

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This Week's Parasha sheet is sponsored **Lehatslach Moshe Ben Harav Yitschak Hakohen Vechol Mishpachto**

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR  
TAL



### RELATIONSHIPS

Alexandros III Philippou Makedonon commonly known in the West as Alexander the Great King of Macedon (336-323 B.C.E.), was the most successful military commander of ancient history, conquering most of the known world before his death.

Our Sages relate the story of how Alexander The Great was about to conquer the land of Israel. Incited by enemies of the Sages, Alexander intended to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem. In the past, wherever he had trodden he made sure to put a massive statue of himself in the holiest place of the land. His intention was clear; all should know about and respect him.

As he arrived closer to Yerushalayim, the sages sent out a delegation headed by Shimon Hatsadik to meet him.

How were they going to defend against such a mighty warrior, and how were they going to ensure that no idols be left in the Holiest Place – the Bet Hamikdash.

They approached the mighty warrior and their answer was astounding.

Let's take a closer look at our Parsha first.

VeEleh Toldot Yitschak Ben Avraham, Avraham Holid et Yitschak -

These are the generations of Yitschak the son of Avraham, Avraham bore Yitschak.

Rashi asks why there seems to be a superfluous repetition here. If Yitschak is the son of Avraham, of course Avraham was his father?

Rashi explains that the Letsaney Hador (jokers/slanderers of the generations) saw how Sarah wasn't able to have children for many years.

Suddenly she was taken by Avimelech and then shortly after at the age of 90 she had a child.

Word got around that the real reason she was able to have a child was perhaps because it was to do with Avimelech?

Of course this had nothing to do with Avimelech and Hashem clarified the matter through a miracle that Yitschak would look exactly like Avraham.

Thus the torah stresses it was Avraham and not Avimelechs son.

There is an even deeper level of understanding.

In the olden days if someone wished to refer to someone else, they wouldn't ask him for his surname – that never existed.

How would they refer to him?

They would say – whose son are you?

We can see this from when Eliezer met Rivka he asked her - Bat Mi At – whose daughter are you?

A person was known as the son or daughter of so and so.

For example when people would hear that a persons name was Shimon Ben Yakov then people would know who he really was.

Avraham was an exception.

He was known as Avraham Halvri.

Why? Because he came from the other side of the river – he came from Mesopotamia. ►

## > MAZAL TOV TO

**Rav Bassous & Rabbanit**  
on the Birth of their grandson in Manchester  
**Felicia & Maurice Assoyag**  
on the Brit of their son Ariel Menachem

## ” THE WEEKLY QUOTE

*"The single greatest thing you can do to change your life right now would be to start being grateful for what you have today."*

## > UPCOMING EVENTS

- YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES PROGRAM  
2ND YEAR LAUNCH ON THE 22ND NOV
- HANUKAH EVENT ON A YACHT  
ON THE 13TH DEC (see more info online)



### DVAR TORAH

Relationships  
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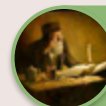
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### DVAR TORAH

Being Truly Blessed  
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Furthermore he believed in One G-d whereas the rest of the world worshiped idols. He was an Ivri –on the other side of the world to others.

He wasn't known as Avraham Ben Terach – Avraham the son of Terach because he was not proud of his father. His father was the top priest of Avoda Zarah.

Thus his status was Ivri.

Later on in life, this status of Ivri, took a change. Avraham stopped being known only as Avraham Halvri and took on a new status.

When Yitschak was born – Avraham would now be known as “Avraham the father of Yitschak”. That is to say, Yitschak was such a Tsadik that Avraham was proud of being called his father – Avraham Holid Et Yitschak.

The Talmud (Yuma 69a) ascribes righteousness to Alexander the Great.

Incited by enemies of the Sages, Alexander intended to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem. On the way, he was approached by R' Shimon HaTzadik who headed a delegation of rabbis. When Alexander saw him, he got off his horse and bowed on the ground at his feet. The enemies of the Sages questioned why “The Great” should prostrate before the lowly. He replied that at the head of all his conquests he was led by the image of a righteous man, and this image was the countenance of none other than R' Shimon. The rabbis asked Alexander, “Is it conceivable that your enemies should mislead you into destroying the House in which prayers for your success and for that of your kingdom are offered?” At which point Alexander recalled his soldiers and turned over the enemies of the Sages to the Jews.

