

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This week's Parasha is sponsored Lirfuat Rav Yona Ben Chava Betch Shaar Cholei Yisrael

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



### PARASHA INSIGHTS

After seven years of working hard for Lavan in order to marry his daughter Rachel, and eager to build the next block in Am Yisrael, Yaakov awakens in the morning and is stunned to find out that he has been tricked and instead married Leah!

Our Sages (Midrash Rabah, Bereishit) bring an interesting dialogue that ensued shortly after Yaakov realised what had really happened.

Understandingly upset, he reproached Leah. How could she do such a thing?

Leah's response was so sound it seems that Yaakov accepted it never going back on this marriage.

Leah cleverly replied that she was put in a very awkward situation. Her father had asked her to marry Yaakov and surely she had to obey her father.

Even though the circumstances were not correct or just, she told Yaakov that she looked to none other than Yaakov himself as an example.

As if to say, "I said what would Yaakov do if his father told him to go to the Chupa?

I heard that you were put in a similar dilemma!

Your mother told you to go and get the Beracha (before Eisav) from your father.

You entered your father's presence and announced that you were Eisav.

If that is what you did given the circumstances, then I justified my actions through yours. Surely what I did was correct!?"

From then on, Yaakov accepted her as his wife and proceeded with the wedding celebrations for seven days, only after which he married his second wife Rachel (for a further seven years work).

These two wives of Yaakov became the forbearers of our nation.

Rather than cast aside, Leah is there together with Rachel and we merited to have four great women as builders of Am Yisrael, all Imahot – Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah.

But why did we end up with three Avot and four Imahot? Normally we would expect it all to equal out?

Let us explain.

When the Torah introduces Rachel and Leah to us (29:16) we are told, "And Lavan had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

Our sages are perplexed as to why the Torah needs to tell us that Lavan had two daughters and then proceed to name the two daughters. The Torah could have merely stated that Lavan's daughters were called Leah and Rachel and we would have known that he had two. Why mention the number two?

There are similar occurrences where the Torah mentions the number two, and where we would have known there were two from the pursuing ►

KISLEV 8<sup>th</sup> 5780

SHABBAT BEGINS: 3:38 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 4:46 PM

### > MAZAL TOV

Amy Abraham on her Bat Mitzvah  
& to the parents Simon & Louise



### THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"The thing Everyone should realize is that the key to happiness is being happy by yourself and for yourself."

### > UPCOMING EVENTS

► 9<sup>TH</sup> Dec Guest speaker for YP Ladies

For our upcoming events check our website [www.torahactionlife.com](http://www.torahactionlife.com)



#### DVAR TORAH

Parasha Insights  
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

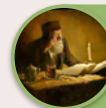
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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Shemot - Please dispose of accordingly

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Pesukim (e.g. in relation to the two Seirim (goats) on Yom Kippur and the two Chatsotrot (trumpets) in the temple). There, our Sages explain that the reason is to teach us that they were exactly the same. Similar in height, look and value.

This would imply that here too, Rachel and Leah were similar.

How were they similar?

When Avraham was in doubt as to who would continue his legacy, he put forth his son Yishmael as a good candidate. Hashem informed him otherwise. Yishmael would not be the one to continue the legacy; rather it would be through Yitzchak that the great future nation would be established. (21.12) Ki B'Yitzchak Yikareh Lecha Zara – because through Yitzchak will your seed be called.

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 59b) learns out – B'Yitzchak – from some of Yitzchak, "but not all of Yitzchak". Yitzchak had two children, Yakov and Eisav.

Only part of Yitzchak, i.e. Yaakov would continue the legacy. Eisav, like Yishmael, is not

considered a descendent and heir of Avraham.

On closer inspection, destiny could have taken a different turn.

Eisav was the first born, he was blessed with great physical strength, and could have been a wonderful partner to Yaakov. What could have transpired could have been – B'Yitzchak – Bet Yitzchak – through the two children of Yitzchak – will your seed continue.

However Eisav forgave his rights, choosing instead to use his strength and power for the pursuit of worldly matters.

Yaakov on the other hand concentrated on the Torah, eventually masterminding even worldly matters. He took on the spiritual and physical role of his brother.

