

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON VAYETZE - 5760

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From: Rabbi Yissocher Frand [SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org]
"RAVFRAND" LIST - RABBI FRAND ON PARSHAS VAYEITZEI
These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion:
Tape # 216, Maariv. Good Shabbos!

Leah Was Commended For Recognizing "I Have Received More Than I Deserve"

Upon the birth of her fourth son, Yehudah, Leah said, "This time I will thank Hashem" [Bereshis 29:35]. Rash"i quotes the Rabbinic explanation that this expression of gratitude was due to the fact that she now had given birth to more than her share of Tribes. "Now that I have received more than my portion, it's time to express my gratitude to G-d".

What is the meaning of the statement that Leah received more than her portion? Our Rabbis explain that Leah made a simple mathematical calculation. She divided twelve future tribes by 4 wives and arrived at the result of 3 tribes per wife. Now that she had her fourth son, she offered praise to G-d. The Rabbis praise Leah for her recognition that she owed a debt of gratitude to the Almighty.

Although Leah's recognition that she owed a debt of gratitude is certainly praiseworthy, this teaching of our Rabbis does not seem to make sense. Who deserves more praise -- the person who receives his or her proper share and feels indebted to G-d, or the person who receives more than his or her fair share and feels indebted to G-d? Obviously, the first person is more deserving of praise.

I saw a very interesting observation from Rav Dovid Kviat (Maggid Shiur in the Mir Yeshiva, New York): The praiseworthy aspect of Leah's behavior here was that she viewed what she received as "more than her fair share".

It is the nature of human beings to view that which they receive in life as something that they had coming to them. "This is what I deserve." If my friend is earning \$30,000 a year and I am earning half a million dollars a year, it may not be so easy to recognize my great fortune. It is easy to think "I'm smarter than him, I'm more clever than him, I earned this on my own -- it was coming to me!"

The novelty of Leah's comment is that we see that a person has the ability to step back, look at a situation objectively and come to the conclusion that "I am getting more than I deserve". This is not our normal tendency. The normal tendency is to view life as either "I am getting less than I deserve" or "I am getting my fair share."

The rare person, who lives their life with the attitude that "I have gotten more than I deserve," is indeed a praiseworthy person.

Convince, Cajole, And Persuade Your Family, But Do Not Impose

Towards the end of the parsha, the Torah tells us that "Yaakov saw the face of Lavan, and it was not like it was yesterday and the day before" [31:2]. Yaakov saw the way in which Lavan was treating him and recognized that things were not the same. G-d appeared to Yaakov and told him that it is time to pick up his family and return to the land of his fathers [31:3].

Yaakov then called his family out into the field and began an extensive monologue with his wives explaining why it was important for them to leave. After the long list of explanations of why they should go, the wives agreed that they should leave.

But the question must be asked: If G-d appeared to any one of us and

B'S'Dold us "It is time to leave your city," "it is time to change your job," or whatever -- we would gather our families, tell them of our message from G-d, and act upon it. We would not start a whole series of rationalizations: "Things are not the way they used to be, times are tough, we have to think about making changes." G-d gave us an order; that settles it.

The Shaloh HaKodesh provides an interesting insight regarding this question. "When a person wants something from his family -- spouse or children -- it is not proper to compel them to do it, even if he has the ability to force them." In other words, even if one has the means to dictate in absolute terms "This is the way it is going to be," the Shaloh says this is not the way to run one's household.

"Rather, a person should try to convince them of the logic of what he wants in order that they be motivated to come to the same conclusion themselves. This is far better than compelling them to do something against their will."

This means that a person can feel very strongly about a certain household decision. He may have no doubt in his mind at all. And, he can be capable of enforcing that decision. "This is the way it's going to be." The Shaloh teaches us: Do not do it that way. Convince, cajole, persuade, but do not impose.

The proof, says the Shaloh, is Yaakov's lengthy discussion with his wives. Yaakov justified the need to leave Lavan (despite the fact that this was also G-d's command) -- in order that they agree willingly with this plan of action.

If there was ever a justifiable case to compel one's family to do something, it would be right here in this situation. G-d said that it was time to leave. Did anything more need to be said? Is there any room for discussion? Why does Yaakov need to give a whole speech?

If in this situation Yaakov felt compelled to gently persuade his wives, what can we say? Is there ever a situation where we can feel as certain as Yaakov must have felt?

If it is good enough for our patriarch, Yaakov, it is good enough for us.

Sources and Personalities Shalo"h -- Acronym for Shnei Luchos Habris, by Rav Yeshayah Hurwitz (1560-1630); Poland, Frankfurt, Prague, Jerusalem. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim dhoffman@torah.org Visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> and click on the "Timely Offers" button (located to the left) or send e-mail to tapes@yadyechiel.org ! Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. RavFrاند, Copyright © 1999 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 1351 learn@torah.org <http://www.torah.org/>

From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP:skatz@torah.org] Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by Shlomo Katz Vayetze

Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Moshe Cohen in memory of his mother, Malka Rivka bat R' Avraham Chaim a"h The Marwick family, in memory of Samuel Sklaroff a"h The Edeson family, in memory of their fathers Joseph N. Edeson a"h and Nathan Salisbury a"h

In this parashah, which relates how Yaakov's family was formed, one aspect which stands out is the fact that Leah had to become Yaakov's wife through deceit. If the divine plan called for them to be married, why couldn't their marriage be an ordinary one?

R' Joseph B. Soloveitchik z"l explains that the different personalities of Rachel and Leah (as reflected in the different events which befell them) were necessary in order to implant in their descendants, the twelve tribes, all of the many traits which a nation needs. In particular, Leah represents accomplishment through initiative.

This is most obvious in the incident in which Leah went out to meet Yaakov and to bring him into her tent (see 30:16). We also see this in the Torah's description of Leah's eyes. Rashi explains that Leah's eyes were red and teary because she was constantly crying over her expected fate: marrying Esav. Surprisingly, Onkelos states that her eyes were

beautiful. How can Onkelos say this? The answer is that Leah rebelled against her "fate," and her tears changed it. She took the initiative to flood the Heavens with her tears, and the fact that her prayers were so successful made her tearful eyes, with hindsight, beautiful. Perhaps Leah was even involved in formulating Lavan's plan to trick Yaakov.

Rachel, on the other hand, had the personality of a quiet lamb, i.e., a follower. ("Rachel" means "lamb.") Her role was always to live in someone else's shadow, a trait which she passed to her children, just as Leah passed her own traits to her children. (Yemei Zikaron p.63) ...

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From: Rabbi Kalman Packouz [SMTP:packouz@aish.edu] Subject: Shabbat Shalom! Vayetze
DVAR TORAH: based on Growth Through Torah BY RABBI ZELIG PLISKIN

The Torah states, "And Jacob worked for Rachel for seven years; and it was in his eyes as a few days in his love for her." When someone loves another even a short time apart can seem like an eternity. How is it possible that the time appeared to be a short time for Jacob?

In his classic commentary, the Malbim gives two answers:

1) Jacob loved Rachel so much that he thought that she was worth working for many more than seven years. Therefore, to work only seven years for such a wonderful person was really a bargain.

2) Jacob's love for Rachel was not simple passion. When a person feels deep passion, a day can seem like a year. Jacob loved her because of her good qualities that would make her worthy of being the mother of the future Jewish people. A person whose love is based on passion really loves himself and not the object of his love. When a person loves the good in another, he truly loves the other person and not himself. (The Torah tells us Jacob's focus was "in his love for her.") Therefore, the time seemed short because it was not a selfish love.

The Alschich gives another approach: The seven years seemed like a few days in Jacob's eyes AFTER he was married to Rachel. (This is the order of the words and events in the Torah.) His love and his happiness overshadowed and all but erased the pain of the seven years of work.

Our lessons: Clarify whether it's a burning heart or heartburn -- are you in love or are you infatuated? Secondly, if you have a difficult situation -- like difficulty in finding a spouse -- know that your trials and tribulations will seem insignificant in light of your happiness. Therefore, don't suffer so much now; rather anticipate your future joy.

From: Yated USA [SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com] PENINIM AHL
HATORAH: PARSHAS VAYEITZEI BY RABBI A. LEIB
SCHEINBAUM Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

And he became frightened and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the abode of G-d." (28:17) In his second interpretation of this pasuk, Rashi cites the Talmud in Chullin 91, which relates that Yaakov traveled to Charan to find a wife, according to his parents' request. After a long journey, he reached Charan. When he arrived, he realized that he had passed by Har Ha'Moriah without having stopped to pray there. He was shocked at his oversight. How could he have passed the place where his father and grandfather used to say their tefillos and not take advantage of the opportunity to do the same? He immediately turned around and began the journey all the way back to Har Ha'Moriah. As reward for his good intention, Hashem performed a miracle and Har Ha'Moriah came traveling towards him. We wonder why Hashem performed the miracle only after Yaakov had reached Charan and realized his error? What prevented Hashem from performing this at

the more convenient time-when Yaakov was traveling towards Har Ha'Moriah?

