

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



EVERY STEP COUNTS!

It was a scorching hot day, and Avraham was recovering from his Brit Mila.

The Torah relates what happens next: "And he lifted his eyes and saw, and behold, three men were standing beside him, and he saw and he ran toward them from the entrance of the tent, and he prostrated himself to the ground. (Bereshit 18:2)

The Torah seems to go out of its way to emphasize and explain in depth this whole episode. Why are we told that he lifted his eyes? Why the stress on "and he saw"? Why the description of him running and prostrating?

Tests play a great part in Avraham's life.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot relates how Avraham was tested ten times and surpassed them all.

From the moment we are really introduced to Avraham we are told about his tests.

Two of his most famous tests were the leaving of his home to go towards Eretz Yisrael (Lech Lecha) and the Akeida – binding/offering of his son Yitschak.

These two tests share something in common.

When Hashem tells Avraham to go to Israel, He says "Lech Lecha" – go from "your land, from your birth place and from your father's place to the land that I will show you."

Our Sages note that the wording here seems to be superfluous. The sentence could have been shortened to – Go to Israel!

The same thing seems to occur at the Akeida.

Hashem appears to Avraham and tells him Kach – "Take your son, your only son, the son you love, Yitschak and offer him up."

Why didn't Hashem just tell him from the beginning to take Yitschak?

Rashi citing the Midrash lends insight in to the matter.

When Hashem told Avraham to take his son Avraham responded "I have two sons". Hashem said to him: "Your only one."

Avraham said: "This one is the only son of his mother, and that one is the only son of his mother."

Hashem said to Avraham: "Whom you love."

Avraham responded: "I love them both."

To which Hashem said "Yitschak".

Rashi asks, why did Hashem not disclose this to him at the beginning?

One of the explanations he offers is that it was to endear the commandment to him and to reward him for each and every expression.

When Hashem increases the command, and explains bit by bit, it is in order to increase the reward of the Tsadik.

Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz zts'l once gave an awesome Mashal to explain this.

Two people in the community had new houses; both were splendid and beautiful, but the owners referred to their houses differently.

The first received the house as a present. Unfortunately someone had passed away and had left the house as an inheritance. ►

> MAZAL TOV TO

Nigel & Marilyn Hanan
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Moshe

Allison & Geoffrey Douek
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son A.J.

THE WEEKLY QUOTE

*"Be careful with your words.
Once they are said, they can only
be forgiven, not forgotten."*

> UPCOMING EVENTS

• 10TH NOVEMBER 2017
FRIDAY NIGHT YP DINNER

• YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES PROGRAM
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Every Step Counts!

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

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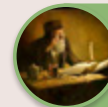


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This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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It was a beautiful house and when the first visitor came in he was impressed. Wow where did you get this from? I received it as a gift – was the reply.

The second person in the community had built his house from scratch and personally made it into the mansion it was.

When he received his first visitor, he sat him down with a coffee and started to explain to him the origins of his great project.

“I bought the land ten years ago, and then I brought four architects to survey the place. I chose the best...it took a year to draw up the plans. Then we made sure to get the most advanced building materials. We bought the stone from Jerusalem and the furniture from Italy. The marble was specially made, the lights were designed with the latest technology and we have invested a great deal in this house.”

Rabbi Yerucham explained that when we build for ourselves then we take great pride in each step we take. We want all to know the hardships we have been through in order to make our house beautiful.

Rabbi Elazar said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: The students of the wise increase peace in the world, as it says, “And all your children (Banayich) will be taught of the Eternal and great shall be the peace of your children (Banayich). Do not read banayich (your children) but bonayich (your builders).” Berachot (64)

We are all builders. We take a step by step approach to life, building our destiny. We must be proud of the destiny we have built.

Avraham was in pain on the third day of his Brit Mila, nevertheless his eyes were lifted, he wanted guests, he looked, he saw and he

ran towards them, each action a part of the building, each action warranting great reward.

