



Parshat Vayera 5769

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**Snapshot****Shabbat:**

- Rav Yaakov Thaler and family hosted Shabbat in Yeshiva.
- Friday night oneg hosted by Rav Thaler, Rav Ami Merzel, and Eli Rothstein.

**In our Yeshiva...**

*By Chaim Strassman, Shana Alef - TABC*

The 6:00 PM class period at Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh offers multiple shiurim on a broad range of subjects. One of the more unique shiurim is the Tuesday Tour with Rav Tzvi Shiloni.

Every week Rav Shiloni leads his shiur through the Old City of Jerusalem, as they "travel through time" to one of the many biblical sites surrounding the Yeshiva, which holds many historical sites. This shiur has allowed our students to read tehilim at the foot of King Dovid's palace, seen the place where over one hundred thousand Assyrians miraculously died in their sleep, and stopped by Nachal Kidron, where the old walls of Yerushalayim once stood. When one can stand in the actual location where the lesson being taught took place, it is altogether a different learning experience.



**Rav Nebenzahl on Parshat Vayera**

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

*Due to technical difficulties beyond our control we are unable to send you this week's sicha. Instead we are sending you one of the sichot for Parshat Vayera in the soon-to-published book of the Rav's sichot on Sefer Bereishit.*

**TRUE EMUNAH**

**"LIKE A JESTER"**

"Lot went and spoke to his sons-in-law and the betrothed of his daughters and he said: 'get up and leave this place, for Hashem is about to destroy the city!' But he seemed like a jester in the eyes of his sons-in-law" (*Bereishis 19:14.*)



His sons-in-law were so convinced that Lot could not be telling the truth that the only plausible explanation was that he was joking. If they would have had the slightest premonition that the city would indeed be devastated they would have fled for their lives. If we were to hear on the news that there was a fifty percent chance of our neighborhood being destroyed would we remain there? Certainly not! We would flee even if the chances were far less than fifty percent! Today too many people fear coming to visit Israel where Baruch Hashem far fewer than fifty percent of the residents have been harmed. Lot's sons-in-law, though, were convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that Sodom would not be destroyed and there was no need to heed his warnings. This was surely Lot trying to entertain them in the middle of the night with his sense of humor!

How was it that they did not believe him? Lot was a great man who Chazal in many respects compared to Avraham Avinu (See Rashi *Bereishis 13:8.*). It is true that Chazal voice disapproval of many of his actions, but all in all he was a great man. Even after his parting from Avraham Avinu, an act which Chazal have many a critical word for (See Rashi *Bereishis 13:11.*), Lot still had the merit of conversing regularly with angels. In addition, his prayers managed to save Tzoar from destruction (See *Bereishis 19:20-21.*). Furthermore, Lot must have spoken passionately after all that had recently transpired: the residents of Sodom had descended upon his house and attempted to take him into captivity, and it was only through a miracle that he was saved through the protection of angels. Lot knew that the entire town was evil, in

fact the *midrash* (*Pirke D' Rabbi Eliezer* 25.) relates that his own daughter was killed by people of Sodom, he could not have been too surprised that Hashem planned to destroy the city. Lot must have conveyed the information in an eloquent and convincing manner - surely his words had tremendous impact on listeners. How then could his sons-in-law attribute it all to a joke?

## IN NOACH'S FOOTSTEPS

Perhaps Lot's sons-in-law were following in Noach's footsteps. The Torah records: "Noach, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives with him, went into the Ark because of the waters of the flood" (*Bereishis* 7:7.). Scripture stresses that Noach went into the Ark only after the rains began, Chazal comment on this: "even Noach was one of those with little faith, he believed yet did not believe that the Flood would come, and therefore he did not enter the Ark until the waters forced him to" (Rashi *ibid.*). The fact that Hashem warned him - "I am about to bring the Flood-waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which there is a breath of life from under the heavens" (*Bereishis* 6:17) did not spur him to seek protection. Only when the rains began to fall and he could no longer remain outside did he enter the Ark. How can we understand Noach's behavior? Noach was a prophet, he was a "a righteous, perfect man" (*Ibid.* 9.) with total faith in Hashem! He must have believed that the Flood would come about - why else did he spend one hundred and twenty years warning his generation? Why did he argue so vehemently with people who did not heed him because they believed that even if a flood would occur they would be able to protect themselves (See Rashi *ibid.* 14 and *Sanhedrin* 108b.)? Does this sound like a man "of little faith"?

