



885
ויצא
י"א כסלו תש"ע • Nov. 27-28, '09



This Shabbat is the 71st day (of 355), 11th Shabbat (of 51) of 5770
שׁוֹבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד ה' אֱלֹהֶיהָ כִּי כִשְׁלֹשֶׁת בַּעֲוֹנָהּ: הוֹשַׁע יִדָּב

Torah: the precision factory tour

We'll be mixing the MASHAL (analogy) and NIMSHAL (what we are actually talking about). You should be able to separate the two.

G-d created a prototype of a human being - we call him Adam HaRishon (and Chava). G-d had plans, so to speak, for this new item - human being. For quite a while, the item was mass-produced and for about the first 2000 years since Creation things went downhill. An occasional good person, but by and large, the product failed to live up to the standards of the Boss.

Candle Lighting
and **Havdala** times
Israel Standard Time

TT 885 • Rabbeinu Tam (J'm) - 5:52pm		
4:00pm	Yerushalayim	5:15pm
4:18pm	S'derot	5:18pm
4:15pm	Gush Etzion	5:16pm
4:15pm	Raanana	5:16pm
4:16pm	Beit Shmesh	5:16pm
4:16pm	Rehovot	5:16pm
4:15pm	Netanya	5:15pm
4:16pm	Be'er Sheva	5:17pm
4:15pm	Modi'in	5:15pm
4:00pm	Petach Tikva	5:16pm
4:00pm	Maale Adumim	5:14pm
4:14pm	Ginot Shomron	5:15pm
4:14pm	Gush Shiloh	5:14pm
4:16pm	K4 & Hevron	5:16pm
4:15pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:15pm
4:16pm	Yad Binyamin	5:16pm
4:18pm	Ashkelon	5:18pm
4:01pm	Tzfat	5:12pm

During the second millenium, it was then almost totally back to the drawing board, retaining a few samples of the original product and basically starting over again. Results were quite disappointing, until one particular sample was found to be unique and the Boss knew He was on the right track.

This exciting, promising individual was tested repeatedly to see if he was actually what the Boss thought he might be. And he was. He and his wife - perfect partners for this new line of products, greatly pleased G-d and He promised them many descendants and the Land of Israel.

cont. on p.3

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OTHER Z'MANIM
Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
8-17 Kislev (Nov 25 - Dec 4)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:23-5:30am
Sunrise	6:17-6:24am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	8:51-8:56am
(Magen Avraham: 8:04-8:09am)	
Sof Z'man T'fila	9:42-9:47am
(Magen Avraham: 9:11-9:15am)	
Chatzot	11:26-11:29¼am
(halachic noon)	
Mincha Gedola	11:57am-12:00pm
(earliest Mincha)	
Plag Mincha	3:31-3:31pm
Sunset	4:40-4:39pm
(based on sea level: 4:35-4:34pm)	

Word of the Month

KL for 3-day people began on Motza"Sh; for 7-day people on Tuesday night, Nov. 24. Last op (for either minhag) is all night between Tuesday Dec. 1 and Wed. the 2nd. p.3

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George z"l and Ilse Falk

WORD of the MONTH cont. from p.2 *A weekly TT feature to help clarify practical and conceptual aspects of the Jewish Calendar, thereby enhancing our appreciation of G-d's gift to us of HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem...*

Cal-check: There are 385 different Hebrew dates on the calendar. 353 of them occur every year. The other 32 dates occur in some years and not in others. These 32 dates are 30 Marcheshvan, 30 Kislev, and 1-30 of the first Adar. Stats on this some other time.

But here's this: Whereas most dates on the calendar have four days of the week (D/W) on which they fall and 3 D/W on which they cannot fall (starting point for that is LO ADU ROSH), the first 29 days of Kislev can each occur on 6 different D/W and have only one D/W they cannot fall on. For example, this Shabbat is 11 Kislev. Besides Shabbat, this date can be a Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday - but never a Tuesday.

30 Kislev cannot fall on SUN, WED, or FRI, but is not linked to LO ADU ROSH.

Lead Tidbit cont. from front page

We now move on to another part of the production line. Since it's obvious about whom we are speaking, we'll name names. Avraham had Yishmael and originally thought that his legacy would be passed on through him. Was not to be. KI V'YITZCHAK... through Yitzchak will be your continuity.

Yitzchak underwent several experiences - some similar to his father's and some different - in order to fine tune the product.

And when we move on to the next generation of the line, we find a further refining by the blessings and legacy going through Yaakov and not Eisav. Both Yishmael and Eisav become the progenitors of great nations, but not that special line that is the subject of today's Torah tour.

Once Yaakov tests out successfully, G-d is ready (so to speak) to begin a limited run of the product, with future plans for mass-production.

And so it happens. Twelve sons are born to Yaakov and, as we see later, they all prove to be worthy of the high-quality product and the promised rewards.

But not without further refinement. But that's part of the tour for upcoming weeks.

Let's jump further down the process. To us. The quality control of the line begun with Avraham and Sara is always tested and improved upon. We cannot rest on Z'chut Avot. We must always be proactive.

Vayeitzei STATS

7th of 54 sedras; 7th of 12 in B'reishit

Written on 235.3 lines in a Sefer Torah, ranks 12

Vayeitzei is one single long (closed) Parsha, which fits with the fact that it is a continuation of the To-l'dot story. It is the Torah's longest closed parsha, and second only to the open parsha that is all of Mikeitz (254.6 lines)

148 p'sukim - rank: 6th (3rd in B'reishit)

2021 words - ranks 4th (3rd in B'reishit)

7512 letters - ranks 5th (3rd in B'reishit)

MITZVOT

none of the 613 mitzvot are in Vayeitzei

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

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

Kohen - First Aliya 13 p'sukim - 28:10-22

[S> 28:10 (148)] Yaakov leaves Be'er Sheva and goes to Haran.

SDT: There are different explanations concerning the wording of this pasuk. As to why the Torah mentions Yaakov's departure (especially having mentioned it a couple of times at the end of Toldot), Rashi explains that a prominent person not only influences his surroundings, but his absence from a place is also felt, in a

negative way. Therefore, the Torah not only tells us that Yaakov went to Haran; it also tells us that he left Be'er Sheva, and his absence was felt - even though Yitzchak (and Rivka) remained there. (Perhaps, especially because Yitzchak and Rivka remained in Be'er Sheva - they would feel Yaakov's absence the most!)

Another explanation - In leaving Be'er Sheva, Yaakov was fulfilling the wishes of his mother Rivka, who feared that Eisav would kill Yaakov if he remained. In going to Haran, Yaakov was fulfilling the wishes of his father, Yitzchak (and also his mother's), who sent him there to find a suitable wife. The pasuk tells us of Yaakov's departure from Be'er Sheva AND his journey to Haran, to show us that it was important to satisfy the wishes of BOTH his parents. (Rivka did not tell Yitzchak about the danger to Yaakov if he were to remain home.)

He encounters "The Place" (it is unidentified in the text, but is traditionally considered to be Har Moriah, the site of the Akeida, and the location of the future Beit HaMikdash) and stays the night. He dreams of a ladder with its feet planted on the ground and whose top reaches the heavens. Angels are ascending and descending the ladder.

SDT: The S'fat Emet points out that the ladder in Yaakov's dream is described first as having its feet planted on the ground (representing worldliness and/or basic decency) and then its head reaching the heavens (representing spiritual pursuits). This is consistent with the famous maxim from Pirkei Avot - Derech Eretz Kodma laTorah, worldliness (should) precedes Torah.

