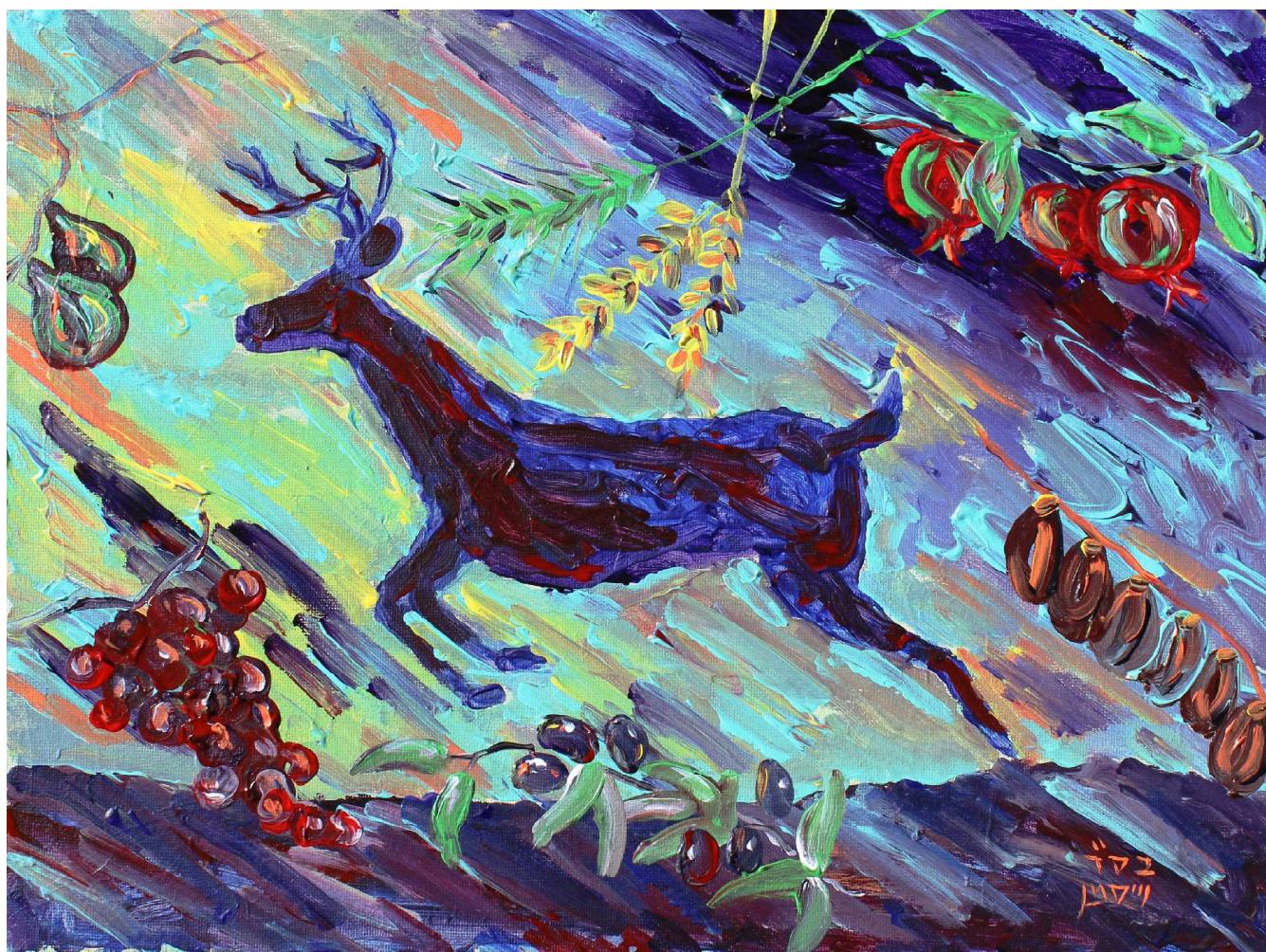


PHILOTORAH

לה'י

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' א'יליה אבוזתינו זאיליה אבוזתינו שחתולח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים, רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לפניו הפלחה, ולנפנעי מעשי טרור ואנטישמיות בישראל ובכל מקום שלהם - עם שאר חולי ישראל. אמן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel; may He facilitate the return of the last hostage body; may He end this war with success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever we are.



YERUSHALAYIM in/out times for **VAYCHI**

י"ד טבת ה'תשפ"ו • 26' 2023

4:12PM PLAG 3:44PM • 5:28PM R' Tam 6:00PM

Use the Z'MANIM link for other locales

PhiloTorah (286chi) - 1 - all at once file

Kiddush L'vana

The molad of Tevet was early Shabbat morning, December 20th, 2h 22m 10p, 1:59am.

The time from one molad to the next that is used in our Jewish Calendar is the average time it takes the Moon to cycle through its phases - from New Moon to the next New Moon. It is 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 1 cheilek (which is 3 and a third seconds).

The last opportunity for Kiddush L'vana is halfway between the current and next molad. The time is called the NIGUD, opposition. It happens at Full Moon. But remember, the calendar uses the average times, rather than the actual times.

Half of the molad is 14 days, 18 hours, 22 minutes (and a half of a cheilek, which we can ignore).

Starting with 1:59am on that Shabbat morning and adding 14 days, brings us to Shabbat morning, January 3rd. Add 18 hours and 22 minutes, brings us to 8:21pm on Motza'ei Shabbat of Parshat Vaychi (January 3rd).

That is the last op for KL of Tevet.

Motza'ei Shabbat, but not later than 8:21pm.

Motza"Sh Vayigash was the first op for those who wait for 7 days after the molad and for those who say KL specifically on Motza'ei Shabbat.

But if you missed KL this past Motza'ei Shabbat - because of clouds or any other reason - DO NOT wait for this coming Motza'ei Shabbat, because the window on that night is very small. If Motza'ei Shabbat didn't work, try Sunday night, and every night thereafter, until you are able to say KL (with a Moon clearly visible).

More About Tevet

The 29th of Kislev can fall on any day of the week except Shabbat. In fact, all dates in Kislev - the 1st through the 29th. Sometimes there is a 30th (in Shaleim & K'sidran years); sometimes there is no 30th (in Chaseir years).

The first of Tevet is either the day following the 29th of Kislev or two days after it.

In Shaleim years, 29 Kislev can be Friday, Monday, Wednesday. In K'sidran years, 29 Kislev can be Friday or Sunday. Two days later, 1 Tevet can be Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, or Tuesday.

In Chaseir years, 29 Kislev can be Sunday or Tuesday or Thursday. That means that 1 Tevet can be Monday, Wednesday, or Friday.

Putting all year-types together, we find that 1 Tevet can be Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. That's only five possible days of the week. And it is so that all 59 dates from 1 Tevet to 29 Tevet and 1 Sh'vat to 30 Sh'vat can fall on five days of the week but not on two days of the week.

Which two days of the week? There are seven pairs of days that cycle through the two months.

And then, as a result of one or two Adars in a given year, the pattern changes to four possible and three not possible. That's the LO ADU ROSH rule that applies to 295 dates of the year (out of 385 possible dates)

VAYCHI

12th of 54 sedras;
12 of 12 in B'reishit



Written on 148.33 lines (rank: 45th)

12 parshiot, 7 open and 5 closed

In addition, the first part of the sedra is the end of the previous parsha from Vayigash. Vaychi is the only sedra that does not begin at a parsha break.

85 p'sukim - ranks 44th in the Torah

1158 words - ranks 44th in the Torah

4448 letters - ranks 43rd in the Torah

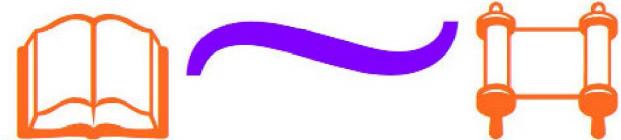
It is the shortest sedra in B'reishit

MITZVOT

None of Taryag are in Vaychi

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.



Towards Improved Layning & Davening Enunciation

The name of the sedra is made up of two syllables. The first is a VAV/PATACH which is closed by YUD/SH'VA NACH, resulting in VAY (close sounding to the English word vie). Second syllable is CHI (the CH is as in Chanuka, not Chicago and not chair). The sedra name and its first word is vay-CHI (not va-yechi and not va-y'chi).

Kohen - First Aliya - 13 p'sukim - 47:28-48:9

[47:28 (4) part of the last parsha of Vayigash] The sedra begins with Yaakov at age 147, having been in Mitzrayim for 17 years.

(Remember that Yosef was 17 when the trouble started.) The Torah tells us that Yaakov is near death and Yosef is called to his bedside. Yaakov asks Yosef that he (Yaakov) should not be buried in Egypt but rather in Me'arat HaMachpeila. Yosef agrees - Yaakov asks Yosef to swear to it.

SDT: Why would Yaakov insist that Yosef swear - didn't he trust him?

Among other reasons, the oath might prove necessary in obtaining permission from Par'o for the funeral. Even if Par'o would have been inclined to say "no", he would respect an oath. This, according to the Midrash, because Yosef had sworn not to divulge a particular secret about Par'o (that he, Yosef, knew more languages than Par'o - a fact that would not impress Par'o's subjects favorably). Par'o could not say to Yosef, "I don't care what promises you made", etc.

Another commentary suggests that Yaakov feared that Yosef might not be happy with Yaakov being buried with Leah, while his mother Rachel was buried by herself, on the road.

EFRAYIM = 331. MENASHE = 395.

EFRAYIM UMNASHE = 732.

REUVEN = 259. SHIMON = 466.

REVEN V'SHIMON = 731.

EFRAYIM UMNASHE KIR-UVEN

V'SHIMON YIHYU LI. K' means like.

732 is like (very close) to 731.

[P> 48:1 (22)] Sometime later, Yosef is informed (by Efrayim who regularly ministers to and learns Torah with Yaakov) that Yaakov is sick ("at death's door"). Yosef brings his two sons with him to Yaakov (so that they can receive his blessing). Yaakov is strengthened by the news of Yosef's impending visit (Thus is the power of Bikur Cholim).

A-s'nat, wife of Yosef - The Midrash says that she was Dina's daughter, who was raised by Potifar in Egypt. The Midrash also says that when Potifar's wife accused Yosef of improper advances, it was A-s'nat who privately told Potifar the truth, thus saving Yosef's life.

Yaakov tells Yosef of G-d's promises to him and his descendants and of Rachel's death and burial. He then assures Yosef that his two sons, Efrayim and Menashe, will be equal to Yaakov's sons. (This in essence, is the double portion of inheritance that Yaakov is giving to "his heart's firstborn", the elder of his beloved Rachel's sons.) Then Yaakov takes notice of the boys and asks Yosef to present them so that he can bless them.

Levi - Second Aliya - 7 p'sukim - 48:10-16

Yaakov's eyesight fails him in his old age (as did Yitzchak's - Yaakov's failing eyesight can be blamed on his crying

for 22 years for Yosef, as stated in the Midrash) and Yosef brings his sons and moves them towards Yaakov, who kisses and hugs them. Yosef then takes his sons off of Yaakov's lap, so that he can present them formally to Yaakov, for their brachot. After bowing before Yaakov, Yosef carefully and formally presents his sons to Yaakov with Menashe on his left and Efrayim on his right so that Yaakov's hands will rest on the appropriate heads for the blessings. Yaakov switches his hands, resting his right on Efrayim's head and his left on Menashe's. Then Yaakov blesses Yosef by blessing his (Yosef's) children with the famous words HAMAL'ACH HA'GO'EL OTI...

Yaakov's reference to fish in his bracha for Efrayim and Menashe (and all Jewish children in perpetuity) is explained on at least two levels. Fish are prolific; Yaakov was blessing his descendants that they should become a large nation. It is also known that the EYIN HARA has no hold over fish (which also had something to do with their survival during the MABUL without being in the Ark). And this too was part of his bracha. (Side point: The Yiddish name Fischel (fish) is often paired with Efrayim; obviously, this bracha is the source of that name-pair.)

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 48:17-22

When Yosef realizes that Yaakov has switched hands (and has thus "favored" Efrayim over the firstborn Menashe) he gets (understandably) very upset and tries to "correct" the positions of his father's hands. Yaakov resists, explaining to Yosef that he is fully aware of what he is doing; and that Efrayim will indeed surpass his brother in greatness.

On this same day, Yaakov blesses them by saying that the traditional blessing for sons shall be: "May G-d make you like Efrayim and Menashe."

Think about this... Imagine the panic that Yosef must have felt when he witnessed the potential of "family history repeating itself". How can Yaakov do what he was doing when he was painfully aware of the consequences of favoring one son and of the jealousy that it creates (can create).

That's the point! It CAN create jealousy, but it need not. It depends upon the character of the people involved. A parent can "tiptoe" around just so long, making everything equal and even, in the hopes that jealousy will not emerge. But that kind of behavior just postpones the jealousy, it does not eliminate it. Parents have to help build the character of their children, so that they will develop good MIDOT,

personality traits.

