

Week of 24 Tevet, 5777 - January 22, 2017

Ohel Sara Newsletter PARSHAT VAERA

By: Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen

PARSHAT VAERA

At the beginning of this week's parshah, the Torah Hakedoshah lists the genealogy of Moshe Rabbeinu (a"h). The Torah begins by listing the sons of Reuven and Shimon (a"h), without listing their grandsons. Then the Torah lists Levi's sons and grandsons and even some of his great-grandsons (Moshe and Aharon), and finishes with Aharon's sons and grandsons.

The Seforno (a"h) asks why in discussing the first shevatim, the Torah only lists the names of the children, but when it discusses Levi, the Torah lists the names of the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren as well?

The Seforno answers that Levi's grandchildren were special individuals so they merited having their names mentioned. Reuven's grandchildren and Shimon's grandchildren were not significant individuals therefore they did not merit having their names mentioned.

What was so special about Levi's grandchildren?

The Seforno explains that Levi lived longer than Reuven and Shimon. Therefore he saw, lived with and taught his grandchildren. Since Levi had a personal connection with his grandchildren, the grandchildren became special as well. This teaches us that there is something special about having a grandfather around. A grandfather can impart something that a father cannot.

Unfortunately, Reuven and Shimon died earlier and never had an opportunity to learn and share with their grandchildren.

Levi's grandchildren had the benefit of having their grandfather in the house. This made all the difference in the world.

The Seforno states that Levi was not just any grandfather. He was the son of Yaakov Avinu (a"h). Levi's grandchildren had a grandfather in their house that was from a different generation, a generation that saw Yaakov Avinu and even Yitzchak Avinu. Therefore, Levi was a special person.

The Gemara of Eruvin relates that Rabbi Yehudah Ha'Nasi (a"h) attributed his own greatness to the fact that he had seen "the back" of Rabbi Meir (a"h). Rabeinu Ha'Kadosh, the editor of the Mishnah felt that the fact that he saw Rabbi Meir from the back made learn better than learning with all of his colleagues. Rabbi Yehudah Ha'Nasi added, "Had I seen him from his front, I would have been even greater."

This passage is perhaps allegorical.

There is a beautiful interpretation of this Gemara which states that Rabbi Meir was from a different generation. Rabeinu Ha'Kadosh was the last of the Tanaim but there was an entire generation of Tanaim that preceded Rabbeinu Ha'Kadosh. Rabbi Meir was the last of that generation.

What Rabbi is saying is, "I at least saw the tail end of a different generation. I saw Gedolim! I saw Rabbi Meir. I saw what it meant to really be a Tana. Even if it was the tail-end, even if it was Rabbi Meir towards the end of his life, that made an indelible impression upon me."

PARSHAT VAERA

Continued

All the generations who saw the giants of the past generation made an incredible impression in their minds and hearts.

This is what the grandchildren of Levi saw. They at least saw someone who saw Yitzchak Avinu and Yaakov Avinu. They at least had a relationship with that generation. This made all the difference. Therefore Levi's grandchildren were unique. They had a link to something irreplaceable, a connection to a more beautiful generation, something that was unfortunately lost from the grandchildren of Reuven and Shimon.

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION

SARA BAT MIMON HA'KOHEN
(A"H)

Ohel Sara is named after my special and righteous grandmother. May the inspiration that women draw from this weekly newsletter benefit her neshamah in Gan Eden and may we all be redeemed as a result.

A CUTE STORY

Sherlock Holmes and Watson were going camping. They pitched their tent under the stars and went to sleep.

Sometime in the middle of the night Holmes woke Watson up and said, "Watson, look up at the stars, and tell me what you see."

Watson replied, "I see millions and millions of stars."

Holmes asked, "And what do you deduce from that?"

Watson said, "Well, if there are millions of stars, and if even a few of those have planets, it's quite likely there are some planets like earth out there. And if there are a few planets like earth out there, there might also be life."

Holmes frustratingly turned to Watson and said, "Watson, you idiot, it means that somebody stole our tent."

HALACHAH CORNER

QUESTION: Does the Mitzvah of Kibud Av Va'em require a grown child to live near his parents so he can care for them or simply because they want to be near him? Or is one allowed to live wherever he pleases, regardless of his parents' preference?

