

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This week's Parasha Sheet is sponsored **Lehastslachat Harav Yitzckak Ben Moshe Hacohen veChol Mishpachto**

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



### LECH LECHA

From the moment we are born, to the day that G-d calls us, we are tested. In essence, everything is a test, and once we absorb this, it will become easier to bear the many challenges and trials of life. These tests come in many shapes and forms -- the way we relate to G-d, to our parents, our teachers, our peers, our neighbours, our co-workers, our colleagues, even to a clerk in a store, the waiter in a restaurant, or a fellow driver on the road, are all tests. These tests reflect the genuineness of our commitment, the depth of our faith and the measure of our character, and at the end of the day, we are marked "pass" or "fail."

Avraham's father was priest of idols, yet at the age of three he recognised Hashem, and spent the rest of his life in servitude of the One G-d. He was tested ten times, and we find one of those tests at the end of last week's Parsha. Avraham was commanded by King Nimrod to bow before the idols, yet he refused and belittled Nimrod, stating that Hashem created the world. Nimrod threw Avraham into the fire, yet Avraham was miraculously saved. This episode in Avraham's life is related to us via the Midrash; the Torah merely hints to this event by calling the place Ur Kasdim -- the furnace of Kasdim.

Why is it that the Torah did not elaborate such an incredible event?

Furthermore, in this week's Parsha we are told that Avraham is tested by Hashem to leave his birth place, going into great detail as to the exact test. Rashi learns from the words "Lech Lecha" that Hashem promised Avraham that it would be for his benefit to go to the land that He would show him. As the Pasuk itself says "I will make you into a great nation." If Hashem had in fact promised that Avraham's trip would not entail any loss to him but would be to his benefit, what was the challenge of the test? Surely the previous test, in which Avraham had to give up his life, was much more severe. If so, why did the Torah only hint the first episode, but elaborate on the test of leaving his homeland?

According to the Ramban, tests are for the benefit of the individual being tested. By passing these, one turns his potential into action, and elevates oneself to a higher spiritual level.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein zts'l states that the big difference between these tests is that the first one, where he was tested for his life was in line with his intellectual beliefs, while the second test of leaving his homeland was emotional. It was easy for Avraham to defend Hashem and monotheism in Ur Kasdim, because it made complete sense on an intellectual level. On the other hand at the beginning of our Parsha, Avraham is being asked to do something that intellectually and logically he cannot understand. He is being asked to leave his old father and his home. This is an emotional test, and clearly harder for Avraham than the previous ones. Similarly we find that when Avraham was tested by Hashem clearly at the Akeida, it was again a test of emotion and went against his intellectual understanding. Avraham had been preaching against the practice of human sacrifices, and here he was, being commanded to sacrifice his own son. =The test was to see whether he would be able to overcome all emotion and intellect in the service of Hashem. ►

## > MAZAL TOV TO

Mazal tov to Yaniv and Laura Ohana  
on the brit of their baby boy  
Ishai Nissim Ovdia



## THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"The distance between your  
dreams and reality is called action."

## > UPCOMING EVENTS

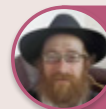
• 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2017  
FRIDAY NIGHT YP DINNER  
(see more info online)



### DVAR TORAH

Lech Lecha  
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

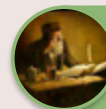
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Rabbi Pinchas Horowitz (Hafla) offers a further insight. Although Avraham was promised reward, nevertheless when he actually fulfilled HaShem's will, he did so solely for the purpose of serving Hashem, and not for the reward. When the Pasuk tells us of Avraham's fulfilment of HaShem's command it says "Vayeilech Avram Kaasher Diber Eilav Hashem." Avraham's journey was not made for his own benefit but rather to fulfill HaShem's commandment. Avraham was tested at this time as to the **way** he would fulfil the command of Hashem.

We recite daily in Kriat Shma "You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul ('Nafshecha') (Devarim 6:5). Chazal tell us "with all your soul - even if He takes your soul" (Brachot 61b). This

explanation is fitting for times when one is required to give up one's life in an effort to sanctify HaShem's Name. What about when a person does not need to give his life but can live? How then does he love Hashem "with all his soul ('Nefesh')"? The Rishonim (Rashi, Ramban, Sforno) interpret the Pasuk "Im Yesh Et NAFSHECHEM Likbor Et Meiti Milefanai (Bereishit 23:8), to mean "if it is truly YOUR WILL to bury my dead before me". The "Nefesh" is a person's will and desire. Loving Hashem "Bechol Nafshecha" implies with your **entire will**.

Avraham was the Father of our nation. Rav Dessler zts"l explains that everything he went through prepared the path for future generations. The fact that Avraham was able to give up his life for Hashem, prepared the way

for all those Tsadikim in the future generations to die Bekidush Hashem.

Even though we are surrounded by tests daily, we are taught to serve and love Hashem Bechol Nafshechem. Our service needs to lie within changing our will to coincide with His. Nullifying the will of the powerful Yetser Hara, which tries daily to bring us down.