The *baalei mussar* explain that Noach certainly had strong belief in Hashem's ability to bring about the Flood, but he did not think that Hashem would actually execute his Attribute of Justice in such a harsh manner. Hashem, after all, is a G-d of kindness Who bestows good upon all His creations. It was Noach's great belief in Hashem and His love of *chesed* that convinced him that Hashem would never turn the entire world into water and destroy all living flesh leaving only a few survivors. Perhaps this understanding can serve as a rebuttal to certain criticism Chazal have of Noach. The *Zohar* (*Section I* 254:2.) writes that when Noach emerged from the Ark to find a world in ruins, he cried to Hashem: "Creator of the Universe! You should have had mercy upon Your creations" to which Hashem responded: "now you are telling Me this? Why did you not speak up before the Flood? Had you done so, perhaps your prayers would have succeeded in rescinding the Flood." When Hashem warned Moshe Rabenu that he wished to destroy the entire nation following the *chet haegel*, Moshe prayed and the nation was saved. Similarly, Avraham's beseeching Hashem with lengthy negotiations on behalf of Sodom succeeded in saving at least one righteous person. The Flood is referred to as "the waters of Noach" (*Yeshayahu* 54:9.) because the fact that Noach did not pray on behalf of his generation means he was somewhat responsible for it (See *Zohar* section I 67:2.). Why did he not pray? Perhaps based on the explanation of the *baalei mussar* we can give Noach the benefit of the doubt by this understanding that the reason he did not pray for his generation was because he refused to believe that the Flood would actually take place. He believed that there was no need to pray because Hashem is a G-d of *chesed* Who would never do such a terrible thing. By the same token Lot's sons-in-law did not believe him because it was incomprehensible that Hashem would punish Sodom so harshly!

The difficulty with this explanation is that Lot and his family lived after the Flood, surely they were well aware of the mighty and awesome power of Hashem's Attribute of Justice and His willingness to activate it when required. Although Hashem promised that He would never again bring a Flood upon the world, some opinions claim "a flood of water He will not bring, but perhaps He will bring a flood of fire" (See *Zohar* section I 67:2.). Secondly, Hashem promised only that the entire world would not be destroyed - Sodom was just one evil city. Our question therefore remains, why did Lot's sons-in-law refuse to even suspect that Hashem would destroy Sodom and its neighboring cities in a flood of fire?

Perhaps this was simply the work of the *yetzer hara*. The *yetzer hara* not only tries to mislead a person to act improperly but can convince him (in this case the people of Sodom) that his improper acts are indeed righteous. Haman, for example, said to himself: "*lemi yachpotz hamelech laasot yekar yoter mimeni*" "Whom would the king want to honor more than me?" (*Esther* 6:6.). Chazal (*Esther Rabba* 3:10.) comment that when the *Megilla* uses the word "*hamelech*" by itself without being followed by the name Achashverosh it refers to Hashem, the King of kings. Haman was therefore asking himself "Whom would the King of kings want to honor more than me?" Am I not a great *tzaddik*? It is true that I declared myself a god (See Rashi *Esther* 3:2.) and passed myself off as the creator of the world, so to speak, but even so, Hashem thinks very highly of me. Perhaps on Erev Purim we could elaborate on this theme, but meanwhile let us try to understand what could possibly have been going through Haman's mind. As evil as he was, he truly believed that he was righteous. Similarly, the people of Sodom, among them Lot's sons-in-law, were sure that their evil and corrupt behavior was completely justified. After all, why should they support parasites who sit idly wasting their time? Why give bread to the poor, let them go out and find a job! The people of Sodom believed they had the proper *hashkafa*. Lot's sons-in-law were *tzaddikim* who strictly adhered to the *minhagim* of the holy congregation of Sodom, why would Hashem destroy them with a flood of fire? Lot must be joking - "he seemed like a jester in the eyes of his sons-in-law".

