



THANK YOU HASHEM For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Chayei Sarah

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

ותמת שרה בקרית ארבע הוא חב'רן...

Sarah passed on in Kiryas Arbah, which is Chevron...

AS WE SETTLE into the ebb and flow of character development and spiritual growth, it becomes easy to think of our efforts as a personal enterprise, affecting our own lives alone. But this is not the whole truth. As the *Shem Havaya*, literally “the Name of Existence”, the four letters of Hashem’s Name encompass all of creation. These four letters are the source for many elemental building blocks of our world as we know it - the four camps of the *Malachim*; the elements of fire, water, air, and earth; the levels of inanimate being, plant-life, animal kingdom, and the human race; the four humors, and many others. The tzaddikim teach that when a Jew works to subjugate his physicality and live a life of God-consciousness, this brings about a unification between the four letters of Hashem’s Name - bringing tremendous vitality to every aspect of existence. The Meor Einayim sees this concept hinted to in our verse: **“Vatamas Sarah”**: When one toils to remove himself from the physicality of his body (hinted to by the word “Sarah”), **“B’Kiryas Arba hi Chevron”**: This brings about a unification (“Chevron” is related to the word “I’chabeir”, to connect) between

SHABBOS
IS A LITTLE TASTE
OF WHAT'S TO COME
WHEN MASHIACH
WILL FINALLY BE HERE!

the Four Letter Name of Hashem (hinted to by the words “Kiryas Arba”). Although we might not be able to perceive exactly how this takes place, we must remember that our every effort is changing the entirety of creation! *Ashreinu!* 🤴

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🤴 At the age of 127, Sarah passes away and is buried in Me’aras HaMachpelah, a cave Avraham purchases from Ephron HaChiti for four hundred silver shekalim.
- 🤴 Avraham’s servant Eliezer is sent to Charan to find a wife for Yitzchak. Stopping at the well, Eliezer asks Hashem to provide him with a sign: When the young women come to the well, he will ask them for some water to drink. If a woman offers to give his camels to drink as well, this will be a sign that she is destined for Yitzchak. Rivka, daughter of Avraham’s nephew Besuel, appears at the well and fulfills Eliezer’s condition. He is invited to her home and repeats the story of the day’s events. Rivka returns with Eliezer to the land of Canaan. On the way, they encounter Yitzchak praying in the field.
- 🤴 Yitzchak marries Rivka, loves her, and is comforted over the loss of his mother.
- 🤴 Avraham marries Keturah (Hagar), and fathers six additional sons. Yitzchak is designated as his sole heir. Avraham passes away at the age 175 and is buried by his two eldest sons, Yitzchak and Yishmael beside Sarah in the Me’aras HaMachpelah.

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

ואברהם זקן בא בימים ויהוה ברוך את־אברהם בכל: ויאמר אברהם אל־עבדו זקן ביתו המושל בקל־אשר־לו שים־נא ירך תחת ירכי...
 ...בְּקַל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ שִׁים־נָא יָרֵךְ תַּחַת יָרְכִי...

And Avraham was old, well on in years, and Hashem had blessed Avraham with everything. And Avraham said to his servant, the elder of his household who controlled all that was his, "Place now your hand under my thigh..."

TO THE SPIRITUAL seeker, this world can appear as a dark forest enveloping a human race hopelessly lost among its thicket of greed, ego, cruelty, lowliness, and despair. Surrounded on all sides by confusion and deception, it seems impossible to forge a path, to chart a way, to discover a mode of thinking and feeling that will enable one to live his life with purpose, conviction, and true peace of mind. Thankfully, we are never called upon to do the impossible. In His great mercy, Hashem sends extraordinary tzaddikim to each era who succeed - through their enormous efforts and ceaseless toil - to chop down the menacing trees, thornbushes, and weeds of impurity and clear a course to safety. If we follow their instructions and walk in their footprints, we can be assured that we will manage to escape the forest of this world as well, emerging from the darkness into an experience of light, unity, and God-consciousness.

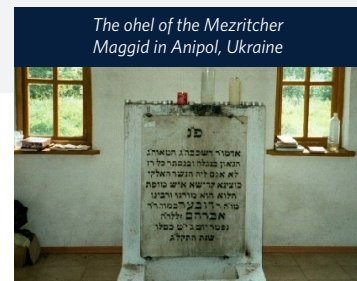
The Gemara in Taanis paraphrases Hashem as saying, "The whole world is sustained on account of (*"b'shvil"*) My son Chanina" (a reference to Rav Chanina Ben Dosa). While a simple translation of the word *"b'shvil"* means "on account of", the Noam Elimelech points out that this word may also be seen as a reference to *"shvil"*, a path. Thus, the tzaddik suggests that this statement should be read, "The whole world is sustained through the spiritual path (*"b'shvil"*) forged by My son, Chanina." In every generation, Hashem sends tzaddikim to awaken His mercy and clear a pathway for am Yisrael to serve Him properly.

