



# MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Candle Lighting 5:37PM

Vol. 14 Issue 1

## Parshas Va'Yeira 5778

### CHESSSED?

BY RABBI YOSEF PRUPAS

We are taught that when relating of the stories of our forefathers, it is essential to analyze in great depth the purposes of their actions. However in this week's Parsha one might be stymied in understanding the acts of Avraham. They range from radical kindness (even in the face of possibly upsetting G-d), to an extreme lack of it. A clue for how to approach Avraham's contradictory behavior is from a Ramban on the words, "Hamichaseh Ani m'Avraham asher Ani oseh?" "Shall I conceal from Avraham what I do (regarding Sodom)?" The Ramban explains that Hashem is saying that "Avraham knows and recognizes that I am Hashem who loves righteousness and justness. And that Hashem performs justice only with righteousness (mercy) ... Thus if according to the way of righteousness and Justness they will be exonerated, Avraham will pray and this situation will be good. And if they are completely guilty he will also wish for their judgment to be carried out. Therefore it is fitting that he enter the counsel of Hashem."

The Ramban's words are puzzling. Why is this a reason to involve Avraham in the decision making? Shouldn't Avraham just trust that G-d knows what He is doing? The answer to this question involves the fundamentals of why this world was created, and in turn resolves our questions.

The Maharal, when explaining the difference between Noach and Avraham, quotes the following

**WHY IS THIS a reason TO INVOLVE AVRAHAM IN THE DECISION MAKING? SHOULDN'T AVRAHAM JUST TRUST THAT G-D KNOWS WHAT He IS DOING?**

Medrash: "Noach walked with G-d (Noach 6:9): Avraham whose strength was refined, went before G-d. Noach whose strength was unrefined, needed to walk with G-d." Rashi explains that Noach needed support, whereas Avraham would strengthen himself with his righteousness and walk on his own. The Maharal elucidates that Noach was completely attached to Hashem, thus saving himself from the possibility of sin. Avraham on the other hand, took himself beyond the extreme attachment - by virtue of the tests sent his way. Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler explains that the Maharal is alluding to Avraham's understanding of the *raison d'être* of creation. Avraham had correctly deduced, by observing the world around him, the extreme chessed/kindness that brought the world into being by a Creator. He understood that his role in life was to emulate that kindness by going out of his way to give to others. While Noach did what he was supposed to do, Avraham looked for ways to do more. The generation of the Flood deserved to die, but Avraham risked praying for the people of Sodom because of his concern that with death all hope of return was lost.

Based on the above, we can posit that involving Avraham in the fate of Sodom was the exact reason for Avraham's apparent *chutzpah* in leaving the presence of G-d to welcome his guests. Emulating the chessed/kindness of G-d meant exactly that -

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### DVAR HALACHA



#### Laws of Mashiv Haruach

##### Part 1

BY RABBI YOCHANAN ESKENAZI

The second bracha of Shemoneh Esrei is the bracha of Gevuros (Hashem's might). Chazal teach us that when Avraham placed the knife on Yitzchok's neck, at the Akeida, Yitzchok's neshama (soul) left his body. When his neshama heard the Angel tell Avraham "do not place your hand on Yitzchok," the neshama returned to the body and Yitzchok stood up. At that moment Yitzchok understood that in the future Hashem will resurrect the dead and he proclaimed, "Baruch atah Hashem, Me'chayei Ha'meisim (Blessed are You Hashem, the One who resurrects the dead)" (Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer chap. 30).

The Mishneh [Berachos 33a] says that we mention the strength of [the wind and] rain during the bracha mentioning *techiyas ha'meisim*. At a later point in Shemoneh Esrei, in *birchas ha'shanim* (blessing for livelihood) we ask for rain. Rashi [ibid. s.v. *maz'keerin*] explains that when we recite *mashiv haruach u'morid hageshem* we are not actually requesting rain, rather we are mentioning that Hashem controls the rain, which is a praise of Hashem.

The Gemara [Berachos ibid] explains that rain is equivalent to the resurrection of the dead. Rashi [Taanis 7a s.v. *u'pleegee*] explains that rain causes produce to grow which helps sustain life. Rabbi E.E. Dessler, zt"l, offers an additional explanation. If a person would attempt to imagine how *techiyas ha'meisim* will look, one can only visualize unbelievable miracles. Yet each year when the trees and plants die and again grow the following Spring, no one even takes notice of it. If Hashem would have made the world that the opposite takes place, i.e. that people die and shortly after are resurrected, yet plants once they die they remain dead for

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### Kollel News

#### MAZEL TOV TO:

**RICHE AND JANIS FINE ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF THEIR GRANDDAUGHTER, SHIFRA LIEBERSTEIN OF FAR ROCKAWAY, TO NOAM SONNENBERG OF BALTIMORE.**

**DAVID AND ELLEN WEISS ON THE BIRTH OF A GRANDDAUGHTER, BORN TO THEIR CHILDREN, MEIR AND SARA BENA WEISS.**

**RABBI AND MRS. YAAKOV SELENGUT ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF THEIR SON, ZEVI.**

**RABBI & MRS. ARON WEINTRAUB ON THE MARRIAGE OF THEIR SON.**

**- IT'S FINALLY HERE!!!!**

#### MASPID PROGRAM 5778

*Begins This Motzaei Shabbos OUR SEVENTEENTH YEAR!*

The long-awaited Masmid Program begins this Motsaei Shabbos, November 4th, at 7:15 p.m.

