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PARSHAS
TOLDOS

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TORAH PERSPECTIVES

RABBI SHAYA FOX



AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK DUG WELLS — REVEALING THE TORAH IN THE GASHMIYUS

In Parshas Toldos, the Torah spends an inordinate amount of time on the digging of the wells. The Ramban addresses this issue and explains that there is a deeper meaning to the wells. The three wells represent the three Batei Mikdash, and the third and final one, which is "Rachovos," represents the third Beis Hamikdash, which never got covered over with dirt by the Plishtim. The Alshich (ויקרא נויג) adds that the three Avos represent the three Batei Mikdash as is hinted to in the Gemara in Pesachim פח. Avraham and Yitzchak represent the first two Batei Mikdash, which were destroyed because Yishmael and Eisav came out of them. However, the third and final Beis Hamikdash is represented by the בחיר שבאבות, Yaakov, as his progeny were only tzaddikim and therefore the third Beis Hamikdash, without any holes in the kedushah, will not be able to be destroyed.

Even after the words of the Ramban and Alshich there remains a question. What does the Beis Hamikdash and the Avos have to do with wells and digging to reach water?

The Ba'al Shem tov and the Chidushei Harim (שפת אמת פרשת תולדות) both explain with slight variations that the digging of the wells represents revealing the kedushah and the Torah that Hashem hid under the dirt of the land — the Gashmiyus. Our job in this world is to reveal the kedushah despite it being so difficult to access as it is hidden behind the physicality of the world.

The world before the actual creation was initially "ורוח אלוקים מרחפת" "אין מים ולא תורה." and "על פני המים" So in essence the world was completely filled with Torah and kedushah with Hashem out in the open. It was only as part of the creation of the world that Hashem was "יקוו" "המים מתחת השמים אל מקום אחד ותראה היבשה." In order that man should have free choice to choose "עפר" or "מים," the "מים" had to be covered over and removed from open sight. In order to access the "מים," one must put forth extreme effort to uncover the hidden "water" (or travel to the seashore) unlike before creation when the "מים" was readily available without exerting any effort.

The evil and tumah are constantly trying to cover over our wells, and our job is to fend off the Plishtim from accomplishing this. The purpose of the Beis Hamikdash is to make a place for Hashem to reveal Himself protected from the influences of impurity. The first two Batei Mikdash were destroyed because each had some flaw of impurity represented by Avraham and Yitzchak with impurities of Yishmael and Eisav. However,

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TRACING OUR HISTORY



RABBI SHMUEL BECHER

THE RAMCHAL

R' Moshe Chaim Luzzato was born in Padua, Republic of Venice, in 1707 into an illustrious family of Torah scholars. He began studying Torah at a young age, and his parents ensured that he received a complete secular education as well. The young R' Moshe Chaim applied his knowledge of the literary arts beginning with a play based on the life of Shimshon. He continued with another play written for a friend (as a wedding gift) entitled "Migdal Oz," as well as poetry. But these works pale to insignificance when compared to R' Moshe Chaim's spiritual accomplishments. Known by the acronym of his name "Ramchal," to this day his numerous seforim are studied intently throughout the Jewish nation. The Ramchal himself was known for his unbelievable Torah scholarship and tremendous piety.

His Rebbi was R' Yeshaya Basan, a famous mekubal, the son-in-law of R' Binyomin HaCohen. By age 19, the Ramchal had received semicha, and begun composing tefillos very similar to Tehillim. At the age of 20, he was visited by a "Magid" who revealed many secrets of the Torah to him. The Ramchal began writing down and sharing the Torah he learned from his heavenly messenger, and before long the word got out to Rabbanim in the region. Just under forty years previously, Yiddishkeit had been devastated by the infamous Shabbtai Tzvi. With that tragedy fresh in their minds, the combination of the Ramchal's claims of having a "Magid" and his composition of what seemed to be a replacement of Tehillim, caused Rabbanim to fear that a similar phenomenon was starting. This resulted in vehement opposition to the Ramchal and his teachings. R' Moshe Chagiz and R' Yaakov Poppers threatened to put the Ramchal in cherem (excommunication), but they settled on the

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ZEMANIM

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SHABBOS ENDS: 6:06 | RABEINU TAM 6:33

Torah Perspectives

>>> continued from front

the third Beis Hamikdash will be represented by Yaakov who was composed of only kedushah with no evil children. The Gemara in Taanis ה writes that "Yaakov never died." According to this, we can understand on a deeper level that Yaakov, who was all kedushah, has a lasting component to him. Torah and kedushah are lasting but only when they are pure. However, when tumah is mixed in, mortality is mixed in as well.

