

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON VAYECHI - 5758

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[weekly@jer1.co.il](http://www.jer1.co.il) Highlights of the Torah weekly portion - Vayechi 5758

Living It Up! "And Yaakov lived..." How would you define "living it up?" Going to all night bashes? Being driven around town in a chauffeur-driven limo while you sip champagne, gazing from the windows into the envious eyes of those poor pedestrians marching to their 9 to 5 jobs? Life at "the top" looks glamorous from the outside, but you only have to look at the number of drug addictions, nervous breakdowns and broken marriages amongst the "glitterati" to realize that "living it up" has its downside. What's the Jewish concept of "living it up?" Last summer, on our yearly pilgrimage to Marks & Spencer, my wife and I were wheeling our two year-old down those hallowed aisles. We were struck by how many people would come over, coo and say "Look! A baby!" When we walk through the streets of Jerusalem we spend most of our time avoiding collisions with all the other strollers and prams. One of the most striking facets of a Jewish lifestyle is how one's daily life is defined by the momentous moments of man's brief walk on this planet. The cycle of life literally blooms and blossoms all around you: A kiddush, a bris mila, redeeming a first-born, an engagement party, a bar mitzvah, a wedding and the week-long celebration afterwards, accompanying a deceased to his place of rest, visiting the mourners. The daily life-cycle of the Jew is replete with the cycle of life itself. From the cradle to the grave. Sharing joy and sharing sadness. The first words of this week's Parsha are "And Yaakov lived." From the time Yaakov came down to Egypt there was literally a population explosion in the numbers of the Jewish People. Within a mere 17 years, Yaakov saw their numbers swell from a mere 70 souls to many thousands. As Yaakov was the "zeide" of all these offspring, his entire day must have been filled with the celebrations -- a birth, a bris mila, a kiddush, a wedding -- of this teeming multitude. Now that's really living it up!

WarGames 1 "...With my sword and with my bow." (48:22) "...With mitzvos and good deeds." (Midrash) The strategy of a conventional war is to attack the enemy first with a long range weapon -- like a bow. If that fails and he gets close, then you resort to the sword. This is true only in conventional warfare. But if you're talking about a spiritual enemy, then things are different. From the order of the verse -- the sword preceding the bow -- it is clear that the Torah is not talking about any enemy, rather a person's life-long enemy -- his own selfishness. The nature of person is to be self-centered. A baby starts with no other thought than his own gratification and employs all available means to gain his desires. Only after many long years can a person eventually overcome his natural selfishness. In the constant battle with his self-centeredness, a person starts off with hand-to-hand combat, using the sword at close quarters to oust the natural impulse for selfishness. However, even when one has beaten back the enemy till he is out of range of the sword, one still needs to keep the enemy's head down by constantly firing salvos of mitzvos and positive actions from the bow.

Generation Gap "...In you shall all Yisrael bless, saying 'May G-d make you as Ephraim and as Menashe.'" (48:20) On Friday nights throughout the Jewish world, parents bless their children with the words of this verse -- "May G-d make you like Ephraim and Menashe." Why, of all our towering spiritual giants, are Ephraim and Menashe singled out to be the paradigm of blessing? Why don't we say "May G-d make you like Avraham and Moshe?" If there is a "generation gap," that gap is the discrepancy between the spiritual attainments of one generation and its predecessor. From that moment of supreme encounter with the Divine at Sinai, the march of history spiritually has been relentlessly and consistently downward. The reason that we bless our children to be like Ephraim and Menashe can be found in what

B'S'D' Yaakov says to Yosef a few verses earlier -- "Ephraim and Menashe will be to me as Reuven and Shimon." (48:5) Ephraim and Menashe, although Yaakov's grandchildren, had reached the level of their uncles Reuven and Shimon -- the level of the previous generation. They hadn't descended the spiritual ladder in any way. Thus, on Friday nights, parents bless their children that they should absorb all the spiritual attainments of the preceding generation and escape that downward spiritual spiral -- the generation gap.

Sources: o Living It Up! Baal HaTurim, Rabbi Reuven Subar o WarGames 1 - Kehilas Yitzhak in Mayana shel Torah o Generation Gap - Rabbi Michael Schoen in Prisms ... Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

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In the end, we each must choose By RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN (Jan. 8 '98) "And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for 17 years, and the sum total of Jacob's years was 147." (Gen. 47:28) The final verse in last week's portion of Vayigash summarizes our achievement in Egypt: "And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen and took possession of it, and was fruitful and multiplied exceedingly." (Gen 47:27) Could anything be a clearer testament to the resilience of Jacob's descendants? Yet according to Rashi, the very next verse - the opening of our portion of Vayehei quoted above, sends us in the opposite direction. Rashi's interpretation is not based on the words themselves, but rather on the almost hidden meaning embedded in the lack of white space between the final verse of last week's reading and the opening verse of this week's. As we know, there are no paragraphs or chapter breaks in the text of Torah scrolls. Rather, a white space - anywhere from a minimum of nine letters wide to the end of the entire line - is the Torah's way of indicating that a pause or separation of some kind exists. But Vayehei is the only portion with no white space preceding it. This lack of a separation leads Rashi to comment that the reason why our portion is setuma (sealed off) is because "with the death of Jacob, the hearts and eyes of Israel became closed because of the misery of the bondage with which they [the Egyptians] had begun to enslave them." Thus for Rashi, the achievement of last week lasts no longer than the blink of an eye. The message is that we are witnessing the beginning of the end. But slavery does not come until a generation later, when we are told of the emergence of a new Pharaoh, one "who did not know Joseph." (Exodus 1:8) So why does Rashi's commentary appear to "jump the gun?"

Rabbi Isaac Bernstein, of blessed memory, drew my attention to the Maskil l'Dovid (Rabbi David Pardo, 1718-1790), who explains that the first intimations of Jewish slavery are indeed to be found in Vayehei, but in a later verse describing an apparently uncomfortable situation after Jacob's death: "And when the days of mourning for Jacob were over, Joseph spoke to the house of Pharaoh, saying: 'If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying my father made me swear, and he declared: "I am dying. In my grave which I have dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." ' ' (Gen. 50:4) Does this request sound like words spoken by the Viceroy of Egypt? Does the number-two figure at a Fortune 500 company need an appointment to see the president? The Seforno (Rabbi Ovadia ben Yaakov, circa 1470-1550), explains that in this instance, court etiquette prevented Joseph from making his request personally, because he was dressed in mourning clothes (and presumably in need of a haircut and shave). However, Jewish law dictates that whatever one has to do in order to bury one's dead is permissible. Joseph certainly could have made himself presentable had his external appearance been the major problem. Hence the Maskil l'Dovid suggests that a careful reading of the text would indicate a change in Joseph's status, his sudden loss of "access."

I would suggest another explanation. Perhaps his almost obsequious manner bespeaks not so much a general change in Joseph's political position as the delicacy of this particular petition. Joseph has reached the top of the social ladder in Egypt; he has certainly lived out the Great Egyptian Dream. But now he is forced to face the precariousness of his position. A person usually wants to be buried in his homeland, where his body will become part of the earth to which he feels most deeply connected. Indeed, in the ancient

world, the most critical right of citizenship was the right of burial. The wise Jacob understood that Pharaoh expected Joseph to identify with Egypt completely, to bring up generations of faithful and committed Egyptians. But this was impossible for Jacob - as the patriarch hoped it would be for his children and grandchildren as well. They were in Egypt but not of Egypt; they might contribute to the Egyptian society and economy, but they could never become Egyptians. Jacob understood that his burial in Canaan would be the greatest test of Joseph's career - and would define the character of his descendants forever. Joseph, too, understood that Pharaoh would be shocked at a petition expressing rejection of the most powerful and civilized nation on earth. Indeed, it is such a sensitive matter that Joseph cannot face his patron directly with it. And at that moment Joseph understands an even deeper truth: If he, his brothers, his children and grandchildren decide to live as Egyptians and die as Egyptians, the chances are that they will be totally accepted into the mainstream of the land. But if they choose to live as Jews, with their own concepts of life and death, they will never be accepted. It is this realization which Rashi correctly sees as the beginning of the slavery of the Israelites. In Egypt, Joseph's kinsmen may have everything: Goshen Heights, progeny and patrimony. But as long as they are determined to remain Jews, servitude and persecution are inevitable. The realization of the transient nature of their good fortune comes upon them inexorably and imperceptibly, as in the blink of an eye. And so this portion is sealed off, just as Egypt will soon be sealed off to their children. Such is the ultimate fate of the children of Israel in every Exile.

Shabbat Shalom Rabbi Riskin, dean of the Ohr Tora institutions, is chief rabbi of Efrat.

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hamaayan@torah.org Hamaayan / The Torah Spring: Parashat Vayechi Edited by Shlomo Katz

An Astonishing Midrash The students asked the Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi (known simply as "Rebbi"), "Why was Yosef buried in Shechem?" Rebbi responded, "Since he was kidnaped from Shechem, they returned him to Shechem." The students refused to accept this answer until Rebbi showed them the verse [in this week's parashah] in which Yosef said, "You must bring my bones up with you." R' Yehonatan Eyebschutz z'l explains: The halachah is that a thief must return the object which he stole. If the object no longer exists or no longer exists in its original form, the thief cannot return it and he cannot achieve full atonement. This was the objection raised by Rebbi's students: Since Yosef was taken from Shechem as a living person and was returned as a corpse, how can that be considered to be a true return?

The answer is as follows: The halachah also provides that even if the stolen object is changed, so long as it has the same name in its original and present forms, the thief can return it for full atonement. Thus Rebbi answered, "Even in Yosef's lifetime he referred to himself (in the quoted verse) as 'bones.' Therefore, when his body was returned to Shechem, it is as if the stolen object was returned." (Midrash Yehonatan) ...