Horav Eliyahu Schlesinger, Shlita, cites Yalkut Lekach Tov on Parashas Toldos which applies an anecdote to explain how Yaakov could have bought the birthright from Eisav for only a bowl of lentils. Certainly the bechorah is valued at much more than a bowl of soup! The story is related that a Jew, who was in dire need of a large sum of money with which to arrange his daughter's marriage, went to his Rebbe for a blessing that he somehow obtain the necessary funds. The Rebbe blessed him and said, "Invest in the first business deal that you encounter." The chasid left for home with a happy heart, secure in the feeling that Hashem would answer his prayers. Along the way he stopped at an inn, where he met a group of businessmen. These were a group of highly successful power brokers who viewed the chasid with disdain. One of them, seeing an opportunity to have some fun, asked the chasid if he was interested in a business opportunity. Remembering the Rebbe's advice, the chasid quickly responded in the affirmative. The businessman said he was willing to sell his portion in Olam Habah, the World-to-Come, for one ruble. The chasid quickly took out the money and paid for the fellow's "share" in Olam Habah. When the businessman returned home and related to his wife that he had sold his Olam Habah to a foolish passerby for one ruble, she became hysterical. "How could you do such a foolish thing?" she screamed at him. "Quickly, buy back your Olam Habah-regardless of the price!" I will not live one more minute with a man who would sell his Olam Habah." With no other recourse, the fellow went back in search of the chasid to demand that the sale be nullified. He found him and began negotiating for his Olam Habah. He was shocked that the chasid would not budge. He refused to "return" the Olam Habah, regardless of the price. The only option left for the businessman was to go to the Rebbe of the chasid and beg him to talk some sense into his disciple. The Rebbe listened to both sides of the story and said, "In truth, my disciple is justified in not returning your Olam Habah. He bought it fairly. I think I can convince him to relinquish his title to your Olam Habah, however, if you pay him a specific amount of money." "How much?" asked the businessman. "I will pay any amount, just get me back my Olam Habah!" The Rebbe said, "My disciple needs a specific amount of money for his daughter's wedding. If you supply the necessary funds, I will see to it that your Olam Habah is returned to you." The businessman agreed to the sale, and everything was settled amicably; he received his Olam Habah in return for providing the necessary funds for the chasid's daughter's wedding. As the businessman was leaving, he turned to the Rebbe and asked, "While I followed the Rebbe's instructions and furnished the funds that were asked of me, I still have a question. Yesterday this man paid one ruble for my Olam Habah. Today this same 'merchandise' is valued at thousands of rubles. Is that right?" The Rebbe countered, "Yes, my friend. The price is set according to the value of the merchandise. Yesterday, you were willing to 'give' it away for a mere ruble. This indicated that it had very little value to you. Today, when you realize that your marriage and your happiness are dependent upon this same merchandise, the price increases. Now it is worth much, much more to you!"

The same idea applies to the birthright. Originally, Eisav scoffed at the bechorah. It was worthless. A bowl of soup had more value than it. When Eisav later realized the blessings that the bechorah entailed, he screamed bitterly over his loss. At that moment, the value of the birthright increased commensurate with Eisav's appreciation of his forfeiture. Let us return to our original question. When Yaakov passed by Har Ha'Moriah without pausing to pray, he demonstrated a lack of appreciation for the sanctity of the place. Thus, he decreased its "value." If the place did not have sufficient meaning for Yaakov, then it was not worth performing a miracle there. Afterwards, when Yaakov realized what he had missed, when he reflected upon the lost opportunity to pray

at the holiest site, the prestige of Har Ha'Moriah increased. If the site was now so valuable that Yaakov was prepared to return to it, then Hashem would perform a miracle. The mountain would move towards him. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and so is its value. ...

From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom

List[SMTP:parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il] SHABBAT SHALOM:
VAYETZE BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN (Genesis 28:10 - 32:3)

Efrat, Israel - Jacob's father-in-law, Laban, is considered one of the most treacherous figures in the Torah; he is pictured as a sweet-talking rogue who loses no opportunity to deceive his immigrant and naive son-in-law - whether it be out of his rightful bride or out of his rightful wages. Indeed, our Sages, in the Passover Haggadah, even paint him with a more ignominious brush than they paint Pharaoh: "Come and hear what Laban the Arami (Syrian and /or deceiver) tried to do to our father Jacob. While Pharaoh only decreed against the males, Laban sought to uproot everything (and everyone)." At the same time, however, the ritual liturgy of the marriage ceremony created by our Sages who composed the Haggadah, has chosen to immortalize Laban's farewell words to his sister Rebecca when she leaves his home to go with Eliezer and Isaac's bride-to-be: "Our sister, may you become (the mother) of thousands of myriads, and may your seed inherit the gate of their enemies [Gen. 24:60]." It is with this very blessing that millions of grooms for thousands of years have placed the veil on their brides face just prior to the wedding ceremony itself in a ritual called "badeken" (covering in Yiddish). If Laban is so evil, why quote his words at such a significant moment?

I believe that we can resolve this paradox by attempting to understand the motivations behind Laban's acts of deception. Laban's primary concern is the welfare of his immediate family, his children and grandchildren. To this end he will stop at nothing, since in his system of values "all is fair in love for one's children." Hence he has no problem in substituting the weak-eyed Leah for the beautiful Rachel under the marriage canopy, for no father would want to see his older daughter languish for lack of a suitable husband. He changes Jacob's wages "ten times" because he must foster Jacob's dependency on him if his family is to remain with him and not leave Syria (Aram Naharayim) 18:19]. "Family for the sake of faith. Laban accepts the importance of family, but he has no clue as to the mission of the faith. Much the opposite, he is more than willing to sacrifice the faith ideals on the altar of his commitment to family. He deceives, lies and cheats - the very antithesis of righteousness and justice - in order to marry off an unpopular daughter and to keep his children and grandchildren in his own back-yard. He denies the Ruler of the Universe when he wishes to make a pact in the name of all of the gods of the family - the gods of Nahor as well as of Abraham. Jacob understands that this would be pure idolatry, and he therefore ratifies the covenant by swearing only in the Name of the one feared by his father Isaac (31: 58). And our Sages understand that had Laban succeeded in keeping Jacob and his children in Aram - thereby allowing family ties to overwhelm their faith in ethical monotheism - the ensuring assimilation would have de-railed the purpose of the Abrahamic election, aborted the mission of Israel, and ended Jewish history almost before it began: Laban's perverted ideal of "family uber alles" had the power to uproot everyone and everything desired by G-d and Abraham.

When I was growing up, it was still quite rare that young Jews married out of the faith; when it did happen, it was an occasion for a major crisis, if not mourning. The healthy instinct of Jewish self-preservation understood that the death-knell for the Jewish people is the form of assimilation which leads to intermarriages. It is false to characterize an intermarriage as a wedding between a Jew and Christian; it is generally a wedding between a secular American of Jewish descent

with a secular American of Christian descent. Hence, as large segments of Jews have not only become less religious but even less ethnically Jewish, it is no wonder that inter-marriage is on the rise: 35% in Latin America, 55% in the United States and as much as 80% in many countries of Europe. (Obviously, I am not speaking of a situation in which one of the partners undergo a serious conversion. "Jews by choice" are to be welcomed into Judaism with love and pride, as the Biblical Scroll of Ruth - whose heroes live in Efrat -testifies). Hence, the Jewish community worldwide is no longer even shocked by a mixed marriage. In the Sunday Times, such wedding announcements no longer raise an eyebrow. We've moved from the shock of my parent's generation to the benign acceptance of my generation, to the active endorsement of the next generation. In a recent most popular off-Broadway production called *Beau Geste*, the still ethnic Jewish mother comes to accept her daughter's fianc **1** (of German Gentile descent) because, after all, at least his name sounds Jewish, he pretty much "looks" Jewish, and he's studying to be a doctor! In the final analysis, the argument always offered is: "for the sake of the family we must be willing to compromise our faith."

But who is speaking here? Is it Laban or Jacob? From what we've seen in this week's portion, Laban's concept of family seems to be on the rise in our age. Laban says, Family must come first, last and always; faith plays no real role. But Jacob's order of priorities is different. First must come the shared vision of our people, our collective ideals of Torah ethics, values and rituals. And these must be emphasized way before our children grow to young adulthood. Only then have we the right to expect a proper choice of mate. Jacob's is the solution for the ages. His children survived as the children of Israel, Laban's didn't. We don't even know their names!

