

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



LIVE FOREVER!

If there is one thing for certain in life, it is that everyone dies. Sounds depressing, but in actual fact we know that this world is but a corridor to the Real (Eternal) World – the world to come. Yet our Rabbis have noted that certain individuals did not die! We are told that “David Melech Yisrael Chai Vekayam” – “King David is alive and exists”. The Gemarah in Taanit (5) states that Yakov never died! Rabbi Yochanan notes that the Torah normally describes a person's death with the word “Vayamot”, as was with the case of Avraham's (Bereishit 25:8) and Yitzchak (35:29). Yet when it comes to Yakov, the Torah never uses the word “Vayamot”. Rabbi Yochanan states that this implies that Yakov never actually died. Rav Yitzchak questions the fact that Yakov never died, for the Torah explicitly states that he was eulogized, embalmed and buried? Rav Nachman responds: “It is written, ‘And you, my servant Yakov, fear not, says the L-rd, and do not tremble, O Israel. For behold, I shall save you from afar, and your descendants from the land of their captivity’ (Jeremiah 30:10). The verse equates Yakov with his descendants: just as his descendants are alive, he, too, is alive.” Thus we see that Yakov never died. How is it possible to never die? Surely this defies logic. Does that mean that Yakov is living with us today?

Let us take a closer look into the Parsha. When Yakov's days came close to the end, he called for his son Yosef and told him that he did not wish to be buried in Egypt; rather he wished to be buried in Israel. Yakov asks Yosef to swear that he will bury him in Israel. Yosef agrees saying – “Anochi Eseh Kidvarecha” – “I will do as you say.” On a deeper level, the Baalei Tosfot learn that Yosef was saying, “Father, I see that it is important for you to be buried in Israel, “Anochi Eseh Kidvarecha” – I am also going to do like you and I will also ask to be buried in Israel.” This seems a little strange. We would expect Yosef just to agree with his father's dying

demands. We would not expect him to add and say, “that's a great idea, I also wish to be buried in Israel.”

Even more strange is that later, when Yosef himself is dying, he approaches the brothers and asks them “VeHalitem Et Atsmotai” (50:25) – “When the time comes and Hashem takes Am Yisrael out of Egypt, please take my bones up to Israel with your bones.” Yosef was inadvertently advising his brothers that they too should be buried in Israel. Of course it is a merit to be buried in Israel, but what gives Yosef the right to seemingly impose this stringency on others? The concept of death is utter separation of body from soul, each one returning to its element, making its Tikun (perfection) in its specific way. The essence of life is the ability to connect to Hashem (as it is “V'Atem Hadevekim...Chayim Kulechem Hayom”).

A Tsadik is connected to Hashem in this world, and remains connected even after death. On the other hand a Rasha, even when he is alive, has this intrinsic life force missing from him. His lack of connection to Hashem causes him to be “dead” even whilst alive. It is for this reason that the righteous are called alive even after they're dead, while the wicked are called dead even while they are alive (Gemara Brachot18).

Our Rabbis taught: “There are three partners in man: The Holy One, Blessed Be He, the father and the mother. The father supplies the white substance, out of which are formed the child's bones, the sinews, the nails, the brain and the white of the eye. The mother supplies the red substance, out of which are formed the skin, flesh, hair, blood and the black of the eye. G-d provides the spirit, the soul, the beauty of the features, eyesight, the power of hearing, ability to speak and walk, understanding and intelligence.” (Gemara Nidda 30a).

Our Sages note that “Brah karah deavuh” – “A son is a physical extension of his father, and the son's soul has an effect on the father”. A son, who goes in the righteous ways of the father, continues his legacy and gives life to his father's name. In such a case it is as if the father never died, for his son continues his father's legacy, both spiritually and physically.

Yosef was Yakov's prodigy. From a young age, Yakov had invested all his Torah that he learnt in Shem VeEver into his son Yosef. Yakov saw in Yosef a future leader. He also noticed that there were many similarities between the two. Many years later when he finally got back together with Yosef, he was pleased to see how Yosef had kept up his spirituality and service of Hashem. Both Yakov and Yosef entered Galut, and both survived spiritually.▶

17th Tévet

SHABBAT BEGINS: 3:47 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 4:57 PM



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

“Don't wait! The time will never be just right.”

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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

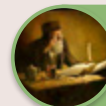
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When Yosef stated to his father that he wished to be buried in Israel just like Yakov, it was because Yosef viewed himself as an extension of Yakov. Any wish that Yakov conveyed was also a wish that Yosef desired to fulfil. Since Yosef wished to be Yakov's mirror image in the world, he too desired to be buried in Israel. When commanding his brothers to bury him in Israel, he specifically mentions that they bury his bones (Atsmotai). This was a hint to the fact that they fulfil their father's will by enacting it themselves. By burying their bones that emanate from their father, they show that they continue his legacy in the world. Yakov Avinu never died, because he passed on his entire essence to his children. All of his children were Tsadikim and carried on his legacy.