"May they proliferate abundantly like fish within the land." (48:16) The midrash says: "Fish, even though they live in the water, surface when it rains to catch the raindrops in their mouths. So, too, the Jews, even though they live in the water - i.e., the Torah which is likened to water - when they hear a new Torah thought, they drink it thirstily as if they had never heard words of Torah before." R' Aharon Kotler z'l (died 1962) explains: The midrash does not only mean that Jews love the Torah. Just as fish recognize that water is the essence of their existence, so Jews recognize that Torah is the essence of their existence. This idea has halachic implications. The gemara states that when one commits involuntary manslaughter and is exiled to a city of refuge, his Torah teacher is exiled with him. Why? Rambam explains that for a true student of Torah, the lack of a teacher is a fate worse than death. Since the Torah did not condemn an involuntary manslaughterer to death, he must be given his teacher. (Mishnat Rabbi Aharon, Vol. I, p.30)

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yhe-sichot@jer1.co.il Sichot of the Roshei Yeshiva summarized by students PARASHAT VAYECHI SICHOT OF HARAV AHARON LICHTENSTEIN SHLIT" A The Symphony of Tradition Summarized by Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon "All these are the tribes of Israel, twelve of them; ...each according to his blessing he blessed them." (Bereishit 49:28) Two factors combine to form a person's character. On the one hand, "All these are the tribes of Israel, twelve of them" - the individual must see himself as part of the community. On the other hand, "each according to his blessing he blessed them" - each individual has his own destiny, his own personality. There is no standard model that applies to everyone. The Or Ha-Chayim explains that Yaakov blessed his children each according to his innermost spiritual characteristics. Early psychologists and the deterministic psychology that they expounded, following the French Revolution, held that we are all born equal - each like a blank page. Chazal never accepted this theory, and believed that each of us is born with his own personality and destiny. Modern psychology, too - le-havdil - agrees with this assessment.

A person needs to recognize what is special about himself and to develop himself accordingly. At the same time, he needs to remember that he is part of a society, and therefore if he is capable of several different things he should choose his direction based on the needs of society. An orchestra is made up of violinists, pianists, a percussion section, etc. If all the musicians had chosen the same path for themselves and all ended up, for instance, in the strings section, the strength of the orchestra would be greatly diminished. The same applies to learning. The Jewish world would not have been any the richer if the Radak had been another Rabbeinu Peretz. The Radak specialized in Tanakh, and his teachings are very valuable to Am Yisrael. It must be remembered, though, that the basis must always be retained - "all these are the tribes of Israel;" in our case - the tradition of Abbaye and Rabba. All the gedolei Yisrael, whether they specialized in Tanakh or in Philosophy, were great also in their study of Gemara. It is only once a person has built his foundations that he can branch off onto the route for which he is destined. (Originally delivered Shabbat Parashat Vayechi 5753. Translated by Kaeren Fish.) Copyright (c) 1997 Yeshivat Har Etzion. ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VBM

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The Tenth of Tevet has traditionally been observed as Yom Ha-Kaddish Ha-kelali, the day we recite Kaddish for people whose date of death is unknown. Consequently, many rabbis have designated it as a day of remembrance for the Holocaust...

The Challenges of the Holocaust Based on a sicha by Harav Aharon Lichtenstein Translated by Kaeren Fish

The Holocaust as a phenomenon raises many intractable questions. On a cultural level, we can ask, in the words of George Steiner, how it is possible that a person can listen to Brahms and read Goethe in the evening, and wake up in the morning and go to work as commandant of a death camp. On the social level, we can ask how the Holocaust grew out of other historical phenomena. But the question which concerns us principally is the prophetic question which echoes throughout the generations: why do the righteous suffer - the question of theodicy.

A number of possible approaches exist in tackling this problem. a. Not only is it not true that God ignored what was going on, but - on the contrary - the Holocaust represented the fulfillment of His will. We need to recognize this and to confess that it was "because of our sins..." to see the Holocaust as a punishment, and to answer the question of the suffering of the righteous with another question: why do we ignore our own behavior which preceded the Holocaust? If we are so concerned with the fulfillment of the prophecy of "women consuming their own offspring," why do we not conduct an equal level of soul-searching when faced with the image of "priest and prophet have been slain in God's sanctuary?" b. The completely opposite approach: God has given man free choice, and He now is - as it were - unable to interfere. "When the powers of destruction are allowed to act, they do not distinguish between the righteous and the wicked" (Bava Kama 60a). c. A combination of these approaches: The Holocaust represents the "hiding of God's face" (hester panim). It is neither a purposeful act on His part, nor is He bound by human freedom of choice, but rather it is a situation whereby God withdrew His hand because of the sins of Am Yisrael. We may ask why God hid His face, despite the fact that He could have saved us, and the answer (according to this approach) is that since modern secularism broke off all contact with God, as described in parashat Vayelekh, this severance became reciprocal. God hid His face as a natural result of our severance of contact with Him - not as a punishment but as a consequence.

However, it may be preferable to remain with the problem - even if it is multiplied six million times - than to accept any of these answers. Not because there are better ones - there are not, and these answers may theoretically be correct. We should not reject outright the answer which maintains "because of our sins" - who are we to instruct Divine Providence as to how to punish? However, morally we dare not say this, since by uttering this answer we have to see European Jewry as a terribly wicked community, to the extent that it brought the Holocaust upon itself, or alternatively to adjust our standards and to say that such terrible punishments are the

appropriate response to very ordinary sins. Yeshayahu was punished for saying, "I dwell amongst a nation of unclean lips." For us to make such a serious accusation against the previous generation is certainly more serious than the accusation made by Yeshayahu; who would dare to say that there is even some comparison between the punished and those who effected the punishment? Among the victims were people of the highest spiritual level, saints from birth and childhood. On the other hand, if we change our standards of sin and punishment, then we have to see the God of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy in a completely different light. The second answer - maintaining that God's hands were tied, as it were - we must also reject, for this would imply that we deny Him any role in the course of history. The third answer, that of "hiding His face," leaves us with a question: why? Was the situation so dire that we really deserved for God to hide His face from us? For those of us who believe, it is preferable to remain with the question and with the faith which surrounds it rather than to try and snatch at excuses of one kind or another. We cannot nor will we ever be able to provide an adequate explanation for what happened. Someone once said, in response to a question as to whether he believed an explanation would ever be found for the Holocaust, "I hope not." A woman once asked my neighbor Leib Rochman, a Holocaust survivor, "Where was God during the Holocaust?" He replied, "He was with us." That is the only response - "I am with him in distress." The question exists, but we are unable to supply an explanation for even smaller details of history's course because we cannot see the entire picture; how much greater, then, is our inability to explain an event of this magnitude.

We are not judged by our ability to find or create convoluted explanations. Our test lies in not forgetting and in learning lessons for the future. Firstly, we are obligated to remember, and the remembrance is twofold. The Gemara speaks of acts "in memory of the Temple," and this involves two dimensions. A) There are mitzvot which are prescribed in order to recall the Beit HaMikdash: shaking of the lulav all seven days of Sukkot, counting the Omer, etc. B) We have to remember not only the glory and the splendor but also the destruction and desolation. In our case, too, we have to remember the glorious Judaism that was - not just as historical knowledge, but as part of a personal relationship, with love. We have to remember the vibrant Jewish life that existed there, the Jews who walked with their heads upright in the filthy ghetto and created a rich world within that most difficult socio-political situation. At the same time, we have to remember the personal tragedies, the fearsome destruction, the chaos which befell the community and the individuals. And although there is generally a boundary to mourning - twelve months - in the "remembrances" of Rosh Hashana we recount every year our communal remembrances, and these are never forgotten. In addition, we have to strive for a higher level of love for our fellow Jews - not just on the basis of the communal fate of the past, but on the basis of our destiny and our common future. Thirdly, we have to learn from the poverty and suffering of the past how truly fortunate we are here and now, in the sense indicated by the mishna in Pirkei Avot: "Who is wealthy? He who is satisfied with his lot." Every person is capable of seeing himself as discriminated against or lacking or unfortunate in some respect, but when we encounter genuine suffering it is easier to put everything into its proper perspective and to regain our sense of priorities and trivialities. As part of this, perhaps we need to learn to appreciate little things too, even levels of spirituality which are less than lofty. Moreover, we have to learn humility when it comes to historical commentary. Someone who cannot provide an answer for what took place during the Holocaust should not be overly eager in providing explanations for current events either (even though this is sometimes convenient). Furthermore, one of the messages of the Holocaust - paradoxical as it may seem - is that of faith. If a person experiences a period of intense difficulty and his faith wavers a little as a result of his troubles, he has to remember those Jews who lived through the inferno and persevered with perfect, pure faith; people who, in the midst of the hideous events which they experienced, continued to believe and persisted in their scrupulous observance of mitzvot. A person has to remember that each one of us is capable of being an Avraham Avinu - someone who believes, even if he is alone in his belief. Someone once said that to be a believing Jew means to be the last Jew on earth, and still to believe. Dr. Zerach Warhaftig recounted how, when he discovered Rav Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg (author of "Seridei Eish") at the end of the war, the latter asked him, "Are there other Jews left in the world?" He had believed that he was the last, but nevertheless remained a Torah giant, firm in his faith. Finally, we must be accompanied by a sense of mission, a feeling of duty towards God as well as towards those who sacrificed their lives. Those of us who remain on the battlefield after the great decimation of God's army, as it were, have to gird ourselves, take up their vision and carry it forward. The same responsibility which they carried is now the lot of a much smaller community, and we therefore have to make much more of an effort. In the past, a person who built himself up was free to consider only himself and his own personal interests. In our generation, we have to see ourselves as a part of Knesset Yisrael, continuing in the path laid down by our fathers, lifting the baton that was struck from their hands. We are all, in a sense, survivors. We must always keep the interests of the community in mind and do our best to serve it. Moreover, our people's great and inspiring vision has in no way dimmed, and we must rededicate ourselves to pursuing its realization.