Shabbat Shalom <http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm>
Ohr Torah Stone Colleges and Graduate Programs Rabbi Shlomo Riskin,
Dean Rabbi Chaim Brovender, Dean

From: OHR SOMAYACH [SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] * TORAH WEEKLY * Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshat Vayeitze IT'S ALL FOR THE BEST!

"And it was in the morning, that behold it was Leah!" (29:25)

The king was unhappy with his Prime Minister. Every time there was a problem in the country, whether it was a minor hiccup or a major disaster, the Prime Minister would say, "It's all for the best!" The king would cringe before the Prime Minister's irrepressible optimism, and scowl. One day things came to a head. The king was out hunting. An ill-aimed sword wielded by one of his courtiers sliced off the king's little finger. As the king shrieked and howled in pain, the Prime Minister chirped, "It's all for the best!" The king was livid. "Take him and throw him in the dungeons!" ordered the king. "I can't stand his infernal cheerfulness one moment longer!"

The days past, and the months too. The Prime Minister languished in jail for a year. And then two. It looked like he would finish up his days with nothing to console him save his irrepressible optimism.

It just so happened that one day the king went out on a hunting party with his court. Unbeknownst to them, a dangerous tribe of pigmy cannibals had invaded the king's northern border -- exactly where the hunting party found themselves. It was all over in a few seconds. The trap sprung and the entire hunting party was trussed up in a gigantic net that the pygmies had strung across the forest path. One by one they were extracted from the net and interred in the pygmy stockade. The following morning they were all destined to be a five-star pygmy cannibal breakfast.

Day broke, and one by one the luckless courtiers were led to the pot. The pygmies, of course, saved the greatest delicacy for desert. Finally it was the turn of the king. They led him from the stockade out

into the unforgiving glare of the morning sun. They tied his legs together. Just when they were about to tie his hands together, one of the pygmies let out a squeal of alarm. The king had no pinkie. Where his little finger was supposed to be was...nothing. Now, everyone knows that in hilchot Pygmy, only a perfect and whole human maybe eaten. Someone who has even the slightest physical blemish is invalid.

Unceremoniously, the pygmies sent the king back to his palace. He immediately rushed to the prison and ordered the release of the prime minister. Telling him of his miraculous escape, the king begged forgiveness from his prime minister. But all the prime minister would say was "It's all for the best!" The king looked at the prime minister with great remorse and said, "I just took away two years of your life -- how can you say it's all for the best?!" "If I hadn't been in prison," replied the prime minister, "I'd have been out hunting with you!"

When Rachel saw her sister Leah standing under the wedding canopy with Yaakov, her intended husband, she must have felt her life was coming to an end. And yet she was silent. She must have thought that Yaakov would never marry her, after her betrayal of his confidence. He would probably resign himself to marriage with Leah and accept it as Divine Providence. Besides, it was highly unlikely that Yaakov would marry two sisters. And yet she was silent.

But Yaakov did marry her. And they had two children, Yosef and Binyamin.

Every stone in the ephod (breastplate) of the kohen gadol represented one of the tribes of Israel. The stone of Binyamin was called "yashpheh." These same Hebrew letters also spell "yesh peh." There is a mouth, a mouth closed in silence.

Esther was also from the tribe of Binyamin. She saved the Jewish People by silence. By not revealing her Jewishness to King Achashverosh, she was able to thwart Haman's plan of genocide.

Esther didn't get her power of silence from nowhere. It came from Rachel. When Rachel stood and watched the chupah of her sister in silence, she planted a power into her offspring which would eventually save the entire Jewish People.

"It's all for the best!"

Source: It's All For The Best - Story heard from Rabbi Eliezer Shore

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From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com]
PARSHA PERSPECTIVES: SHEEPISH LEADERSHIP
BY RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY

Sheep. You wouldn't think they'd play a major role in determining Klal Yisrael leaders, but they did. The Medrash tells us that one of Moshe's defining acts that moved Hashem to choose him as the leader of Klal Yisrael was his attitude toward a poor and tired ewe that wandered from the pack. Moshe, who was tending Yisro's sheep scoured the desert to find it. He finally found the parched and exhausted creature, and he fed and carried her back to the rest of the flock. Hashem saw an amazing level of care and concern for even the lowliest creatures. On the way home, Moshe saw a very fascinating sight. A burning bush. The rest is history. Dovid HaMelech was also a shepherd. The Medrash tells us that Dovid HaMelech's handling of sheep was also the impetus for Hashem to choose him to lead His flock. Dovid had a very calculated grazing system. First he would allow only the young sheep to pasture. They would eat the most tender grass. After they finished, Dovid allowed the older sheep to graze. In this manner the tougher meadow grass was left for those sheep with stronger jaws. The Medrash tells us that

Hashem was impressed with Dovid's abilities to discern the different needs of varying age groups and foresaw in those actions the leadership qualities needed to be Melech Yisrael. So much for the pursuit of two of our greatest Jewish leaders as shepherds. What is interesting to note, is this week's parsha contains a long episode that also deals with sheep. It expounds in detail exactly how Yaakov manipulated genetics and had the acumen to cultivate an amazingly large and diverse flock. It tells us how he placed sticks near the water and other machinations to get results of nekudim, broodim and t'lumim. Why is a long narrative of seemingly inconsequential breeding techniques detailed so intricately? The Torah spends nearly twenty verses on a half-dozen varieties of sheep colors and explains how Yaakov bred them. Why are such seemingly insignificant breeding details given so much play in the Torah? Let us analyze the story. Yaakov worked fifteen years for his father-in-law, Lavan. No matter how arduously he toiled, Lavan constantly tried to deny Yaakov compensation. Finally, he forced Yaakov to accept a share in the sheep as wages, but only with certain stipulations. He would only compensate him with sheep that exhibited an mutations in contrast to the normal flock. First, he set Yaakov's wages to be paid with only speckled lambs born of Yaakov's flock. Yaakov, in a procedure that would have astounded even the most modern of geneticists, produced sheep exactly according to those specifications. Next, Lavan allowed him striped sheep. Again, miraculously Yaakov cultivated his flock to produce a bounty of striped sheep! The Torah repeats the episode in various colors and stripes. What could be the significance of its importance? Perhaps the greatness of Yaakov Avinus's leadership, like that of Moshe Rabbeinu and Dovid HaMelech was also inherent in his dealings with the lowly sheep.

The story is told that Rabbi Aryeh Levin was once standing outside his yeshiva in Jerusalem while the children were on a 15 minute recess break. His son, Rav Chaim, a Rebbi in the yeshiva, was also standing outside and observing the children, when suddenly his father tuned to him. "What do you see my son?" asked Rav Aryeh. "Why," he answered, "children playing!" "Tell me about them," said Reb Aryeh. "Well," answered Reb Chaim, "Dovid is standing near the door of the school, with his hands in his pockets, he probably is no athlete. Moishie is playing wildly, he probably is undisciplined. Yankel is analyzing how the clouds are drifting. I guess he was not counted in the game. But all in all they are just a bunch of children playing." Reb Aryeh turned to him and exclaimed, "No, my son. You don't know how to watch the children.

"Dovid is near the door with his hands in his pockets because he has no sweater. His parents can't afford winter clothes for him. We must attend to those physical needs and make sure that his family is provided for. Moishie is wild because his Rebbe scolded him and he is frustrated. He is letting out his anger in that way. Perhaps if we get him to focus his attention through certain projects he will prosper. And Yankel is moping because his mother is ill and he bears the responsibility to help with the entire household. We must find out his family's needs and try to help them without placing a burden on Moishie.

"In order to be a Rebbe you must know each boy's needs and make sure to give him the proper attention to fulfill those needs."

Yaakov had a very difficult task. His mission was to breed twelve tribes--each to be directed in a unique path. Some sons were to be merchants, others scholars. Yehudah was destined for royalty, while Levi was suited to be the spiritual mentor of the common folk. Each son, like each Jew, had a special mission. Hashem needed a father for the twelve tribes who would not breed all his children in the same mold. If Moshe's and Dovid HaMelech's destinies were determined by their care and compassion for their animal flock, perhaps Yaakov's development of twelve shevatim was pre-determined by his development of a wide array of his flock. Only someone who knew how to cultivate each individual talent within the great harmony of Klal Yisrael would be able produce the forebears of the Klal Yisrael. Only then could hundreds of Torah

personalities in every corner of the earth, from so many communities, flourish together—from Bais Knesses Echod to Ir Achas to Am Echod. Rabbi Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of Yeshiva South Shore and the author of the Parsha Parables Series

From: MRS. LEAH KOHN [SMTP:lkohn@torah.org] Subject: Women in Judaism - Intersection Between Heaven and Earth SARAH'S BLESSED HOME: Intersection Between Heaven and Earth

Our previous class, "Sarah's Accomplishment: An Inheritance for Each Jew," covered Sarah's ability to connect the physical world to the spiritual, thus forging for all time a whole new relationship with Hashem. In recognition of her accomplishment, G-d bestowed Sarah's home with three miraculous symbols of her ability to transform the earthly realm into a dwelling place for Him. This class will detail those blessings and will explore how they remain for us an eternal inheritance.