Rashi (29:17) teaches that Leah was originally destined to marry Eisav, and Rachel, Yaakov.

That's right there could have been four Avot! However that prestige was forgone.

Yaakov listened to his mother, dressed as Eisav and entered towards his father to receive the eternal blessing.

Of all the Avot only Yaakov had two eternal names – Yaakov and Yisrael.

The Michtav Me'Eliyahu (Parshat Vayeishev) explains that Yaakov connects to Rachel and Yisrael to Leah. Yaakov filled the void created by Eisav, functioning as two Avot. He was therefore given a second name, Yisrael.

Originally Leah was destined to marry Eisav. When Leah saw that Yaakov took over the mantle of Eisav, Leah realized that Yaakov became her soul mate. This is what she alluded to when she told Yaakov, "It is from you I learned"; since you substituted for Eisav, taking his blessings and birth right, you have become my soul mate.

Everything is written from above, but there are many different ways of interpreting life's challenges.

Leah learnt from the best, and proactively yearned to be a founding mother of our nation.

What seemed like a simple story has now taken on a completely new meaning.

■ **Shabbat Shalom**

## RABBI SIMCHA KIRSCHENBAUM - NANCY REUBEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



### MAKE AN IMPRESSION!

In this week's Parasha Yaccov needs to run from his brother עשו, the Pasuk says וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲרָנָה וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע – And יַעֲקֹב went out from Beer Sheva and he went to Charan. (כה:י).

Why does the Torah need to mention that יַעֲקֹב departed Beer Sheva and went to Charan, simply say and יַעֲקֹב went to Charan?

Rashi explains the relevance of the departure of a righteous man from a place, makes an impression, for while the righteous man is in the city, he is its beauty, he is its splendour, and he is its majesty. When he departs from there, its beauty has departed, its splendour has departed, and its majesty has departed, the Tzadiks departure makes an impression on the place, it's lacking something.

The Kli Yakar asks why doesn't the Torah write in this way regarding when אַבְרָהָם and יִצְחָק travelled from one city to another surely their impressions also went away?

Answers the Kli Yakar that with אַבְרָהָם and יִצְחָק it's pretty obvious that the impression and impact they made went the Torah doesn't need to tell us this. But with יַעֲקֹב one might have thought that when he departed from his hometown one may say his departure doesn't make a big impact, because there are still two Tzadikim left, יִצְחָק and רַבִּיקָה, therefore for this reason the Torah teaches us specifically here that also his departure made an impression.

יַעֲקֹב in his way made a strong impression on his own rights. The Kli Yakar is teaching us that everyone in their own way can make an impression, no matter who you are, each person has a part of Hashem in them and has the power to make an impression and impact on another. People say "How can I make an impact one another, what can I do?" We do have the power to make an impact! Says Rav Desler in *Michtav Meliyahu* it is true that we need to impact our own spiritual growth and

our own *Aliya*, but now that the *Beit Hamikdash* is destroyed one must make more efforts to go and make an impact on others. This can be achieved by even the simplest of Jews. One must do what they can.

Our Avot went from place to place with a mission to spread the word of ה' and to encourage and have a positive impact and make a big impression on people. This trait is still very much alive and this power is within ever one of us.

Says the *Chovat Halvavot* any person who has an impact on someone to bring them closer onto the pathway of ה' ones rewards are doubled.

May we be Zoche to be שָׂפֵעַ רֵב בְּכָל עוֹלָמוֹ מִשְׁפִּיעַ

אָמֵן

■ **Shabbat shalom**

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## OUR CHACHAMIM

### RABBI RAHAMIM HAI HAWITA HACOEN

Rabbi Rahamim Hai Hawita Hacohen was born on the isle of Jerba on Sivan 22, 5661 (1900). His father, Rabbi Hanina, had great difficulty in providing for the needs of the family, but never did he ask his son to help him in his work.

Rabbi Rahamim studied with great passion and raised himself in the knowledge of Torah, for his father would tell him that the Torah is more precious than gold or pearls. He loved to delve into each point of his study, doing so well into the nights.

At the age of 15, Rabbi Rahamim joined the classes of Rabbi Moshe Kalfon Hacohen, the Av Beth Din of Jerba. Already at that age, he began to exchange correspondence with Torah greats. A few years later, he was named Shochet of Jerba and Sofer of the Beth Din.

