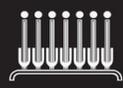




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Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!



2 Dec 2017 Parshas Vayishlach 14 Kislev 5778

ings. It follows that one who is married *can* attain Torah and blessings. The groom is called up to the Torah to differentiate between the Torah learned before and after the wedding, which are of entirely different qualities.

Holy Materiality

When planning a wedding, it's easy to get caught up with the petty details, the decor, the food, and all the other bells and whistles, forgetting the spiritual element that lies at the core of it all. The antidote is Shabbat, when our physicality—eating, drinking and other delights—is imbued with the holiness of the day.

Starting the wedding celebration by being called to the Torah on Shabbat, the groom connects himself to the Torah, and he imbues the rest of the week with the blessings and holiness of that Shabbat.

Livelihood From Heaven

When a man gets married, he becomes responsible to provide for his wife and their household. After the groom is called to the Torah, it is customary to shower him with candies and nuts as a "good sign." Having goodness rain upon him from above right after he reads from the Torah is symbolic of the concept that "one who accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah is exempted . . . from the yoke of worldly cares."

As we celebrate with our brides and grooms, let us pray for the day when "once again it will be heard in the cities of Judea and in the outskirts of Jerusalem, a sound of joy, a sound of glad-

ness, a sound of the groom, a sound of the bride," speedily in our days!

Live & Laugh

Samuel told his doctor that he wasn't able to do all the things around the house that he used to do. When the examination was complete, he said, "Now, Doc, I can take it. Tell me in plain English what is wrong with me." "Well, in plain English," the doctor replied, "you're just lazy." "Okay," said the man. "Now give me the medical term so I can tell my wife."

What's Nu?!

The Battie Girl Tanni Cohen

Mazal Tov to Chazan Yudi & Dina and to grandparents Rabbi Yosef & Sarah Kesselman and Rabbi Shaul & Esther Cohen.

Choson Kallah Mazal Tov

Mendy Grabnik & Deena Raff
Gidon Pincus & Jessica Ritz
Ian Saunders & Romy Genende
Gidi Weinstein & Rochi Zimblor

Calendar

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shitl 8:45 am
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall sponsored by **Leon Druckman** in honour of his 80th birthday, by **Yudi & Dina Cohen** in honour of Tanni's Bas Mitzvah and by the **Genende Family** in honour of Romy & Ian's wedding.
- ◆ **Smorgasbord of Shiurim**
- ◆ Mincha: 6:10 pm
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 7:22 pm
- ◆ **Tal U'matar:** Monday night 4 Dec

- ◆ The **Scottish Leader Signature** whiskey at Shul is sponsored by **Distell** & available for purchase at **Norman Goodfellows**.
- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.

Mazel Tov!
Rabbi Goldman's
Sunday morning **Mishna Shiur** has just completed the entire **Seder Nezikin** of the Mishna!
SIYUM CELEBRATION DINNER this Sunday. Guest Speaker: Rabbi Dayan Yoel Smith.
New members welcome.

Mazel Tov!
Rabbi Stern's
Wednesday night **Gemora Shiur** has just concluded
Talmud Tractate Sukkah and celebrated a **Siyum Dinner**.
New members welcome to join in the new year.

Jacob's Lament

by: *Rabbi Yossy Goldman*

Here's a message for South Africa today.

This week the dreaded encounter between Jacob and Esau finally materialises. After two decades, the twin brothers who are anything but identical square up. Jacob who fled the wrath of Esau as a young man is returning home with a large family and much wealth. Esau is fast approaching with four hundred armed desperados armed to the teeth. Will it be all out war, or will they make peace? Jacob prepares for all eventualities and also sends a message to his hostile brother.

Im lavan garti – "I have sojourned with Lavan." Rashi interprets the message of Jacob to mean that though he lived with a notorious trickster for all this time he "had not learned from his evil ways" and remained a righteous Jew committed to the G-dly way of life. This is indicated by the *gematria* (numerology) of the Hebrew word *garti* which equals *taryag*, 613, the number of Mitzvot in the Torah.

But wasn't this rather boastful of Jacob? The same man who will soon be praying for deliverance and say *kotointi*, claiming that he has been humbled by all G-d's kindnesses to him, now seems to be pointing proudly to his piety, telling Esau how religious he has been?

