

Great people view difficulties as challenges for growth. Through tests and challenges we raise ourselves up to new levels of attainment. This is the lesson we learn from Abraham our forefather. (Rabbi Label Lam)

### Weekly Pele Yoetz

Each week we will offer a brief excerpt from the *sefer Pele Yoetz*. **This week's topic is: *Ahabat HaBanim VeHabanot* - Love for One's Children.**

A person has a natural love for his children. However he must be careful that does he does not allow his love to blind him from his child's faults and wrongdoings, as this will affect the child negatively. A parent needs to correct his child and rebuke him when necessary, each child according to his nature and personality. One must also avoid showing favoritism to one child, as this will cause the other children to be jealous.

If a child disrespects his parent, the parent should be quick to forgive the child so that the child will not be punished for sinning against his parent.

A primary obligation of a parent is to ensure that his children follow in the path of Torah and *misvot*, and to teach them proper character traits. He should distance them from anyone and anything that will influence them negatively, and train them to be very careful to always speak the truth and to avoid all improper speech. His love for his children should stem from his love for Hashem, and his efforts should be focused towards raising his children in a way that they will bring pleasure to their Father in Heaven.

### It's Only a Dream

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser tells this story: One night in June, a few hours after falling asleep, I began dreaming. The dream was frighteningly real.

I dreamt that I was riding in the passenger side of a car with a man whom I had never met. As he barreled down the highway, I noticed that his eyes had closed and he had fallen asleep. To make matters worse, we were quickly approaching a sharp curve in the highway. With the speeding oncoming traffic approaching from the other side of the median, I immediately shouted, "Wake up! Wake up!" However, the driver lowered his head slightly and seemed to descend into an even deeper sleep. Desperately, I shouted the first thing I could think of - "Wake up! For G-d's sake, wake up!"

With those words, I woke up in a cold sweat. Somewhat relieved that I had been dreaming and was not actually in the car, I calmed myself with the words, "It's only a dream!" I looked at the clock on my night table. It was exactly 3:00 a.m. Needless to say, the dream was a horrific experience. I decided to give charity and thank Hashem that this event had not really happened.

The next morning, I bumped into one of my closest friends. He startled me by saying, "You'll never believe what happened last night. My brother called me shortly after 3:00 a.m. He was driving his car on the Long Island Expressway, returning from North Carolina. I guess the trip was too much for him and he fell asleep at the wheel. All of a sudden, he heard a voice screaming, 'Wake up! For G-d's sake, wake up!' Thank G-d he did! *Baruch Hashem*, he tricked the Angel of Death by executing a harrowing maneuver, steering his car around a dangerous curve on the highway. My brother - who as you know is not a religious man - instantly became a believer. He called me to ask if there was anything special that he should do to thank G-d for sparing him. I explained to him that it would be appropriate for him to donate money to charity."

I was stunned by my friend's story. I still vividly remembered my dream and was a little shaken up because of it. I related my dream of the previous night to my dear friend; we both were astounded. From that day on I knew, unequivocally, that I would be careful when I use the words, "It's only a dream." (Living on the Edge)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהִיָּה

## Congregation Magen Abraham

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SHABBAT LECH-LECHA ☆ שַׁבַּת לֶכֶּלֶךָ

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 40:27-41:16

**NOVEMBER 4-5, 2022 11 HESHVAN 5783**

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: Shaharit: 6:30, 8:25, 8:30, 9:00 am  
5:21 pm (main & upstairs) Morning Shema by: 9:28 am  
Candlelighting: 5:31 pm Shabbat Class: 4:10 pm  
Evening Shema after: 6:19 pm Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 5:10 pm  
These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Ends: 6:28, R"Y 7:00 pm  
Weekday Shaharit: 6:45, 7:10 am, Sundays: 6:45, 8:00 am, Weekday Minhah: 4:25 pm

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Moshe ben Margie  
by Eli & Marjorie Kairey

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Tuesday night, Nov. 8 at 10:00 pm.

Remember to move your clocks back one hour on Saturday night.

Mabrook to Isaac & Ilana Abadi on the marriage of their daughter, Mazal, to Rachamim Laniado. Mabrook to the grandparents, Meir & Barbara Abadi.

Mabrook to Morris & Susan Dana on the *Bar Misvah* of their grandson, Morris Dana.

Mabrook to Jimmy Kassin on the engagement of his daughter, Barbara, to Ezra Ohnouna. Mabrook to the grandparents, Meir & Barbara Abadi.

Mabrook to Allan & Randy Abadi on the engagement of their son, Shlomo.

Mabrook to Charles & Sophia Serouya on the engagement of their son, Jacob. Mabrook to the grandparents, Abe & Elaine Serouya.

Mabrook to Freddie & Gloria Jemal on the engagement of their daughter, Terry, to David Shacalo.

### A Message from our Rabbi

"He journeyed" (Bereshet 13:3) "וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִסְעָיו"

We learn many things from our forefathers, Abraham, Yitzhak, and Ya'akov. However, we tend to learn the big lessons and we don't pay too much attention to their casual encounters as well.

Our Sages (quoted by *Rashi*) help open our eyes. Abraham *Abinu* returned to the

same lodgings in which he had stayed on the trip to Egypt, to teach you proper conduct: A person should not change his accommodations.

Abraham *Abinu* came back on his return trip wealthier than he had been on the first part of the trip, but he showed respect for the hoteliers along the way. He could have selected better accommodations but opted not to. Why? Who would know? How many people were paying attention to where he stayed?

“*Limedcha*.: *Rashi* says, to teach you. The *Abot*, our forefathers influenced us with their every decision. There are no small things.

