

Parsha Press

PARSHAT VAYECHI

Accursed is Their Rage... Batya Matla Herzberg

Editorial Board

Faculty Advisors

Dr. Tzipora Meier
Rabbi Jeff Rothman

Editors-in-Chief

Daniella Dobe Friedman
Batya Matla Herzberg

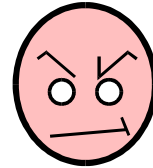
Weekly Editors

Jennie Sturm
Ayelet Nussbaum

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Accursed is Their Rage	1-2
The Blessing of Yaakov's Son's	1-2
Production '04	3
Shmirat Halashon	3
Story of a Gadol	3
Fast Facts	4
Mazel Tov	4

In *Eruvin* 65b, the *Gemara* states “*amar Rabbi Ilai ‘b’shlosha dvarim adam nikar: b’koso, u’v’kiso, u’v’kaaso.*” Rabbi Ilai said, “In three ways a person’s character can be perceived: with his cup of wine, with his wallet, and with his anger level.” This saying fits well with an *inyan* in this week’s parsha when Yaakov was “blessing” Shimon and Levi. “*Arur apam ki oz...*” accursed is their rage for it is mighty (49:7). (Rashi there notes that even at a time of rebuke, Yaakov only cursed their anger rather than cursing Shimon and Levi themselves.) Yaakov chastised them because they had killed an entire city (*Shechem*) in their rage. Rashi brings an alternate interpretation as to whom exactly they killed in their rage. He says that Shimon and Levi would kill every man at whom they were angry (49:6) The *Shaarei Aharon* brings down that most *rishonim* see “*arur apam*” as a blessing rather than a curse. According to the *Chizkuni*, Yaakov was really imploring that their anger not be successful so that they would not become people of angry temperament.

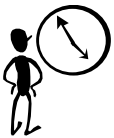


In *Bamidbar* Perek 20, Hashem told Moshe to speak to the rock in order to get water for the people. In 20:10, Moshe says “Listen now, rebels, shall we bring forth water for you from this rock?” The *Rambam* (quoted by the *Shaarei Aharon*) says that his sin here was acting in an angry fashion. Hashem was especially strict with him, because of his stature, and he was punished for this exclamation. The *Rambam* continues to say that Moshe even caused a *chilul Hashem* through this incident. His anger brought about drastic results and punishment. (continued on pg. 2)

The Blessing of Yaakov's Sons Mrs. Martin

How important is it to receive a blessing? Is a blessing from one person more significant than from another? Why do we ask tzaddikim for blessings? What if the blessing is given by Hashem?

Hashem tells Avraham *Vaheyey Berach*—(continued on pg. 2)

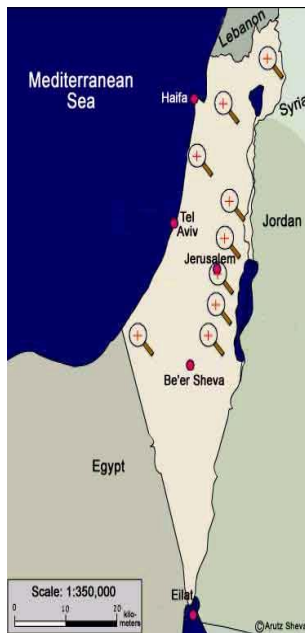


Shabbat Starts:
4:16

News From Israel

- **Fighting erupts in Gaza, Thursday, resulting in 1 Israeli and 4 Palestinians being shot fatally**
- **The residents of Pa'at Sadeh, a settlement in Gaza, have agreed to move into another Israeli village due to withdrawal plans**

-Israelnews.net



Arutzsheva.com

The Blessing of Yaakov's Sons (Continued)

(continued from pg. 1) you will be a blessing. According to Rashi, this gave Avraham the Divine authority to bless anyone else. *Vaheyei beracha* also refers to the spiritual essence of Avraham, which he passed down to Yitzchok.

Yaakov wishes to bless his sons as a last will and testament. "He blessed each according to his appropriate blessing." According to Rashi, each son received a unique blessing. But Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveichik z"l explains that "according to his blessing" could refer to Yaakov himself. Yaakov blessed them with "his" blessing— his very being. In addition to giving a blessing tailored to each son, he gave them a common blessing, one that he had received from Yitzchok, who received it from Avraham.

Parents have always tried to bless their children with their material wealth. The words "*vaheyei beracha*" say to us "**You** will be a blessing!" How much of **you** will you leave your children? How much Torah and morality will your children inherit from you?

This year Asara B'Tevet, the fast day commemorating Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem 2,500 years ago, falls on December 22. A fast day is a time to correct a previous mistake. What happened on Asara B'Tevet that the Jewish people have to correct? The siege was a message to do Teshuva but it was ignored and the Beit Hamikdash was destroyed.

Today the Jewish nation is again under siege. Assimilation is rampant and the majority of Jews are unaware of their heritage. The message for us? We have to make sure we and our children are blessed with the spiritual essence of Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov.