SDT: *What Yaakov saw in the dream represents the "Changing of the Guard". Angels that accompanied Yaakov in Eretz Yisrael are not the same as those outside Israel, just as Shabbat angels differ from those of weekdays. Our weekly counterpart to Yaakov's dream is the Friday night song, Shalom Aleichem, which refers to the changing of the angels. (Note that in Shalom Aleichem, we greet the Shabbat angels before saying farewell to the weekday angels. This gives us an overlap of angels rather than an angel-less gap. In Yaakov's dream, the angels are spoken of as ascending and descending, leaving a momentary gap. Commentaries point out that G-d was "standing watch" over Yaakov from the top of the ladder because there was a gap between the ascension of the angels and the descending of the new ones - OLIM (and then) V'YORDIM BO.*

SDT: *A person should realize that wealth is not permanent; it can be lost as easily as it is gained. Therefore, if one is blessed with wealth, he should use it wisely, constructively, charitably. This idea is symbolized by the ladder, and the ups and downs that take place on it - the SULAM, with the angels OLIM V'YORDIM BO. SULAM (ladder) is numerically 60+6+30+40=136. MAMON (money) is also 40+40+6+50=136. And so is ONI (poverty) 70+6+50+10=136.*

More... KOL, voice (prayer) and TZOM, fasting are also equal to 136, perhaps saying that prayer and petition of G-d can be effective in resulting in a blessing of wealth rather than one's being poor.

In the dream, G-d appears to Yaakov at the head of the ladder and reiterates to him the promises

flocks is to the mother as what is to what?

He made to Avraham and Yitzchak. These oft-repeated promises have consistently included the possession of the Land and the "countless" nature of their descendants. This prophecy also includes G-d's promise of protection for Yaakov on his sojourn.

Yaakov awakens from his sleep and acknowledges the sanctity of the Place. When Yaakov awakens in the morning, he takes the stone (formerly referred to in the plural) that was at his head, and erects it as a monument, which he then anoints. He names the place Beit El. Yaakov vows allegiance to G-d.

SDT: *Shulchan Aruch, based on Midrash, says that a person should/can take a vow or make a pledge to increase and enhance performance of mitzvot and giving of tzedaka during troubled times. The precedent for this is Yaakov's vows at this "low point" in his life. This is notwithstanding the recommendation to avoid taking vows. Tzedaka is another story (sort of).*

SDT: *"And I will return to my father's home and HaShem will be for me, G-d." Ramban explains the connection between Yaakov's return home with his "acquisition of G-d". The Gemara in Ketuvot states that he who lives in Eretz Yisrael is like one who has G-d; he who lives outside Israel is like one without G-d. Yaakov's return from Lavan's house to his father's was a physical and spiritual Aliya - as is Aliya to Eretz Yisrael in our own time.*

Let's say that again - even though it is written about in a few different places in this week's TT - in a clear way as an important "reminder" and gentle nudge to Jews not yet living

in Eretz Yisrael. (And Chizuk for us all.)

Avraham Avinu was born in Chutz LaAretz and was commanded by G-d to go and live in Eretz Yisrael, the land that he and his descendants would receive from G-d in perpetuity.

Yitzchak Avinu was born and raised in Eretz Yisrael, lived here all his life, never having stepped foot outside the Land.

Yaakov Avinu was born in Eretz Yisrael and left the land for an extended time. In Parshat Vayeitzei, we find his returning to Eretz Yisrael is both a physical return and a spiritual one.

Jews - as far as Eretz Yisrael is concerned - have one of three role models to emulate. You are either born in Israel and live your whole life here. Or you come on Aliya from the place of your birth, or - if you were born in Israel (or lived here at one time) and left to live elsewhere, you work your way back to Eretz Yisrael.

And the Gemara/Ramban's point: Coming on Aliya is not just a mitzva, it is the way a G-dless person acquires G-d for himself.

Levi - Second Aliya 17 p'sukim - 29:1-17

Assured of G-d's protection upon leaving the Land (something Yaakov had reason to be unsure of), his pace quickens. He sees a well in a field, with three flocks of sheep gathered around. The well is covered by a large rock. It was the

practice of the shepherds to gather at the same time each day so that they would have the manpower necessary to remove the rock and then replace it after the sheep drank. (This, to prevent water from being stolen by one shepherd or another.) Yaakov asks the shepherds who they are and why they gather so early in the afternoon to water their sheep.

When they tell him that they work for Lavan, Yaakov asks about his wellbeing. The shepherds point out the approaching Rachel, daughter of Lavan. They explain to Yaakov that they must cooperate with each other in order to physically remove the stone from the well. Just then, Yaakov sees Rachel, his cousin, and approaches the rock and single-handedly removes it from the mouth of the well in order to give water to his uncle's sheep. Yaakov kisses Rachel and weeps bitterly. (He weeps because he sees with Ru'ach HaKodesh that they are destined not to be buried together.)

Yaakov tells Rachel who he is - what their relationship is - she runs off to tell her father. When Lavan hears, he runs to welcome Yaakov, and brings him home to tell "the whole story". Lavan "offers" Yaakov a job and tells him "to name his price". Lavan had two daughters - Leah, the older one and Rachel, the younger one. Leah had "weak" (sensitive) eyes and Rachel was very beautiful.

SDT: Commentaries note that Lavan is identified as ben Nachor, who was his grandfather - B'tu'el was his father. One explanation is that B'tu'el was a wicked person and his name is bypassed, so to speak, in identifying Lavan. Another explanation is that Nachor was well-known, and not B'tu'el, so the shepherds identified Lavan as ben Nachor, assuming that this visitor (Yaakov) would know of the family. One halachic ramification of the first opinion is the practice of the way we call to the Torah a person born of a Jewish mother and non-Jewish father - namely, Ploni ben the name of his mother's father. This situation is not exactly the same, but is based on the same kind of idea.

Shlishi - Third Aliya 31 p'sukim - 29:18-30:13

Yaakov loves Rachel and offers to work for seven years in exchange for her hand in marriage. Lavan agrees and the time flies by in Yaakov's eyes because of his great excitement. At the end of the seven years, Yaakov asks that the marriage take place.

Lavan gathers the locals for the festivities and substitutes Leah for Rachel.

SDT: Although Lavan was the deceiver, and had his own motives, our Sources indicate that it was Rachel who facilitated the switch, motivated by love and compassion for her sister. Rachel gave her private "signals" to Leah to save her from a probable marriage to Eisav, Yitzchak's biological elder. This compassion serves her descendants well many years later, when she "intercedes" before G-d following the destruction of the Beit

HaMikdash. Tradition tells us that G-d "softened" the punishment with a promise of our return, only after Rachel pleaded before Him. According to Tradition, the Avot and Moshe Rabeinu had not succeeded in their pleas on behalf of the people. There was also "knowledge" via some kind of RU'ACH HAKODESH, that was given to Rachel and Leah that "The Tribes of G-d" were to come from more than just Rachel.

When Yaakov confronts Lavan about the deceit, Lavan says that it is improper to marry off the younger before the older. (this is the minhag in many communities, despite its origin being Lavan.)

Yaakov agrees to work an additional seven years for Rachel. Zilpa and Bilha are the handmaidens of Leah and Rachel respectively (commentaries say they too were daughters of Lavan, from a pilegesh - their are other opinions as to who exactly they were, including a Midrash that says they were nieces of Devora, Rivka's nursemaid). Yaakov showed his obviously greater love of Rachel. As a result, G-d made Leah fertile and Rachel barren.

