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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

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Leiluy Nishmat David ben Masuda z"l

TOLDOT

2nd Kislev 5776
Shabbat begins: 15:59
Shabbat ends: 17:03



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

G-D INTERVENES!

Since creation of our state, the land of Israel has been continuously targeted and gone through tough times.

There seems to be no end. Last year's war in Gaza with mortars and bombs landing across the country and more recently the nonstop knife attacks throughout the land.

We are facing hard times and in a day and age where people can post their thoughts and send them instantly to millions, we are witnessing an unprecedented attack on our people, history and heritage.

The claim that the land does not belong to the Jews and the Jews are not the 'Chosen People' has taken on a fashionable role in society. So much so that it is even causing some of our own people's views of the situation to be manipulated.

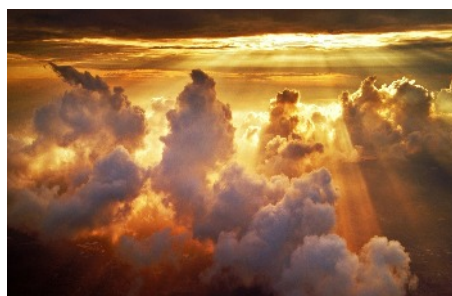
When Hashem created man, the Torah (Bereishit 1:26-27) relates that Hashem said: "Let us make man in our image, as our likeness, and let them (him) have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the animals and over the land and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

The sages are baffled as to why the Torah relates to the Creator in the plural. Why does it say *Naaseh Adam* - let us make man, rather than *E'eseh Adam* - I will make?

Rashi explains that this plural formulation reflects Hashem's humility in formally consulting with lower beings. People should learn from this that if the Creator of the world consulted with lower beings before creating

man, so too when we are in a high position we should consult with those around us and bring them into the decision making process. The lesson of *Derech Eretz* far outweighs the small risk of theological confusion.

This lesson however seems to contradict an episode hinted at in this week's Parasha. Avraham had been married to Sarah for many years. He was nearly 100 and she was nearly 90 when they were caught up in the house of the king of the Gerar - Avimelech. Avimelech took Sarah to his chambers over night. Due to the intervention of Hashem, Avimelech was not able to touch Sarah. However no one was there to witness this and soon after, Sarah became pregnant.



Our sages tell us that the *Letsanei Hador* - the jokers and scoffers of the generation all made up that the only reason Sarah was now pregnant was because she had relations with Avimelech.

This was of course false.

In order to show the scoffers of the generation that this was false Hashem made a miracle and Yitzchak's facial features resembled those of his father Avraham. Hence the Torah states Avraham *Holid Et Yitzchak*. It was clear to everyone that Avraham, not Avimelech, gave birth to Yitzchak.

How come here it seems that G-d was worried (so to speak) about the wrong image being portrayed and thus changed how Yitzchak looked but in creating man, G-d did not seem to be worried. Why the difference? There is one place that Hashem Himself intervenes.

Chazal teach us that the Jewish people were meritorious in leaving Egypt due to them not changing their language - they may have spoken the local language to the Egyptians but among themselves they spoke *Lashon Hakodesh*. This prevented them from assimilating altogether, as we recite in Hallel - *Betzet Yisrael MiMitzrayim Bet Yaakov me-am Loez*. The latter words may be interpreted as 'from a nation that speaks a foreign tongue'. Am Yisrael kept their language preferring not to take on the language of the Egyptians. But there is a further meaning to this Pasuk. Am Yisrael went out from a nation that was *Motzi Laaz* - speaking badly about them. The Egyptians claimed that Bnei Yisrael had fallen in their modesty. Egypt was the centre of immorality and they claimed that there



1. What is the significance of Yaakov and Esav being twins?
2. Rashi brings that whilst still in the womb, Esav moved about when his mother passed places of idol worship. How could he do that when we hold that the evil inclination only comes to a person after they are born?
3. When during the year did the blessings of Yitzchak take place?
4. What are the two reasons why Yaakov left home at the end of the parasha?
5. Which pasuk in Parashat Toldot tells us the power special to Yaakov and Esav?

Answers On Page 3

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was no way that Bnei Yisrael were not affected by this during their tenure in Egypt. The Pasuk continues – *Hayta Yehuda Lekodsho* – in fact the opposite was true. Am Yisrael had managed to survive morally intact. When Am Yisrael left Egypt and came to Marah, a bitter water pool, G-d showed Moshe a tree. Moshe threw the tree into the water and the water became sweetened. The Jews were then able to drink the water. The Rekenati explains based on a Zohar that in fact Moshe was asked to write Hashem's Name and throw it into the water similar to the case of a Sotah (a woman accused by her husband for being secluded with another man). All of Am Yisrael then drank from this water and they all lived – proving that they were all Kedoshim – *Sham Sam lo chok umishpat Vesham Nisahu*.

