

Parsha Press

PARSHAT LECH LECHA

A GOOD NEIGHBOR *Batya Matla Herzberg*

It says in *Pirkei Avot* 2:13-14, "...Go out and discern which is the proper way to which a man should cling...Rabbi Yose says: a good neighbor...Go out and discern which is the evil path from which a person should distance himself...Rabbi Yose says a wicked neighbor." These *mishnayot* are definitely applicable to various aspects of *Parshat Lech Lecha*. Of course, their message also reaches us in our own times.

The *parsha* begins with *Avram* leaving *Charan* to go to the land that Hashem will show him. He takes his wife, *Sarai*, and his nephew *Lot* among others. It is interesting to observe the relationship and interactions between uncle and nephew. It says in 13:5 that *Lot*, who went with *Avram*, also had flocks, cattle and tents. *Rashi* is bothered by the fact that the *pasuk* notes that *Lot* is with *Avram* (a fact we already know from prior *psukim*) and resolves the difficulty by saying that his goings with *Avram* cause him to have such affluence. This is an important instance where we see clear evidence that association with the *tzadik*, *Avram*, yields fruitful results for *Lot*. This is a physical manifestation of the goodness that comes from a relationship with a righteous person. The *perek* goes on to discuss a feud that occurs(continued on page 4)



Editorial Board

Faculty Advisors

Dr. Tzipora Meier
Rabbi Jeff Rothman

Editors-in-Chief

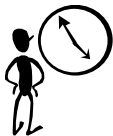
Danielle Dobe Friedman
Batya Matla Herzberg

Weekly Editors

Atara Feinberg
Megan Leifer

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Good Neighbor	1,4
The Power of Tefillah	1-2
PAYDAY	2-3
Shmirat Halashon	3
Story of a Godol	3
Parsha Quiz	4
Mazel Tov	4



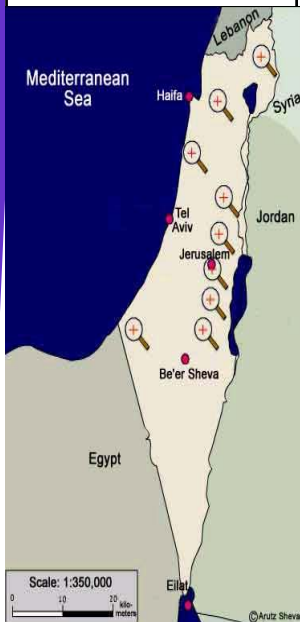
Shabbat Starts:
5:47 P.M.

The Power Of Tefillah *Mrs. Feinberg*

R. Yissachar Yaakovson, in his *sefer Chazon HaMiqra*, identifies three connections between this week's *parsha* and *haftarah*: First, he cites R. Hertz, who notes that Hashem's command to Avraham Avinu to leave his home and family and travel to a distant and unidentified new land, where he is to teach and propagate the fundamental truth of monotheism even while undergoing severe trials and tribulations, is parallel to the expectation found in the *haftarah*, that even while suffering the terrible hardships imposed upon us in exile, it is incumbent upon us to maintain our faith in Hashem, who will ultimately fulfill His promises of redemption and reward to His children, "*Zera Avraham Ohavi*" – the descendants of Avraham who love Hashem faithfully. Rav Yaakovson points out that according to this view, rather than serving as a reflection of the *parsha*, the *haftarah* serves to highlight the contrast between (cont. on page 2)

News From Israel

Six terrorists were killed on October 18th, thwarting three attempted attacks against Israelis. In one incident, early in the morning, two armed Palestinian terrorists infiltrated an orchard near Kibbutz Holit, south of the Gaza Strip - despite the presence of a protective fence around the entire Gaza area. The residents of the kibbutz were warned to stay indoors, and IDF forces went into action. They surrounded the area where the terrorists were sighted, and exchanged fire with them for an hour and a half - until the terrorists were finally killed. According to one report, one terrorist was wearing or holding an explosive belt, and was killed when it exploded. No Israelis were hurt.



(cont. from page 1) Hashem's promise to Avraham that his children would be a source of blessing and the harsh realities of the *galut* through which we are now living.

The second connection noted by R. Yaakovson is based upon the midrashic interpretation of the text in Yeshayahu from which our haftarah is taken. The midrash explains that Yeshayahu 41:2-8 refer to the war fought between the four and five kings into which Avraham Avinu entered and emerged victorious. They highlight his constant faith in Hashem as the source of his strength and his ultimate victory. The navi is highlighting the success of Avraham Avinu as a lesson to us, his descendants; that Hashem rewards those who are faithful to Him, even if it seems as though they must endure great suffering. The navi is giving *chizuk* to B'nei Yisrael that even when things seem unbearably difficult in exile, Hashem is always with us and we are capable of earning great rewards by remaining faithful even through these challenging times.