Rabbi Shalom Schwadron told a story of two religious people who took a taxi ride in Israel a few years after the passing of the Chazon Ish – R' Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz zt"l (1878-1953). They were in the cab and mentioning to each other how Bnei Brak wasn't the same since the Chazon Ish had passed away. The cab driver, a non-observant Jew, hearing this, turned around and said, "Did you say that the Chazon Ish is gone? You're wrong – you don't know what you're talking about! The Chazon Ish is still around – and I can prove it!" The two people were a bit stunned, and they were all ears.

The cab driver began his story: "My daughter was going through complicated labour and the doctors had been dealing with her for many hours. She was in agony, yet the doctors seemed helpless, and told me there was nothing

they could do. At some point an old nurse came over to me and said, 'Why don't you go to the Chazon Ish?' 'The who?' I asked. 'What is the Chazon Ish?' 'He is a great rabbi,' the nurse said. 'People go to him for advice, and to pray for them.' I asked her, 'Where does he live?' She told me, 'Just go to Bnei Brak. Once you get there, any child in the street will be able to direct you to his home.' I got into my cab and raced to Bnei Brak. In no time I was at the Chazon Ish's house. It was late at night, but he answered my knock himself. In a quiet and friendly manner he asked how he could help me. I told him about my daughter's difficulties, and how the doctors were unable to help her. He looked at me, smiled, and said, 'You can go back to the hospital – the child was just born.' He shook my hand and wished me Mazel Tov. My heart leaped with joy, but I could not believe him. I dashed back to the hospital and when I got there, sure enough, the child had already been born, exactly as he said."

The cab driver continued. "Two years later my daughter was again expecting a child. Once again she had extreme difficulties in labour. And once again the doctors despaired of a healthy birth. This time I didn't wait for the old nurse. I got into my cab, rushed to Bnei Brak, and went to the Chazon Ish. I came to the corner where I thought I remembered he lived, and just to be sure I asked a passer-by, 'Is this the home of the Chazon Ish?' The man looked at me as if I had lost my mind. 'What's the matter with you? Don't you know that the Chazon Ish passed away last year?' My heart fell. I felt as if I had lost my best friend. Illogically,

I began pleading with this total stranger. 'Please, I came to speak to him; it's an emergency. To whom should I go now?' 'People go to his kever (grave site) and pray there,' he told me. I queried as to its location, and the man pointed me in the right direction. I ran there, fell on the grave and began crying uncontrollably. I begged the Chazon Ish to pray for my daughter. 'You saved my daughter once before,' I pleaded, 'please pray for her again.' I was there a short time. Suddenly, just as I sit here now, I saw his face with that same smile. I heard him say to me, 'Mazel tov! You can go back to the hospital; the child has been born.' Startled, I got up, ran to my cab, and rushed back to the hospital. When I got there, they told me that my second grandchild had indeed been born." Then the cab driver turned to his passengers and said, "nd you say the Chazon Ish is gone!"

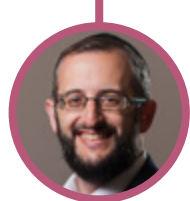
When attending a Yeshiva, you often here Yeshiva students learning out loud. One asks the other, "What does Rashi say?" "Rashi is saying....." is the answer! Rashi is alive – it is as if he is with us today. Through his Torah and teachings, his life lives on.

Dying in Judaism is far from certain. People who leave children behind them, students that go in their righteous path, as well as positive actions, live forever.

May we all merit to live forever!

■ Shabbat Shalom

RABBI RAPHY GARSON - OHR YISRAEL SHUL, THE HEART OF HERTFORDSHIRE - JROOTS, INSPIRING JEWISH JOURNEYS



THE ONLY TRUE KINDNESS IN THIS WORLD

As Yaakov takes leave of this world, he beseeches his son Yoseph with the following request "and do for me kindness and truth, please don't bury me in Egypt".

Rashi mentions that kindness one does with the dead is termed "chesed shel emet" – kindness of truth, as one does not expect any form of repayment.

The Sefer Vayomer Abraham elaborates on this them. It is norm that when a poor person approaches our door for a loan or a donation, even if we agree to give the donation, our minds are dubious of the individual asking. "Does he really need it? Will he just spend it on cigarettes? Is he legitimate cause?"

This sentiment is echoed in the Talmud: "One should be grateful to the Raamayim/Faudsters, for without them we would be sinning daily." Rashi explains that they allow us to have a defence – we turned a blind eye from giving Tzedaka because there are so many impostors.

