

# THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT VAYERA

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
*TAL Founder & Director*

## HOPE!

Hope is a renewable option: if you run out of it at the end of the day, you get to start over in the morning!

The prophet Yeshaya (51:2) states take a "look at Abraham your father and at Sarah who bore you, for when he was but one, I called him, and I blessed him and made him many."

Avraham and Sarah were getting older. It looked impossible for them to have any real future. Sarah was barren. Yet we all have read what happens next. From the depth of despair comes great salvation.

According to all norms of the world, Yitzchak should not have come into existence. But Hashem blessed Avraham and Sarah beyond the rules of nature teaching all future generations that – Yisrael MeAl Hamazal – Israel is above nature.

Rabbeinu Nissim Gaon (Sefer Masiyot Divrei Hamtchil Chachmenu Amru) tells the story of a wealthy Jew who pondered over his end in this world.

He thought to himself, "A person doesn't live forever. One day I will be in the grave, and I won't take a penny with me. What can I do with my wealth so it can help me even then?"

His advisors told him, "Help the poor, and that merit will be taken with you to the next world."

The wealthy Jew decided that he would love to give his wealth to a pauper who would be so lost for hope and totally in despair. He wanted to turn the paupers' fortunes around in one moment.

He began speaking with paupers, asking them how they were managing to get by.

Each one gave a different reason, one was relying on a wealthy uncle, the other an old friend, a neighbour; Not one of them had lost hope.

He became frustrated. "Is there no one out there that I can find that has totally lost all hope?"

As he was deep in thought, he noticed someone dressed in rags, sitting on top of a garbage heap, rummaging for something to eat.

"Can there be anyone poorer than him?" he thought.

"This person has certainly lost all hope!" He approached the pauper and gave him a sack full of a hundred silver coins.

The pauper seemingly shocked asked, "Why did you give me so much money?"

The wealthy man answered, "I made a vow that I will give a lot of money to the pauper who has lost all hope and I am glad that I have finally found you".

The pauper nodding his head replied, "Only a fool loses hope. I didn't lose hope. I trust in Hashem who is Meashpot Yarim Evyon – raises the poor out of the garbage heap! (Tehillim 113:7). If Hashem wills it, nothing can prevent Hashem from making me wealthy."

The wealthy man stunned by this pauper's response, realised that he will never find a person who lost all hope, so he dug a pit in the cemetery and hid his money there.

As the years past, he forgot all about this and the wheel of fortune turned. Eventually this wealthy man became very poor, and he went from door to door, collecting food and money.

At one stage after many years in poverty, he remembered that he once buried a large

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16TH CHESHVAN 5786

SHABBAT BEGINS:  
16:08pm

SHABBAT ENDS:  
17:11pm

TAL is Delighted to Welcome 100 Young Professionals to Our Exclusive Friday Night Dinner this week

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**DVAR TORAH**  
Hope!  
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

**DVAR TORAH**  
When Hashem Calls Twice  
By Rabbi Danny Fisher

**HALACHOT**  
By Rabbi Eli Mansour

**KIDS ZONE**  
Quiz & Comic

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sum of money in the cemetery. So, he went to the cemetery and started digging.

The police heard that someone was digging the cemetery and arrived to arrest him.

Eventually he was brought before the Count to explain what he was up to.

He explained to the Count that he was once wealthy, and now that poverty had struck, he would go collecting from door to door. He remembered that he hid a large sum of money in the cemetery, and he was digging there to retrieve it.

The Count smiled and asked, "Don't you remember me? Years ago, you found me in the garbage heap, rummaging around for food. I told you that I trust in Hashem. I told you that if He wills it, He can make me wealthy.

Now look at where my belief brought me!"

We have to constantly remember that Hashem can do anything and EVERYTHING.

According to nature, Avraham and Sarah couldn't have children. Am Yisrael could never be. But if Hashem wills it, miracles can happen beyond nature.

The gematria (numerical value) of hope in Hebrew (אמונה) is 317. If one adds one more, it is equal to 318, the gematria of Eliezer- אליעזר, which stands for Elokei Avi BeEzri – the G-d of my father is at my help. When one knows that Hashem is helping him, he will never lose hope.

Rabbi Yisrael of Koznitz (1740-1814) - The Avodas Yisrael zt'l notes that Hashem's name (spelt Yud and Heh and Vav and Heh) is not mentioned in the Parashiot of Mikeitz or Vayigash all the way until Parshat Vayechi where it mentions His Name again with the famous statement of Yaakov – Lishuat-

echa Kiviti Hashem, I await Your salvation, Hashem.

This is because these Pesukim tell the story of the exile to Mitzrayim: The seven plentiful years followed by the bad years (stated in Mikeitz), ending with Yaakov Avinu and his family coming down to Mitzrayim (stated in Vayigash). It wasn't a happy time; therefore, Hashem's Name of compassion is not mentioned.

If one counts the number of all these Pesukim that Hashem's name isn't mentioned he will get the sum of 318! This hints to us that even when Hashem's compassion is concealed, it is always Elokei Avi BeEzri, that Hashem is helping us, from behind the scenes. And since Hashem is with us, there is never a reason to lose hope!

