

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON VAYISHLACH - 5758

B'S'D' experience exile [for Avraham after the initial sojourn to Egypt as related in Lech Lecha].

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vayishlach.97 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Vayishlach (Shiur date: 12/3/74)

The Ramban says that the events related throughout Sefer Breishis, in particular those in Parshas Vayishlach, foreshadow the events that will happen to Bnai Yisrael throughout the generations. A lot of Jewish history is foretold in Parshas Vayishlach. The Midrash Rabba says that Rabbi Judah Hanasi would study Parshas Vayishlach before traveling to see Antoninus. The verse that epitomizes the symbolism of the Parsha is "And a man wrestled with him".

The Rav focused on the verse "And he erected an altar and he called Kel Elokay Yisrael" (33:20). Rashi interprets the verse that Kel Elokay Yisrael is the name that Yaakov called his Gd: Kel, the Gd of Israel (Yaakov). Both these names, Kel and Elokay Yisrael, are Kodesh and the scribe writing a Sefer Torah must treat these names as Kodesh.

The Gemara (Megilla 18a) says that Hashem called Yaakov El, The verse should be read as follows: Hashem, who is Elokay Yisrael, called him (Yaakov) El. According to this opinion, the word El is to be treated as Chol.

These two opinions have a practical difference in that according to Rashi in Vayishlach, if the scribe neglected to follow the process for writing the name of Hashem it renders the Torah as Passul, unusable. The Rav said in the name of Reb Chaim that not only is it a Psul to write a name in the Torah that should be Kodesh in the same way that a non-Kodesh name would be written, it is also a Psul to write a name that should not be treated as the name of Hashem with the same process that must be followed for a Shem Kodesh. According to Halacha, we follow the opinion brought in Rashi in Vayishlach, and treat the name as Kodesh.

The Rav explained the opinion brought in the Gemara, that Hashem called Yaakov by the name El. We saw the term El used in the previous Parsha, where Lavan said that he had the power to harm Yaakov, L'el Yadi. El means power, strength. Why did Hashem choose this point in time to refer to Yaakov as El?

The patriarchs are referred to as Aysanim, mighty. Chazal interpret the month of Aysanim as the month in which the Aysanim or bulwarks of the world, the patriarchs, were born. In the piyut for the Yamim Noraim we say Ahavas Aysan, Adonaynu, that Hashem our Master should recall the love expressed by the one referred to as Aysan, Avraham. In Psalms, Avraham is referred to as Aysan Haezrachti. The Rambam (Hilchos Avoda Zara 1:3) also refers to Avraham as Aysan. If the Avos were referred to as Aysan, why was Yaakov now referred to as El? Aysan connotes a natural, primordial strength to something that has been in place and immovable since the dawn of creation. In the Parsha of Eglu Arufa we find Nachal Aysan which has two interpretations: a strong moving brook or a field that is very difficult to cultivate. Aysan can lose its strength if it is moved. El, on the other hand, connotes strength that remains intact even when moved. Yaakov is the chosen one among the patriarchs. He accomplished something that Avraham and Yitzchak did not have to: he went into exile twice, once in the house of Lavan and the second time when he went down to Egypt. Yaakov's partner in his exiles was Joseph. In fact, Joseph received a double portion in Eretz Yisrael because he suffered longer in exile than any of the sons of Yaakov. Hashgachas Hashem led Yaakov into exile to show that the Jew can be in exile and still remain mighty, El. Avraham and Yitzchak showed the attribute of Aysan, in that they remained firmly rooted to Eretz Yisrael and did not

Jewish history is the story of exile. Yaakov was sent to blaze the trail for the Jew in exile. The Jew must be able to withstand the exile that manifests itself in poverty and oppression, Galus Mayoni. This was the exile that Yaakov experienced in the house of Lavan. The Jew must also be able to withstand an exile that manifests in opportunity and plenty, Galus Mayosher, where he must resist the temptations to assimilate. It would appear that Bnai Yisrael remained more resolute in their faith when they were enduring Galus Mayoni than when they were afforded opportunities to assimilate in society through Galus Mayosher. The Rav noted that when he was a child, the financial constraints on the Jew were very limiting, yet there was a fierce, unshakeable commitment to Torah and Mitzvos. Joseph, who spent the longest time in exile, showed that it is possible to be the Viceroy of Egypt and remain committed to Torah and Mitzvos, he survived the Galus Mayosher

Ultimately, the prophet says that Bais Yaakov will be fire, Joseph will transform into an inferno and they will immolate the house of Esau. It is the combination of Galus Mayoni (Yaakov), and Galus Mayosher (Joseph) that will ultimately destroy Esau. The Torah tells us that Yaakov and Joseph looked alike. Both also played major roles in Jewish History in that they set the example of survival under difficult circumstances, Oni and Osher. Chazal tell us that Yaakov feared the legions of Esau. Hashem reassured him that he had nothing to fear, as together with Joseph, the two of them will ensure the ultimate destruction of Esau. Yaakov and Joseph are linked by their common experience: the pain of exile.

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"jr@sco.COM""mj-ravtorah@shamash.org" vaysihlach.96 [From last year]

Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Vayishlach

There are 2 different Haftoros associated with Vayishlach. The first is Chazon Ovadiah and the second is Vami Teluim. The content of Chazon Ovadiah matches closely the content of the Parsha as both discuss the battle between Yaakov and Esav, past, present and future. In fact, Vayishlach is thought of as the Parsha of Esav, therefore reading Chazon Ovadiah is readily understood. The choice of Vami Teluim requires further explanation. The Navi refers to the battle between Yaakov and Esav in-utero and then discusses the battle between Yaakov and the angel, and how the angel pleaded with Yaakov to let him go to sing Shira and Yaakov's refusal unless he blessed him. The Psukim in the Navi support the statement of Chazal that the angel did not want to bless Yaakov with changing his name at that point, however Yaakov insisted. The angel, despite his initial refusal to do so, revealed to him that Hashem would be the one to change his name later in Beis El. The Rav asked why Vami Teluim, with a more limited connection to Vayishlach, might be selected over Chazon Ovadiah, which has a more easily discernible connection to the battle between Yaakov and Esav. The Rav explained that the verses in Vayishlach that refer to the battle between Yaakov and the mysterious stranger, the Ish (Vayayavek Ish Imo), characterizes the essence of the continuing battle between the Jewish People and the nations of the world. (Midrash Rabbah relates that before Rabi Yehuda Hanasi would travel to Rome to visit Antoninus he would study Parshas Vayishlach beforehand. Once it happened that he did not study Parshas Vayishlach prior to his trip and that mission was unsuccessful.)