Similarly in Parashat Pinchas we find that Hashem intervened and gave a signature to every family. The Torah relates the families by their names; "*Bnei Reuven Chanoch Mishpachat HaChanochi*". Rashi asks, why does the Torah add a "*Hey*" to the beginning of each family name and a "*Yud*" to the end? He answers, because the nations of the world were ridiculing Bnei Yisrael by saying, "Why are you tracing your ancestry to your Shevatim? Are you under the impression that the Mitzrim were not promiscuous with your mothers?? If they controlled Bnei Yisrael by forcing them to work, they surely had relations with Bnot Yisrael! So all of you are really descendants of Egyptians!" Therefore Hashem added a "*Hey*" to the beginning of each family name and a "*Yud*" to the end, using the name of Hashem – "*Kah*" – as a testimony that the Jewish women in Mitzrayim were not promiscuous.

In creating man, Hashem was adamant to teach Derech Eretz by telling Moshe to write "let Us make man" and those that made the wrong conclusion would make the wrong conclusion and not learn from the moral. However when it came to taking care of the *Kavod* (honour) of His people, He is very clear and leaves no room for doubt! *Eleh Toldot Yitzchak Ben Avraham – Avraham Holid Et Yitzchak*. It was Avraham that bore Yitzchak, and Hashem changed Yitzchak's entire features to be compatible with this so that there would be no room for confusion. Over the past three thousand years we have stayed strong, through thick and thin. In our generation we have merited the gathering of the exiles. There are still trials and tribulations ahead. But one thing is for sure and has Hashem's stamp on it – we are a Holy Nation, we are His Chosen Nation and we will never be forsaken.



RABBI MASHIACH KELATY

AFTERSHOCK

Yitzchak entreated Hashem... Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him, and his wife Rivkah conceived. (25:21)

Can we even imagine how difficult it must have been for Yitzchak and Rivkah to be barren for twenty years?

It comes as no surprise when we are told that both of them prayed so fervently and intensely for a child.

Rashi explains that Hashem responded specifically to Yitzchak's Avinu's prayer, as opposed to that of his wife, Rivkah Imeinu. In addition, he explains that the root of the word, va'ye'etar, "and he entreated," is the word atar, which denotes abundance. The sense of the pasuk is that Yitzchak prayed abundantly – every which way, in order to effect a positive response from the Almighty. Why was it necessary to pray so hard in every manner possible?

Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zl, gives us a powerful – almost frightening – insight into the concept and efficacy of prayer and its far-reaching implications. Rashi teaches us

that on the day that Eisav went out l'tarbut raah, (left the fold and publicly displayed his true malevolent character), Avraham Avinu died. The Patriarch was originally supposed to live five more years – to age 180. He died prematurely, so that he should not be privy to the infamy wrought by his evil grandson. This means, explains Rav Yosef Chaim, that Yitzchak and Rivkah's prayers had severe ramifications for the Patriarch. Had the prodigal twins been born five years later, Avraham could have lived out his entire pre-determined lifespan. Their prayer – if accepted – would be the indirect cause of

What a powerful lesson this is for us. We all pray and, while Hashem certainly listens to each and every prayer, the reply is not always, in our limited perception, positive. Sometimes, the answer is "no!" We have difficulty understanding His ways, but, He has reasons for everything.

This idea, continues Rav Sonnenfeld, is underscored in the pasuk in Ashrei – Retzon yireiav yaaseh, v'es shavaatam yishma v'yoshieim, "The will of those who fear Him, He will do; and their cry He will hear, and save them." This verse seems redundant. With the above, we understand that there are times when we ask for something which we ultimately might regret or which will eventually cause us pain. The pasuk teaches us that Hashem listens twice – before and after – we ask for something. At first, it is good. Then we realize – or become aware – that the ramifications are not good. We pray again. He listens – once again.

There was a certain philanthropist who would spend Succot every year with his family in Yerushalayim, where he was besieged with people seeking his help. While he usually took care of the contributions himself, this year he had hired a gabbai to disburse the charitable funds. He figured that this way he would have more time to listen personally to each person's needs. He would hand each person a card with a code denoting a specific amount of money. There were a total of five cards. While they represented clearly defined amounts, the gabbai had the right to render his own decision if he felt that his employer

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Avraham's premature demise.

This is an extremely sobering revelation! We see now why Yitzchak had to pray with such fervour. He was not simply asking for a child. It was much more. He did not know this, but Hashem, Who knows all, was well aware of the difficulty of this decision.