ANSWER: Numerous sources indicate that one must, indeed, live near his parents. The Gemara states that Yaakov Avinu (a"h) was punished for the years he spent away from his parents, clearly implying that one must live near his parents so he can fulfill the Mitzvah of Kibud Av Va'em.

The Maharil of Germany (a"h), as cited in his "Likutim," stated explicitly that a person should live near his parents. The Rambam (a"h) comments that if a person's parents became senile, then the son should move somewhere else - implying that under normal circumstances one should live near his parents.

Furthermore, Reb Yehudah Ha'chasic (a"h) states in his Sefer Ha'chasicim that if one's parents instruct him not to get married, because they are afraid that he would then move away, he should not listen to them; rather, he should get married and live with or near his parents.



Once again, we see that if the parents want their child to live near them, then he should accede to their wishes. The Aruch Ha'shulchan states that a person does not have to adhere to his parents' demand that he not go away from town to learn Torah.

The Gemara does inform us that Yaakov was not punished for the years he spent away from home learning in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever, thus demonstrating

Continued on page 4

QUOTABLE QUOTES

** "What you want is irrelevant - what you have chosen is at hand." **

** "Happiness is a continuation of happenings which are not resisted." **

RIDDLE ?

Mr. and Mrs. Mustard have 6 daughters and each daughter has one brother.

How many people are in the Mustard Family?

(Answer on Page 8)

WEEKLY QUESTION

Dear Rebetzin Cohen,

Can you please tell me why it is that we have a custom of singing the Eshet Chayil Friday night?

Response on page 10

A ROSE AMONG THORNS

There is a single rose in a garden so grand
She is alone and forlorn for
among the thorns she stands.
Her mission is one of hope and love
That one can survive it all,
if he has faith in the One Above.

She is not bitter or sad,
but proud to be singularly rare.
As Hashem Himself sees her through
with gentleness and care.

She is His beloved flower,
His single and adored rose.
The one He selected from the many,
the one He lovingly chose.

A symbol for the people to
withstand the test of time.
To surpass all challenges of life
and to receive a world sublime.

Nothing else can matter on
this materialistic Earth.
Only to be true to G-d
and to know what that is worth.
It is not easy for a single rose
to be alone amid her foes.
It is not easy to live in a garden filled
with thorns and woes.

But she does not wilt away rather,
rshe clings strong with her head held high.



Her own song does she sing -
it is her message to the skies.

"Not solely for beauty have
You created me Hashem.
But for a message to Your people
to hold strong until the end.

Continued on page 6

HALACHAH CORNER

Continued

that one may leave his parents' city - even
against their wishes - for the purpose of
learning Torah.

There are however, several important
exceptions to this law. The Aruch
Ha'shulchan concludes that if one needs to
move away for purposes of earning a living -
where his job requires him to relocate - then
he may move away even against his parents'
wishes. Furthermore, if living near one's
parents may threaten his Shalom Bayit, then
he may move away. Certainly, if there are no
suitable options for one's children's Jewish
education in the area where his parents live,
then he may move elsewhere for the sake of
his children's education. And, it goes without
saying that if the parents approve of their
child's decision to move away, then he is
permitted to do so.

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

25 TEVET

CHOVOT HA'LEVAVOT PUBLISHED

Chovat Halvavot, the classical work on
Jewish ethics, was authored by Rabbi
Bachya ben Yosef ibn Paquda (the first
"Rabeinu Bechaye") on or before 1161. The
sefer was translated into Hebrew from the
original Arabic.

It was first published on the 25th of Tevet of
the year 5319.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

A truly great soul is one whose presence in this world is felt more after his passing than before, and continues to be felt more and more every day that passes.

(Anonymous)

THE BURGLAR'S GIFT

Tears streamed down Pnina's cheeks, "We do not have any food in the house!" she sobbed to her husband Yonatan who was an avrech in the local Kollel.

"I feel terrible about this because you're learning so well but we can't go on like this," she continued.

"You are the last person who should feel bad," her husband comforted her. "You have been sacrificing for the sake of my learning Torah now for 6 years. I have an obligation to support our family and I will gladly do so. Don't worry. Next week I'll start looking for a job as a Rebbe. I'm sure that with Hashem's help..."