Even though the story of Yaakov and Esav begins in Parshas Toldos, the central description of their embattled relationship is related in Vayishlach, particularly in the story of the encounter between Yaakov and the Ish, the battle that the Navi in Vami Teluim describes. But the question remains: what is there in these few Psukim that causes many to give it precedence as Haftoras Vayishlach over the entire section of Ovadiah that deals at length with the battle between Yaakov and Esav? Yaakov knew that his true enemy was Esav. He knew that Esav had 2 complaints: the first the birthright that Yaakov took from him and the blessings that were intended for him that

Yaakov received from their father. Yaakov tried to convince Esav that the blessings were not fulfilled, as Rashi comments that Yaakov explained to Esav that he had acquired cattle and not the blessings of the heaven and earth that their father gave him. Also, the Kehuna, based on the birthright, implies personal sacrifice that is inconsistent with the blessing of Gevir Lachecha, to master over all his brothers. However in this case, Yaakov knew this enemy, Esav, well, and recognized that perhaps he could be bought off. He therefore sent the present of cattle to bribe him. He knew that the way to deal with Esav was to insist that he accept his gift, which he finally did.

However the night before he was to encounter his known enemy, Esav, he was attacked by a mysterious stranger, described simply as Ish. Yaakov attempted to learn the name of his opponent, but was not successful. He remained nameless. This encounter was symbolic of all the subsequent battles throughout the generations when the Jewish People were confronted by mysterious, nameless enemies who make outrageous demands on us that we can not comprehend. At times the troubles of the world are blamed on the Jew. We have been accused of being at the center of socialism, communism, capitalism etc. and we are forced into life and death struggles, yet we often do not know why they attack us. Yaakov and the Ish struggled and kicked up dust in their battle, yet in the end Yaakov did not know what his opponent wanted from him and why he attacked him. Yaakov must have compared his opponents to each other, thinking to himself that he understands what Esav wants and how to work around him, but what does this nameless foe want from him? The Torah says that when the Ish realized that he could not defeat Yaakov, he dislocated his thigh. The Midrash says that this is a reference to the generation of Shemad and assimilation. Even though we don't understand why the battle was forced on us, the end result can be, G-d forbid, Shemad.

The struggle with the nameless Ish extends all night till the dawn as the Torah says, Ad Alos Hashachar. This is symbolic that our battle with the nations of the world and our nameless foes will continue till the coming of Moshiach. This is the most important part of Parshas Vayishlach. Vami Teluim was chosen over Chazon Ovadiah because it does not refer specifically to the battle with Esav, the known enemy, but to the Ish, the nameless foe of the Jewish People throughout the generations.

* TORAH WEEKLY * Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Yayishlach
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s-MORE-gasbord! Esav: "I have plenty..." Yaakov: "...I have everything." (33:9-11) A buffet is not a Jewish invention. Have you noticed whenever you eat at a buffet, you always end up eating about twice as much as if you'd been served a meal? The Torah says "And you will eat and you will be satisfied, and you will bless Hashem your G-d." Eat. Be satisfied, and then thank the One who provides food for the whole world. What does a buffet say? "Don't look at what you've eaten. Look at what's left! How can you possibly walk away from this gorgeous spread, these tables groaning under their load of delights? Have you no conscience? Get over here and fill up another plate immediately! (Have you tried the smoked salmon yet?)" Esav says "I have plenty." Yaakov says "I have everything." What's the difference between someone who says they have plenty and someone who says they have everything? Someone who says they have plenty is telling you that they could have a lot more! Their focus is not what's on their plate. It's on what's left on the tables of life's buffet. Someone who says that he has everything is saying that he's happy with what he has, even though he may have but little. His focus is on the portion that the Creator has provided for him. For only He knows the exact size of the helping needed to preserve our individual spiritual health and fitness.

Burning Soul "Please save me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esav." (32:12) "Then Yaakov looked up and saw Esav coming in the distance; immediately he looked heavenward, cried, and begged for mercy ... until G-d promised to save him from every tribulation by the merit of Yaakov." (Bereishis Rabba 75:13) Can we ever erase from our minds the terrible frightened faces of the six million? Standing in lines on railway platforms. Dressed in drab European grays and browns. We will never

know how close we came to seeing those ranks of holy martyrs swelled by the gold kaftans of Yerushalmi Jews and the khaki shorts and blue hats of kibbutzniks. In 1942, Rommel and a huge tank-force stood at the gates of Palestine. Nothing was between him and the yishuv (Jewish settlement). The British forces prepared to evacuate Palestine. They started to burn documents. At this very moment, Rabbi Kahanaman purchased a lot near Tel Aviv and laid the cornerstone for a new Yeshiva. People thought he was crazy. He responded that G-d hadn't brought him to Israel to be murdered by the Nazis. (Rabbi Kahanaman went on to build the Ponevezh Yeshiva, one of the largest in Israel today.) In the desert in 1942, the only thing holding the Germans back was a lack of drinking water. They discovered that the British had laid a water pipe through the desert. The British had just finished this pipeline and they were checking it for leaks. Instead of wasting valuable drinking water, they were pumping sea-water through they pipeline to check its integrity. The Germans guzzled the sea-water from the pipes and surrendered in terrible agony.