Perhaps Yaakov Avinu saw that his two grandsons possessed the qualities that "allowed" him to do what he did. Two major personality traits that a person should strive for (and that parents should try to help develop in their children) are: not being boastful when in a superior position and not being jealous or resentful when in an inferior position. Efrayim was destined to become greater than his older brother Menashe. These two brothers were such that Efrayim did not lord himself over Menashe, nor was Menashe jealous of Efrayim's prominence. What greater blessing can a father give his sons than "May G-d make you like Efrayim and Menashe!"

Yaakov then tells Yosef that he (Yaakov) is about to die; that G-d will be with the family-nation; that He will restore them to the Land of their ancestors; and that he (Yaakov) has provided Yosef with an additional portion of the Land.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 49:1-17

[P> 49:1 (4)] Yaakov gathers his sons around him with intentions of revealing to them "the end of days" (knowing the future will ease the pain of the difficult times ahead) - but it is not to be!

SDT: Egyptian exile would have been more tolerable, had our ancestors known about this 190 year "grace period". This is the KEITZ (KUF (100) + TZADI (90) = 190) that Yaakov wanted to reveal to his sons. But this he was not permitted to reveal it. (Of course, this is not the "regular" (P'shat) meaning of the pasuk, but it operates on a REMEZ level.)

(The blessings, often mixed with fatherly criticism, combine to become the brachot of the Tribes.)

Yaakov's words about Reuven speak of his unrealized potential to have been the leader and the indiscretion that lost him the position of leadership.

[P> 49:5 (3)] Yaakov refers to the violence of Shimon and Levi. He curses their anger - not them.

Important lesson for us all, from this. Don't say to your son, "BAD BOY!" - he'll begin to believe it, and that's destructive. Say, "You did a bad thing." It might not seem to be so important, but it is. Especially, because we don't say these kind of things once, but rather countless times over many years.

[P> 49:8 (5)] Yehuda receives the brightest words - he is promised the leadership and respect of his brothers.

[P> 49:13 (1)] Zevulun is given the blessing of prosperity...

[P> 49:14 (2)] and Yissachar will carry

the burden of Torah scholarship. (The image of a donkey indicates perseverance, strong will - qualities that are suitable for a scholar.) Together, these two tribes will form a partnership that will be mutually beneficial.

[S> 49:16 (3)] Dan will be the judge (and upholder of the honor, the one that will avenge Israel by fighting the P'lishtim) of the people. Rashi says that this is a prophecy about Shimshon, who was from the tribe of Dan.

This parsha and Aliya finish with the famous 3-word pasuk: To Your salvation, I hope, HaShem.

When a person sneezes, he is supposed to say **LISHU'ATCHA KIVITI HASHEM (LKY)**. This is based on the traditional understanding that prior to Yaakov Avinu, there was no sickness before one died. Rather, the soul just left the body as it had been breathed in, through the nostrils, with a sneeze, so to speak. Yaakov acknowledged the "gift" of being sick before death, so that one can put his affairs in order. A sneeze is no longer a sign of death, but just a reminder of illness (sometimes a symptom and sometimes just a reminder). This is why people say **ASUTA** or **LIVRIYUT**, or something like that, to a person who sneezes. But the sneezer himself should quote the words of Yaakov Avinu. And even though people are more familiar with ASUTA (or whatever someone else says when

someone sneezes), it is closer to a requirement for the sneezer himself to say **LISHU-ATCHA KIVITI HASHEM**.

Heard long ago from Rabbi Y. L. Ginsberg z"l. The context is also instructive. A group of NCSY advisors was preparing for a Shabbaton/Convention. Everyone was busy. Someone sneezed. Rabbi G apologized for interrupting but said he HAD TO tell us this vort about sneezing. The lesson was three-fold. The DT about sneezing itself. The fact that even a sneeze can trigger one to share Torah with others. And the fact that even busy people need a time out for Torah every so often. And maybe a fourth lesson - that words of Torah that came not only from the brain but from the heart and soul also, and went to the brain, heart, and soul of those listening - can be remembered more than 50 years later.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya **- 8 p'sukim - 49:19-26**

[S> 49:19 (1)] Gad will be blessed with good fortune (this is Malbim's interpretation which is by far the most optimistic of the various understandings of the pasuk).

[S> 49:20 (1)] Asher's blessing also seems to be that of prosperity (and/or eloquence).

[S> 49:21 (1)] Naftali is likened to a

swift deer (or spreading tree, according to other opinions) and is blessed with eloquence (and probably, prosperity).

[S> 49:22 (5)] Yosef's blessing is extensive and shows Yaakov's special love for him. It is the bracha of Avraham to Yitzchak and of Yitzchak to Yaakov that Yaakov gives to Yosef, son of Rachel.

A fruitful son is Yosef.

BEIN PORAT (YOSEF) = 2+50 (52) + 80+ 200+400 (680) = 732. The Gimatriya of Efrayim and Menashe: 1+80+ 200+ 10+ 40 (Efrayim) + 6 (and) + 40+50+ 300+ 5 (Menashe) = 732

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 27 p'sukim - 49:27-50:20

[S> 49:27 (33)] Binyamin is blessed with success (sometimes qualified). Rashi mentions prophecies of Shaul and Mordechai & Esther.

These are Yaakov's words to his 12 sons and he blessed them.

Commentaries point out that Yaakov's words don't always seem to be blessings - but they do contain implied blessings and prophecies.

Yaakov tells his sons that he is about to die and wants to be buried in Me'arat HaMachpeila. (He does not make them swear as Yosef did, since they might not be able to fulfill an oath.)

Yaakov "dies". The wording in the

Torah is indirect - the words death or dying are not used - indicating the special "quality of life" (strange term to use here, but purposely chosen) even in the death of Yaakov Avinu.

The Torah next tells of the preparation for burial. Yosef tells Par'o of his oath and receives permission for the funeral procession to Canaan. The funeral and mourning for Yaakov is elaborate and extensive.

When they return to Egypt, the brothers are filled with guilt feelings and offer themselves to Yosef as slaves. Once again, Yosef assures the brothers that all that has happened is G-d's will and for the best.

Yosef cries because the brothers are falsely accusing him of planning to take revenge against them.

Interesting/sad/ironic (choose the adjective you like best) that part of their original problem was false accusations against his brothers.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 50:21-26

Yosef promises to support his brothers and families. Yosef lives to 110 (less than his brothers - punishment for hearing his father humiliated by being referred to as "your servant" and not objecting - so say sources). Yosef has helped raise even his great-grandchildren. He tells his brothers that G-d will eventually take them out of Egypt,

restore them to Eretz Yisrael, and he asks them to remember him and take his remains with them when they leave. Yosef (and the brothers) dies; thus B'reishit, the book of the Avot & Imahot, ends.

According to Seder HaDorot HaKatzar, the brothers died over a period of 22 years, in this order: Yosef, Shimon, Yehuda, Reuven, Binyamin, Yissachar, Asher, Zevulun, Gad, Dan, Naftali, Levi.



CHAZAK, CHAZAK, V'NITCHAZEIK
after Sh'vi'i (or Acharon).

(Some say the person with the CHAZAK Aliya should not say ChCh"V. This is so because it might be considered a HEFSEIK - interruption - between the Torah reading and the final b'racha. Possibly, too, ChCh"V might be said by everyone else, to/for the one who gets the Chazak Aliya.)

Chatzi Kaddish, then the final 4 p'sukim are repeated for the Maftir.

Although standing for the Aseret HaDibrot is problematic, there does not seem to be an objection for standing for CHAZAK at the end of each Sefer of the Torah. With the Aseret HaDibrot, Chazal feared people saying that standing for them while sitting for the rest of the reading indicates that the Aseret HaDibrot

were commanded by G-d and the rest of the Torah by Moshe Rabeinu. To debunk that mistaken notion, it is best to either sit for all reading or stand for all reading. No such fear with Az Yashir or Chazak.

Haftara - 12 p'sukim - Melachim Alef 2:1-12

Short Haftara for a short sedra.

Just as the sedra tells us of the father on his deathbed giving instructions and blessings to his sons, and requesting an act of Chesed, so too do we find King David at death's door, instructing his son Shlomo concerning matters of Faith, State, and Chesed.

Rabbi Julian G. Jacobs z"l, in A Haftara Companion, makes the following observation. In the sedra, the term used for Yaakov's passing on is "to sleep with his fathers", rather than the simpler, "to die". So too for David HaMelech in the haftara. In each case, the father had a worthy son to continue in his ways, and this is a form of "living on" that perhaps explains the absence of the verb, to die.

As there are similarities between the sedra and its haftara, so are there contrasts. Yaakov speaks to all his children, comforted by their having been reunited and confident in the fact that they all will continue with the way of life of Yaakov, and Yitzchak and Avraham before him. David is speaking to only one of his sons and

dies knowing of the treachery of other sons and people whom he thought to be friends. Still, a good choice of a haftara for Vaychi.

Bringing the Prophets to Life

**Weekly insights into the Haftara
by Rabbi Nachman (Neil) Winkler**

Author of Bringing the Prophets to Life (Gefen Publ.)

Blessings & Warnings

VAYCHI - 12 p'sukim

- Melachim Alef 2:1-12

This week's haftara taken from the open perek of Sefer M'lachim Alef, records David HaMelech's address to his son, Shlomo, Israel's successor to the throne. We have no question as to why Chazal chose the specific reading, as it closely echoes the theme of our parasha - the farewell messages given by Ya'akov to his sons. Our Rabbis saw the patriarch's blessings to his sons as a fitting counterpart to the advice of the founder of Israel's first dynasty to his son.

Nonetheless, we are confounded each year by the contrast between the messages of our founding fathers - more than their similarity. As opposed to the beautiful blessings granted to most of Yaakov's sons, the final message given by David is not a

blessing but, primarily, a warning. We are rightfully troubled by the UNinspiring words of Israel's monarch filled with the possible threats to the throne in the future. In previous articles, I discussed the clear difference between a father's blessing to ones' sons and a ruler's concern for a nation's future.

It is, therefore, fully understandable why David reminds Shlomo to reward the family of his faithful friend, Barzilai HaGil'adi, who remained true to the throne during the widespread rebellion that forced David to flee from Yerushalayim. Similarly, it is logical why he warns his successor not to trust Shim'i ben Geira, of the tribe of Binyamin, who publicly cursed David during the King's flight from Jerusalem and who led his tribesmen against David during the rebellion.

However, what we might see as most troubling, is David's treatment of Yo'av ben Tz'ruya, his own nephew, who served as a loyal general of the King, leading the army to many victories against the enemies of the throne (including his victory over Avshalom's rebellion) and who had actually saved David's life - more than once! The resolution to this troubling decree of David will better explain the King's fears and will, I believe, give us a greater appreciation of this founder of the Judean dynasty.

As outstanding a leader that Yo'av was, and despite his relationship to his family, Yo'av was, clearly, a powerful figure who quite often, disagreed with the King and, with that, disobeyed the royal demands. While David hoped to make peace with his domestic opponents, thereby creating a calmer, united society, Yo'av saw any of David's adversaries as challengers to the throne and threats to the nation. And, as a result, he chose to destroy them.

- He (and his brother Avishai) urged David to assassinate Sha'ul when he had the opportunity - but David would not so do, thus avoiding the possible civil war.
- He disregarded the King's command to protect Sha'ul's general, Avner, who was negotiating with David to hand Shaul's army to him - thereby uniting the tribes under David alone. Instead, Yo'av regarded Avner as a dangerous rival - and so, he murdered him.
- When Avshalom rebelled against his father, Yo'av was told to "be gentle" in handling the rebel. Ignoring David's charge, Yo'av, who saw Avshalom as a dangerous enemy, murdered the King's successor.
- And when peace finally returned to Israel, when the tribes agreed to place David back on his throne, the returned monarch wisely chose

Ammasa ben Yeter, the general who had led the rebellious army, to be his new commander-in-chief - an act that would further unite the fractured nation. But Yo'av decided that he was a traitor, and killed him, as well.

So, this was Yo'av: a hero, a general, a defender of his King... and one who soon joined the rebellion of Adoniya, to remove David from the throne.

Do we now better understand David's harsh final words to his successor? A King who needed to protect his nation from civil war and rebellion, was wise enough to know who were the real dangers that could take down the young regent and threaten the very future of the new dynasty.

David was neither harsh nor vindictive; rather, he was a wise and compassionate leader who placed the welfare of his nation above personal sentiment. *



The fun way to go over the weekly sedra with your children, grandchildren, Shabbat guests

VAYIGASH

 and one Unexplained

There's a key next to a two dollar bill with a picture of Thomas Jefferson on it. So you have KI with (IM, spelled wrong, but...) TAM.

