

## Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim Vayishlach 5773

(From the archives)

### Shabbos in the Parasha

In this week's parashah it is said (Bereishis 32:25) *vayivaseir Yaakov livado vayeivek ish imo ad alos hashachar*, Yaakov was left alone and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 77:3) states that the man who wrestled with Yaakov was the angel of Esav. Why was the angel of Esav wrestling with Yaakov? The Torah records the result of the struggle. It is said (Ibid verse 26) *vayar ki lo yochol lo vayiga bikaf yireicho vateika kaf yerech Yaakov biheivko imo*, when he perceived that he could not overcome him, he struck the socket of his hip; so Yaakov's hip-socket was dislocated as he wrestled with him. It would seem from this that the angel of Esav was initially attempting to overwhelm Yaakov completely, and when he saw that Yaakov was a formidable opponent, he merely wounded him. Yet, the Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 77:3) tells us that this dislocation of the hip-socket was an ominous omen for the future of Jewish life, when the Jewish People would be attacked on a spiritual front, known as the *doro shel shemad*, the generation of destruction. The commentators point out that this "dislocation" was manifest in the period known as the Greek Exile, which culminated in the miracle of Chanukah. The Medrash (Megillas

Chashmonaim and Medrash Antiochus) states that one of the decrees that the Greeks promulgated against the Jewish People was that they could not observe Shabbos. Let us understand this decree and we will see how it has practical applications in our own times. At the onset of Shabbos a Jewish woman lights Shabbos candles, ushering in the Holy Day. We then pray in shul and we come home and eat a festive meal. On Shabbos morning we again pray in shul and eat another festive meal, and we repeat this in the afternoon by praying Minchah and eating the third meal. If the Jewish People were prohibited from observing Shabbos, does this mean that they actually were forced to desecrate the Shabbos? It would appear that the Greeks, unlike the Nazis of cursed memory, did not intend that the Jewish People should be engaged in back-breaking labor on Shabbos. Rather, the Greeks sought to remove the sanctity of the Shabbos from the Jewish People. Once the Jewish People would not be engaged in sanctifying the Shabbos through prayer, Torah study and festive meals, what else could they do but visit the theaters and entertain themselves in a manner foreign to Jewish lifestyle? This is what can also occur to us, heaven forbid, if we do not sanctify the Shabbos properly. It is insufficient to merely desist from physical labor, eat a few bowlfuls of cholent, and then assume

that we have observed the Shabbos properly. Rather, we must engage ourselves in intense prayer, Torah study, and delight in the festive Shabbos meals, and then we will truly be victorious over the Esav-Greeks who constantly challenge our service of HaShem. It is further noteworthy that the words the Torah uses to describe the battle between Yaakov and the angel of Esav are *biheiavko imo*, as he wrestled with him. The word *biheiavko* contains the word *avukah*, which means a flame. We can interpret this homiletically to mean that the angel of Esav was attempting to remove the “fire” from Yaakov, i.e. to dampen the enthusiasm with which the Jewish People exhibit in their Torah study and performance of mitzvos. HaShem should allow us to merit that in the coming days that lead up to the festival of Chanukah we will reignite the spark within us that brings us closer to HaShem and His service. We will thus merit greeting Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily, in our days.

## **Shabbos in the Zemiros**

### **Askinu Seudasa**

Composed by the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria

*Shevisin ushivikin misaavin dirichikin chavilin dimikin vichol zinei chavushin*, suspended and relinquished be the distant abominations the afflicting destroyers of all forms of prisoners. Here again we see the theme of Shabbos being a time when all the forces of evil are suspended and relinquished. It appears as if the entire world

is imprisoned until the Holy Shabbos arrives and release the world from bondage. When Shabbos arrives the Jewish People are then bathed in the light that existed by the creation of the world.

## **Shabbos in Tefillah**

*Hamanchil menuchah liamo Yisroel bikdushaso biyom Shabbos kodesh*, Who gives a heritage of contentment to His People, Israel, in His holiness on the holy Shabbos day. Why do we say that HaShem gives contentment as a heritage? Contentment is not tangible, so how can one inherit it? The Tiferes Shlomo (Bereishis) writes that the meaning of this passage is that HaShem gives a heritage of contentment in this world from what will be in the future, in the World to Come. Thus, the words *biyom Shabbos kodesh* that we recite does not necessarily refer to Shabbos in this world. Rather, it refers to the light and holiness of Shabbos in the World to Come.

