

עטרת השבוע

Ateres HaShavua

A Weekly Torah Publication from the Students of Mesivta Ateres Yaakov
Ruth & Hyman Simon High School

פרשת לך לך
א"ה חשוון תשע"ג
October 27, 2012

Candle Lighting:	5:40
First קריאת שמע זמן:	9:23
Second קריאת שמע זמן:	9:59
First תפלה זמן:	10:28
Second תפלה זמן:	10:52
שקיעה	5:57
Earliest הבדלה:	6:47 (50 minutes)

All times are for The Five Towns

This week's edition of the Ateres HaShavua is Sponsored by the Daphna Family in honor of their daughter Chana's marriage to Shammai Simcha Tropper on Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan

This week's edition of the Ateres HaShavua is Sponsored anonymously לז"נ דניאל פייוש בן יעקב יצחק אליהו בן מרדכי הלוי נפטר י' חשוון תשע"ב

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FIRST APPEARANCE

By Yoel Weizberg, 10th Grade

וירא ה' אל אברם ויאמר לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת ויבן שם מזבח לה' הנראה אליו" (פרק י"ב, פסוק ז')

"And Hashem to Avraham and said "to your children I will give this land" so he built an alter to Hashem who appeared to him"

The Ramban explains that the reason Avraham Avinu built a *mizbeach* and slaughtered *korbanos* to thank Hashem was because until now Hashem didn't appear to Avraham. Therefore, when Hashem said "it was either in a dream or through *Ruach Hakodesh*."

The Ohr Hachaim asks, What's the reason that first Hashem spoke to Avraham in a dream before appearing to him. This was unlike any other first time Hashem spoke with a person. Why was it like this? So the Ohr Hachaim offers two answers. The first answer he gives is that Avraham had to work and put in effort to recognize that Hashem is the Creator of all, unlike anyone else Hashem ever spoke to. Also Avraham came to this recognition at the age of 50 years old on his own (there are other opinions as well regarding at what age Avraham came to this awareness), without anyone else's help, using his great *chachma*. Therefore, Hashem told him "לך לך" and Avraham realized who the speaker was without the speaker having to appear to him.

(Continued on page 2)

DAWN OF A NEW ERA

By Yonah Nisanov, 12th Grade

"ויקח אברם את שרי אשתו ואת לוט בן אחיו ואת כל רכושם אשר רכשו ואת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן ויצאו ללכת" ארצה כנען ויבאו ארצה כנען: (בראשית י"ב:ה)

"Avram took his wife Sarai, and Lot his brother's son, and all their wealth that they had amassed, and the souls they made in Charan; and they left to go toward the Land of Canaan, and they came to the Land of Canaan." (Bereishis 12:5)

In *Mesechtas Avodah Zara (9)*, it states that the history of the world is divided into three eras: 2,000 years on confusion, 2,000 years of Torah, and 2,000 years of the era of Moshiach. One might think that the 2,000 years of Torah would begin with Kabolat Hatorah but this is not so. The 2,000 years started with "the souls that Avram made in Charan," a reference to the converts that Avram brought to Hashem.

Avraham was credited with being the first to spread Hashem's wisdom in this world, thereby ending the era of confusion. However, he was not the first to study Torah. Noach also studied the Torah. Otherwise, how would he be able to distinguish between the pure and impure animals that he needed to bring on the *taiva*? *Shem and Eiver* also studied Torah, and they even built yeshivos where Avraham himself learned!! According to this, why would Avraham be credited with the start of a new era of Torah? All he seems to be is a link to a chain going back to Adam Harishon! Why was he of all people credited with the starting of a new era?

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ATERES HASHAVUA

Yoel Weizberg (Continued from page 1)

The Ohr Hachaim's second answer is Avraham was the first person in the past ten generations (aside from *Shem* and *Eiver*) to recognize that there is a G-d, and that it wasn't the stone idols of nothingness that everyone around him in *Ur Kasdim* was bowing down to, and Hashem then spoke to him which was also a first for the past ten generations. Therefore, Hashem guided Avraham in this order of first speaking to him without revealing His *Shechina* to Avraham, until he tested him to be positive that he'd keep His *Mitzvos*. After Hashem saw that Avraham Avinu left his homeland, his birthplace and his father's house from *Charan* to go to *Eretz Canaan*, was Hashem sure that Avraham would keep his *Mitzvos*; only then did he reveal the *shechina* to him as the pasuk says "...וירא ה' אל אברם..."