The Chofetz Chaim offers a novel interpretation. He explains that Jacob's words should not be understood as a boast but rather as a lament. "I sojourned with Lavan but did not learn from his evil ways" means that Jacob did not learn from the way Lavan did evil. How did Lavan do evil? Enthusiastically!

With vim and vigor. His wicked ways were undertaken with a passion and energy and Jacob bemoans the fact that his own **good** deeds were not performed as passionately as Lavan's evil deeds.

If the good guys were as incentivised as the bad guys, crime would be dramatically down. If the police and justice systems of the world operated with the same commitment and drive as the drug lords and the hijacking syndicates we would all be better off. The trouble is that the forces of evil are enthusiastic and highly motivated while the forces of good often depend on civil servants who are overworked and underpaid.

Nikita Khrushchev (of United Nations shoe-banging fame) was once addressing a large public meeting in Russia during the anti-Stalinist period. He was blasting Stalin's cruel and unforgivable atrocities when a voice in the crowd suddenly spoke up and asked, "If Stalin was such a villain, why didn't **you** do anything about it then?"

"Who said that?!" thundered Khrushchev. There was absolute silence in the hall. Not a sound, not a movement. People froze in fear.

"Now you understand why I didn't do anything," was Khrushchev's convincing answer.

This interesting interpretation of Jacob's lament reminds us that the voice of morality must be at least as loud as the voice of evil. Too often the voice of justice is soft and still while the voice of corruption and degeneracy is loud and bombastic.

Who will amplify the sweet, silent sound of goodness?

Let us strive to become as passionate and assertive

for the cause of G-dliness and goodness as the other side is for evil and injustice. The world will be better balanced, much nicer and a lot safer.

Parsha Pointers

*Vayishlach: Artscroll Chumash pg 170;
Living Torah pg 155*

On the trip back to Canaan, Jacob meets his brother Esau; Jacob wrestles with the angel. Then they arrive in Shechem; Shechem, the son of Chamor the Hivite, (heir to the town of Shechem) rapes Jacob's daughter, Dina; Dina's brothers, Shimon and Levy, massacre the men of Shechem; Rebecca (Rivka) dies; God gives Jacob an additional name, "Israel," and reaffirms the blessing to Avraham that the land of Canaan (Israel) will be given to his descendants; Rachel dies after giving birth to Benjamin (Binyomin); Jacob's 12 sons are listed; Isaac dies; Esau's lineage is recorded as is that of Seir the Horite; and lastly ... the succession of the Kings of Edom is chronicled.

Actual Angels

By Rabbi Dovi Scheiner

They say that "you can't dance at two weddings at once." But according to a teaching of the Maggid of Mezeritch, the leading disciple of the saintly Baal Shem Tov, you can.

The Torah reading of Vayishlach begins, "And Jacob sent angels before him to Esau his brother" (Genesis 32:4). A frightened Jacob struggles to reach conciliation with his wild brother Esau, who is determined to punish Jacob for sneaking away with the Patriarchal blessings.

Commenting on the words, "And Jacob sent angels," Rashi states, "Actual angels." Says the Maggid of Mezeritch, "Only the 'actual' aspect of the angels did Jacob send to Esau, but the spiritual component of the angels remained at all times with Jacob."

Just a minute—something seems not quite right here. It would seem that Jacob's goal in sending the angels was to have them wield their immense spiritual powers to neutralize the animosity of his brother Esau. So why would the Maggid propose that in sending the angels, Jacob withheld these very spiritual

powers, dispatching a more ordinary version of the angels instead?

But the Maggid's words can be understood in another, more magical way.

The angels bring all of themselves along for the journey to Esau. They are fully equipped, actually as well as spiritually, to face this formidable challenge. Yet, while struggling to realize their mission, they never fail to realize that hanging out with Esau is not where they are meant to be. They race to wrap up their mission and rejoin the righteous Jacob. Thus, while the angels are with Esau in actuality, they remain spiritually linked with the one who sent them.

And it is this unyielding bond that yields the angels their success. Only by remaining firmly connected with their source, the virtuous Jacob, can the angels be sure of success in their effort to refine Esau. Were this bond ever to be severed, the angels would face the risk of falling in with the very entity they arrived to elevate.