The three miracles that graced Sarah's home were as follows: her Shabbat candles burned all week; her challah was blessed with a Divine satiating quality; and the presence of G-d hung over her tent in the form of a cloud. Each of these physical manifestations had its spiritual significance. By exploring them one by one, we see how their essence remains a force in our lives as Jews today.

In contrast to Sarah's Shabbat candles, ours burn for only a few hours, leaving us without their unique light for the rest of the week. Beyond Shabbat we are busy working and providing for our basic needs.

The candles mark a departure from this routine, ushering in a singular day of focused connection to Hashem. For Sarah, there was no such separation between holy and mundane. Her enlightenment, clarity and relationship to G-d did not ebb and flow with the coming and going of Shabbat. As an expression of this continuum, her candles burned from one Shabbat to the next. In much the same way, during Temple times, one of the lamps on the menorah attended by the Kohanim never burned out. This suspension of natural law indicated that Hashem had deemed the Temple fitting for his presence. Sarah was the first to usher Hashem into the physical world in this fashion.

As with her candles, Sarah's challah expressed how she redefined the boundaries of the physical world by infusing it with spirituality. Hashem embedded a blessing in Sarah's challah, which caused it to be completely satisfying, no matter how little a guest ate. This by-passed the laws of nature - where any given quantity is experienced in terms of its limits - and gave way to a more expansive sense of the physical realm's ultimate, unlimited source. By giving the challah spiritual characteristics, Hashem acknowledged Sarah's ability to use material existence as a pipeline to the Divine. Her bread - a staple of life in this world - became a symbol of the inherent connection between here and the beyond. Later in Jewish history, the bread baked in the Temple by the Kohanim remained miraculously fresh throughout the week. This was Hashem's indication that the legacy of spirituality established by Sarah had endured.

The third miracle in Sarah's midst - the cloud of the Divine Presence that hovered over her home - was literally a visual link between heaven and earth. Regardless of time of day or change in weather, it persisted as proof of a spiritual domain beyond the five senses. The Divine cloud originated with Sarah, who pioneered a relationship with G-d by creating a dwelling place for Him in this world. A symbol of the Divine presence, the cloud reappeared at key points in the development of the Jewish Nation - as a protective force for the generation in the desert and as a sign of the presence of the Divine at the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

For us today, although we no longer live in an era of open miracles such as those fostered by Sarah, each time we use the physical for a higher purpose, we create in ourselves a dwelling place for Hashem. In this way, the world around us never becomes the be-all and-end-all that breeds discontent in so many. Rather, for the Jew it remains a place

where the mundane and routine present opportunities to practice connecting to our spiritual Source. This task is a challenge, especially when taken-on in the midst of a consumer society devoted to convincing us that we are, in fact, bored and in need of constant diversion. As Jews, we have the potential to walk the path of Sarah, transforming and infusing meaning into every physical aspect of our existence, each in our own way, on our own time and step by step.

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RABBI JONATHAN SCHWARTZ jschwartz@ymail.yu.edu
INTERNET CHABURAH -- Parshas VaYetzai (fwd)

Prologue: Knowing one's place is the essence of life and the pursuit of one's Avoda (See beginning of Mesillas Yeshorim.) Finding one's place, in life, in society and in work has often led to a growth in the major fields of philosophy, psychology and the religions. One who knows his place can clearly live a successful and productive life.

Rav Yaakov Moshe Charlop ztl. (Mei Marom V) points out that Yaakov found his true place and almost bypassed it. VaYifga BaMakom, he met THE place. Rav Charlop explains that Har HaMoriah was destined to be the center of Yaakov's existence. It was, his place. Therefore, the Torah refers to the place as HaMakom (the place) for to Yaakov, it was the only place. For that reason, Yaakov was able to have his dream specifically in that place. Yaakov's dream, of Malachim Olim V'Yordim, presupposed his being in his place. For only when one is in his right place, can he achieve any measure of success. Thus, the use of the phrase, Makom, is the ultimate praise of Yaakov, as a person who knows his place. It comes as no shock that Hashem, for whom M'lo Kol Ha'Aretz Kevodo, is referred to as HaMakom. Clearly, the true praise of Hashem is one for whom all places are His place whereby his glory can and is fully actualized. When one is out of place and finds his way back, he should have the desire to thank Hashem MiMikomo, for helping him out and finding his way back. The Beracha, HaGomel, is recited in the specific instances where one's proper place might play an important factor in determining if he should even recite a Beracha. This week's Chaburah examines that issue entitled:

HAGOMEL: FOR YOU OR FOR ME?

Often, people are in situations where they find themselves ready to 'bentch gomel'. Men clearly utilize this opportunity to partake of an Aliya to the Torah on an otherwise "open" Aliya day in our Shuls. However, how does a woman fulfill her Mitzva to thank Hashem for getting through a potentially difficult period? The Gemara (Berachos 54b) notes that four people need to make the Gomel Beracha. These four include the fellow who crosses the ocean, crosses the desert, the deathly ill person who recovers and the captive who is released from jail. Abaye notes that the Beracha ust be recited in the presence of ten as the Possuk notes, Hashem should be exalted in the presence of the great assemblage. Mar Zutra adds that two of the ten should be Rabbonon. Tosfos ("V'Aima") notes that the world has grown accustomed to reciting the Beracha during Laining since the Laining cannot be done without ten people present (see Beis Yosef, Orach Chaim, 219). Hence, we see that the Gemara views the recital of HaGomel as a public declaration of thanks to Hashem that MUST be recited in public.

Rabbi Yosef ibn Chaziz (Shut Halachos Ketanos II, 161) explains that for this reason, women should not recite the Hagomel on their own. According to his opinion, a woman's glory is in her privacy ("Kol Kevoda Bas Melech"). Therefore, it is not honor to her to make her appear in public to make a public declaration and recite HaGomel.

The Keneset HaGedolah questions this opinion of the Halachos Ketanos. According to the Keneset haGedolah, Hagomel is not related to one's level of honor. He questions one to find a time that we excuse one from thanking G-d since the situation is not according to his/her level

of comfort. Additionally, he asks why it would be uncomfortable for a woman to recite HaGomel in shul from the Ezras Nashim, saving her from difficulty?

There are times when a woman is the specific person required to recite HaGomel based upon the criteria cited in the Gemara above. Childbirth, when the mother is at risk, is one such example. Still the Toras Chattas (Sanhedrin 94a) notes that she is required to recite HaGomel the day she returns to Shul. However, since HaGomel is recited during laining and she cannot get an Aliya, her husband receives and Aliya (see Biur Halacha to Orach Chaim 136 who declares the husband a Chiyuv Aliya). When he recites Barchu, he is thanking Hashem in her stead. Therefore, both he and she must have this idea (i.e. to be 'yotzai' HaGomel with Barchu) when he comes to the Torah, and she is then Patur from the Beracha. (Contained within this position is the idea that one can recite HaGomel for another and may specifically relate to a husband's recitation for his wife as Ishto K'Gufo.)

Rav Zvi Pesach Frank (Shut Har Tzvi, Orach Chaim I, 118) quotes a second understanding for the potential reason to excuse women from this Beracha. Rav Frank quotes the Chasam Sofer (Orach Chaim, 51) who states that HaGomel cannot be recited at night since the Beracha replaces the Korban Todah that the same individuals used to bring during the times of the Beis Hamikdash. The Korban Todah cannot be brought at night and neither can the Beracha be recited then. Therefore, one could postulate that since the Beracha cannot be recited at night women should be Patur based upon the principle of mitzvas Aseh She'Hazman Gramma. To this idea, Rav Frank disagrees. He notes that the night does not end the Chiyuv of the Beracha, it merely delays it. A Delayed mitzva is not a Mitzvas Aseh She'Hazman Gramma. (see Turei Even to Chagiga 16b). (this idea, that HaGomel is like a Korban is also advanced by the Sha'arei Ephraim 219:4 and seems to suggest that anyone who can be Nodev a korban on your behalf can recite HaGomel for you. This position differs from the one above in that based upon this logic, a husband or anyone else, can recite HaGomel for the woman even if she is not present).

The Eliyahu Rabba (219:12) suggests yet another reason why women don't recite HaGomel. He notes that like children for whom, the main punishment heaped upon them is for the sins of the parent, the main danger for a wife is because of the sins of her husband. Hence, it is only logical for the husband to make the Beracha. The Pri megadim (Mishbetzos Zahav, 219:7) challenges this idea because unlike a child, the wife has her own sins to own up to.