This episode which didn't happen to any other person before or after was because the other *nevi'im* that spoke with Hashem, already believed in Hashem in their hearts, which stemmed from Avraham Avinu, the first to have that faith. For example, the first time Hashem communicated with Moshe Rabeinu was through the burning bush. As a proof to this there's a *pasuk* that writes "שמעי בת וראי" hear, daughter, and see. The *pasuk* could've said "שמעי וראי בת" or "שמעי בת וראי" but it didn't, so it's coming to teach us something. What it's teaching us is that "שמעי" (hearing) happened before the "ראי" (seeing) as descendants of Avraham Avinu, as we've had *Emunas Hashem* passed down to us through our parents and *Rabbeim*. May we all be *zocheh* to have the *shechina* appear to us, as It did to all the *nevi'im*.

Yonah Nisanov (Continued from page 1)

Rav Yosef Karo explains on his commentary on the Rambam, that *Shem and Eiver* revealed the ways of Hashem to their students, however they were never inspired to spread the word of Hashem to the world outside of the *beis medresh* like Avraham did. Therefore, Avraham's merit was greater than theirs.

The spiritual leaders that were before Avraham did no more than show the words of Hashem to the people that were interested and to the people that came into the *beis medresh*. No one ever took the Torah out of the *beis medresh* and into the streets and market places to spread its awesomeness to other people. However, Avraham rose and tried to inspire people outside of the *beis medresh*.

The Rambam writes: Avraham rose and began to call out to the world in a great voice proclaiming that Hashem is the Almighty and He Himself is the One fitting to be served. He would travel from city to city and country to country gathering crowds as he went until he reached the Land of *Canaan*. Eventually, he gathered a group that was tens of thousands of people. These were the members of Avraham's household.

By spreading Hashem's wisdom beyond the walls of the *beis medresh*, Avraham began a new era of Torah. The Torah shattered the darkness and confusion of the world and brought a new light down to the world. In this merit, Avraham earned the title of "Hashem's beloved". He started an era that would last throughout the generations, throughout the next 2,000 years. In our lives also, we have this opportunity to show Hashem and his Torah outside of the *beis medresh*. We too can do what Avraham did, and bring people outside of the *beis medresh* closer to Hashem.

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Stories of Tzaddikim

By Binyamin Goldstein

There was a story told over by R' Mordechai Grunwald, at a hesped for Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel zt"l, whose first yartzeit is this Shabbos.

Around 15 years ago there was a family who lost their father, who was a Talmud of the Mir. Rav Nosson Tzvi had a fond relationship with the deceased father and took it upon himself to make sure that the children will have a fatherly figure and also receive proper chinuch. He told the children that whenever they had a question or just wanted to talk, to mail him a letter and he would communicate with them that way. Rav Nosson Tzvi kept photos of these children in his pocket as a reminder of his talmid's family.

The children took advantage of this and would mail him constantly, and even though Rav Nosson Tzvi had Parkinsons disease he would respond to every letter. This went on until the boys grew up and Rav Nosson Tzvi got them into various yeshivos. Every Friday night the boys would be seen enjoying their Shabbos seudah with Rav Nosson Tzvi.

As R' Mordechai Grunwald finished the hesped, he was approached by one of the yungeleit of the beis medrash. The man said that this story doesn't end here. "There was a 8 year old girl among those 4 boys. Unfortunately, she wasn't able to write to Rav Nosson Tzvi, and felt very bad that she didn't have as close a relationship with him as her brothers did. Once though she received a letter in the mail from Rav Nosson Tzvi, and in it was a hand-drawn picture of a large heart with a loving message to her." That little girl is my wife, and to this day she remembers how happy that letter made her feel.