A miracle, or a coincidence? We live in an era where it's very difficult to see Hashem's hand in the world. When you see a wall, you know that something is blocking your view. When there is no wall you can think that you see everything. The Torah itself tells us that Hashem will "hide His face from us." That we won't see Him. The expression the Torah uses is "hasteir astir" -- "I will surely hide My face." The verb is doubled. It is as though Hashem is telling us that He will hide even the fact that He is hiding. The greatest concealment is that the concealment itself is concealed. Yaakov Avinu saw our generation some three and a half thousand years ago. He saw "Esav coming in the distance." He saw Esav executing "the Final Solution." And he saw him fail. He also saw the other face of Esav, when he pretends to be our brother. Yaakov Avinu saw that Esav would try to smother us with a brotherly embrace. A brotherly embrace that wants to tell the Jewish People that three thousand years of miraculous survival is merely coincidental; that there is no One behind the wall, because there really is no wall at all and we can see everything. We have the technology! Yaakov Avinu saw this silent holocaust of Jewish souls "coming in the distance." He looked heavenward. He cried and begged Hashem for mercy for his children; that whether Esav would try to burn our bodies or our souls he would ultimately fail.

The Housewife And The Cat "And Yaakov was very frightened and distressed." (32:7) Rashi comments that Yaakov was frightened lest he or members of his family be killed, and he was distressed, that he might be forced to kill others. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein asks: Why was Yaakov distressed that he might be put in a position of having to kill Esav or one of his four hundred wicked companions? Wasn't this an opportunity to rid the world of evil -- a reason to rejoice, and not to be distressed? Reb Moshe answers with the words of Beruria to her husband Rabbi Meir (Berachos 10a): "Better to pray that evildoers repent than to pray that the wicked die." Yaakov was distressed that he might have to kill to remove evil from the world. There is an inherent danger in using undesirable methods to achieve desirable goals -- that one can become tainted by the means. Rabbi Chaim Brisker pointed out that there are two kinds of zealots in the world, comparable to a housewife and a cat. Both the housewife and the cat want to rid the house of mice. The only difference is that the housewife hopes that there will never be another mouse to eliminate, whereas the cat hopes there will be many more. Before we are zealous to attack the evils of the world, let us make sure that we are acting as housewives and not cats.

Sources: o Burning Soul - Devarim 31:18, Baal Shem Tov, Imrei Shefer, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman o The Housewife And The Cat - Rabbi Zev Leff in Shiurei Binah o The Rise And Fall Of The Roman Empire - Rabbi Mendel Hirsch Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach International

"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Vayishlach

'Yosef' is the Antidote for 'Eisav' The Ramba"n writes in his introduction to Parshas VaYishlach that this parsha is the prime example of a theme that recurs throughout the book of Bereshis: Everything that happened to the

Patriarchs foreshadows that which will happen to their children (ma'aseh Avos siman l'banim). In particular, this portion gives us guidance how to deal with Eisav, the classic soneh Yisrael (hater of Israel). Ramba"n cites a Medrash that before Rabbi Yannai would meet with the Roman authorities, he would read Parshas VaYishlach. This parsha instructs us how to deal with Eisav on two levels-- on a spiritual level and on a physical level. How do we deal with Eisav on a spiritual level? In last week's parsha, after Yosef was born, Yaakov tells his wife Rachel that this was the opportune moment to return to Eretz Yisrael and face Eisav. Rash"i comments on the implication that until Yosef was born, Yaakov could not face Eisav, but with Yosef's birth, he was able to face Eisav. He relates this insight to a verse in our Haftorah: "And the House of Yaakov will be a (spark of) fire and the House of Yosef will be a flame and the House of Eisav will be as straw (that will be consumed by this flame)..." [Ovadia 1:18]. Rash"i comments that Yaakov is only a spark, he is unable to deal with Eisav by himself. But when Yosef, the flame, is born then Yaakov can deal with him. There is a famous Chazal: The descendants of Eisav will only be given over to the descendants of Rachel.

What is it about Yosef that can overcome the peril of Eisav? The Shem MiShmuel answers by pointing out that names in Tanach are meaningful. They are not arbitrary labels. Names define the essence of the person. Eisav, he says, comes from the word 'asui' (fully done). When Eisav was born, he didn't look like an infant; he was like a complete individual. The spiritual threat that Eisav provides is a threat called 'asui' -- I'm finished. One who feels that he is perfect and has no room to improve -- that is what an Eisav is about. "I am fine. My Midos are fine. My character is fine. There is no room for improvement. I am OK. I am more than OK -- I'm perfect." This is the spiritual danger that Eisav provides, the complacency that one is totally fine, with no need to improve. The opposite end of that spectrum is Yosef. He represents the constant need to add on to (mosif) and grow from where one is today. Any person who thinks he can remain still and stagnant will eventually descend. The antidote to the philosophy of being an 'asui' (complete) is Yosef -- one must always add on. There is no such thing in this world as standing still. One either ascends, or he automatically descends. I once heard the following example: Life is like trying to go 'up' a 'down' escalator. If one tries to stay the same, he will go down. The only way to go up is to exert oneself. Recognizing the need to put out a maximum effort to get anyplace, is the only way to ascend. This is the spiritual antidote to the philosophy of Eisav. The descendants of Eisav will only be given over to the descendants of Rachel.

