "there was a great famine in the land". Avram needed to descend to Egypt "for the famine was severe in the land." Within a relatively short time of arrival, Avram became so destitute that he needed to flee Eretz Yisrael because he and his family were starving. This development had the potential to create a terrible desecration of Chilul haShem: "Where is this G-d of yours? What happened to all these promises?"

Avram wanted to make sure that people were not left with the impression that Hashem did not fulfill His promises. Now that Avram was coming back "laden with livestock, silver, and gold," he wanted to make sure he stopped at all the same lodgings where people might have been sceptical about the fulfilment of Hashem's blessings to Avram as Avram was leaving the Land of Canaan. Avram wanted to make sure that the people would not doubt G-d's promises. Yes, there may have been a temporary "bump in the road." That is the way life is sometimes. That is part of the 'nisyonos' we must sometimes endure. Ultimately, however, we should have rock solid faith in Hashem's Promises and Blessings.

The Kesav Sofer offers a somewhat different interpretation as to why it was so important for Avram Avinu to come back to the same places. Unfortunately, many times in life, when people are starting their careers and they are "just getting by," they associate with a certain type of people. As they become more successful, they forget who their friends were 'then' and those same people who were good enough for them 'then' are no longer good enough for them 'now' in their higher station in life.

This is equivalent to someone who stayed in Motel Sixes early in life and then, after hitting the jackpot, stays in the Ritz-Carltons and the Four Seasons of the world. This is a lack of "hakaras hatov" to Motel Six. Now the truth is that a person does not owe anything to Motel Six (and Tom Bodet) just because they may have left the light on for them once or twice. However, in the case of Avram, the situation was different: When he went down to Egypt and stayed in all these houses of people who were willing to take in a family that was down on its luck, they did him a favour. Now that Avram and his family are coming back as wealthy aristocrats, it would be inappropriate for them to turn their noses up and refuse to stay in the humble quarters of their original hosts. We are not talking about commercial hotels. We are talking about people's houses and people's feelings.

Many times, I have mentioned that virtually every parsha in the Torah teaches us the lesson of "hakaras hatov". Hakaras hatov is such a fundamental aspect of Judaism that allusions to it are scattered throughout the Torah. This is one such example. The reason Avram felt compelled to go back to the same people and the same lodgings on his return from Egypt as a wealthy man as he did when he went down to Egypt as a poor man is to teach a lesson. "If you were good enough for me when I was poor, you are good enough for me when I am rich." A person with such an attitude is a person who possesses the character trait of "hakaras hatov".

PARSHA RIDDLE

In this week's Parsha there is a name of a place that appears on almost every Daf in Shas. What is the name of this place?

Clue: if you look carefully in the Possuk you might find this place to be very "holy".

Thank you to Boruch Kahan bkahan47@yahoo.co.uk

FIND THE ANSWER IN NEXT WEEK'S ONEG

ANSWER FROM LAST WEEK

The Gemoro Sanhedrin (Daf 93a) tells us that there were three people who Nevuchadnezzar put into the furnace (the second time). Two were false prophets - Tzidkiyoh Ben Maaseiyoh and Achov Ben Koyloyah - who were both burned and one was Yehoshua Koihen Godol - who was saved.

Osher Chaim Levene

Orah

The Author can be contacted at osher.levene@googlemail.com

אורה Orah

Parshah

TERACH – NO INTERRUPTION

Name:	**Terach**
Life span:	**205 years**
Father:	**Nachor**
Spouse:	**Amaslai**
Children:	**Avraham, Nachor and Haran**
Ancestry:	**Shem**
Home town:	**Ur Kasdim**
Place of Death:	**Charan**

- **Idolater who brought his insubordinate son Avraham to Nimrod**
- **Witnessed Avraham's miraculous salvation from the fires**
- **His son Haran died when thrown into the same inferno**
- **Repented and left Ur Kasdim with his family**
- **Settled in Charan and died there**

Terach was not only an idolater but also an idol-manufacturer.[1]

But his oldest son rejected his pagan ways. Avraham defiantly smashed his father's idols and chased away customers. Terach dragged his insubordinate son before Nimrod, who had Avraham thrown into a fiery furnace, from where he miraculously escaped.[2]

Later on in life, Terach departed from Ur Kasdim with his family bound for Canaan. Significantly, the Torah reports how Terach never reached his final destination as he passed away in Charan.[3]

Only subsequent to closing the chapter on Terach's life, does the Torah turn its full attention onto Avraham's journey – notwithstanding the fact that chronologically Terach died *after* Avraham left Charan. This arrangement is to silence any would-be claim that Avraham may have been remiss in the mitzvah of honouring parents by leaving his aging father behind.[4]

The psychology and gradual descent into idolatry transpired in the following manner: Homage was originally accorded to the natural forces and constellations as divine intermediaries. Over time, though, they became treated as independent powers – such that G-d, the Primary Source of all influence, was inevitably removed from the picture.[5] And so, in spite of the worshipper's original quest, the idol-worshipper failed to complete his "journey"; he failed to arrive at the ultimate destination: G-d.