## **Shabbos Stories**

### **Bris for the future**

Rabbi Chaim Berlin, the head of Moscow’s rabbinical court, lived in Jerusalem in his old age. He would read the Torah in his shul every Shabbos very beautifully and very carefully. Many people in Jerusalem came to daven in his shul just to hear him. On Shabbos during Pesach, many people streamed into his shul to hear him read Song of Songs, which he did with fervor and an outpouring of love. In particular when he reached the verse, “Behold you are beautiful my beloved, behold you are beautiful, your eyes are those of doves,”

he would read with great excitement and with tears. Rabbi Aryeh Levine, as a close student, decided one year to ask his rebbi why, when he reached this verse every year, he would break down in tears. Does this verse not describe so beautifully the love that exists between G-d and the Jewish people? "Let me tell you the reason," answered Rabbi Chaim. "Once when I was a rabbi in Moscow, a Jew came to me and asked to speak with me privately. I thought, who knows what kind of trouble this Jew is in, to the point that he is embarrassed to speak in front of strangers. We went into a side room, and I was surprised to hear that his 'secret' was the announcement that - mazel tov - his wife had just given birth to a baby boy. He had come to invite me to perform the bris. (Rabbi Chaim Berlin was known as an expert Mohel.) "I asked my guest what was the reason for secrecy in the matter; after all, every Jewish boy has a bris. What then is there to hide? "Your honor should know," he replied, 'that I live in an entirely non-Jewish area, and none of my neighbors or acquaintances know that I am a Jew. I own a large warehouse of Christian religious articles, and of course if it were to become known that I am a Jew, I would lose my comfortable income, and there might be danger to my life. Therefore, while I'm inviting you to give my son a bris, I ask for advice as to how to arrange the bris so that no one will be aware of what is happening.' "Of course, in such a situation there was no room to think of fulfilling the mitzvah in an exemplary way, with a minyan and

festive meal, as is the Jewish custom, and therefore I told him that he should be prepared to be the sandak (to hold the boy on his knees), and then we would be able to carry out the bris by ourselves. "No, I will not be able to do that, Rabbi,' replied this Jew in fright. 'I have a soft heart and I cannot bear to look at anyone being hurt. How then will I be able to watch my young son having a bris? Perhaps my hands will shake and I will, God forbid, drop the baby from my lap.' "I asked him for a few more details about his situation, where he lived and the like, and then I made the following suggestion: 'Firstly, on the day of the bris, send away all the non-Jewish servants that are in your house, so they will not see what you are doing there. Secondly, since there is in the city a Jewish doctor, a famous surgeon, whose services are requested by many non-Jews as well, you should ask him to come on the eighth day to be present at the time of the bris, and you should tell your neighbors that a physical blemish was found in the baby and he needs a minor operation. And I will come with the doctor at the appointed time. The doctor will be the sandak, and I the Mohel. And the doctor will be able to come afterwards a few times to your house to oversee the healing of the bris, and everything will go peacefully.' "On the appointed day, the Jew came to lead me to his house, together with the famous surgeon. We passed through streets and areas that in all the years I had lived in Moscow, I had never had the opportunity to pass through, because

never did a Jewish foot tread there. We reached his house, which was like a nobleman's, and there was not a single sign that this was a Jewish home. On the contrary, it had many types of idols and many Christian religious objects. We arranged the bris according to Jewish law, with the doctor serving as the sandak, and I the Mohel. When we parted I asked him to come to me on the third day after the bris in order to tell me how the baby was doing. "On the third day this Jew came to my house, and since he suspected that I had invited him so that he would pay me for my services, he offered me a bill of 20 rubles. Of course I refused to accept it. He thought that I was not satisfied with the sum he was offering, and therefore he added to it until I was able to convince him that I simply refused to accept reward for my efforts on behalf of such a great mitzvah. However I did disclose to him my real intention in inviting him to come to me, which was that I had a great desire to know what had brought him to fulfill the mitzvah of bris milah with such self-sacrifice, despite the fact that after speaking with him and visiting his home I saw that he had no connection whatsoever with Judaism. "Upon hearing these words, his eyes filled with tears. With a bowed head he said: 'I know, Rabbi, that I have distanced myself from the Source. Sometimes my heart is broken, but with my situation I do not know whether I will be able to do a full Teshuvah (repentance)...' And here he started weeping uncontrollably. After he calmed down somewhat, he