Someone was once asked, "After the Holocaust - you're still a Jew?" He immediately replied, "What else? Should I then become a gentile?" Let us not become entangled in meaningless questions of how they allowed themselves to be led like sheep to the slaughter, etc. What supreme heroism was demonstrated there! Jews sang on the way to the crematoria - "Joyful are we; how good is our portion, how pleasant our destiny!" And it was not only the pious and righteous who declared this.

Let us strengthen ourselves and continue with the construction which they never completed through the building of the land and its development. Anyone who emerges from Yad VaShem experiences profound depression - and quite understandably so. But someone who emerges and sees the hills of Judah and Jerusalem rebuilt can take some comfort. We should not attempt to do "accounting" and to say that this is God's compensation to us for the Holocaust. The State of Israel is not the solution to that problem but rather an opportunity for us to fulfill our mission; not an answer but rather a challenge and a destiny, and our responsibility is to work towards its realization!

(This is a student summary of a sicha delivered on the Tenth of Tevet 5746 [1986]. It has not been reviewed by Rav Lichtenstein.) Copyright (c) 1997 Yeshivat Har Etzion. All rights reserved.

ravfrand@torah.org Rabbi Frand on Parshas Vayechi ...

Seeing the Good of the Land: The Holiness of Tel Aviv I have a different appreciation for the following insight now (after visiting Israel) than I did two weeks ago. I have "come and seen the Land and it is very very good" [Bamidbar 14:7]. A student of Reb Yisrael Salanter once went to his master and told him that he was going to Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel. He inquired of his Rebbe what he should be careful about. Reb Yisrael told him to be careful not to transgress the prohibition of speaking Lashon HaRah [evil] about Eretz Yisrael. Just as our ancestors' actions set patterns for us in a positive direction (ma'aseh Avos siman l'Banim), so too can they do in a negative direction. There was an action of our ancestors concerning Eretz Yisrael -- the incident of the Spies. This incident implanted for all generations a tendency within us, that when a person goes to visit Eretz Yisrael he may wish to dwell on its shortcomings rather than on its tremendous attributes. Reb Yisroel therefore told the student "Be careful, and don't stumble in the sin of the spies." This is something that I try to bear in mind. There is perhaps a handicap in going to Eretz Yisrael for the first time at my age, rather than when younger. But the positive side is that one can be very aware and very cautious of this prohibition. One can make a concerted effort to see 'the good of the Land and its fat places'. A verse concerning our forefather Avraham says "And G-d said to Avraham, 'Lift your eyes and see from the place where you are standing there. For all the land that you see, I will give to you and your children.'" [Bereshis 13:14] Before G-d showed Avraham the Land, he advised him to lift up his eyes. That is the approach that one must take when viewing the Land of Israel. It must be with 'lifted eyes'. It requires, sometimes, an uplifted vision to see beyond the imperfections and to recognize the beauty and greatness of the Land. When the Gerrer Rebbe, zt"l, went to Eretz Yisrael before the Second World War he wrote back a letter and referred to the "holy city of Tel Aviv". His Chassidim wondered -- we would understand "the holy city of Jerusalem"; we would understand "the holy city of Hebron"; "the holy city of Tzfat" -- But the "holy city of Tel Aviv"?! What is so holy about Tel Aviv? The Gerrer Rebbe wrote back and told his Chassidim, "The only Houses of Worship in Tel Aviv are synagogues! Other cities have churches and mosques, but Tel Aviv is holy -- it has only synagogues!" This is the "lift your eyes" -- to see that Tel Aviv has its holiness and not to dwell upon the imperfections.

Deep Down We Are All Brothers - Hopefully Yes, there are problems in Eretz Yisrael. In two weeks I did not become an expert, and can not tell people anything they don't already know about Eretz Yisrael and its problems. There is a serious problem between the religious and the less religious. I like, however, to believe that the ill feelings are only on the surface, and nevertheless, deep deep inside, everyone knows that his neighbor is Jewish and that in times of trouble, in the final analysis, we are all brothers. I was walking on a street in Jerusalem and a little boy approached me. This was perhaps the sweetest moment of my visit. The boy asked me, "Can you help me cross the street?" I never saw the kid in my life; I'll probably never see him again. But I am Jewish and he is Jewish and therefore I am his uncle or I am his brother or I am his father. When people are running after a bus in Jerusalem, everyone yells to the bus driver "Stop!" Why? Because a fellow Jew is chasing the bus.

Experiencing Biblical Verses First-Hand Of all the holy places that I had the merit to visit, the most moving place for me personally was Kever Rachel. In this week's parsha, Yaakov Avinu tells his son Yosef "When I came from Padan Aram, Rachel died upon me when there was yet a measure of land to go until reaching Efras." [Bereshis 48:7] "Don't have complaints to me that I didn't take your mother the short distance between Kever Rachel and the Cave of the Machpela. The reason I didn't take her there was based on Divine command. There will come a time when Jews will go into Exile, they will pass by Rachel's tomb and Rachel will argue for the Jewish people and G-d will respond 'The children will return to their borders' [Yirmiyahu 31:16]. That is why I buried Rachel there, sitting among the children of Yishmael, and not in the tomb of the patriarchs." I went to Kever Rachel right at Mincha [afternoon service] time. There was a minyan there and a

Jew said "Let's daven Mincha". There is a little chazan's amud there and a small paroches [cover in front of the Ark]. On that paroches the words are inscribed, "The children will return to their borders". A Hungarian chassidische yid, bekkeshe, round black hat, gartel, gets up and starts davening (Bureech Ata...). Right next to him is another Jew, a Sephardi, who answers in the Sephardic pronunciation (Ba-ruch A-ta...). And I'm standing in the middle, born in America, educated in American Yeshivos and I say (Baruch Ata...) using my pronunciation. I look around, and I look on the paroches where it says "And the children will return to their borders" and I say to myself, "Am I not living this verse? Do I not see a Jew whose ancestors got stuck in Hungary and another Jew whose ancestors were dragged by the Exile to Spain or to Turkey or to Salonika or to Yugoslavia and my parents got stuck in Germany and I got stuck in America? And we all pray with our own unique pronunciations. But in front of my eyes was written "And the children will return to their borders". From Spain, from Germany, from Hungary -- we have witnessed the return of the children to their borders from the four corners of the world. One goes around and finds different customs -- Chassidim, Misnagdim, Sephardim, Yemenites... At Kever Rachel we find that the children have returned! My last day in Jerusalem we took a tour of the Old City. The guide pointed out the Ramba'n Synagogue. Ramba'n wrote to his son "What can I tell you about the land, great is its abandonment and desolation. As a rule, the more holy the place, the greater its destruction. Jerusalem is the most destroyed; Judea more than the Galilee, etc. etc." Here we stood in the rebuilt synagogue of the Ramba'n and the rebuilt Old City, which a mere 20 years ago was off limits. One can actually sense that Redemption is coming. We were standing there in a beautiful courtyard of the Old City and the tour guide was speaking. Suddenly, a little kid with a knitted Kippah comes out with his soccer ball and begins practicing shooting balls at a goal against a wall in the Old City. The noise of the soccer ball was reverberating in the echo chamber and I asked myself "Is this right? Is it right that within 3 blocks of the Western Wall, literally in its shadow, a kid is shooting a soccer ball against a wall?" As if by script, the tour guide quoted the verse in Zecharyah [8:4-5] "Thus Sayeth the L-rd of Hosts -- Yet again will old men and women sit in the streets of Jerusalem ...and the roads of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in her streets." To the backdrop of the guide reading this verse, the kid was kicking the ball against the wall. I said to myself "It is not incongruous. It is not inappropriate. It is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Zecharyah."

Sources and Personalities Reb Yisrael Lipkin of Salant (Reb Yisrael Salanter) -- (1809-1883) Founder of the Modern Mussar movement, stressing ethical behaviour. Gerrer Rebbe -- Rav Avraham Mordechai Alter of Ger (1866-1948), authored Imrei Emet; Fourth Generation of Ger Dynasty. Son of Sefas Emes. Ramba'n -- Rav Moshe ben Nachman (1195-1270); Forced to flee native Spain in 1263 after he demolished arguments of apostate Pablo Christiani in debate arranged by King James of Aragon. Settled in Eretz Yisrael in 1267 at age 72. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Balt, MD dhoffman@clark.net RavFrand, Copyright (c) 1998 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway 6810 Park Heights Ave. Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800

weekly-halacha@torah.org Parshas Vayechi - Medications on Shabbos By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav. Behold your father is ill (48:1) Until Yaakov fell ill, no one was sick...(Bava Metzta 87a)

**MEDICATIONS ON SHABBOS** One of several Rabbinical decrees that our Sages enacted in order to guard the sanctity of Shabbos concerns the use of medications. In the opinion and experience of the Rabbis, easy access to medicine may lead to the transgression of Shabbos Lab ors such as "grinding" (when preparing certain medications) or "smoothing" (when applying certain medications). While issuing the decree, however, the Rabbis were bound by the halachic principle of being as lenient as possible with those suffering pain or distress. Thus, they established guidelines for determining when it is permitted to take medication on Shabbos and when it is not. In the following discussion, we will list several common conditions which normally require medication and how they are dealt with on Shabbos.

**HOW TO USE THIS LIST:** Our discussion is limited to non-life threatening situations. When in doubt whether or not a situation is life-threatening, consult a rav and/or a doctor. Whenever we mention that an act may be done "with a shinui", it means that the act may be done in a manner different from the normal and usual. For example, dialing a telephone with the knuckles instead of the fingers is considered a shinui. Our discussion applies to healthy adults and children over three(1). Children under three, and certainly infants and babies, are treated (for the most part) as "patients not dangerously ill", and will be discussed elsewhere. A separate area of discussion concerns a healthy

person who takes medication for preventive purposes or in order to strengthen himself. Those laws are not discussed here.