When Hashem first appeared to Avraham and told him to go to Israel, He could have simply said go to Israel. But He wanted to stress that He understands that there were levels to this test; leaving his country, leaving his birthplace, leaving his fathers house, each level was appreciated and each level would be rewarded.

Similarly when Hashem commands Avraham regarding the Akeida He stresses, your son, your only son Yitschak – for He wants to bring out the idea that each level is cause for reward, each action and thought in the fight to serve Hashem will be rewarded.

Life's tests are many, but we should be assured that we will be rewarded for every action we take towards the servitude of Hashem. ■

RABBI YEHOANATHAN SALEM - SHALOM LAAM DIASPORA

DVAR
TORAH



THE BEST IN THE WORLD!

The beginning of the perashah relates how, following Avraham Avinu's circumcision, three angels came to visit him. After having been served their meal, the angels enquired of Avraham: “Where is Sarah, your wife?” He answered that she was in the tent, meaning, that she was attending to the matters of the home.

What was the purpose of the angels posing such a question to Avraham? Being angels, they certainly knew where she was, and Avraham also knew. Our sages tell us that the angel's motive was to make Sarah even more beloved to Avraham, her husband. He knew that his wife was the personification of modesty and privacy, shunning the limelight. However, now that he was questioned about his wife's

whereabouts, he was made to understand that she was more private than any other woman. Other women would have been there serving their guests, while Sarah chose to remain behind the scenes. After he realised this and verbalised the answer, he internalised that her real beauty was that she was more modest than any other woman.

Every woman wants to feel that she is unique in her husband's eyes and “the best in the world.” This is part of her natural makeup. It is therefore incumbent upon her husband to generate that feeling that he considers her to be the most exceptional woman in the world. How can a man achieve this? By giving her the three “A”s: Attention, Appreciation and Affection. Firstly, a man must work at giving his wife attention, constantly acknowledging that he is aware of her. Secondly, he must show appreciation for all the kindnesses that she does, however small they may seem. Moreover, he should tell her sincerely: “You are the dearest present that G-d has given me in my entire life”. Lastly, he must show her affection, to intensify their relationship and their feelings towards each other.

“Many daughters (of Israel) have succeeded, but you have surpassed them all” (Eshet Chayil, Mishlei 31:29). When the man truly feels this way about his spouse, she will intuitively detect this. The more she feels it, the more her emotional focus will be directed towards him. She will then find within herself the ability to strengthen, encourage and inspire him to higher goals and aspirations. Often, a man's ability to initiate and to attain is stunted by his lack of belief in his capabilities. When he receives an injection of emotional strength from his wife, though, his belief in his ability to achieve his aspirations soars. No boundaries or obstacles will limit his rising and achieving, especially and most importantly, in spiritual endeavours and goals.

May we be granted the sense and understanding to work on making our spouses feel “the best in the world”, thereby strengthening our relationships and commitment in marriage. **Shabbat shalom** ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI YOSSEF DOV SOLOVEITCHIK OF BRISK

"THE AUTHOR OF BEIT HALEVI"

Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik was truly one of the greatest and most amazing personalities that Lithuanian Jewry has given to the Jewish people. Stories concerning this Tzaddik and Gaon abound. People speak of his genius, sharp intellect, integrity, and finesse, and especially about his good heart, for he had a heart of gold.

The son of Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Halevi Soloveitchik (who was the grandson of the Gaon of the generation, Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin), Rabbi Yosef Dov was born in 5580 (1820). From childhood, it was obvious that he was destined for greatness. People say that when he was seven years old, he already completely knew several chapters in tractates Nashim and Nezikin with the commentary of the Rambam.

He entered the renowned Volozhin yeshiva at a young age, and there he became famous for his keen intelligence. The Rosh Yeshiva and his great uncle, Rabbi Yitzchak (the son of Rabbi Chaim, the founder of the Volozhin yeshiva), rejoiced over his presence and said of him, "This boy is destined to become great." In fact, sometime afterwards Rabbi Yosef Dov became very great in Torah, and while still young he was named as the Rosh Yeshiva of the Volozhin yeshiva. Several reasons forced him to quit this position after ten years, whereupon he was named as Rav of the town of Slutsk.