Let us strengthen in our belief and never despair.

Once we choose hope – anything is possible!



## RABBI DANNY FISHER

*Director - TAL Boys After School Programs*

### WHEN HASHEM CALLS TWICE

We find in several places throughout Tanach that Hashem calls out to people by repeating their name twice. We see this in this week's Sedra, when a Malach of Hashem calls to Avraham at the last moment and tells him not to offer up his son – "Avraham, Avraham!"

Similarly, Hashem calls to Yaakov in a dream when he learns that Yosef is still alive, to Moshe at the burning bush in the Midbar, and to Shmuel when he is a young child living in the Mishkan. Rashi explains that this double calling is an expression of chibah – deep love and

affection – between Hashem and the one He is speaking to.

By contrast, when Hashem appears to resha'im, the Torah uses the expression "Vayavo Elokim" – "and Hashem came." We see this in this week's Sedra when Hashem comes to Avimelech in a dream after he takes Sarah; likewise, when Hashem appears to Lavan as he chases Yaakov, and when He speaks to Bilam. In these cases, Hashem does not call them – He simply comes to them. The connection is distant, without affection. Hashem speaks to them out of necessity, not love.

However, when Hashem first commands Avraham to offer up his son Yitzchak, He does not say "Avraham, Avraham." Perhaps we can suggest that this is

because at that stage, Avraham had not yet demonstrated the full depth of his love and devotion to Hashem. Only after he successfully passes this ultimate test does the Torah show the expression of love – "Avraham, Avraham" – reflecting that Avraham has now proven his unwavering faith and closeness to Hashem.

This teaches us that life's challenges and tests are opportunities to deepen our relationship with Hashem. When we overcome our yetzer hara and remain steadfast in our emunah, we bring ourselves even closer to Him – and strengthen the bond of love that Hashem has for us.

**Have a wonderful Shabbos!**



## HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

**Must One Stand if He Hears the Congregation Reciting "Hashem Melech"?**

The proclamation "Hashem Melech, Hashem Malach, Hashem Yimloch Le'olam Va'ed," which we make each

morning before Baruch She'amar, should be made while standing. On weekdays, "Hashem Melech" is recited just before Baruch She'amar, and so one remains

standing until after Baruch She'amar. On Shabbat and holidays, however, when other chapters of Tehillim are recited in between "Hashem Melech" and Baruch

She'amar, one must remain standing until he completes the verse recited right after "Hashem Melech" – "Ve'haya Hashem La'Melech...U'Shmo Ehad." The next paragraph – "Hoshi'enu" – may be recited sitting.

If one has already prayed Shaharit, and, while learning Torah in the synagogue, he hears the congregation recite "Hashem Melech," then he must stand. Preferably, he should also join them in the recitation. If, however, one hears an individual reciting "Hashem Melech," not with a Minyan, he has no obligation to stand.

If a person is praying with a Minyan, and he is still reciting Hodu when the congregation reaches "Hashem Melech," then he should stand but not join the congregation in reciting "Hashem Melech." The Arizal taught that the sequence of the prayer service is vitally important, and so following the proper order takes precedence over the value of joining the congregation in reciting "Hashem Melech." Disrupting the sequence of the Tefila could adversely affect its impact, and so one should not recite "Hashem Melech" early, while he has yet to complete Hodu or the earlier parts of the service. This is the ruling of the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909) and the Kaf Ha'haim (Rav Yaakob Haim Sofer, Baghdad-Jerusalem, 1870-1939). This is in contrast to the view of the Peri Hadash (Rav Hizkiya Da Silva, 1659-1698), who felt that since we do not pray with all the deep intentions of the Arizal, the sequence of the prayers is not as critical, and thus one should interrupt an earlier part of the service for the sake of joining the recitation of "Hashem Melech." The Ben Ish Hai countered that we should follow the Arizal's practices despite not having all his deep Kavanot (intentions), and so the sequence must be maintained. It is worth noting that if Halacha discourages disrupting the Tefila with the

recitation of a different part of the service, then certainly, and many times more so, it forbids interruptions such as reading text messages, checking notifications, and doing other things with one's device. Throughout the entire prayer service, we should try to remain as singularly focused on our Tefila as possible, and make a point of avoiding all distractions.

"Hashem Melech" is recited also during the Selihot prayers, and the Ben Ish Hai writes that the aforementioned Halachot apply also when one hears the congregation recite "Hashem Melech" during Selihot, and he is required to stand. Standing during "Hashem Melech" is the accepted custom, but not a strict Halachic requirement. Therefore, an elderly or infirm individual, who finds it difficult to stand, may remain seated for the recitation of "Hashem Melech."

The Ben Ish Hai writes that standing is not required during the traditional recitation of "Hashem Melech" during the Hakafot on Simhat Torah. This custom is a relatively new development, and may thus be treated more leniently, such that standing is not required.