And so it is with all other areas of kindness that we perform, doubts creep in that perhaps this is not "chesed shel emet". For most acts of chesed done during one's his life are not "pure," it carries within itself some of the complexities of human interaction. Maybe I owe him a favour and am uncomfortable in refusing him, or perhaps we think he owes me one. This corrupts what chesed is really all about. For chesed by definition is "something for nothing."

Thus the act of burying a dead person is called chesed shel emet – "true kindness." The unassuming dedicated staff that form the chevra kadisha in every community, are guaranteed that their work is "chesed shel emet". It is the truest act of kindness, since one cannot be thanked by the recipient.

Most people would not want to spend their weekend in a Beit Tahara (where the dead are prepared) or even their mornings moving a body from a morgue to the cemetery, but for the thousands of chevra kadisha volunteers worldwide, it is not about what you want to do, but rather what has to be done.

In fact the word Emet – truth, encapsulates this mitzvah. Emet is made up of three letters: Aleph, Mem and Taf.

Aleph = Aron / the casket

Mem = Mitah / the bed or final resting place.

Taf = Tachrichin / the shrouds.

We need to be grateful to those who involve themselves with this holy work.

But may it be Hahsem's will, that all those in the chevra kaddisha, should become unemployed, speedily in our days.

■ Shabbat Shalom

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI TSEMAH TSARFATI

Rabbi Tsemah Tsarfati was the leader of the Rabbanim of Tunis. He founded a great spiritual center and taught Torah to numerous students that came to imbue themselves with his wisdom. Rabbi Tsarfati renewed the study of the Gemara with the Tosafists and implanted in his students a love of study for various commentators.

On the eve of every holiday and Shabbat, he would pass by the shops and pressed merchants to close their businesses in order to tranquilly welcome Shabbat. Rabbi Tsarfati united in his person astonishing wisdom with purity and holiness. His courteousness and nobleness were well-known, to the point that even non-Jews respected and esteemed him well.

Rabbi Tsemah devoted his days and nights to the study of Torah. Yet every night, when he prepared himself to study quietly, the problem of lighting confronted him. It was difficult for him to obtain a new tallow candle or a little oil for a wick each time that he needed it.

One night, Rabbi Tsemah did not have a way to light his candle. Yet he was not about to forsake a long night of study. He went outside in the darkness, headed to the nearest bakery, and asked the baker's assistant to help him light his candle. The assistant joyfully did so, and Rabbi Tsemah began to feel reassured: Hashem had come to his aid and he had not lost hours of study in vain!

While he was walking back, the candle blew out. Rabbi Tsemah returned to see the employee and, excusing himself for bothering him, asked him to kindly light the candle once again. The candle blew out several times while on route, and each time the employee relit it. Eventually, sadness began to take hold of Rabbi Tsemah's heart. Perceiving that such was the case, the employee took the candle and brought it himself to the Rav's home in order that it not get blown out while on route. "For a commandment is a lamp and the Torah is light," and the tiny flame warmed Rabbi Tsemah's heart. He placed his hands on the head of the employee and uttered a blessing, wishing him great wealth.

One day, while Rabbi Tsemah was traveling through Istanbul on his way to Eretz Israel, Hashem placed an extremely wealthy Jew on his path – none other than the baker's assistant! In his generosity he gave the Tzaddik a donation, a sizeable amount in fact, so that he could settle peacefully in Eretz Israel and study Torah.

One year, a trying epidemic struck Tunis, producing numerous victims. Cries of distress rang out from every home. There was not one house that was not touched by illness.

Rabbi Tsemah, who could no longer tolerate seeing the suffering of his people, invited the Angel of Death to come to his Beit Midrash. His students were stunned when he signaled to them with his hand that the angel had arrived. Rabbi Tsemah rebuked the angel in front of everyone, and while holding a bag of beans in his hand, he ordered him to immediately leave the city and its inhabitants alone for as many years as there were beans in the bag.

Pushed by curiosity, one of the students dared to ask the Rav for the bag in order to count the number of beans inside. Eighty were found.

That same day, the epidemic ceased and the inhabitants of Tunis breathed easier. They had seen with their very eyes that "the Tzaddik decrees and G-d executes."

And in fact, eighty years later the epidemic once again struck the city, but Rabbi Tsemah was already in the world where only goodness reigns.

Near the end of his life, Rabbi Tsemah fell gravely ill. He suffered terribly for two years, without any remedy for his ills being found. The Jewish community implored Hashem, Who heals the sick, and begged Him to have pity on their Rav.

Rabbi Tsemah himself related that during those difficult times, the Prophet Elijah appeared to him and gave him the remedy to his sickness: If he studied Gemara and the Poskim on the eve of a Brit Milah in the home of the baby's mother, he would be healed.