The Aruch HaShulchan (219:6) feels that there is no basis for the custom of women not to recite HaGomel. He explains that the reason behind the practice not to recite HaGomel comes from a mistaken association with Kriyas Hatorah which women are not obligated in. (This is consistent with his position that women aren't obligated in Kriyas HaTorah which is challenged in Mogen Avraham <282:6 see Birkei Yosef 7>). The Keneset HaGedolah writes that a woman can recite HaGomel in front of one or two men or 10 women because the need for a minyan is not an absolute requirement. (See Tur, Beis Yosef argues).

Interestingly, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (MaOn HaBeracha, Berachos 54b) notes that only in the case of childbirth does a woman recite HaGomel. (as opposed to say, a plane ride). Rav Shlomo Zalman explains that since people tend to be around the home for a Seudas Hodaah (see internet Chaburah Berashis 5760), it is possible for the Isha to feel she can Bentsh Gomel with a Minyan even in her own home. At other times, this might not be possible and Kol Kevodah would win out in those situations. Bottom line, the issue is complex. There are many opinions as to how one could recite HaGomel after childbirth. What one should do when in this situation is consult her Halachic authority to determine what the best practice for herself might be (See Chayei Adam 65:6; Birkei Yosef 219:2; Mishna Berurah 219:3).

From: Jeffrey Gross [SMTP: jgross@torah.org] WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5760 Selected Halachos Relating to Parshas Vayeitzei
BY RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

WHEN IS A SEFER TORAH PASUL?

An earlier column dealt with certain laws pertaining to a pasul Sefer Torah: It may not be used for kerias ha-Torah, and if a mistake is found in the middle of the keriah, it must be put away and another Sefer is taken out. It is important to understand, though, that there are different types of mistakes, and not every mistake requires that another Torah be taken out as a replacement. There are three types of mistakes and they vary in their degree of seriousness:

1. PASUL - such a sefer cannot be used at all for kerias ha-Torah, even when another one is not available. When a mistake is found during kerias ha-Torah, the reading is not continued in that Sefer(1). The Torah must be fixed as soon as possible. If the Torah could not or is not going to be fixed at all, then it should be permanently "retired." The most dignified manner to accomplish this is to locate an honorable place in shul where the pasul Torah can lay undisturbed(2). If this is not possible, then one may designate a secluded but honorable place in one's home where the pasul Torah can remain(3). If neither of these options is practical, then the Torah may be buried in the ground by placing it in an earthenware utensil(4) and burying it along with a talmid chacham who passed away(5).

2. PASUL L'CHATCHILAH - the mistake must be fixed and the sefer is not used until it is. If, however, the mistake was found during kerias ha-Torah, another Torah is not taken out in its place even when there is another one available.

3. SAFEK PASUL - Certain mistakes are of a debatable status. Their status is determined by showing them to an average child - as will be explained later - whose spontaneous reading of the word will determine how flawed the letter in question is.

We will now list, in no particular order, some common flaws that a Sefer Torah may have and classify them according to their degree of seriousness(6):

LEVEL 1 - PASUL If the stitches connecting two yerios unravel and there are fewer than five or six stitches remaining intact(7). If there is an extra vov or letter, or if a word or a letter is missing or completely erased(8). If two letters are attached so closely that they appear as one letter. If the parchment tears and the tear extends into at least three lines of writing, even if no

words or letters are affected(9).

LEVEL 2 - PASUL L'CHATCHILAH If an additional vov or yud (chaser or maleh) which do not alter the meaning or pronunciation of the word are found(10). For instance, where the word avoseinu is supposed to have a vov and does not, or if it was not supposed to be written with a vov and it is. But if the pronunciation is altered even if the meaning is not, such as the word keves instead of the word kesev, or if the meaning is altered even though the pronunciation is not, such as the word v'nimtzah written with an hay instead of an alef, the Torah is pasul. A letter which should be written in large print (e.g., the ayin in the word Shema) is not, and vice versa. Dots which belong over certain words (e.g. the dots over the word ayei Sarah ishtecha) are omitted. If there is a complete break in a letter, even the width of a hair's breadth which is hardly recognizable(11). If, however, the break shows up only under the glare of the sun or artificial light(12) or under a magnifying glass(13), it is kosher. If two letters become attached to each other slightly, in a manner which does not change their form(14). If the form of the letter remains intact, even if some of the ink inside the outline is missing(15). If wax [or dirt] is stuck to a letter. On Shabbos the wax may not be removed, even if it could be removed effortlessly(16). As a general rule, whenever there is an unresolved dispute among the poskim, even though we tend to rule stringently and consider the Torah pasul, we still do not stop the reading to take out another Torah, for we rely on the Rishonim who maintain that it is permitted to read from a non-Kosher Torah.

LEVEL 3 - SAFEK PASUL Sometimes we may call upon a child to determine whether or not a Sefer Torah is kosher. The child must "neither too bright nor too stupid", which means that he must have a basic knowledge of the Hebrew letters, their shapes and forms, but he is not advanced enough to figure out on his own what the defective letter ought to be. When a letter is shown to a child to see if he can recognize it, the preceding words are covered up so that the child does not quote a familiar pasuk from memory. The actual word containing the questionable letter and the words which follow need not be covered(17). Bear in mind, though, that a child's determination is limited to certain cases only. If a part of the actual letter is missing or severely broken, then the Torah is pasul even if a child could make out what the letter is. For example, if the top of the alef (the part that looks like a yud) is completely detached from the body of the alef, even if a child could make out that it is a alef, it does not make the letter kosher. This is true with many letters. The following list covers some of the cases where a child's determination may be relied upon: If two words are written so closely together that it is difficult to tell if they are one word or two. A child is called upon to see how he would read those words. If one word is so spread out that it may be read as two separate words. We ask a child to see how he would read that word. A correctly written letter whose ink has faded or turned brown and is hard to make out. We ask a child to see if he can identify the letter. If a child can make out the letter, even if all of the black ink is faded(18), it is kosher even l'chatchilah. If the leg of a vov [or a yeyin or a final nun or chaf] is not long enough so that the letter may look like a yud, or if the leg of a yud is so long so that the yud may look like a vov, a child is asked what it looks like to him. If there is a break in the leg of a vov or a final nun and we are unsure if the unbroken section connected to the roof of the letter is long enough to be considered a letter(19). If the roof of a daled looks like it is too short and the letter may be seen as a vov or a yeyin, we ask a child for his opinion(20).

FOOTNOTES: 1 If another sefer is not available, then the keriah is continued but the blessings are not recited, as explained earlier. 2 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:38. It is customary to leave a pasul Torah in the aron, as long as that it is clearly marked pasul by placing the gartel (belt) over the mantle instead of beneath it. 3 Aruch ha-Shulchan 154:8. 4 Or any other type of material which is durable and will not disintegrate in a short time. 5 O.C. 154:5. 6 Based, generally, on the rulings of the Mishnah Berurah 143:25. 7 If the torn yerios are in a chumash other than the one that is presently being read, it is reduced to a Level 2 mistake. 8 This is true concerning most letters of the Torah. See Level 2 for some exceptions. 9 Other poskim hold that even if the tear extends into one line the sefer is pasul; see Gidulei Hekdesh Y.D. 280:1. 10 Rama O.C. 143:4 (as understood by Noda b'Yeudah Y.D. 2:178), who explains that our Sifrei Torah are not written such exactitude, so that the likelihood of a similar error appearing in the substitute Torah is great. [See Minchas Chinuch 613 who seems to hold that these types of mistakes do not make the Torah pasul at all.] 11 Chazon Ish O.C. 8:8. 12 Be'ur Halachah 32:25 (s.v. ois). 13 See Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:146. 14 Mishnah Berurah 143:25. In certain cases, when the letters are attached at the top or middle, some poskim are more stringent. If another Torah is available, it should be used. 15 Mishnah Berurah 32:41. 16 Mishnah Berurah 340:10. 17 Mishnah Berurah 32:51. 18 But if all of the ink is faded and only a "rust" impression remains, it is pasul. This is sometimes difficult to determine. 19 In this case, the broken part of the letter is covered up so that the child does not mentally connect the two broken parts. 20 Be'ur Halachah 32:16 (s.v. hapeshtutos).

