



# THANK YOU HASHEM

## For Shabbos Kodesh!

### Parshas Vayeishev

#### HaMeor Shebah

*A Short Burst of Relevance*

אלה תלדוּת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף...

*These are the offspring of Yaakov: Yosef...*

THE PASUK STATES: *“Beis Yaakov l’aish, ubeis Yosef lehava”*, “The house of Yaakov shall be a fire and the house of Yosef shall be a flame.” The holy Sefas Emes explains that *“Beis Yaakov l’aish”* is a reference to the Torah HaKedosh, which is associated with the *Sefirah of Tiferes* embodied in the persona of Yaakov Avinu. How does one gain access to the inner light of Torah, the sweetness and illumination which lights up every aspect of the human experience? *“Beis Yosef lehava”*. The tzaddik teaches that these words refer to the yearning and desire of the Jewish soul for matters of holiness. Rashi to *Bereishis* 30:25 tells us that while the connotation of *“aish”* is a fire that illuminates its direct surroundings, a *“lehava”* is a flame that can reach much further; *“Aish b’lo lehava eino sholeit l’meirachok”* - “A fire without a flame is unable to reach a great distance.” The Sefas Emes writes that distance referred to here is a spiritual perception of distance from Hashem, a time when one feels as if he lacks a connection with the Master of the world and yearns to live a more elevated life. It is this yearning that is referred to in the words, *“Ubeis Yosef lehava”* - an intense desire to cross the expanse of distance from Hashem and once more enter His loving embrace. Ultimately, this

NEVER LET THE  
THINGS YOU WANT  
MAKE YOU FORGET  
THE THINGS YOU  
ALREADY HAVE.

yearning and desire is what will open the gates of Torah, bringing one into the glorious abode of *“Beis Yaakov l’aish”*. This, explains the tzaddik, is the meaning of our verse: *“Eileh toldos Yaakov: Yosef...”* - When a Jew engages with the aspect of *“Beis Yosef lehava”*, he will be able to see fruits (*toldos*) in his Torah study, the aspect of *“Beis Yaakov l’aish.”* 🤴

#### Parsha Roundup

*A 60-second Review*

- 👑 Yaakov’s favorite son is Yosef. Yosef’s brothers exhibit jealousy of and hatred toward him, which intensifies when he relates two dreams which foretell his ruling over them.
- 👑 Shimon and Levi plot to kill Yosef, but Reuven suggests that they throw him into a pit instead. Yehuda sells Yosef to a band of passing Yishma’eilim. Yaakov believes Yosef was devoured by a wild beast.
- 👑 After her previous husbands, Yehuda’s sons Er and Onan, die in quick succession, Tamar disguises herself and seduces Yehuda. Upon hearing that Tamar is pregnant, Yehuda orders her executed for harlotry. When she produces proof, he publicly admits that he is the father. Tamar gives birth to twin sons, Peretz and Zerach.
- 👑 Yosef is taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, where he is appointed manager of all his master’s property. Potiphar’s wife attempts to seduce Yosef. When Yosef rejects her, she tells her husband that he tried to assault her, and he is thrown into prison.
- 👑 In prison, Yosef interprets the dreams of Pharaoh’s chief butler and chief baker; in three days, the butler will be released, and the baker hanged. Yosef asks the butler to intercede on his behalf with Pharaoh. Yosef’s predictions are fulfilled, but the butler forgets all about Yosef.

## P'nimiyus haParsha

### An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

וְיֵהִי כַמְשָׁלֶשׁ חֲדָשִׁים וַיְגַד לַיהוּדָה לֵאמֹר זָנַתָּ תַמָּר כַּלְתֶּךָ וְגַם הִנֵּה הָרָה לְזַנוּנִים וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה הוֹצִיאֲכֶה וְתִשְׂרָף: הוּא מוֹצֵאת וְהִיא שְׁלֹחַת אֶל-חַמִּים לֵאמֹר לֹאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-אֵלָה לֹא אֶנְכִי הָרָה וְתֹאמַר הַכֹּרֵן לְמִי הַחֲתָמֹת וְהַפְתִּילִים וְהַמָּטָה הָאֵלֶּה: וַיִּכַּר יְהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר צְדָקָה מִמֶּנִּי כִי-עָלִין לֹא-נִתְּתִיהָ לְשֵׁלָה בְנִי...

*About three months later, it was told to Yehuda: “Your daughter-in-law has become a harlot, and she is pregnant by harlotry.” Yehuda responded, “Take her out to be burned.” As she was being taken out, she sent word to her father-in-law, saying, “It is with the child of the man to whom these things belong that I am pregnant.” And she said, “Examine these: to whom does this seal, cord, and staff belong?” And Yehuda recognized them, and he said, “She is more in the right than me, inasmuch as I did not give her my son, Sheilah...”*

IN In this week's parsha, Tamar disguises herself and seduces her father in law, Yehuda. Upon hearing that Tamar is pregnant, Yehuda orders her executed for harlotry. When she produces proof, he publicly admits that he is the father.