So too, Terach set off on a journey from Ur Kasdim. His odyssey was heading in the right direction, towards Canaan – the Land of Israel, the lighthouse of spirituality. But he only got as far as Charan. But bearing the hallmarks of an idol-worshipper, Terach was characteristically unable to go "all the way". He stopped there...and there he remained.

By stark contrast, Avraham was not beholden to his father's idolatrous past.[6] On the contrary, he traced the phenomenon of the universe, uninterrupted, all the way back to their Original Source: to G-d Himself.

Intrinsic to the mitzvah of honouring parents is that a child takes the first step backwards: to the source of his or her birth. But at the same time, his parents are merely the ambassadors of man's Heavenly Father.[7] Parental instruction is not the last word; it cannot conflict with any other divine command wherewith man establishes an uninterrupted link to the ultimate destination: to G-d.

And since Avraham's teachings highlight how it is incumbent upon man to trace the universe back to its Maker, it was imperative he not be accused of defying a mitzvah which captures the very concept of going backwards.[8]

In actual fact, as the first convert Avraham freed himself from the shackles of his past; his new existence closed the chapter on his former life.[9] Although towards the end of his life, Terach repented, [10] G-d's command for Avraham to travel away from his homeland, from his town and family absolved him from the mitzvah of honouring parents. He would go on to found a fresh lineage unrelated to his predecessors.

In turn, Avraham established the template for the Jewish people, his descendants, to act likewise, to similarly *go backwards* to first principles, to G-d – with no interruption whatsoever.

1 See Eliyahu Rabbah 6 and Eliyahu Zuta 25. Terach was an idolatrous priest (Midrash Hagadol, Bereishis 11:28).

2 Bereishis Rabbah 38:13

3 Bereishis 11:31

4 Bereishis 11:32 and Rashi ad loc citing Bereishis Rabbah 39:7

5 Rambam, Hilchos Kochavim Ch.1. The idol-worshipper failed to identify and relate to the phenomena – natural forces – supplying him his needs and goods.

6 Avraham broke away from his idolatrous past, from Terach's legacy of "At the outset, our forefathers were idolaters, Terach the father of Avraham…" (Haggadah).

7 The honor and reverence according to man's parents is akin to similar conduct toward G-d (Kiddushin 30b). The addendum to this mitzvah incorporates the important call "I am Hashem your G-d" (Vayikra 19:3).

8 See Yerushalmi, Peah 2b how Dama ben Nesina's exemplary portrayal of honoring parents bordered on the idolatrous. Indeed, Dama made the rock his father sat upon into an idol.

9 Maharal, Gevuros Hashem Ch.5 See our essay on Yisro: The Convert

10 Midrash Tanchuma, Shemos 18; Zohar 1, 77b, Zohar 1, 78b

QUIZ TIME Living with Mitzvos livingwithmitzvos.com

5. **Why is the great miracle of Avraham's surviving being thrown into the furnace not recorded in the Torah?**

Rabbi Alex Nadler

The Author can be contacted at alexnadler@hotmail.com

HASHEM'S GIFT TO AVRAHAM

Hashem commanded Avraham "Go for yourself from your land, from your relatives, and from your father's house to the land that I will show you…" we know that Hashem doesn't tell Avraham where to go. From the outset, this seems like a fairly cruel task to perform. In those days, it wasn't as easy to just pack up and leave your birthplace and take everything with as it is today.

Rashi explains that the Ribono Shel Olam specifically 'left Avraham in the dark' in order to heighten his sense of anticipation. This can be emphasised in the way that we gift-wrap presents for our loved ones, not knowing what is inside increases the excitement and intensifies their joy. Hashem was 'wrapping' the present of Eretz Yisrael before giving it to this most special recipient. Hashem wanted the destination to be cherished.

Another reason for the absence of information, was that Hashem wanted to test his faith. Differently to G-d, man is constantly making choices between Tov and Rah, sometimes even questioning belief in Hashem, R"L. There is nothing inherently wrong with considering both alternatives, without this doubt, it is not called "faith" but "knowledge". Avraham underwent this great test of faith, and he passed with flying colours.

A PROMISE OF SUCCESS

"I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing"

The famous question is presented, why does Hashem say "Lecha" superfluously using the words *'for yourself'?* He tells him to go for his own benefit and good. In Ur Kasdim, Avraham will not merit the privilege of having children and being famous.