Rabbi Tsemah agreed to do this, and he was quickly healed. From that day on, he wandered near the doors of the Jews of his city and was invited into each home in which a boy was born. There he prepared himself to study Torah until daybreak.

Since that time, the custom among the Jews of Tunis has been to gather a minyan of Chachamim in the home of the baby and to study until daybreak.

To the great regret of all those that loved him, Rabbi Tsemah Tsarfati passed away in Jerusalem in 5477 (1717), receiving at his death all the honors due a Tzaddik. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO EAT SOUP THAT WAS REHEATED ON SHABBAT?

A question recently arose concerning the situation of a guest who was served hot soup during Shabbat lunch. The guest was surprised to see hot soup being served on Shabbat day, as Halacha forbids reheating cold liquid on a Blech or hotplate on Shabbat, a law known as "Yesh Bishul Ahar Bishul Be'lah." It turned out that the hostess mistakenly thought that one may reheat hot soup on Shabbat, and thus accidentally violated this Halacha. The question thus arose as to whether the soup was permissible to be eaten. Generally speaking, Halacha forbids deriving benefit from prohibited acts committed on Shabbat. Seemingly, then, it would be forbidden to eat the hot soup, as one would thereby be deriving benefit from a Shabbat violation.

However, Hacham Ovadia Yosef, in his Hazon Ovadia (vol. 4, p. 422; listen to audio recording for precise citation), ruled that the soup may be eaten in this case. He writes that although food that has been prepared in prohibited fashion on Shabbat is forbidden for consumption, this applies only when the act in question is forbidden according to all authorities. When, however, the permissibility of the act is subject to a debate among the Halachic authorities, then the food is not forbidden. Hacham Ovadia writes that in such a case we may apply the rule of "Safeik De'rabbanan Le'kula" (we may act leniently in situations of doubt concerning a Rabbinic prohibition). Since deriving benefit from food cooked on Shabbat is forbidden only by force of Rabbinic enactment, the food is permissible if there is some question concerning the act that was performed. This important principle applies in the case of liquid that was reheated on Shabbat. Although the Shulhan Aruch rules that it is forbidden to reheat liquid on Shabbat, and this is the accepted Halacha, there were some Rishonim (Medieval Halachic scholars) who held that once a liquid had been cooked, it may be reheated on Shabbat even after it had completely cooled. As mentioned, we do not follow this position, but nevertheless, since this issue is subject to debate, if soup was reheated on Shabbat it does not become forbidden.

Summary: It is forbidden to reheat cold soup on Shabbat, but if one mistakenly did reheat soup, it may be eaten. ■

KidsTime

TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

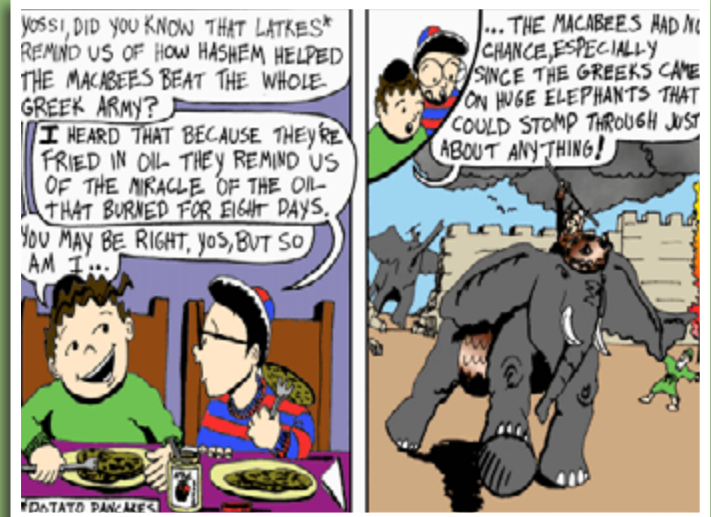
- ❶ Why was Yehuda the one to plead for Binyamin?
- ❷ What do we learn from Yosef telling his brothers "Go up to my father"?
- ❸ What two things did the brothers see that helped prove that he was really Yosef?
- ❹ Why did Binyamin weep on Yosef's neck?
- ❺ Why did Yosef send old wine to Yaakov?

- ❶ 44:32 - He was the one who took "soul" responsibility for him.
- ❷ 45:9 - We learn that Eretz Yisrael is higher than all other lands.
- ❸ 45:12 - He was circumcised like they were, and he spoke Lashon Hakodesh.
- ❹ 45:14 - Binyamin wept for the destruction of Mishkan Shilo built in Yosef's territory..
- ❺ 45:23 - Elderly people appreciate old wine.

Answer



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PARSHA PEARLS

INSIGHTS INTO THE WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 8.15PM

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