continued. 'I think that my tender son, who has been given the bris, will be even more distant than I am from Judaism, for at least in my childhood I lived like a Jew. But my son will not grow up with any sign of Jewish life. Even so, it is possible that this son, when he grows up, will become acquainted with Jewish life, and perhaps the spark will ignite and he will want to be a Jew. It is for this reason that I don't want to block the way for him to return to our source. That is why I made such a great effort to give him a bris, so that the road will be open to him and he will be able to return easily to his source'." When Rabbi Chaim Berlin reached the end of the story, he was moved to tears once again and added: "This incident made clear to me the saying of the Sages on the verse above: 'Behold, you are beautiful my beloved, behold you are beautiful, your eyes are those of doves,' which I had difficulty understanding throughout my life. "Our Sages explain the repetition of words, 'Behold, you are beautiful' in the following way: Behold you are beautiful - before the sin, and behold you are beautiful - after the sin. And the matter is not clear at all; what is the beauty after the sin? But this incident elucidated their intention to me. The answer lies in the final words, 'your eyes are those of doves.'" "One of the unique tendencies of a dove is that she does not distance herself so far from her nest that she will not know her way back. "This is what our Sages mean by: 'Behold, you are beautiful - after the sin.' A Jew, despite the fact that he sinned and

distanced himself from his source, still turns his head backwards and tries not to lose his way entirely back to his nest. And if not he, then at least his offspring will be able to return to Judaism. And this is the praise of ‘your eyes are those of doves’.”

## **Shabbos in Navi**

### **Shmuel I Chapter 16**

#### **Happiness on Shabbos**

In this chapter we learn how HaShem instructed Shmuel to appoint Dovid as a king over the Jewish People. Upon being anointed as king, a spirit of HaShem rested upon Dovid. Subsequently, the spirit of HaShem departed from Shaul, and he was tormented by a spirit of melancholy. Shaul then had Dovid brought before him and when Dovid would play his harp, Shaul was relieved and he felt well, and the spirit of melancholy would depart from him. This incident in Scripture is parallel to Shabbos. The entire week we are engaged in the struggle with the forces of evil, and when Shabbos arrives, all melancholy and sadness departs. We should use the holiness of Shabbos to lift our spirits even during the week, as one can only serve HaShem with joy.

## **Shabbos in Agadah**

### **Teshuvah fills the gap of Shabbos**

The Medrash (Koheles Rabbah 1:3) states that Shlomo HaMelech writes the word *hevel*, vanity, seven times, and

each word *hevel* corresponds to a day of creation. This is because for every day Shlomo saw that there was a lack. Regarding Shabbos it is said (Shemos 31:14) *Michalileha Mos Yumas*, its desecrators shall be put to death. This verse reflects the idea that even Shabbos has a lack, as because of its great holiness and the stringencies inherent in Shabbos, one who transgresses the Shabbos is punished. The Bais HaLevi (Bereishis) writes that this is only said if there was no concept of repentance. The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 22:13), however, states that Kayin demonstrated to his father, Adam, that repentance is effective, and Adam then declared (Tehillim 92:1) *Mizmor Shir LiYom HaShabbos*, a psalm, a song for the Shabbos day. Thus, Shabbos is not lacking and it is complete good. It is for this reason that the Gemara (Shabbos 118b) states that one who observes Shabbos properly will gain atonement for his sins, even if he had worshipped idols like the Generation of Enosh. One who observes Shabbos merits having his repentance accepted and he thus gains atonement for his sins.

## **Shabbos in Halacha**

### **Removing a pot from a blech by mistake**

If one mistakenly removed the wrong pot from the blech, he is allowed to return it to that spot, even if he had it set it down with the intention of not returning it. An example of this would be if on Friday night one assumed that

the cholent pot was the soup pot, and upon removing the pot from the blech, he set it down with the intention of not returning it. In such a situation he is allowed to return the pot to the blech. This ruling, however, only applies if the food is completely cooked and is still warm.

