

if you view it through rose-colored glasses. A cheerful reaction will lift your spirits and give your self-esteem a boost when you have a good giggle at your own expense. Brush the event off – and go on with your life. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Our Gut Instinct

“Recognizing falsehood is not a small thing because our lives are full of such conflicts. The world is full of falsehood and we need intelligence to be able to ferret out the truth and recognize it. A person without knowledge can be persuaded to believe any kind of falsehood.”

Hashem gave us the Torah as a gift to guide us on the proper correct path of life. Engaging with a proper atmosphere of peers, triggers our Gut Instinct to distinguish between truth and false ideologies. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

A Chocolate Cake Surprise

When a *bachur* who was learning at *Chavrei HaKollel* in Lakewood became ill, a number of Rebbeim took turns staying with him at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan.

One *ereb Shabbat*, Rabbi Miller, one of the visiting Rebbeim, realized that if he didn’t head home from the hospital soon, there would be a risk that he would not get back to Lakewood in time for Shabbat. He began a series of calls with Rabbi Shlomo Gissinger, a noted Rav and *posek* in Lakewood, to discuss questions about the patient and about his driving home for Shabbat that late in the day. As the hour grew late and the phone calls went back and forth, Rabbi Gissinger finally ruled that it would be prohibited for the Rebbi to travel back to Lakewood at that point; he would have to spend Shabbat at the hospital.

The Rebbi called his wife and informed her that he would be staying in the hospital for Shabbat to be with the patient, as the Rav had ruled that it was too late for him to get home in time for Shabbat.

A few minutes before Shabbat, there was a knock on the door of Rabbi Miller’s home in Lakewood. When his wife opened the door, she was shocked to see Rabbi Gissinger standing there holding a chocolate cake.

The esteemed Rav said, “I know your husband won’t be able to be home for Shabbat and I’m sure it won’t be easy for you and your family, so I brought you this for Shabbat.” He then humbly handed over the cake.

The woman was overwhelmed with gratitude and admiration for Rabbi Gissinger, who was very busy with complex life-and-death questions daily, and yet had the presence of mind to think about her family’s temporary discomfort.

She then asked the Rav to give her children *berachot*. He blessed them that they should grow up to serve Hashem *besimchah* (with happiness), and then hurried off to shul, as it was minutes until Shabbat. (Stories that Strengthen Your Heart)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשִׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT VAYESSE ☆ עֶשֶׂת וְיָמֵי חֹדֶשׁ

Haftarah: Hoshea 11:7 – 12:12

NOVEMBER 28-29, 2020 12 KISLEV 5781

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| Friday Minhah: 4:13 pm | Shaharit: 5:58, 6:40, 8:00, 8:15, 9:00 am |
| Shir Hashirim (midrash): 4:03 pm | Morning Shema by: 8:47 am |
| Minhah (midrash): 4:13 pm | Shabbat Minhah: 3:50 pm |
| Candlelighting: 4:13 pm | Shabbat Ends: 5:11 pm (R"Y 5:43 pm) |
| Evening Shema after: 5:11 pm | Sunday Minhah: 4:15 pm |

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

This bulletin is dedicated by Steven Levy
in honor of his wife, Linda, a true *eshet hayil*.

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Sunday night, November 29.

A Message from our Rabbi

”וַיָּגֵל אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר”

“Jacob came forward and rolled the stone from upon the mouth of the well” (*Beresheet* 29:10)

The Gerrer Rebbe had a custom of inviting people in for tea in the very early morning. On one occasion, a student was invited to the Rebbe for a pre-dawn visit.

It was still very dark outside and the curtains were drawn, the doors closed. The *gabbai* was not there and the student stood outside feeling lost. Suddenly the lights came on and the Rebbe opened the door wide.

“The door was open all along,” he said. “All you needed to do was turn the knob and push it.”

The Rebbe then told the student the following idea, which relates to this week’s *perashah*.

When Ya’akob *Abinu* came to the well that had a very large stone on it, other shepherds were standing around, waiting for everyone to come and lift the stone together.

“Anyone could have lifted the stone,” the Rebbe said, “but they all saw a big stone and said ‘I can’t lift it so I am not even going to try.’ Ya’akob *Abinu* also saw a big

stone and believed that he wouldn't be able to lift it but he said, 'Let me try' and indeed he could do it," the Rebbe concluded.

Sometimes it's impossible but try anyway.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Two For the Price of One

Ya'akov labored for Rachel for seven years, only to have his father-in-law switch daughters and give him Leah. When Ya'akov complained about this outrageous deceit, Laban proposed that Ya'akov agree to work for him for an additional seven years and then he would give him Rachel.

Ya'akov should have told Laban, "I already worked for Rachel for seven years. I will agree to stay married to Leah whom I never asked for, but it is only decent that you fulfill your end of the previously agreed upon bargain and give me Rachel, with no further stipulations." Why did he so meekly agree to work seven more years for Rachel?