### **NOT VERY CONVINCING**

I do not know if I am permitted to say this, but perhaps Lot's sons-in-law were not the only ones to blame. Lot himself was also somewhat responsible for his words not being accepted. The Gemara relates the following incident: "The Roman regime once enacted a decree that the Jews not keep the *Shabbos*, that they not circumcise their sons, and that they cohabit with *niddos* (not adhere to the laws of Family Purity). R' Reuven ben Istroboli went and cut his hair (to hide the fact that he was Jewish) and went and sat together with them. He said to them: 'one who has an enemy, does he want him to become poor or to become rich?' They said to him: 'to become poor'. He said to them: 'if so, let them not do work on the *Shabbos* so that they should become poor.'" (*Meila* 17a.). The Romans were convinced by his argument and the decree against *Shabbos* observance was annulled. R' Reuven now tried to have the other decrees rescinded: "he said to them: 'one who has an enemy does he want him to become weak or to become strong?' They said to him: 'to become weak'. He said to them: 'if so, let them circumcise their sons on the eighth day, and they will become weak.'" They were impressed with this argument as well and revoked the decree against circumcision. He then tried to have the decree against observing *Taharas HaMishpacha* rescinded: "He said to them: 'one who has an enemy, does he want him to increase or decrease?' They said to him: 'to decrease'. He said to them: if so, let

them not cohabit with *niddos* (i.e. let them observe the laws of Family Purity which limits the time a man may cohabit with his wife)."<sup>1</sup> They accepted this argument and annulled that decree as well.

At a later stage when the Romans realized that R' Reuven was Jewish they reinstated the decrees. These decrees remained in force until R' Shimon bar Yochai and R' Elazar ben R' Yossi managed to have them nullified. What difference did it make to the Romans that R' Reuven ben Istroboli was Jewish, did he not present them with convincing arguments, did they not find his logic flawless? When they realized that in actual fact he observed the *mitzvos* which they had banned, it became clear that he could not believe a word of what he was saying! If he did not believe what he was saying, why should they?

Lot's sons-in-law did not believe him because Lot himself was not convinced that the city of Sodom was about to be overturned. The angels may have "struck with blindness, from small to great"<sup>(Bereishis 19:11.)</sup> the people of Sodom who converged upon his house, yet Lot was still not convinced. Lot went to warn his family only because the angels instructed him to. If his words did not come from his heart, how could they be expected to penetrate the heart of another person? "He seemed like a jester in the eyes of his sons-in-law".

Why should we assume that Lot did not believe what he was saying? We ourselves are not permitted to speak of Lot in such a manner, but from the *psukim* his behavior clearly indicates this. What should Lot have done when his sons-in-law refused to listen to him? At the very least he should have taken his wife and daughters and fled. What actually did happen? "And just as dawn was breaking, the angels urged Lot on saying: 'get up take your wife and your two daughters who are present, lest you be swept away because of the sin of the city'"<sup>(Bereishis 19:15.)</sup>. Had it not been for the urging of the angels, he would not have moved! How did Lot react to the angels urging him to flee from the city? "*vayismahmah*" "still he lingered"<sup>(Ibid. 16.)</sup> - interestingly the *cantillation* mark is a *shalshelas* - a very long and drawn out note signifying that he tarried for a long time. Why did he wish to remain behind? Rashi tells us "in order to save his money." Even though Sodom was about to be destroyed, he had to first pack his bags and liquidate his bank account! Given that the bank was closed in the evening he would have to wait until the morning. What about all his sheep and cattle? He had to wake them and bring them along too. Traveling laden with sheep and cattle limits a person's mobility, as Yaakov remarked to Esav: "My lord knows that the children are tender, and the nursing flocks and cattle are upon me; and they will drive them hard for one day, then all the flocks will die"<sup>(Bereishit 33:13)</sup>. In fact during the Middle Ages Jews usually did not work with livestock because they feared that at any moment they could be expelled and it would be very difficult to flee with this extra burden. How could Lot possibly have been expected to flee in such a hurry?