Based on this concept, the Noam Elimelech reads our *pesukim* in the following, novel manner: **"V'Avraham zakein"**: As a result of his serving Hashem with great wisdom his entire life (*"zakein"* is a conjugation of the words, *"zeh kaneh Chochmah"*), **"ba bayamim"**: Avraham triggered mercy to flow upon the world (the light and warmth of *yom*, day, is a symbol for mercy). **"v'Hashem beirah es Avraham bakol"**: the word *"bakol"* contains the letters *"kelev"* and is numerically equivalent to the word *"beheimah"* - both references to negative spiritual forces. As a result of the pathway created through his service, Avraham defeated those powers and was blessed with their parallel in the side of holiness, represented in the word *"bakol."*

In the next verse, Avraham tells Eliezer to take an oath on his *bris*. The *bris* is a medium of and symbol for connection and intimacy. With these words, the Torah teaches that a tzaddik must advise his followers that if they would like to benefit from his efforts and ultimate success, they should bind themselves to him and the path to serving Hashem he has forged.

May we merit to open our hearts to the guidance of the tzaddikim Hashem has sent to shine a light in the darkness by studying their teachings and walking the path of spiritual and emotional health they toiled to forge so we could easily grow close to our Father in heaven. 🕎

Hashem sends tzaddikim to each generation who, as a result of their intense efforts, pave a path of illumination through the darkness of their time so their students can more easily achieve spiritual salvation.



Profiles of Tzaddikim

Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

Rebbe Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezritch zy"א

ALTHOUGH THE EXACT year is unknown, it is likely that the Maggid HaGadol was born in the early 1700s. While little is known about his early years, it is said that from an early age, Dov Ber exhibited exceptional mastery of the Torah.

The story goes that when the Maggid was a boy of only five years old, his house was destroyed in a fire. When it was all over, he looked on as his mother cried bitter tears next to the ashes of what had been their home. Looking into the face of her son, Dov Ber's mother explained that it wasn't the destruction of the house which saddened her, but rather the loss of a precious document - a family tree that traced their lineage directly to Dovid HaMelech. With shining eyes, the young boy looked up at his mother and said, "Then start a new line from me!"

Although word about the Baal Shem Tov's revolution had already been spreading throughout different communities, Reb Dov Ber was apprehensive about journeying to Mezhibozh to meet him due to the intense opposition that was springing up as well. It wasn't until 1752 (5513), after a direct correspondence with the Baal Shem Tov, that Reb Dov Ber decided to meet him in person.

After an incredible and life-altering meeting with the Baal Shem Tov, Reb Dov Ber remained in Mezhibozh for many months, studying and learning with his new Rebbe. After the passing of the Baal Shem Tov in 1760 (5520), Reb Tzvi, son of the Baal Shem Tov, declared that his father had visited him in a dream and relayed that the Heavenly Court decided that leadership must be passed on to Reb Dov Ber.

The Maggid moved his court to the town of Mezhibozh. It was there that he began disseminating the teachings of his beloved Rebbe. The benches of the Maggid's Beis Midrash were lined with the future torchbearers of the movement - Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchov, the Chozeh M'Lublin, the Rebbe Reb Meilech and his brother, Reb Zusha, the Kozhnutzer Maggid, the Baal HaTanya, the Beis Ahron of Karlin, the Meor Einayim and others. Together with his esteemed disciples, the Maggid of Mezritch laid a mighty foundation for the development of lofty and transformational concepts and succeeded in spreading the brilliant light of the Baal Shem Tov throughout Eastern Europe.

The Maggid HaGadol left this world on the 19th of Kislev 5533 (1772). His teachings were compiled by his disciples into various *sefarim*, most notably *Maggid Devarav L'Yaakov* and *Ohr Torah*.

Zechuso Yogen Aleinu! This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press). 🕎

Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

LAST WEEK, WE discussed three levels of engagement with Torah study and the aspects of *Ruach* they enable one to attain. We explained that the loftiest level is when the Torah is used as a medium for the deepest oneness and intimacy with Hashem, which is why, as the pinnacle of the entire Torah, the words “*Anochi Hashem Elokecha*” were uttered by Hashem Himself. The Chernovitzer explains that “*Shabbos*” is numerically equivalent to 27 times the *Shem Havaya*. This number corresponds to the 27 letters of the *Aleph-Beis* with which the Torah is written - twenty-two original letters and five closing letters. This is the deeper meaning behind Chazal’s statement that keeping Shabbos is equal to keeping all the mitzvos of the Torah. Because Shabbos and Torah are intimately connected, the levels that exist with regard to *limmud haTorah* apply to Shabbos as well - with one major difference. Whereas we mentioned three levels of engagement with Torah, the first being study for the simple purpose of carrying out the mitzvos properly, when this level is applied to Shabbos (keeping Shabbos simply as a day of rest from one’s mundane pursuits) this is parallel to the *second, higher level* of *limmud haTorah*, delving into the hidden light of the Torah to enjoy her secrets. This is because even the most basic observance of Shabbos embodies testimony that Hashem created and recreates the world each and every moment, filling it with spiritual vitality. Thus, there is no “*nefesh-body*” aspect of Shabbos observance - even the lower level already relates to the aspect of **Neshama**. 🕎