The Galus Mentality: A Tradition That Goes Back to Yaakov Throughout the generations, Eisav has always provided a physical threat to the existence of Klal Yisroel (The Jews). This is the parsha that tells us how to deal with haters of Israel. On the verse "Let my Master go before his servant, and I will go at my own pace" [Bereshis 33:14], the Medrash tells us of a dialogue between the two brothers. They were not just talking about the speed at which Yaakov should travel. They were talking philosophy and strategy. Eisav asks, "Aren't you afraid of the marauders and bandits and pirates -- why do you suggest that you can travel at a leisurely pace? Is this the correct approach -- to go quietly and to turn the other cheek?" Yaakov answers, "I will go at my own pace. I will not start up with the haters of Israel. I will not flaunt myself in front of the non-Jew and give him a motive to be jealous of me." Rav Henoch Leibowitz says this Medrash is discussing an old dispute of how to deal with the haters of Israel: Do we fight him, take him 'head on', and make public demonstrations? Or do we go quietly, try diplomacy, even run away sometimes. This is the dispute the Medrash portrays between Eisav and Yaakov. What Yaakov is telling us is that the way to deal with the Soneh Yisrael is not always with strong-arm tactics. Rav Schwab [zt"l] wrote the following in an article: Others who do not know how to learn Chumash and some who might have forgotten, ridicule us for our so-called 'galus mentality'. But when dealing with the sworn enemies of Jewry there is one approach: Do not provoke them; do not anger them; do not embarrass them. Eisav never forgets and only harm can come from antagonizing him. If anti-Semites in Austria want to elect one of their ilk, a

former Nazi as their president, let them do so! Do not meddle. It is not our concern. If a foreign leader chooses to embrace Arafat or Waldheim, let him do so! He has demonstrated his inner feelings. We cannot afford to forget that whatever statements we make and whatever actions we take can antagonize them and may harm our brethren, the children of Israel. Quiet diplomacy entails its own Mesiras Nefesh [self sacrifice] -- avoiding the reassurance of headlines. But the purpose of discreet activity is not to show that we also have a voice. Slogans which are currently popular may sound beautiful to the ear and saying them or hearing them can make one's chest swell with pride. But in the final analysis, is this good or no good for Klal Yisrael [the Jews]? How many times do we ask ourselves, "Why don't the Gedolim [Great Rabbis] do something? Why don't they tell us to demonstrate? Why don't we take them on? The answer is because that is not our way. We have a Chumash. We have a Parshas VaYishlach. We have a Yaakov that tells us how to deal with Eisav. Unfortunately others do not have a Mesorah. But this is our way.

The Remaining Camp Shall Escape There is another teaching in Parshas VaYishlach. The Ramba"n writes on the verse "And the remaining camp will be able to escape" [Bereshis 32:9] that these are prophetic words which enabled Klal Yisrael to survive despite the greatest persecutions. Yaakov testified that Eisav would never be successful in wiping out the entire Jewish people. The acts of the Patriarchs foreshadow the fate of their offspring. When Yaakov uttered these words, it became part of G-d's plan -- there will always be a remaining camp that will escape destruction. The Ramba"n cites a Medrash: 'If Eisav comes to the camp and smites them' -- this refers to our brethren in the south -- '... and the remaining camp will be spared' -- this refers to our brethren in the exile. One of the Roshei Yeshivos in Radin went to the Chofetz Chaim in 1933 after the Nazis, yimach shemam, had taken power. He asked the Chofetz Chaim, "What will be with Klal Yisrael [the Jews]?" (This was at a time when the Nazis were already openly saying what they had in mind for the Jews). (Parenthetically, I once heard from the Rosh Yeshiva, zt"l, that at this stage in the Chofetz Chaim's life, many of his utterances were said with Ruach HaKodesh - Divine Inspiration.) The Chofetz Chaim told him, "They may wipe out Jews in Europe but there will always be 'the camp that remains, for escape'. They will never succeed in wiping us all out." This person, upon hearing that, asked the Chofetz Chaim where the 'remaining camp' (peleita) would be. In 1933, the Chofetz Chaim quoted the verse from this week's Haftorah, "And on the Mountain of Zion there will be escape (peleita) and it will be holy and the House of Yaakov will inherit their inheritance" [Ovadia 1:17]. This is what the Ramba"n is talking about. This parsha is the parsha that establishes for us hope and assurance. It is also the parsha that puts upon us responsibilities that we may not always like. We may not always want to take the passive mode and to be submissive. It is not easy to be told "You have a Galus Mentality." But this is what the Torah established. Just like this parsha is our hope, it is our guidance. This is how we have to conduct ourselves, as Rav Schwab wrote. We have to go, "Chumash in hand." Sometimes it is hard. Sometimes we suffer ridicule. But this is how we have to conduct ourselves. This is what the Grandfather Yisroel (Yaakov) taught us. It is with his tradition that we will go, and with no one else!

Sources and Personalities Ramba"n -- Rav Moshe ben Nachman (1194-1270); Gerona, Spain; Jerusalem. Rash"i -- Rav Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105); Worms, Troyes, France. Shem MiShmuel -- Rav Shmuel of Sochachov (1856-1920); son of Avnei Nezer [Rav Avrohom of Sochachov]; Chassidic discourses; Poland. Rav Henoch Leibowitz -- Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim, Forest Hills, NY. Rav Shimon Schwab -- (1908-1995) for many years a Rav in Baltimore at the Shearith Israel Congregation; later became the Rav of Khal Adath Yeshurun in Washington Heights, New York. Chofetz Chaim -- (1838-1933) Rav Yisrael Meir HaKohen of Radin; author of basic works in Jewish law, thought, and ethics. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Balt, MD dhoffman@clark.net RavFrاند, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Y. Frاند and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org http://www.torah.org/

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5758 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS VAYISHLACH By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt
A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

AND HIS ELEVEN CHILDREN (32:23) Yaakov was punished for concealing Dinah from his brother since she might have had a good influence on him (Rashi)

KIRUV RECHOKIM: IS EVERYTHING PERMITTED

Of paramount importance to Orthodox Jewry today is kiruv rechokim, bringing our fellow Jews back to religious observance. Thank G-d, the concerted efforts of many devoted individuals and organizations have borne fruit, and thousands of Jews the world over have gone back to their roots and become Torah observant. We must bear in mind, however, that although kiruv rechokim is supremely important, it does not supersede Halachah. "The ends justify the means" is a philosophy utterly rejected by the Torah, and compromising halachic standards for the sake of being mekarev is forbidden.