The Shvilei Pinchas שנת תשע"ג adds that it is for this reason that both the snake and Adam were both punished with the "earth." The snake has to only eat dirt and Adam will die and return to the earth because once they allowed the kedushah to be covered over by the "עפר," the "עפר" will unfortunately play a more prominent role in their lives and it'll be much more challenging to access the holiness. Yaakov represents the Amud HaTorah, which is the greatest tool to shovel away the impurity and uncover the kedushah. He adds it is for this reason that the times of the third Beis Hamikdash is described as "כי מלאה" "כי מלאה" The revelation of kedushah will be so great that the world will be filled "like the water covers the sea" with "עפר" covering it, returning back to "רוח אלוקים מרחפת על פני המים." פני המים. ▲

Quick 6

PARSHAS TOLDOS

1 Who were the שני גוים בבטניך referring to?

2 Where do we find that Yitzchok Avinu was poor in the beginning of the Parsha, and then became rich?

3 How do we know that Yitzchok Avinu Kept Shabbos?

4 Give Five reasons as to why Yitzchok Avinu Couldn't see when he called in Esav for the Brachos?

5 Where do we find Yaakov Avinu referred to as בכור?

6 How many times does it say that Yitzchok Bentched Yaakov?

answers on the back

Climbing HIGHER



RABBI YOSEF CHAIM PINKUS

CHESHBON PART 3

A continuation of last week's discussion of the value of Torah study.

It is beyond the purview of this article to detail the profundity of the Rambam's philosophical understanding of Judaism. However, we will pull out one key aspect. The primary reason why mankind was put into this world is to further perfect oneself. The purpose behind our personal Jewish journey is to develop the entire self — both body and soul — furthering depth of understanding to ultimately align with the Divine.

The attempted synchronicity has two distinct paths. Firstly, our physical selves should emulate Hashem. For that, mitzvos are the path. The spiritual reasons behind the mitzvos target our physical actions and character attributes. Engage with the mitzvah and a small part inside you changes for the good and becomes more like Hashem.

The second part of this twofold goal is the intellectual side of the journey. We are required to develop an understanding of the spiritual fabric of the universe, the concept of Hashem, and the import of spirituality in this world. This is the role of Torah study. The importance of Torah study is such that the Talmud views it as equivalent to all the other mitzvos combined.

Expounding this within the Rambam's worldview, Torah study is so exceptional because it shapes the intellect. Intelligence is not the simply most advanced part of the human, but the advanced reasoning ability is the biggest differentiator between humans and the animal kingdom. Bringing the uniquely powerful and definitional capabilities of the brain into alignment with Hashem's values is the ultimate goal. This is not easy to do with mere philosophical musings.

Let us explain. When Rambam illustrates the thirteen fundamental principles of Judaism, he spends a large amount of ink describing the nature of what Hashem is not. The negative definition of Hashem's attributes is because the very nature of Hashem is singularly different and incomprehensible to the human.

Ramchal does a fantastic job briefly describing this in Derech Hashem. He explains that essentially, man is finite. His capabilities are shaped by human limitations and boundaries, and as such, the finite (Man) cannot comprehend the infinite (G-d). We could bumble around for eons and never come close to the proper comprehension.

Given this impossibility, the ideal way to develop the understandings of Hashem necessary for our spiritual development is via Torah study. Hashem may be incomprehensible, but the direction and purpose that Hashem has for us was translated into accessible human language in the Torah.

