



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Menachem Treuhaft and his parents, Eli and Suri, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos in Ohel Torah. The Kehillah is invited to a Kiddush after davening in the Ateres Rochel Hall.

Mazel Tov to Dovi Kraushar and his parents, Zevi and Malki, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos in Vine Street. The Kehillah is invited to a Kiddush after davening in Ohr Yerushalayim Hall.

Mazel Tov to Eli and Adina Wieder on the occasion of the wedding this Monday of their daughter Shifra Wieder to Shmuli Berlinger. Mazel Tov also to grandparents Stephen and Penina Wieder

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrtzeit this week:

- Shabbos, 12th Kislev - Joe Levene for his mother
- Sun, 13th Kislev - Rebbetzen Cohen for her father
- Thurs, 17th Kislev - Chaya Bolel for her father

Shalosh Seudos

Please try and assist with the cost of the סעודה by sponsoring or jointly sponsoring a week by putting your name against a Sedra on the list on the notice wall in the foyer

Total Harmony

Rabbi J Rubinstein

As we follow the history of the Jewish people, after the birth of the children of יעקב, it is very striking to see, how לוי and his descendants were always different. They never allowed themselves to become enslaved in Egypt, they did not sin with the golden calf, and neither did they sin with the bad report the spies brought back from Israel. And of course they were the people chosen to serve Hashem, on behalf of the whole people, in the sanctuary in the desert, and later in Jerusalem.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitch (Talks from 5732-Vayera) suggests the cause of all this, is to be found in this week's Parshah. When לוי the third son of יעקב and לאה was born, his mother said, "עתה הפעם ילדה אישי אלי, לאה" - "Now this time my husband will be joined to me". Rav Chaim quotes the אור לאה who points out that nowhere in the Chumash does it say that לאה felt יעקב hated her, only that Hashem perceived it (see Chap.29: Verses 31 & 33). So it must have been a very small element of dislike which only Hashem detected. Nevertheless, לאה must have sufficiently felt that something was wrong with their relationship, for her to say, when לוי was born, "Now this time my husband will be joined to me". Rav Chaim says it is possible that the total harmony, and removal of any friction, which לוי's birth engendered, was the reason he and his descendants were so exceptional. From here we can learn, he says, the importance of removing any resentments in a marriage. I would call it the importance of forgiving, and of having empathy for a spouse, and indeed in all our relationships with other people.

It is reminiscent of the story of the single fellow who used to be invited to other people's homes for Shabbos meals. There was one home he particularly liked going to, the atmosphere there was so warm and enjoyable. He decided that when he would get married, he would build a house like that. In due course he did get married and took care to make sure the décor, and the carpets, and the lighting arrangements, were like those in the home he had liked so much. However his relationship

with his new wife did not go so well and the atmosphere in their home became very strained. In frustration he went to visit the house, on which he had tried to model his own home; to see if there was some point in the décor of the house he had omitted to copy. To his amazement he found they had completely redecorated their house, the décor and the lighting arrangements were now completely different, yet the atmosphere was the same warm enjoyable atmosphere it had always been. Only then did it dawn on him, he had been looking at the wrong things. If there is thoughtfulness, love and even forgiveness, then the atmosphere becomes wonderful, and the décor becomes beautiful by association.

Certainly, as we see from the story of לוי, when there is harmony and the removal of resentments, that creates the possibility of great things in the future.

A New Role

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

And it was in the morning, and behold it was Leah!" (29:25)

According to the Talmud, Yaakov gave Rachel a secret message that would identify her on their marriage night. He did this in order to prevent Lavan from substituting Leah for Rachel. When Rachel realized that Leah would be publicly humiliated if she could not give Yaakov the message, Rachel revealed the secret words to her. The Daas Zekainim cites a Midrash which says that in the morning, when Yaakov realized that the woman with him was Leah and not Rachel, he asked her, "Why have you tricked me into believing that you were Rachel?" Leah responded, "It is from you that I learned to do so. Did you not pose as your brother in order to receive the blessings?" How do Yaakov's actions substantiate Leah's?

