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NETIVARYEH



Parshat Lech Lecha 5769

In This Issue**Snapshot****Rabanit Bina in New York - 11/16****Our Alumni Write****Rav Nebenzahl on Parshat Lech Lecha****Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Yitzchak Korn, Rosh Beit Midrash and Shana Alef Rebbe****Alumni Dvar Torah by Michael Weinblatt (5763-64)****Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List****Snapshot****Shabbat:**

- Friday night oneg hosted by Rav Natan Schwartz.
- Shabbat day hosted by Rav Ami Merzel.
- Afternoon shiur by Rav Ally Ehrman.
- Seudat Shlishit hosted by Rav Yoel Rackovsky.

Rabanit Bina in New York - 11/16**Mini-Hakhel in New York on 11/16**

Rabanit Bina will participating in a mini-hakhel in New York hosted jointly by Matan-KJ-Ramaz on Sunday, November 16th at 10:00 AM in honor of Rabbi Haskel Lookstein. For details [click here](#).

Our Alumni Write

Daniel R. Altman (5748) writes...

A few years ago Rav Bina requested that alumni get in touch with Partners In Torah and get involved in their telephone kiruv programming. Per Rav Bina's advice I joined the program and learned with a fellow for about three years. We just broke up our chavrusa as he will be having an in-preson chavrusa with one of the Roshei Yeshiva in his area. I sent him a Shanah Tovah e-mail and got back the following reply:

Daniel,

Good to hear from you. Shanah Tovah! I too meant to send you a note during the holidays.

I'm glad to hear you have a new chavrusa. I miss our weekly conversations, but I've been keeping myself very busy. I've gotten fully invested in improving the Jewish day schools in my area, to the point that I'm setting up a foundation to focus on the issue. We're launching a big voucher program starting next year. I haven't started

learning with Rabbi Kamenetsky yet, but he's going to get back to me with a time and we'll start soon. I've finally started to incorporate some non-trivial observance into my daily routine. When I turned 40 in September, I decided to start saying the Shema morning and night. In the morning, I put on Tefillin and say all of the morning berachot, as well as the pre-Shema berachot. In the evening, I just say the pre-Shema berachot. I've done it "religiously" since turning 40. (O.K., one or two mornings I might not have done it on time, but I was close.) I'm hoping to add the Shemoneh Esreh at some point, but I feel like it's great progress that I'm observing this much on a regular basis.

I hope you have as much success with your new chavrusa as you had with me. I feel like you had an enormous amount of impact on my religious development.

Have a sweet and productive year!

Best,

Rav Nebenzahl on Parshat Lech Lecha

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon

TESTS OF FAITH: WAGING A WAR AGAINST THE WHOLE WORLD

AVRAHAM HA-IVRI

In this week's *parsha* we read of Avraham Avinu's war against Amrafel and his cohorts. The Torah records: "then there came the fugitive and told Avram the Ivri" (Bereishit 14:13). What is the meaning of this reference to Avram as an Ivri? The obvious reason is that he was a descendant of Eiver. This, however, is not sufficient reason, for Eiver had many other descendents who were not referred to as the Ivri and secondly, why do we find this reference specifically in connection with this incident? Chazal offer the following interpretation: "for the whole world stands *be-eiver echad* (on one side) and he stands on the other side." Avram was waging a battle not only against Amrafel but against the entire world. There may have been a few people who sided with him, but they did not fight for the cause as he did. In fact, Avram spent his entire life fighting against the rest of mankind - he knew that Hashem was the Creator and that idols have no meaning. The opinion of the majority had no meaning for him because he knew the truth. When it comes to a person's own worldly matters one should act with humility. When it comes to Hashem, however, a person has no right to yield to the majority. The whole world may believe in idols, but Avram steadfastly refused to believe in them. He would not compromise his belief under any circumstances.



THE SHABBAT BELONGS TO HASHEM

When the Chafetz Chaim heard that many business people were keeping their stores open in violation of the Shabbat, he came and spoke to them about the significance of the Shabbat and how important it was to observe it. A number of the shopkeepers were moved by his plea but of course they had previous commitments. They approached the Chafetz Chaim question whether they could spend the next few weeks finishing up some business and they promised to begin observing Shabbat after that. The Chafetz Chaim responded: "kinderlach, believe me if the Shabbat were mine I would do my utmost to accomodate you, but what

can I do, the Shabbat belongs to Hashem it is not mine to compromise." When Chazal add *takkanot* it is for the purpose of upholding the Torah - of preventing people from violating Torah commandments. For example, when Chazal saw that people were not keeping Shabbat as they should they instituted the prohibition of *muktzeh*. In fact, the initial decrees were very stringent and were later relaxed when Chazal noted that the Shabbat situation had begun to improve. The prohibition against *muktzeh* is not as strict today as it was during the days of Chazal. Perhaps had the situation been as bad in the time of Chazal as it is today, they would have reverted back to the stringent prohibitions or gone even further. *Takkanot* serve to strengthen upholding of the Torah, not compromise by any means.