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From: rsiegel@torah.org [SMTP: rsiegel@torah.org]
kollel@mcs.com; genesis@torah.org HAFTORAH Parshas Vayeitzei
Hoshea 12:13 - 14:10 BY RABBI DOVID SIEGEL

This week's haftorah is devoted to the rebuke of the Jewish people for falling into their idolatrous practices. This serious national offense traces back to the days of the Jewish king Yeravam ben N'vat, the first

king over the Ten Tribes after the split in the Jewish kingdom. During the early part of the reign of , Shlomo's son Rechavam, Hashem revealed through the prophet Achiya that ten of the Jewish tribes would leave the iron hand of Rechavam and be led by Yeravam. The tribes of Yehuda and Binyomin would remain under the reign of Rechavam, a scion of Dovid Hamelech. In those days, the influence of Shlomo Hamelech's idolatrous wives threatened to corrupt the entire Jewish nation and Hashem responded by removing most of the Jewish nation from under Shlomo's influence. Unfortunately, their new leader Yeravam misused his privilege and instead of preventing the spread of idolatry he actually developed it beyond the point of return. Eventually, Hashem was left with no choice but to exile the major portion of the Jewish people to bring matters under control. In our haftorah the prophet Hoshea turns to the remaining Jewish tribes and beckons them to return to Hashem and not follow their brothers' corrupt ways.

It is quite significant to study the events which brought about the rise of Yeravam and thereby gain true appreciation for proper human sensitivity. The prophet Hoshea says, "When (Yeravam from) Efraim spoke frightening words he was elevated over Israel; yet he sinned in idolatry and died." (Hoshea 13:1) This passage refers to a special incident described in Sefer M'lochim when Yeravam took a stand and reprimanded Shlomo Hamelech for forsaking the ways of his father, Dovid. Dovid Hamelech had designated an area outside Yerushalayim known as the Milo to serve as a communal area for the Jewish people when they visited Yerushalayim en masse during the festivals. However, his son Shlomo Hamelech, opted to utilize this area to build a beautiful palace for his new bride, the daughter of Pharaoh. The Jewish people were quite disturbed over this outrageous demonstration of authority but lacked the courage to respond to it. Taking the law into his own hands, Yeravam demonstrated religious zeal and publicly reprimanded Shlomo Hamelech for his behavior. Hashem responded to Yeravam's outstanding display of courage in defense of Hashem's people and elevated Yeravam to the highest position of power, king over the Ten Tribes.

Our Chazal (Yalkut Shimoni, 196) reveal to us an important insight regarding Yeravam's rise to power. They reflect upon a passage in M'lochim I (11:27) which describes Yeravam's act in the following words, "For he lifted his hand against the king, Shlomo." Chazal reveal that Yeravam actually merited his rise to power because of his outstanding display of courage in opposition to Shlomo Hamelech's conduct. But, they add, painfully that Yeravam was also severely punished because his reprimand of the king was done in public. Apparently, Chazal are pointing a finger to the devastating outcome of Yeravam's reign. The silent question being raised here is considering that Yeravam's act was a meritorious one, as is evidenced by his appointment over Israel, why did Yeravam's control result in the Jewish people's horrible exile? If Hashem truly appreciated Yeravam's devotion to Hashem and Israel how could such devotion develop so quickly into an encompassing campaign of idolatry?" Chazal answer that although Yeravam's intentions were proper his insensitivity towards the king's feelings and esteem reflected a serious fault. His failure to concern himself with the feelings of Shlomo Hamelech was the cause of serious catastrophe. Although he was actually guided by religious zeal and truly felt compelled to act immediately he lost sight of the greater picture and permitted himself to publicly shame the honorable king of Israel.

This imbalance played itself out on a broader scope and Yeravam eventually introduced a separate religion to his kingdom. He feared that the Jewish pilgrimage to Yerushalayim would cause his following to forsake him and unite with Rechavam, the king of Yehuda. Based on an halachic precedent in the Bais Hamikdash, he knew that greater honor would be accorded Rechavam in the Temple area than would be to Yeravam. He reasoned that this would ultimately undermine Hashem's master plan, that the Ten Tribes be led by their own leader. In response to this concern he established alternate sites of worship for his people

outside of Yerushalayim and discouraged them from even visiting the Bais Hamikdash or associating with the kingdom of Yehuda. The result of these measures was that the Jewish people eventually abandoned Hashem totally and became gravely involved in idolatry. Chazal are revealing to us that if we analyze Yeravam's fear we would realize that it was rooted in this same insensitivity towards the House of Dovid. After all, it was certainly feasible for Rechavam the king of Yehuda and a scion of Dovid, to be recognized as an authority without interfering with Yeravam's reign over the remaining Ten Tribes. But, due to Yeravam's insensitivity towards Dovid's household, beginning with his publicly shaming Shlomo and continuing with his attitude towards Shlomo's descendants, Yeravam permitted himself to develop his threatening illusion. Regretfully, we learn that this underlying character flaw, lacking concern and tolerance for the feelings and prestige of others eventually caused the total downfall of our nation.

This lesson is most appropriately related to our sedra wherein our matriarch Rochel becomes the paradigm of human sensitivity, totally subjugating herself to the sensitivities of her sister, Leah. Although Rochel recognized the immeasurable spiritual outcome of her exclusive relationship with Yaakov this did not influence her from considering its effect on Leah. If this exclusiveness would cause Leah embarrassment and humiliation Rochel could not permit it and felt compelled to prevent it. She, unlike Yeravam, overlooked her religious fervor and focused on her sister's pain. Therefore she revealed to her sister, Leah the secret signals of Yaakov and secured that Leah would also become a leader figure in Yaakov's household. This sensitive approach of Rochel became the merit of the Jewish people for all times. In fact, Chazal inform us that Hashem responded specifically to the tefillah of Rochel on behalf of her children in exile. They explain that when Rochel cried over the loss of her children Hashem responded to her sensitivities. In her merit Hashem consented to forgive the Jewish people for their insensitivities towards one another and promised that the Jewish people would return to the land of Israel. Although their exile was sown through the insensitivity of Yeravam for others, the merit of Rochel surpassed all of these faults. Her superhuman display of sensitivity became the character of the Jewish people and in her merit Hashem promised to return them to their homeland.

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 Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash (Vbm)
 Student Summaries of Sichot Delivered by the Roshei Yeshiva
 Parashat Vayetze
 SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A
 BIRTH OF A NATION Summarized by Ramon Widmonte

And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva... and he stopped along the way, and tarried there the whole night, because the sun had set. He took of the STONES of that place and put them under his head, and lay down to sleep there and he dreamed... And Ya'akov rose up early in the morning, and took the STONE which he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on top of it and he called the name of that place Beit El... (Bereishit 28:1-19)

The Midrash (Bereishit Rabba 68:11), quoted by Rashi (28:11), notes the discrepancy between the two descriptions of Ya'akov's

pillow: at first it says that he gathered many stones (plural) to serve as a pillow, and afterwards it says that he took "the stone (singular) which he had placed under his head" and set it up as a pillar. According to the midrashic account, this discrepancy is due to the fact that when he began to gather the stones, they began to argue with each other, each saying, "Let this righteous man rest his head on me!" Immediately, G-d joined the stones into one stone, which then served as his pillow.

What is the meaning of this midrash? Is it simply a nice fairy tale to soothe a textual irregularity? Or is there more to it?

In order to understand everything that occurs in our parasha, we have to appreciate that the whole of Avraham Avinu's family lived with the immanent historical consciousness that they were going to build a nation. A strong proof for this is Bereishit 21:18. G-d turns to Hagar, after Avraham has exiled both her and her son, and comforts her by saying, "For I will make him [Yishma'el] into a great nation." In effect, G-d says, "Don't worry, in another thousand years, his descendants will become a nation." The obvious question is - who cares about a thousand years down the line? What about me? What about now?

If, however, we understand that the feeling within Avraham's camp was that they were building a nation and creating a historical factor which would alter the entire world's destiny, only then can we comprehend Hagar's taking solace from such an assurance. Moreover, in this light, we now understand afresh what the dispute between Hagar and Sarah really was. The question was from whom would this historical lynchpin emerge? From Sarah or from Hagar? Or maybe, as Avraham thought, the nation would come from both of them!

The central problem from which from Avraham and Yitzchak suffered was that they thought that they would be the ones to establish Am Yisrael - that all their children would be part of the nation.

Avraham always believed that Yishma'el would be included among the Chosen People. We find signs of this in many places. When Sarah suggested exiling Yishma'el and Hagar, "It was very bad in Avraham's eyes, because of his son" (Bereishit 21:11). It required a direct mandate from G-d to force Avraham to send Yishma'el away. A more poignant proof is the Midrash cited by Rashi (Bereishit 22:2, based on Bereishit Rabba 55:7) regarding G-d's command to Avraham to sacrifice Yitzchak. [G-d said to Avraham,] "Take your son." Avraham replied to Him, "I have two sons - which one do You mean?" [G-d] said to him, "Your only son." [Avraham] replied, "They are both the only children of their mothers." G-d [finally] said, "[Take] Yitzchak." In this midrash, Avraham is constantly searching for some way for Yishma'el to be involved in the historical, national mission. He searches for some place for Yishma'el within G-d's words, some area where he too can take part. Eventually, however, he accepts that Yishma'el is to be rejected.