VAYCHI



Locks on door is for the "super-closed" nature of the beginning of VAYCHI (see Sedra Summary for details) • The bed is mentioned three times in the sedra. It is a hospital bed in the PP because Yaakov was sick, on his deathbed • The crossed hands of the referee represent Yaakov's hands... for Efrayim and Menashe • Mufasa is the Lion King is for Yehuda • as is the lion cub, Simba. Yehuda's bracha refers to him as a GUR (cub), ARYEI and LAVI (lions at different stages of their lives). • The wolf is Binyamin. Binyamin Ze'ev is a common combination of names • The faucet is for Reuven (based on what Yaakov said to him) • The Israel Postal

Authority emblem is for Naftali. Naftali Tzvi Hirsh, or two of those three names often come together • The snake is for Dan • So is the snake attacking the horse • The donkey is for Yissachar • The ship is for Zevulun • The bread is for Asher • The math-like statement stands for Efrayim and Menashe are like (approx. equal to) Reuven and Shimon. Numerically, E&M = 732 and R&S = 731 • grand/father blessing his grand/son (the words of the bracha come from Vaychi) • Pyramids remind us where the sedra takes place and where the end of B'reishit finds us. In Mitzrayim • Picture of Kever David, refers to the haftara • So too, IR DAVID, mentioned in the haftara • The cluster of grapes and Donkey, Shrek's donkey friend, are for part of Yehuda's bracha (49:11) - OSRI LAGEFEN IRO... "He loads down his donkey with a [single] grapevine..." • ME'ARAT HAMACH-PEILA, KEVER RACHEL, SHILOH (all from the sedra) • gavel for DAN • BADIN marked Merlot comes from Yehuda's bracha: "...he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes" - meaning that his land will yield grapes in such abundance that he will produce a lot of wine • The knight is ABIR (or AVIR), as in Avir Yaakov • Kid making a snow angel with one of the HA from the speech bubble is for HAMALACH, the other HA and the GO and whale is for HAGO'EIL and then the OT which

looks like an OC in that particular font, completes the phrase HAMALACH HAGO'EIL OT (or OC, depending upon your Hebrew pronunciation) - one of the alltime great complex ParshaPix • right above the horse is the symbol for G'DUD, one of the levels of units in the IDF, but also from Gad's bracha • CX is Roman numerals for 110, the length of Yosef's life • the sneezer is for the D'var Torah on LISHU-AT'CHA KIVITI HASHEM - see SedraSummary • the Xed out doctors are for ROF-IM, embalmers, not our kind of doctors • the C on what looks like a lettuce leaf, but it actually is kale, combine to give C-KALE, what Yaakov did with his hands when he placed them on the heads of Efrayim and Menashe • TOV - its gimatriya is 17, a significant number of years on both sides of Yosef's "disappearance" • 93h means 93 in hexadecimal, which is nine 16s and three units, which is 147, Yaakov's age at his passing • and two Unexplaineds - one number and one words

לע"נ
הרבי יעקב צבי ב"ר דוד אריה ז"ל
Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l

Generations Forget and Remember

VAYCHI

The drama of younger and older brothers which haunts the book of B'reishit from Kayin and Hevel onwards reaches a strange climax in the story of Yosef's children. Yaakov/Israel is nearing the end of his life. Yosef visits him, bringing with him his two sons, Menashe and Efrayim. It is the only scene of grandfather and grandchildren in the book. Yaakov asks Yosef to bring them near so that he can bless them. What follows next is described in painstaking detail:

Yosef took both of them, Efrayim on his right hand to Yisrael's left, and Menashe on his left hand to Yisrael's right, and brought them close. Yisrael reached out his right hand and put it on Efrayim's head, even though he was the younger. And, crossing his hands, he put his left hand on Menashe's head, even though he was the firstborn... (B'reishit 48:13-14)

When Yosef saw that his father had placed his right hand on Efrayim's head, he was displeased. He took hold of his father's hand to move it from Efrayim's head to Menashe's head.

Yosef said to his father, "Not so, father. This is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head." But his father refused: "I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great, but his younger brother will become even greater, and his descendants will become an abundance of nations." On that day, he blessed them: "By you shall Yisrael bless, saying: 'May God make you like Efrayim and Menashe.'" He put Efrayim before Menashe (17:20).

It is not difficult to understand the care Yosef took to ensure that Yaakov would bless the firstborn first. Three times his father had set the younger before the elder, and each time it had resulted in tragedy. He - Yaakov, the younger - had sought to supplant his elder brother Eisav. He had favoured the younger sister Rachel over Leah. And he favoured the youngest of his children, Yosef and Binyamin, over the elder Reuven, Shimon, and Levi. The consequences were consistently catastrophic: estrangement from Eisav, tension between the two sisters, and hostility among his sons. Yosef himself bore the scars: thrown into a pit by his brothers, who initially planned to kill him and eventually sold him into Egypt as a slave.

Had his father not learned? Or did he think that Efrayim - whom Yosef held in his right hand - was the elder? Did Yaakov know what he was doing? Did

he realise that he was risking extending the family feuds into the next generation? Besides which, what possible reason could he have for favouring the younger of his grandchildren over the elder? He had not seen them before. He knew nothing about them. None of the factors that led to the earlier episodes were operative here. Why did Yaakov favour Efrayim over Menashe?

Yaakov knew two things, and it is here that the explanation lies. He knew that the stay of his family in Egypt would not be a short one. Before leaving Canaan to see Yosef, God had appeared to him in a vision:

Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Yosef's own hand will close your eyes (46:3-4).

This was, in other words, the start of the long exile which God had told Avraham would be the fate of his children (a vision the Torah describes as accompanied by "a deep and dreadful darkness" - 15:12). The other thing Yaakov knew was his grandsons' names, Menashe and Efrayim. The combination of these two facts was enough.

When Yosef finally emerged from prison to become Prime Minister of Egypt, he married and had two sons.

This is how the Torah describes their birth:

Before the years of the famine came, two sons were born to Yosef by A-s'nat, daughter of Poti-fera, priest of On. Yosef named his firstborn Menashe, saying, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." The second son he named Efrayim, saying, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction" (41:50-52).

With the utmost brevity the Torah intimates an experience of exile that was to be repeated many times across the centuries. At first, Yosef felt relief. The years as a slave, then a prisoner, were over. He had risen to greatness. In Canaan, he had been the youngest of eleven brothers in a nomadic family of shepherds. Now, in Egypt, he was at the centre of the greatest civilisation of the ancient world, second only to Pharaoh in rank and power. No one reminded him of his background. With his royal robes and ring and chariot, he was an Egyptian prince (as Moshe was later to be). The past was a bitter memory he sought to remove from his mind. Menashe means "forgetting".

But as time passed, Yosef began to feel quite different emotions. Yes, he had arrived. But this people was not his; nor was its culture. To be sure, his family was, in any worldly terms,

undistinguished, unsophisticated. Yet they remained his family. They were the matrix of who he was. Though they were no more than shepherds (a class the Egyptians despised), they had been spoken to by God - not the gods of the sun, the river, and death, the Egyptian pantheon - but God, the creator of heaven and earth, who did not make His home in temples and pyramids and panoplies of power, but who spoke in the human heart as a voice, lifting a simple family to moral greatness. By the time his second son was born, Yosef had undergone a profound change of heart. To be sure, he had all the trappings of earthly success - "God has made me fruitful" - but Egypt had become "the land of my affliction". Why? Because it was exile.

There is a sociological observation about immigrant groups, known as Hansen's Law: "The second generation seeks to remember what the first generation sought to forget." Yosef went through this transformation very quickly. It was already complete by the time his second son was born. By calling him Efrayim, he was remembering what, when Menashe was born, he was trying to forget: who he was, where he came from, where he belonged.

Yaakov's blessing of Efrayim over Menashe had nothing to do with their ages and everything to do with their

names. Knowing that these were the first two children of his family to be born in exile, knowing too that the exile would be prolonged and at times difficult and dark, Yaakov sought to signal to all future generations that there would be a constant tension between the desire to forget (to assimilate, acculturate, anaesthetise the hope of a return) and the promptings of memory (the knowledge that this is "exile", that we are part of another story, that ultimate home is somewhere else). The child of forgetting (Menashe) may have blessings. But greater are the blessings of a child (Efrayim) who remembers the past and future of which he is a part.

Around the Shabbat Table:

- (1) What are ways people today might "forget" where they come from without meaning to?
- (2) What traditions or stories help you remember what matters most in your family?
- (3) How do you think the stories in B'reishit prepare the Jewish people for future generations?

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Message from the Haftara

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A Lion in Jerusalem

VAYCHI

This week's haftara speaks about the last will and testament of King David, conveyed to his son, Shlomo. After this, the haftara closes with a short, matter-of-fact summary of David's reign: "The length of time that David had reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned in Hebron for seven years, he reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-three years" (Melachim Alef 2:11).

At first glance, this seems like a simple biographical note, similar to summaries of the reigns of the subsequent monarchs that appear throughout the book of Kings, noting how long they ruled and where they lived. Upon closer inspection, however, we can discern a deeper significance to this fact about David, one which sheds light both on his own character and the national character of the Jewish people, then and now.

After the death of Shaul, as recorded at the end of Shmuel Alef, David began to reign as king in Hebron. However, at that point he was not, in practice, king of all of Israel. Shaul's son Ish Boshet still ruled over the

majority of the tribes, while David held sway only over the tribe of Yehuda and its immediate environs. Only seven years later, when Ish Boshet's rule crumbled and he was assassinated by his own men, did David assume rule over the entire nation of Israel.

At that point, we are told (Shmuel Bet 5), that the tribes of Israel approached David in Hebron and asked him to assume kingship over all the people. After that covenant was established, the very first thing that David did was to capture the city of Jerusalem and move his capital there. As king of the entire nation, he could not maintain his capital in a sectarian city like Hebron, which was closely associated with the tribe of Yehuda from which he hailed. Rather, it was important for him to rule from Jerusalem, a city that is not associated with any particular tribe, but is the territory of the entire nation (Rambam Hilchot Beit HaB'chira 7:14), symbolizing the impartial and national nature of his rule.

Hence, David's reign in Hebron and that in Jerusalem differed not only in simple geography. They differed fundamentally in their scope and nature. As king in Hebron, David ruled only over a specific subset of the Jewish people. He was tasked with looking after their needs in accordance with their specific character. When ruling

from Jerusalem, however, he was responsible for all the tribes, without privileging any one over the others. Jerusalem, in that sense, symbolizes a sense of holistic responsibility for the Jewish people, and the recognition that all its different tribes are equally important and have something to contribute.

Rabbi Moshe Alshich (Tzfat, 1508-1593) offers a powerful reading of this contrast between Hebron and Jerusalem in his commentary on our parsha (49:9):

“Yehuda is a lion’s cub” – This is a reference to King David, who at first would be a cub ruling only in Hebron over Judea, but who afterward would become a full-grown lion ruling all of Israel [in Jerusalem] as a lion is king of beasts. Why was David’s full rule not consummated immediately? It was because he had to fulfill the prophecy “From the prey, my son, you have risen”, to acquire that highest level of kingship. At first, when he and his brothers conspired to kill Yosef, and cast him into a pit, Yehuda did not protest, since he did not wish to lord over his brothers. He was able to control only himself, keeping his silence and not joining in the fray. In this same way, David first took control of only his own tribe. Only afterward did Yehuda muster the fortitude to stand up to his brothers and convince them not to kill Yosef. And this is parallel to

David's later success in winning over the other tribes until he ruled them all. From thence forward he would be called a lion.

In our own day, the lesson of leadership through unity could not be more pressing. During his tenure, former Israeli President Reuven Rivlin articulated a language of four modern "tribes" of Israel – religious, secular, haredi, and Arab. To this we might add the Jews of the diaspora in their various denominations, whose membership and contribution to Am Yisrael as a whole cannot be underestimated. Even if we have very deep, principled disagreements with many of our brothers and sisters, recognizing the inherent worth and value of every Jew, as well as the non-Jewish members of our society, must be a paramount Jewish value symbolized by the city of Jerusalem. Recognizing the inherent value of Jerusalem, both symbolically and in a very real practical and physical sense, as the eternal seat of Jewish kingship is essential in guaranteeing our future as a unified nation.

Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel, not only politically, but spiritually and ethically as well. It represents our commitment to one another and the idea that God, our true King, is ruler of all of us equally. May we be blessed, despite political pressures to the contrary, to always remember that David's full sovereignty only begins when he rules in Jerusalem. 



Asara b'Tevet Take-Away

We have four, rabbinically declared fast days related to the destructions of the two Batei Mikdash. But Avelut HaChurban (mourning the Destruction) is not restricted just to those fast days. We also have the Three Weeks and the Nine Days... and we have aspects of Avelut HaChurban that apply to every day of the year.