G-d promises fame, fortune and a good reputation to Avraham. This is quite puzzling as reputations are usually earned and not given out as gifts. The Midrash explains that to show the fulfilment of G-d's promise, a *hey* was to be added to change 'Avram' to 'Avraham'. Avraham was not pleased by the number of letters to be added to his name, but rather with the new meaning which the extra letter would add. Rabbi Uziel Milevsky

Parshah

zt"l writes that Avram is an acronym of *Av Aram,* literally "Father of Aram", conveying that Avram became a spiritual leader in Aram. Avraham on the other hand, is an acronym for *Av Hamon Goyim,* "Father of many nations", conveying that eventually Avraham would become the spiritual leader of all mankind. Ramban also adds that Avraham represented the standard by which people would bless themselves, not only the Canaanites, but all of the families of the world.

OUR NISYONOS ARE GIFTS FROM ABOVE

The Nesivos Shalom brings the Yesod Ha-Avodah who cites the Ari, there are no two people who ever lived with the same purpose and task. No person can ever accomplish what another was meant to contribute to the perfection of the universe. Each person is place precisely by The Al-mighty in the circumstances that he needs to fulfil his mission in Olam Ha'zeh. The good, the bad and the ugly are all suited to our specific mission and are always in our best interest, no matter how hard it is to see.

This is all the more true in the spiritual realms, like the nature of one's soul and spirit. Individuals are born with different middos tovos and leanings, while others suffer from evil tendencies and traits. All of these characteristics are designed to assist that person in completing their assigned task. So too, with the nisyonos, they come in all shapes and sizes but *sof sof,* they are all "for your good, and for your benefit".

This is key to understanding the opening of our Parsha, Hashem tells Avraham towards his individual promise, towards the betterment of your soul. His directive to Avraham repeats itself to every single Yid. We are all instructed sometimes to distance ourselves from our land, our birthplace and our father's house, and it is our mission to remember Who gave us that challenge, and that it is a 'kiss' from above and we should only have hatzlacha in reaching our goals.

Living with Mitzvos ANSWERS

1. The Radak says that it comes to teach us how Avraham was not scared against these most powerful armies since he placed his reliance on Hashem.
2. The Gemora in Taanis 21a when talking about the story of Nochom Ish Gam Zu brings that Avraham threw earth and it turned into swords and the stubble turned into arrows.
3. The Tur says that Amorfel was the oldest while Kedorlo'omer was the strongest in battle. The Hamek Dovor says that Amrofel was the greatest leader of his country while the Be'er Bisode says that Amrofel was the ring leader who goaded on and encouraged the others to fight (i.e. he was Nimrod who see Rashi (10:9) was a smooth talker able to influence others to rebel.)
4. The Rokeyach says that it is because these nations gave advice to the five kings to rebel. The Redak says that these places where close to the five kings and might come to assist them in battle. The Malbim adds therefore they decided to conquer them first individually.
5. The Maharal says that it is in order that we should know that Hashem picked Avraham and the Jewish Nation **not** based on any action or reason.
6. The Chizkuni explains that Avraham was then given provisions so that when he spoke with the King of Sedom he would not need to hold anything back. The Tzror Hamor answers that it was for the benefit of the King of Sedom when he saw how generous Avraham was to Malki Tzedek he felt he could then ask for all the captives back.

Photography by Yossi Chesner

TO SPONSOR A WEEK
please email
mc@markittech.com
Cost per week: £500
(which covers production costs)

For questions on Divrei Torah, please contact the Editor in Chief, Rabbi Yonasan Roodyn
rabbiroodyn@jewishfuturestrust.com
To receive this via email please email
mc@markittech.com

JFT נצח Jewish Futures Trust

NOW IN THE FOLLOWING PLACES
Yerushalayim, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Baltimore, Beit- Shemesh, Birmingham, Borehamwood, Budapest, Cancun, Detroit, Edgware, Elstree, Gateshead, Gibraltar, Glasgow, Hale, Henderson, Hong Kong, Ilford, Johannesburg, Lakewood, Larnaca, Las Vegas, Leeds, London, Los Angeles, Manchester, Melbourne, Miami, Milan, New York, Oslo, Paris, Petach Tikva, Philadelphia, Pressburg, Radlett, Ruislip, Santiago, Sao Paulo, Southend, Tallinn, Tarzana, Toronto, Uman, Vienna, Zurich

Please could you ensure that there are ample sheets left in shuls for Shabbos before taking one home.

שמות לגניזה

This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimos. Please dispose of accordingly.
NISHMAS YISROEL · SINAI · YESHURUN · OHR YISRAEL
www.federation.org.uk/sheimos-lgeniza

FEDERATION