## LUKEWARM BELIEFS

Had Lot truly believed the angels, would he have remained behind to gather his money and his flocks? If he had believed Sodom was about to be destroyed, he would have grabbed his wife and daughters and fled immediately even if this meant leaving behind all his material possessions. Perhaps Lot believed that Hashem would bring a fire down upon Sodom, but not today - perhaps tomorrow or the next day. Just as Hashem did not destroy Tzoar, perhaps he would cancel the decree against Sodom as well. If Lot himself was not convinced of Sodom's impending destruction is it any wonder that he was unable to convince his

sons-in-law? Discussing the laws of cooking on *Shabbos*, the Talmud states: "a *kli sheni* - second vessel (one that was not directly on the fire, but rather hot food was transferred to it) is not capable of cooking" (*Shabbos* 40b.) because it has lost some of the intensity necessary to transfer the heat. One who gets "fired up" about something is able to transfer the "heat" to others in a convincing manner. (Perhaps Lot adopted the stringent *Ashkenazic* view forbidding placing food that is easily cooked even in a *kli sheni*. Nevertheless, Lot's sons-in-law were clearly not "easily cooked".) When a person himself is not convinced of the truth of something, he does not have the intensity to convince others.

According to the Chazon Ish the *halacha* of "cast in and not brought up" (*Avoda Zara* 26b.) does not apply today. This *halacha* permits casting an evil person into a pit and rules that one does not have to save such a person if he is already in a pit. The Chazon Ish believed that so long as the evil person was not properly rebuked for his sins this law would not apply, and he maintained that in this generation there isn't really anyone who has the ability to rebuke effectively. Why did the Chazon Ish believe that there is no one in our generation who is capable of giving proper reprimand?

We are not worthy of speaking this way about the *gedolim*, but at least when it comes to ourselves we should first do some self-introspection before we go and rebuke a secular Jew. How strong is our own belief? Do we truly live what we preach? Perhaps if our *emunah* were stronger we would learn Torah and not waste even a single moment. We would sprint like an athlete racing for a gold medal to grab an opportunity to perform an act of *chesed*. Avraham Avinu had his *bris milah* at the age of ninety-nine. While Avraham was recovering, Hashem "turned up the heat". Even so, Avraham gathered all the strength he could muster and ran to search for guests. Can we say the same about ourselves?

What about our *tefilla*? Do we truly pour out our hearts to Hashem? Our voices need not be as loud as the *shofar* on Rosh Hashana, but do our hearts shout? I cannot speak for others, but I can certainly speak for myself. If my *emunah* were stronger, my *tefillos* and *mitzvos* would be more "heated". The fact that this is not the case indicates that something is missing from my faith. If our *emunah* is not strong enough, how can we even hope to have any influence on others? When we arrive late for *shacharis*, are we distressed at having missed an opportunity to answer:

"*Amen yehei Shmei Rabba mevorach leolam uleolmei olmaya*" or do we simply resign ourselves saying "Baruch Hashem we arrived in time for *yotzer or* and console ourselves with the fact that there will be other opportunities to hear a *Kaddish*? We have no realization of how much was lost by not being able to answer the *Kaddish* and *Borchu*! If this is who we are, how can we possibly expect to convince others to follow the true path in life?

## **STRENGTHENING EMUNAH**

How can we improve our attitude? By realizing our own greatness and potential! With every step we take we can build worlds or destroy worlds, it is up to us. Every word of Torah we learn, every Rashi and every *Tosafos* creates entire worlds that while not visible, certainly exist. If a person should be learning but he wastes his time, this causes destruction of worlds, G-d forbid.