[This is similar to other aspects of our calendar - for example, we have a mitzva to celebrate Seder night with matza and maror and with telling over the story and related mitzvot as part of the Seder. But we also have a command to remember the Exodus every day of our lives.]

Starting this PTDT this way is my excuse to talk about Asara b'Tevet even though it is behind us for this year. And I'm going to include other aspects of the whole topic of Avelut HaChurban.

Let's say it like this:

National mourning - different from personal mourning - carries something above and beyond just mourning. It requires a pro-active agenda. Every specific event - and the actions

and behaviors that brought about various tragedies.

The first Beit HaMikdash was destroyed because of bloodshed, sexual immorality, and idolatry.

The second Beit HaMikdash was destroyed because of unwarranted hatred.

The sin of the golden calf is linked to the 17th of Tamuz.

The sin of the Meraglim is linked to Tish'a b'Av.

Some suggest that the sin of the sale of Yosef is linked to Asara b'Tevet.

So there is our agenda.

TIKUN - Repair.

We must become better people and better Torah observant Jews. We must help - in a pleasant, non-coercive manner - spread Torah and mitzvot to our fellow Jews.

The Meraglim said "It's a nice place to visit by we wouldn't want to live there. (Here, that is.) TIKUN - repair. Come on Aliya. Encourage others to do the same. Help smooth K'lita for recent arrivals.

Work towards AHAVAT YISRAEL to repair the hatred that has split us for thousands of years. This does not mean to homogenize the Jewish people. Rather, it means to respect the differences between groups -

those that do not contravene halacha.

It means to stop gossip and lashon hara that is so destructive of lives, of reputations.

To sum it up, we must do our share (and even more) to raise ourselves, our families, our communities, our nation - so that HaShem will have every reason to bring about the Geula Sh'leima.

Any generation in whose time the Beit HaMikdash is not rebuilt, it is as if it was destroyed in that generation.

Let us not be guilty of prolonging the exile.

Let's work towards turning the fast days of Churban into the Yamim Tovim that HaShem via the Navi Zechariya promised us. **PTDT**



NIKBUV It's a nice word, so how come most Hebrew speakers would say PERFERATZIYA?

What does NIKBUV mean?

PERFORATION

Walk through the Parsha

with Rabbi David Walk



VAYCHI

The Magic Word

Words have power, even very little ones. I believe this idea very strongly, and I think there's a verse at the beginning of this week's Torah reading which powerfully proves the point. Ya'akov Avinu is on his death bed. He calls for his beloved son Yosef. The reader's expectation is for a passionate exchange, but that is not yet what happens. Ya'akov has a request. Really?!

Eventually, Ya'akov shares his heartfelt emotions, feelings that have been hidden for decades. He recounts his eternal love for Rachel, who died so very young - too young. But before that; it's down to business: Don't bury me in Egypt!

Why not? After all, Yosef will be buried in Egypt. The Midrash offers a number of suggestions: the Egyptians may worship him as a deity or his body would suffer during the plagues. But I like the Zionist/nationalist approach. Our Patriarch must be buried in the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Chevron, next to Leah who birthed half the nation. Patriarchs are people, with loves and drama, but they are also symbols of our nationhood and

destiny. Ya'akov must be in Ma'arat HaMachpela, and immediately.

This is a difficult request. How do I know? Because Ya'akov says the little word NA, 'please', three times in the verse: And when the time approached for Yisrael to die, he summoned Yosef and said to him: If I, please (NA), find favor in your eyes, then, please (NA), place your hand beneath my thigh, and perform for me an act of kindness and truth, please (NA) don't bury me in Egypt! (B'reishit 47:29)

Those three little words paint a picture of need and urgency. We see the significance of that potent, mini-word back in chapter 18 of B'reishit. Avraham uses it to beg the wayfarers, who are really angels, to interrupt their journey so that he can host them. But its true power becomes evident later in that remarkable chapter: Please (NA), I have already dared to speak before God, and I am but dust and ashes! (verse 27)

Avraham doesn't use the word in his initial pitch to God for clemency for S'dom, because he believed that asking for pardon for five towns with five groups of ten (a minyan?) is a legitimate petition. But asking for indulgence for fewer good guys is a bit of a CHUTZPA. He must beg! NA is the biggest little word for begging.

The Jews use the word when they ask the Egyptians for gold and silver

before leaving Egypt (Sh'mot 11:2), because the suffering Egyptians don't think they deserve anything. Moshe puts the word to heavy-duty use when asking God to forgive the Jews for the sin of the Golden Calf (32:31).

It's there that Moshe introduces another version of our big little word: ANA. This seems to be the form of the word when it introduces the supplication. We see that most clearly in Hallel: ANA Hashem, save us NA! ANA Hashem, make us prosper NA! (T'hilim 118:25)

ANA becomes very significant in the Beit HaMikdash. It is how the Kohen Gadol addresses his confession to the Merciful One on Yom Kippur: ANA Hashem (in the Temple the Kohen Gadol pronounced the true WORD), I have sinned, I have transgressed, I have erred before You; I and my household! ANA Hashem! Atone NA for the sins, transgressions and errors that I have sinned, transgressed and erred before You; I and my household! (TB Yoma 35b)

Rabbeinu Bechaye suggests that ANA, this slightly longer version of our powerful little word, is really in place of God's name. Moshe introduced it because it reminds us of the 13 Attributes of God (Sh'mot 34:6) which begin with a double recitation of the Tetragrammaton. Since the Gematria of this Name is 26, its

repetition equals 52, which is, indeed, the Gematria of ANA. Moshe used it in place of the double declaration, and its use became popular in our liturgy.

This term ANA is very powerful, and Rav Soloveitchik insisted that: The word ANA should be inserted at the beginning of the VIDUI (the alphabetical confession), after ELKEINU VEILOKEI AVOTEINU, as in the Mishna in the Yoma which indicates that the Kohen Gadol recited the word in introducing his VIDUI.

The Rav very eloquently explains the necessity of this inclusion (which doesn't appear in many Ashkenazic versions): The introductory words to the Kohen Gadol's VIDUI seem to be out of place. He says, 'I beg of You' -- for what? What is he petitioning here? He is declaring that he has sinned; where does begging fit into this formula? In fact, however, this phrase gives expression to the very possibility of repentance. If we listen attentively, we can discern in these words a heartbreakin cry: Please, God, do not slam the door in my face, do not close the gates, allow me to speak! He is begging to be allowed in to repent; it is thus a most appropriate introduction!

Remember our confession isn't just a declaration, an admission of guilt. It is a plaintive plea for God's mercy.

The simple word NA or 'please' transforms your need into a respectful request of the other person, and, actually, empowers them to respond or not, to your request. Studies show that requests are more likely to receive a positive response if they are accompanied by a 'please'.

A study on Twitter (now X) showed that people re-Tweeted a message 20.9 times more often if the request for re-tweeting included the word 'please'. I would like to think this works in face to face requests, too. A recent post on Linked-In actually claimed that: Believe it or not, polite prompts can lead to fewer errors in complex AI calculations. It seems AI just gets what we're asking better when we're polite about it. Mainly because when we're polite, we're more descriptive and explain things more. (William K., March 3, 2025)

Cool! There are measurable advantages to saying 'Please!' and being polite. That's wonderful. I say 'Please!' a lot, and it's not to get what I wanted (life isn't a game of 'Go Fish!'). I say 'Please!' because it makes me feel good about myself. I say NA, because it makes me feel more like Avraham, Ya'akov and Moshe, and that's pleasing and magical. 

Rav Kook Torah



by Rabbi Chanan Morrison
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When Great Souls Err

Shortly before his death, Yaakov blessed his sons. Some of these blessings, however, were more like reprimands:

"Reuven, you are my firstborn... first in rank and first in power. [But since you were] unstable as water, you will no longer be first, for you moved your father's beds" (B'reishit 49:3-4).

According to some opinions, Reuven did not actually interfere with his father's sleeping arrangements.

After Rachel's death, Yaakov moved his bed to the tent of Rachel's handmaid, Bilha. Reuven, deeply disturbed by what he saw as an affront to his mother Leah's honor, moved his father's bed to Leah's tent (Shabbat 55a).

He intended to do so, indignant at what he saw as a slight to his mother's honor and her position in the household. But at the last minute, Reuven restrained himself.

How did Reuven succeed in overcoming his intense feelings of injustice and dishonor?

Reuven's Fear of Punishment

One scholar inferred the method Reuven used to master his anger by reversing the letters of the word PACHAZ ("unstable") to ZAYIN-CHET-PEI and reading it as an acronym:

ZACHARTA – You reminded yourself of the punishment for this act;

CHALITA – you made yourself ill over it; and

PEIRASHTA – you avoided sin (Shabbat 55b).

This explanation is surprising. Was Reuven motivated by the lowest form of YIRAT SHAMAYIM (awe of Heaven) – the fear of punishment? Was this the only way the tzadik could prevent himself from wrongdoing? Could such a great individual not take advantage of more lofty incentives, evoking his natural love and awe of God in order to avoid sin?

The Achilles' Heel of Great Souls

Some people are blessed with such nobility of soul that their traits are naturally virtuous and good. Yet even these tzadikim need to recognize their limitations as fallible human beings. They too may be misguided. Precisely because they rely so heavily on their innate integrity, they may more easily fall into the trap of deluding themselves and making terrible mistakes, inflicting great

harm on themselves and those around them.

Truly great souls will avoid this mistake. They carefully examine the source of their moral outrage. Further examination may indeed reveal that their zealous response comes from a sense of true injustice. But if they have any doubts as to the source for their powerful emotions, they can adopt a different approach. Instead of examining the matter in terms of ideals and lofty visions of the future, they will take into account more commonplace moral considerations. Such unpretentious calculations are sometimes more effective than nobler considerations.

Reuven reminded himself that he would be held accountable for disrupting the delicate balance in the family and temporarily usurping his father's position. The simple reminder of the personal price to be paid helped Reuven clear his mind. He was then able to analyze more accurately his true motivations and arrive at the correct moral decision.

The resulting inner turmoil was tremendous. Reuven was accustomed to following the dictates of his innate integrity. The conflict between his sense of injustice and his awareness of the correct response was so great that he felt ill – emotionally, and even physically: "You made yourself ill over it."

This too indicates greatness of soul: the ability to acquiesce to moral imperatives. Truly great individuals are able, like Reuven, to rein in all of the soul's powers when necessary. They recognize the absolute justice of the Eternal Judge, before Whom there are no excuses and no exceptions. They follow the dictum that even if the entire world – your entire inner world – tells you that you are righteous, still consider yourself fallible (see Nida 30b).

Much good can result from recalling the punishment for wrongdoing, even if this motivation may appear beneath one's spiritual stature. This simple reminder can overcome all the sophisticated calculations – calculations which may mislead even the noblest souls. In this fashion, Reuven succeeded in avoiding sin and retained his moral integrity.

Sapphire from the Land of Israel.
Adapted from *Ein Eyah* vol. IV, pp. 48-49

Rav Kook on T'hilim

Ed. note: This is a new PhiloTorah column from an unpublished work by Rabbi Chanan Morrison.

Here is the third installment -

David's Song

"David's Song, when he fled from his son Avshalom" (T'hilim 3:1).

This psalm reflects King David's tribulations when his son Avshalom rebelled against him, taking over his palace and the capital. "How many are my enemies! So many rise up against me!" he cried out.

And yet – the title of the chapter is "David's Song". A song? Is David content and lighthearted? "David's Lamentation" would be more appropriate!

The Talmudic sage Rabbi Shimon gave the following explanation:

"This is like a man in debt. Before paying back his debt, he is worried. But after he has paid it, he rejoices..."

David was worried. 'Perhaps I will be punished by a rebelling servant who will have no pity on me?'

But when he saw that it was his son Avshalom, he was relieved. That is why it is 'David's Song'. David rejoiced, knowing that sons usually have mercy on their fathers" (B'rachot 7b).

In short, Rabbi Shimon offered two answers:

A person is happy and relieved when he has paid his obligations.

The punishment was less severe than David had feared.

Why was it necessary to give two answers?

Divine Justice

Rav Kook explained that the first answer, the comparison to a man paying off a debt, does not suffice in David's case. David was a righteous tzadik who completely accepted Divine punishment for his mistakes. Such an upright and honest individual would not feel tremendous relief knowing that the "debt had been repaid" – certainly not enough to compose a song of joy.

It is Rabbi Shimon's second answer that completes the picture. David feared punishment at the hands of a cruel servant. His concern reflected his awareness of the extent of human freedom of choice. He knew that a messenger possessing free will is capable of inflicting more damage than was decreed by Heaven. In the end, all is accounted for. Nonetheless, there is a difference between willingly accepting the judgment of Heaven, and accepting extra persecutions from the vehicle of God's retribution.