He never finished his sentence. A sudden sound of shattering from the back room startled them. They hurried to the room and found a burglar with his revolver drawn and pointed straight at them.

"Okay, both of you get on the floor," he hissed. They lay down on their stomachs with their hands behind their heads.

"You're wasting your time. We have nothing here," Yonatan pleaded.

"That's for me decide. Now don't you dare move," Rambled the burglar. He quickly investigated their apartment and came back saying, "You were right man! You really don't have anything."

The burglar pulled a wad of cash out of his pocket and threw it at Yonatan. "Here man, you need this more than I do." And out the window he went.

Is this story really true? We do not know but even if it is - we cannot rely on this form of hishtadlut.

On the other hand, "harbeh shluchim la'makom." Hashem has many agents.



Ohel Sara wishes all its readers a Shabat

Shalom u'mevorach!

CANDLE LIGHTING TIME

FOR SHABAT

4:50pm – NY TIME

ANNOUNCEMENT

Audio-visual shiurim of

Rabanit
Kineret Sarah Cohen

Are Now Available For Viewing At

www.torahanytime.com

Instructions: Register for free and click on the "Ladies" tab at the top of the Home Page. Scroll down and look for Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen. Underneath the image for the Rabanit, click on the "**follow**" tab if you want to be notified via email or text about a shiur that has become available for viewing.

Shiur To Post Thursday, January 26

Parshat Vaera
Practical Lessons

Log on and enjoy the live
lectures and be inspired.

A ROSE AMONG THORNS

Continued

You placed me in the garden not to
harm or my soul to stain.
But for me to learn to survive among these
thorns with faith despite the pain.



"The tears that fall from heaven are
not meant to crush my soul.
They are the drops of rain that quench the
pedals and keep me pure and whole.

"The thorns they hurt but protect they do
from the plucking of the human hand.
The one that does not know the
value of the rose nor does it understand.

Only You know that being in the garden
is part of Your eternal plan.
A mystery from up on high -
not known even to man."

She still stands, the single rose -
amid the thorns - come what may.
She is longing for her father,
waiting for that joyous day.
When with gentleness and love He will
remove her from there still.
And bestow upon her all the glory
For keeping His eternal will

He will place her in His precious garden
near His temple here on Earth.
For all to look upon her grace
and realize her true worth.
She has been the symbol of our people
who stood alone against the dark.
Who held on to their father, to their soul
and to that spark.

No one knows the secret of the flower
amid the thorns.

Only G-d holds true the answer of
why the rose was born.
So should you ever pass the garden
and see a rose there standing tall.
Know that she's alone, amid the thorns
for a reason - So that YOU may never fall

If you have a question, email us and we will
B'ezrat Hashem publish it.
Send your question to:
ohelsara26@gmail.com

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**THE MERIT OF
RIGHTEOUS WOMEN**

Sarah Imeinu (a"h)

"Whatever Sarah tells you," Hashem told Avraham, "listen to her" (Breishit 21:12).

The first to heal the wound that Chavah (a"h) had made was Sarah Imeinu (a"h). She descended to the lair of the snake, to the palace of Paroh. She resisted his lure and rose back up. While living within, she remained bonded to above.

It was Avraham who empowered Sarah to do so. Yet Avraham himself was not capable of such a thing. This is the role of a man - to activate the power that lies dormant in a woman. Without a woman, a man has no bond with the Shechinah. Without a man, the woman cannot be the Shechinah. Once there is a man, the woman becomes everything.

Sarah is the embodiment of the cosmic power of purification and healing of neshamot. What Chavah confused and stirred together, Sarah sifts and refines; where Chavah entered in darkness, Sarah puts on the light. Her work continues through each generation.

Sarah Imeinu helps us connect the light to the Infinite Light. The neshamah of Sarah discerns the stains that must be cleaned and the dross that must be rejected. When any soul or spark of light is healed and returned to its source, you will know that Sarah's touch was there.

