

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

LIVING FOREVER

If there is one thing for certain in life, it is that everyone dies. Sounds depressing, but in actual fact we know that this world is but a corridor to the Real (Eternal) World – the world to come. Yet our Rabbis have noted that certain individuals did not die! We are told that David Melech Yisrael Chai Vekayam – King David is alive and exists. The Gemarah in Taanit (5) states that Yakov never died! Rabbi Yochanan notes that the Torah normally describes a persons death with the word "Vayamot", as was with the case of Avraham's (Bereishit 25:8) and Yitzchak (35:29). Yet when it comes to Yakov, the Torah never uses the word Vayamot. Rabbi Yochanan states that this implies; Yakov never actually died. Rav Yitzchak questions the fact that Yakov never died, for the Torah explicitly states that he was eulogized, embalmed and buried?" Rav Nachman responds: "It is written, 'And you, my servant Yakov, fear not, says the L-rd, and do not tremble, O Israel. For behold, I shall save you from afar, and your descendants from the land of their captivity' (Jeremiah 30:10). The verse equates Yakov with his descendants: just as his descendants are alive, he, too, is alive." Thus we see that Yakov never died. How is it possible to never die? Surely this defies logic. Does that mean that Yakov is living with us today? Let us take a closer look into the Parsha. When Yakov's days came close to the end, he called for his son Yosef and told him that he did not wish to be buried in Egypt, rather he wished to be buried in Israel. Yakov asks Yosef to swear that he will bury him in Israel. Yosef agrees saying – Anochi Eseh Kidvarecha – I will do as you say. On a deeper level, the Baalei Tosfot learn that Yosef was saying, "father I see that it is important for you to be buried in Israel, Anochi Eseh Kidvarecha – I am also going to do like you and I will also ask to be buried in Israel." This seems a little

strange. We would expect Yosef just to agree with his fathers dying demands. We would not expect him to add and say that's a great idea, I also wish to be buried in Israel. Even more strange is that later when Yosef himself is dying he approaches the brothers and asks them VeHalitem Et Atsmotai (50:25) – When the time comes and Hashem takes Am Yisrael out of Egypt, please take my bones up to Israel with your bones. Yosef was inadvertently advising his brothers, that they too should be buried in Israel. Of course it is a merit to be buried in Israel, but what gives Yosef the right to seemingly impose this stringency on others? The concept of death is utter separation of body from soul, each one returning to its element, making its Tikun (perfection) in its specific way. The essence of life is the ability to connect to Hashem (as it is V'Atem Hadevekim...Chayim Kulechem Hayom). A Tsadik is connected to Hashem in this world, and remains connected even after death. On the other hand a Rasha, even when he is alive, has this intrinsic life force missing from him. His lack of connection to Hashem causes him to be "dead" even whilst alive. It is for this reason that the righteous are called alive even after they're dead, while the wicked are called dead even while they are alive (Gemara Brachot 18). Our Rabbis taught: There are three partners in man: The Holy One, Blessed Be He, the father and the mother. The father supplies the white substance, out of which are formed the child's bones, the sinews, the nails, the brain and the white of the eye. The mother supplies the red substance, out of which are formed the skin, flesh, hair, blood and the black of the eye. G-d provides the spirit, the soul, the beauty of the features, eyesight, the power of hearing, ability to speak and walk, understanding and intelligence." (Gemara Nidda 30a). Our Sages note that Brah karah deavuh – A son is a physical extension of his father, and the son's soul has an effect on the father. A son, who goes in the righteous ways of the father, continues his legacy and gives life to his father's

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name. In such a case it is as if the father never died, for his son continues his father's legacy both spiritually and physically.