So goes the story of our lives.

We too, are on a mission. Our souls have been dispatched from a lofty port, to be clothed in a coarse body and a crude world. At the same time, we have been imbued with the tools required to master, refine and elevate our surroundings.

It is imperative that in facing this challenge, we master the art of dancing simultaneously at two weddings. While sending forth the messenger-angel in our soul to conquer, we must hang firmly onto our very own "Jacob," the pristine source of our divine soul, which can never be tainted or tarnished.

The Material Jew

By Rabbi Yanki Tauber

No longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel. For you have lorded over angel and man, and have prevailed. (Genesis 32:29)

And [Esau] said: "Of course they call his name Jacob! He has twice deceived me..." (Genesis 27:36)

Jacob and Israel -- the two biblical names of the Jewish people.

Jacob (*Ya-a-kov*, Hebrew for "he who grasps the heel"; also "he who shall deceive"): the sly conniver who disguises himself in Esau's clothes and makes

off with the blessings for "the dew of heaven and the fat of the land" intended for his material brother.

Israel (*Yis-ro-el*, Hebrew for "prince of G-d"; also related to *sarita* "you have lorded over"): the courageous knight who confronts his terrestrial and supernal challengers head on, wrestles with them through the night, and prevails.

Prince and conniver -- the dual identity of the Jew. In his spiritual life, Israel is an uncompromising prince of G-d. He stares the mocker in the eye and lays all his cards on the table: these are my beliefs, these are my standards, these are my ethics; this is what I am, this is what I stand for, this is what I am here to teach the world. You may deride me, you may persecute me, you may slaughter me -- but I shall prevail. Israel, who lords over angel and man, and prevails.

But when it comes to his material existence, Jacob plays the field but keeps his true objectives close to his chest. He will be scrupulously honest in his financial dealings, but he'll be utterly *dishonest* as to *why* he's in the business. He eats, drinks, earns money -- for all intents and purposes, he's a full-fledged participant in the give and take of physical life. But he's unwilling to relate to the material on its -- the material's -- terms; refusing to care, refusing to become involved, refusing to pursue it for its own sake.

The Jew dresses in Esau's clothes, but he refuses to allow the clothes to remake the man. He seeks the dew of heaven and the fat of the land, only to manipulate them to serve a higher end. First he buys out his brother's stake in the spiritual, divorcing the mundane from any pretensions to import or significance. Then he disguises himself as a materialist, and claims materialism's choicest bits for his own purposes.

Jacob, who has twice deceived me...

The Aufruf: Why is the Groom Called to the Torah Before His Wedding?

By Rabbi Yehuda Shurpin

Traditionally, the *chatan* (groom) is honoured with an *aliyah* at the Torah on the Shabbat before his wedding. This is known as an *aufruf*, Yiddish for "calling up." This is on par with the obligation for

a boy to get called up to the Torah before his bar mitzvah.

Where did this practice originate?

Solomon's Gates

In Solomon's Temple, there were two special gates: one for grooms, the other for mourners. The public was positioned between the two. When mourners came through their gate, they would be greeted by words of consolation. When grooms entered, they were greeted with the blessing, "May He whose Presence dwells in this House gladden you with sons and daughters." After the destruction of the Temple, the sages instituted that the grooms and mourners go to the synagogue on Shabbat to be greeted there.

Reflecting this tradition, the *aufruf* serves as a way for people to publicly congratulate the groom. Thus, if he will be out of town for the Shabbat before his wedding, the *aufruf* is held on the Shabbat prior. Nevertheless (due to the reasons outlined below) he should ideally be called to the Torah on the Shabbat immediately before the wedding as well.

Torah Sustains the World

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, explains that the bride and groom maintain the world's existence by bringing up children who will engage in the study of the Torah. The *chatan* is therefore called up to read the letters of the Torah, for through the Torah G-d continually sustains the world.

Like the King's Two Torahs

The sages tell us that the bride and groom are like king and queen. A Jewish king was required to have two Torah scrolls, so the groom is called up twice to the Torah: once on the Shabbat before the wedding, and once on the Shabbat after the wedding.

The Torah of Marriage

The Talmud states that one who dwells without a wife remains without Torah and bless-

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