Hacham Ovadia Yosef raises the question of how the Ben Ish Hai could write this, as standing is strictly required during Hakafot for an entirely different reason – because the Torah scrolls are being carried. Irrespective of the recitation of "Hashem Melech," standing is required in the synagogue when the Sefer Torah is being carried, which is of course happening during Hakafot.

Some answer this question by suggesting that the Ben Ish Hai accepted the novel ruling of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Jerusalem, 1910-1995) permitting one to sit during Hakafot. Rav Shlomo Zalman asserted that during Hakafot, the Torah scrolls are considered to be in their place, as they are meant to be danced with at this time. Standing for the Sefer Torah is required only when it is removed from its

place, and therefore one may sit during Hakafot, when the Torah scrolls are, in a sense, in their place. For this reason, perhaps, the Ben Ish Hai permitted sitting while reciting "Hashem Melech" during the Hakafot.

It is unlikely, however, that the Ben Ish Hai followed this novel position, and in fact, it is not accepted as Halacha. The story is told of Hacham Ezra Attieh (1885-1970), Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Porat Yosef, who, as an older man, felt weary during Hakafot on Simhat Torah, and so he left the room to sit down somewhere else. This is the generally accepted Halacha – that even those who feel weak or weary during Hakafot should leave the synagogue to sit. (It should be noted, however, that Hacham Ovadia permitted sitting when the Torah scrolls are stationary in the few moments between Hakafot.)

It is more likely, then, that the Ben Ish Hai referred to the practice observed in many congregations to place the Torah scrolls on the Teba after dancing and recite the hymns, including "Hashem Melech," and he therefore wrote that sitting is permissible during that time.

**Summary:** One must stand for the recitation of "Hashem Melech" during Shaharit. If one had already prayed, and, while learning in the synagogue, he hears the congregation recite "Hashem Melech," he should stand and join their recitation. If one is reciting a different part of the prayer service, such as Hodu, then he should rise but not interrupt to recite "Hashem Melech." This applies also to the recitation of "Hashem Melech" during Selihot. Standing is not required, however, for the recitation of "Hashem Melech" during Hakafot if the Torah scrolls are on the Teba and not being carried at that time. The elderly, infirm and others who find it difficult to stand may remain seated for the recitation of "Hashem Melech," even during Shaharit and Selihot.



## WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

### Parshat Vayera

Three days after performing brit mila on himself, Avraham is visited by Hashem. When three angels appear in human form, Avraham rushes to show them hospitality by bringing them into his tent, despite this being the most painful time after the operation. Sarah laughs when she hears from them that she will bear a son next year. Hashem reveals to Avraham that He

will destroy Sodom, and Avraham pleads for Sodom to be spared. Hashem agrees that if there are fifty righteous people in Sodom He will not destroy it. Avraham "bargains" Hashem down to ten righteous people. However, not even ten can be found. Lot, his wife and two daughters are rescued just before sulfur and fire rain down on Sodom and her sister cities. Lot's wife looks back and is

turned into a pillar of salt. Lot's daughters fear that as a result of the destruction there will be no husbands for them. They decide to get their father drunk and through him to perpetuate the human race. From the elder daughter, Moav is born, and from the younger, Ammon. Avraham moves to Gerar where Avimelech abducts Sarah. After Hashem appears to Avimelech in a dream, he

releases Sarah and appeases Avraham. As promised, a son, Yitzchak, is born to Sarah and Avraham. On the eighth day after the birth, Avraham circumcises him as commanded. Avraham makes a feast the day Yitzchak is weaned. Sarah tells Avraham to banish Hagar and Hagar's son Yishmael because she sees in him signs of degeneracy. Avraham is distressed at the prospect of banishing his son, but Hashem tells him to listen to whatever Sarah tells him to do. After

nearly dying of thirst in the desert, Yishmael is rescued by an angel, and Hashem promises that he will be the progenitor of a mighty nation.

Avimelech enters into an alliance with Avraham when he sees that Hashem is with him. In a tenth and final test of Avraham, Hashem instructs Avraham to take Yitzchak, who is now 37, and to offer him as a sacrifice. Avraham does this, in spite of ostensibly aborting Jewish

nationhood and contradicting his life-long preaching against human sacrifice. At the last moment, Hashem sends an angel to stop Avraham. Because of Avraham's unquestioning obedience, Hashem promises him that even if the Jewish People sin, they will never be completely dominated by their foes. The Torah

**Rabbi Sinclair,**  
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**Q**

1. Why did G-d appear to Avraham after the brit mila?
2. Why was Avraham sitting at the entrance to his tent?
3. What were the missions of the three angels?
4. Why did Avraham enjoin the guests to wash the dust off their feet?
5. Why did Avraham ask specifically Yishmael, and not someone else, to prepare food for the guests?

**A**

1. 18:1 - Avraham was sick, so G-d came to "visit" him
2. 18:1 - He was looking for guests.
3. 18:2 - To announce Yitzchak's birth, to heal Avraham and to destroy Sodom.
4. 18:4 - He thought they were among those who worship the dust, and he didn't want any object of idolatry in his home.
5. 18:7 - To train him in the performance of mitzvos.



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