**LIST OF AILMENTS AND CONDITIONS:** ABSCESS - may be opened to relieve pressure from pus, even if some blood is secreted in the process(2). ALLERGIES (mild) - medication may not be taken. ANGINA - all medications are permitted. ASTHMA - all oral and/or breathing medications may be taken(3). ATHLETE'S FOOT - all medications are prohibited. BACK OR NECK BRACE - may be put on or removed(4). BEDRIDDEN(5) DUE TO PAIN - ALL ORAL MEDICATIONS MAY BE TAKEN. BEE STING - the stinger may be removed and the area may be washed with ice water, lemon juice or vinegar, etc. The area may not be soaked, however, in those liquids(6). BLEEDING (SLOW) - pressure may be applied to a cut to stop bleeding. Sucking or squeezing out blood is prohibited(7). BROKEN BONE - a non-Jew may be asked to do anything necessary, e.g., make a phone call, drive a car, take x-rays or put on a cast. [If a non-Jew is not available, some poskim permit a Jew to do these actions with a shinui(8).] COLD (RUNNING NOSE) - medication may not be taken. COUGH - medication may not be taken. If the cough may be an indication of pneumonia or asthma, medication is permitted. CUTS AND ABRASIONS (minor wounds) - may be washed or soaked in water. Hydrogen peroxide may be poured over a cut. It is not permitted, however, to soak absorbent cotton or paper in such a solution and then wash the wound with it. The wound may be covered with a non-medicated band-aid(9). DIABETES- all oral medications may be taken. DRIED (OR CRACKED) LIPS - It is prohibited to apply chapstick or any other medication, liquid or otherwise. DRIED (OR CHAPPED) HANDS - It is prohibited to rub them with either oil, ointment (vaseline) or lotion. One who regularly uses a pourable, liquid lotion or oil on his hands (whether they are chapped or not) may do so on Shabbos, too, even if his hands are chapped(10). EAR INFECTION - all medications are permitted. Cotton balls may be inserted(11). Even if the infection is no longer present, the prescription begun during the week must be continued until finished in order to avoid a relapse EYE INFLAMMATION - eye drops (or ointment) may be instilled in the eye. If the eye is not inflamed but merely irritated, no medication is permitted(12). FEVER - all oral medications may be taken. A conventional thermometer may be used(13). If a person is suffering from high-grade fever, a non-Jew may be asked to do whatever the patient needs in order to feel better(14). If the cause of the fever is unknown, a doctor should be consulted. HEADACHE - medication may not be taken. If the headache is severe enough so that one feels weak all over or is forced to go to bed, medication may be taken. One who is unsure if he has reached that stage of illness may be lenient and take pain relieving medication(15). HEARTBURN - Foods which will have a soothing effect may be eaten. Some poskim permit taking anti-acid medication while others are more hesitant. In a severe case, one may be lenient(16). INSECT REPELLENT - liquid or spray repellents may be used(17). MIGRAINE HEADACHE - all oral medications may be taken. NOSEBLEED - the bleeding may be stopped with a tissue or a napkin. If none is available, a cloth napkin may be used(18). RETAINER - may be inserted and removed(19). RHEUMATISM - It is prohibited to bathe in therapeutic hot springs(20). SCAB - it is permitted to remove a scab as long as blood is not drawn from the wound(21). SORE THROAT - medication may not be taken. Gargling is prohibited(22). Drinking tea or any other hot drink, or sucking a candy, is permitted even if the intention is for medicinal purposes(23). See also 'strep throat'. SLEEP DISORDER - There are conflicting views among contemporary poskim whether it is permitted to take sleeping pills or no-doze pills(24). One who is weak all over or is bedridden may take these pills. Cotton balls may be used as ear plugs. It is questionable if it is permitted to use pliable ear plugs, which are made from a wax-like material that must be spread to fill the cavity of the ear(25). SPRAINS - If the patient is not experiencing severe pain, nothing may be done. If the patient is experiencing severe pain, medication may be taken and a massage may be given. A makeshift splint may be applied, provided that no Shabbos Labors are transgressed. SPLINTER UNDER THE SKIN(26) - May be extracted with the fingers, or with tweezers or a needle. If, unavoidably, a little blood is secreted in the process it is of no consequence(27). STITCHES a non-Jew is allowed to stitch any wound(28), even if the stitching is done only for cosmetic reasons(29). STOMACH CRAMPS - Unless one is in severe pain, it is prohibited to take a laxative or castor oil. Prune juice or any other food or drink is permitted. A hot water bottle is permitted when one experiences strong pains(30). STREP THROAT-all oral medications may be taken. Even if the infection is no longer present, the prescription begun during the week must be continued until finished in order to avoid a relapse. SUNBURN (ORDINARY) - medications are not permitted. SWEATING - it is permitted to sprinkle baby powder on those parts of the body which are perspiring(31). SWELLING - It is permitted to press a knife, etc. against the skin to prevent or minimize swelling(32). It is permitted to wash or soak the swollen area in water(33). It is permitted to place a compress(34), ice (placed in plastic bag) or any frozen item over a swollen area(35). TOOTHACHE - a slight toothache may not be treated with painkillers, but one is permitted to drink whiskey, etc., provided that it is swallowed immediately(36). A severe toothache (to the point where one feels weak all over) or gum infection may be treated with oral medication. If the tooth needs to be extracted, a non-Jew may be asked to do so(37). WEAK ALL OVER -all oral medications are permitted to be taken.

**GENERAL NOTES:** It is commonly accepted among the majority of poskim that the Rabbinical restriction against taking medications on Shabbos applies to Yom Tov as well(38). The poskim agree, however, that on the second day of Yom Tov(39) and on Chol ha-Moed(40) it is permitted to swallow any medication, even for the most minor of ailments. No shinui is required. On Shabbos, a pill may be split in half(41) (even on a dotted line(42)) ground into small pieces (43) or dissolved in a cup of liquid(44). One who suffers from two conditions - one for which he may take medication on Shabbos and another for which he may not - may take medication only for the former(45). Sometimes (as described above) a medication may not be taken on Shabbos, but not taking it could lead to aggravating a condition to the point where the medication would become necessary and permitted. In such a case, one is allowed to take the medication in order to avoid this eventuality. For example, one who has a headache which, if untreated, tends to escalate to a migraine, may take medication before the migraine sets in(46). When ointment needs to be applied on Shabbos, it should, preferably, be prepared before Shabbos on a gauze square and then placed on the skin on Shabbos. If this was not done, the ointment may be squeezed directly from the tube on to the wound and a bandage placed over it. Whatever shinui can be made should be employed, so as to serve as a reminder not to inadvertently spread ointment on the skin ("smoothing"), which is prohibited. If this is impractical, there are sometimes other methods that may be followed. Consult a rav.

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 There are different opinions as to when a child is no longer treated as a

"patient not dangerously ill". Some (Chazon Ish O.C. 59:4; Harav S.Z. Auerbach in Nishmas Avrohom 328:54; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv in Eis la-Ledes, pg. 57) quote the age of 2-3; others (Tzitz Eliezer 8:15-12) say six, while yet others (Minchas Yitzchak 1:78) are lenient till the age of nine. The poskim agree, however, that in the last analysis, it all depends on the strength and maturity of the child. 2 O.C. 328:28. 3 See The Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society # 6, pg. 47 for a full discussion of how to treat asthma on Shabbos. 4 Based on ruling of Harav S.Z. Auerbach in Tikunim u'Miluim 34, note 111. 5 Even if he is capable of getting out of bed and walking around, but presently he is in bed due to his pain, he is considered as bedridden - Aruch ha-Shulchan 328:19. 6 See Mishnah Berurah 328:141,142. Obviously, one is allergic to a bee sting must do everything necessary to avert danger. 7 Mishnah Berurah 328:147. 8 This is the view of Shulchan Aruch Harav 328:19 and Eglei Tal (Tochen 18). Some poskim (Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 33, note \*17) rule that one may rely on this view, especially when there is "danger to a limb". Note, however, that Mishnah Berurah and Aruch ha-Shulchan and the majority of the poskim do not agree with this leniency. 9 Some poskim (oral ruling by Harav M. Feinstein, Harav S.Z. Auerbach in Tikunim u'Miluim, pg. 58; Harav C.P. Scheinberg, quoted in Children in Halachah, pg. 88; Az Nidberu 7:34,35) permit removing the protective tabs from a band-aid, while other poskim (Minchas Yitzchak 5:39-2; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, quoted in Machazeh Eliyahu 70) are stringent. It is proper to prepare band-aids for Shabbos use by peeling off their protective tabs and re-sealing them before Shabbos. Once they have prepared in this fashion, they may be used on Shabbos (Tzitz Eliezer 16:6-5). 10 Based on O.C. 327:1. 11 It is prohibited to tear cotton balling on Shabbos - Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 35:19 and Tikunim u'Miluim; Minchas Yitzchak 4:45. 12 O.C. 328:20. See also Eglei Tal (Tochen 17). 13 O.C. 306:7. Before using it, the mercury may be shaken down. 14 Mishnah Berurah 328:46, 47. 15 See Ketzos ha-Shulchan 138, pg. 100; Minchas Yitzchak 3:35; Be'er Moshe 1:33; 2:32. 16 See Ketzos ha-Shulchan 138, pg. 98; Tzitz Eliezer 8:15 (15-21); Az Nidberu 1:31; Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 34:4. 17 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 14:31; Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 179. 18 Mishnah Berurah 328:146. 19 Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 34:29. See Tikunim u'Miluim for the reason that it is not considered mesaken. 20 Mishnah Berurah 328:137. 21 O.C. 328:22 and Mishnah Berurah 90. 22 O.C. 328:32. 23 O.C. 328:37. 24 See Minchas Yitzchak 3:21, Tzitz Eliezer 9:17, Be'er Moshe 1:33 and Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 176 for the various views. 25 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Tikunim u'Miluim 14:39) permits their usage while Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 179) and Az Nidberu 3:21 do not. 26 If the thorn or splinter is under a fingernail, it may be considered dangerous. 27 Mishnah Berurah 328:88 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 63. 28 See Nishmas Avrohom, vol. 4, O.C. 340 who quotes Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S. Y. Elyashiv as ruling that stitching a wound may be a Biblically prohibited activity. Accordingly, only a non-Jew may do it, unless it is a life threatening situation. 29 Ibid. See also Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 33, note 23 and 35, note 62. 30 Mishnah Berurah 326:19. 31 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 34:12. 32 Mishnah Berurah 328:124. 33 Tzitz Eliezer 8:15 (15-12). 34 In order to avoid several possible prohibitions, only paper towels or napkins should be used and care should be taken not to squeeze them. 35 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Tikunim u'Miluim 34, note 87); Be'er Moshe 1:33-18. 36 O.C. 328:32. It may not be retained in the mouth longer than usual, nor may one rinse his mouth with it and then spit it out. 37 Rama O.C. 328:3. See Tzitz Eliezer 9:17 (2-11). 38 Mishnah Berurah 532:5. There is a minority opinion that permits taking medications on Yom Tov, see Tzitz Eliezer 8:15 (16) who quotes their opinion and rules that when in distress one may rely on this view. 39 Mishnah Berurah 496:5. 40 O.C. 532:2. 41 Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 33:4. 42 Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Nishmas Avraham, vol. 5, pg. 225. 43 Rama O.C. 321:12. 44 See Mishnah Berurah 320:34,35. 45 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:53. 46 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 34:16.