Later in the parsha, Reuvein, Leah's eldest son brings her Duda'im, a plant that, according to some commentaries, increases the chances of conception. Rachel asks Leah to give her the Duda'im, to which Leah retorts, "Is it not enough that you took my husband? Now you want to take my son's Duda'im?" How could Leah make such a statement when the only reason that she was married to Yaakov was Rachel's kindness toward her?

To begin answering the aforementioned questions, we must first answer another question: Why are there four Matriarchs and only three Patriarchs? The answer is that there were supposed to be four Patriarchs. Eisav had the potential to become an Av, but since he made the wrong choices he lost this right. Yaakov filled the void created by Eisav, functioning as two Avos. He was therefore given a second name, Yisroel.

Rashi teaches that Leah was originally destined to marry Eisav, and Rachel, Yaakov. When Leah saw that Yaakov took over the mantle of

Davening Times

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| זמן שבת & Candle Lighting | 3.45pm |
| Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos | 3.50pm |
| Shacharis | 7.25am / 9.15am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 9.53am |
| Rov's Shiur | 3.06pm |
| Mincha | 1.30pm / 3.36pm |
| Motzei Shabbos | 4.56pm |
| Ovos uBonim/Bonos | 5.56pm |
| Sun | 7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am |
| Mon / Thurs | 6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am |
| Tues / Wed / Fri | 6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am |
| Mincha & Maariv | 3.40pm |
| Late Maariv | 8.00pm |

Eisav, Leah realized that Yaakov became her soul mate. This is what she alluded to when she told Yaakov, "It is from you I learned"; since you substituted for Eisav, taking his blessings and birthright, you have become my soul mate. Leah argued that her marriage to Yaakov was not due to Rachel's kindness; it was Leah's right once Yaakov had assumed Eisav's role. Therefore, Leah felt justified in criticizing Rachel for having taken away her husband.

It is interesting to note that the children who issued forth from Leah possessed many of Eisav's characteristics and propensities. Dovid Hamelech, a descendant of Leah's son Yehuda, is described as "Admoni" – "of ruddy complexion". This is the same description the Torah gives for Eisav. Shimon and Levi were involved in shedding blood, and were admonished by Yaakov for having used Eisav's craft.[8] Leah praised Reuvein for perfecting character flaws which his uncle Eisav displayed. [9] A perusal of the verses with Rashi's commentary shows many examples of this nature. The reason for this phenomenon is that Leah was initially Eisav's soul mate. Therefore, she possessed of the same propensities found within Eisav. Whereas Eisav was not able to channel these propensities correctly, it was left up to Leah's offspring to do so.

It's Who You're Dealing With Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we read the parsha of Vayaitzay. "Vayaitzay Yaakov {And Yaakov left} Beer Sheva and went to Charan (in order to find a wife). [28:10]" On the way, Yaakov arrived at the place where the Beis HaMikdash {the Temple} would be built and had a prophetic dream. "And behold, there was a ladder standing on the ground with its head reaching the heavens. And behold, Hashem was standing above him. [28:12]"

The Nefesh HaChaim offers a fascinating interpretation of this dream. He explains that our purely physical appearance is, in fact, incredibly misleading. The Medrash in Breishis teaches that a perfect balance and symmetry had existed during creation between the heavenly, spiritual realm and the physical, earthly realm. This was endangered at the point of man's creation. If he'd be created solely from either the heavenly realm or from the earthly realm, this balance would have been upset. Hashem therefore created man from both realms—a physical body formed from the earth with a spiritual neshama {soul} contained within it.

At first glance, it would seem that this had upset the balance even more than if man had been created solely from the lower realm. Now, man exists in the physical realm, holding the heavenly neshama captive! He explains, however, that man and his soul actually extend from the lowest realm all the way up to the highest realms. The soul is like a beacon of light, emanating from the physical body, the lowest part of man, and extending all the way to the highest spiritual realms. As such, the creation of man maintained that perfect symmetry in the world. Man, by existing in both realms, actually bridges the gap between heaven and earth.