Yosef was Yakov's prodigy. From a young age, Yakov had invested all his Torah that he learnt in Shem VeEver into his son Yosef. Yakov saw in Yosef a future leader. He also noticed that there were many similarities between the two. Many years later when he finally got back together with Yosef, he was pleased to see how Yosef had kept up his spirituality and service of Hashem. Both Yakov and Yosef entered Galut, and both survived spiritually. When Yosef stated to his father that he wished to be buried in Israel just like Yakov, it was because Yosef viewed himself as an extension of Yakov. Any wish that Yakov conveyed, was also a wish that Yosef desired to fulfil. Since Yosef wished to be Yakov's mirror image in the world, he too desired to be buried in Israel. When commanding his brothers to bury him in Israel, he specifically mentions that they bury his bones (Atsmotai). This was a hint to the fact that they fulfil their father's will, by enacting it themselves. By burying their bones which emanate from their father, they show that they continue his legacy in the world. Yakov Avinu never died, because he passed on his entire essence to his children. All of his children were Tsadikim and carried on his legacy.

Rabbi Shalom Schwadron told a story of two religious people who took a taxi ride in Israel a few years after the passing of the Chazon Ish – R' Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz zt"l (1878-1953). They were in the cab and mentioning to each other how Bnei Brak wasn't the same since the Chazon Ish had passed away. The cab driver, a non-observer

Jew, hearing this turned round saying "Did you say that the Chazon Ish is gone. You're wrong – you don't know what you're talking about!" "The Chazon Ish is still around – and I can prove it." The two people were a bit stunned, and they were all ears.

The cab driver began his story: "My daughter was going through complicated labour and the doctors had been dealing with her for many hours. She was in agony, yet the doctors seemed helpless, and told me there was nothing they could do. At some point an old nurse came over to me and said, 'Why don't you go to the Chazon Ish?' "The who?" I asked. 'What is the Chazon Ish?' "He is a great rabbi," the nurse said. 'People go to him for advice, and to pray for them.' I asked her, 'Where does he live?' She told me, 'Just go to Bnei Brak. Once you get there, any child in the street will be able to direct you to his home.' "I got into my cab and raced to Bnei Brak. In no time I was at the Chazon Ish's house. It was late at night, but he answered my knock himself. In a quiet and friendly manner he asked how he could help me. I told him about my daughter's difficulties, and how the doctors were unable to help her. He looked at me, smiled, and said, 'You can go back to the hospital – the child was just born.' He shook my hand and wished me Mazel Tov. My heart leaped with joy, but I could not believe him. I dashed back to the hospital and when I got there, sure enough, the child had already been born, exactly as he said."

The cab driver continued. "Two years later my daughter was again expecting a child. Once again she had extreme difficulties in labour. And once again the doctors despaired of a healthy birth. This time I didn't wait for the old nurse. I got into my cab,

rushed to Bnei Brak, and went to the Chazon Ish. I came to the corner where I thought I remembered he lived, and just to be sure I asked a passer-by, 'Is this the home of the Chazon Ish?' The man looked at me as if I had lost my mind. 'What's the matter with you? Don't you know that the Chazon Ish passed away last year?' "My heart fell. I felt as if I had lost my best friend. Illogically, I began pleading with this total stranger. 'Please, I came to speak to him; it's an emergency. To whom should I go now?' "People go to his kever (grave site) and pray there,' he told me. I queried as to its location, and the man pointed me in the right direction. I ran there, fell on the grave and began crying uncontrollably. I begged the Chazon Ish to pray for my daughter. 'You saved my daughter once before,' I pleaded, 'please pray for her again.' "I was there a short time. Suddenly, just as I sit here now, I saw his face with that same smile. I heard him say to me, 'Mazel tov! You can go back to the hospital; the child has been born.' Startled, I got up, ran to my cab, and rushed back to the hospital. When I got there, they told me that my second grandchild had indeed been born. Then the cab driver turned to his passengers and said, "And you say the Chazon Ish is gone!"

When attending a Yeshiva, you often here Yeshiva students learning out loud, one asks the other what does Rashi say? Rashi is saying..... is the answer. Rashi is alive, it is as if he is with us today. Through his Torah and teachings his life lives on.