dafyomi@jer1.co.il Insights into Daf Yomi from Ohr Somayach Shabbos 37-43 By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

What Language Do You Think In? Do you think in the same language that you speak? This fascinating speculation arises in the story told by Rabbi Yitzchak bar Avdimi of his visit to a bathroom on Shabbos, in the company of his mentor, Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi (Rebbie). When he asked Rebbie a question about the laws of Shabbos pertaining to cooking congealed oil he received a detailed halachic response. "How could Rebbie discuss a topic of Torah in the bathroom?" asks the gemara. After all, it has already been ruled by Rabbi Yochanan that one may not even think thoughts of Torah in a bathroom or bathroom because of the unclean nature of those places. The first attempt to vindicate Rebbie is to suggest that he made his Torah statements in a secular tongue and not in the sacred language of Hebrew. This is rejected, however, because the Sage Abaye has already taught us that in such places secular matters may be discussed even in the holy language, while sacred matters may not be discussed even in a secular tongue. The gemara's conclusion is that since it was necessary to issue a halachic ruling in order to prevent the asker from violating Shabbos law, it was permissible to do so even in the bathroom. Tosefos raises the question as to how the gemara initially suggested that it was permissible to speak words of Torah in a secular language. Before uttering such words one must think, and thinking Torah thoughts is also forbidden in the bathroom! The gemara's initial suggestion, answers Tosefos, was based on the assumption that if Rebbie said his words of Torah in a secular language, he probably thought of them in that language as well. Shabbos 40b

The Mitzvah of Living in Israel "They shall be brought to Babylon and there remain until the day that I remember them, says Hashem, and I shall bring them up and return them to this place." (Yirmiyahu 27:22) Does this prophecy concerning the Babylonian Exile refer to the Jewish People and constitute a ban on leaving Babylon for Eretz Yisrael? Or does it simply refer to the sacred vessels of the Beis Hamikdash mentioned a few passages earlier and spell out the exile of those vessels? This was the subject of a dispute between two great sages, Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Zeira. The former interpreted this passage as a ban on leaving Babylon for Eretz Yisrael, while the latter contended that it applied only to the sacred vessels. Because Rabbi Zeira was anxious to make aliya to Eretz Yisrael he avoided any encounter with Rabbi Yehuda, whom he greatly respected, lest Rabbi Yehuda forbid him to make such a move. But he was so anxious to hear some words of wisdom from him before leaving that he surreptitiously came to overhear him dispensing advice to his attendants, advice which he considered most valuable. (In the classic debate between Rambam and Ramban as to whether settling in Eretz Yisrael is considered one of the 613 mitzvos, the

position of Rabbi Yehuda is cited by one of the commentaries as support for Rambam's opinion that there is no such command after the Jews were exiled from Eretz Yisrael. Had the command in the Torah to conquer and settle Eretz Yisrael been incumbent on every generation, how could a later prophet, Yirmiyahu, counter a prophetic command of the Torah? Refutations of this challenge have been made, and the relevant issue today is not whether it is permissible to leave Babylon but whether it is obligatory to settle in Eretz Yisrael.)

daf-insights@shemaisrael.com Insights to the Daf: Shabbos 32-35 brought to you by Kollel Iyunei Hadaf of Har Nof Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld

Shabbos 35 1) BEIN HA'SHEMASHOS QUESTION: According to Rabbi Yehudah, the duration of Bein ha'Shemashos (from Sheki'ah until three stars come out) is either 2/3 (Rav Yosef) or 3/4 (Rabah) of the time that it takes to walk one Mil. However, in Pesachim (94a) there is a discussion concerning how long it takes for the sun to go through the "thickness of the firmament" (that is, for its light to disappear). The Gemara says that it takes from sunset (Sheki'ah) until the stars come out (Tzeis ha'Kochavim) for the sun's light to disappear. Rabbi Yehudah there says that the period from Sheki'ah to Tzeis is the amount of time that it takes to walk \*four\* Mil! How could Rabbi Yehudah say that the duration of Bein ha'Shemashos is \*four\* Mil, when here he says that it is only 2/3 or 3/4 of a Mil? ANSWERS: (a) TOSFOS (DH Trei) explains that there is a difference between our Gemara and the Gemara in Pesachim. When the Gemara there says "mi'Sheki'as ha'Chamah," (and not \*mi'Shetishka\* ha'Chamah, as it says in our Sugya) it is referring to the moment that the sun disappears \*from our eyes\*. At that moment, though, it is still journeying through the firmament. When the sun reaches a certain point in the thickness of the firmament, its light \*begins\* to disappear. This is referred to as \*mi'Shetishka\* ha'Chamah." Shortly afterwards, its light disappears altogether and three stars can be seen. In summary, the order of events is: (1) the sun disappears, (2) a period of 3 1/4 (or 3 1/3 according to Rav Yosef) Mil passes, after which time the light of the sun \*begins\* to totally disappear (this is the start of the Bein ha'Shemashos of our Sugya), and then (3) a period of 3/4 Mil or 2/3 according to Rav Yosef passes, after which the sun has completely disappeared and the stars come out. This is the view of RABEINU TAM. (b) THE VILNA GA'ON (SHENOS ELIYAHU, beginning of Maseches Berachos, and in BI'UR HA'GRA OC 235 and 261) explains that both here and in Pesachim, the times mentioned (3/4 Mil and 4 Mil) start from the time that the sun completely disappears from our view. However, the Gemara in Pesachim is talking about a different \*Tzeis ha'Kochavim\* than our Gemara (and not a different Sheki'as ha'Chamah, as Rabeinu Tam suggests). In Pesachim, "Tzeis ha'Kochavim" refers to the time at which every last ray of light disappears from the sky (which is four Mil after sunset), and \*all\* of the stars can be seen. In our Gemara, "Tzeis ha'Kochavim" refers to the time at which \*three medium-size stars\* can be seen, which is the Halachic definition of nightfall. (The Gemara in Pesachim, by contrast, is an Agadic discussion and is not referring to the Halachic Tzeis ha'Kochavim.)

Shabbos 42 1) COMPARING "DAVAR SHE'IN MISKAVEN" TO "MELACHAH SHE'INAH TZERICHAH LE'GUF" QUESTION: The Gemara asks that since Shmuel permits Davar sh'E'in Miskaven, like Rabbi Shimon, he should also maintain that a Melachah sh'E'inah Tzerichah I'Gufah is permitted. The Gemara answers that the two concepts are not related. Why did the Gemara think they were related to begin with? The two concepts have entirely different laws. (1) "Davar sh'E'in Miskaven" is permitted on Shabbos, while Melachah sh'E'inah Tzerichah I'Gufah is forbidden mid'Rabanan even according to Rabbi Shimon. (2) Furthermore, the concept of Davar sh'E'in Miskaven applies to all prohibitions in the Torah, while the concept of Melachah sh'E'inah Tzerichah I'Gufah is a concept unique to Shabbos, which is learned out from the verse "Melechesh Machsheves." We see, then, that they are two completely independent Halachos. ANSWERS: (a) TOSFOS (DH Afilu) explains that whenever a person does an action unintentionally results in a Melachah being performed (that is, he performs a Davar sh'E'in Miskaven), that means by definition that the Melachah that results is not Tzerichah I'Gufah (because the person had no need to perform the Melachah). Hence, the Gemara's initial assumption was that the reason why, on Shabbos, Rabbi Shimon permits a Davar sh'E'in Miskaven is because even if Melachah is unintentionally performed, it will remain no more than a Melachah sh'E'inah Tzerichah I'Gufah, which he prohibits mid'Rabanan. Similarly, it was assumed that Rabbi Yehudah prohibits a Davar sh'E'in Miskaven because it may result in a Melachah that the Torah prohibits, since he considers Melachah sh'E'inah Tzerichah I'Gufah to be a Torah transgression. (b) TOSFOS HA'ROSH and TOSFOS in Zevachim (92a) explain that the Gemara initially thought that if a Melachah sh'E'inah Tzerichah I'Gufah is forbidden, that is because one's \*intention\* does not make a difference (that is, even though he did not intend to perform the Melachah for the usual \*purpose\* he is still Chayav). If one's intention does not make a difference, then it stands to reason that not only does not having intention to perform the Melachah \*for its purpose\* not make a difference (and he is still Chayav), but not having \*any intention at all\* to do the Melachah\* also does not make a difference.