Let us take heed from our Father Avraham, let us serve Hashem with reverence, and love, and may Hashem uphold the blessing of Avraham - Veheyeh Beracha.

I've done best I could at amending the explanation of R Moshe Feinstein, I suggest reading the original for clearer explanation as the difference of emotional vs intellect is very blurred in the above. ■

## RABBI AVRAHAM CITRON - WALFORD ROAD SYNAGOGUE, SHAARE MAZAL TOV

DVAR  
TORAH



### LIGHTING SHABBAT CANDLES WITH SARAH IMENU

Hundreds, if not thousands, of communities worldwide are participating this week in an international Shabbat. Children of Abraham and Sarah will be doing what Sarah did weekly - ushering in the holiness of Shabbat with candle lighting.

Abraham "called in the name of G-d, Lord of the Universe". He made everyone aware that G-d is the Lord of the Universe (Rashi, 21:33). We start our day with the prayer of Adon Olam - Master of the Universe. This might be because Shacharit (the first prayer of the day) was instituted by Abraham and it is he (according to the Talmud)

who was the very first to declare G-d as the Master of the Universe.

We are not just talking G-d or being all warm and fuzzy (which is good too) but we are putting our money where our mouth is. We believe in you, G-d, so strongly that we are willing to abstain from work one day every week, knowing that our parnassah is in Your hands. You will look after us.

After vanquishing the four kings, the grateful King of Sedom wishes to offer gifts to Abraham. Abraham responds, "I have lifted my hand (in an oath) to G-d Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth! Not a thread nor a shoelace! I will not take anything that is yours! You should not be able to say, 'It was I who made Abram rich'..."

A fascinating interpretation (heard from Rabbi Schlesinger of Monsey) is that Abraham turns to his own hand warning it "You (my hand) shall not say...I have made Abraham rich". Don't dare claim that it is your might that conquered the four kings. One should never think that it is one's own

cleverness/strength/acumen/hard work that has made him wealthy. It is G-d's doing.

One desperately ill man came to his Rebbe begging him for help as the doctors were unable to cure him. "Go to the city of Hanipoli and ask to see the 'Great Healer'. The man went but was disappointed to find out that not only did they not have a "Great Healer", they did not have any healer at all! When he came back to his Rebbe, disappointed, the Rebbe asked him what the people of Hanipoli do if they are ill. He responded, "I wondered that myself. They said they just ask G-d to heal them". "So then they do have a Great Healer" retorted the Rebbe. "You too should know that all Brachot come from Hashem".

We must keep this Shabbat (and every Shabbat) declaring proudly that we are the children of Abraham and Sarah and we too believe in Hashem. We believe in a G-d who not only created the world but is active in it and cares about our behaviour. ■

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## OUR CHACHAMIM

### RABBI ELAZAR BEN AZARYAH

In his youth, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah already enjoyed great respect. He descended from a great and noble family of priests. Ezra, the High Priest and restorer of the Jewish nation after the Babylonian exile, was his ancestor, and in the person of Rabbi Elazar, Ezra's tenth generation descendant blossomed. Rabbi Elazar was still a child when his father died, and his tutor raised him with the greatest care. During that time Jerusalem was conquered by the Romans, the holy Temple was destroyed, and the prince of Israel, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai, went to Yavneh with his disciples. There, after Rabban Yochanan's death, Rabban Gamliel was chosen as prince and head of the academy. When later on Rabban Gamliel had serious disagreements with his colleague, Rabbi Joshua ben Hanania, these differences led to the ouster of Rabban Gamliel. Thus Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, though only 18 years old at the time, was chosen as prince and head of the academy. When later on Rabban Gamliel came to terms with Rabbi Joshua (and consequently was reinstated in his position), Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah still retained his position of prince in that he and Rabban Gamliel alternated as president.

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah also assumed a large role in the political life of his people. He accompanied Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Joshua ben Hanania, and Rabbi Akiva to Rome in order to oppose the sinister intentions of the Roman Emperor Domitian, who wanted to exterminate all Jews. Rabbi Elazar's contemporaries called him a "spice box containing all sorts of spices" because of his great and extensive knowledge. His gentleness and goodwill, contrasting with the severity of Rabban Gamliel, were greatly valued. Rabban Gamliel closed the doors of knowledge to those whose purity of character he was not firmly convinced of. Yet Rabbi Elazar opened wide all the doors of the academy and permitted everyone to enter. He operated from the principle that higher levels of Torah knowledge would strengthen people's character. Rabbi Elazar reached a very great age and worked long for the good of his people, however he did not live to see the terrible and catastrophic persecutions of Hadrian. It was concerning Rabbi Elazar that Rabbi Joshua ben Hanania once said, "The era in which we find a man such as Rabbi Elazar is not forsaken." ■



## HALACHOT

### RABBI ELI MANSOUR

#### IS ONE REQUIRED TO MAKE A NEW BERACHA ON A MEZUZA THAT FELL OFF?

The question was recently asked regarding Hilchot Mezuzah: If a person discovered that a Mezuzah fell off his doorpost, must he recite a new Beracha when he reattaches it? This would seemingly be analogous to the Halacha of a Tallit which inadvertently fell off a person's body. In such a case, the Shulhan Aruch (8:15) rules that he must make a new Beracha when he puts it back on, since the Misva has left him in the meantime. The Pitheh Teshuva (Yoreh Deah 289), as well as Rav Shlomo Kluger, the Aruch Hashulhan and Yismah Lev Yagen do, in fact, infer from this Halacha that one would make a new Beracha on the Mezuzah.