David rejoiced when he realized that he would be punished at the hands of his son. His soul broke out in song. He knew that sons are ordinarily compassionate, and any ordeals would be according to the precise measure of Divine justice.

We find that David expressed a similar concern on another occasion. After he had ordered a census of the people, contradicting God's will, the prophet allowed David to choose his punishment: seven years famine, three months of defeat at the hands of his enemies, or three days of pestilence.

David responded:

"I am very sorry [for what I did]. Let us fall in the hands of God, for His mercies are great. Just let me not fall in the hands of man!" (Sh'muel Bet 24:14)

(Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. I, p. 35)

The Daily Portion - Sivan Rahav Meir

What does the Word of the Year say about us?

Translated by Janine Muller Sherr

Pay attention to the following sentence: The Oxford English dictionary has chosen the term "rage bait" as the Word of the Year for 2025. This is a term related to social media content that is designed to spark shock and rage and thus to garner higher online circulation. You might not be aware of this term but you have surely come across such provocative annoying and distressing posts.

Meanwhile, the Webster Dictionary chose the word “slop” as its Word of the Year. The complete term is “pig slop”. This term relates to low-quality digital content that is AI-generated. This refers to content that is of inferior quality – and often completely fake – that goes viral. Are you familiar with this type of content? We are being swamped by this trash.

Another leading language website, “dictionary”, chose the word “6-7”, which is not even a word but a number. If you’re not familiar with it, it’s perfectly fine. Any attempt to explain this term will be awkward – essentially, it is a meaningless slang that has become popularized by the TikTok youth.

But the Cambridge Dictionary has chosen the most disturbing word of all: “parasocial” which is a one-sided bond people form with famous personalities or even with a bot, even though they have never met them or, in the case of a bot, they don’t exist in reality. This refers to a relationship developed with an AI, and the word was chosen because it illustrates the blurring between human and digital connections.

What do you think about these word choices? We can certainly conclude (without consulting AI) that all of these words point to the same disturbing phenomenon: that our

world has become loud, tech-centered, detached, and artificial. If this is the direction in which we’re heading, what will the Word of the Year be in 2026? Will anyone even bother to choose one and who would be interested?

But there is a role for us to play in all of this. While these were the words chosen for the secular year ending in December, the Academy of the Hebrew language determined, by an overwhelming majority, that the Word of the Year for 5785 was the word CHATUFIM – “hostages”, followed closely by the words “courage”, “responsibility”, and “home” – words that express solidarity and mutual responsibility. What will be Israel’s Word of the Year for 2026? With all the digital garbage and rage baits circulating online, this will be our challenge.

I will end with our own eternal words that will never be outdated. As we do as Shabbat approaches and arrives - SHABBAT SHALOM UMVORACH!

To receive Sivan Rahav-Meir's daily WhatsApp: tiny.cc/DailyPortion



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

VAYCHI

ZAIDIE, MY ZAIDIE

The song is "Zaidie, My Zaidie".

It speaks about having grandfather living with the family, and what happens when he is no longer there.

We do not know whether the parents of Zaidie's grandchildren are prosperous or important. All we know is that Zaidie is desperate to maintain the Jewish life of the family, and that when Zaidie goes this may be under threat.

The song could have been written about Yaakov and his grandsons Efrayim and Menashe. Their father has power second only to Par'o. The home has affluence and prestige. But to Yaakov, it is not that dimension which is uppermost. He is concerned with their Jewishness.

Hence the prayer, "God before whom walked my fathers Avraham and Yitzchak; God, my shepherd all my life to this day; the angel who saved me from all evil, bless the lads; may they be called by my name and that of my fathers Avraham and Yitzchak, and grow into a great people on the earth" (B'reishit 48:15-16).

The sages say Efrayim was modest and studious, though his descendants were often unfaithful. Menashe was strong and courageous, but his descendants transgressed. What Yaakov would have said can be imagined.

As a parable of Jewish history, this is a constant problem. The younger generation has sometimes been admirable in its Jewish loyalty, and sometimes gravely disappointing.

Most parents and grandparents want to give enough grounding in Jewish values and commitments to be reasonably sure their children and grandchildren will be a credit to the patriarch.

Earlier generations had it easier. The temptations and distractions open to Jewish youth were severely limited. Going astray was more difficult. Few fell by the wayside. The world Jewish population was small, but the vast majority of Jews were loyal.

Now of course the world has changed. Hardly a Jew does not live in an open society. "Back to the Ghetto" is not an option. There are pressures that pull us out of Judaism, temptations and allurements that are more exciting.

Would Jacob weep?

The answer is yes - and no. We lose Jews by reason of drift and deser-

tion, apathy and indifference. Levels of Jewish knowledge and observance are often low. Basic Jewish observances are never seen in some homes. Jews are to be found everywhere, but not in Judaism. Yaakov would weep.

But there is also so much happening that is positive. Yaakov would weep for joy. Due to many factors, Jewish identity is strong and visible, especially amongst young people.

Children are bringing parents back to Judaism. Homes are becoming kosher. People are becoming Shomrei Shabbat. Jewish education is flourishing. Yeshivot have never been so numerous, full and powerful. Many people are finding fulfilment in Aliya, or at least visiting and being enthused by Israel.

And all of this is by voluntary choice. No external forces are sending us back to our Jewish roots.

Efrayim and Menashe are bringing joy to the old man. Zaidie is content. -OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

VAYCHI

(Following Yaakov's death), Yosef's brothers said: "Perhaps now Yosef will

show us hatred. He will take vengeance on the evil that we plotted against him." They therefore claimed that Yaakov had ordered before his death: "Tell Yosef to forgive your brother's transgressions and sins against you..." (50:16-17).

There is nothing in our story that mentions Yaakov's commanding Yosef to forgive his brothers. Rashi brings the tradition that Yosef's brothers were anxious about Yosef's change of behaviour towards them. Whilst Yaakov was still alive, they were all regular guests around his table. Now, they were no longer on the invitation list. Rashi's sources suggest that Yaakov's words did not include any such order. The brothers made the whole thing up, in order to maintain peace in the family, judging that keeping good relationships within the family was more important than sticking to the raw truth. And the Torah accepted their judgment, as it did not raise the issue of their having invented a story.

Possibly, Rashi's sources that claim that Yaakov never gave such an order are derived from the following. Within the b'rachot, he castigated Reuven for his involvement with Bilha, and he also severely rebuked Shimon and Levi for their guile and anger in killing the people of Shechem. Yet he didn't rebuke all the brothers for Mechirat Yosef, for the selling of Yosef. That

might well be for the following reason. He couldn't rebuke them of something he didn't know about. It seems plausible that Yaakov Avinu never found out the full story, not even to the day of his death. Possibly, in his eyes, he knew that Yosef didn't get on with his brothers and that they hated him, so after a break, he sent him on an errand to Shechem. Yosef might have been attacked and badly injured on the way, his blood having spurted all over his coat of many colours which his attackers threw on the wayside and which was later discovered and recognized by his brothers on their return journey and handed over to their father. In the meantime, Yosef somehow recovered from his wounds and made his way to Egypt. Maybe, he used his talents and G-d's support to climb the Egyptian hierarchy to his present exalted and extremely powerful position. That would hardly been out character with the dreams regarding which, he, Yaakov Avinu SHAMAR ET HADAVAR: waited to see what the outcome would be (37:11).

One could offer an additional explanation why Yaakov didn't tell Yosef to forgive his brothers, which finds expression in Yosef's reply to the brothers' expressing their apprehensions: "Don't be afraid... am I in place of G-d? ... It was G-d who made it come out good" (50:19-20). For it was G-d directing what was

going on, not the free will of the brothers.

According to this explanation, by then Yaakov Avinu might have known the whole story, but he did not rebuke his children for the Mechirat Yosef for the following reason. Reuven, Shimon, and Levi's methods of handling the particular situations they found themselves in were well in character with their personalities and limitations as he knew them. In contrast, the extreme hatred and jealousy of all Yosef's brothers arising over just a couple of trivial youthful indiscretions was behaviour that was utterly and completely out of character. It couldn't be, it was just not them! It was, surely, G-d directing the brothers, and the brothers did not even know it. As we are told: "the brothers were jealous", and he, Yaakov Avinu, "waited to see what the outcome would be". It was specifically because of their jealousy which was quite out of proportion and quite out of character that Yaakov did pay attention, but he said nothing at the time. He knew that G-d was operating plans precisely as all so far removed from the ordinary that he knew that his work was not to intervene, but to watch.

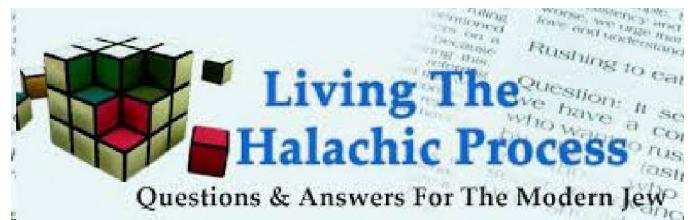
The same happened years later when the brothers first appeared before Yosef in Egypt. Yosef reasoned that through his brothers, G-d was putting

into place a series of events that would lead to a destiny whose details only He knew. He therefore wisely held back and did not intervene by revealing himself, but followed the example set by his father: he went along with the situation to see how things would turn out. Indeed, Yosef had seen the hand of G-d in his destiny so many times in his own life that he could sense that that his brothers' attitude towards him did not arise out of anything he did, but through extraordinary divine intervention.

It was for that reason that Yosef told the brothers later that it was not them, but G-d that sent him to Egypt and raised him to a position of great power and responsibility. And he did not flinch from that position now. He was effectively telling the brothers that all that had happened was G-d's prompting for the ultimate good.

The ways of G-d are fully known only to Him. When strange and out-of-character series of events happen and we don't know why. A series of failures when the expected is success. And for that matter, a series of successes when the expected is failure. But we can learn from here that G-d can well be orchestrating things behind the scenes and that there are times when we should consider recognizing and falling in

with His plans, and patiently observe rather than protest about injustice or boast of one's successes, even where we don't fully understand at the time.



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Knowing How to Lovingly Disagree

Question: Throughout the millennia, we have awaited the coming of Mashiach. Of late, people who are Torah observant are talking about hastening the geula (redemption). I heard that Rav Kook wrote that this requires AHAVAT CHINAM (love without a specific reason) among all members of Klal Yisrael (the Jewish Nation). How can each of us cultivate AHAVAT CHINAM and learn to disagree as Hillel and Shammai¹ did?

Answer: Our inclination is to agree with you wholeheartedly and unconditionally. However, to be intellectually honest, we can agree only wholeheartedly, but not unconditionally, as we will explain.

¹ Two prominent early *Tanna'im*, who disputed many critical issues but maintained respect for and good relations with one another.

There is little question that AHAVAT CHINAM is an extremely important concept to implement. This phrase was adapted from SINAT CHINAM (baseless hatred), which, according to the gemara,² was responsible for the destruction of the second Beit HaMikdash. Hatred of our brethren may be baseless. However, love for our fellow is not without foundation. The Torah requires it,³ and it is logical to love one who shares with us history, destiny, and (hopefully) values.

Rav Kook apparently (coined or) popularized the phrase, expressing his conviction that just as SINAT CHINAM caused destruction, AHAVAT CHINAM is the antidote that will promote healing and rebuilding.⁴ This forecast certainly gives us the impetus to demonstrate AHAVAT CHINAM. However, we trust that love for members of Klal Yisrael also exists for its own sake, as a mitzva and as the natural feelings of one with the right mind-set, which Rav Kook certainly intended. Rav Kook epitomized AHAVAT YISRAEL and showed much love even to his ideological opponents (to the “right”

and the “left”), even while many of his colleagues took a more combative approach.

Nevertheless, we would be doing Rav Kook and ourselves a disservice if we thought that he never had harsh words to say about a fellow Jew. As a leader, he at times spoke out sternly in public against those who had gone over the line, thus warranting such a response.⁵ He certainly retained his love even as he rebuked.⁶ The same is true of Shammai, Hillel, and their academies. The mishna⁷ relates that despite their far-reaching disagreements regarding family status, they cooperated with each other so that their children would be permitted to marry those not in question within the other camp. The gemara⁸ attributes the pasuk of “the truth and the peace you shall love”⁹ to the affection between the two. However, there are sources¹⁰ that speak about harsh tactics that one side took against the other when they thought the consequences were pressing.

How does one know when to employ the tolerant approach and when the forceful one? We do not know fully, but allow us to share some guidelines.

². *Yoma* 9b.

³. *Vayikra* 19:18.

⁴. *Orot HaKodesh*, III, p. 324.

⁵. See, for example, *Otzrot HaR'iyah*, p. 1137.

⁶. Also, see the Ramban's introduction to his commentary on the Torah.

⁷. *Yevamot* 13b.

⁸. *Ibid.* 14b.

⁹. *Zecharya* 8:19.

¹⁰. Including *Yerushalmi Shabbat* 1:4.