I saw an insight on this point by Rav Dovid Feinstein zt"l. The reason Ya'akov agreed to this "new deal" was to preserve Leah's sense of self-respect. How would Leah have felt if Ya'akov expressed willingness to work for seven years for Rachel, but would only take Leah "gratis" — as if she were "good for nothing"?

Ya'akov's willingness to accept Laban's terms was not because he did not know how to cut a good business deal. He knew how to negotiate and he knew that if he pressed his case, he could have gotten his way. The reason why he worked seven more years was in order not to devastate Leah. Had he stood up for his rights, he would have received "two wives for the price of one" and one of the wives would have felt that "he got her for nothing."

Concerning potato chip bags, there is no concern over hurt feelings when they are "buy one get one free." Neither potato chip bag thinks: "Am I the one he paid for, or am I the one he got for free?" However, it would have been cruel to put Leah in the position of being the "get one free" wife. Ya'akov refused to do that.

Rav Dovid Feinstein emphasized that we see from here that it is worth giving up seven years of one's life so that another person not feel humiliated. It is for this reason Ya'akov willingly agreed to work for seven more years. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Power Surge

Upon Ya'akov's arrival in Padan Aram, the Torah relates the incident of Ya'akov giving water to the sheep from the well. A large boulder sat atop a certain well from which all the flocks were given to drink. The rock could not be moved until all the shepherds gathered to collectively remove it from the well and then collectively replace it. Ya'akov removed the rock from the well by himself and gave water to the sheep that Rachel was watching. *Rashi* notes that Ya'akov removed the rock as easily as one would remove a cork from a bottle.

When we learned this story in grade school, we all pictured a dramatic scene of a macho, muscle-bound Ya'akov demonstrating awesome power and impressing Rachel with his good looks and great strength. Then we imagined a scene right out of a Hollywood script: Rachel falls madly in love with Ya'akov, they get married and live happily ever after.

However, that picture of events is far from accurate. Does it not seem strange that all these shepherds, who were going through this routine, day after day, year after year, did not have the strength to remove the rock, but Ya'akov — the Yeshiva student from the Yeshivah of Shem V'Eber, who had (according to the *Midrash*) spent the last 14

years learning day and night — did have the strength? Ya'akov, in fact, probably looked more like the stereotypical pale, emaciated Yeshivah weakling than like a Hollywood he-man. How was it that he could move the rock and all the rugged shepherds could not?

Rav Yaakov Neiman offered the following idea, which is echoed by many of the *Ba'alei Musar* [Masters of Ethics]: The key to understanding this whole chapter is a stanza which we recite in the Prayer for Rain (recited on Shemini Aseret). The poet there uses the language "He concentrated his heart and then rolled off the stone" (*yichad leb, vaYagel Eben*). In other words, Ya'akov did not use his biceps or his upper body strength to move the boulder. Ya'akov used concentration of the heart. This means that it was a matter of motivation. Ya'akov was able to move the stone by virtue of his single-mindedness of purpose to do an act of kindness. When one is driven by a goal, he can accomplish that which is beyond the scope of normal people.

We have all heard of cases of a mother, who, upon finding her young child pinned underneath a car, lifts the car and saves the life of her child. Reflecting moments later, she is astounded — "How did I lift that car? I would not be able to budge it off the ground if I tried for the rest of my life!" These types of stories happen regularly. What is this all about? The poet of the Prayer for Rain expresses it as "*Yichad Leb*" — singleness of purpose. If it is my child that I am trying to save, I can lift up a car!

The difference between Ya'akov and the shepherds was one of motivation. To the shepherds, it was no big deal if the rock was not moved. They were not concerned if it would take them another four hours for enough people to show up to move the rock. Their attitude was "Who cares?"

When Ya'akov saw the scene and saw everyone waiting around, and saw an opportunity to perform an act of kindness, he put his heart to it and was able to do it. When one puts his heart to do something, strengths and abilities that he innately possessed all along come forth, and amazing things can be accomplished. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

A Good Laugh

Most people like a good laugh. Millions are spent annually by people seeking entertainment that will bring a smile to their faces. But what, really, is a "good" laugh?

When you think about it, most of the laughing we do is brought on by external stimuli. Someone says or does something funny, and we laugh. It may last a moment or two, and when we think about it, the memory may even bring a smile back to our faces many months or even years later. It's a laugh — but is it a good one?

Sometimes we see a mishap. A friend trips or spills something and people start to laugh. The initial reaction of the victim is to laugh along with them. It's usually out of embarrassment or hurt, not happiness. It's merely a cover-up: "I might as well laugh; it's better than crying!" That is a bad laugh. The person who fell is hurt and the laughter is insincere. As for the others, they are laughing at someone else's expense and inflicting further pain.

Another situation that comes to mind is when we laugh at our own foibles or at the sometimes ridiculous situations in which we so often find ourselves. This laugh may even be a private one, with no audible laughter shared with others. People who can chuckle at their own mistakes and brush off life's setbacks with a sense of humor — realizing the general insanity of the human condition — are people who have self-esteem. It is really a good exercise in confidence-building to laugh at yourself.

When you encounter the inevitable annoyance, think positively about the overall flow of your life and laugh off the negative. The world can be an awfully funny place