Dying, in Judaism is far from certain. People that leave behind them children, students that go in their righteous path, as well as positive actions, live forever.

May we all merit to live forever!



RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT VAYECHI

In this week's Parashah, Yosef's brothers come trembling before him after Yaakov's death, afraid that he will now take revenge for what they did to him years earlier. Yosef responds:

וַאֲתָם הִשְׁבַּתְּם עָלַי רָעָה, אֱלֹהִים הִשְׁבְּחָה לְטוֹבָה - "You intended to harm me, but G-d intended it for good."

Think about that. The brothers chose evil. They plotted, they acted, they tried to destroy Yosef. That was their choice, freely made. That is what

Bechirah, free choice, is. Free choice is not a fantasy of unlimited power. It is the ability to decide, the ability to want, the ability to say yes or no, to choose right from wrong. That is real freedom. But look closer at Yosef's words. The outcome of their evil was not in their hands. He did not blame the result on them. They tried to destroy him, but they could not control the future. G-d, and G-d alone, directed the events so that Yosef would rise to power, save Egypt from famine, and preserve his entire family. Their evil became the instrument of salvation.

We have been given the freedom of choice, and only that. The results are not a direct outcome of our choices.

All you can control is your choice itself. This is also the comfort of faith. If someone harms you, remember: their choice was theirs, but the outcome is G-d's. Yosef teaches us that suffering, betrayal, hardship, none of these is the final word. The outcome of life is not the outcome of someone else's choice; it is part of G-d's plan.

So, the question for us is simple, yet profound: What will you choose? You cannot control the outcome, but your choice, the moral act, the honest word, the kind deed, belongs entirely to you. And that is the freedom of G-d given choice: the power to choose, and the faith to trust that G-d will turn it for good.



RABBI DANNY FISHER

Director - TAL Boys After School Programs

PARSHAT VAYECHI

As Yakov Ovinu gives the brochos over to the Shevotim in this weeks Sedra we find something very interesting. The Medrash Rabbah explains that the maftach of the brochos, the actual ability to give the brocha over was handed down from Avrohom to Yitzchok, Yitzchok to Yakov and now Yakov was handing it over to Yosef. Before Yakov Ovinu leaves this world he calls in Yosef to give the brocha to him. The brocha he gives is "hamalach hagoel", in it he says "yevorevh es haneorim" which says it actually refers to Efraim and Menashe.

The Nesivos Sholom asks, why does Yakov miss out Yosef and instead give a brocha to Efraim and Menashe?

The Nesivos Sholom explains that in fact Yosefs middah was split into 2 parts, one Efraim and the other Menashe, which is something that we don't find with any other Shevet.

Menashe represents the aspect "tzur merah", and Efraim represents "v'aseh tov".

As Yosef brought in his 2 children Yakov asks "mi eleh", the letters "mi eleh" can be written out to read "Elokim". The aspect of Elokim represents the middah of "yiroh" – "fear". It appears that Yakov Avinu realized that Efraim and Menashe were serving Hashem out of "yirah" instead of "ahavah" even though serving

Hashem out of "ahavah" would be on a greater level.

Yosef answers Yakov question by stating "asher noson le Hashem Bazeh", that Hashem has given them to me here in Mitzrayim. The fact that they were born here in Mitzrayim, in a place saturated with tumah means that "yiroh" is needed in order to serve Hashem. It is the Yiroh that will get us through mitzrayim and will enable us to hold onto our morals and ideals.

Says Yakov back to Yosef one needs the koach of the Torah in order to serve Hashem.

We should merit to learn the Torah in the best possible way

Have a wonderful Shabbos



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

If a Sefaradi is Praying With Ashkenazim And the Minyan is Lost During the Hazara

The Halacha below was generated based on classes given by Rabbi Eli Mansour in the Beki'im B'Halacha series. The classes were previously orated on the date(s) shown below.