Recently, a certain kiruv network recruited actors and actresses and honored them at an organizational event. In view of the immoral and decadent lifestyle pursued and personified by these people, honoring them may be a desecration of Hashem's honor. When we give recognition to such people, we mock the sanctity and holiness which Hashem requires of us, His "kingdom of priests and holy nation"(1). Another sensitive issue that presents itself is just about anyone involved in kiruv is the problem of men and women shaking hands. Physical contact of this sort is a serious transgression(2) and should be studiously avoided(3). Although kiruv professionals prepare themselves to deal with this problem, those of us who are not adept at handling such potentially embarrassing situations may not put ourselves in a position where we are liable to violate the halachah. Since kiruv veterans agree that a most effective method of kiruv is the Shabbos invitation, let us review some of the potential trouble-spots so that we do not transgress the halachah while acting upon our good intentions: If the guest does not live within walking distance of our home, he should be invited for the entire Shabbos so that he does not drive home on our account. The guest should be told that according to Jewish law it is prohibited for him to drive home on Shabbos. Experienced kiruv workers maintain that when properly explained, the guest will often accede to the request. In the event that the guest will come for Shabbos only if he can drive home, there are authorities who permit inviting him anyway, provided that there is a reasonable chance that the invitation will lead to kiruv(4). The guest should be informed that sleeping quarters have been arranged for him and he may change his mind at anytime and decide to sleep over. Since not all authorities agree with this leniency(5) and not all cases are identical, the specific case should be presented to a rav for a final decision. When possible, a guest at our table should be asked to wash his hands before eating bread(6) and to recite the proper blessing before and after food is eaten(7). If the guest cannot read the Hebrew text, he may recite the blessing in any language that he understands(8). Alternatively, the host may recite the blessings aloud while the guest listens and recites amen(9). If none of these suggestions are practical, it is permitted to serve him food, even though he will not wash his hands or a blessing - either before or after the meal - will not be recited(10). A non-observant Jew may be counted towards the minimum number of people required for zimun. Preferably, however, he should not be the one to lead the zimun(11). While teaching a non-observant Jew how to recite a blessing, it is permitted for the host to recite Hashem's name(12). A female guest, whether single or married, must be dressed at least according to the minimum standards of tzenuis(13). A woman who is scantily clad, should not be invited into our homes under any circumstances. If the female guest is not dressed with the minimum requirements of tzenuis, kiddush, blessings, Divrei Torah or zemiros may not be recited while facing her. If one cannot avoid facing her, one may close his eyes or face downward throughout the recitation of these devorim sh'bekedushah(14). A married woman's hair should be covered while sitting at our table. If it is not, there are poskim who are lenient and allow devorim sh'bekedushah to be recited in her presence(15). One may rely on these poskim when no other alternative is practical(16). A female guest should be asked not to sing zemiros along with the family. If this will result in alienating a potential ba'al teshuvah, there are some poskim who allow her to sing along with the rest of the family(17). The wine or grape juice should not be touched or poured by the guest (18). If

the wine or grape juice is mevushal (cooked), there are several authorities(19) who permit non-observant Jews to touch it while others(20) do not(21). Before learning Torah with a potential ba'al teshuvah, it is proper - when possible - to have him recite Birchos ha-Torah(22). In a previous column we quoted the opinion of several poskim who prohibit proposing a shiduch between non-observant Jews who will not keep the laws of family purity. It is possible, however, that if the shiduch is made for the purposes of potential kiruv or in order to avoid the tragic alternative of intermarriage, then the shiduch may be proposed. A rav should be consulted.

FOOTNOTES: 1 Harav E. Svei (oral address, partly quoted in Yated Ne'eman, Dec. 6 1997). 2 Rabbeinu Yonah (Sha'arei Teshuvah 3:80; 3:138); Igros Moshe O.C. 1:113; E.H. 1:56; Az Nidberu 2:73. 3 Harav Y.Y. Kanievsky quotes the Chazon Ish as maintaining that shaking hands falls into the category of yehareg ve'al ya'avor (see Teharas Am Yisrael, pg. 44). 4 Teshuvos v'Hanhagos 1:358. Several arguments lend support to this position: 1) The guest is desecrating the Shabbos regardless of my invitation; 2) Actually, we are minimizing his chillul Shabbos for the time period he will spend at our home; 3) He will be eating kosher food; 4) Several poskim hold that "aiding a sinner" does not apply to one who deliberately sins (see Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:72 and E.H. 4:87-1 quoting the Dagul Mervavah); 5) The purpose of the invitation is for kiruv and not to aid a sinner in committing a sin. 5 See Igros Moshe O.C. 1:98-99; 4:71; who prohibits organizing a minyan for children on Shabbos when they will surely come by car. [There are several differences, however, between the situations described in these responsa and the situation with which we are dealing.] See also a stringent ruling by Harav S. Vosner (quoted in Avosos Ahavah, pg. 119). 6 Rama O.C. 163:2. 7 O.C. 169:2. 8 O.C. 185:1. 9 Mishnah Berurah 213:9. B'dieved, even if the guest failed to recite amen, his blessing is valid. 10 Harav S. Z. Auerbach (oral ruling, quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 154). [See also Minchas Shelomo 35 where Harav Auerbach maintains that when denying a guest food will lead him to become antagonistic toward Torah and religious Jews, it is permitted to feed him. See also similar ruling quoted in the name of Chazon Ish in Pe'er ha-Dor 3:195]; Harav C.P. Scheinberg (quoted in Avosos Ahava, pg. 118.); See also Igros Moshe O.C. 5:13-9 who finds much room for leniency on this matter. 11 Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav C.P. Scheinberg (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 132) based on Mishnah Berurah 199:2 and Beir Halachah. See also Teshuvos Pnei Mavin 40. 12 Igros Moshe O.C. 2:56. 13 Minimum requirements: Neckline must be high enough to cover the bone at the base of the neck (collarbone); sleeves must extend past the elbow; dress must cover the knees. 14 Mishnah Berurah 75:1; Chazon Ish O.C. 16:7. 15 Aruch ha-Shulchan O.C. 75:7. 16 Igros Moshe O.C. 1:39,42,43; O.C. 3:23,24; E.H. 1:114. 17 See Sridei Eish 2:8 q quoting Harav S.R. Hirsch and other poskim who allowed singing under similar circumstances. 18 Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:46; 2:132; 4:58-3; O.C. 5:37-8. 19 Igros Moshe Y.D. 3:31; Minchas Yitzchak 7:61; Yabia Omer 8:15. 20 Minchas Shelomo 25; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (written responsim quoted in Yabia Omer, ibid.) Shevet ha-Levi 2:51; Teshuvos v'Hanhagos 2:401. 21 This issue is discussed at length in The Weekly Halachah Discussion, vol. 1, pg. 197. 22 Oral ruling heard in the name of Harav S.Y. Elyashiv. Weekly-Halacha, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Project Genesis, Inc. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Haya'el Danie'l Meir ben Hinda. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800