## **Shabbos Challenge Question**

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Last week we posed the question: why do we refer to the extra soul on Shabbos as a *neshama yeseira* and not a second soul? Perhaps one answer to this question is that although everything on Shabbos is doubled, we are expressing the idea that the extra soul that a Jew has on Shabbos is not merely a replica of the soul that he has during the week. Rather, the second soul is higher and more exalted than the soul that the Jew has during the week. In a similar vein, the Sfas Emes writes that during the week, the soul and the body are equal, and the soul must battle against the body, whereas on Shabbos, the body is subdued by the soul, which has the upper hand on Shabbos.

A reader (in 5773) wrote: Neshama yeseira - yeseira is the feminine of yeser also meaning -- INCREASE, like in "yeser sieis v'yeser eiz".

Thus it may not mean a second soul but a powerfully "Increased" soul.

**Thank you for your contribution.**

This week's question is, is there an association between the candles that are lit with the onset of Shabbos and the candle that we light by Havdalah, and what is the association? If you have a possible answer, please email me at [ShabbosTaamHachaim@gmail.com](mailto:ShabbosTaamHachaim@gmail.com) and your answer will be posted in next week's edition of Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim.

## **Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim Vayishlach 5773**

Is sponsored in memory of:

Rav Yosef Yoizel Horowitz, Alter of Novardok (1849[or 1858]-1919). Born in the Lithuanian town of Plongian to Rav Shlomo Zalman, Rav and Dayan of the town, Rav Yosef Yoizel joined Kovno's Kollel Perushim where he studied under Rav Itzele Blazer, Rav Naftali Amsterdam and Rav Avraham Shenker, spending at least 18 hours a day - most of the time standing-studying. He also spent two lengthy periods learning in solitude - first, he secluded himself in a small room for a year and a half after tragically losing his first wife during childbirth; later, learning in a room in a forest for 12 years, leaving only to visit his family for Shabbosos. In 1894, Rav Yosef Yoizel began to visit the Alter of Kelm, Rav Simcha Zissel Ziv. Later, he established a large yeshiva in Novardok and was responsible for creating a whole network of yeshivas. During the War, in 1914, he moved the yeshiva - with its bachurim - to Hommel in the Ukraine, as the

Germans advanced on Novardok. In 1918, he moved it to Kiev.

Rav Chai Taib of Tunisia, author of HaLev Hitin (1835)

Rav Shlomo Heiman, Rosh Yeshiva of Beis Medrash Elyon, Tora Vodaas (1893-1944). Born in Parenz, near Minsk, Reb Shlomo entered the yeshiva in Halusk at age 12, where he learned under Rav Baruch Ber Leibowitz. He remained there until 1917, when he married Chaya Feiga Rudensky of Volozhin. That year, he was appointed by Rav Baruch Ber to serve as Rosh Yeshiva in Knesses Bais Yitzchak. When anti-Semitic harassment forced him to leave the area, the Chafetz Chaim asked Rav Shlomo to teach in his yeshiva. When WWI ended, Rav Elchonon Wasserman asked Rav Shlomo to be a Rosh Yeshiva in Baranovitch. In 1927 Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski invited Rav Shlomo to be Rosh Yeshiva of the Ramailles Yeshiva in Vilna, a position he held for almost eight years. In 1935, with Rav Chaim Ozer's approval, Rav Shlomo accepted an invitation to head Yeshiva Torah Vodaas. Thus he was spared, through hashgacha pratit, the horrors of WWII. Since he arrived in America a few years before the onset of the Holocaust, he was able to aid in the rescue of Bnei Torah and Rebbeim.

Rav Avraham Yochanan Blumenthal (1877-1966). Born to his parents one year after they made aliyah from Hungary, he married in 1895, and - despite the death of three of his children and his wife's becoming hard of hearing - he began an orphanage for the destitute of Yerushalayim during World War I. Beis Zion Blumenthal has been continued by his grandson, Rav Eliezer Rakovsky (d. 1996) and his great grandson, Rav Baruch Rakovsky זכר צדיקים וקדושים לברכה, נפטר לגן עדן י"ז כסלו, זכותם יגינו עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה ([www.matzav.com](http://www.matzav.com))

### **Daf Yomi Schedule at Maor Torah Center**

Monday-Friday 6:00 AM followed by Shacharis at 6:55 AM.

Sunday 8:00 AM followed by Shacharis at 9:00 AM

Shabbos morning 8:00 AM followed by Shacharis at 9:00 AM

Shabbos afternoon 45 minutes before Mincha

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Have a wonderful Shabbos

Prepared by Rabbi Binyomin Adler.

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