REFUAH SHLEIMAH – SHIDUCHIM – CHAZARAH BE'TESHUVAH - HATZLACHAH

Please daven for

Yeshaya Dov Yehuda ben Shoshana - Alexander zishe Ben aliza - Tziviya bat Rachel - Chaim yehudah ben aidel -
Avner ben Miriam - Moshe ben Chanah - Chana Nessya bat Miriam - Avner Chaim ben Devora - Yisroel Yosef ben Leah - Ilana bat Lora -
Larisa - devorah bat - Ester bat Hamro - Yaffa bat Rivka - Baruch Chai ben Zoya -
Baila Chava bat Sorka - Nissan ben Liza - Gavriel ben Toviyo - David ben Liza - Freida Leah bat Pesha Rachel -
Rivkah bat Malkah - Yehoshuah Mordechai ben Leah Gita

SHABBAT SECRETS

A Series On Shabat & Its Holiness

Eating Meat On Shabat

The Gemara of Shabat tells us that Rabee Aba (a"h) used to buy meat from 13 butchers. He wanted to have a wide selection from which to choose the best piece of meat for the Shabat meals. He paid the butchers in advance so they would rush his meat delivery.

In a sefer titled, "Otzar Yad Ha'chaim" we are taught that all his life, Shamai, the Elder ate in honor of Shabat. If he found a beautiful animal he would say, "Let this be for Shabat." If he found a better-looking animal, he would set aside the second one for Shabat.

The Rambam (a"h) in Hilchot Shabat writes that to delight in Shabat one should eat meat and drink wine, provided one can afford it. And the Gemara of Pesachim states that eating meat on Shabat brings joy.

Chasidishe Rebbes always ate meat on Shabat at their meals. Many ate chicken and meat for two reasons: the Musaf Korbanot on Shabat consisted of two lambs; and a two-fold portion of manna was provided for Shabat. Interestingly, condiments like horseradish or pickles remind us of the Kohanim who would add mustard when eating the meat of the Shelamim Korbanot.

On Friday night, some people taste the chulent or the kugel that was prepared for the day meal. But the Zohar Ha'kadosh states that doing so insults those dishes.

INTRODUCING...

A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR LADIES

The Rabanit will now be offering INDIVIDUAL, one-on-one classes on the phone for women who wish like to learn ONE topic in depth.

The advantage of the private classes is the ability to learn the subject of your choice in a deep and detailed manner - and the opportunity to ask questions and receive undivided attention.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

1. Choose a topic from the list below
2. Call our office and schedule your appointment for the time and day that best suits you
3. Depending on the topic you choose, an email with any materials you require for the lectures will be sent to you so you can follow along as you learn together with the Rabanit.
4. Payment for the series is made at the commencement of your classes.
5. You are now ready to begin your enlightening journey!!

Below is the list of topics:

**SHABAT
EMUNAH & BITACHON
THE SECRET OF THE MIKVEH
SHALOM BAYIT
TEFILAH
WOMEN IN JEWISH HISTORY
THE PARSHAH IN DEPTH
BREISHIT**

**Call To Begin Your Journey
(347) 430-5700**

**Room For 5 More Women
To Join!**

We're beginning our second cycle

ANSWER TO RIDDLE

9 people are in the Mustard Family since
all the sisters share the same brother.

ATTENTION LADIES

Call us to host a learning group in your community.

(347) 430-5700

Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen will be speaking on the following dates:

Date: January 25, 2017

Time: 2:30pm

Place: Raleigh Hotel
680 Hyden Rd, South Fallsburg NY

Date: January 29, 2017

Time: 6:00pm

Place: 4915 10th Ave - Brklyn, NY
Boro Park Center

Date: February 08, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm

Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: February 12, 2017

Time: 8:00pm

Place: 1175 East Laurelton Parkway - Teaneck, NJ
Special Tu Be'Shevat Program

Date: February 15, 2017 / **Time:** 4:15pm

Place: 4915 10th Ave - Brklyn, NY
Boro Park Center

Date: February 22, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm

Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: March 8, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm

Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D - Brklyn, NY

Date: March 19, 2017 / **Time:** 7:45pm

Place: 148 Copley Ave – Teaneck NJ

Date: March 22, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm

Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: April 4, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: April 26, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: April 29, 2017 - Shabat