Accursed is Their Rage (Continued)

(continued from pg. 1) In *Divrei Hayamim* 2, while talking about *Uzziah*'s attempt to bring *k'toret* even though he was not a *kohen* it says, "...as he was becoming enraged with the *kohanim*, a *tzara'at* appeared on his forehead..." (26:19). It is important to observe here that the *tzara'at* came as he was becoming enraged, an example of anger leading to disastrous results. *Uzziah* suffered from this affliction until the day he died.

From these sources, it is evident how destructive rage can be and how much importance is given to its prevention. Through a few words in the *parsha*, we are able to understand how essential it is to distance oneself from the *middah* of *ka'as*. One's level of anger is a telltale sign to one's general character. Plato, a Greek philosopher, once said, "*He best keeps from anger who remembers that God is always looking upon him.*"

Shabbat Shalom! Chazak Chazak V'nitchazeik!

Production '04

Jaclyn Ramras

Everyone in this world is different and unique. But each person has something very valuable to offer to the world. In this week's Parshas Vayechi, before his death, Yaakov called all of his sons together and gave each son a separate bracha. He saw each son's special trait and told each what he needed to hear to better himself. Even though each son would be very different, they would still help one another grow. When we see the good in others, it helps them see the good in themselves and better themselves. With the SKA Production approaching, it's important to recognize each and every person's traits. Whether it is singing, dancing, acting or drawing, we must recognize this and help make others into better people. We must never put someone else down because it will not better him, rather it will hurt him. Production was made to display each person's talents and help each person grow from this experience. So help others grow, don't hurt them.

-Based on an article from aish.com

"Quote of the Week"

"The state of your life is nothing more than a reflection of your state of mind"

-Dr. Wayne W. Dyer

SHMIRAT HALASHON

If a statement can cause ill will it is forbidden, regardless of the speaker's good intentions.

**Chofetz Chaim:
A Daily Companion**

Story of a Gadol

A story is told of a man who wanted to be ordained as a rabbi. He met with the Brisker Rav, R' Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, who spoke with him and tested him for many days on his knowledge of Jewish law. R' Soloveitchik agreed to give this man semicha, to ordain him as a rabbi.

As R' Soloveitchik was writing out the ordination certificate, a woman came into his office and told him that there was a confusion with her chickens. She had five chickens slaughtered and one of them was treife. She put that chicken aside, but when she went to salt the chicken legs, she saw that there were nine legs instead of eight. Somehow, one of the treife chicken legs had gotten mixed in with the kosher ones and she didn't know what was kosher and what was not.

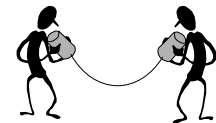
R' Soloveitchik asked the almost-ordained man what his psak would be. He said that since you cannot distinguish the kosher legs from the non-kosher ones, all must be deemed teife.

R' Soloveitchik listened and then looked carefully at each chicken leg. He placed five legs on the right side and four on the left. He told the woman that the five legs were not kosher but the four legs were kosher. He explained to the almost-ordained man that there is a difference in appearance between the right and left legs of a chicken. Since the problem was with the extra leg, all five right legs had to be considered treife. But there were only four left legs, and these would be the left legs of the four kosher chickens.

R' Soloveitchik taught this man the importance of checking all details before giving a psak. So, too, must we know all the possible facts before we "jump to conclusions."

Shabbat Shalom U'Mevorach.

-Based on a story from A Story A Day



FAST FACTS on Mitzvah *Lekayem Divrei HaMais* Michal Jager and Beth Stein

- ❖ Before *Yaakov Avinu* was *niftar* in *Parshas Vayichi*, he commanded *Yosef* to bury him in *Mearas HaMachpeila*. He also gave the *shvatim* similar instructions after giving them *berachos*. *Rashi* expands on this: *Yaakov Avinu* specifically said that no Egyptian should carry his *aron*, meaning that the *shevatim's* sons could not take part since their mothers were not Jewish. From here we learn about *mitzvas kiyum divrei hamais*.
- ❖ Even if the person was healthy when he/she gave you instructions, it is a mitzvah to fulfill their words when they are *niftar*. So then why was there a necessity for *Chazal* to create the concept of a Last Will and Testament? There is a possibility that the deceased person did not specifically instruct to whom certain things should be given.
- ❖ If a person tells you to do something terrible like *aveiros*, it is *assur* to listen, and therefore, the mitzvah of being *mikayaim divrei hamais* does not apply.

-Based on an article from Torah LaDaas by Rabbi Matis Blum (As were last week's facts)

Mazel Tov



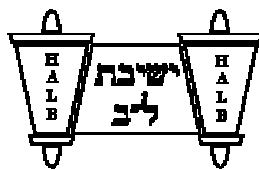
To Nava Dworetzky on
the engagement of her sister Ariela to
Moshe Davis

To Ayelet Chovev on the birth of her siter
and to her cousins Tamar and Shalvi Berger
December 28
Shanie Schulman
Adina Snow

December 29
Lauren Bayer

December 31

Stella K Abraham High School for Girls



Mrs. Helen Spirn
Principal

Dr. Tzipora Meier
Associate 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
Dir. Of Religious Guidance