A child cries when his toy breaks. As sensitive parents we either try to console him

by giving him a candy or we spend a few shekels on a new toy. Imagine for a moment if the sun were to break in half. A few shekels are not going to fix it. I cannot even imagine all the ramifications of such a disaster - I'll leave those calculations to the scientists. We would first have to figure out the paths each half of the sun would take independently. This would also effect the rotation of the earth which until now was more or less elliptical. We would feel a great intensifying of heat on one side, and a sharp decrease on the other side. The force of gravity would cease to function. Although Hashem has not made me privy to His secrets, I do not believe we need to fear this happening in the near future. The sun and the moon were placed in the universe to remain "continuously all the days of the earth" (*Bereishis* 8:22). The Rambam writes that even the materials found on these luminaries are meant to remain there for eternity. I am not sure how to understand this Rambam given that in recent years astronauts have managed to remove soil from the moon and bring it to earth. Some scientists claim that the sun is burning itself up, but I am not worried about this phenomenon having any immediate effect on our lives. The fact remains that if the sun were to split into two it would have immeasurable ramifications.

### **EVERY JEW IS A STAR!**

We must realize that a Jew is not a mere child's toy in which a crack is not of great significance - we are not only as great as the sun, we are even greater! Hashem instructed Avraham: "'Gaze now toward the Heavens, and count the stars if you are able to count them', and He said to him: 'so shall your offspring be!'" (*Bereishis* 15:5). I believe this refers to the greatness of the Jewish people not only in quantity but in quality. From our vantage point such a great distance away, a star appears very small. In reality each star is immense - some of them being several times larger than the sun. The sun itself, as we know, is several times the size of the earth. Each and every Jew is like a star - he appears small and insignificant because we do not possess the tools with which to measure his true greatness. A crack in a Jew is like a crack in the sun - the implications are immeasurable.

Each word that issues forth from our mouths, whether good or bad, has as much significance as the movements of the sun. Conversely, in our *parsha* Avraham Avinu expresses himself as "dust and ash" (*Bereishis* 18:27). Similarly, Moshe Rabenu and Aharon Hakohen ask of themselves "for what are we" (*Shmos* 16:7). This presents a dichotomy that is a cornerstone of our Belief. On the one hand, it is required of us to be humble, to live with the realization that we are totally insignificant in relation to this vast world. On the other hand, we must realize how great our potential is. How could Moshe Rabenu sincerely ask "for what are we", did he not realize that he was the greatest of all prophets and that it was he who saved the Jewish nation from Egypt and brought the Torah down for us? Of course he knew! He also knew, however, that all of this was given to him by Hashem and he did not ascribe any greatness to himself. We must be aware of our greatness while at the same time realize that this greatness is a heaven-sent gift - we have nothing to be haughty about. However, it is incumbent upon us to act in a manner befitting a great person.

### **TEFILLAH AS A DEFENSE SHIELD**

The current situation here in *Eretz Yisrael* is very difficult (This *sicha* was given at the height of the second Intifada.) - we do not need Lot or the angels to explain this to us. What we must realize is that it is within our power to improve the situation. Every

word of Torah we learn has the power to change things. Our *tefillos* must be an outpouring of our hearts to Hashem. The commentaries explain that the *brachos* of *bonei Yerushalayim*, *matzmiach keren yeshua*, and *hamachazir Shchinato lesion* refer to the Final Redemption, may it arrive speedily in our day, while the *bracha* of *goel Yisrael* - "Redeemer of Israel" - is a prayer to Hashem to save us from the troubles we encounter along the way. When we say this *bracha* we should concentrate on this interpretation. Hashem has saved us from many evil people the likes of Haman and Antiochus, yet Chanukah and Purim were not the only salvations. Throughout history we have had many enemies that Hashem has spared us from and if we are worthy Hashem will deliver us from our current situation too.