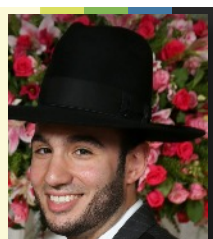
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had underestimated the gravity of the situation.

The weeks went by, and the process went along smoothly. One day, a distinguished rabbi came to plead on behalf of his sick nephew. With tears in his eyes, he explained how his twenty-two year old nephew had been born with a brain tumour which, at the time, seemed non life-threatening. Over the years, it had shifted and now had to be removed. The surgery, which was dangerous and difficult, could only be performed in America. It was a fortune, and there was no insurance. Could he, please, help? Without the surgery, his nephew, who had recently become engaged, had only three months to live.

The philanthropist himself was moved to tears. He immediately gave the rabbi a card indicating by code that the gabbai should extend all courtesies to this man and give him significantly beyond the usual amount. He wanted to make sure that the surgery and all ensuing costs would be addressed. He never told his gabbai to overrule him, but, this time, he hoped that he would.



HALACHA
RABBI ADAM MATHER
Mi K'Amcho

Toys & Games On Shabbat (Series)

Wind-up Toys

It is Biblically prohibited to wind up a stopped watch on Shabbat although there is a machloket as to the reason. The Chayei Adam rules that it is prohibited as tikun mana (fixing an object) and the majority of poskim agree. The winding is considered an act of

The next day the gabbai came to his employer with an incredible story. "Twenty-four years ago, my wife and I lived in an apartment. We had two children, a two year old and a three month old. One day, a terrible fire broke out in the apartment. My wife thought I had escaped with both of our children. When we looked at each other and realized that the baby was still sleeping in the apartment, we became hysterical. The firemen would not let us return to the apartment, claiming it was too dangerous. We would never emerge alive. It was Hashgachah that a bus returning from Tel Aviv stopped in front of the blazing apartment, at the behest of one of the passengers. This man ran out of the bus and, after assessing the situation, ignored everyone, ran to the rear of the building, climbed the fire escape and, with Hashem's help, saved my baby's life. That man was the father of this young man whose life is in danger. Twenty-four years ago, he saved my child's life. Now, I have the opportunity to repay this favour. I beg you to allow me to give him whatever he needs."

repair, as a clock or a watch are meant to run continuously and are therefore in a "broken" state when they have stopped. On this basis, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ruled that it is permissible to wind up a motorized toy on Shabbat as it is unlike a watch for two reasons. Firstly, winding a watch sets it for a long period of time whereas a toy runs only for a very short time before stopping again. Secondly, whereas a watch that has stopped is considered broken, one would not say the same of a wind-up toy that has stopped and the prohibition of tikun mana doesn't apply to something that is not broken. This is the position of the majority of poskim.

The Chazon Ish, however, disagrees with the Chayei Adam and held that the prohibition of winding a watch was due to boneh as one is "bringing to life" a piece of machinery that is "dead". On this basis, one would be prohibited from winding up a toy just as one is prohibited from winding a stopped watch.

The philanthropist needed no encouragement and gave his gabbai a blank check to cover all expenses. We do not know why things happen the way they do. We live through what seems to be an isolated experience, only to discover many years later that it was an act of Providence to enable us to merit further deliverance. We must remember that nothing occurs in a vacuum and without reason. Hashem is the Source of all activity, and it is His way of calling to us. We should listen and respond accordingly.

May our prayers be heard, and may we know for what to pray.

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1. Twins represent the idea of partners who work together. The mazal for the month of Sivan is Teumim - twins, and represents unity as seen in that month when there is the giving of the Torah. The partnership here should have been like Yisaschar and Zevulun with Esav working in this physical world to help support Yaakov with his spiritual pursuits.

2. The Gur Aryeh answers that this push and move to evil was not because of his evil inclination but was because of his evil nature that naturally was drawn to these places.

3. Rashi implies that this took place on Pesach and therefore Yitzchak asked for two goats. However, in some Rosh Hashana Machzorim before the blowing of the shofar they bring a Zohar that says these blessings took place on Rosh Hashana.

4. Yaakov left as instructed by his father to go and look for a wife. However, the reason why his mother wanted him to go away was because she was scared that Esav would try and kill him for taking away his brachot.

5. "Hakol kol Yaakov ve hayadayim yedei Esav" – the power of the Jews is in speech, specifically tefilla, while the power of Esav is in action, by the sword.

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Mazal Tov!

- Natalie and Joel Braham on the brit on their son Eliyahu Yosef Chaim.
- Rabbi Saul Kelly & his wife Shoshana on the Barmitzva of their son Naftali last week.

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