Yet there was still the predicament of the statue of Alexander being placed in the Holy Temple.

When the sages were faced with the biggest problem in their times, they approached Alexander and made him an offer.

Putting the statue is a great honour, they told Alexander, but we have something even better than a statue.

We can offer you that every Jewish child that is born this year will be called Alexander after you!

And so it was he accepted and whereas nowadays the statues of the greatest warrior are far and few, his name lives on (even in our community) forever.

Our Children are our future. Let us invest and take pride in them and may they be an ever lasting merit to us - their parents and ancestors forever. ■

## RABBI ALEX CHAPPER - COMMUNITY RABBI AT BOREHAMWOOD & ELSTREE SYNAGOGUE

DVAR  
TORAH



### BEING TRULY BLESSED

We might have thought that Yitzchak would be blessed by G-d on account of his tremendous spiritual achievements, supreme among them being his willingness to be sacrificed by his father Avraham. But as remarkably inspiring as they are, Divine approbation for his accomplishments is recorded in the Torah in relation to a seemingly more modest act.

Forced by a local famine to relocate to Gerar, Yitzchak sows the land and in that year it yields an abundant harvest which amounted

to a hundred times its estimated capacity. Then we read, ‘and G-d blessed him.’

This last statement seems to be a non sequitur. Surely Yitzchak was blessed by G-d first and that is why he enjoyed such a bumper crop. Why does the blessing follow the news of his agricultural success?

Rav Hirsch explains that Yitzchak merited G-d's blessing because of his actions. Having such a quantity of produce that was more than sufficient for his own needs, he did not hoard the excess but offered it for sale in the market places for the benefit of those who had been affected by that year's famine. It was this simple act of kindness that resulted in him being the one blessed by G-d.

It is a powerful insight into G-d's priorities. Although we might think that precedence would be given to the performance of precepts that display great religious fervour, it might just be that the more modest and unassuming consideration for our fellow human beings has greater worth. Yitzchak scaled the spiritual heights, he demonstrated his readiness to dedicate his life to the service of G-d and yet it was his thoughtfulness and altruism that brought him the greatest accolade.

The Torah provides us with a clear message - it is being a blessing to others that makes us truly deserving of being blessed by G-d. ■

*Rabbi Alex Chapper is rabbi of Borehamwood & Elstree Synagogue and the Children's Rabbi [www.childrensrabbi.com](http://www.childrensrabbi.com)*

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## OUR CHACHAMIM

### RABBI PESACH PRUSKIN - "THE RAV OF KOBRIN"

Rabbi Pesach, the Rav of Kobrin, was among one of the great teachers of Torah during the last century, becoming famous as a remarkable Rosh Yeshiva while he was still young. In an era when Roshei Yeshiva were great and noble Torah figures, Rabbi Pesach's rise to greatness was considered phenomenal.

Rav Avraham Pruskin, the son of Rabbi Pesach, once asked the Gaon Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (who was one of Rabbi Pesach's main disciples) why he had departed from the Slutsk yeshiva. He wanted to know why Rabbi Moshe had left Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer, the famous Slutsk Rosh Yeshiva, to be with his father Rabbi Pesach, who at the time was still relatively young.

Rabbi Feinstein replied, "If you want to know who your father was, I will tell you what he did and how he acted. During the summer he went to the countryside with us and sat down in the grass, studying Torah with us for the entire day. He opened a Gemara and immersed himself in the minutest detail and the most infinitesimal nuances concerning the question at hand. He listened attentively to what each student said, and in this way he conquered our hearts. Where could we have found a Rosh Yeshiva like your father, who spent the entire day with his students? Of course Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer was an extraordinary Rosh Yeshiva, but he was busy tending to the needs of the city's community, and it was impossible for him to devote as much time to his students as your father did." Rav Avraham Pruskin said, "That was the secret of my father's success."

Rabbi Pesach was born in 5639 (1879) in the small town of Koshchin, near Kobrin in Lithuania. His father passed away before he was born, and he was named after him. We know nothing about his infancy, and he may not have been a prodigy as a child. However as an adult, he was absolutely amazing. Of his family (he had two brothers and sisters), he was the only one who remained connected to Torah.