Shabbos 44 1) MOVING "MUKTZAH" INDIRECTLY The Gemara concludes that it is permitted to move the body of a dead person, which is Muktzah, by way of "Tiltul Min ha'Tzad," or moving Muktzah indirectly, in order to save it from being destroyed in a fire. The Rabanan permitted moving the body out of concern that one might otherwise be tempted to extinguish the fire. TOSFOS (DH d'Kuli Alma) infers from the conclusion of the Sugya that "Tiltul Min ha'Tzad" in any normal circumstance would be forbidden. However, Tosfos explains that there are two types of "Tiltul Min ha'Tzad," and only one of them is forbidden: (1) Lifting a permissible object that is not Muktzah which touches and moves a Muktzah object while it is being lifted, is permitted, since the person is interested in the moving the non-Muktzah object and the Muktzah object is just being moved indirectly. (2) If one is interested in moving the Muktzah object, even if he does so by way of moving something permissible, it is forbidden. The ROSH adds a third type of "Tiltul Min ha'Tzad." (3) If one moves a Muktzah object with a part of his body that is usually not used for moving that object (such as with his elbows or feet), even if his purpose is to move the Muktzah object itself, it is permitted.

daf-discuss@shemaisrael.com Shabbos 018: Time clocks

SUBJECT: Shabbos 018 Time Clocks Howard Schwartz <schwartz@sce.carleton.ca> asked: Question: With regard to Shabbat Clocks: Would Beit Hillel have allowed the use of a Shabbat clock on the basis that they did not subscribe to the principle of "idleness of Utensils"? Could I automatically set the TV and clock radio to go on and off? Would even Beit Hillel say that at

some point one is not respecting Shabbat? At what point would one no longer be respecting Shabbat in our highly automated society? (i.e. if it makes noise - is a clock radio considered noise?)

The Kollel replies: Thanks for your interesting question. A Shabbos clock would certainly be no different than any other utensils as far as the Isur of Shevisas Kelim is concerned. There are, however, other concerns raised with regard to their use. Rav Moshe Feinstein Z"l, in Igros Moshe O.C.4, 60, writes that if Melacha is done indiscriminately on Shabbos by means of a Shabbos clock this constitutes a Zilusa deShabasa i.e. disrespect to the sanctity of Shabbos. He adds that it is clear to him that had the question of Shabbos clocks arisen in the time of Chazal they would have forbidden their use. He therefore does not permit a Shabbos clock for anything other than lights. He explains that lights are different as there was a tradition in many places to permit the extinguishing and even lighting of lamps by goyim. (There is some justification for allowing goyim to light lamps for Jewish benefit (Rama O.C. 276 -2), although many poskim protested this practice.) Since switching lights on and off by means of Goyim is an established practice it no longer constitutes a Zilusa deShabasa and is therefore permitted by a Shabbos clock. According to Rav Mosh Feinstein one would not be permitted to use a Shabbos clock for anything other than lights. The above answer was given in reference to switching on a hotplate by a time switch. When the appliance in question makes a noise there is a further factor to consider. The Rama O.C. 252-5 rules that preparing a mill before Shabbos to grind on Shabbos is forbidden because of the noise that is made and the consequent disrespect to Shabbos. Any appliance which makes a noise would not be allowed to be operated by a Shabbos clock due to this consideration. Many people rely on more lenient opinions and use Shabbos clocks for other appliances. They should not be used for appliances which make a noise such as radios, washing machines etc. Ilan Segal

did the restoring and hanging? RASHI, again, offers two interpretations: (1) The one capable of restoring, namely Pharaoh who is mentioned above (verse 10:  $\delta$ Pharaoh became enraged... $\delta$ ); (2) This verse is elliptical since it doesn't note who restored. This is the way of all elliptical verses; when [it is obvious] who is doing [the action]--they leave it anonymous.

Part Two: Yaakov/Es Last Will... One of the most recognizable features of Biblical poetry is  $\delta$ Synonymous Parallelism, $\delta$  the duplication of the first part of a poetic verse in its second part through the use of synonymous words. The medieval exegetes, however, disagreed on whether the duplicated words were repetitious (i.e., redundant) or whether the second part of the verse added to, or altered, the first. In this week's Parsha we see an example of this disagreement. The verse reads (49:3):  $\delta$ Reuven, you are my firstborn, my strength and first of my vigor; exceeding in rank (or: loft in honor (or: force; 'OZ). $\delta$  The question is: What is the relationship of  $\delta$ ránkō to  $\delta$ honorō? Compare the approaches of RASHI and IBN EZRA. RASHI: You were entitled to exceed your brothers in the priesthood-- [symbolized by] the term  $\delta$ raising the hands $\delta$  (NESI'AT KAPAYIM)--and in monarchy, to wit:  $\delta$ He shall give honor ('OZ) to His king $\delta$  (1 Samuel 2:10). IBN EZRA: Exceeding in rank: You were entitled to an advantage over all others, to be elevated (NISA'ET), and Exceeding in honor: The meaning is repetitious (HA-TA'AM KAFUL) in the manner of all prophecies. RASHI's position is taken to its logical--if extreme--conclusion by the 19th century exegete, MALBIM (Meir Loeb ben Yehiel Michael; 1809-1879), who wrote in the introduction to his commentary on Isaiah:  $\delta$ In prophetic discourse there is no such thing as  $\delta$ repetition of the same idea in different words $\delta$  (IBN EZRA's phrase); no repetitions of speech, no rhetorical repetitions, no two sentences with one meaning, no two comparisons of the same meaning, and not even two words that are repeated. Whereas IBN EZRA would treat the ox and donkey of Isaiah 1:3 as merely repetitious, MALBIM insists that their differences be acknowledged and, further, linked to the differences (in the continuation of the verse) between a  $\delta$  purchaser $\delta$  and a  $\delta$ owner. $\delta$  [EXTRA: The subject of parallelism is given thorough treatment by Prof. James Kugel in his book: The Idea of Biblical Poetry (Yale university Press, 1981). See p. 288 ff. for references to MALBIM.]

Part Three: ...and Won't While our Parsha is conventionally called  $\delta$ Yaakov's blessing, $\delta$  it is clear, quite to the contrary, that he doesn't bless every one of his children; what he has to say to Shimon and Levi hardly constitutes a BERAKHAH (49:5-7): "Shimon and Levi, the brothers, deal in instruments of violence. Let me not enter into their council, let my reputation not be joined with their assembly; for in their anger they slew a man and by their desire they maimed a bull. Their fierce anger is accursed and so is their intense rage; let them be split up and scattered among Yaakov and Israel." QUESTION: To what  $\delta$ council $\delta$  and  $\delta$ assembly $\delta$  is Yaakov referring? ANSWER: Recalling the incident concerning Dinah (chapter 34), we are reminded of the way in which these same two sons, Shimon and Levi, fell upon the men of the city after they had undergone circumcision and slew them. Yaakov rebuked them sharply, saying (34:30):  $\delta$ You have sullied my reputation in the eyes of the local inhabitants... $\delta$  It would appear, then, that Yaakov is returning here to that same rebuke. The  $\delta$ council $\delta$  that he condemns is the one that gave the people of Shekhem the nefarious advice to undergo the debilitating circumcision, and the assembly is the attack on them that followed. QUESTION: To the slaying of which man and the maiming of what bull, is Yaakov referring? ANSWER: The commentary of RAMBAN contains several approaches: (1) Onkelos interprets SHOR (ox) as though it were vocalized SHUR (a wall). I.e., After killing the men of the city they uprooted its walls. (2) Others say that the ox, the largest domestic animal, represents Hamor and Shekhem, the princes of the land. (3) I, however, treat the verse literally: After killing the people they castrated their cattle. QUESTION: Why refer to Shimon and Levi, superfluously, as  $\delta$ brothers $\delta$ ? ANSWER: A PESHAT answer would interpret  $\delta$ brothers $\delta$  as a euphemism for concerted action and would derive from the incident as Shekhem for which they were singularly (dually?) responsible. The AGGADAH (Bereishit Rabbah 99), however, focuses on the word AHIM, detecting not only a clear reference to Shekhem (34:25:  $\delta$ Shimon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took each man his sword), but also an allusion to the sale of Yosef (37:19:  $\delta$ They said, each man to his BROTHER, here comes that dreamer... $\delta$ ). In establishing a link between the destruction of Shekhem and the sale of Yosef, this Aggadah leads us to a final source that stipulates a direct moral link between the two events. SEDER ELIYAHU RABBAH (chapter 28) states: One who can [want] blood of a gentile is capable of shedding Jewish blood, whereas the Torah was given only to sanctify His great name. Moshe Sokolow