1. One should not hypocritically take a harsh approach when it affects a personal interest and a mild one when it affects “only” HaShem’s interests.¹¹

2. One should take into consideration the possibility that his views are not necessarily 100% correct or that the other side is 100% wrong.

3. One should exhaust other options and pray that he will not need to take steps that can trigger conflicts and for the wisdom to act effectively and sensitively.

4. One should weigh the damage that conflict might cause, which is usually far greater than the average person realizes.

5. As is attributed to Rav Kook, it is better to err on the side of AHAVAT CHINAM than on the side of SINAT CHINAM.

We hope that these principles help (or at least do not hurt) and that we will soon be able to hear Eliyahu HaNavi’s solution to the dilemma of balancing the aspiration for peace with the need to “fight” for ideals.

Eretz Hemdah gives a participatory Zoom class - Behind the Scenes with the Vebbe Rebbe - an analytical look at the sources, methodology, and considerations behind our rulings, with Rav Daniel Mann. Contact us to join - info@eretzhemdah.org

Dvar Torah by Rabbi Chanoch Yeres

to his community at
Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe
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VAYIGASH

After the brothers had shown genuine remorse for what they had done, Yosef then revealed his identity to them.

VAYOMER YOSEF EL ECHAV, ANI YOSEF, HA'OD AVI CHAI

"And Yosef said to his brothers, I am Yosef, is my father still alive?"

The pasuk continues:

V'LO YACHLU ECHAV L'ANOT OTO KI NIVHALU

"And his brothers were unable to answer him because they felt disconcerted before him."

My Chavruta of old, Rabbi David Movsas, asked why is Yosef asking if his father is still alive? Yehuda had just used the plea of the sorrow of his aged father if Binyamin would not be released home. Why then was it necessary for Yosef to ask if Yaakov was still alive?

We can find the answer in the Talmud Chagiga. The Talmud discussed that when Rabbi Eleazer came to the pasuk, "But the brothers could not answer him because they felt

¹¹ See the strong words of admonition in *Sanhedrin* 103b.

disconcerted before him", he wept and said, "if such is the result of the rebuke from a human being, how much more so must it be when someone is rebuked by the Holy One Blessed Is He!"

The Rabbis taught us that Yosef's words of "I am Yosef, is my father still alive?" is considered a rebuke to the brothers. But how? Rabbi Yosef Ber Soloveitchik (Beit HaLevi) explains that the word Tochacha – Rebuke is learnt out from the word Hochacha - "Proof". The essence of rebuke is to convince the person to realize on his own that he has done wrong. By recalling to them the words that they themselves had spoken, he convinced them that they had sinned.

Yehuda had wanted to arouse compassion in Yosef for his aged father. Yosef, now, wanted Yehuda to realize that his own argument was inconsistent with the brothers' own action of selling Yosef into slavery. With the words "Is my father still alive?", Yosef was saying... if it did not occur to you when you sold me into slavery that it would kill my father, why are so worried about him now? This was the reproach implied in his question. Thus, Yosef refuted the arguments of his brothers with their own words, and this is the reason why the brothers became so frightened that they were unable to answer him.

Rabbi Soloveitchik continues to say

that a similar rebuke will be administered in the days to come by G-d himself. In this manner, everyone will be shown the folly of his ways, through his own deeds and words. In the confusion and flurry of life, rationalization comes very easily to our lips. Either it is lack of time or lack of money or lack of talent. However, on the Day of Truth those invalid excuses will be challenged with the other actions and interests we did accomplish, for which there was always sufficient time, money, and talent. It will be our own deeds that will accuse us. That shame can be avoided if we attempt in a sincere fashion to harmonize our live with the Will of G-d. 

The Weekly 'Hi All' by Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

VAYCHI - 10 TEVET 5785

In our Parsha, we read that upon the funeral for Yaakov, Yosef ordained a seven-day mourning period for his father (50:10). From this verse, the Yerushalmi (Mo'ed Katan 3:5) derives the obligation of sitting shiva for seven days. Rambam, in the beginning of his discussion of the laws of mourning (Hilchot Avel 1:1), references another source for this custom which mentions another seven-day period. He states that Moshe took the initiative to re-institute seven days of

shiva upon the death of a family member and, at the same time, he instituted the seven days of rejoicing after a marriage. The question is plain: Why did Moshe include both in the same edict? What is the conceptual link between mourning and rejoicing after the wedding?

Rav Soloveitchik, in a tour de force lecture on Parshat Vaychi addresses this question and offers this insightful response: "The seven days of rejoicing... is part of the same ruling because both marriage and death connect to the tragic experience of loneliness. If man did not experience loneliness, he would neither mourn the passing of a relative, nor rejoice much at his marriage. 'It is not good that man is alone (L'VADO); I shall make him a helpmate opposite him' (B'reishit 2:18). L'VADO is man's worst existential tragedy. It is both the reason behind man's desire to marry, as well as the experience of mourning. The period of rejoicing following marriage is related to man's desire to join someone else, for he is mortal and lonely. For the same reason, the vacuum created by death is cruel, the pain excruciating. Gd introduced the laws of mourning so man could find himself again; so, he would not be completely overwhelmed by that which cannot be changed... This idea describes how Judaism, in worldview as well as in practice, relates to the tensions and

stormy emotions of the person experiencing either joy or mourning." (Divrei Hashkafa, pp. 37-39)

Perhaps we may expand upon the Rav's answer and suggest that just as marriage rescues man/woman from their loneliness by providing a caring and loving companionship, so too, when during the shiva period, a community of people enters the home of the mourner to offer their condolences, their simple presence, their oftentimes silent embrace of the grieving mourner, also rescues him/her from their desolate bereaving solitude.

In the Rav's discussion of the various topics mentioned in Parshat Vaychi, he emphasizes that the Torah's intention in recounting these events had one common underlying purpose: to prepare the family and descendants of Yaakov to survive the Egyptian exile and merit their redemption. And chief among them: the critical importance of community togetherness to help its members withstand and endure what would turn out to be the harshest of enslavement, torture and death. This Yaakov accomplished with his special blessings to his sons, and Yosef - with his family reconciliation and the funeral and shiva - a unifying, bonding kinship of brothers - for his father.

There is, however, another dimension to this linkage of the days of

mourning with the days of the post-wedding celebration. It finds expression in the few terse comments of Radbaz (R. Dovid ibn Zimra, Spain/ Tzfat, 15-16th c.) on the above mentioned Rambam. He asserts that the coupling of both seven-day events comes to advise a wedding celebrant that even during the marriage festivities, one should contemplate the day of death. Definitely quite a strange and perplexing bit of advice. As his proof text, he quotes the verse from Kohelet (7:14): "On a day of goodness [prosperity] be in good spirits, and on a day of adversity, reflect [that]: the one was set up against the other by Gd, in order that man should not find anything after Him." What important lesson is Radbaz attempting to teach?

On the phrase in that pasuk in Koheles, "the one was set up against the other by Gd", Chazal explain (Chagiga 15a., Kohelet Rabba, ad loc.) that with everything HaShem created, He created its opposite. In the physical realm, there are mountains and valleys, oceans and rivers; in the spiritual cosmos, there is Heaven and Hell; in the world of man, there is wealth and poverty, good and evil, the righteous and the wicked. Indeed, the list of opposites are interminable. Why HaShem chose to establish creation as such can be a fascinating and important theological inquiry. However, for our limited

purposes, let us suggest a rather simple explanation: The reality of life is a mix of enormous contradictions and paradoxes. One day, the sun shines brightly and the next, dark clouds fill the horizon. One moment, love is in the air, the next, hate-filled rhetoric poisons the room. One instant - smiles and laughter, the next - gloom and depression. The incongruities of life are inescapable; like it or not, they are a permanent fixture of our life. "Into every life, a little rain must fall", and sometimes, it's a downpour, a storm! What then are we to make of it?

Two lessons: One, in navigating between these opposites, one must never surrender to the extremes of either. Enjoy the marriage celebration, but do not become intoxicated and succumb to bacchanalian feasting. The Talmud records (B'rachot 30b) that a glass was shattered at a wedding to sober up the attendees lest frivolity ruin the occasion. In a word, "break a glass" and "remember the day of death". And the reverse: In the wake of the death of a loved one, when the mourner is assailed by the grisly blackness of loss, do not crash into a pit of bottomless despair and hopelessness. Heed the words of Rambam (Hilchot Avel 13:11): "A person should not become excessively broken hearted because of a person's death... That means not to weep excessively, for death is the 'way of the world'. And a person who

causes himself [undue] grief because of the 'way of the world' is a fool." In a word, even in mourning, remember "tomorrow is also the wedding of your child".

Indeed, as the wisest of all men declared: "Everything has its season, and there is a time for everything under the sun: A time to be born and a time to die... a time to laugh and a time to weep..." (Kohelet 3:1-8) The clashing vicissitudes of life must first be apprehended in all of its enigmatic, tension-filled contradictions, and then judiciously experienced with balance and wisdom, behaving carefully never to veer to the extremes.

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The second lesson is no less important and is inextricably bound up with the first. The very contrast between the positives and negatives of life compels us to appreciate the worth of each and incorporate their teachings into our lives. The Rav would often point out that had the Jewish people not suffered through the bitter enslavement in Egypt, the precious values of brotherhood, family, chesed and compassion would never have etched themselves into our collective DNA. Only when confronted with the horrors of evil, does man fight for the good. Only in the shadow of death does the moment of marriage assume infinite value. Only in the wake of a wedding

celebration does the fragility of life, the stark awareness of our finite future, come into cold focus. Consider: In the midst of the simcha of a Yom Tov, we recite Yizkor!

Our Parsha is invariably read in and around the 10th of Tevet, that day which marks the event ultimately leading to the destruction of the First Temple and for the first time, casting the Jewish people into exile. And still, we are in exile. How is it possible that we've managed to survive over these millennia?! The answer:

Moshe taught us the strange and eternal secret of the "sevens"!

And so, as we conclude Sefer B'reishit, heartened with this wise legacy of the "sevens", let us forever be assured that CHAZAK, CHAZAK, V'NITCHAZEIK. 

## Afterthoughts

- Yocheved Bienenfeld

## V'YOSEF YASHIT YADO AL EINECHA

And Yosef shall place his hand on your eyes.

After years of reading about Yosef and all the drama that surrounds him, I finally noticed something I had not noticed before. All the incidents that lead to Yosef's achieving rulership, involve his being the "victim", if you

will. He is thrown into a pit (did he even know why?); he is sold to traveling merchants; he is sold to be a slave; he is falsely accused by his master's wife; he is thrown into jail. One would imagine that after all this, he would question his relationship with Gd, if not totally reject Him. And yet, this doesn't occur. Not only doesn't it occur, but his statements are seasoned with recognition of HaShem. In refusing the advances of the wife of Potifar, he says CHATATI LEILOKIM - I would sin before Gd if I agree (39:9); his response to the SAR HAMASHKIM and the SAR HA'OFIM before offering an interpretation is HALO LEILOKIM PITRONIM - it is Gd Who has the solutions (40:8). Indeed, it is the same response he gives to Par'o; again, he repeats this idea during his explanation: ET ASHER HA'ELOKIM OSEH HIGID L'FAR'O (41:25) [Gd is telling Par'o what He will do], and again, in verse 28. We, as onlookers, are aware of HaShem's involvement in all of this, as the text says a number of times, VAYHI HASHEM ET YOSEF (39:3) (39:21) [Gd was with Yosef], and many more. Is Yosef aware of this? I imagine he must be, given his constant references to Gd's involvement.

In trying to understand how Yosef could react like this, maintain his faith, and not lose hope, I can only conclude that he had the critical ability to believe that all was for the

good, that there would be a positive, if distant, outcome, because Gd was behind it all. And when all the pieces would be put together, he could understand Gd's plan. Certainly, after all was said and done, he says as much to his brothers more than once: LO ATEM SH'LACHTEM OTI HEINA, KI HA'ELOKIM... [it was not you who sent me here, but rather, HaShem.]

If this is true, then it paints a different picture for me of something that follows in the text. When Yaakov is on his way down to Egypt, he stops in B'er Sheva and offers sacrifices, hoping that he wouldn't have to leave Israel, just as his father Yitzchak was told not to. Hashem reassures him that this was meant to be, the Jews would flourish and grow and that V'YOSEF YASHIT YADO AL EINECHA - that Yosef would not die in Yaakov's lifetime but would be present to put Yaakov to rest.

The Kol Aryeh, one of the students of the Chatam Sofer, explains the above phrase according to the Zohar as DA HI RAZA DIKRI'AT SH'MA - this is the secret of the K'RI'AT SH'MA. He explains that our lives contain difficulties and hard times and we can't always see Gd's hashgacha with our own eyes. Only in the World to Come would we be able to understand. Only in hindsight. This is how he explains the custom that Rav had when saying the first pasuk of the Sh'ma: Rav would cover his eyes

when reciting it. He covered his eyes to teach that everything that occurs to us, whether from Y-H-V-H, the attribute of mercy, or from Elokeinu, the attribute of din, we cannot "see" with our eyes but only understand that it is all for our benefit, from HaShem's kindness (B'rachot 13:2).