From his earliest years, the young Pesach was noticed for his great diligence in study. He experienced hunger and misery as he studied Torah, and he suffered a great deal while studying in the Chafetz Chaim's yeshiva in Radin. At one point, having not enough bread to eat or proper clothes to wear, his friends advised him to travel to the home of his sister, who lived in Vilna at the time, and ask her for help. As it turned out, she was ready to help him, but only on condition that he leave the yeshiva and go study in a secular school. Rabbi Pesach immediately left his sister's home and never returned.

When the Second World War erupted, Rabbi Pesach was staying with many rabbis in a summer retreat far from the city. One morning he packed up his things with the intention of returning to his yeshiva and community. People were surprised at this, and asked him where he was going. Rabbi Pesach replied, "My place now is with the Jews of my community. During a time of danger, the place of a captain is on his ship." He returned to Kobrin and suffered the tribulations of the time with the members of his community. His pure heart broke from grief, and he passed away on the 11th day of Heshvan 5700 (1939). ■



## HALACHOT

### RABBI ELI MANSOUR

#### COOKING WITH A MICROWAVE ON SHABBAT

The Gemara in Masechet Shabbat (p. 39) states that "Bishul B'Hama"-cooking using the direct rays of the sun is permitted on Shabbat. For example, one may heat a glass of water by placing it outside in the sun. The Menuhat Ahaba (Rabbi Moshe Halevi, Israel, 1961-2001) even allows using a magnifying glass to concentrate the sunlight on the water, even if it brings the water to the boiling point. However, it is prohibited to use the magnifying glass to make a fire and then cook with that fire.

Rashi explains that there is neither a Torah nor Rabbinic violation involved in cooking in the sun, since that is not the normal way of cooking. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Russia - New York, 1895-1986) in his Iggerot Moshe (3:52) understands Rashi that any type of cooking which is not the normal method was never prohibited by the Rabbis, but if a method other than fire becomes the norm, it may be even be prohibited from the Torah. According to this approach, cooking in a microwave may be prohibited from the Torah. Even though it is not cooking with fire, since it has become accepted practice, the exemption no longer exists.

It should be noted that the Egleh Tal (R. Avraham Borenstein, Poland, 1838-1910, Melechet HaOfeh 44) understands Rashi in a different way. Hacham Ovadia (Hazon Ovadia Vol. 4 p. 402) argues that cooking with a microwave is fundamentally different than cooking with fire, and therefore, although it is the norm, it is not prohibited by Torah law, only by Rabbinic law.

No authority holds that it is permitted to cook with a microwave on Shabbat. They merely disagree as to the level of the prohibition. The Mishna Berura Tiferet (318:52) cites Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Jerusalem, 1910-1995) that if the prohibition is only M'drabanen, then microwaves would be the preferred method for cooking in the event that a sick person needs cooked food.

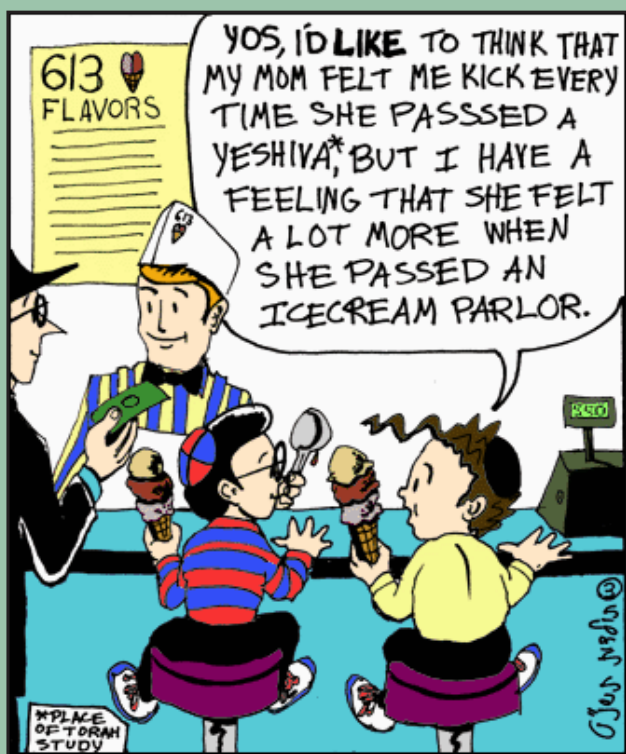
**SUMMARY:** It is permitted to heat food and water directly in the sunlight or with a magnifying glass.