This, he explains, was the vision that Yaakov saw in his dream. The ladder exemplified the essence of man. Standing with our legs resting on the earth and our heads reaching the heavens, connecting to Hashem.

It was the clear understanding and internalization of this concept that carried Yaakov through the difficulties he encountered with his uncle, Lavan.

Yaakov, understanding that Rachel was his soul-mate, offered to work seven years for her father, Lavan, to secure her hand in marriage. Lavan agreed to this arrangement and a seven-year wedding date was set between Yaakov and Lavan's younger daughter, Rachel. We can only imagine how honestly and diligently Yaakov worked for those seven years. His future father-in-law was watching carefully, hoping for a pretense to demand more from him. Yaakov devoted himself completely to the responsibility that he had accepted upon himself and no efforts were spared during those seven years.

Upon the completion of the seven years, Lavan threw a feast to celebrate the wedding but substituted his older daughter, Leah, in place of Rachel. Yaakov and Rachel had made up certain signs in order to safeguard themselves against Lavan's treachery but when Rachel saw that calling her father's bluff would humiliate her sister, she passed these signs on to Leah. The deception was successful and Yaakov didn't realize that he'd been tricked until the next morning.

Yaakov confronted Lavan who simply brushed him off, condescendingly explaining that, perhaps where Yaakov comes from they do such things, but in his 'cultured' world, they don't marry off a younger sister before the older one. He then made Yaakov the following offer: Wait the seven days of feasting that follow the wedding and then marry Rachel as a second wife, all for the low, low price of "ode sheva shanim achairos [29:27]"another seven years of work.

What was Lavan thinking? How could he dare to make such a scandalous offer and trust that Yaakov would keep to it? Why wasn't he afraid that Yaakov would marry Rachel after the week and then leave without working the additional seven years?

Yaakov agreed to the offer, waited the week, married Rachel and worked "ode sheva shanim achairos. [29:30]" The Medrash teaches the profound lesson that is revealed by the word "ode" another. The conscientiousness of the second seven years was identical to that of the first seven years!

Incredible! Unfathomable! How well do we produce when we feel that we're not being appreciated or compensated properly? And if we were tricked into doing additional work? He started up with the wrong guy! Oh would we make him regret it!

Yet, Yaakov showed Lavan the same dedication and diligence after having been tricked by him!

Let's take this one step further. We know ourselves and how we work. Even if we're willing to go beyond the call of duty, we want it to be recognized and appreciated as such. I'll do it for you as long as you don't demand or expect it. If you think you have it coming to you then you can just forget it.

The words "ode sheva shanim achairos—another seven years" taught us that Yaakov's second seven years were indistinguishable from his first seven years. Lavan, when he was proposing his deal to Yaakov, used those very same words! He was demanding the very same diligence the second time around and still Yaakov delivered!

Lavan knew whom he was dealing with and Yaakov knew whom he was dealing with. Lavan knew he was dealing with a person whose feet were on the ground but whose head was in the heaven. A person whose connection to Hashem filtered down and affected each and every one of his earthly dealings. He knew that if Yaakov would agree to the deal, it would be meticulously fulfilled.

Yaakov knew with whom he was dealing—not with Lavan, but with Hashem. Every interaction and relationship between he and another person was actually a reflection of the relationship between he and Hashem. Stooping to Lavan's level would only serve to sully himself. His head reached the heavens, reached Hashem Himself, as his feet were on the ground, maintaining that perfect symmetry in the world, bridging the gap between heaven and earth.

New Winter Time!

Dirshu Highlights Shiur
A summary of the past week's Mishna Brura Dirshu cycle

by **Reb Rafi Cope**

At **Ohr Yerushalayim**

Motzei Shabbos throughout winter
an hour & a half after shabbos

The Shiur also suits those who are behind
or don't learn Dirshu Mishna Brura