In what is perhaps his most famous teaching, the holy Bas Ayin reads these words in a remarkable way:

**“Vayehi k'mishlosh chadashim”**: And it was around Chanukah time. (Kislev is the third month of the year.) **“Vayugad l'Yehuda”**: The Satan sent word to Hashem, Whose entire Name is included in the word “Yehuda”, saying, **“zansa Tamar kalasecha”**: “Your bride, the Jewish nation – who are compared by chazal to a ‘Tamar – date’ – has acted immorally, **“v'gam hinei harah l'zenunim”**: and she has become ‘impregnated’ by the influence of foreign cultures.”

**“Vayomer Yehuda hotzi'uha v'tisarei”**: Hashem responds by saying, “If it is as you say, then there is no longer any hope for our

relationship. Let them feel the pain of my eternal distance.”

**“Hee mutzeis, v'hee shalcha el chamiyah leimor”**: As the Jewish people are being taken out, they protest with the following claim: **“L'ish asher eileh lo anochi harah”**: “It is to Hashem alone (who is referred to as “Ish milchama”), to whom the 36 candles of Chanukah belong (the numerical value of the word “lo” equals 36) that I am faithful; **“hakeir na, l'mi hachosemes v'hapsilim v'hamateh ha'eileh”**: “Look down from heaven and see that we are still celebrating the Chanukah miracle (involving oil bearing the *chosem*-seal of the Kohen Gadol) in the darkness of this exile, lighting the wicks (“*pesillim*”) of the menorah, which is a vessel (the word “*Hamateh*” is numerically equivalent to the word “*kli – vessel*”).” Despite the appearance of our unfaithfulness, our connection to Chanukah demonstrates our innermost desire for closeness with Hashem.

**“Vayaker Yehuda vayomar”**: Hashem peers through the windows our Jewish homes around the world and sees loving families gathering around the menorah with such joy and sweetness. He says: **“tzadkah mimeni ki al kein lo nisatiha l'sheilah b'ni”**: “My beloved nation, you are right. I am at fault for your appearance, for I have still not sent Moshiach (Moshiach is referred to as “*Shiloh*”) to redeem you.”

Chanukah reveals the truest, innermost allegiance of a Jew: our desperate thirst for a relationship with Hashem. Its unparalleled illumination has the ability to penetrate beyond the cold, dark veneer of our lowly spiritual state to reveal the candle of God which forever burns at the core of our Jewish identity. 🕯



**Lighting Chanukah candles in the dark winter of our exile demonstrates that, despite all external appearances, our holy nation is yet bound with mighty bonds of love and devotion to the Master of the world.**

## Tohameha

### Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

NOW THAT WE have begun to learn about the exalted nature of Shabbos and the way in which this day channels the energy of *Binah*, we are able to understand why the nations of the world have no access to the spiritual treasures of this day. As we have described, the *Sefirah* of *Binah* is associated with the limitless spiritual freedom of the world to come. Because this level is prepared for the members of our exalted nation who are outfitted with a *neshama* that is a *cheilek Elokah mima'al*, it is only our nation that is gifted with Shabbos and the *neshama yeseirah* it brings. Based on this understanding, the Chernovitzer asks how Hashem could have offered the Torah to the nations of the world which includes the mitzvah of Shabbos. He answers that while they would be able to connect to some level of Shabbos, this aspect of the Shabbos spirit, the spirit of Shabbos day, is completely removed from their soul's capacity. With this, the tzaddik explains the words we recite Shabbos morning, **“V'lo nasato Hashem Elokeinu l'goyei ha'aratzos... ki l'Yisrael amcha nasato b'hava l'zera Yaakov asher bam bacharta.”** **“V'lo nesato...”**: This energy of Shabbos morning was not given to the nations of the world, **“l'zera Yaakov asher bam bacharta”**: For this level is only accessible to am Yisrael who maintain a spiritual connection to **“bam”**, which stands for **“Middas Binah”**. Indeed, the word **“Shabbos”** stands for **“Shabbos BaBayis Taaleh”**, a reference to the *Sefirah* of *Binah* into whose energy am Yisrael ascend on Shabbos morning. *Ashreinul!* 🕯

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

## Profiles of Tzaddikim

### Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

#### Reb Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl zy"א

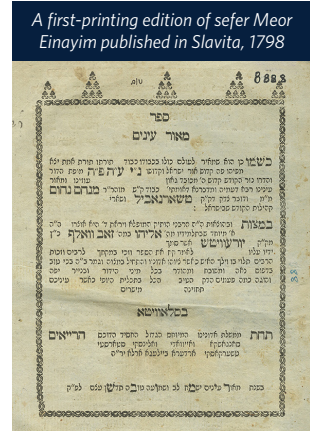
Reb Menachem Nachum ben Tzvi Hirsch Twersky was born in Norynsk in 1730 (5491). Orphaned as a young boy and raised by his uncle, Menachem Nachum exhibited exceptional mastery of the Torah from an early age. Although he was educated in traditional Lithuanian yeshivos, with the advent of Chassidus and the Baal Shem Tov's influence quickly spreading throughout Europe, Reb Menachem Nachum traveled to Medzibozh to meet the Baal Shem Tov and quickly became one of his closest disciples.