By nature, Rabbi Yosef Dov was a man of truth. He never demonstrated any partiality towards anyone, and he fought against every powerful and wealthy person who wanted to lord it over people. One day in Slutsk, it happened that a Reformer (a completely dishonorable man) was called up to the Torah. He ascended the Bimah and began to recite the blessing for the Torah reading with the intonation of a religious, G-d fearing Jew: "...Who has chosen us from among all the peoples and given us His Torah."

Upon hearing this, Rabbi Yosef Dov began to laugh. He said, "He certainly did not recite this blessing in vain, for if the Torah had been given to the other peoples, he would have felt obliged to carry it out in its smallest detail so he could be viewed as a perfect goy! However since the Torah was given to Israel, he feels free to reject its yoke, and that's why he said the blessing with such sincerity by emphasizing, 'and given us His Torah' - to us, not to non-Jews - because he doesn't feel obliged to carry it out!"

In addition to his greatness in Torah, Rabbi Yosef Dov had a caring heart that was open to all who were poor or dejected. He faithfully cared for the needs of the community and did much for the city's poor. During one year of scarcity, he established an organization called "Food for the Poor" which he himself directed. He went from house to house collecting money for the needy, and his home was open wide to the downhearted and every soul in pain. Even when he himself was lacking, he spent his last cent on Tzedakah.

After the departure of Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin (the Rav of Brisk) for the Holy Land, the leaders of the Brisk community came to ask Rabbi Yosef Dov to take his place as their Rav, to which he agreed.

Rabbi Yosef Dov was accorded great honor in Brisk, and his fame spread throughout the Jewish world as a Rav par excellence. In Brisk he found rest and tranquility for his disquieted soul, and he was able to study Torah in peace and also write his marvelous four-part collection of responsa, Beit Halevi, and a commentary entitled Yad Halevi.

After a brief illness, Rabbi Yosef Dov died on Iyar 4, 5652 (1892). He not only left behind his books, but also his children, who themselves were great in Torah. Among these was Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik, who enlightened the world through his Torah and wisdom. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

DESCRIPTION:

WHERE ON THE DOORPOST SHOULD A MEZUZA BE PLACED?

How high on the doorpost should a Mezuzah be placed?

The Ben Ish Hai (Rabbi Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909) addresses this question in Parashat Ki Tabo, where he writes, based on the ruling of the Shulhan Aruch, that the Mezuzah should be placed in the upper third of the doorpost (listen to audio recording for precise citation). One should measure the height of the doorpost, divide the height by three, and then measure the quotient from the top of the doorpost to determine the upper third. The Mezuzah should then be placed on the lower part of the upper third of the doorpost. If one placed the Mezuzah lower than the upper third, he has not fulfilled the Misva.

Does this Halacha apply if the doorframe is very high, such that one cannot reach the upper third? In such a case, if one places the Mezuzah in the upper third he will be unable to touch the Mezuzah as he walks through the doorframe, as is customarily done. Should the Mezuzah nevertheless be placed in the upper third, or should it be placed lower down, so that it is within reach?

The Talmud Yerushalmi addresses this question and rules that in this case, the Mezuzah should be placed lower than the upper third, at the height of one's shoulders. The Shach (Rabbi Shabtai Ha'kohen, 1621-1663) and the Taz (commentary by Rabbi David Ha'levi, 1586-1667) rule in accordance with this position of the Talmud Yerushalmi. The Taz even suggests an allusion to this Halacha in the verse, "He [God] resides between his shoulders" ("U'ben Ketefav Shachen" - Debarim 33:12), indicating that the Mezuzah, which contains the Name of God, should "reside" at the height of one's shoulders.