II. DID YAAKOV EVER COMMAND? DID YOSEF EVER TELL? In this week's Parsha, the brothers came to Yosef after their father's death and said the following:  $\delta$ ...Your father did command before he died, saying, So shall you say to Joseph, Forgive, I beg you now, the trespass of your brothers, and their sin; for they did to you evil; and now, we beg you, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father. And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. $\delta$  (Genesis 50:16-17). It is clear that Yosef wept because the conversation never took place between Yaakov and his sons, i.e. Yaakov never really asked his other sons to tell Yosef not to harm them once Yaakov is dead. Yosef wept because he knew the brothers made up this entire story, as they were still afraid that Yosef may still avenge his sale as a slave by the brothers. The brothers did not understand that Yosef no longer harbored any ill will towards his brothers. QUESTION: How do we know this to be the true interpretation of events? Perhaps, indeed, Yaakov had said these words to his sons? ANSWER: If indeed Yaakov wanted to prevent Yosef from taking revenge on his brothers, it is clear that YAAKOV WOULD HAVE GONE DIRECTLY TO YOSEF to instruct him not to take revenge, and would never have done this through the brothers themselves. Therefore, we can be sure that this conversation never took place, and was fabricated, in order to try to prevent (what they thought would be) Yosef's revenge. QUESTION: Now that we understand that Yaakov never said these words, did Yaakov even know at all that the brothers had sold Yosef as a slave? Perhaps the true story of Yosef's journey to Egypt was never revealed to Yaakov. Do the verses and logic give us any clue? ANSWER: Although not all agree, many commentaries understand that Yaakov was never told what really happened to Yosef. First, if Yaakov had known about the sale, it is logical that he would have mentioned something of this heinous act in his  $\delta$ blessings $\delta$  to his sons. If Yaakov reminded, reprimanded and cursed Shimon and Levi for what they had done to non-Jews in Shechem who raped their sister (and deserved punishment), Yaakov surely would have berated the brothers for selling Yosef who was innocent of sin -- had he known of the sale. And yet, no mention is made of the sale in Yaakov's Berachot. Second, there is no occasion in the entire Torah where Yaakov is alone with Yosef, once Yaakov descends to Egypt. Some commentaries explain that Yosef (or the brothers) purposely did not allow a moment of privacy between Yaakov and Yosef, in order to

<http://www.intournet.co.il/mtv/parsha.html> Michlelet Torah Viregsh

$\delta$ About these Shiurim by Dr. Moshe Sokolow Michlelet Torah Viregsh has undertaken to publish English, for the first time (and for much of the material, for the first time anywhere), the idea, thoughts and selections of Shiurim of Nehama Leibowitz Z"l. By distributing this new material on the internet, we hope to reach as many people each week, and help them gain insight into Parshat Hashavua. One of the main goals of Michlelet Torah Viregsh is to teach its own women students who come for a year of post high school study, the ideas, skills and "Derech" in learning of Nehama Leibowitz. It is our privilege here to share with you some of Nehama's insights into traditional Jewish Biblical exegesis (PARSHANUT HA-MIKRA) in an abbreviated format. The challenge in preparing this lesson - and those which will appear on a weekly - lay neither in selecting the sources which she presented, nor in correlating the questions which she originally posed; the challenge lay in providing the answers - something which Nehama herself never published. We can only trust in our own experience - some of it acquired under her supervision - to verify their accuracy. We would be pleased to entertain differences of opinion regarding my own interpretations, but we are unable to assume the burden which Nehama executed so faithfully and selflessly of reading, and commenting on, your responses. Many of these Shiurim will be written by Dr. Moshe Sokolow. Dr. Moshe Sokolow is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies, and Director of the Educational Services Program (ESP) for Yeshiva High Schools, at Yeshiva University. He teaches at Stern College for Women, the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education, and is the Editor of TEN DA'AT; A Journal of Jewish Education. For 12 years he has been conducting a weekly Shiur in "Parshat Ha-shavua" for the Minyan Hashkama at Merkaz Torah (Lincoln Square Synagogue). He has translated several of Nehama Leibowitz's pedagogic essays, and published "Mafte'ah HaGilyonot," an index to all 30 years of Nehama's weekly Parsha sheets.

#### VAYECHI

I. INTENTIONAL AMBIGUOUS PRONOUNS IN THE TORAH Preface: Broken Syntax In several previous weeks we have dealt with the phenomenon of syntactical ambiguity (see, for example, VAYIGASH: Part One). This week we will continue with syntactically troubling verses, but of a different order. This time, there is not ambiguity regarding the subject--or object--of a verb; there is complete anonymity.

PART ONE: Who is Doing all the Telling? Read the following verses (Bereishit 48:1-2):  $\delta$ Afterwards, HE said to Yosef: Your father is ill; So he took his two sons --Ephraim and Menashe--with him. HE said to Yaakov: Your son, Yosef, has arrived... $\delta$  QUESTION 1: Who spoke to Yosef? [See RASHI] QUESTION 2: Who spoke to Yaakov? [See RASHI] ANSWER 1 (RASHI): Someone spoke to him (literally: One of the speakers). This is an elliptical verse (MIKRA KATZEIR). Alternatively: Ephraim customarily kept Yaakov's company to study with him. When Yaakov took ill in the Land of Goshen, Ephraim brought the news to his father in Mitzrayim. Someone spoke to Yaakov, but [the Torah] doesn't specify who it was. Many verses are elliptical. Essentially, RASHI treats both verses the same way --elliptically--as though they said:  $\delta$ [Someone] said to Yosef... and [someone] said to Yaakov. $\delta$  All the  $\delta$ Alternatively $\delta$  (YESH OMERIM) adds is a possible Aggadic identification of the  $\delta$ someone. $\delta$  Read the following verse (Bamidbar 8:4):  $\delta$ This is the fashion of the Menorah... according to the appearance which God displayed to Moshe, so did HE fashion the Menorah. $\delta$  QUESTION: Did Moshe fashion the Menorah? [See Shemot 31:1-8, and 37:1-17.] ANSWER: Clearly not; the Menorah was fashioned by a craftsman, either by Bezalel, Ahaliav, or another of the  $\delta$ wise of mind. $\delta$  QUESTION: What does RASHI (Bamidbar 8:4) say? ANSWER: Just as in Bereishit, RASHI offers two interpretations. The first:  $\delta$ Whoever fashioned it, $\delta$  treats the verse as an  $\delta$ ordinary $\delta$  example of ellipsis. Then, however, he proceeds to cite a  $\delta$ Midrash Aggadah $\delta$  [TANHUMA] to the effect that:  $\delta$ It was fashioned by God all by itself. $\delta$  QUESTION: Does this Aggadah have any foundation in the text? ANSWER: Yes; it presumes that God, who is the subject of the verb  $\delta$ displayed $\delta$  (HER'EAH), remains the subject of  $\delta$ fashioned $\delta$  ('ASAH), as well. QUESTION: What support does Shemot 25:31 lend this Aggadah? ANSWER: It addresses the Menorah with the passive form of the verb: TEF ASEH (will be fashioned), rather than the more usual active form: (TA'ASEH). [EXTRA: What is the difference between RASHI's treatment of the anonymity in Bereishit and that in Shemot? In Bereishit, as we have just pointed out, his two identifications (someone/Ephraim) are feasible simultaneously. In Shemot, however, the two (whoever/God) are mutually exclusive.] To review and summarize, let us take a look at an earlier verse in Bereishit in which RASHI  $\delta$ codifies $\delta$  his treatment of this phenomenon. In Bereishit 41:13, the chief butler recounts Yosef's dream-interpreting prowess to Pharaoh, saying, in conclusion:  $\delta$ It happened just as he interpreted for us; HE restored me to my post, and hung him [the baker]. $\delta$  Who

prevent Yaakov from ever asking Yosef the obvious question: What really happened to you on that day when I sent you to Shechem to find your brothers? QUESTION: Now that we have discussed the question about Yosef telling his father what happened AFTER Yaakov arrives in Egypt, let us turn to the infamous question -- why Yosef did not inform his father long BEFORE that he is alive. It might be possible to understand why Yosef did not tell his father that he is alive when Yosef was a slave in the house of Potiphar or when he was in jail. But when Yosef rose to be Viceroy to Pharaoh, why didn't Yosef send word to his father that not only was he alive, but that he was now second to the king? Why did Yosef let his father live a tortured life, believing his son to be dead? (See Abarbanel and others who expound on this question) ANSWER 1: Nehama discusses this question in her book Studies in Beraishit (Miketz 4). There she gives two possible explanations: Ramban explains that Yosef realized as he rose to power that it is he who was to be the instrument through whom the dreams are actualized. Therefore, he had to cause the brothers to bow down to him, and, thus, could not reveal who he was without spoiling the actualization of the dreams. ANSWER 2: The Ramban alludes to an answer that the Abarbanel elucidates, which is based on the concept of Teshuva in Ramban. Ramban explains (Hilchot Teshuva 2:1) that complete Teshuva is not possible unless the sinner is placed in the precise situation once again, and then does not commit the sin. Therefore, to ascertain if the brothers had indeed done Teshuva for their attitude and sins towards Yosef, Yosef had to construct a situation that was most similar to his own situation years before. Thus, Yosef chose to create the scenario with Binyamin because: 1) like Yosef, Binyamin was a son of Rachel and favorite of Yaakov 2) Binyamin received extra clothing (from Yosef), just as Yosef had received extra clothing from his father 3) the brothers could have easily abandoned Binyamin in Egypt and walked away to attain their freedom, just as they had abandoned Yosef in the pit (and then sold him) many years before (actually, the situation with Binyamin was EASIER for the brothers to sin, as they would not have to do anything to abandon Binyamin -- an act of omission --, while by Yosef, the brothers had to do something to Yosef -- an act of commission). ANSWER 3: In her study sheets (Miketz 5727) Nehama quotes other explanations. Rav Moshe Chaifetz says in his Melech Machshevet commentary on the repetition of the phrase Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him in Genesis 42, verses 7 and 8, and that the actions of the brothers bowing make it superfluous for the Torah to tell us that they did not recognize Yosef. Rav Chaifetz says that the second Yosef recognized his brothers signifies that Yosef UNDERSTOOD and respected his brothers as a brother, despite what they had done, and he understood that there was a higher purpose in Yosef's being sold to Egypt (which he was not at liberty to yet reveal). And yet, the brother did not recognize Yosef, i.e. their entire lives they never treated him like a true brother, even in the last years of their lives in Egypt. In addition, the brothers never really understood the true Yosef, his personality, motives and actions. ANSWER 4: The Rechasim Libikah commentary says that Yosef intentionally hid and disguised himself (Genesis 43:7) in order not to embarrass the brothers or his father. Yosef knew that the dreams had to be actualized and the brothers would first have to bow down to Yosef, and then the brothers and Yaakov would then bow down to him (the second dream). If they had bowed down to Yosef as a brother and a son, this would have been very embarrassing and humbling. Therefore, Yosef INTENTIONALLY did not tell his brother who he was, in order to insure that they would be bowing down to him as a non-Jewish Viceroy to the king, and not as Yosef. That was Yosef's plan. The plan went awry, however, after the fervent plea of Yehudah to save Binyamin. The Torah tells us that Yosef could not hold himself back (Genesis 45:1), and revealed himself to his brothers BEFORE he could maneuver Yaakov to come to Egypt and bow down to him as an Egyptian ruler, and not as Yosef's son. [EXTRA: Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch gives a simple and psychological answer to our question. He says that had Yosef sent a letter back to his father that he was alive in Egypt, Yaakov would have demanded to know the circumstances surrounding how he, Yosef, arrived to Egypt. This letter would have caused the brothers to panic, and flee from the house before their actions to Yosef would be discovered, and this would have been disastrous for everyone. Hirsch compares this to Rivka's comment about losing both children on the same day, as it says "...why should I be deprived of both of you in one day?" (Genesis 27:45). Yosef would be in Egypt away from his home, and the rest of the brothers would also be gone. Yosef, knowing what this letter would trigger, refrained from sending word to his father, and thus prevented unnecessary upheaval in his father's house. N.A.]