The depths of the Torah contain the spiritual guidance and intellectual coaching necessary for this ultimate perfection of ourselves. Through engagement with the Torah, one is not only learning practical halachos. One is additionally directing and positively influencing their brain, intellect, and spirit towards a further understanding of the Divine. It is the ultimate method of achieving the goals for which we were put on this earth. ▲


RABBI EPHRAIM RAUCH

Steal of a deal! Cracker Barrel took a turn for the worse, decreasing its value temporarily, and now it's up for sale. With the right negotiating and a few meetings, you can be the proud owner of one of America's food chains! While the prohibition to eat milk and meat is widely known, the specific details of this halachah are less familiar to the masses. Not surprisingly, though, ignorance in the nuances can be a recipe for disaster. Is it permissible to own a and derive benefit from a nonkosher restaurant that sells forbidden foods such as Biscuits and Sausage Gravy (a cooked milk and meat sauce)? What about simply having a job there? Does it depend which job you have? The passuk says "Lo sevashel g'di bachalev imo," which means "Don't eat a kid (goat) in the milk of its mother." This is the source for the prohibition to eat milk and meat together. The Gemara in Chulin explains that each of the three appearances of this phrase teaches a separate issur in the realm of basar v'chalav — the issur achilah (eating), the issur bishul (cooking), and the issur hanaah (benefiting). These issurim are mid'Oraisa (biblical) since they're learned from extra pesukim in the Torah. This means, then, that aside from the simple law that we must refrain from eating milk and meat together, we also may not cook them together or derive any pleasure from their union. Honing in on this third issur, to benefit from basar v'chalav, there are some exceptions. The poskim write in siman 87 that it only applies to basar v'chalav mid'Oraisa. However, if the food only qualifies as basar v'chalav d'rabbanan (rabbinical), it would be permissible to benefit from. Even in cases of basar v'chalav mid'Oraisa, it's not so simple. The Rambam famously writes that meat of a neveilah (meat that isn't slaughtered according to law) is forbidden to be

cooked with milk mid'Oraisa because it is from a min tahor, which automatically includes it in the laws of basar v'chalav. He adds, however, that it would be precluded from the prohibition to eat basar v'chalav since it's already forbidden to be eaten under the prohibition of neveilah. This is due to the rule that "ein issur chal al haissur" which means that if something is already forbidden, a separate issur can't subsequently come upon it. Hence, in our scenario, the act of eating neveilah with milk is already assur as neveilah, so the second issur of basar v'chalav doesn't take effect. Interestingly, although the Rambam speaks out the halachos of eating and cooking in the case of neveilah, he doesn't guide us with regards to having hanaah (benefit) from it. In the Rambam's Pirush Mishnayos, he explains that the prohibition to gain or benefit from basar v'chalav is fundamentally an extension of the issur to eat it. Therefore, in an instance where the issur achilah isn't able to take effect due to the rule of "ein issur chal al haissur," the issur hanaah would likewise not be relevant. Accordingly, then, in the case of neveilah and milk, while it would be biblically forbidden to cook it under the umbrella of basar v'chalav, it wouldn't be forbidden to eat under the same issur (rather it'd be assur as neveilah), and it wouldn't be forbidden to have hanaah at all.

Returning to our initial questions about owning a nonkosher restaurant or having a job there, it's critical to realize that although we are most often discussing meat from a min tahor, we are almost never dealing with properly shechted (slaughtered) meat. This being the case, there's no doubt that working in the restaurant as a cook would certainly be problematic (assuming the method of cooking doesn't render it basar v'chalav d'rabbanan) since it's been made clear that even in the absence of the issur achilah, the issur bishul is present. Regarding our questioning of owning the restaurant, it would come out that according to this Rambam there should be no problem. The Pischei Teshuvah quotes the Dagul Mervava who brings this Rambam and ends off writing that one who relies on this in a situation of potential loss to him won't lose out. The Pischei Teshuvah brings down others (Pri Megadim, Kanfei Yonah) who disagree and say that this is forbidden even mid'Oraisa. The Pri Megadim adds that even if it's muttar mid'Oraisa, mid'Rabbanan it would certainly be assur. It would therefore come out that it's best not to own the restaurant in light of the poskim who forbid it. In the case of a major loss, it seems there may be what to rely on and a Rav should be consulted for practical guidance. As an aside, waiting in such a restaurant would seemingly be ok since he's neither cooking nor benefiting from basar v'chalav.▲

Tracing our History >>> continued from front

Ramchal's agreement to cease recording the Torah he learned from the "Magid," not teach any kabbalah, and give all of his existing writings to his Rebbe. However, more false rumors about the Ramchal forced R' Basan to hand over all of the Ramchal's writings to R' Poppers who buried most of them, and burned what he deemed as heresy.