I once encountered a fascinating Halachic question while praying in an airport before boarding. A group of nine Ashkenazim approached me and said they needed a tenth man so they could make a Minyan for Minha, and I of course happily agreed. During the Hazara (repetition of the Amida), an announcement was made that it was time to board. Six of us knew we had time to finish Minha before we needed to get on line to board, but four of the men were worried, and left to board. The remaining six were unsure what to do, and I told them that the Hazzan may continue the repetition of the Amida, since there was a Minyan in attendance when it began. If a section of the service requiring a Minyan began when ten or more men were present, it may be completed even if the Minyan was lost, as long as at least six men remain.

The problem, however, arose when the time came to recite the Kaddish Titkabal after the Hazara. Ashkenazic custom views the Kaddish Titkabal as integrally connected to the Hazara, and therefore, just as the Hazara may be completed after the Minyan was lost, the Kaddish Titkaba after the Hazara may likewise be recited. Sephardic custom, however, views Kaddish Titkabal as separate from the Hazara, and thus according to Sephardic practice, if the Minyan was lost during the Hazara, then the Kaddish Titkabal may not be recited after the Hazzan completes the Hazara. I was thus unsure what to do in this situation, as a Sepharadi praying with Ashkenazim after four of the ten men left. Their Halachic tradition mandated reciting the Kaddish Titkabal after the repetition of the Amida, but according to my Halachic tradition, this Kaddish should not be recited. I did not know whether I should answer to their recitation of Kaddish.

I later sent a message to Rav Yisrael Bitan asking this question, and he promptly replied with a detailed, six-page Teshuva

(responsum) on this subject. He noted Hacham Ovadia Yosef's ruling that when a person hears a Beracha which according to his tradition is unwarranted, and thus recited in vain, he may not answer "Amen." One example is a Sefaradi who hears an Ashkenazi recite the Beracha of "Al Misvat Tefillin" over the Tefillin Shel Rosh. Although this Ashkenazi obviously acts correctly by reciting this Beracha, which is required according to Ashkenazic custom, the Sefaradi should not answer "Amen," since according to Sephardic practice, this Beracha constitutes a Beracha Le'batala (blessing recited in vain). This would apply also in the case of a Sefaradi who hears an Ashkenazi recite a Beracha over Hallel on Rosh Hodesh – a Beracha required by Ashkenazi custom but not according to Sephardic custom. Since Sephardic tradition regards this blessing as a "Beracha Le'batala," the Sefaradi should not answer "Amen" to this blessing. Many other Poskim dispute Hacham Ovadia's ruling, and maintain that since the Ashkenazi recites this blessing legitimately, in accordance with Ashkenazic practice, there is no problem

for a Sefaradi to answer "Amen." Rabbi Bitan considers the possibility that Hacham Ovadia might agree that in the case of Kaddish, a Sefaradi may respond even if the Kaddish should not be recited according to Sephardic custom. One might distinguish between answering to an unwarranted blessing, which constitutes a "Beracha Le'batala," and answering to Kaddish, which is not a blessing.

Rav Bitan concludes, however, that Hacham Ovadia likely applied his ruling even to Kaddish, and thus, in his view, a Sefaradi should not answer "Amen" to Kaddish if the Kaddish is not valid according to Sephardic custom. He may, however, answer "Yeheh Shemeh Rabba" even according to Hacham Ovadia's position, as this is merely an expression of praise, and differs from the response of "Amen."

Given the different views on this subject, Rav Bitan suggested avoiding this problem by reciting the verse, "Baruch Hashem Le'olam Amen Ve'amen" (Tehillim 89:53), attempting to conclude the verse just when the others respond "Amen" to the Kaddish. This way, the Sefaradi answers "Amen" but says this word as part of a verse, which is always acceptable, thus satisfying all opinions.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Vayechi