Next the Torah tells us, in rapid succession, of the births of Reuven, Shimon, Levi, Yehuda. Leah names each son (Levi was named by Yaakov or perhaps by an angel) with a name that expresses her thanks to G-d and her feelings under the unusual circumstances of her life.

Rachel, jealous of Leah, complains to Yaakov that she has no children.

Yaakov gets angry with her, saying that it is G-d's doing, not his.

Rachel gives Bilha to Yaakov to have children whom she will raise as her own. Dan and Naftali are born. Leah, realizing that she has stopped having children, gives Zilpa to Yaakov. Gad and Asher are the results.

Notice the rapid fashion the Torah employs to tell us of the build-up of Yaakov's family. With Avraham and Yitzchak having such a difficult time fathering children, Yaakov has fathered 10 sons in the span of 16 p'sukim!

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 14 p'sukim - 30:14-27

Rachel begs Reuven to give her the special (fertility) herbs (DUDA-IM, mandrake) that he had gathered for his mother, Leah. When Leah complains to her, Rachel promises that Yaakov could sleep with her that night in exchange for the herbs. When Yaakov returns from the fields, it is Leah who goes out to greet him - something Yaakov questions, and Leah explains. G-d answers Leah's prayers of despair, and she gives birth to Yissachar and then Zevulun. Then Leah gives birth to a girl, Dina. Finally, G-d "remembers" Rachel and she too becomes pregnant.

She gives birth and names her son Yosef, praying that she will have yet another son (giving her not fewer than the hand-maidens had.

Paris street named for Franklin

Leah has also prayed to G-d that her sister should not be shamed by having fewer sons than the handmaidens).

After Yosef is born, Yaakov asks his leave of Lavan. He desires to return to his fathers' home. He asks for his wives, children, and compensation for all the work he has done for Lavan. Lavan acknowledges that he has been blessed because of Yaakov.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya 32 p'sukim - 30:28-31:16

They make an arrangement by which Yaakov will be paid. Lavan repeatedly attempts to minimize the births of the goats and sheep that will be Yaakov's. G-d has other plans and Yaakov becomes very wealthy. The details of the speckled, banded, spotted animals and how which gave birth to what, are obscure. The bottom line is that Lavan attempts to cheat Yaakov (again) and is completely unsuccessful. Lavan's sons feel as if Yaakov has cheated their father. G-d tells Yaakov to return to his birthplace. Yaakov calls to his wives and explains the situation to them. He tells them of being instructed by an angel as to what to do with the animals. Rachel and Leah feel as strangers in their father's house, as if they have no share in Lavan's wealth, and they will do as G-d commands.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya **26 p'sukim - 31:17-42**

Yaakov prepares to leave. Meanwhile, Rachel takes her father's TERAFIM in his absence. When Lavan becomes aware of Yaakov's departure, he sets out in pursuit. G-d appears to Lavan in a dream and warns him not to harm Yaakov in any way. When Lavan catches up to Yaakov, he confronts him about the unannounced departure and the missing terafim.

Rav Aryeh Kaplan z"l in The Living Torah, explains Terafim according to different opinions. Some say they were idols that were worshiped. This opinion adds that Rachel took them to save her father from the sin of idolatry. Others are of the opinion that they were meditative devices that would enable Lavan to divine the whereabouts of Yaakov. Thus Rachel's motive was to prevent Lavan from pursuing Yaakov & Co.

Yaakov answers in kind, expressing his anger at Lavan's repeated attempts to cheat him. As to the terafim, Yaakov permits Lavan to search for them and boldly declares that the one who took them shall not live. Lavan fails to find his terafim because Rachel convinces him not to search her person or belongings. Had it not been for G-d's protection, Yaakov tells Lavan, you would have left me with nothing.

KI VARACH... (Lavan knew that Yaakov had "fled") The Midrash, based on the phrasing in the text,

says it was Amalek who told Lavan that Yaakov fled, and later told Par'o that Bnei Yisrael did so too.

In the Hagada we read/say: VAYEIREN MITZ-RAI-MA (Yaakov went down into Egypt), and this is qualified by, ANOOS AL PI HADIBUR, usually translated as "Forced by Divine Decree". There is another explanation offered: It was Yaakov's DIBUR, his statement that forced himself down into Egypt. How so? He inadvertently condemned Rachel to an early death by his words to Lavan. This can be construed as taking a life B'SHOGEIG. Punishment (and atonement) for that is EXILE. (Really, to a city of refuge, but for this "drash", exile to Egypt will do.) Not only does this explanation fit the DIBUR part, but it can also explain why the Hagada connects Yaakov's descent into Egypt with Lavan.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya **15 p'sukim - 31:43-32:3**

Lavan answers that the women are his daughters, that the children are his (grand)children, and the animals are his as well. Yaakov and Lavan make a pact and form a mound of rocks as a sign of their agreement. Yaakov offers a sacrifice to G-d and swears to the covenant. In the morning, Lavan kisses his children and grandchildren, blesses them, and returns home.

Yaakov continues on his journey and encounters angels (of Eretz Yisrael - the sedra thus comes full circle) on the way, Yaakov names the place Machanayim.

Last 3 p'sukim are Maftir.

Haftara - 28+2* p'sukim - Hoshe'a 12:13-14:10

S'faradim read the 17-pasuk portion of Hoshea that precedes the Ashkenazi reading, 11:7-12:12. Chabad do also, but they continue for two more p'sukim - namely, the first two p'sukim of the Ashkenazi reading.

*Chayei Adam suggests concluding the haftara with Yoel 2:26-27, in order to end the haftara on a better note than Hoshea ends with.

This concluding portion of the book(let) of Hoshea begins with reference to Yaakov's journey to Aram to find (and work on behalf of) a wife (wives) - hence its obvious connection to the sedra. The prophet points out to the People of Israel their humble origins, in an attempt to put things in perspective and restore their faith and reliance upon G-d.

The last 9 p'sukim of the haftara and also the first 9 p'sukim of the haftara of Shabbat Shuva.

"...so will we offer the words of our lips instead of bulls." This is the textual link between prayer and korbanot. Remember that the origin of Maariv is found in the sedra.

Speaking of Maariv... let's clarify the Shacharit, Mincha, Maariv issue.

The gemara in B'rachot tells us of a machloket (this is not a typical dispute,

because the two sides go hand-in-hand to give us a full picture of what davening is) as to where we get the three daily davenings.

One opinion is that the Avot established the davenings. The other, that they correspond to the daily offerings in the Mikdash. For sedra reasons, let's focus on the first opinion.

For each of the Avot and each of the davenings, we are shown two p'sukim - one in the Torah and one elsewhere in Tanach.

For Shacharit, the Torah says that Avraham arose early in the morning (and went) to the place where he had stood before G-d. A verse in Tanach helps us define "standing before G-d" as prayer. Combining the two p'sukim, we attribute Shacharit to Avraham who arose early in the morning to stand before G-d in prayer.

The Torah (towards the end of Chayei Sara) tells us that Yitzchak went out into the field before evening, to supplicate (commune, converse). A second pasuk in Tanach teaches us that SICHA is a synonym for prayer. Again, combining the two p'sukim, we find that Yitzchak prayed in late afternoon, and we attribute the establishment of Mincha to him.

In this week's sedra, Yaakov encounters the place and slept there because the sun had set. Yet another pasuk in Tanach teaches us that P'GI'A is also a synonym for prayer. Combining the two p'sukim in the same "drash" style, the gemara concludes that Yaakov prayed after the sun had set, in the beginning of the night. Correspondingly,

we daven Maariv at the same time.