In 1735 the Ramchal moved to Amsterdam. On the way, he passed through Germany where he attempted to garner support from the Rabbanim he met. Instead, they forced him to write a statement that everything he had learned from the "Magid" was false. Reaching Amsterdam, he became a diamond cutter. The Ramchal was careful to never teach any kabbalah, though he did write numerous seforim. In fact, the most prominent of his seforim were written while he was in Amsterdam, including Mesillas Yesharim, Derech Hashem, Da'as Tevunos, and Derech Tevunos. The Ramchal also wrote many other seforim and

essays covering a wide range of Torah topics, many of which are now printed together.

Although he faced much adversity, there were also numerous Rabbanim who supported the Ramchal and recognized that he was in fact a true tzaddik and Torah scholar. The Gra said that would he have had the opportunity, he would have travelled on foot to be able to learn from the Ramchal. He is also quoted as saying that in the first ten chapters of Mesillas Yesharim, there is not one extra letter. Today, the Ramchal's seforim are considered foundational in mussar, philosophy, and kabbalah.

After eleven years in Amsterdam, the Ramchal moved to Eretz Yisrael, settling in Acco in 1746. Sadly, shortly after arriving there, his family passed away in a plague, and he was nifter soon after on the 26th of Iyar, 5508 (May 16, 1747). He was buried in Teverya, near the Tanna R' Akiva (though there is another grave in Kfar Yasif that bears his name as well). ▲

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For men and women

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6718 Windrock Road



Iyun Shiur – **Inyanei Chanuka**
Mareh Mekomos to be available in advance
Rosh Chodesh, Sunday morning, December 1
Kollel Bais Medrash, 6324 Churchill Way
Shacharis at 8 and 8:15
Iyun Shiur at 9:30

DATA
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PARSHA PIX



HOW DOES THIS SCENE

CONNECT TO THE PARSHA?



ANSWER FROM LAST WEEK'S PARSHA PIX:

פרק כד, פסוק סז

וַיְבִיאֶהָ יִצְחָק הָאֵלֶּלֶל שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־רַבְּקָה
וַתְהִי־לָיו לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּצֵאֶהָ וַיִּגְתֶּם יִצְחָק אֶת־רֵי אִמּוֹ:

Rashi

האהלה שרה אמו. ויביאה האלה ונעשית דגמת

שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ, כְּלוּמַר וַתְהִי הִיא שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ, שְׁכַל זְמַן שְׂפָרָה קִיָּמַת הָיָה גַר דְּלוּק
מֵעָרֵב שָׁבַת לְעָרֵב שָׁבַת וּבִרְכָה מְצוּיָה בְּעֶסֶה וְעִנּוּ קָשׁוּר עַל הָאֵלֶּל, וּמִשְׁמַתָּה:
פְּסָקוֹ, וּבְשָׂבָאֵת רַבְּקָה הָזְרִין (בראשית רבה)

INTO HIS MOTHER SARAH'S TENT — He brought her into the tent and she became exactly like his mother Sarah, for whilst Sarah was living, a light had been burning in the tent from one Sabbath eve to the next, there was always a blessing in the dough and a cloud was always hanging over the tent, but since her death all these had stopped. However, when Rivka came, they reappeared"

ANSWERS TO QUICK 6

1) רבי ואנטוניוס 2) Even Ezra – יובד עשו – Bal Haturim – ועבודה רבה את השבת 3) שמור משמתי מכאן שהאבות שומרים את השבת 4) (a) At the Akida, Yitzchok saw the נסא הכבוד. (b) The blindness is the reason Yitzchok mistook Yaakov for Esav and ultimately received the Brachos. (c) The spices that the wives of Esav burnt for עבודה זרה. (d) Yitzchok was רשע בפני רשע. (e) The bribery that Esav gave to Yitzchok (bribery diminishes one's eyesight.) 5) בני בבורי ישראל 6) Four.