From menken@torah.org (Rabbi Yaakov Menken)

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Shabbat-B'Shabbato - Parshat Vayishlach No 678: 14 Kislev 5758 (13 December 1997) SHABBAT-ZOMET

OUR G-D OR THE G-D OF OUR FATHERS? by Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chief Rabbi of Efrat and Head of Ohr-Torah Institutions

The Shemona Esrei prayer opens with a description of the Almighty from two points of view: as our G-d, and as the G-d of our forefathers. These are two complementary aspects of the faith of man in the Creator. While some people seek revelation in a personal divinity, others are taught belief in G-d by their parents. As explained by the Ba'al Shem Tov, the personal aspect is the first one mentioned in prayer, since it is preferable and is of greater benefit for one to expend by himself the effort necessary to reveal G-d. This can lead to developing a more personal relationship with the Almighty. However, one who has not yet attained such a high level is still required to worship the G-d of his fathers. This process, progressing from belief in the G-d of the fathers to internalization of faith and personal revelation, is what happened to Yaacov. If he had been more typical, Yaacov would have undoubtedly had a problem in accepting his father's G-d. At first glance, he had all the reason to feel unloved and rejected by his father Yitzchak. The feeling of estrangement would have been strongest after the trick instigated by his mother, which resulted in expulsion from his home. In spite of this, Yaacov's first encounter after leaving home is in a dream where the Almighty identifies himself as "the G-d of your father Avraham and the G-d of Yitzchak" [Bereishit 28:13], not "your G-d" or "the G-d of Yaacov." Yaacov's reaction is, "And I didn't know!" [28:16]. He is saying that he has not yet achieved the level of personal revelation. He therefore asks, "Let G-d be a Deity FOR ME" [28:21]; he is striving for a personal experience with a G-d who is his own. However, as the Baal Shem Tov explains with respect to prayer, the first step is to recognize the G-d of one's ancestors. The same sequence is true of Yaacov: when he leaves Lavan with the knowledge that the way to success lies only in the Holy Land, he turns in prayer to "the G-d of my father Avraham and the G-d of my father Yitzchak" [Bereishit 32:10]. He does not mention a personal G-d. Only after he had succeeded in defeating the angel of Esav was Yaacov able to achieve the revelation to which he aspired: "I have seen G-d face to face" [Bereishit 32:31]. This was not a dream but clear vision. From this point on, he could describe G-d as "The G-d who responds TO ME on my day of distress" [Bereishit 35:3]. And the altar which he built was at the site where "G-d revealed Himself TO HIM" [35:7]. Now that Yaacov had internalized his faith, it is possible to write: "Yaacov arrived whole in the city of Shechem" [Bereishit 33:18]. His faith was complete. Now he was able to dedicate an altar to "The G-d of Yisrael" [35:20], not just the G-d of Avraham or Yitzchak but, as it should be, his own personal G-d.

The Chassidic Dimension Adaptation of Likutei Sichos by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion
The Names Ya'akov and Yisrael

In the Torah portion of Vayishlach, we read that the angel told Ya'akov: "Your name will no longer be Ya'akov, but Yisrael..." The Gemara states that he who calls Avraham by the name Avram transgresses the command: "Your name will no longer be Avram." The Gemara then asks: seeing that this is so, why is it that, when one calls Ya'akov by the name Ya'akov and not Yisrael, that he does not transgress the command "Your name will no longer be Ya'akov, but Yisrael"? The Gemara answers that the two situations are different, in that, once Avram was given the name Avraham, we no longer find him referred to as Avram. The name Ya'akov, however, is mentioned in the Torah even after he was given the name Yisrael. Why is it that the Torah still calls Yisrael Ya'akov after it explicitly states "Your name will no longer be Ya'akov, but Yisrael"? Chassidus explains that the names Ya'akov and Yisrael denote two levels of Divine service that must be found within every Jew. There are times when an individual must serve in the manner of Ya'akov, while at other times the person should serve in the manner of Yisrael. The name Yisrael denotes a loftier form of spiritual service, but there are times when the lesser service of Ya'akov must be employed. The difference between Ya'akov and Yisrael in terms of spiritual service is as follows: the name Ya'akov reminds us that the blessings received by Ya'akov from his father came about as a result of eikev, deception and subterfuge -- he was able to outfox his brother Esav. The name Yisrael, however, indicates that the blessings were received from Yitzchak in a straightforward manner. Since "the deeds of our forefathers are an indication to their descendants," it follows that, in terms of our own lives, there must be a manner of service similar to that of Ya'akov and a manner similar to that of Yisrael. We observe that, in order to receive Yitzchak's blessings -- which involve physical matters -- both Ya'akov and his mother Rivka were self-sacrificing in their deception, with Ya'akov donning the garments of the infamous Nimrod, etc. This was done so that Ya'akov could elevate the sparks of holiness found within material things. Herein lies a lesson on how to serve in the manner of Ya'akov: a Jew's approach to eating, drinking and other such physical matters is to be that of deception. The nature of a deceiver is not to reveal his true intent; he seems to be in complete agreement with his opponent, but when it comes right down to it, he acts in complete opposition to his opponent's desires. So too, a Jew must be involved in purely physical matters such as eating and drinking, business and the like. Yet his intent is spiritual -- he garbs himself in "Esav's clothing," in order to refine and elevate the sparks of holiness found within these physical matters. The spiritual service of Yisrael is quite different. The blessings for the "dew of heaven and the fat of the earth" were received by Yisrael in an open and completely aboveboard manner. At this level, a Jew need not hide his spiritual intent in involvement with physical things, for on this level, physicality does not hinder his spiritual service, nor does it conceal G-dliness. An example would be the Shabbos meal. In this instance, the meal itself is a mitzvah, not like the six days of the week, when a person eats for the sake of spirituality. The sanctity of the Shabbos meal is such that the holiness of the event is clearly manifest. Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. III, pp. 795-796