Back to the other opinion. Shacharit corresponds to the Tamid of the morning, the first of the two communal offerings that were brought every single day. And our davening Mincha matches the afternoon Tamid. At night, parts of the day's korbanot were placed on the fires of the Mizbei'ach and left there to slowly simmer throughout the night. Hence, Maariv.

It should be obvious that each side of this machloket adds an important dimension to our three-times-a-day prayers.

Both the Avot and the lofty Temple service should instill in us a reverence, a spirituality, a sense of high purpose to our daily davenings. Both sides of the coin should enhance our KAVANA when we daven. All we need to do is think, ponder, personalize.

Divrei Menachem

Parshat Vayeitzei describes Ya'akov's departure from Eretz Yisrael, his dream of the ladder going up to Heaven, and the subsequent events. One of the surprising elements of this story is Ya'akov's declaration after he awakes from his sleep. For he proclaims, "Surely Hashem is present in this place and I did not know!"

Our commentators explain that Ya'akov was referring to the specific site where he had put his head down, the very place where the future Temples would be built. He had experienced a prophecy there - and was unprepared for it (S'forno). And this holy spot also marked, "The gate of the heavens", a most propitious place for prayer (Targum Yonatan).

Later, concerning Ya'akov's seeming condition of faith - "If G-d will be with me... and I return in peace to my father's house and [then] Hashem will be G-d to me..." - Ramban notes that Ya'akov meant to say that only on the soil of the Holy Land would he be able to serve Hashem properly.

Clearly Eretz Yisrael, in general, and Yerushalayim, in particular, have unique attributes, so different from the essence of Chutz La'aretz. This notion is so critical that even the Rabbis in Bavel were moved to assert that, "He who dwells outside of Eretz Yisrael is like one who has no G-d" (Ketuvot 110b).

FROM THE VIRTUAL DESK OF THE OU VEBBE REBBE

The Orthodox Union - via its website - fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and the Israel Center.

Q *Regarding the machloket between the Magen Avraham (= MA) and the GR"A on the times of the day, why are we lenient like the GR"A in regard to questions of d'oryata (Torah-level laws) such as Sof Z'man Kri'at Sh'ma (=SZKS)?*

A Before discussing the machloket between the GR"A and the MA, let us see what is agreed upon. Daytime begins at alot hashachar (=ALOT), over an hour before sunrise (neitz hachama = NEITZ); night and the new halachic day begin at tzeit hakoachavim (=TZEIT; when the stars come out) (Megila 20b). In Talmudic times, daytime hours were counted from 1 to 12, as people determined the time by looking at the sun's angle. In the middle of those 12 hours, the sun is directly above head (on the east-west axis) (Pesachim 11b), meaning there must be astronomical symmetry between the beginning and end points of the count. The gemara (Pesachim 94a) says that there are 4 mil (the time it takes to walk app. 4 kilometers) in between ALOT and NEITZ and also between shki'at hachama (=SHKI'A/sunset) and TZEIT.

The basic difference between the opinions is as follows. The MA (see 58:1; 233:2) starts and ends all calculation from the halachic bookends of day and night, ALOT and TZEIT,

which adds 4 mil on either end of sunrise-sunset. Therefore, SZKS (which is the end of the 3rd hour of the day), is well before the sun is at 45° above the horizon (1/4 of the time the sun is visible). The GR"A calculates from sunrise to sunset, and therefore SZKS is at 45°. It is indeed astronomically logical that people did not count the progress of the sun from or until a time when it was well beneath the horizon.

[Ed. note: Either approach seems to have a logic: Consider the day from first light to last light or from when the body of the Sun appears in the east until it sinks in the west.]

While each approach has advantages and disadvantages, it cannot be decided in a vacuum because the machloket is linked to an even more important one (see Am Mordechai, Berachot 2). Days (including Shabbat) last until SHKI'A, enter a period of halachic doubt known as Bein Hashemashot, followed by definite night at TZEIT (Shabbat 34a). We rule that Bein Hashemashot is 3/4 of a mil (appr. 15 minutes) long (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 261:2). Since daytime begins 4 mil before NEITZ, there is a lack of symmetry (of 3/4 mil) between the beginning and end of daytime in relation to the appearance and disappearance of the sun. Rabbeinu Tam (Shabbat 35a) explains that

SHKIA is not what we call sunset but is around an hour later, until which time it is still definitely day. (His idea of the sun finishing travelling the “thickness of the earth” fits an ancient astronomical conception but certainly not a modern one). Thus Shabbat does not begin or end until more than an hour after sunset. The GR"A (OC 261) posits that SHKIA is the visible sunset and after around a quarter of an hour (in Talmudic latitudes) it is definite night. This machloket is linked to the aforementioned MA (who accepts Rabbeinu Tam) and GR"A as follows. According to the MA, sunset, like sunrise, is not a halachic time. According to the GR"A, TZEIT cannot be a bookend, because it does not mirror ALOT, and thus we use NEITZ and SHKIA.

Whose opinion is accepted? The gemara (Shabbat 35a) says that Shabbat is fully over by the time three medium stars are visible (without “light pollution”). Thus, the GR"A's argument that keeping Shabbat at least 72 minutes after sunset is “contradicted by our sight” is powerful. The GR"A's impact (as well as the Rambam and the Ba'al HaTanya) on the greater “Lithuanian” world, the difficulty (including scientific evidence) of Rabbeinu Tam's approach, and the difficulty of finishing Shabbat so late in northern latitudes probably all contributed to the fact that historically most communities accepted the GR"A's basic approach regarding the night. (See a variation in Igrot Moshe, OC I, 24.) This is despite the fact that the Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) and most Rishonim agree with Rabbeinu Tam (see sources in Yabia Omer II, OC 21).

Some people have decided to adopt the MA for SZKS, which is not so difficult; others keep Shabbat until late due to its severity (not all are aware of the linkage). All of these practices are legitimate.

Chanuka's Timely Message – We Dare Not Despair!

Guest article by **Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher** Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

Once again, as during Chanuka, we are under attack by modern day Hellenized Jews, this time under the guise of the Judge Goldstone "Commission".

Chanuka commemorates our victory over the Syrian-Greeks and the Hellenists - Jews who betrayed their own people in order to curry favor with the Gentiles. Not much has changed in this respect in almost 2200 years. The battle continues. We cleaned up and purified the Beit HaMikdash, but were we truly liberated? The Greeks were ousted from our land, but were they ousted from our minds?

What light did the Menorah provide that proved that the battlefield victories warranted an annual celebration for the remainder of Jewish history, despite the Holy Temple's destruction?

Our Sages make a strange statement about the Greeks. They inform us that Greece - a nation noted for its scholars, wisdom, and academics - is the image of darkness (B'reishit Rabbah 2:4). We, a people with great appreciation for the intellectual, find this baffling. Rebbe Nachman provides an explanation that is as simple as a dreidel of Chanuka.

All of creation is a rotating wheel, a dreidel. Things constantly change, cycle, revolve and become transformed. This is because all things, no matter what they are made of, have

one root. Before they manifest as they are, they pass through an interface known as "hyle" (Ramban on B'reishit 1:1). A person's roles also change over time, providing and dominating one day, receiving and following the next. Nations, too, rise and fall.