JOIN THE CROWD DURING LONG WINTER MOTZAEI SHABBOS AT OUR EVER-POPULAR AND EXCITING MASPID PROGRAM. YOUNG BOYS COME TO LEARN WITH FATHERS, GRANDFATHERS, AND MENTORS AND ENJOY GREAT LEARNING, STORIES, RAFFLE PRIZES, AND PIZZA!

To receive Menucha Vesimcha by weekly email or to dedicate/sponsor an issue PLEASE CONTACT THE EDITOR AT: [menuchavesimcha@phillykollel.org](mailto:menuchavesimcha@phillykollel.org)

#### DAVENING TIMES:

##### Friday, November 3:

5:37 PM Candle Lighting  
5:55 PM Shkiya/sunset

##### Shabbos, September 4:

8:15 AM Shacharis  
9:33AM/10:09AM Latest Krias Shema Kiddush this week is dedicated by The Aidman Family In honor of Rabbi Yochanan Eskenazi Upon his becoming a maggid shiur at Mesivta Yesodei Yisroel in Elkins Park Mazel tov! We wish Rabbi Eskenazi and his family much hatzlacha in his new position!  
5:14 PM Mincha  
5:54 PM Shkiya/Sunset  
6:49 PM Ma'ariv  
7:06 PM 72 Minutes  
7:15 pm Masmid!

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL WOMEN'S DIVISION PRESENTS A THREE-PART SHIUR ON SEFER BEREISHIS:

#### YAAKOV AVINU:

A STUDY OF THE LIFE, TRAVAILS, MARRIAGES, AND PERSONA OF OUR FOREFATHER THROUGH THE LENS OF OUR TORAH COMMENTARIES AND THE MIDRASH

AN INTERACTIVE STUDY WITH MRS. SIMA GREER

WEDNESDAYS, NOVEMBER 8, 15, AND 29 AT 8:30 P.M.

AT THE HOME OF AMY ERLBAUM  
328 BROOKWAY ROAD  
MERION STATION, PA

[cont. from front]

hundreds of years, if one were to observe a plant growing again, he would feel as if he just observed a great miracle. It is only because we are accustomed to plants dying and growing again that we are not amazed when this miracle occurs. However, if a person thinks about it, the concept of humans and plants living after death is the exact same miracle (Sifsei Chaim, Shemoneh Esrei, pg. 42).

With regards to mentioning rain, there is a difference in text between the winter and the summer. In the winter we mention mashiv haruach u'morid hageshem (Who makes the wind blow and brings down the rain), and during the summer months we mention morid ha'tal (Who brings down the dew) (See Shulchan Aruch 114:3). Generally, b'nei Ashkenaz do not mention anything in the summer months (Rama 114:3), and b'nei Sefard say morid ha'tal (See Shulchan Aruch 114:3). In Eretz Yisroel, the minhag of even b'nei Ashkenaz is to say morid ha'tal during the summer.

We mention mashiv ha'ruach beginning at Musaf of Shemenei Atzeres until Musaf of the first day of Pesach (Shulchan Aruch 114:1). The Mishneh Berurah [114:2] explains that we should begin asking for rain at Maariv on the first night of Succos, since on Succos we are judged on rain (Mishneh Rosh Hashanah 16a). However, since rain is considered a (bad omen) on Succos (See Mishneh Succah 28b & Rashi ibid. s.v. mashal) since one is unable to sit in the Succah, we push it off to immediately after Succos [i.e. Shemenei Atzeres]. Logically since the [halachic] day always starts at night, we should begin mentioning mashiv ha'ruach at Maariv of Shemenei Atzeres, however since not everyone is in shul at night, Chazal did not want to start without the whole congregation present, to avoid confusion. We cannot start by shachris, since one may not interrupt between birchas krias shema and shemoneh esrei [s'michas geulah l'tefillah (Shulchan Aruch 111:1)], and therefore no one may announce before shemoneh esrei that we are switching over. Therefore, we do not switch until Musaf. Since the proper time to switch would have been starting from Maariv, if one accidentally mentioned mashiv ha'ruach before Musaf, one would not need to repeat Shemoneh Esrei (Mishneh Berurah 114:3).

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walking before G-d and going to the extreme to assist another. G-d was giving him another opportunity to do exactly that and pray for the people of Sodom.

Avraham's attribute of chessed/kindness is further clarified by instances of inaction on his part. He prayed for the people Sodom, but did not pray for his nephew, Lot. He threw out Hagar and his son Yishmael, and was willing to sacrifice Yitzchak despite being told that he would be perpetuated through him – yet was prepared to run out while ill and greet a few strangers. This was because he was in his own words "afar v'eifer" "dust and ash." He acted only for G-d's sake, and

not for any possibility of personal gain. He intuited that in those cases trying to intervene was not expected of him, and all he could and should do was trust G-d's final outcome.

Avraham is our forefather because he paved our way by making it easier for his descendants to confront similar situations with the same attitude. May we have the strength to emulate Avraham's ways, and continue to exhibit the symbol of Jewish identity inherited from Avraham, gomlei chassdim, seeking chessed/kindness - above and beyond.

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