Avraham Avinu fought for what he believed in, while at the same time trying to maintain a special love for his fellow human beings and trying to steer them in the right direction. When he would give them food he would explain to them that it all came from Hashem and that they must give thanks to the Creator of the Universe.

BATTLING AGAINST ONE'S SELF

I would like to suggest another interpretation to Chazal's explanation of the word Ivri. When Chazal stated that Avraham Avinu was up against the rest of the world, the rest of the world included **Avraham himself!** In other words Avraham was on one side and the rest of the world including Avraham were on the other side. What do I mean? Avraham fought a war not only against Amrafel and his cohorts but against himself as well. Avraham's whole life was spent being involved in *chesed* - thinking of ways to help his fellow man. He wished he could show Amrafel the same benevolence that he showed others - but he knew full well that he could not. Taking on the entire world meant his own nature of loving his fellow man - the entire world he fought against included Avraham himself. His nature demanded that he act nicely to them. but he knew that he was obligated to fight this evil.

Chazal teach us that Lot was not captured just because he happened to be inhabiting Sodom when it was defeated, rather Amrafel and his cohorts were specifically searching for Lot. Why were they so interested in taking Lot into captivity? Because he was a relative and a disciple of Avram - their war was against Avram and all that he stood for. Avram had to fight back. To do so, however, required him to fight against his own nature as a peace-loving individual who wanted to do good for others.

ANOTHER TEST OF FAITH

This incident is recorded as one of Avraham's ten tests of faith. Not long afterwards, he was faced with the more difficult challenge of having to send away his own son, as his wife Sarah ordered: "drive out this slavewoman (Hagar) with her son (Yishmael)" (Bereishit 21:10). Avraham did not wish to comply, as we read in the next *pasuk*: "the matter greatly distressed Avraham regarding his son." Hashem, however commanded Avraham: "whatever Sarah tells you, heed her voice, since through Yitzchak will offspring be considered yours." (Ibid. 12). Avraham, being the faithful servant that he was, obediently followed the word of Hashem and proceeded to send away Hagar and Yishmael. Sending away his own flesh and blood was a tremendous test of faith for Avraham, yet he fully complied with Hashem's request without asking why. Although it went against his nature, deep down he understood full well that Yishmael was a negative influence who should be kept away from Yitzchak.

AKEIDAT YITZCHAK

Not long afterwards was faced with an even bigger test of faith - Hashem tells him to offer Yitzchak as a *korban* upon Har HaMoriah. Avraham is very perplexed - why should he sacrifice Yitzchak? Yitzchak is a man of exemplary character, a loyal disciple, he strictly adheres to the laws of the Torah, and he is a great *talmid chacham* in his own right. Why would Hashem ask Avraham to kill his beloved son whom Hashem gave to him after so many years of praying. What about his mother Sarah? Avraham Avinu however asks no questions and does as Hashem commands. Such an act certainly goes contrary to his nature and to his understanding - yet he is a loyal servant and this is what he must do, so he proceeds to travel with his Yitzchak to Har HaMoriah. When it came to saving Sodom, Avraham offered many entreaties - perhaps there exist fifty righteous people there in whose merit the city could be saved, perhaps forty-five, forty, thirty, and so forth down to ten. When it comes to being asked to offer his son, however, he asks no questions and simply does as he is commanded. The truth was that Hashem had no intention of Avraham sacrificing Yitzchak it was only a test of faith and a ram was offered instead of Yitzchak.

Avraham had every reason to feel good for having passed this great test and perhaps it was time to relax. Yet, the moment he arrives home from the *Akeida*, he discovered that his beloved Sarah had passed away. He could have asked Hashem: "Why? I meticulously adhered to everything You commanded. After all that I have been through, is this what I deserve?" Avraham asks no such questions, he immediately arranges for his wife's burial, with the misfortune of having to deal with Ephron. This is what Hashem decided and this is what he must do - a loyal servant follows with all his heart and soul and does not ask questions. Perhaps this test was even more difficult than the *Akeida*.