Why do we play with a dreidel on Chanuka? Because - like Chanuka, the dreidel parallels the concept of the Beit HaMikdash, which spun things around in a number of ways. It manifested the concept of the revolving wheel by being the home of the Sh'china (Divine Presence) while its design was simultaneously engraved on high (Tanchuma, Pikudey 1; Zohar 1:80b).

Additionally, it somehow limited the Divine presence of a transcendental G-d to a physical space. As Shlomo HaMelech put it, "Behold the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain You, how much less this Temple?!" (Kings I 8:27).

Furthermore, it is impossible to rationally explain how flesh-and-blood human beings can influence spiritual realms and how a sacrificial animal can produce "a sweet savor" (B'reishit 8:21, Sh'mot 29:18) to G-d. Yet, G-d did constrict His presence to the Beit HaMikdash and did accept sacrifices as "a sweet savor". By doing so, G-d

Apparently, she didn't show

debunked the Greek model of rational philosophy, with the Beit HaMikdash – as we do with the dreidel.

The Greeks are "darkness" because the rational mind (or rather, the insistence to be rational always), limits one's possibilities. One becomes stuck, "engraved on the horn of an ox", and one can no longer think out of the box. As Jews, we must always bear in mind that G-d has reasons that our Reason cannot know. This is why we dare not despair, even in the longest darkest, tragic periods of personal and national life. This is what enabled the Maccabees to undertake the struggle to fight the spiritual darkness against all odds.

The essential quality of the ultimate Redemption which we await is that of the Beit HaMikdash, the revolving wheel, the dreidel, when we will see and know that, in fact, all is one; that G-d is One and G-d's Name is One (Zechariah 14:9). May we soon see the arrival of the Mashiach, the rebuilding of the Holy Temple and the redemption of the Jewish People

Parsha Points to Ponder **VAYEITZEI**

1) Yaakov experienced a remarkable prophecy during his dream but what led him to the conclusion that this was THE HOUSE OF G-D and THE GATE TO THE HEAVENS (28:17)? Prophets experienced prophecy in many different places!

2) Why did Yaakov ask the shepherds if they knew LAVAN, SON OF NACHOR, who was Lavan's grandfather, and not SON OF BETUEL, Lavan's father (29:5)?

3) Given the fact that there was already a decree for Yaakov and his children to go into exile and Yaakov was already in exile in Charan, why did G-D instruct Yaakov to return to Canaan (31:3) to have him then resume exile in Egypt at a later point?

Parsha Points to Ponder

is prepared by

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Answers are somewhere else in this issue Look for them, but only after a good pondering

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column: **Parshat VAYEITZEI**

Two Meanings of Maturity

How do you define "maturity"? The dictionary definition asserts that it is a state of being full-grown, ripe, or fully developed. But I think that the average person gives a subjective definition to maturity in one of two other ways.

Maturity, depending upon whether one tends to be idealistic or leans toward cynicism, seems to carry one of the following meanings:

Either one takes the position that maturity is associated with the wisdom gained from experience over time. From this point of view, the mature person is one who has learned from all that has happened to him and has developed, if not an infallible system that answers all questions, then at least an approach to life which is practical, informed, and wise.

Or, one takes the position that maturity is the state reached when one realizes that his childhood dreams were just that: dreams, and no more. One who is mature has learned to abandon youthful ideals, surrender impractical hopes and plans, and settle for reality and its limitations.

Which definition of maturity is yours, dear reader? Is maturity associated with wisdom? Or is the mature person

the one who has learned to live a practical and cautious life, without ideals and utopian dreams?

In this week's Torah portion, Parshat Vayeitzei, we have the opportunity to read about the maturation of our patriarch Yaakov. The portion begins with a dream, a sublime dream. Toward the middle of the portion, Yaakov dreams again, this time a very businesslike, down to earth, practical dream.

Jacob's first dream, the sublime one, envisions a ladder firmly rooted into the earth but extending heavenwards. However one interprets it - and creative interpretations abound - it is a majestic glimpse of infinite possibilities, of ideals of immense significance. If anything, it is a grand imaginative symbol of the relationship between man and God, and of the former's potential to connect with the latter.

But then, Yaakov spends his years working for his uncle Lavan. He is busy with mundane affairs; in his own words, "scorched by heat all day, and freezing at night." He is busy, nay preoccupied, with business affairs, with profit, with practical material matters.

And he dreams again. But the second time, his dream is far from sublime. He sees "that the he-goats mating with the flock were streaked, speckled, and mottled." Things are going his way in the world of sheep-raising. Every trace of another higher world is missing.

If Yaakov's second dream would end at this point, we could say that he

matured in the second, cynical, sense. His initial dream was a lofty one; his subsequent dream, a come-down. His vision was diminished, from a glimpse of Heaven to earthly things.

But his second dream does not end with his vision of goats, speckled or otherwise. Rather, an angel appears to him and says that he, the angel, has observed Jacob's dream and has "noted all that Lavan has been doing to you." The angel in the dream is the better part of Yaakov himself, the part that realizes that Lavan's environment has contaminated his dreams.

The angel in the dream then goes on to say that he represents the God of Beit El and that it is time for Yaakov to "leave this land and return to his native land." It is time for him to become mature in the first sense. It is time for him to reclaim his first dream and to do all that he can to make that dream real.

Yaakov reaches true maturity when he decides not to yield to the temptation to compromise upon his original dream. When he realizes that his dreams are not what they once were and that he has lost his youthful vision of a ladder connecting heaven and earth, he does not merely settle

for his new reality.

Rather, he learns, and this lesson is imparted to him by God Himself, that one must not surrender to mundane dreams, abandoning old ideals. He learns that he can return to the dream of his youth. And he learns not only that he can go home again, but that he must go home again.

There is, of course, another lesson that he learns. And this is an eternal lesson for the Jewish people. The dreams of our national youth, the visions of our biblical heroes and of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, can only be achieved in the Land of Israel. The dreams of the Diaspora are apt to be mundane, shortsighted, and a bit selfish. The dreams of the Land of Israel are noble dreams, exalted dreams, and dreams which ultimately connect us to heaven. Indeed, the dreams of Israel ideally connect all of the earth's inhabitants to their Father in Heaven.

We can revisit the dreams of our youth. We can go home again. The Land of Israel is the land of our dreams, and it is home. This is one lesson learned from this week's Torah portion: a lesson about being a Jew, and a lesson about true maturity.

Albinism genetic conditions marked by little or none of the pigment melanin in the skin, hair, and/or eyes... may be a prized possession at a zoo... but, in nature, albinos have definite disadvantages and may not live long. **Easier to see, therefore easier to catch or to run from ...often rejected by others of the same species...**

We must be as ready to WITHdraw conclusions as we are to draw them.

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R' Chaim Volozhiner, who was a student of the Gaon of Vilna, felt there was a pressing need to open a Yeshiva. Before doing so, he traveled to the Gaon and explained to him all the reasons why such an institution was necessary. Rather than agreeing with him, as R' Chaim anticipated, the Gaon rejected the idea. Of course R' Chaim shelved his plan.

A few years later, R' Chaim decided to one again broach the subject with the Gaon. Again he laid out all the reasons for opening such a yeshiva - the same reasons he had used years before - and this time the Gaon agreed with him.

R' Chaim, somewhat surprised, asked the Gaon: "Rebbe, I used the same reasons years ago, and you turned me down. What has changed?"

"When you came to me last time," explained the Gaon, "you were burning with enthusiasm. I was afraid that your motives might not be unadulterated, and that deep down there might be an element of the yetzer hara along with your other motives. When you came this time, I saw that the burning enthusiasm had been replaced by a totally logical exposition of the need for such a yeshiva. This time, there can be no doubt that what you are asking for is indeed out of the purest of motives, and that is why I was so ready to approve the opening of the yeshiva."