Thoughts On The Haftorah

By Ari Halpern

In this week's Haftorah, Hashem tells Yeshaya that despite the widespread *aveira of avoda zara*, Hashem still loves the Jewish people. In the words of Yeshaya, Hashem uses three different phrases to describe the Jews: "Yisrael my servant," "Yaakov whom I have chosen," and "the children of Avraham, who loved me." Why was it necessary for Hashem to employ three different phrases to describe His nation? And what happened to Yitzchak?

Actually, this pasuk is not employing the often-used theme of mentioning the merits of the three avos. Instead, the Malbim explains, Yeshaya is comparing the Jews to two types of servants. The first is a servant who does excellent work and pleases his master to the utmost. This is Yisrael, the holier name of Yaakov, who always strives to fulfill the Mitzvos. The second is a servant who does sub-par work, but is nevertheless kept around because he is from an exotic country that the master favors. This is Yaakov, who is kept only because of his birthright. Both servants are cherished by their master, but, if either one were to make a huge mistake, they would be abruptly relieved of their duties. These two servants are the first two phrases in the *pasuk*: the excellent servant and the inferior one. If we were to be judged as either one of those names, we would not be able to remain in Hashem's good graces because we have made huge mistakes. That is why the *pasuk* brings down the third phrase. It teaches us that although we may not be the best servants, and we may make mistakes, Hashem still loves us because Avraham, our forefather, loved Hashem when everyone else in the world

אם תשיב משבת רגלך

Tochain-Grinding

Last week we discussed what constituted tochain. this week we will discuss what practical actions are and are not tochain.

What is tochain:

- 1) Chopping wood into chips is tochain, even though the wood is not being grinded, it is being broken down into smaller pieces, thus constituting tochain
- 2) Although we said in last week's article that grinding food that does not grow from the ground does not constitute tochain, raw meats or fish are considered non-foods according to halacha, thus the chopping of these foods will constitute tochain even though they do not grow from the ground.
- 3) Crushing salt into a powder is considered tochain because the salt is getting broken down.

What is not Tochain:

- 1) One may use an egg slicer on shabbos because the blades of the egg slicer are made for slicing, not grinding, therefore one may slice eggs via an egg slicer without being *over* on tochain.
- 2) One may crush a medicine tablet for a child because the medicine has already been ground, therefore grinding it again would not be tochain.
- 3) According to many poskim, one may crush a baked potato because they say that the potato had already been "ground" by being softened in the cooking.

וקראת לשבת עונג

שלקראת בואו תלך

Last year when we initiated this column, we related how R' Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l once observed that although we have been zocheh to overcome the *nisayon* of *shmiras Shabbos* in America, we have yet to regain the flavor of *erev Shabbos*.

Throughout the year we explored many aspects of preparing for Shabbos, purposefully, practically and peacefully. Hopefully we were able to recapture some of that flavor.

Let us continue through *erev Shabbos*, as the sun sinks lower in the western sky, and focus on those beautiful moments when we usher in the Shabbos.

The *Gemara* relates how *Amoraim* would greet the Shabbos with the words בואי כלה; they received the Shabbos like a חתן stepping forward to greet his כלה.

Seforim explain that preparing for Shabbos is compared to getting ready for a wedding. (This is a theme which actually continues throughout the Shabbos) The eager anticipation of the arrival of the Shabbos parallels the excitement of preparing for a *Chasunah*. As the scene shifts from the hectic pre-*Chasunah* preparations to the *kabalas panim*, the *badeken*, and then the *chuppah*, the joy and excitement are magnified.

Ma Yedidus Menuchasech- in this *zemer*-a joyous paean to the Shabbos Queen- the author makes reference to the above mentioned *Gemara*: "How beloved is your tranquility, oh Shabbos Queen. Let us run towards you, come, exalted bride."

In the coming weeks we will iy"ח discuss, through the prisms of halacha and *aggadah*, through things we do and even through the songs we sing, how we too can step forward to greet the exalted כלה, the Shabbos Queen.



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