This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

Chassidus 101

Exploring the Foundations of Chassidus

SHLOMO HAMAELECH WRITES, “In all your ways, you shall know Him.” One of the most basic concepts in the writings of the tzaddikim is the importance of seeking out Godliness even within the seemingly mundane aspects of the physical world. While there are fixed times throughout the day, such as when we daven and learn, that we actively connect ourselves to the Master of the world, *avodas Hashem* is about bringing the Creator into every experience, enabling us to draw close to Him every step of our lives.

Our Sages teach us that whatever Hashem created, He created for His honor. It follows that through every experience and encounter - even when engaging in worldly, seemingly insignificant activities - we are charged with the responsibility of revealing the Godliness enfolded within that experience. For example, when one eats or drinks, he should have in mind that through this food or drink he is gaining the necessary strength and vitality to better serve Hashem. The same applies to all physical matters. Rebbe Nachman of Breslov teaches that the Master of the world is constantly calling out to us from everything we experience, urging us to draw close to Him.

The Kedushas Levi teaches that this is one of the hidden messages within the *beracha* we recite before eating bread, “*hamotzi lechem min ha’aretz*.” The word *lechem*, bread, represents holiness, as *lechem* is numerically equivalent to the value of three times Hashem’s Name. The word *aretz*, earth, can be understood as a reference to *artziyus*, earthliness. The *beracha* can therefore be translated as,

“The one who draws out holiness from the earthliness.” Even within the most basic physical necessities, we are given the opportunity to strengthen our connection to our Father in heaven.

The tzaddikim teach that while davening and learning obviously carry infinite importance, *avodas Hashem* is not limited to these *avodas* alone. On the contrary, it is often through experiences we tend to view as peripheral or insignificant that we can bring the most pride and joy to Hashem. Having been created and placed in a physical world, it is our responsibility to peer behind the curtain of materialism and physicality to find the depth within everything around us.

It is no coincidence that these teachings were revealed and continue to spread during the generations directly preceding the coming of Moshiach. In a world that seems to be lost in materialism and experiences offering instant gratification, the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov HaKadosh and his *talmidim* are a helping hand that enable us to navigate the world around us and help us open our ears to Hashem’s call. “Hashem desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds.” It is specifically our generation which has the unique opportunity to bring about a revelation of Godliness that no other generation could, to show the world that behind the mask of physicality there exists an Infinite Creator Who is constantly reaching out to us and guiding us ever-closer to Him. The more we can shift our perspective and view our experiences with this mindset, the more we will be able to feel that inner dimension in a real, tangible way. 🕎

This section is written by R’ Akiva Bruck, author of “From Behind the Curtain” (Mosaica Press)

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

The Chassid was shocked at the sight of his Rebbe's sallow complexion.

"Rebbe, why do you look so ill? Are you sick?"

"No," replied the tzaddik, "It is because I have been put to shame by a certain person."

A fire of righteous indignation burned within the Chassid's heart. How could anyone dare to do such a thing to his Rebbe? Filled with zealotry on his Rebbe's behalf, the Chassid demanded to hear the name of his Rebbe's assailant. But the Rabbi replied that he could not tell him the name of the person. In attempt to garner whatever information he could, the chassid asked, "What did you do to the man after he had insulted you?"

The reply was astonishing: "I embraced him and kissed him!"

Stunned, the Chassid begged his Rebbe to reveal the identity of this individual who had shamed him only to be embraced and kissed in response.

The Rebbe paused for a moment before responding, "It was Rav Eliyahu HaCohen, the author of *sefer Shevet-Mussar* who put me to shame. As I began delving into his *sefer* this morning, it dawned upon me that I had not even begun to serve Hashem, and that I was not even worthy of being a descendant of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. Indeed, in this moment of honest reflection, I felt very much ashamed of myself. I realized the truth of all he had written, and then in my appreciation and gratitude to him for showing me the truth, I took his holy *sefer* and kissed it."

The tzaddikim served Hashem with such truth and sincerity that they were prepared to thank whoever it was that guided them along the path of avodas Hashem - even if that guidance was a bit difficult to swallow. 🙏

"THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"
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