The Zohar explains that in saying V'YOSEF YASHIT YADO AL EINECHA, HaShem was hinting this to Yaakov. That the events of Yosef's life are to teach that the end result was for good. Indeed, just as Yosef said to his brothers.

And now, I have a much better understanding of the very unusual Chazal that says that when Yaakov finally sees and embraces Yosef, he says the Sh'ma. This never made any sense to me, no matter whose explanation I read. Now, however, I can understand it. Yaakov comes face to face with Yosef, the living proof of all the Sh'ma was teaching: he suffered, struggled, survived, flourished and never veered from all that Yaakov had taught him; trusting that Gd had a plan. V'YOSEF YASHIT YADO AL EINECHA - it was the story of Yosef that would 'put a hand over his eyes', that would prove that we can't always "see" what is behind what occurs to us. Yaakov's saying of Sh'ma at that moment was a statement that it was undeniably clear that all that had transpired, was Gd's plan for the

future of his family, for the survival of the Jewish people. \*

## Insights into Halacha

- Rabbi Yehuda Spitz

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## Lechem Mishneh with Mezonot?

Several weeks ago, at a local shul Kiddush, this author noticed that Rav Efrayim Landy, Rav of Aderes Eliyahu in Givat Zev, passed over a piece of cake to specifically make Mezonos on two Rugelach. He remarked that his choice was a matter of preference - not of taste, but rather halachic preference. Noting my confusion - as I was unaware of any halachic optimality inherent in Rugelach as opposed to cake - he referenced a somewhat obscure ruling of the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's... But to properly understand the context, a bit of background is in order.

Let's revisit a twist on an important part of Shabbat, the Shabbat day Kiddush. As discussed in previous articles over the years, we know that Kiddush must be performed B'MAKOM SEUDA, in the same place as (meaning as part of) a meal. In other words, in order to fulfill the Kiddush obligation, it must serve as the preamble to an actual Seuda.

The Rashbam explains that this halacha is gleaned from the pasuk in Yeshayahu, V'KARATA LASHABBAT ONEG, and you will proclaim Shabbat as a delight for you', meaning in the same place where you proclaim Shabbat (making Kiddush), there must also be the delight (referring to celebrating the Shabbat Seuda).

## What is a Seuda?

Although there is some debate as to how 'Seuda' is defined, with the Vilna Gaon famously maintaining that Kiddush may only be performed with a full bread Seuda – meaning exclusively when washing for HaMotzi, nonetheless, the common minhag is to follow the Magen Avraham's psak, that for this halacha, eating Mezonot is sufficient to be considered a Seuda for Kiddush purposes. In fact, this approach of the Magen Avraham's was accepted and considered 'Minhag Yisrael' by all sectors of world Jewry, certainly for Shabbat day Kiddush. That is why by almost any Kiddush in almost any shul anywhere in the world, it is de rigueur to have a Kiddush with Mezonot as the Seuda (that follows Kiddush).

*Rabbi Spitz points out in a footnote that Kiddush with Mezonot - even though we regard it as a seuda for the purpose of connecting it to Kiddush, it does NOT qualify as one of the required seudot for Shabbat.*

## Mezonos Lechem Mishneh

Yet, there is an interesting related debated halacha, whose existence many are entirely unaware of (including this author, up until recently). As pointed out to this author by Rav Efrayim Landy, in the final line of his passage regarding the halachot of Lechem Mishneh at a Shabbat Seuda, Rav Shlomo Ganzfried, the renowned Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, advanced a novel approach. He wrote that even when making Kiddush with Mezonot, one should nonetheless make sure to take SH'TAYIM SH'LEIMOT as Lechem Mishneh, with some editions adding in parenthesis, KEIN RA'ITI LINHOG EITZEL GADOL ECHAD (emulating a certain Gadol whom he saw doing so).

Meaning, even when making Kiddush with Mezonot, the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch rules that one should ensure that he has Lechem Mishneh of his Mezonot. As an example, he is teaching us that if about to be munching on Rugelach, then the Kiddush should be made with two whole Rugelach. The Kaf HaChayim actually cites this ruling with no dissenting opinion.

## Staunch Opposition

On the other hand, several Poskim of the late 1800s and early 1900s opposed this chiddush, with several,

including the Ba'er Yaakov, stating simply that as Kiddush on Mezonot is not the IKAR SEUDA (main Shabbat meal), Lechem Mishneh simply cannot be mandated for it. Moreover, it is pointed out that this is not the common minhag, and he has not seen anyone actively doing so.

Others, including the Maharsham and Katzeh HaMateh, raise a pointed two-fold objection to this hanhaga. First, they cite that the Tosefet Shabbat and the Machatzit HaShekel maintain that one may fulfill his Lechem Mishneh obligation with a Mezonot Challah (Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin), yet, they define this as meaning that if one only has one regular Challah, he may then use a Mezonot Challah in conjunction with it as part of his Seuda, to combine to be considered Lechem Mishneh together. This implies that one cannot use two Mezonot items to be considered Lechem Mishneh.

## Shabbat is Koveya

Moreover, as briefly cited by the Shaarei Teshuva, there is another relevant rationale advanced by several Poskim that may impact this discussion. Rav Avraham Azulai (great-grandfather of the Chida), citing a manuscript from an early source; likely the Mahara"ch Ohr Zarua (Rav Chaim, son of the famed Ohr Zarua, Rav Yitzchak of Vienna, from the early 1300s), as this ruling is

found almost word-for-word in his responsa, opines that the same way Shabbat creates a KEVIYUT for Maaser, meaning although one is normally allowed to eat untithed food DERECH ARAI (in a temporary manner), on Shabbat one may not, as Shabbat itself lends a certain inherent importance, and only 'Maasered' (tithed) food may be eaten on Shabbat], perhaps the same applies to eating Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin.

In other words, although normally Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin's b'racha is Mezonot unless one eats copious quantities of it and is Koveya Seuda with it - when its b'racha becomes HaMotzi, perhaps the same idea is applied here - that if one eats such Mezonot on Shabbat, it automatically becomes HaMotzi, due to Shabbat's inherent importance. In other words, Shabbat creates a keviyut (sense of permanence), which instantly turns these Mezonot items into HaMotzi, even if only partaking of small amounts.

Not a Daat Yachid, there are other Poskim who support this idea, at least in theory, including the Mahari Chagiz (author of the Halachot Ketanot) and the Minchat Chinuch (regarding the b'racha on Matza on Pesach, that the Mitzva creates KEVA), as well as several Rishonim who may infer this way, including sefer Tanya Rabbati and Shbolei

HaLeket citing Rabbeinu Avigdor Kohen-Tzedek, and the Ria”z (Rav Yeshaya Ha’acharon of Italy), all of whom maintain that even a casual meal (temporary) is considered a formal (permanent) Seuda on Shabbat.

[However, it is important to note that this is not the halacha pesuka, as many Acharonim are quick to point out that although Shabbat creates Keviyut, it still does not automatically create a ‘Shiur Keviyut’ – the amount of food which would still be halachically necessary for a Mezonot Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin item to become HaMotzi. These Poskim include the Ginat V'radim, the Maamar Mordechai (regarding Sukka, that Sukkot mandates a keviyut that Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin should be eaten in a Sukka, but not that it upgrades its b'racha to HaMotzi), Rav Meir Arik, Rav Yitzchak Isaac Chaver (who also utilizes this distinction to argue against the Magen Avraham’s allowance of making Kiddush with Mezonot), the Chida (who concludes that the Ginat V'radim is correct), and the Shaarei Teshuva himself, who concludes like the Chida.]

The Maharsham and the Katzeḥ HaMateḥ use both of these arguments (albeit briefly) to argue on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch. They maintains that combining both ideas, if one would use two Mezonot items (like our two Rugelach) as Lechem

Mishneh to make Kiddush, one may be mandated to first do Netilat Yadayim and make HaMotzi, as it would now be deemed an actual formal Seudat Keva.

They therefore assert that it would be preferable not to make Kiddush with two Mezonot items as Lechem Mishneh, not to enter this halachic question and potential obligation of washing and Bentching. Indeed, the Katzeḥ HaMateḥ asserts rather strongly not to follow the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch’s shita, writing that the minhag is not to do so, concluding that we should not come up with novel obligations.”

## Contemporary Conclusions?

Contemporary Poskim are divided as to the correct approach in this situation, whether Lechem Mishneh with Mezonot should be, shouldn’t be, or may be done. The Shemirat Shabbat K’hilchata actually cites all three options without a clear cut conclusion.

Rav Mordechai Eliyahu writes simply that the minhag is not to do so. Likewise, although in one teshuvah Rav Moshe Sternbuch posits a sevara as to the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch’s rationale (that Lechem Mishneh signifies and showcases Kavod HaShabbat), adding that he was likely referring specifically to cake, as it is a ‘safek Pat’ (see Orach Chayim 168:7), nonetheless, in a later teshuva, he

questions the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's ruling altogether, referring to it as a "chiddush", and that he did not find any other sources who agree, and concluding that we don't do it. Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky holds similarly, writing succinctly that it is a that is a novel concept, and the minhag is not to do so.

Indeed, not being makpid on this seems to be the common minhag, as even the idea of Lechem Mishneh with Mezonot is glaringly absent from the vast majority of halachic literature.

The She'arim M'tzuyanim b'Halacha writes that Rav Eliezer Silver (Rav of Cincinnati, and head of the Agudas HaRabbonim of United States and Canada) cited several of the aforementioned sevaros and Poskim, including the Minchat Chinuch and Maharsham, and pointed out that therefore if one would be makpid to make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonot, he may be required to wash and make HaMotzi, implying that it would be better not to, and thus avoiding entering into the Sheila in the first place.

The Minchas Yitzchak also strongly questions the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's ruling, presuming it is based on the Machloket Rishonim whether or not Seuda Sh'lshit mandates bread, or suffices with Mezonot (discussed later in the article). He

refers to being makpid with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonot as a CHUMRA AL GABEI CHUMRA, compounded stringency. He concludes that a Baal Nefesh may be machmir b'tzina, stringent in his own home, but one may not do it publicly, as then it would be considered YOHARA (religious arrogance) and may cause machloket.

## **Two Rugelach are Better than One...**

On the other hand, come what may, it is known that there were Poskim who were indeed makpid for the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's psak, of specifically using Lechem Mishneh of Mezonot at Kiddush, including the Minchat Elazar of Munkacsz, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, his brother, Rav Avraham Dov Auerbach, Rav of Teverya, Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer, as well as the Yerushalmi Gaon, Rav Zundel Kroizer.

The Klausenberger Rebbe was also makpid for the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's shita, and even wrote an extensive teshuva defending his opinion from his detractors. He maintains that Mi'd'Orayta, Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin has a din of actual Pat, however, Mi'd'rabbanan, 'Lechem' refers to actual bread that one must make HaMotzi and Birkat HaMazon on. Hence, for Lechem Mishneh, he avers that it is worthwhile to be makpid l'chumra on the

Din Torah, and make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonot.

He also argues on the Maharsham's assessment, stating that Rabbeinu Avigdor, the Shibolei HaLeket, Agur, and other Poskim who maintain that Shabbat's inherent holiness makes a keviyut that can potentially turn Pat HaBa'a b'Kisnin from Mezonot into HaMotzi, was only stated regarding Seudat Erev or Seudat Boker, meaning the main Shabbat meals - and not an informal one, citing precedent from many Poskim, including the Vilna Gaon and Chatam Sofer.

Ergo, the Klausenberger Rebbe asserts, that certainly regarding Kiddush on Mezonot on Shabbat - which is only eaten in order to be considered Kiddush B'Makom Seuda - as anyway, later on a full Shabbat Seuda is eaten, which would prove that this was not intended to be the full Seudat Boker, it is clear and obvious, that there is no chashash (prospect) that this informal achilat arai would require Netilat Yadayim and Birkat HaMazon.

In conclusion, with no clear-cut contemporary consensus, one should certainly ask his rabbinic authority for guidance, as to whether he can and/or should make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonot. Who would have thought that a few Rugelach can be the basis of an

obscure halachic debate? Either way, we at least have gained a new appreciation for the seemingly simple Shabbat Day Kiddush.