When he married, Rabbi Rahamim decided to begin teaching, and his fame eventually became great. His students admired him without limit, and he devoted a great part of his time to them. He got them into the habit of writing down in a small journal their own commentaries on the Talmud and Bible, later correcting their style of commentary in order that they love their studies. Rabbi Rahamim innovated teaching methods and inculcated in his students, from their earliest ages, the principles of study and the foundations of Torah. This method enabled the creation of decision-makers and teachers destined to become rabbis in Jewish communities everywhere.

Famous students developed in his shadow, among them being the Gaon Rabbi Matziah Mazuz and the Gaon Rabbi Raphael Hadir Tsaban.

In 5691 (1930), one of the positions of Dayan in Jerba became free, and the sages of the city asked him to come and sit among them. Nevertheless, they feared that by naming him to this post, they would lose a great Torah educator. After discussing the issue many times, they decided to appoint him. It was thus discovered that he possessed the abilities of a great decision-maker, and in every field. Moreover, he wrote 10 books of Halachah.

Rabbi Rahamim knew how to vigorously preserve Judaism, and he enacted various laws for his community. His fame as a preacher and orator drew crowds to hear him speak. He had the habit of illustrating his lectures with marvelous explanations.

His novel interpretations illuminated the Torah with a great light and brought back many Jews closer to their source.

The life of Rabbi Rahamim was beset with much suffering. In his letters, he recounted that the difficult ordeals that he endured prevented him from having a clear and tranquil mind. Despite his weakness and illness, he wrote a commentary on the Book of Esther in which he stated, "Since it is impossible for me to dig thoroughly into the Talmud and the Poskim because of my illness and pain ... Hashem healed me so that I could study during my recovery ... Between two attacks, I drew comfort and strength from the Book of Esther ... Blessed be the Eternal, Who gave me His help during my distress, Who sent me His word and healed me." Despite these difficult trials, Rabbi Rahamim did not abandon his ways, but continued to study, teach, question, and answer.

When Rabbi Moshe Kalfon Hacohen passed away, Rabbi Rahamim replaced him as Rosh Av Beth Din. He was loved by all the inhabitants of the city. Despite his sufferings, he received everyone warmly and always with a smile. He occupied this position for four years, until he left for the Land of Israel. One week before his departure, a large crowd gathered at his door. Everyone came to see him to be blessed by his holy mouth. When he began departing on route, the entire city accompanied him and firmly decided not to separate themselves, despite the difficulty, from their greatly beloved teacher.

Arriving in Israel, Rabbi Rahamim decided to settle in the tiny community of Berechia. The light of his teachings did not delay in surpassing the limits of the community. He was respectfully named HaAdmor Mijerba, and his modest home became a prominent place of study. From all directions, people rushed to ask him for advice, as well as to benefit from the purity and clarity of his wisdom. He became the spiritual guide and Rav of all immigrants from Tunisia. He shared in their difficulties, and when they came to see him, he did not neglect to lavish his blessings and advice on them.

On Shevat 10, 5719, barely aged 58, his holy soul was called back to the Creator. His students established a yeshiva near his tomb and named it Kissei Rahamim in his memory. To this day, the yeshiva still radiates the light of its departed teacher's instructions. ■



## HALACHOT

### RABBI ELI MANSOUR

### MAY A SYNAGOGUE HAVE A MENORAH WITH SEVEN BRANCHES?

The question recently arose regarding a certain synagogue that remodeled the interior of the building, and ordered special decorative Menorahs that adorned the wall both in the main sanctuary and in the study hall. These Menorahs are made from metal, use electric lights, and have seven branches, resembling the Menorah in the Bet Ha'mikdash. Some Rabbis questioned the propriety of having these Menorahs, as it is forbidden to make replicas of the furnishings of the Bet Ha'mikdash. Although this Menorah does not precisely resemble the Menorah in the Mikdash, as the branches do not have a receptacle for oil and wicks, and it runs on electricity, nevertheless, some argued that its resemblance to the Menorah in the Bet Ha'mikdash suffices to render it forbidden.