After 17 years in Egypt, Yaakov senses his days drawing to a close and summons Yosef. He has Yosef swear to bury him in the Machpela Cave, the burial place of Adam and Chava, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivka. Yaakov falls ill and Yosef brings to him his two sons, Ephraim and Menashe. Yaakov elevates Ephraim and Menashe to the status of his own sons, thus giving Yosef a double portion that removes the status of firstborn from Reuven. As Yaakov is blind from old age, Yosef leads his sons close to their grandfather. Yaakov kisses and hugs them. He had not thought to see his son Yosef again, let

alone Yosef's children. Yaakov begins to bless them, giving precedence to Ephraim, the younger, but Yosef interrupts him and indicates that Menashe is the elder. Yaakov explains that he intends to bless Ephraim with his strong hand because Yehoshua will descend from him, and Yehoshua will be both the conqueror of Eretz Yisrael and the teacher of Torah to the Jewish People. Yaakov summons the rest of his sons in order to bless them as well. Yaakov's blessing reflects the unique character and ability of each tribe, directing each one in its unique mission in serving G-d. Yaakov passes from this world at age 147. A tremendous procession accompanies his funeral cortege up from Egypt to his resting place in

the Cave of Machpela in Chevron. After Yaakov's passing, the brothers are concerned that Yosef will now take revenge on them. Yosef reassures them, even promising to support them and their families. Yosef lives out the rest of his years in Egypt, seeing Ephraim's great-grandchildren. Before his death, Yosef foretells to his brothers that G-d will redeem them from Egypt. He makes them swear to bring his bones out of Egypt with them at that time. Yosef passes away at the age of 110 and is embalmed. Thus ends Sefer Bereishet, the first of the five Books of the Torah.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com

Q

1. What is a 'parsha stumah'?
2. Give three reasons why Yaakov didn't want to be buried in Egypt.
3. "When I was coming from Padan, Rachel died on me... I buried her there on the way to Ephrat..." Why did Yaakov say all this to Yosef?
4. Initially, why was Yaakov unable to bless Ephraim and Menashe?
5. Name one great descendant of: a) Ephraim; b) Menashe.

A

1. 47:28 - A 'parsha stumah' is a parsha written in the Torah scroll which is not preceded by a blank space. 'Vayechi' is the only 'parsha stumah' in the Torah. All other weekly portions are preceded by a blank space or they begin on a new line.
2. 47:29 - (a) Egypt's ground was to be plagued with lice; (b) At the time of the resurrection, those buried outside of Israel will suffer; (c) so the Egyptians wouldn't make him into an idol.
3. 48:7 - Yaakov thought Yosef harbored resentment since Yaakov had not buried Yosef's mother, Rachel, in the Maaras Hamachpela.
4. 48:8 - The Shechina departed from him.
5. 48:19 - (a) Yehoshua; (b) Gideon.

LET'S GET TOGETHER AT TAL

Your week ahead starts here! Explore Our Timetable

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays
BAR MITZVAH PROGRAM By Rabbi Shaul 8-4:30pm Boys CHAZANUT PROGRAM By Rabbi Shaul	10am Ladies YOGA CLASS By Tzipi Tiro 11am Ladies CAFFEINE FOR THE SOUL By Rabbatun Hefesshadi	12pm UCL Boys 1-2-1 LUNCH & LEARN By Rabbi Markovitz 1:30pm JPS LUNCH & LEARN 9pm Lads CHAVRUTA NIGHT 8-10pm YB YOUNG PROFESSIONALS EVENING By Rabbi Shaul and Boys Team	10am-12pm Mothers MOTHER & BABY PROGRAM With Hani 1:30pm JS Boys LUNCH & LEARN 1:30pm Remnant Girls LUNCH & LEARN 4:30-6pm Boys Y9 AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM By Rabbi Shaul 8pm Lads LADS CHAVRUTA PROGRAM with Gonen By Rabbi Shaul and Rabbi Shaul	1:20pm (Remnant) Boys LUNCH & LEARN By Rabbi Shaul 4:30-6pm (Remnant) Boys AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM By Rabbi Shaul Fridays & Shabbat WEEKLY MINYAN with Dina and Keren FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS Students, Young Professionals, Community