However, although this is indeed the position taken by the Talmud Yerushalmi, the Talmud Babli makes no mention of this case, and never draws any distinction between doorframes of different heights. It thus appears that according to the Talmud Babli, one places the Mezuzah on the upper third of the doorpost regardless of its height, and this is the view of the Rambam (Rabbi Moshe Maimonides, Spain-Egypt, 1135-1204) and the Bet Yosef (work by Maran, author of the Shulhan Aruch). Hacham Ovadia Yosef indeed expresses astonishment over the fact that the Shach and the Taz prefer the Talmud Yerushalmi's view over that of the Talmud Babli, which is generally accepted as the more authoritative text as far as practical Halacha is concerned. Thus, Hacham Ovadia rules that one must place the Mezuzah in the top third of the doorpost even if it will be beyond reach. In his work Yalkut Yosef, Hacham Ovadia goes so far as to say that if one placed the Mezuzah at shoulder's height in such a case, he must remove it and affix it in the upper third of the doorpost, though without reciting a Beracha.

Summary: A Mezuzah must be placed in the upper third of the doorpost, even if the doorframe is very high and thus one will be unable to reach it. ■

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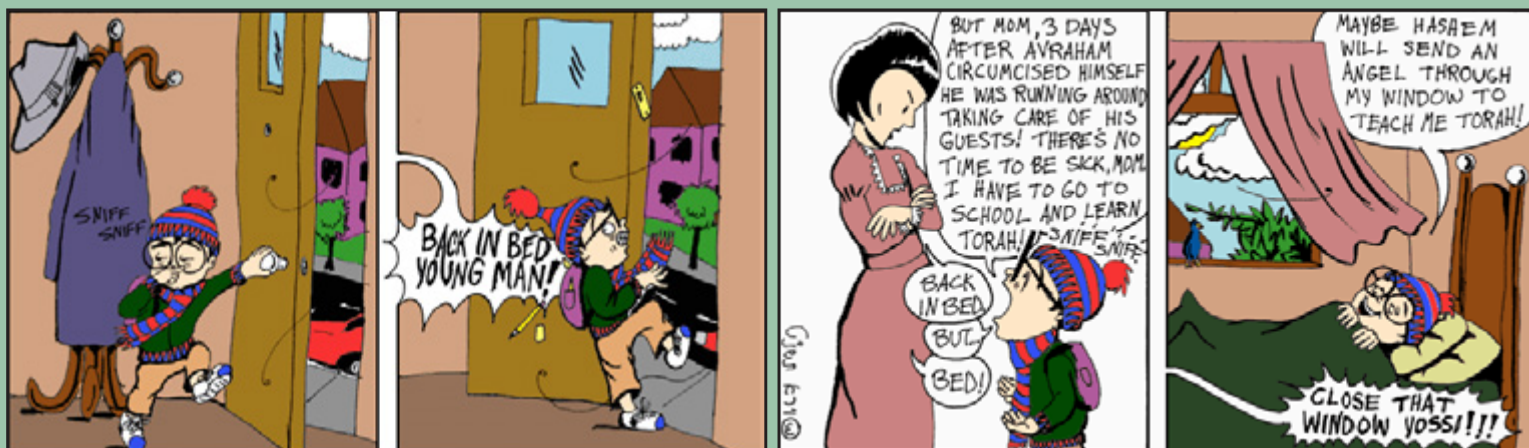
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- ❶ Why was Avraham sitting at the entrance to his tent?
- ❷ What were the missions of the three angels?
- ❸ Why did Avraham ask specifically Yishmael, and not someone else, to prepare food for the guests?
- ❹ How many angels went to Sodom?
- ❺ Why did Lot delay when he left Sodom?

Answer

❶ 18:1 - He was looking for guests. ❷ 18:2 - To announce Yitzchak's birth, to heal Avraham and to destroy Sodom. ❸ 18:7 - To train him in the performance of mitzvot. ❹ 19:1 - Two; one to destroy the city and one to save Lot. ❺ 19:16 - He wanted to save his property.

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