Why is it that when there is ice on the streets everyone walks slowly and carefully out of fear of slipping physically, while in their daily lives people are not afraid of slipping spiritually?

ZZZ...

וַיִּקְוֶה מִשְׁנֵיתוֹ

B'reishit 28:16 - Yaakov awoke from his sleep...

Last week we wrote about the SH'VA NA and NACH and mentioned that sometimes - but not usually - the meaning of a word can change if a SH'VA is switched for the other kind. Here is an example.

MISH-NA-TO, without a DAGESH in the SHIN, would mean "his mishna" or his learning and reviewing of Torah. The SH'VA under the SHIN is NACH, it does not add any vowel sound to the SHIN and the SHIN closes the first syllable of the word - MISH.

With a DAGESH CHAZAK in the SHIN, the SHIN is stressed and, more importantly, the SH'VA under the SHIN is NA. Technically, the SHIN is doubled (not as SH,SH but rather a long SHHH) and serves to close the first syllable as MISH and begin the next syllable SH'NA. (That's not SHNA as in SHNAPPS, but SH' and NA.) Although the syllables are officially MISH and SH'NA and TO, you don't hear (are not supposed to hear) two SHINs, just one long one.

Realize that it isn't just elongating the SHIN sound; there is a very short vowel sound that follows the SH, almost, but shorter than the SHI in SHIP. It is that little vowel sound and the attachment to the NA that follows it, that gives us the word that means "from his sleep", MIN HASHEINA SHELO, MIN SH'NATO, MISH'NATO. If the SH'VA under the SHIN in this word is not NA-ed, the meaning is changed and we have a prob.

Yaacov wakes up from his super-natural sleep and begins to rattle off his conditions for “God to be a God for me.” But surely our forefather did not need mundane gestures from God to guarantee his acceptance of Hashem.

Perhaps the answer lies in the Gemara Ketubot (110b) which says, “Anyone who lives outside of Eretz Yisrael has no God”. Only in Eretz Yisrael are we the masters of our own destiny. We control the rain so that it comes in its time and when we take care of the land we find that “the very atmosphere of the Land makes us wise.”

So Yaacov, as he leaves the Land of Israel, is worried. What if his constant communication with God is interrupted by the coarseness rampant in the non-Israel lands? What if he falls prey to those who have no true God? Perhaps that is why he makes his “deal” with God, ending with his request to return home. He knows that only if he gets back to the Land of Israel unscathed can he hope to keep the lines of communication open so that God will be his God.

How fortunate are we, living in Eretz Yisrael, to be in touch with God everyday. We just have to tune in to Hashem’s wavelength to hear His call.

Yaacov Peterseil, Jerusalem

what, angels, G-d, and I?

MACHON PUAH

Preventing a Mistake

Chanah and Dovi had been married for four years before they consulted the PuaH Institute. They had undergone some unsuccessful treatments and spent many hours crying and agonizing over their childlessness.

Dovi, concerned about a recent story in the news about a lab mix up, was not willing to undergo another treatment. He did not want to end up with a child who did not look like him or Chanah. Or, even one that looked like them but was not their own genetic child.

Someone suggested that they speak to PuaH. The PuaH Rabbi told them about PuaH’s worldwide network of halachic supervision services, utilizing independent monitors for each and every stage of the process. At no time would their genetic materials be unidentified or unverified by a PuaH supervisor.

This news gave them the peace of mind to undergo IVF treatments. They underwent several cycles of treatment and were eventually successful; Chanah gave birth to a baby girl. As is often the case, their treatments had yielded several embryos. Their unused embryos remained frozen under PuaH’s halachic supervision.

When their daughter was three years old, Dovi and Chanah decided it was time to try to expand their family. They went to their doctor and asked to have some of their embryos thawed out to be implanted in the

hopes of getting pregnant and presenting a brother or sister to their darling daughter.

The doctors treated Chanah with medications that prepared her uterus to be in an optimal state to achieve pregnancy. Based on the timing of those treatments, they scheduled the embryo thawing process so that implantation would be performed on the optimal day.

The embryos had been fertilized and frozen under PuaH’s supervision. In order to ensure the continuity of the process, they could only be thawed under supervision as well. The embryos were identified by name, the thawing process begun and the medical staff were relaxed as they waited for the next step. The PuaH supervisor, however, remained vigilant and performed her routine double check as set out in PuaH’s operating standards, to ensure that everything had been done properly. It was then that she discovered a terrible mistake.

At approximately the same time as Chanah and Dovi’s embryos were being formed and frozen, another couple whose wife had the same first and last name as Chanah had also undergone the same treatment. By mistake, seeing the same first and last name as the Chanah’s on the vial, the staff - believing that they had the correct embryos, thawed out the wrong embryos! The error was only discovered by the keen eyes of the supervisor who checked Chanah’s social security numbers for verification and saw that it did not match up.

She immediately alerted the staff. Unfortunately, they had to dispose of the thawed embryos, since it was too late for them to be used. Yet, thankfully, through PuaH supervision, a potentially devastating mistake was prevented. Chanah and Dovi were horrified when they heard what had happened. They were also extremely relieved that they had chosen to use the supervision services of the PuaH Institute.

Lesson # 500

Contradictory witnesses regarding betrothal

Before continuing with the subject matter, I would like to translate a statement of the Shulhan Aruch that does not appear until chapter 49 and it reads as follows, "Whoever is not expert in the laws of marriage and divorce should not be part of the process and should not decide matters dealing with them because it is easy to make a mistake and this will result in prohibited things being practiced and will result in children who are mamzerim".

Assume that two witnesses say that they saw Sarah being betrothed and two other witnesses say we did not see the betrothal. She is to be considered betrothed. This applies even if all of the witnesses reside in the same residential complex and it is assumed that everyone there knows what the others are doing. The fact that these people did not see the betrothal does not prove that there was no betrothal. The betrothal could have been done quietly.

Assume that two witnesses say she was betrothed and two witnesses say she was not betrothed. Or assume that he threw the object of the kiddushin to her for betrothal purposes and two witnesses say the object landed closer to her and she is betrothed and two witnesses say the object landed closer to him and she is not betrothed. In these situations she may not marry another person and if she became

betrothed or married to another man the second man must divorce her. If she married one of the witnesses and she stated that she was not betrothed until then, he need not divorce her.

One witness testified that she was betrothed and another single witness says she was not betrothed. She testifies that she was never betrothed. She may become betrothed to another man.

If a man wanted to betroth her by throwing an object of kiddushin toward her. There is contradictory testimony if the object landed closer to her and the kiddushin is valid or closer to him and the kiddushin is not valid. She should not get married to another man but if she married another man, she is married to the second man.

Assume that a girl stated I was betrothed and she immediately stated I am not betrothed - her second statement is accepted and she is considered not to be betrothed. If her second statement came after a few moments her second statement is disregarded. She may explain her first statement by saying she said she was betrothed since many people there wanted her to become betrothed to a man she did not want to become betrothed to. If her current statement seems to be true, we say that we believe it and she is not considered betrothed to the person she said she was betrothed to. If she did not offer us a logical and truthful reason for her first statement, we consider her to be betrothed to the man she mentioned in her first statement. If she accepted

betrothal from another person she is considered to be doubtfully betrothed to him and he must deliver a Get to her and she may not marry him.