[Not in time for distribution:] mj-ravtorah@shamash.org vayeichi.98 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Vayeichi (Shiur date: 1/8/74)

The Torah tells us that Jacob blessed Efrayim and Menashe prior to his death and placed his right hand on the head of Efrayim and his left hand on the head of Menashe. He then blessed them with Hamalach Hagoel. After this blessing Joseph protests and asks his father to place his right hand on the head of Menashe, the first born. Jacob refuses and gives them a second blessing followed by Jacob giving Joseph the city of Shechem as an extra portion above and beyond what he gave the other brothers.

The Rav asked why did Joseph wait to protest until after the completion of the first blessing? Why didn't he immediately try to reposition his father's hands to place the right one on Menashe? What is the difference between the first and second blessing that motivated Joseph to act in this way?

In Sefer Breishis we find several blessings that were given. Often the Torah says simply that a blessing was given (e.g. where the angel blessed Jacob after their encounter) without explaining the blessing in detail. The exception is the blessing of Vyiten Lecha. The Bircas Avraham that Isaac gave Jacob prior to his departure for Charan is not explained in detail, yet it clearly was related to the inheritance of Eretz Yisrael. In fact, Bircas Avraham and Yerushas Haaretz go together. That is why Chazal said that

even though Isaac wanted to bless Esau with the blessings of Vyiten Lecha, Isaac always intended to bless Jacob with Bircas Avraham and the associated Yerushas Haaretz. The Mesoras Haavos is the Bircas Avraham and that, along with Eretz Yisrael, could only go to Abraham Isaac and Jacob.

The first blessing from Jacob related to Hashem who protected them. The next blessing relates to how the children will be blessed in the future. After that Jacob tells him that he is giving him Shechem as an extra portion. Why tell Joseph about Shechem at this point? Jacob had previously said that Menashe and Efrayim will be given equal status with the other tribes, which would mean that Joseph would get a double share. However the land required a Kinyan, How did Joseph create the Kinyan that gave him this extra portion? Apparently, this Kinyan came through the extra blessing. That is why Jacob told Joseph about Shechem at this point. Jacob, who was the owner of the land having taken it with his sword and bow, was now transferring title to the extra portion via the second blessing that he gave Efrayim and Menashe.

Now let us examine the 2 blessings given by Jacob to Menashe and Efrayim. Jacob says that Hashem, who my forefathers walked before, should bless the children. The Ramban says that Jacob was emphasizing that the patriarchs each exemplified a characteristic of Hashem. Abraham epitomized the aspect of Gedulah (Chesed), while Isaac had the trait of Gevurah (strength). Hashem performed great acts (Gedulos) and amazing feats (Noraos) for each of them. The Ramban says that after this introduction Jacob mentions Hashem Elokay Haemes, the God of truth. Emes and Tiferes are the traits of Jacob, as it says Titen Emes Lyaakov Chesed L'Avraham. Hashem who exemplifies the attributes of Chesed Gevurah and Tiferes/Emes protected the patriarchs who walked before Him, who each exemplified one of these attributes. Jacob, who saw the Shechina and was protected throughout his life by the angel, often experienced miracles that were of a non-natural manner, Shelo Bderech Hateva. The next verse of Hamalach Hagoel... Bkerev Haaretz symbolizes the attribute of Malchus as Hashem protected Jacob wherever he went. Jacob blessed Menashe and Efrayim that they should merit the Giluy Shechina Lmaalah Miderech Hateva (of Gedulah Gevurah Tiferes) and the Giluy Shechina Bderech Hateva (of Malchus) Jacob blessed them that they should always reflect the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of the patriarchs. Wherever they go and whatever they do, it should always be obvious that they are the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When it comes to Giluy Shechina and exemplifying the patriarchs, all Jews are equal. Both brothers, [indeed, all of Jacob's children] have equal rights to, and need for, this blessing. A great person possesses certain attributes in a greater quantity than a simple person. For example some are blessed with greater talents and abilities. In other attributes all are equal. This applies in Mitzvos as well. For example, the Mitzvah of Machtzis Hashekel (according to the Ramban) was that each person above the age of 20 contribute exactly one Machtzis Hashekel, no more no less. The Machtzis Hashekel was required for Kofer Nefesh, redemption of the soul, and each Jew whether rich or poor, a scholar or an ignorant person, had an equivalent need for Kofer Nefesh. In other cases, each person is permitted to donate according to his hearts desire.

Each Jew has an obligation to represent the Mesorah and must be worthy of carrying the name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Efrayim was no greater than Menashe when it came to this blessing. Vayidgu Larov Bkerev Haaretz, each Jew must be worthy to represent the Mesorah and the patriarchs, Bkerev Haaretz. The main ideal of Jewish education is to teach each child to be worthy to carry the name of Abraham Isaac and Jacob with honor and distinction. We should never say that the responsibility of carrying on the Mesorah of the patriarchs is limited to great people like the Vilna Gaon and not to the average individual. All are equally bound by this obligation. When a Jewish father blesses his child with Hamalach Hagoel he prays that each child should represent favorably the patriarchs and carry on their tradition. He does not bless his child to be greater than all other Jews in this regard.

The second blessing was of a different nature. Chazal comment on the verse that Abraham was blessed with everything, that Abraham was blessed with a daughter whose name was Bakol. The Ramban says that this

"daughter" is really Knesses Yisrael, the collection of all the individual strengths, talents, hopes and aspirations of each member of the Jewish nation. Efrayim and Menashe, indeed the rest of the tribes as well, each had his own unique strength and talent. The background of all the blessings given by Jacob was the common blessing of Vaykoray Bahem Shmi Vshem Avosay. This applies to all tribes equally. Afterwards, Jacob recognized them individually and blessed each one accordingly. At the conclusion of the blessings in Vayechi, the Torah says that Jacob blessed each according to his own individual blessing. Rashi comments that all the blessings were applied to all the tribes at the end, however the focal blessing for each tribe was the specific one that Jacob blessed him with. Hence the order of the blessings was (1)global, (2)individual and (3)global.

It is interesting to note that Moshe learned from Jacob how to bless the Jewish nation prior to his death. First it says Vayehi Byeshurun Melech.. Yachad Shivtey Yisrael. First Moshe began by blessing all the tribes equally, Yachad, together. First, all of Klal Yisrael must be worthy to receive Giluy Shechina, Yachad Shivtei Yisrael. Only then did he bless Knesses Yisrael, each tribe individually according to his talents and strengths. He concluded by again blessing them all together, Ashrecha Yisrael Mi Komocha. The blessings for that which we call "Knesses Yisrael" are in the middle. The Ramban says that Knesses Yisrael is called a Kallah because it is Kollel, includes, all the blessings and talents each member of the Jewish nation brings to it.

Jacob and Moses both blessed Klal Yisrael and Knesses Yisrael. The difference between these blessings was that the first blessing related to Klal Yisrael, where all are blessed equally. The second blessing related to Knesses Yisrael, to each individual according to his talents and strengths. Knesses Yisrael represents the aggregate of all the individual blessings. Chazal say that the multi-colored coat (Ksones Pasim) that Jacob gave Joseph, represented the Knesses Yisrael as it was comprised of many different sections and colors, each one representing a different talent and strength.

Joseph did not protest the first blessing even though Jacob had switched his hands because he thought that the position of Jacob's hands was irrelevant in the context of a blessing that applies equally to all, to Klal Yisrael. Each child has an equal right to represent the patriarchs. The first-born is not entitled to a double portion of this blessing, just like he does not donate a double Kofer Nefesh and does not have to provide an extra Machtzis Hashekel. Joseph realized that Jacob wanted to give them an additional blessing that related to the individual talents and strengths of Menashe and Efrayim. Joseph thought that the first born, Menashe, who Joseph thought had the greater talents and strengths, should have the right hand placed on his head. Jacob replied that he was well aware of who the first born is, yet he has his reasons for reversing his hands, for Efrayim will be the one who will exhibit the greater talents and strengths. The second blessing was related to Knesses Yisrael. Such a blessing requires a distinction between Menashe and Efrayim, that each one be blessed according to his talents and strengths. Jacob blessed the rest of his children in this dual manner as well: he blessed each one individually as Knesses Yisrael, then he blessed them all as a group, as Klal Yisrael.

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