FORGING THE WAY

HaGaon HaRav Chaim Volozhin writes that when a *tzaddik* undergoes a particular test, he forges the way and makes it easier for his descendants to undergo this same test. He notes that future generations were able to make the journey to Eretz Yisrael on the strength of Avraham having given up so much to do so. He adds that the many who sacrificed themselves *al Kiddush Hashem* were able to do so on the strength of Akeidat Yitzchak.

I would like to add, if I may, something which R' Chaim did not mention because it took place after his passing. Not too many years ago, the Jewish nation underwent terrible tests of faith during the Holocaust. Although many people in the face of mass destruction and tragedy broke, many others remained loyal to Hashem and His Torah. How were they able to do so in the face of such terrible adversity, the circumstances were horrendous. Why did Hashem do this to us? Perhaps if we search hard we can find the answer to that question, but there are six million individual questions we will never be able to answer in this world. Why was this *tzaddik* killed? What about that *tzaddik*? What about Yeshiva *bochurim* and children? Why? We cannot ask such questions because we cannot understand the ways of Hashem. What we do know however is that the ability to withstand such tests was something we inherited from our patriarch Avraham Avinu. We need strength of faith to be able to continue serving Hashem without asking **why**? Why Rav Elchanan Wasserman and Rav Menachem Zembe and other great *tzaddikim* were slaughtered along with cheder children, Hassidic Rebbes, and Yeshiva *bochurim*. May it be the will of Hashem that there never again be Holocausts, that this be the end of all of our troubles, and may we soon be blessed with the arrival of Moshiach, speedily in our day. Amen.

Staff Dvar Torah

by Rav Yitzchak Korn, Rosh Beit Midrash and Shana Alef Rebbe

To Walk with Hashem



The Parsha of Brit Mila, in which Hashem enters into a covenant with Avraham and promises him progeny that will inherit the land, is introduced by the phrase "*Hithalech Lifanay V'hayeh Tamim*", "Walk before me and be whole hearted". Many commentaries offer explanations as to what exactly this statement is. I would like to focus on Ramban's understanding of this phrase.

Ramban understands this phrase as a command, associating it with the verse "*Tamim Tihyeh im Hashem Elokechah*"- "Thou Shalt be whole-hearted with the Lord your G-d" (Devarim 18:13), which he learns to be a positive Mitzvah. This Mitzvah tells us that a Jew is prohibited from following diviners and sorcerers. He must disregard their predictions and say "*HaKol Bidei Shamayim*" - everything is in the Hands of Heaven. The future depends on our drawing close to G-d's service, and is not related to the declarations of soothsayers.

This covenant is made at a critical point for Avraham. He has already proven himself as a dedicated servant of Hashem, and is now preparing for phase II - Nationhood. He will have descendants who will dwell in their homeland. Specifically now it is imperative for Avraham, known as the "foundation of Emunah" in this world, to totally rid himself of any association or belief in all sort of magic or sorcery.

Our nation was separated and elevated from the nations of the world through Brit Milah. Therefore we express our bond to Hashem by walking with Tmimut before G-d. Regardless of the degree of truth or falsehood emanating from the various foreign sources, we are prohibited from taking heed of their words. A Jew walks before Hashem, B'timimut, as Avraham did.

Rav Yehuda HaChassid (12th century), in Sefer HaChasidim, writes against using Hashbaot or dream inquiries as a factor in guiding one's actions or controlling the future. Rather, he invokes our posuk, "*Tamim Tihyeh im Hashem Elokechah*", and instructs us to pray to Hashem for our needs, who, in His Divine mercy will respond to us.

Many people are tempted by all sorts of tricks and tricksters, modern day soothsayers and magicians. A Torah Jew will ignore them, by placing his full trust in Hashem and concentrating on Avodat HaShem of Tefillah.