Assume that a man said to a woman I betrothed you and she says you did not betroth me. He may not betroth any of her relatives but she may become betrothed to his relatives.

If she stated that he betrothed her and he denies the betrothal, she is prohibited to become betrothed to his relatives but he may become betrothed to her relatives.

Assume that Reuven stated that he betrothed Sarah and Sarah says you did not betroth me but you did betroth my daughter Rivka. Reuven is prohibited to the relatives of Sarah and Sarah is permitted to the relatives of Reuven. Reuven is permitted to the relatives of Rivka and Rivka is permitted to the relatives of Reuven.

Assume that Shimon says to Rachel, I betrothed your daughter Leah, and Rachel says you betrothed me Rachel; Shimon is prohibited to the relatives of Leah and Leah is permitted to his relatives.

In all of these instances where a person pleads that there was betrothal (kiddushin) the allegations include that there were proper witnesses present when the kiddushin took place but the witnesses are now overseas or dead. But if the parties concede that there were not two witnesses present, the entire kiddushin is of no effect.

In all those instances where the woman says there was kiddushin and the man denies it, we request that the man give her a Get (divorce) so that she may become eligible to get married to some-

one else.

A man betrothed one of five women who were present and he wrote a ketuba for her. He does not remember which one of the five women he betrothed. Each woman says I am the one you betrothed. He is prohibited to all of the relatives of all five women. He must give a Get to each of them. He places the proceeds of the ketuba before all five of them and tells them to work out who gets what from the ketuba.

A man betrothed a woman and as soon as he gave her the money for kiddushin he changed his mind and stated that the money he gave her is a gift to her, his changing of his mind is of no avail and he must give her a Get.

If a man betrothed a woman and if one of the parties changed their mind, he or she, or if he died or if she died, or he divorced her, the original kiddushin (betrothal) is never rescinded. Even if he gave her an extraordinarily large amount of kiddushin money it all belongs to her. But if the kiddushin was a mistaken betrothal, the money must be returned to him. Similarly if the kiddushin was on condition and the condition was not fulfilled, the money is returned to him.

If a man betrothed his own sister, the money he gave to her for kiddushin is a gift to her for all know that a man cannot betroth his own sister.

The Shulhan Aruch in the concluding paragraphs of chapter 50 of Eben haEzer has laws relating to the parties signing agreements regarding if one of the sides to the marriage calls of the marriage to be. This is a matter to be handled by

Mothers 1 & 3; mother of other twins

lawyers and very often before the wedding there is a meeting of the parties to the forthcoming wedding and they sign documents that they do not know the true impact it can have upon them. I suggest that one should bring his own rabbi who is familiar with these agreements to explain them to him before he signs. Most of the time the agreements are merged in the marriage. There may, however be times when it does not merge and this may cause problems.

TRIDDLES

Prizes for best solution sets (when awarded) are furnished by Noam Productions and/or Big Deal.

Last issue's (TO-L'DOT) TTriddles:

[1] Please have a seat near the b'eir

The wording of the TTriddle mixes Hebrew and English. This is something typical of kids from English-speaking families who learn both languages at the same time. [Personal favorite: HINEI my nose PO.] This particular sentence is almost all English, with only the word B'EIR replacing well. We are looking for an English-Hebrew hybrid that means "Please have a seat" and is also the name of a well dug by Yitzchak. SIT-NA.

[2] US Sec of D, his wife, 10 sons & wives, 52 grandsons half of whom are married

Robert Gates is the current US Secretary of Defense. He and his wife are two gates. If he had ten sons and they were all married, and none of the wives opted to retain their maiden name, we'd have another 20 gates - total so far, 22 gates. 52 grandsons bring the total gates to 74. If half of the grandsons are married, that would add another 26 women named Mrs. Gates. Making a total of 100

Came true sort of, 86 p'sukim later

Gates, as in MEI'A SHE'ARIM, as mentioned in the sedra.

[3] Herb sits down.

This is a sentence of three words with four letters each. In Parshat Toldot, we find a three word pasuk with four letters in each word: VAYEISHEV YITZCHAK BIG'RAR. The shortest p'sukim in the Torah are of three words. There seems to be some kind of issue - either a SEGULA or something like that - to these three-word p'sukim. Siddur T'filat Kol Peh (perhaps other siddurim) lists them for recitation on Motza'ei Shabbat. This, together with a few other collections of p'sukim, such as p'sukim that begin and end with the same letter. (Not all the letters; just some of them.) The list contains 14 p'sukim, but one of them is really part of a pasuk (at least in our Chumashim), but is the end of a parsha in the midst of a pasuk. The other 13 are all full p'sukim. Why are these 3-word p'sukim collected for a special reading on Motza'ei Shabbat? Maybe someone reading this knows. If so, please tell us. The 14 3-word readings are followed by the prtial pasuk in Kohelet: ...a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

[4] What the aggressive mouthwash was to him in its pursuit of odor-causing bacteria?

Corny, but you know how it goes sometimes. Yitzchak loves Eisav, KI TZAYID B'FIV, either meaning that Eisav hunted and provided food for Yitzchak, or because deceived Yitzchak with his mouth by pretending to be interested in religious and spiritual matters. For this TTriddle, another explanation of TZAYID B'FIV, hunting in his mouth, which is what the aggressive mouthwash did to the bacteria.

[5] Yaakov & Eisav; Some say Peretz & Zerach

Yaakov and Eisav were twins, as were Peretz and Zerach. For Yaakov and Eisav, the word used is TOMIM, TAV-VAV-MEM-MEM. For Peretz and Zerach, the word is T'OMIM, TAV-VAV-ALEF-MEM-YUD-MEM. Rashi brings the Midrash that says the word describing the twins Yaakov and Eisav is

written CHASEIR, missing letters, because one twin was a Tzadik and the other a Rasha. With Peretz and Zerach, the word is MALEI, full, because both were righteous. The missing letters are YUD and ALEF, which is an abbreviation (actually, an initialism or Rashei Teivot, in Hebrew) for YEISH OM'RIM, "some say". The TTriddle solution is Y&E, TOMIM. Add a "some say", a YUD and ALEF and you get the word that describes P&Z.

[6] Who said: I'll go in the sea?

I'll go - EILEICH, in the sea - BAYAM. Who said it? He must have been confused when he said it, so scramble the letters of EILECH BAYAM and you get AVIMELECH.

[7] Yitzchak was more literal than Pinchas and Kalev

Pinchas and Kalev were the two spies (scouts) that Yehoshua sent to check out the land and the Yericho area. They were sent LACHPOR to search out, lit. to dig (out information). Yitzchak, in Parshat Toldot, was more literal. In his case, VAYACHPOR actually means to dig (for water).

[8] One Unexplained from the ParshaPix

A bottle of wine labeled A DRY. In French - as is used on wines and other spirits, DRY is SEC. A-SEK was the name of the first well that Yitzchak dug.

ParshaPix explanations

How do we know that Yaakov Avinu wore a Kipa? Vayeitzei Yaakov, and Yaakov went out... Would he go out without a kipa?! Old (corny) joke represented by the KIPA

The road sign could have been at the side of the road that Yaakov traveled at the beginning of Vayeitzei, with Be'er Sheva behind him and Charan still to come. En route, Yaakov encounters THE Place where he spent the night

and had his famous dream.

Speaking of which, there's the rock he put by his head... The rock is also the one that covered the well that Yaakov removed so that Rachel (and the other shepherds) could water their sheep. It also stands for the rock that Yaakov set up as a MATZEIVA to mark his agreement with Lavan (GAL-EID).

and the ladder standing on the ground climbing heavenward.