The Weekly Daf #200 Shabbos 9-15 By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions
<http://www.ohr.org.il/yomi/yomi200.htm>

When to Keep it a Secret When should you keep a gift a secret and when should you let the recipient know that you are his benefactor? "One who gives a gift to his friend should inform him that he has done so." This statement in the name of the Sage Rav is based on Hashem's order to Moshe Rabbeinu to let His people know concerning the gift of Shabbos "that they may know that I am Hashem Who sanctifies them." (Shemos 31:13) Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel extends this concept to the need for one who gives a child some food, to somehow communicate this kindness to his mother. The reason for all this, explains Rashi, is that if the recipient of the gift is aware of the identity of the giver this will promote a greater affection between the two parties. This approach, points out Tosefos, is therefore limited to situations in which the gift is an expression of the feelings of friendship which the giver has for the recipient. Where the gift is made, however, because of the needy situation of the beneficiary, the assumption is that the receiver will feel less embarrassment if he is not aware of the tzedakah giver's identity. This idea is expressed in Mishlei 21:14 as "A gift in secret subdues (Divine) anger," and was personified by the Sage Mar Ukva. He used to secretly place a sum of money daily through a slit in the door of a needy Jew in his neighborhood. The Talmud (Kesuvos 67b) describes how this sage virtually risked his life to avoid his identity being revealed to this recipient in order to avoid embarrassing him. Shabbos 10b Written and Compiled by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach International

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

Shabbos 6b 2) 600,000 PEOPLE IN RESHUS HA'RABIM [1] DEFINING A "RESHUS HA'RABIM" OPINIONS: The Gemara defines Reshus ha'Rabim as a major highway between cities, or a major public gathering spot in town. The Gemara later (99a) adds that it must be 16 Amos wide. Our Gemara then says that when the Jewish people were in the desert, the desert was

considered to be a Reshus ha'Rabim. What was it that made it into a Reshus ha'Rabim at that time?

(a) RASHI explains that when the Jews were in the desert, the desert became a "Makom Hiluch la'Rabim," a place in which many people walk. Rashi understands, then, that a defining property of a Reshus ha'Rabim is that many people *actually* walk there. There is no fixed number of how many people have to walk there. This is also the opinion of the RAMBAN, RAN, RASHBA, and the RAMBAM (see (c) below). (b) TOSFOS (DH Kan) explains that one condition of Reshus ha'Rabim is that *600,000* people actually be found there. That is what made the desert a Reshus ha'Rabim. The opinion that 600,000 people are necessary to make a Reshus ha'Rabim is also the opinion of RASHI in Eruvin (6b and 59a), the BEHAG and the ROSH (Eruvin 1:8). (Tosfos in Eruvin 6a point out that even though the Jews numbered much more than 600,000 people when we include the number of women, children, and mixed multitude, nevertheless the criteria for Reshus ha'Rabim is established based only on what is written explicitly in the verses.) (c) The RAMBAM (Hilchos Shabbos 14:1) rules that a desert *today* is a Reshus ha'Rabim. The Kesef Mishnah cites a responsa written by the Rambam's son, Reb Avraham, who explains his father's opinion. When the Gemara differentiates between a desert in the time that the Jewish people sojourned there and in our time, it means to say that in our time a desert is a Reshus ha'Rabim, while in the times of the Jewish people's sojourn there it was not a Reshus ha'Rabim (as opposed to the way the other Rishonim understood, that it *was* a Reshus ha'Rabim when the Jews were there, and is *not* a Reshus ha'Rabim in our time). A desert is a Reshus ha'Rabim now because all people are *free to walk* through it. When the Jews were in the desert, the area in which they were encamped was not free for all to walk through, because it was the Jews' private residential area. Therefore it was not a Reshus ha'Rabim. Thus, the Rambam's criteria for a place to be Reshus ha'Rabim is that it must be an area that is *free for everyone* to walk through, even if large numbers of people are not actually to be found there at any given time. HALACHAH: The BI'UR HALACHAH (OC 345) writes that a G-d-fearing person should follow the more stringent opinion, that does not require a Reshus ha'Rabim to have 600,000 people (a). One who follows this stringent opinion will not rely on a "Tzurah ha'Pesach," or what we commonly call an "Eruv," if it encloses a street that is 16 Amos wide, even though 600,000 people do not use that street. (A "Tzurah ha'Pesach" only makes a Karmelis, and not a Reshus ha'Rabim, into a Reshus ha'Yachid. According to those who do not require 600,000 people, any public area wider than 16 Amos is a Reshus ha'Rabim).

[2] 600,000 WHEN? OPINIONS: According to the opinion that an area needs 600,000 people going through it in order to be considered a Reshus ha'Rabim, how often do they have to be there?