Alumni Dvar Torah

by Michael Weinblatt (5763-64)

For the Sake of Hakaras HaTov

Following the commandment of Hashem "*Lech I'cha*," the Torah tells us in pesukim

4-5 that "Avram went as Hashem had spoken to him, and Lot went with him...Avram took his wife Sarai and Lot, his brother's son...and they left to go to the land of Canaan." The Ramban in Parshas Vayera 19:29 says that since Lot did a chessed to Avraham and accompanied him on his journey, Avraham risked his life to save Lot from the kings. When Avraham is told that his nephew/brother-in-law Lot was kidnapped by the kings, the Torah tells us in pasuk 14:13 that Avraham "dwelt in the Plains of Mamre, the Amorite, the brother of Eshcol and the brother of Aner, and they were parties to the covenant of Avram." Rav Yehuda Kuperman Shlit"a points out that the Meshech Chochmah has a difficulty as to why the Torah feels it necessary to include all the details as to where Avraham was and who his friends were when he found out about Lot being captured. The Meshech Chochmah answers that this emphasizes the righteousness of Avraham. People might have thought that a foreigner like Avraham would go to rescue a family member because he needs friends and feels lonely, as an outsider. Therefore, the Torah teaches us that Avraham had good company and didn't need to rescue Lot for his company. Rather, the Meshech Chochmah says that the Torah wants to teach us that Avraham risked his life in order to show his *hakaras hatov* to Lot for accompanying him on his journey to *Canaan*. This midah of being *makir tov* is so important that Avraham risked his own life just to show his *hakaras hatov*.

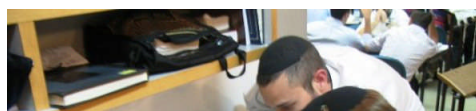
This midah of being *makir tov* comes up in other places in the Torah as well. Moshe Rabeinu had *hakaras hatov* to Hashem, other people, and even to inanimate objects. He wouldn't hit the water or the ground which both had saved his life. Why would Moshe Rabeinu need to show *hakaras hatov* to inanimate objects? Because, as Rav Nebenzahl Shlit"a points out, *hakaras hatov* is crucial for our own personal development. If we fail to thank those that have helped us, even inanimate objects, then we may one day come to forget thanking Hashem for everything He has done for us, chas v'shalom. Rav Soloveitchik explains that this idea of thanking Hashem should really be what occupies every second of our days. For every breath we take we should need to stop and thank Hashem. Obviously, this is impossible since we need to do other things in our day too. However, Rav Soloveitchik says that this idea of constantly thanking Hashem can even be seen in our davening. Every day in psukei d'zimrah we repeat the line "*kol haneshama t'halel k-ah halleluk-ah*" twice to show this idea that we should really keep on praising and thanking Hashem. Similarly, in Hallel, we repeat the lines "*hodu laShem ki tov ki l'olam chasdo*." This lends support to the idea that really we should constantly be thanking Hashem, but we cannot because we need to take care of other important things in our day too.

This lesson taught by Avraham of *hakaras hatov* is really a big mussar to each of us. Unfortunately, many people nowadays forget the good that others have done for them in the past once they no longer need that good. This is what Avraham was coming to teach us - the importance of being *makpid* on *hakaras hatov*. As I once heard from Rav Aryeh Varon, "*lech l'cha*" can also be translated as "go to yourself." Go and look into yourself. We all need to look into ourselves and try to internalize this important message which the Torah is coming to teach us.

Good Shabbos!

**Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List
Announcements from the Yeshiva**

Note: Rav Natan Schwartz will be in NY from November 10-19. Anyone interested in getting in touch with him please call 347-461-5665 or email



him at DannyI31@aol.com.

Photo Gallery

[Learning in Yeshiva](#)



Mazal Tavs

The Yeshiva would like to wish a Mazal Tov to:

- Rav [Aryeh](#) and Tamar Varon on the birth of a baby boy, Daniel.
- Rabbi Dr. [John](#) and Phyllis Krug on the birth of a granddaughter, daughter of Oriya and Debbie Shohat.
- [Evan](#) Koller (5763-64) on his marriage to Shari Shanin.
- [Michael](#) (5756) and Deborah Adler on the birth of a baby boy.

Visitors

The following people visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Scott Garber (5760)
- Dr. Shmuel Soffer (5747)

Baruch Dayan Emet

The Yeshiva wishes condolences to:

- [Avi](#) Levison (5759-60) on the loss of his mother. Shiva will take place at his house in New Rochelle:
11 Bon Air Ave
New Rochelle, NY 10804
914-235-9178
Avi's Cell: 914-720-1495
- [Yaniv](#) Lautman (5769) and family on the loss of his grandmother.

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Toiby Yehudit bat Tama Gaisa
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Yosef ben Latife
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Perla bat Miriam
- Rachel bat Sarah

- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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