In the event that a sick person requires cooked food on Shabbat, it is preferable to use a microwave rather than a conventional oven. ■





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## TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- 1 Why was it important that Yitzchak look like Avraham?
- 2 Why was Esav named Esav?
- 3 Who gave Yaakov his name?
- 4 How did Esav deceive his father?
- 5 Why are lentils a food for mourners?

### Answer

1 25:19 - So everyone would agree that Avraham was indeed his father. 2 25:25 - He was born fully developed. The name Esav is based on the Hebrew word for "made." 3 25:26 - Hashem. 4 25:27 - Esav deceived Yitzchak by asking questions that suggested that he was very strict in mitzvah observance. 5 25:30 - They are round like a wheel and mourning is like a revolving wheel that eventually touches everyone.

## Kids STORY

### THE PIPELINE

"Mom, is the water okay?"  
 "I think so, Chaim. Why do you ask?"  
 "I turned the faucet on and no water came out."  
 "Let's see. You're right Chaim. I wonder what's wrong?"  
 "Let's try another faucet. Nope. No water here either."  
 "What should we do Chaim?"  
 "I saw Dad look at the main water meter once. Let's go down into the cellar and take a look." Chaim and his mother venture down into the cellar and find water gushing out onto the floor. Chaim alertly rushes over to the water meter and turns off the big valve. Thankfully, the water stops.  
 "Mom, let's call the plumber."  
 "Yes, Chaim. Here's the number." Within half an hour, the plumber arrives at the door.  
 "What seems to be the problem, ma'am?"  
 "Come into the basement, sir."  
 "Looks like the main pipe has burst."  
 "Why was so much water gushing out sir?"  
 "Son, that pipe provides all of the water for all of the faucets in your whole house. That's a lot of water. When it breaks, all of that water comes out. It will take me about half an hour to fix it. Then

I will leave you with just the mop-up work."  
 "Thank you so much sir. All of the water comes through one pipe. Imagine that. The builder built this house in a similar way that G-d set up the world."  
 "Chaim, you certainly have a vivid imagination. How does this house resemble the world?"  
 "All of the water comes through one pipe. What G-d sends to the world comes also comes through one pipe."  
 "Pipe? Where is this pipe? It must be huge. I would like to go see it."  
 "The pipe that I am referring to is our prayers, Mom."  
 "Our prayers are like a pipe?"  
 "A pipeline would probably be a better comparison. G-d wants to shower this world with endless blessings. He wants to send them down from Heaven."  
 "What is he waiting for?"  
 "Us. Our prayers create the pipeline that will carry those blessings down from Heaven to earth."  
 "Chaim, how do you know this?"  
 "We learn it from this week's parsha, Mom. Rivkah Emaynu, our Mother Rivkah, did not have children for the first 20 years of her marriage to Yitzchak. Both Yitzchak and Rivkah poured out

their hearts in prayer to G-d. Finally, their request was granted. Rabbeinu Bechaye explains that G-d could have given them a child right away. However, He wanted their prayers."  
 "Why, Chaim?"  
 "When we pray, Mom, we get closer to G-d. By constantly making requests, we come to realize that He is the one Who provides us with everything. As our relationship grows, the "pipeline" grows wider. That allows Him to send down more blessings."  
 "Chaim, that is fascinating. Twenty years of praying for a child is a long time."  
 "G-d never gets tired of hearing our voices. People can get annoyed if you ask too much. G-d is happy to hear our requests. They show Him how much we appreciate Him."  
 "Chaim, you have added a new dimension to my prayers. I am going to try to keep this in mind when I am praying."  
 "Mom, it is especially important now, when the Jewish people are facing some real dangers."  
 "I know, Chaim. We need a very big pipeline filled with blessings."  
 "May G-d answer all of our prayers, Mom."  
 "Amen."



## POTTERY PAINTING

### TAL YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES PROGRAMME

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