Meriting Divine Protection is within our reach. Our Torah, our *tefilla*, and our acts of *chesed* have the power to save us. For every act of *chesed* we perform Hashem acts towards us" "*midda keneged midda*" "measure for measure" (*Shabbos* 105b). This is the only form of protection we have against war (and peace as well!). Government leaders have spent time in Washington pursuing peace (and may Hashem protect us from such peace, especially here in the Jewish Quarter, I always refer to *Shalom Achshav* - Peace Now - as

*Chas veshalom achshav*). Today, in addition, the government is attempting to bring about what they call a Secular Revolution (Towards the end of Ehud Barak's tenure as Prime Minister he became an advocate for "secular rights".) - may Hashem protect us from that as well.

## DO HANDS WIN BATTLES?

I heard the following *chiddush* in the name of my esteemed teacher HaRav Bezalel Zolty zt"l. Chazal established that "whoever sees the stone upon which Moshe sat when Yehoshua waged war against Amalek must give thanks and praise to the Omnipresent" (*Brachos* 54a). Why did Chazal not enact a similar *bracha* for when one views the actual site on which Yehoshua conducted the battle? Chazal wanted to ensure that we do not credit Yehoshua and his army with the victory. Yehoshua may have chosen soldiers who were "strong and feared sin, that their merit should assist them" (*Rashi Shmos* 17:9), but the victory resulted from Moshe raising his hands, as the Torah states: "It happened that when Moshe raised his hand, Israel was stronger" (*Shmos* 17:11). Chazal ask: "But do Moshe's hands win a battle or lose a battle? Rather, the verse comes to tell you: so long as Israel gazed upward and subjugated their heart to their Father in Heaven, they would prevail, but if not, they would fall" (*Rosh Hashana* 29a). The victory can be seen on the battlefield, Yehoshua killed the strong Amalekites: "with the sword's blade" (*Shmos* 17:13, see *Rashi*.). The true source of victory, however, was Moshe's raised hands. Am Yisrael won the battle because they enslaved their hearts to our Father in Heaven. Therefore we recite this *bracha* not upon seeing the battlefield but upon seeing the place where war was really waged - the stone upon which Moshe sat.

We may not be on the level of Moshe or Yehoshua, but we must try our utmost to completely enslave our hearts to Hashem. We must strengthen our Torah learning, as well as our *tefilla* and *chesed*, our *Shabbos* observance, *Shmiras HaLashon*, and whatever else needs strengthening. May Hashem bring salvation to the Jewish nation so that once again, as in the war against Amalek, we can say "Israel was stronger", speedily in our day. Amen.

**Staff Dvar Torah****by Rav Yoel Rakovsky, Shana Alef Rebbe**

In the beginning of this week's parasha, Parshat Vayera, we find a very strange thing. It says "and G-d was seen to him b'Eyloney Mamrey and he was sitting in the opening of his tent". Instead of using Avraham's name, and saying Avraham was seen, the pasuk uses the pronoun "him". Why?



The "Bat Ayin", Rebbi Avraham Dov from Ovritch (5629) who was the pupil of the famous "Meor Eynayim", Rebbi Menachem Mendel of Tchernobul, explains: Prior to the bris of Avraham, he could relate to holiness only through the materialistic side of his being, despite his high level of spirituality. Avraham occupied space in this world, in a physical sense, but was unable, at that point, to bring his spiritual side into his physical. This is why he was called Avram which is "av ram", a "father of greatness", prior to the bris, however after the bris, he was called Avraham, with an added letter Heh. The Heh reflects the five additional limbs now filled with Hashem's light, namely, his two eyes, two ears, and bris kodesh. The new name numerically equals 248, the number of 'limbs' in the body (ramach eivarim) and also the number of positive mitzvot in the Torah. The lesson being, once the whole body is made holy, it becomes a complete vessel for the mitzvot.