UFARATZTA, and you shall spread out in all directions, is represented by the compass. (accent, by the way, is on the last syllable - ufa-ratz-TA)

Yaakov promised to give G-d (so to speak) MAASER, one tenth, .1

There are 10 baby boys in a column on the right side of the ParshaPix representing Reuven, Shimon, Levi, Yehuda, Dan, Naftali, Gad, Asher, Yissachar, and Zevulun. And an 11th one on its own (sort of) representing Yosef. The "It's a Girl!" balloon is for Dina.

The plant on the left is a mandrake, the DUDA'IM that Reuven collected for his mother. ("A native plant of SE Europe. Its mystical and magic properties date back into the mists of time, where aphrodisiac and fertility qualities were accorded to it... The root is rather toxic... so-called "mystical" properties were attributed to it mainly because of the form of the parsnip-like root system, which usually divides to give "arm and leg" limbs to a human body form...")

- 🍦 There are two of the sticks Yaakov used to induce the production of...
- 🍦 the striped, speckled, and plain sheep and goats - upper left
- 🍦 Ice cream, G'LIDA, which is the Targum of KERACH in Yaakov's tirade about his cold nights spent watching over Lavan's flocks. (So too the bullets of these ParshaPix explanations)
- 🍦 The Torah Tidbits logo with a thumbs up signal is for Lavan's endorsement, when he said to Yaakov: TOV T.T.
- 🍦 The sine wave is a GAL (not the English gal, the Hebrew for wave), as in the pile of rocks at the end of the sedra.
- 🍦 Philadelphia Phillies cap. That team has the ignoble honor of being the losingest team in MLB (despite last year's WS victory and this year's post season successes - but not the ultimate one). And it goes one step further. They are the losingest team in major league sports (in the US, counting baseball, football, basketball, and hockey.) Perhaps, then, they are the modern incarnation of the teams that did play in LUZ. [To be fair to the town of LUZ (Beit El), it is only in TTriddlese that there is an association with the English word LOSE. LUZ is the hazel tree, one of the sticks that Yaakov used in Vayeitzei at the behest of the angel... LUZ is also the name of the vertebra at the top of the spinal column that is associated with the starting point of T'chiyat HaMeitim.
- 🍦 Staying with sports, we also have a South Park figure playing

dodgeball. (We know it's hard to tell what he's doing.) This is similar to the game MACHANAYIM, as in the concluding word of Parshat Vayeitzei, referring to the twin camps of angels that Yaakov saw upon his return to Eretz Yisrael.

- 🍦 There is a matador waving his red cape at - not a bull, but a pair of lips. As in the haftara, UNSHA-L'MA FARIM S'FATEINU, and our lips (voices in prayer) will replace the bulls (sacrifices).
- 🍦 The oil can stands for Yaakov's anointing the stone at the beginning of the sedra...
- 🍦 Yogi bear and the Xed out Cubs cap represent DOV SHAKUL, a bear without offspring. Nothing personal, Yogi.

to... Chava, Avra(ha)m, Yitzchak, Lavan, each other. What and who?

RAKEL BERENBAUM'S
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BREAD TO EAT AND CLOTHES TO WEAR

On waking from his dream of the ladder, in his deal with G-d, Yaakov says V'NATAN LI LECHEM LE'ECHOL UVEGED LILBOSH (28:20). G-d will give me bread - to eat - and clothes - to wear. Isn't it obvious that the bread would be to eat and the clothes would be to wear. We wouldn't think the opposite that the food is to wear and the clothes to eat. It seems superfluous to add the words "to eat" and "to wear". What could be the reason for these added words?

The Maharshal Melanteshno says that Yaakov asked G-d to grant him physical and mental health to be able to actually eat the food that he has. Sometimes people might have enough food but because of health conditions they can not enjoy this food. Depression may curb their appetite, a gastro infection may make it impossible to keep food in their system and a severe backache might make it impossible to sit down to enjoy the food. Or a person might suffer from Alzheimer's disease and might forget how to eat on their own.

Yaakov also asked not only to have clothes but to be able to wear them. Some people might have nice clothes but might have to put them up for auction (Madoff's jacket was sold recently for thousands of dollars). Or someone might have many nice

clothes but because of difficulties and worries he might not have occasions to wear these fine clothes. Or someone might suffer from dementia and may no longer remember how to dress him or herself.

From the addition of these seemingly unnecessary few words by Yaakov we learn not to take anything for granted -- not the ability to eat the bread that we might have nor the ability to wear the clothes that we might have.

The DIVRAT SHLOMO - Rabbi Shlomo M'Losk reads the verse as follows: LECHEM LE'ECHOL - LECHEM K'DEI L'HA'ACHIL L'ACHERIM - enough bread to be able to feed to others who are needy, UVEGED LILBOSH - SHE'UCHAL L'HALBISH BO ET HANIZKAKIM - clothes to be able to clothe the needy with. According to his understanding, Yaakov is not only asking for himself - he is asking to be able to have enough to share with others and provide for their needs. According to this interpretation the addition of these seemingly extra words teaches us about Ya'akov's concern for others (and how we must emulate this quality).

Just to let you know that anyone who would like to show concern for others who might have trouble eating the bread that they have or putting on the clothes they have - it is not too late to join this year's Melabev Walkathon to raise needed funds for the care of people with Alzheimer's disease. The walk departs Dec. 1st from Melabev's new building in Talpiot. www.melabev.org/posts/125 • It includes a 2-day hike in the Western Gallilee, and a moonlight walk along Hof Dor, on the Mediterranean coast. This year there is also a virtual walkathon for those who can't make it physically, but would like to participate in some way www.melabev.org/posts/151

For any of you who still like to have a Thanksgiving dinner – here's a

bread/muffin recipe to with cranberries to go along with the Turkey.

Cranberry Almond Muffins

- 2 cups flour
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1¼ cups soy milk
- ½ cup oil
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp. almond extract
- 1 cup frozen cranberries, rinsed and chopped
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds
- A little extra sugar for topping

Combine flour, sugars, baking powder and salt in a medium mixing bowl. Combine soy milk, oil, egg and almond extract in a separate mixing bowl. Add liquid ingredients to dry, stirring just until dry ingredients are moist. Stir in cranberries. (You can use the cranberries even if they are not completely thawed out, just enough to be chopped).

Fill muffin cups ¾ full with batter. Sprinkle tops of muffins with a little sugar and the almonds. Bake at 180°C for about 25 minutes or until golden brown. Cool 5 minutes in the pan. Makes 12 muffins.

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) Da'at Zekainim MiBaalei HaTosfot explain that Yaakov came to this conclusion because of the fact that the angels ended their travels back at that spot in the dream. The angels WENT UP, indicating leaving from that spot, and then CAME DOWN, indicating a return to their home base which Yaakov assumed was the HOUSE OF G-D.

2) The Kli Yakar answers that Yaakov knew that the people of the town knew Lavan. He wanted to know if Lavan followed the righteous path of his grandfather and not the evil ways of his father. Thus, he was asking if they know if Lavan acted like a descendant of Nachor.

3) The Chofetz Chayim teaches that G-D actually did Yaakov and his children a favor by changing the location of the exile since exile amongst family where we feel somewhat comfortable is actually worse than exile among complete strangers. We actually make this point in the Hagada when we declare that Lavan wanted to destroy our entire nation while Par'o only wanted to kill the males.

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