Thirdly, Rav Yaakovson points out the linguistic connection mentioned earlier, the reference to "*Avraham Ohavi*" as the basis for the relationship between the *parsha* and haftarah. Throughout the *parsha* we find Avraham facing and overcoming many *nisyonot*, and remaining an *Ohaiv Hashem* in the face of all these obstacles. This faithfulness is the key to his, and our, success. It is because of Avraham's unwavering love for Hashem that we, his children, will merit redemption.

What can we do to expedite this reward? The navi states (Yeshayahu 41:13): "*Al Tiri Tola'at Ya'akov, Metei Yisrael; Ani 'Azartich Neum Hashem V'Goalaych K'dosh Yisrael.*" "Do not fear you worm Ya'akov, you men of Yisrael! I have helped you, says Hashem, and I am your Redeemer, the Holy One of Yisrael."

The midrash asks, why does Hashem call the Jewish people a worm? One of the qualities that Hashem treasures in the Jewish people is humility. We are not arrogant; we consider ourselves lowly, like a worm. However, a worm does have one strength - it has a tremendous amount of power in its mouth. With its mouth, a simple worm can gnaw down cedar trees. Similarly, while in most respects B'nei Yisrael are powerless in exile, subject to anti-Semitism and its effects, we do have one weapon we can employ against our enemies - our mouths. When we cry out to Hashem in prayer, Hashem listens to our voices. "HaKol Kol Ya'akov" - when the voice of Ya'akov resounds with Torah and Tefillah, the sword of Eisav is rendered powerless.

May our *Makom Torah* at SKA resonate with meaningful *tefillot* and Torah study, reflecting our legacy as "*Zera Avraham Ohavi*" and helping all of Klal Yisrael to merit a speedy redemption from these times of challenge.

PAYDAY Shanna Naiman

It says in Parshat Lech Lecha, Perek Yud Gimel, Posuk Yud: "*Vayisah Lot Et Einav Vayar Et Kol Kikar Hayarden Ki Kulah Mashkeh Lifney Shacheit Hashem Et Sidom Viet Amorah Kigan Hashem Kieretz Mitz-rayim Boacha Tzoar*" - And Lot raised his eyes and saw the entire plain of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere - before Hashem destroyed Sodom and Amorah, like the garden of Hashem, like the land of Egypt going towards Zoar.

When the time came that Avraham and Lot decided to go their own ways, Lot was fascinated by the magnificence and fertility of the Kikar Hayarden. He therefore decided to go in that direction. When the Torah describes the beauty of the valley, the phrase "*Lifney Shacheit Hashem Et Sidom Viet Amorah.*" These don't seem to be Lot's words, but rather just a comment that the Torah provides. Rather it can be interpreted as: Lot wanted to live in that

area, and chose to do so, before Hashem punished it.

However, a different explanation can be given. We know that the Torah does not merely state things for no reason. Every seemingly extra word in the Torah has a purpose. So what is the Torah trying to teach us through these words?

Lot had grown up in his uncle Avraham's house because he was an orphan. He knew that the world was ruled by Hashem, who gives punishments and rewards based on actions. Everyone knew that Sedom and Amora were filled with of evil and sinners. Lot could have concluded that one day "their measure would be full" and Hashem would punish them for all their wrongdoings. Therefore, the Torah tells us that Lot knew that the cities would be destroyed some day, yet he chose to live there. Now we must see why Lot would make such a choice.

Lot knew that he couldn't constantly sin and not be punished for it, but he thought he still had time before his sentence. He knew that he was doing wrong, but his intellect wasn't strong enough to contain the desire within him. Lot saw the Kikar Hayarden and thought that one day the land may be destroyed, but that could be a while off. In the meanwhile he wanted to go there and enjoy while he could.

If Hashem would have punished Sedom and Amora slowly, they may have learnt a lesson and improved their ways. Rather, Hashem allowed them to take pleasure in the lushness of the land without disruption, until that they could no longer save themselves.

We can learn from Lot's mistake never to be misled when Hashem's vengeance is slow. The Yetzer Harah tries to trick us into thinking that we can always push off paying our dues to Hashem, lest we wake up one day like Sedom and Amora and discover that the end was a lot closer than we thought.

Story of a Gadol - Rav Moshe Feinstein

His family related a remarkable incident that took place after R' Moshe *paskened* a famous *sheilo* as permitted. There were rabbonim who disagreed with his *psak* as is often the case since we are in *golus*. "We have no *novi* . . ."