This question was addressed already by Hacham Ovadia Yosef, in a responsum that appears in the posthumously published seventh volume of Yehaveh Da'at (142; listen to audio recording for citations of select passages from this responsum), and he cites numerous Poskim who explicitly allowed such Menorahs. One such Posek is Rav Reuven David Ha'kohen Borstein (the "Radach"), who writes that it is entirely permissible even "Le'chatehila" (from the outset) to make such a Menorah, because the branches are closed at the top without a receptacle for oil and wicks. As such, such Menorahs do not at all resemble the Menorah in the Bet Ha'mikdash, and it is therefore permissible to produce them and have them in the synagogue. Hacham Ovadia cites also Rav Moshe Stern of Debrecen (Hungary, 1914-1997), who adds that electric lights are not at all similar to oil lamps, and so it is certainly permissible to make an electric Menorah with seven branches. This was also the view of Rav Yitzhak Eizik Herzog (first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, 1888-1959), and of Rav Bension Meir Hai Uziel (first Sephardic Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, 1880-1953). Hacham Ovadia relates in this responsum that he was first asked this question in 5722 (1972) by a rabbi in Tel-Aviv, and he ruled that this was permissible. He refers in this context to his earlier responsum on the subject, which appears in the first volume of Yabia Omer (Y.D. 12).

He acknowledges, however, that there were some Poskim over the ages who felt it appropriate to be stringent in this regard. One especially interesting anecdote is a story told by the son-in-law of Rabbi Akiva Eiger (1761-1837) about the time when a Menorah was made for Rabbi Akiva Eiger's synagogue with seven branches. Even though the Menorah was round, and thus did not at all resemble the Menorah in the Bet Ha'mikdash, Rabbi Akiva Eiger insisted that an eighth branch must be added. The Menorah was returned to the smith, who had a very difficult time finding a way to add an eighth branch, and ended up ruining the entire Menorah. Rabbi Akiva Eiger's son-in-law did not understand why Rabbi Akiva Eiger was so insistent that an eighth branch be added, but he nevertheless expresses respect for his father-in-law's strict fealty to Halacha.

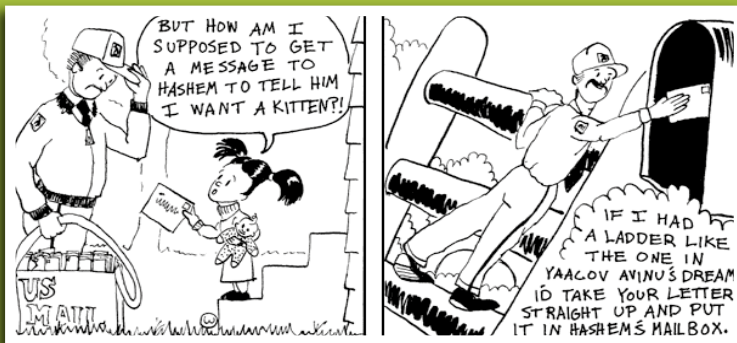
It is told that the decorative Menorot in Congregation Shaare Zion have eight branches following the instructions of Rav Yaakov Kassin (1900-1994), who felt that a seven-branched Menorah should not be used.

Nevertheless, in light of Hacham Ovadia's clear ruling, there is certainly room to be lenient and allow a seven-branched Menorah if it was already made.

Summary: Some Rabbis ruled that it is forbidden to make or have a decorative electric Menorah with seven branches, because it resembles the Menorah that stood in the Bet Ha'mikdash. The majority opinion, however, permits such Menorahs, and this was the position of Hacham Ovadia Yosef. ■



Y<sup>SS</sup>I & Co.



## TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ What did Rachel find enviable about Leah?
- ❷ Who was Yaakov's fifth son?
- ❸ Who was Leah's handmaiden? Was she older or younger than Rachel's handmaiden?
- ❹ How do you say "dudaim" in Arabic?
- ❺ "Hashem remembered Rachel" (30:22). What did He remember?

Answer

❶ 30:1 - Her good deeds, thinking they were the reason Leah merited children. ❷ 30:5 - Dan. ❸ 30:10 - Zilpah. She was younger. ❹ 30:14 - Jasmine (Yasmin). ❺ 30:22 - That Rachel gave Leah the "signs of recognition" that Yaakov had taught her, so that Leah wouldn't be embarrassed.



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