After the Baal Shem Tov left this world, Reb Menachem accepted the Maggid of Mezritch as his mentor and was charged with the responsibility of spreading the Baal Shem Tov's teachings to the masses, inspiring European Jewry with a newfound passion and excitement in their *avodas Hashem*. Establishing his court in the city of Chernobyl, the tzaddik's fame quickly spread.

With a natural proclivity towards the inner dimension of the Torah and an exceptional ability to elucidate these esoteric concepts, Reb Menachem Nachum captivated the hearts of all those who came to him seeking a more passionate and invigorated experience of Yiddishkeit. His *sefer Meor Einayim* has become widely accepted as one of the most fundamental texts of Chassidic literature.

*Zechuso Yogen Aleinu!*

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



## Chassidus 101

### Exploring the Foundations of Chassidus

THE TZADDIKIM COMPARE the Jewish nation's exile from the Holy Land to Adam HaRishon and Chava's expulsion from Gan Eden. Initially, Hashem placed Adam in Gan Eden in order to work the land as well as to protect it. After their sin, the Torah tells us that Hashem sent Adam out from Gan Eden "to work the soil from which he had been taken."

The Shem MiShmuel teaches that during the process through which the physical world was created, sparks of *kedusha* were scattered throughout existence. The ultimate task for which Adam HaRishon was originally created remained even after his sin: he was charged with elevating the sparks of *kedushah* throughout the world back to their source above. Adam and Chava's expulsion from Gan Eden and their subsequent journeys throughout the world paved the path for what was to ultimately become the *avodah* of Bnei Yisrael as a whole - to reconnect the world around us to our Father in heaven.

Reb Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin writes that when Klal Yisrael is sent into exile under the rule of a given nation, our task is to seek out a certain *middah*, a certain quality that once belonged to the Jewish People which, due to our shortcomings, was "exiled" to a different nation. This is why, when studying the different Yomim Tovim in the writings of the Chassidic Masters, one can usually identify a general theme which expresses itself through the general *avodah* of that Yom Tov. For example, the Arizal famously taught that while in Mitzrayim, the quality we lacked was *dibbur*, speech.

*This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press)*

The primary mitzvah of Pesach, telling over the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, is achieved through *Dibbur*, rectifying this quality. After leaving Mitzrayim, we journeyed into the *midbar*, the desert, which can also be read as *medaber*, one who speaks. One can find many different hints and references to various *middos* throughout the writings on the other Yomim Tovim as well.

Oftentimes, however, this recognition is lost. In these last generations, it is this very idea, the idea of a broader mission, which is too often lost in the rush of everyday life. The ability to refocus on our national goals and begin to work towards rectifying the world around us is dependent upon our recognition of the reason we are in *galus* in the first place. The Shem MiShmuel writes that during Avraham Avinu's time in his father's house, surrounded on all sides by idolatry, his desire and yearning for Godliness only increased. It was specifically because he was in that dark place and faced obstacle after obstacles that he was able to constantly strengthen himself to keep moving forward.

Therefore, Avraham Avinu understood that when his children would lose their passion and emotion in *avodas Hashem*, when that ultimate goal would become an afterthought, it would be the difficulties and struggles of *galus* which would ultimately bring them back. Rather than lamenting over the difficulties of *galus*, the tzaddikim wanted us to understand that the difficulties we face are opportunities to strengthen ourselves and keep pushing forward, drawing ourselves ever-closer to our Father in Heaven. 🕎

## A Quick Mayseh

*A Story to Warm the Heart*

The children excitedly gathered around the tree and marveled over its great height, discussing how exciting it would be to climb to the top. They opted to play a game to see who could climb to the top of the tree without falling. Among the participating children was five-year-old Menachem Mendel, the future Lubavitcher Rebbe. His mother, Rebbetzin Chana, observed the children as they played.

All the other boys succeeded, at best, to reach halfway up the tree before losing their grip and slipping down. Menachem Mendel alone reached the top.

Later, his mother asked him, "Mendel, how did you manage to reach the top of that tree when the other children failed?"

"It was easy," he answered. "The other boys kept looking down, and as soon as they realized how high they were, they became dizzy and slipped. I, however, looked only upward. When I realized how much more there was left to climb, I kept going higher and higher until I reached the top."

*There are a number of lessons to take from this anecdote. The most obvious: when one grows proud over perceived accomplishments, this is the beginning of his downfall. The tzaddikim who made it to the top did so because they never grew satisfied with where they were - they constantly pushed onward, higher and higher. 🙏*

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"THANK YOU HASHEM  
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"  
IS WRITTEN BY R' YAAKOV KLEIN,  
AUTHOR OF **SPARKS FROM BERDITCHOV** (FELDHEIM)  
AND EDITED BY **ASHIRA HERZFELD**

R' YAAKOV MAY BE REACHED AT  
SPARKSFROMBERDITCHOV@GMAIL.COM

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