*The author wishes to thank Rav Efraim Landy for bringing this fascinating debate to my attention, as well as my talmid, Rabbi Yitzchak Rubin, for his assistance and serving as my sounding board on this complicated inyan.*

*Ed. note: The paragraphs written in italics and in light blue font are taken from Rabbi Spitz's copious footnotes. For fuller treatment of the subject, see the article on his website with all the footnotes. The green paragraphs are mine.*

*For any questions, comments or for the full Mareh Mekomot & sources, please email the author: yspitz@ohr.edu*

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[ohr.edu/this\\_week/insights\\_into\\_halacha/](http://ohr.edu/this_week/insights_into_halacha/)

**Disclaimer:** This is not a comprehensive guide, rather a brief summary to raise awareness of the issues. In any real case one should ask a competent Halachic authority.

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz's English halacha sefer, "Food: A Halachic Analysis" (Mosaica/ Feldheim) containing over 500 pages featuring over 30 comprehensive chapters discussing the myriad halachic issues pertaining to food, is now available online and in bookstores everywhere."



## VAYCHI

**GM** In Parshat Vayigash, Yehuda faces the leader of Egypt and pleads for the safe return of Binyamin to his father - and to take him (Yehuda) as a slave, instead of Binyamin. B'reishit 44:32 states -

כִּי עָבֹד עָרֵב אֶת-הָעֵד בַּעֲמָד אָבִי  
לְאֹמֶר אֶמְלָא אֶבְּנָא אֶלְיָה  
וּזְעִטָּא תִּי לְאָבִי כְּלָדָה-קִמְמִים:

*Besides, I offered myself to my father as a guarantee for the lad, and I said, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I will have sinned to my father for all time.'*

Years passed, Binyamin was returned to Yaakov, Yosef revealed his identity to his brothers, Yaakov and his whole household went down to Mitzrayim, and Yaakov was reunited with Yosef.

And then, Yaakov was on his deathbed and Yosef came to him - B'reishit 48:2 -

וַיַּדַּר לִיעַקְבּ וַיִּאָמַר הַנָּה בְּנֵךְ יוֹסֵף  
בָּא אֶלְיָה וַיִּתְוֹזֵק יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁבַּ  
עַל-הַמִּטָּה:

*When Yaakov was told that Yosef was coming to him, Israel summoned his strength and sat up in bed.*

I sometimes look at Gimatriya Matches as extra threads that link two things. In this case, two points in the continuing story of Yosef. These two p'sukim share the numeric value of 2393.

As GM searches result in more than you look for, sometimes, another pasuk in the Torah showed up as matching these two. Without anything to say or any observation to make, the other pasuk is D'varim 22:11, the prohibition of wearing SHAATNEZ.

Unrelated, in the year 2393 from Creation, the future Moshe Rabeinu was 25 years old.

And as long as we're playing with numbers, 2393 is a prime number. Further, it is a right-truncatable prime, since 2, 23, and 239 are also prime. And now you know!

**USFUNEI T'MUNEI CHOL** is the working title of my hopeful book of Gimatriya Matches. The title translates to Hidden in the Sand. That's how I feel about my Gimatriya searches. Like walking along the beach with a metal detector. Beep-beep-beep. Lean down and find something. Usually, nothing of note. But sometimes you find something special.

There are two Gimatriya Matches in the SedraSummary that I would like to put together here.

The opening words of Yaakov's description/b'racha for Yosef are -

בָּן פְּרַת יוֹסֵף

A fruitful bough is Yosef...  
(B'reishit 49:22)

Commentaries understand this in various way, but Avraham ben HaRambam says that it refers to the fact that Yosef was given two tribes among those of his brothers. And that his descendants will multiply from his sons.

A numeric REMEZ (hint) to this understanding is that the gimatriya of BEN PORAT is  $2+50\ (52) + 80+200+400\ (680) = 732$ . And so is EFRAYIM UMNASHE =  $1+80+200+10+40\ (331) + 6+40+50+300+5\ (395) = 732$ .

Earlier in the sedra, Yaakov declared that Efrayim and Menashe would be to him as Reuven and Shimon.

REUVEN =  $200+1+6+2+50 = 259$  and (6)  
SHIMON =  $300+40+70+6+50 = 466$ .  
Total: 731.

Close but no cigar? Not really, because differences of one in gimatriya are often ignored. And in this case, Yaakov had said that E&M would be like R&S. That can mean (numerically, at least) that they were not to be exactly the same, but K' (like). Close enough for a cigar.

Let's push the gimatriya angle further - to the one pasuk in Tanach with 732 as its numeric value. Mishlei 27:19 -

כַּפְרִים הַפְּנִים לְפָנִים  
כַּן לְבַדְּהָאָדָם לְאָדָם:

As water reflects a face,  
so a man's heart reflects the man.

Rashi says: As in water - the face that you show it, it shows you. is the heart of a man to a man - his friend. According to how much a man knows that his friend loves him, so he will show him his face.

Face to face; man to man - Efrayim & Menashe to Reuven & Shimon.

## RED ALERT!

VAYCHI

by Rabbi Eddie Davis (RED)  
of the Young Israel of Hollywood -  
Ft. Lauderdale (Florida)

## DIVREI TORAH

- Yaakov was nearing death and needed to take care of his final needs. Firstly, he needed to arrange his burial in Eretz Yisrael. This was a need for him personally and to extend a message to his growing tribe. The final verse of last week's reading stated that the Jewish people were growing in population and were purchasing property in Egypt. They were no longer planning to return to

the Promised Land. By planning his funeral in Israel, he was telling his people that their future was not to be in Egypt. It was to be in Eretz Yisrael. Rashi quotes the Midrash that states three different reasons why Yaakov wanted to be buried back home and not in Egypt, but does not mention this necessary concept, and designing a future for this eventual nation. I think the link to the last verse places a different idea to what is in Yaakov's mind.

- The first of Yaakov's final blessings was to promote Efrayim and Menashe to equal tribal status with Yaakov's sons. The blessing included the fact that when we bless our sons, we say that they should be like Efrayim and Menashe... and not like Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. Why was this necessary? I yield to the words of the Abravanel, who asks a different question, and in so doing, answers this question as well. The Abravanel wants to know why this Chumash ends here, well into the Egyptian experience for our people. He states that all the family stories in B'reishit involve cases where the younger brother is favored over the older brother, and the result is disastrous. Hevel is favored over Kayin, and the result was murder. Yitzchak is favored over Yishmael, and the result was expulsion. Yaakov is favored over Eisav, resulting in attempted murder. Yosef is favored over his brothers,

and that led to an enslavement. Now Efrayim is favored over Menashe, and there was no resulting hatred, jealousy, or envy. The Abravanel concludes that now we can move on to building a nation. I add that now we see a major B'racha that we wish for our sons: Family Harmony.

- The question of national leadership is decided when Yaakov blesses Yehuda and tells us that the future kings of Israel will come from his family line. Yaakov states that the whole family will unite under his dynasty of leaders. A further insightful discovery is pointed out to us by Prof. Nechamah Leibowitz. Up until this portion of the blessings, every time the Torah uses the term IVRIM, Hebrews, the Targum translates that term in the Aramaic form of IVRIM. But now, after stating Yehuda as the leader of the Jewish people, the Targum begins to refer to the IVRIM as YEHUDIM; our name as a people now and forever more reflects the linkage to Yehuda. We are Yehudim, and this change occurred here in Yaakov's words.

- There is no doubt that in Yaakov's life, his most peaceful and pleasurable years are the last seventeen years of his life, those he spent in Egypt. Gone are the most trying and painful years involving Eisav, Lavan, and Dina's abduction. The Torah does not go into any details of these final

years, but it is obvious. There is Shalom Bayit, peaceful harmony in the family. They are all together. No more brotherly rivalry. They are financially doing well. And we can conclude with our comprehension of the extreme blessing of this Shalom Bayit. Furthermore, we see the relationship Yaakov has with his grandchildren. The Rambam refers to Yaakov as Saba Yaakov. Avraham and Yitzchak definitely had a pleasant relationship with their grandchildren, but no one ever refers to them as a Saba, a grandfather. Only Yaakov attained that title in our literature.

- Did Yosef ever really forgive his brothers for the terrible way they treated him in his younger days? In the simplest way of reading the narrative, we would say: yes, he did. But in his commentary on 50:16, Rashi points out that the brothers ate frequently at Yosef's house, in respect to their aging father, Yaakov. But after Yaakov's death, they never ate at Yosef's house ever again. This comment definitely leads us to conclude that a total forgiveness never came about. Yosef could act civilly and pleasantly to them, and yet could never erase the pain and difficulties that he had to experience because of their treatment of him. I can't fault Yosef at all for this lingering ill will. I can compliment Yosef from keeping these feelings concealed and in check for the rest of

his life.

- We see that in the mourning process, a seven day mourning period was enacted. Our Sages direct us to observe the Shiva period, but say that it is Rabbinic and not Torah law. The first day only is ordained in the Torah. Not the seven day period. (Ibn Ezra). The loss of Yaakov was felt by the Egyptians as well. The Ramban writes that when Yaakov arrived in Egypt, it was after two years of the famine. And the famine stopped when Yaakov came. But immediately after Yaakov died, the famine resumed and completed its seven years ordeal. I assume that the Ramban arrived at this statement because, after Yaakov's death, Yosef said to his brothers that he will sustain them (50:21). If there was no famine and they were financially doing well, there was no need for Yosef to sustain them. Hence, the Ramban's conclusion.

- The Shulchan Aruch ruled that if a person served as the Sandek at a family Brit Mila, he should not repeat as the Sandek at future circumcisions in that family. Too much Kavod. Ayin HaRa. Yet, on that page in the Code of Law, a commentary by the Yad Shaul disagrees with the Code. He proves his case by citing the Torah at the very end of this Parsha. It says that Yosef was blessed with many grandchildren , and the Torah reads

that the grandchildren “were raised on Yosef’s knees” (50:23). From this verse, the Yad Shaul concludes from that expression that Yosef was the Sandek for all his grandsons. I favor this Yad Shaul and permit a multiple performance by a Sandek within the same family.

- MIDRASH. Sotah 13b. Ultimately, Yosef was buried in Shechem, either because Yaakov gave him that city as a personal gift, or because his brother tribes wanted to make amends for their mistreatment of him in that very place, for it was there that they sold him.

## Questions by RED

### From the text

1. How many years did Yaakov live in Egypt? (47:28)
2. What was Yaakov’s blessings to his two grandsons Efrayim and Menashe? (48:5)
3. Why didn’t Yaakov recognize Efrayim and Menashe?
4. Which son was chosen to be the royal line of his tribe? (49:8)
5. Whom did Yosef request to bury him eventually in Eretz Yisrael? (50:25)

### From Rashi

6. Why did Yaakov ask Yosef (and

only Yosef) to bury him in Eretz Yisrael? (47:29)

7. Why is the act of burying a person considered an act of “kindness and truth” - CHESED VE’EMET? (47:29)

8. Who told Yosef that Yaakov had become seriously ill? (48:1)

9. According to the Midrash, why didn’t Yaakov recognize Efrayim and Menashe? (48:8)

10. What kind of financial relationship did the tribes of Yissachar and Zevulun have? (49:13)

### From the Rabbis

11. When Yaakov came to Egypt, he intended to return to Eretz Yisrael after the famine was over. Why did Yaakov remain in Egypt for the rest of his life? (Ramban)

12. Why did Yaakov insist that Yosef take an oath to bury him in Eretz Yisrael? (S’forno)

13. As the firstborn, Reuven was entitled to receive a double portion of his father’s estate, the Kehuna, and the Kingship. He was denied all three things. Who received these privileges? (Chapter 49)

### Midrash

14. When Yaakov was ready to bless all his children, the sons said: SH’MA YISRAEL... Listen, Yisrael, our father, HaShem is our God, HaShem is one.

What was Yaakov's response?

## Haftara - Melachim Alef

15. How long was King David king?

### Relationships

a) King David - Yoav ben Tz'ruya

b) Yehuda - Sheila

c) Reuven - Yosef

d) Korach - Moshe

e) Yocheved - Yehuda

### ANSWERS

1. Seventeen years.

2. That Efrayim and Menashe would be elevated in status and become the heads of their own tribes among Bnei Yisrael.

3. Because Yaakov had become blind.

4. Yehuda

5. All of Bnei Yisrael.

6. Because, as viceroy, Yosef was the only one who had the authority to do it.

7. Because the deceased could never return the favor.

8. Probably Efrayim who was with Yaakov a great deal of the time.

9. Because Yaakov saw with the divine spirit (RU'ACH HAKODESH) that evil kings would come from each tribe.

10. Zevulun was a tribe of successful businessmen and would support Yissachar and enable them to learn Torah.

11. Because Hashem told him to stay in Egypt.

12. Because that was the only way Par'o would agree to let Yosef go and bury his father.

13. Yosef received the double portion. Levi received the Kehuna. Yehuda received Kingship.

14. BARUCH SHEIM K'VOD MALCHUTO L'OLAM VA'ED.

15. 40 years

### Relationships

a) Uncle & Nephew

b) Father & Son

c) Half-brothers

d) First Cousins

e) Niece & Uncle