Yitzchak himself suffered from the same problem, except that in his case, the ramifications were far more momentous. In last week's parasha, we saw that when Yitzchak thought he was blessing Esav (who was really Ya'akov masquerading), Yitzchak never gave him the blessing of Avraham - to inherit Eretz Yisrael - for he never intended the essence of the blessing for Esav. What did he intend? The Seforno (Bereishit 27:29) claims that Yitzchak wished to divide the blessing in half, with the material blessings going to Esav and the spiritual blessings to Ya'akov. The two would jointly found the nation.

Ya'akov would lack temporal power, being slightly subservient to Esav; thus, Esav would worry about the material needs of himself and of Ya'akov, his "vassal," while Ya'akov would busy himself with the spiritual side of Am Yisrael. Yitzchak thus wanted Am Yisrael to be a duality of sorts, with two halves - one consisting of more "this-worldly" people, and the other being more spiritual.

Eventually, however, Yitzchak too had to accept the rejection of

his first-born and of his idea of the division of labor between the brothers..

Ya'akov, too, lives with the self-same question: "Will G-d's nation descend from me? What will become of my family? Will I too have to choose between my children? Will I be able to?" (These doubts are voiced further on in the midrash quoted at the very beginning of this sicha.) It is in this light that we must understand Ya'akov's apprehensions and thoughts as he leaves Be'er Sheva. And it is in this vein that the midrash interprets everything that befalls him on the way. The dream about the angels takes on apocalyptic dimensions, with questions about which nation will dominate - who will rise and who will fall? We can now answer the question with which we began. What is the meaning of the stones coming together as one? The idea of all the rocks upon which Yisrael rested - read "the foundations of Am Yisrael" - being forged into one single rock, beats in exact tune with the questions which were gnawing away at Ya'akov Avinu. He had wondered whether he would be the single progenitor of Am Yisrael, and he is now answered. The stones coming together symbolise that all of his children will also come together, that he will indeed be the molder of this nation. Not one of his children will go astray; they will all be part of Am Yisrael.

Thus, we see how, in a single sentence, the midrash conveys the central issue which runs throughout the stories of the Avot. We now understand that Avraham Avinu had begun to establish a community with an intensely powerful awareness of historical destiny, and that each Patriarch, himself included, was involved entirely with the idea of creating a new historical factor on the world stage. Both Avraham and Yitzchak Avinu lived with the hope of seeing the nation in its complete form, but both were disappointed. Only Ya'akov Avinu was assured that his edifice would not be fractured like his father's and grandfather's - rather, he would build a single, unified, unshakeable pillar and anoint it as an altar to G-d.

(Originally delivered on Shabbat Parashat Vayetze 5759.)

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From: listmaster@jencom.com[SMTP:listmaster@jencom.com] Subject: KINDER TORAH BY SIMCHA GROFFMAN - VAYETZE Kinder Torah 1 For parents to share with children at the Shabbos Table Parshas Vayetze Stay Calm

"And Yaakov became angry and he fought with Lavan" (Bereshit 31:36). The Medrash (Bereshit Rabba 74:10) praises Yaakov for his self control at a time of anger. Let us examine the situation that caused Yaakov to be angry. Yaakov's father-in-law was Lavan, one of the most devious tricksters in history. Lavan tricked Yaakov into marrying Leah before Rachel, thereby extorting seven years of work from him. He changed Yaakov's wages 100 times in 20 years. He did not give a dowry to either of his daughters (Rashi 31:15), in fact, he received money for them by selling them to Yaakov in exchange for his labor.

Yaakov fled from Lavan with his family. Lavan finally caught up to him. He called Yaakov a thief saying, (31:43) "The daughters are my daughters, the sons are my sons, the sheep are my sheep, and all that you see is mine." How would we react when dealing with a terrible person like this?

We would probably feel justified in pouring out our anger and frustrations upon the person who has treated us so unfairly. How did Yaakov react? He answered Lavan, "What have I neglected and what am I guilty of that has caused you to be angry with me?" (Bereshit 31:36). The Medrash states that one might have thought that Yaakov would have hit or injured Lavan. Rather he spoke words of appeasement, trying to soothe Lavan's anger.

Kinderlach . . .

"Oy am I upset. That is the tenth time that Miri has borrowed my book without permission. How inconsiderate! I am really going to let her have it. She should know how upset I am." Wait a second. Stop. Think. What would Yaakov Avinu have done in this situation? Take a few deep breaths. Perhaps Miri really meant to ask permission, but just forgot. People make mistakes.

Judge her favorably. You can tell her that she should have asked, but speak in a low voice, very calmly and respectfully. As the Ramban writes in his letter about anger, "Accustom yourself to always speak softly to everyone at all times and you will be saved from anger." Silence "And Hashem remembered Rachel, He listened to her, and He opened her womb" (Bereshit 30:22). The Sifsei Chachomim explains that whenever the Torah states that Hashem remembers someone, He remembers a good deed or deeds that the person performed in the past and subsequently grants their request. The Medrash Tanchuma notes that Hashem remembered Rachel's silence. Yaakov wanted to marry Rachel. He sent gifts to her. Lavan intercepted the gifts and gave them to Leah instead.

Rachel was quiet. The Medrash praises her silence by quoting the Mishnah (Avos 1:17). Shimon the son of Rabban Gamliel said, "All of my life I have been raised among the sages and I have not found anything better for the body than silence." Our sages praise silence in many other ways.

Rebbe Akiva said, "The fence that protects wisdom is silence" (Avos 3:17). The Gemora (Megilla 18a) writes, "The best medicine in the world is silence." "Those who listen to insults and do not answer back are beloved by Hashem. They will grow stronger as the rising sun from morning to midday." The Vilna Gaon zt"l writes in the name of the Medrash, "Each and every minute that a person seals his lips he merits to see the light that was hidden away (from the time of the creation of the world). This value of this reward is beyond the comprehension of any creature."

Kinderlach . . .

Let's go around the Shabbos table giving examples of when we should be silent. "When we are thinking of saying Loshon Hora." Very good Dovid. "When someone who will not listen to criticism says something insulting to us." Excellent Rivkah. "When we are bored and just want to say something silly." You're right, Chaim, it's better to say nothing. "When we are in the middle of an argument." So true, Esti. The other person cannot continue arguing with himself. Kinderlach, quiet is a beautiful sound.

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Kinder Torah C/o Simcha Groffman Rechov Shadikar 11/2 Neve Yaakov Mizrach Jerusalem, Israel All contributions are deductible from Maaser Kesafim simchag@netvision.net.il

From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] Subject: Simcha's Torah Stories - Toldos SIMCHA'S TORAH STORIES Parshat Toldos 5760 TRICKY WEDDING

Daddy please tells us the story about the wedding again. Kids, you must have heard that story ten times. We know daddy, but it is so good. Okay kids, here we go again.

One evening, we find two sisters at home sitting together.

Leah, your eyes are wet. I know. I am so sorry Rachel. Leah, dear. What's wrong? Why are you crying? Oh Rachel, it's so sad.

Leah sobs softly and the two sisters embrace. Leah begins to speak.

We are both daughters of Lavan. Our Aunt Rivkah has two sons, Yaakov and Eisav. Eisav is the older son, and I am the older daughter. I know that I will marry him and you will marry Yaakov. I know that Eisav is an evil man and I do not want to marry him. That is why I am crying. Everything will be okay, Leah. Just have faith in G-d and He will work it all out.

The story continues after Yaakov meets Rachel and the two decide they want to marry. Yaakov then asks Lavan, Rachel's father for her hand in marriage.

Lavan, I love your younger daughter Rachel and I would like to marry her. I will work for you for seven years in order to receive her hand in marriage. Yaakov, I would much rather give her to you than to a stranger. Please come and work for me.

The years fly by due to Yaakov's great love for Rachel. As the wedding day approaches, Rachel senses trouble.

Yaakov, you know my father Lavan is a very tricky man. What do you mean, Rachel? There is no telling what he might do. He might even try to trick you out of my hand in marriage. What can we do? Let us make up secret signals between us. If Lavan tries to send another bride in my place, just ask her for the signals. If she does not know the signals, then we will expose the whole fraud. Rachel, are you sure that we need to go to such extremes? Yaakov, trust me.

The wedding day arrives, and Lavan gathers all of the townspeople together to celebrate the marriage of his daughter. Sure enough, he comes to Leah and informs her that she will be the bride, and not Rachel. Rachel is put on the spot. Should she let Leah go without giving her the secret signals? Then Lavan's devious plot will be exposed. But what about poor Leah? She will be so embarrassed. An unwanted bride. What a humiliation. Of course, she should give her the signals. But what about Rachel? She is finished. She will never marry her beloved Yaakov. Who knows whom she will marry? Perhaps his cruel brother Eisav. What should she do?

Leah, I am so happy for you. You are such a beautiful bride. I want to tell you something very important. When you see Yaakov make sure you give this secret signal to him.