The Bat Ayin concludes that this is the reason the Parasha uses a pronoun in referring to Avraham. After the Bris, he was completely nullified to the light of G-d as if he had no materialistic existence at all. In order to tell us about this high level that he achieved, the Pasuk uses the pronoun eylav, to him, instead of his name.

Rebbi Yaakov Abuchatzera, in his commentary Machsoff Halavan, explains that when Adam ate from the tree of knowledge, he brought judgment/din into the world, thereby pushing benevolence/chessed away from the world. Avraham came and brought benevolence/chessed back into the world and therefore was the fixing/tikun of Adam. Rebbi Yaakov Abuchatzera explains that this is why the pasuk says b'Eyloney, spelled with the same letters as "b'ilan", "in the tree". Mamrey is the same numerical value as tav and ra, good and evil, meaning that G-d was seen to Avraham the way He had originally been seen by Adam before he ate from the tree of knowledge good and bad. This adds to the explanation we mentioned from the Bat Ayin. G-d permeated Avraham's entire being, including his materialistic side, which is the aspect of judgment/din, and thereby brought out the aspect of benevolence/ chessed which is the fixing/tikun of the Tree of Good and Evil.

The world was created for Avraham (b'heebaram, Rashi), because ultimately, the world was created for us, his descendants, to do the mitzvot. The day of Avraham's bris was the day he accepted ol malchut shamayim, upon himself. We continue to live on the level he attained that day, through our immersion in the learning of the Torah. The Torah has in it the 248 positive commandments and the 365 negative commandments, totaling 613. The numerical value of brit is 612. G-d permeating through the mitzvot adds oneness (1) equaling 613. When we do the mitzvot we truly have yichus, (from the Hebrew word "yachas", "related to"), a connection. We look at the previous generations as they look at us, and we are proud and happy that we received their inheritance.

Avraham was on a very high level before his bris and an even higher level afterwards. He no longer had a materialistic side to him! Such a level is not

normally within our reach, but after studying the parasha and learning about Avraham Avinu, we can strive to grow from his example. We can think less about ourselves, and more about others and G-d's will. We can strive to have G-dliness permeate our perception, and chessed permeate our actions.

### **Student Dvar Torah**

**by Ari Jacobuvitz, Shana Alef - Akiva Hebrew Day School, Detroit MI**

In the beginning of Parshat Vayera, we see Avraham sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day, recovering from his circumcision. G-d appears to him to give him comfort, but as this is happening, Avraham notices three men passing by in the distance. Without hesitation Avraham jumps up and runs to offer these three strangers a stay in his spa, free of charge, meals included!



There are many things you can learn from this crazy story of our grandfather, but there was one in particular which gave me a true perspective on how great Avraham Avinu was.

I remember a time in fourth grade, before my perspectives changed, which today stands to be a major lesson in my life. The teacher had placed a star chart on the wall of the classroom, the goal being to create an incentive program for peer-to-peer relationship development. A good deed would earn one gold star, while ten gold stars would earn a reward. This is a common practice amongst elementary school teachers, but looking back, this exercise held a negative side as well. I found myself doing those good deeds for the sake of a sticker, not for the sake of the deed itself or the effect it had on others.

In our day and age we have a large amount of mitzvot for which we know the rewards - honoring one's parents brings longevity, and things of this sort. Avraham was never given such commandments, nor the incentive of reward, yet in the heat of day and in a world of pain, he ran from the entrance of his house to give hospitality to three strangers. This act of kindness came from his heart, with no added thought of the World To Come needed to motivate him.

### **Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List**

#### **Announcements from the Yeshiva**

**Note:** Rav Natan Schwartz is in NY until November 19. Anyone interested in getting in touch with him please call 347-461-5665 or email him at [Danny131@aol.com](mailto:Danny131@aol.com).

### **Photo Gallery**

[Learning in Yeshiva Part II](#)



### **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
- Tamar Gittel bat Betty
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther

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

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh | Western Wall Plaza | One Hakotel Street | POB 32017 | Jerusalem | 91319 | Israel