However, Hacham Ovadia argues that the case of Mezuzah is not analogous to the case of the Tallit. In the case of the Tallit, once the Tallit has fallen off, there is no obligation to put it back on. The original Misva has been interrupted with a Heseh Ha'Daat. If one chooses to continue wearing it, it is a new Misva and therefore requires a new Beracha. On the other hand, the Mezuzah is a constant obligation on the house, and reattaching it is a continuation of the original Misva that does not require a new Beracha. Moreover, Hacham Ovadia cites Rabbenu Yonah who holds that even in the case of a Tallit that fell off a new Beracha is not required. Based on these two factors, he applies the principle of "Safek Berachot L'Hakel" - to be lenient and not recite a Beracha in a case of uncertainty. He originally presented this discussion in Yabia Omer YD 3:17, and then forty years later in Halichot Olam (Vol. 8 in the footnotes of p. 268).

Hacham Ovadia also discusses in which a person intentionally removed the Mezuzah in order to replace its case. In such a case, no new Beracha is required, unless he kept the Mezuzah off for a few hours, until he took his mind off of it, constituting a Heseh Ha'Daat.

#### SUMMARY

If a Mezuzah fell off the door post, a new Beracha is not recited when reattaching it. Similarly, if a person took off a Mezuzah, in order to change its case, no Beracha is required when reattaching it, unless he delayed reattaching it for several hours and took his mind off of it. ■

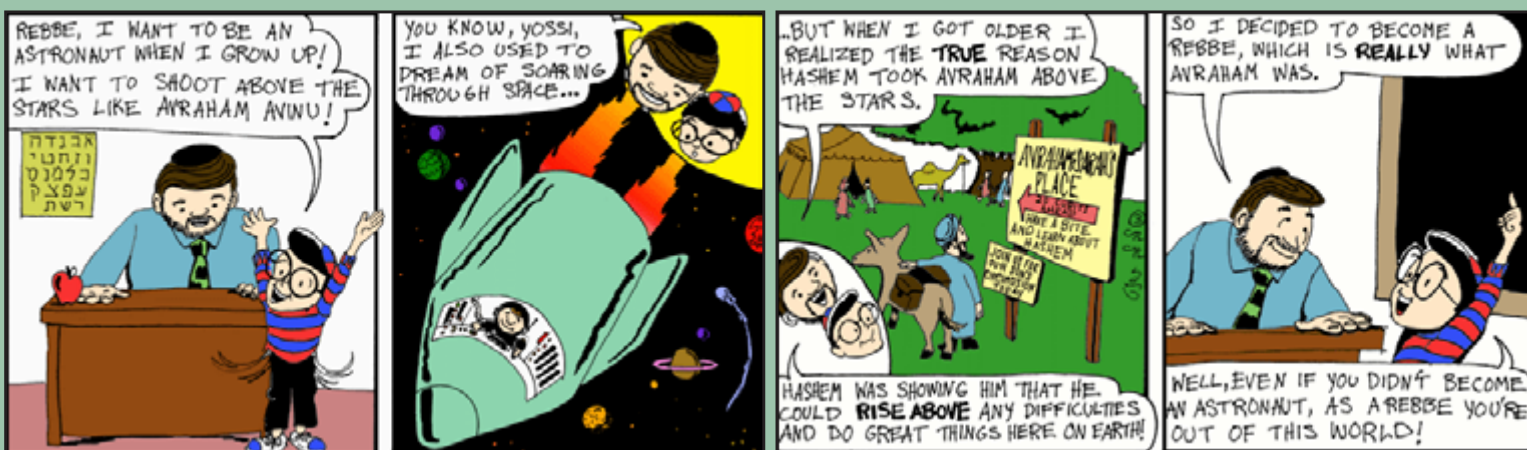


- ❶ What benefits did Hashem promise Avraham if he would leave his home?
- ❷ What were the Canaanites doing in the Land of Canaan when Avraham arrived?
- ❸ What two results did Avraham hope to achieve by saying that Sarah was his sister?
- ❹ Who accompanied Avraham in battle against the four kings?
- ❺ When did the decree of 400 years of exile begin?

### Answer

❶ 12:1 - He would become a great nation, his excellence would become known to the world, and he would be blessed with wealth.  
 ❷ 12:6 - They were in the process of conquering the land from the descendants of Shem.  
 ❸ 12:13 - That the Egyptians would not kill him, and would give him presents.  
 ❹ 14:14 - His servant, Eliezer.  
 ❺ 15:13 - With the birth of Yitzhak.

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