Time: 5:00pm

Place: 1364 E7th - Brklyn, NY

Date: April 30, 2017

Time: 7:45pm

Place: 1100 Trafalgar St. – Teaneck NJ

Date: May 10, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: May 21, 2017

Time: 7:45pm

Place: 275 Taft Court, Paramus NJ

Date: May 24, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: June 07, 2017 / **Time:** 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy - #6D, Brklyn, NY

Date: June ?? – To Be Announced

Time: 7:45pm

Place: Teaneck NJ

Date: July ?? – To Be Announced

Time: 7:45pm

Place: 1288 West Laurelton Parkway
Teaneck, NJ 07666

Date: August ?? – To Be Announced

Time: 7:45pm

Place: 115 Addison Rd.
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

RESONSE

Continued

Thank you for writing. I like your question. Hopefully, with Siyata Dishmaya, I'll be able to provide a satisfactory answer.

The beautiful 22-verse hymn Eshet Chayil, is an alphabetic acrostic found in the closing pesukim of Sefer Mishlei. It is traditionally sung in many Jewish homes on Friday night before *Kidush*. Although I haven't seen it documented, it seems that, like much of our Friday night rituals, this custom originated with the mystics of Tzefat, specifically the students of Rabbi Yitzchak Luria (the Ari Ha'kadosh a"h), as a way of greeting the Shechinah and the "Shabat Queen." Perhaps the earliest mention of this custom is in the Sidur of Rabbi Yeshayah Ha'Levi Horowitz (a"h).

On the most basic level, the singing of Eshet Chayil has become a way of expressing gratitude to the woman of the house, for what is a more fitting time to sing her praises than on Friday night, after she worked tirelessly to ensure that the Shabat Queen be greeted in royal fashion? Indeed, the Arizal is known to have kissed his mother on both her hands every Friday night. Some follow the minhag of the Arizal, and have the children kiss their mother's hands on Friday nights.

While some say the "Eshet Chayil" refers to a generic praiseworthy woman.

According to the Midrash Tanchumah, Eshet Chayil was originally composed by Avraham Avinu (a"h) as a eulogy to his wife, Sarah, and then later I was included in Sefer Mishlei. According to other opinions, it was written by Shelomo Ha'melech to honor his mother, Queen Batsheva, wife of David Ha'melech.

The Midrash Shocher Tov on Mishlei explains how the 22 pesukim of Eshet Chayil correspond to 19 great Jewish women (the last four pesukim correspond to the same

person) and the lessons we can learn from these special women.

All these explanations provide us with a simple reason for reciting Eshet Chayil on Friday night - that being a way of expressing deep gratitude to the woman of the house.

But there are deeper reasons and we see that we recite the Eshet Chayil regardless of our marital status.

According to Rabbi Yeshayah Ha'Levi Horowitz, the holy Shaloh Ha'kadosh (a"h), the Eshet Chayil is a metaphor for the Shechinah Ha'kedoshah. The 22-pesukim that ascend in alphabetical order through the entire Hebrew Alphabet, corresponds to the 22 mystical channels of berachot that are opened on Shabat.

The Zohar Ha'kadosh teaches that all berachot for the coming week come from Shabat. In addition, the word *chayil* (חַיִּיל) has the numeric value of 48 ($8+10+30=48$), corresponding to the 48 habits through which Torah is acquired. Therefore, Eshet Chayil is a metaphor for the Torah, which was given on Shabat.

The Midrash of Breishit Rabah relates that every day of creation was created with a "mate." Sunday was paired with Monday, Tuesday with Wednesday, and Thursday with Friday. Only the Shabat was left without a mate. In response to Shabat's complaint, Hashem replied that the Jewish people would be Shabat's mate. Therefore, we sing the Eshet Chayil on Friday night to the Shabat "bride."

In truth, all of the explanations are interconnected. For it is the noble woman of the home, more so than the man, who makes the home into a Divine spiritual place - a place of Torah, a place where our neshamot can flourish, serving Hashem in all that we do. The Midrash says in relation to Eshet Chayil that just as Hashem gave the Jews the Torah through the 22 letters of the *Alef-Bet*, so too does He praise the Jewish woman with 22 letters.

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