Rabbi Yaakov Bender tells us a story that occurred with his parents that illustrates this very same point. One summer his parents were staying at a hotel in the Catskills. At mealtimes, they sat together with Rav Aharon Kotler and his Rebbetzin. At one point, a fly was buzzing around Rabbi Bender’s mother, and she waved it away. “No!” Rav Aharon said with distress. “No, do not swat it in that direction.”

Mrs. Bender was puzzled, and the *Rosh Yeshivah* explained that she had swatted in the direction of the other guests, rather than towards the open door.

That was it.

We have never seen a fly take directions, but the *Rosh Yeshivah* was so sensitive that he was anguished at the thought that the fly might irritate others.

“*Limedcha*.” That is what *Rashi* wants us to know. Great people take everything into account, and therein lies the secret to their greatness. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

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## *A New Start*

“Go forth from your land, your birthplace and the house of your father to the Land that I will show you.” Many *mefarshim* ask: This *pasuk* contains an inherent problem.” Hashem is asking Abraham to go away from his country, his city, his father’s house and to go to *Eress Yisrael*. As we all know, if we go anywhere – especially if we go out of the country – the first place that we leave is our home. Then we leave our city. Then we ultimately leave our country. The *pasuk* should therefore have really been written in the reverse sequence: Go forth from your father’s house, your birthplace, and from your land.

The famous answer is that Hashem is not requesting a change of location. Rather, He is asking for Abraham to become a different person, to wipe the slate clean to the extent that there is no remnant of his past existence. “I want a fresh start. I am going to build a new nation from you and therefore everything in your past needs to be deleted.”

Now the *pasuk* makes eminent sense. We are all Americans (at least most of us). So there is a certain influence that the country has on us. Everyone is different based on the cultural practices of the country where they grew up. This is the reality of things. But the influence that a person’s country has on him is not in his bone marrow. That is the easiest influence to get rid of.

Next comes “and from your birthplace”. We are all influenced by the cities we live in. This influence has a little more profound impact on a person’s identity than “your country,” but again it is not part of the person’s DNA.

But then there is a person’s family – *Bet Abicha*. This is part of our very essence. This is the hardest thing to get rid of – the walls that we were raised in, what we heard as children from our parents and our siblings. That is really who we are.

Therefore, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* is not really telling Abraham to change location but to become a different person and to delete all former influences. The way to do that is *Arsecha*, *Moladetecha*, and finally *Bet Abicha*.

One final point: The *pasuk* says “And be a blessing” (*Beresheet* 12:2). *Rashi* explains: “The blessings are given over into your control. Until now, blessings were in

My Hand. I Blessed Adam and Noah. However, from now on, you will bless whomever you desire.” This gift was unprecedented in the history of the world. The keys to blessing were given over to Abraham *Abinu*.

The reason the *Ribono shel Olam* gave this gift to Abraham was because Abraham became a different person. He wiped his entire previous life experience clean and became “*Kulo l’Hashem*” – totally devoted to the Almighty.

Now we can understand something that is truly mind boggling. The *pasuk* says in *Hayye Sarah*: “And it was after the death of Abraham, *Elokim* blessed Yitzhak his son...” *Rashi* asks – why was it necessary for Hashem to bless Yitzhak – after all, He had given the “keys to blessing” to Abraham to bless anyone he wanted. Why didn’t Abraham bless Yitzhak himself while he was still alive? *Rashi* says: Even though Hashem handed over the keys of blessing to Abraham, Abraham was afraid to bless his son because he saw that Esav would descend from him. Abraham said, “Let the Master of Blessing come and Bless who ever finds favor in His Eyes.” And the Holy One came and blessed Yitzhak.

Which of us, if we controlled the power of blessing, would withhold it from our own son – even from the “Yitzhak that you love”? Yitzhak is a *Sadik!* He was prepared to be offered as an offering at the *Akedah!* Abraham *Abinu* said, “No. I am not going to take the responsibility of giving a *Bracha* to Yitzhak because Esav is going to come out from him.” How selfless can a person be? How does a person get to such a level?

A person gets to that level by working on himself and allowing himself to depart from his land, from his birthplace, and from the house of his father. He becomes a new person – a person the Almighty trusted with the Power of *Berachah*. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

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## *An Uplifting Experience*

There is a *Mishnah* in *Pirkei Abot* which teaches us that Abraham underwent ten tests. Several of them can be found in this week’s *perashah*. The question is, what is the purpose of G-d testing anyone? He certainly already knows what the results will be, so why put anyone through the trouble?

The question is really based on a false assumption. The assumption is that a test is merely an evaluation. We’re used to school, and grades, and being evaluated by means of a test. In today’s society, this is the sole purpose of a test; judgement.

In Hebrew, the word for test is “*nisayon*.” It is related to the word “*nes*” which translates as banner, and also miracle. By understanding this relationship, one can derive a better understanding of the purpose of a test. A miracle is very often a public manifestation of divine power. A banner is held high for all to see. A “*NISayon*” is designed as a prescription for a person to elevate him/herself. It is meant to cause one to flex his/her spiritual muscles and raise him/herself up.

As a teacher, my intentions in testing are twofold. The first is evaluation. It evaluates how the students are doing in understanding the material, and how the teacher is doing in teaching it. The second purpose is to motivate my students to study well, and achieve the best understanding possible of the material. I want them to study so well that they will always remember what they learned. Many students study only for the test, and immediately afterwards forget most of what they learned. Contrary to this I want the study to be of lasting value, and I tell my students this.

When G-d tested Abraham the purpose was to raise him up to a higher level; to attain new levels of accomplishment. Each of the ten tests brought him to a higher level, and in a way, made him a different person with a greater closeness to G-d.

We are all Abrahams in our own way. We all find ourselves in numerous tests each day. Each time, we have an opportunity to elevate ourselves, and make spiritual acquisitions which manifest themselves in our personalities.