A follower of one of these, a man of bad *middos*, stood up publicly against R' Moshe's *psak* and even degraded R' Moshe himself. R' Moshe, true to the Torah's command, "You shall not fear any man," did not sway from his *daas Torah*, and held his own. Not long after, the American authorities caught this man for a minor crime. His court case was imminent and he knew that he could receive a very harsh sentence if the court was against him. He turned to R' Moshe, not to apologize and beg forgiveness, for perhaps this happened because he had humiliated a *godol hador*, but to request that the Rabbi write a letter in his favor to the judge, as even the non-Jews respected the Rabbi's word.

Immediately, Reb Moshe took out a paper and pen and wrote a warm letter, which, after reading it, one would think was written about a close friend, and handed it to his adversary saving him from a harsh verdict.

His astonished family explained their wonder: how could he so wholeheartedly help someone who had besmirched his name only a short while earlier? The wonder of wonders was that Reb Moshe was not working on his *middos* in writing this letter; he did it naturally and in total innocence did not understand his family's amazement. "If I am in a position to help this man, how can I refuse to extend a helping hand to a fellow Jew in need?"

-<http://chareidi.shemayisrael.com>

"Quote of the Week"

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

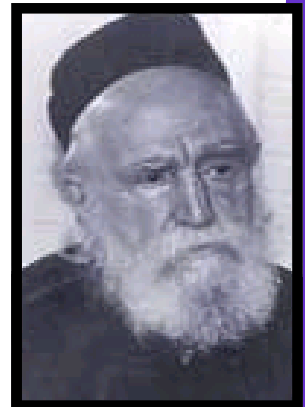
SHMIRAT HALASHON

"If a statement can cause ill will, it is forbidden,



regardless of the speaker's good intentions"

-A Daily Companion



(continued from Page 1) between the shepherds of Avram, who refuse to allow their cattle to graze on others' property, and the shepherds of Lot, who rationalize and allow the cattle to graze. Therefore Avram makes a proposition to Lot (13:8) – "Let there be no strife between me and you... please separate from me. If to the left, then I will go to the right..." Firstly, it is important to note that, according to Rashi, Avram does not mean this as a hostile gesture. Although Avram wants distance between them, he will still stand as a protector and helper for Lot. Lot chooses Sdom - a land steeped in immorality. Rashi notes that this immorality is the particular reason that Lot chooses to live there. This decision will ultimately harm Lot.

Immediately following the separation, Hashem speaks Avram. Rashi comments that the whole time that the wicked Lot is there, Hashem does not speak to Avram, but now that they separate, Hashem immediately comes. This demonstrates a further implication to the mishnayot above. Even Avram, a great tzadik, is not able to have Hashem speak to him because of his companion. This demonstrates the great influence that surroundings have on a person. Even if the influence is subliminal, there is a definite impact of company upon a person, even for someone as great as Avram.

Later, the Parsha describes the war between the 4 king and the 5 kings. During the course of the war, Lot and his possessions are captured. That passuk then says that Lot is residing in Sdom. Did we not already know his place of residence? Rashi resolves this difficulty by saying that his dwelling in Sdom causes this evil to befall him. This is a perfect example of the repercussions that may befall someone who dwells willingly in a place of evil. In early editions of Rashi, a passuk from Mishlei 13:20 is quoted – "And he who keeps in the company of fools will be smashed." This is a sharp contrast to those young men who went to battle with Avram. They (Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre) receive a full share of reward from the war. This demonstrates a physical reward which is gained.

There is a great message to be taken from this aspect of the Parsha. Especially today, when so many negative influences surround us, it is imperative to remember the result that comes from being in the company of others. This message is stated perfectly in Tehillim 1:1 "Praiseworthy is the man who sat not in the session of scorners," and in Rashi, Bamidbar 16:1 "woe to the wicked one and woe to his neighbor." May we be zoche to internalize this message and to place ourselves in the company of the righteous.

Mazel Tov



- Shanie Schulman on the marriage of her brother, Elie
- Megan Leifer on the engagement of her sister, Katie

Happy Birthday

October 22

Sarah Rosenberg
Aliza Rosentberg

October 24

Daniella Friedman
Rochelle Sonenberg

October 25

Tamar Gafni

October 26

Tova Hagler

October 28

Debra Friedmann

Stella K Abraham High School for Girls



Mrs. Helen Spirn
Principal
Dr. Tzipora Meier
Assistant Principal
Rabbi Yosef Zakutinsky
Dir. Of Admissions and Student Programs

291 Meadowview Avenue
Hewlett Bay Park, New York 11557
(516) 374-7195
Fax (516) 374-2532
Email info@skahalb.org

Mrs. Sandi Pomerantz
Assistant Administrator
Rabbi Jeffrey Rothman
Assistant Administrator
Mrs. Elisheva Kaminetsky