(a) The REMA (OC 345:7) says that 600,000 people must go through that area *every day*. (This appears to be based on an inference from the RAN who -- when he argues on the opinion that requires 600,000 people -- says that it is not necessary for "600,000 people to be going through *every day*.") The MISHNAH BERURAH (345:24) argues, pointing out that no Rishon actually suggests such a ruling. (b) TOSFOS and RASHI in Eruvin say that 600,000 people must be "Metzuyim Sham," i.e. they must frequent the area. They do not necessarily have to be walking through together at one moment, but each person may frequent the area at a different time. (c) The RAMBAN (Eruvin 59a) adds that even according to those who require 600,000, the requirement of 600,000 people applies only to an open square ("Platya") where people gather together. However, a highway ("Seratya") is considered a Reshus ha'Rabim even without 600,000 people on it, since it *leads* to a place where 600,000 people gather, and it is used by the public. (d) The RAN cites the RE'AH who adds that according to those who require 600,000 people, not only is a highway considered a Reshus ha'Rabim because it opens into a place where 600,000 people gather, but *any area* which opens into a gathering place of 600,000 people is considered Reshus ha'Rabim. Consequently, the *entire desert* became Reshus ha'Rabim because of the one place in the desert in which the Jews dwelled. (BI'UR HALACHAH #345)

Shabbos 9b HALACHAH: EATING BEFORE "DAVENING MINCHAH" ...HALACHAH: The SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 232) cites the opinion of the Rif and the Rambam (a), which is the most stringent opinion. The REMA mentions the other three opinions. The MISHNAH BERURAH writes that we may follow the lenient side of any of the opinions (because the prohibition is only mid'Rabanan). Therefore, the practice is to permit starting a large meal before Minchah Gedolah, and a normal meal before Minchah Ketanah, and to refrain only from starting a large meal before Minchah Ketanah. The Kaf ha'Chayim rules that even the Sefardim may rely on this lenient practice, because nowadays we have a set time for Davening and that prevents us from forgetting to Daven Minchah. However, the BI'UR HALACHAH adds that it is "Midas Chasidus" (a trait of righteousness) to be stringent, but only to the extent of Tosfos' stringency (b); it is not necessary to be as stringent as the Rambam's opinion (a). The Kaf Ha'Chaim, however, maintains that it is "Midas Chasidus" to be stringent even like the Rambam's opinion.

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around the world! Gratefully yours, Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld Rosh Kollel, Kollel Iyun Hadaf Har Nof, Yerushalayim

PARSHAS VAYISHLACH BIG RETURNS 12/08/95 Volume 2 Issue 7 [From 1995] by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Anticipating conflict is quite strenuous. Yaakov had heard that his brother Esav was advancing toward him and his twelve children, accompanied by four hundred armed men. He had no idea of Esav's intentions. Was he still raging over the loss of Isaac's blessings or did thirty years of separation calm his wrath? Yaakov had to act fast. He split his camp into two groups and instructed his children both, how to do battle and how to escape. He sent a large contingent of men laden with myriad gifts to greet the advancing army. He hoped that the large offering will indicate submission to his older brother and thus appease him. And of course, he prayed. In the middle of the night before the encounter, he made his move. In Genesis 32:23-24, the Torah tells us, "and Yaakov got up that night and took his wives, his children, and all of his possessions and crossed the stream at Yabok." It would seem from this verse that Yaakov was together with his entire family and all their possessions. Yet the next verse tells us that Yaakov remained alone. The Torah places him back on the other side of the river, alone. As he stands alone the Torah relates that an angel fought with him till dawn. The question is obvious. If Yaakov crossed with his entire family, how did he end up on the other side of the stream, alone? The Talmud in Chulin 91a is also bothered by this question. The Talmud explains that Yaakov returned to his original camping grounds. He obviously had forgotten some Pachim K'tanim, insignificant small earthenware, bric-a-brac, and thus returned alone, to retrieve them. The Talmudic reasoning is thus. If the verse tells us that Jacob crossed with all of his possessions, then it tells us he was alone, whatever he had returned for must have been insignificant and not worthy enough to be considered as possessions. Why did Yaakov go to retrieve insignificant tchotchkes on the night when he was preparing for the most difficult encounter of his life? Obviously, there is an eternal lesson to be gained. What is it?

In the summer of 1954, my grandmother, Itta Etil Kamenetzky, of blessed memory, left Beth Israel Hospital, for the last time, after a prolonged stay. Her condition had deteriorated, and the doctors felt that there was nothing left for them to do. My grandfather, Reb Yaakov zt"l, went together with family members to pick her up from the hospital. My grandmother was wheeled to the waiting automobile and made as comfortable as possible. Suddenly, Reb Yaakov seemed to realize that he had forgotten something very important. He whispered something to his wife, and when she nodded her approval, he asked if it was possible for the driver to wait a few minutes. He had to go back into the hospital. The family members were a bit surprised. Although there was another patient in the room, and items may have been confused, they remembered removing every one of my grandmother's personal belongings from the room. Accompanied by his curious son, Reb Yaakov proceeded to the elevator and pushed the button to the floor on which his wife had stayed. "Pa," his son protested, "we have everything." The elevator stopped at the correct floor. Reb Yaakov proceeded into his wife's former room and turned to her ailing roommate. "In our rush to leave the hospital, I forgot to tell you good-bye and wish you well. May G-d send you a speedy recovery." With that, Reb Yaakov walked out of the room, nodded at the stunned nurses, whom he already had thanked on his first exit, and left toward the waiting car. Yaakov went back for something that in our estimation, may have been insignificant. But he knew otherwise. A small jug may have had a sentimental value to one of his wives. An old blanket may have meant something to one of the children. Yaakov our forefather taught us that everything in life has value. It is easy to say, "I crossed the river," "I packed the suitcase," or "I left the building, and I'm not going back." Yaakov's lesson tells us that even at a risk, the little things in life are just as important as the big ones. Some acts are glorified, others are seemingly petty. We can never judge which investments yield great returns, and which returns are great investments!

Good Shabbos (c) 1995 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Mordechai

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