With that, Rachel gives away her whole future to Leah. She sacrifices everything in order to avoid embarrassing her sister.

That's the story kids. You all know, of course, that the story had a happy ending. Sure, Daddy. One week later Yaakov married Rachel. That's right kids. For her tremendous act of self-sacrifice, G-d gave Rachel a great reward and she was able to marry her beloved Yaakov after all. What lesson do we learn from this, kids? We learn to never, ever, ever embarrass someone. Very good, kids. Lavan tricked Yaakov, but Rachel had a better trick. Rachel mastered the trick of self-sacrifice in order to save the other person. That is true greatness.

Simcha's Quiz Question of the Week What is the closest relation that your father's sister's sister-in-law could be to you?

Answer to last week's quiz question: A camel has 3000 bananas. He wants to go over a one thousand-mile stretch of the desert. He has to eat one banana for each mile he walks.

However, he can only carry 1000 bananas at a time. Waiting for him on the other side is his family. He wants to find a way to bring as many bananas to them as possible. Hint: He doesn't have to go all the way at the at once and he can leave bananas in the desert because he and his camel family are the only camels that eat bananas. Can he bring any extra bananas? - If so, how many? The Answer! There are a variety of answers. Technically the most is 533.333... but this is if you went an infinitesimally small distance and went back for more bananas and then back and forth until you reach the other side. I prefer the answer of going 250 miles, leaving a thousand bananas, going back and getting more. Then go to the 250 mark, go back

and forth until you have all the bananas at the 250. Then take all the bananas to the 500 mile mark then 750 then to the end. This way, you end up with 500 bananas at the end.

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From: Mordecai Kornfeld[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il] INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, http://www.dafyomi.co.il

CHAGIGAH 12 - has been generously dedicated by Lee and Marsha Weinblatt of Teaneck, N.J. HELP THE DAFYOMI ADVANCEMENT FORUM CONTINUE ITS WORK Free gift to *all* donors -- D.A.F.'s unique new bookmark; a concise chart of all the basic Rishonim on each Masechet of Shas Send donations to 140-32 69 Avenue, Flushing NY 11367, USA Chagigah 10 "MELACHAH SHE'EINAH TZERICHAH L'GUFAN" OPINIONS: A fundamental argument concerning the liability for performing Melachah on Shabbos concerns a "Melachah she'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah," a Melachah "that is not needed for itself." Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon argue whether one is Chayav for performing such a Melachah that is "not needed for itself." Rabbi Yehudah says that one is Chayav, and Rabbi Shimon says that one is Patur. What exactly defines a Melachah "that is not needed for itself?"

(a) TOSFOS (10b, DH Meleches; see also TOSFOS in Shabbos 94a, DH Rabbi Shimon Pote) understands Rashi to be saying that a Melachah she'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah is any Melachah that one did in order to *prevent* something else from happening, or in order to *rectify* something that was already done wrong. For example, a person who carries a dead body out of a house is interested in correcting an uncomfortable situation (the dead body being in his house), and would have preferred that the dead body never have been brought *into* the house in the first place.

However, Tosfos refutes this explanation. When a curtain has a wormhole and one tears some more above and below the hole in order to mend it neatly, he is Chayav (this is the classic example of Meleches Kore'a Al Menas Litfor, Shabbos 75a). Similarly, if one destroys a building in order to build another structure in its place, one is Chayav for "Soser Al Menas Livnos." Rashi, asks Tosfos, should maintain that one is Patur in these cases. The person tore the curtain only in order to fix the damage done by the wormhole, and destroyed the building only in order to make room for another. He would have preferred that the wormhole or building not be there in the first place!

(b) TOSFOS himself (10b, DH Meleches, and Shabbos 94a, DH Rabbi Shimon) defines a Melachah she'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah as any Melachah not performed for the same reason that that Melachah was performed *in the Mishkan*.

(c) The RAMBAN (94b) and BA'AL HA'ME'OR (106a) write that a Melachah must be performed with the objective for which that activity is *normally performed*. If one is doing the Melachah for a purpose other than its normal objective, it is a Melachah she'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah.

For example, digging a pit in order to use the dirt is a Melachah she'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah because, normally, the objective of digging is in order to have a pit, and not to use the dirt. The pile of dirt produced is a secondary outcome of the digging. Similarly, a Melachah performed in order to prevent damage from happening, such as capturing a snake, is considered a Melachah that is not needed for itself, because the normal objective of capturing is to use the animal. The same is true for carrying an object to Reshus ha'Rabim in order to keep oneself from becoming soiled (or Tamei) from the object.

This might be RASHI's opinion as well, unlike TOSFOS' understanding of Rashi (see (a)). This is why ripping the garment to repair a wormhole is considered a true Melachah. The person ripping the garment is interested in having the garment ripped apart (the primary effect of the Melachah) and is not trying to accomplish a secondary outcome of the ripping. The same applies to demolishing a building in order to build in its place. The demolisher is interested in the removal of the building, and that is the primary outcome of the Melachah.

Chagigah 12 SPIRITUAL POTENTIAL, PHYSICAL ACTIONS, AND CHANUKAH AGADAH: The Gemara records an argument between Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel with regard to what was created first, the heavens (Shamayim) or the earth (Aretz). Beis Shamai says that the Shamayim was created first. Beis Hillel says that the Aretz was created first.

This Machlokes reflects a fundamental difference in ideology between the two schools. Beis Shamai always looks at the *potential* inherent in the subject ("Ko'ach"), while Beis Hillel looks at what part of that potential is realized through actions in the physical world ("Po'el").

Beis Shamai considers the primary component of creation to be the potential that it contains, because the ability to do any act in this world comes from that potential, its Ruchniyus, or spiritual, energy. The source of all Ruchniyus is the Shamayim (from which the Neshamah originates), and therefore the Shamayim is the main part of creation and had to be created first.

Beis Hillel, though, maintains that the "Po'el," the actual execution of actions in the physical world, is the primary component of creation. This is because the world was created for the sake of enabling people to *accomplish* and perfect themselves in the physical world of Olam ha'Zeh. Therefore, Beis Hillel maintains that the Aretz was created first.

This difference in ideology is found in other disputes between Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel. In Shabbos (21b), Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel argue about how the Chanukah lights are to be kindled. Beis Shamai says that they are kindled in descending order, with eight lit on the first night, and one lit on the eighth night. Beis Hillel says that they are lit in ascending order, with

one lit on the first night, and eight lit on the eighth night.

This dispute is based on this ideological difference. Beis Shamai maintains that the Ko'ach, or potential, is most important. Hence, on the first night of Chanukah, the oil that burned in the Menorah in the Beis ha'Mikdash not only contained the miracle for that night, but it also contained the *potential* to remain lit for the remaining seven nights. Since the oil contained the potential for eight days of miracles, we light that number of candles on the first night. Beis Hillel, on the other hand, maintains that the Po'el, the realization of the potential, is most important. Hence, on the first night of Chanukah, we only saw one actual miracle occur. By the eighth night, though, we had seen eight miracles occur.

Similarly, in Kesuvos (17a), Beis Shamai says that we praise the Kalah with whatever praiseworthy attributes that she has ("Kalah Kemos she'Hi"). This is because we praise her for her potential ability to attract a Chasan, which is measured based on the attributes inherent in her that are visible to the average person. Beis Hillel, though, says that we praise her with generous words of praise ("Kalah Na'ah v'Chasudah"), even though the average person does not see these attributes in her. This is because we look at what actually occurred: her Chasan was attracted to her, and *he* must have seen in her great cause for praise.

Also, we find that Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel argue concerning the text of the blessing over the flame on Motza'ei Shabbos. Beis Shamai says that the text is "she'Bara *Ma'or* ha'Esh," and Beis Hillel says that the text is "Borei *Me'orei* ha'Esh." Beis Shamai says that the blessing should be made on the original concept of fire that contained the potential for all future fires, and thus the blessing should be in the singular, "Me'or," since it is a single concept. Beis Hillel says that the blessing should be made on the physical fire that appears before us, which comes in many colors and may be referred to in the plural (see Berachos 52b).

(M. Kornfeld -- This approach is related to the approach presented in Insights to Berachos 52:2, in the name of the ROGATCHOVER GA'ON, in which the arguments between Beis Hillel and Beis Shamai reflect an ideological debate whether to place more emphasis on the Chomer [substance] or the Tzurah [essence] of an object. The Ga'on elaborates on this in TESHUVOS TZAFNAS PANE'ACH #50 and many other places -- see the Hespel of the compiler of the Teshuvos after Teshuvah #255, Rav Zevin's L'OR HA'HALACHAH, chapter on "Snow" footnote #11, Rav Kasher's introduction to TAFNAS PANE'ACH on the Torah, Bereishis, etc.)

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