

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE VAYIGASH

Haftarah: Yehezkel 37:15-28
DECEMBER 19, 2015 7 TEBET 5776

The fast of Asarah Betebet will be on Tuesday, December 22.
DEDICATIONS: In memory Esther Bat Leah - Esther Bibi - 11th of Tevet
And in memory of Molly Jamal

We have a sponsorship opportunity We have a beautiful set of Rambam Mishneh Torah with English translation coming in to our library We would like someone to dedicate All 18 volumes \$550 Please let us know

Minha & Arbit 4:11PM - Candle Lighting 4:11PM
Friends – We need assistance and a commitment for Friday evenings

Shabbat
Class with Rav Aharon 8:30AM – Latest Shema 8:48AM
Shahrit 9:00 AM,
Torah not before 10:00 and Musaf not before 10:30AM
Derasha by Rabbi David - Fooling Ourselves - Chazot is 11:52

Please be generous and donate a Kiddush
As we pray Mincha after Kiddush during the winter,
we need a sponsor every week

Kiddush Message from Rebbetzin Ida
With the exception of two Shabbats this winter, we have no Kiddush dedications until the spring and during the winter as we pray Mincha after Kiddush, we must have a lunch.
Please take a moment and select a week and reserve a kiddush

Mincha Follows Kiddush – Amida after 12:15 PM
Shabbat Morning Children's Program 10:30 - 11:30 with Jennifer Ages 2-5 - in the Playroom/ Girls Ages 6-12 -
In the Upstairs Library / Treats, Games, Stories, Prayers and Fun!

Children's program at Sephardic at 3:00PM –
Ladies Class at the Lembergers at 4:00 - Any changes will be advised in Synagogue

Seudah Shelishi at Home Shabbat Ends at 5:11 Return for Arbit at 5:30 PM

We are happy to announce the return of movie night!
Thank you to Rabbi Colish for his help arranging the movies, to David Freiden and Robert and Avital Yadgarov for volunteering to be "counselors" and to Patti Azizo and Lisa Gaon for volunteering to do the pizza runs!

The first movie night will be This Motzei Shabbat December 19th at 6 pm.
Please join us and bring your friends!

Special Thank You to Jack and Patti Azizo for sponsoring the pizza.
To be on the volunteer list or to sponsor a movie night
please email Hindy - HmizNY@Gmail.com

SUNDAY MORNING Shaharit at 8AM
DAILY MINYAN Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 6:55,
Wednesday and Friday at 7:00AM
Asara Be'Tebet is this coming Tuesday.
The fast begins at 6:00 AM on Tuesday morning and ends at 4:52 PM.

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**Daily Minyan Mon – Thurs at 979 Third Avenue,
 17th Floor, Artistic Frame at 4PM – Please join us!
 212-289-2100 – Mincha/Arbit –Give us 18
 minutes and we'll give you the World To Come!**

Editors Notes

Syrian Refugees

This week, following the revelation that Zaphenath-Paneah, the viceroy of Egypt is really their brother, Joseph explains that the famine will continue and asks the brothers to bring their father and family to Egypt in order to survive. We read of Jacob and his family leaving the land of Canaan with G-d's blessing. Eleven of the twelve tribes move their children and all their belongings to join Joseph. They will dwell in Goshen where they will raise their sheep. The Torah lists the seventy who will form the Jewish people.

Refugees leaving their home, welcomed by Pharaoh and given a place to settle. Looking back though, we see that the family's stay in the Holy Land was fairly short. In fact only 32 years passed since they made their escape from Syria under the cover of darkness from the house of their grandfather, Laban the Aramite, who sought to kill them all. At the time the eleven boys and one girl ranged most likely in age from 7 to 14, on the road with their belongings leaving the only home they and their mothers knew since birth and filled with fear in aware that Esav and his band of four hundred main lay in wait for them on the road.

Imagine a picture from that scene. Would we title it, "Ancient Syrian refugees"?

Syrian refugees are what we hear about again and again. My grandparents were Syrian Refugee. My grandmother Esther Mizrahi Bibi whose yahrzeit is this week was born in Syria and made her way from Beirut to America in 1911 at the age of 5. In the same year my grandfather Reuben, a student at American University Medical College had to be smuggled out of Beirut as his life was in danger. My grandfather David Gindi suffered terrible oppression at the hands of the Turks and was able to get out of Aleppo after World War One to be assisted here by his cousin Haron Gindi. And his wife, my grandmother Victoria and her oldest children who found refuge in her father's home in Tripoli were able to follow to the shores of America. Reuben and his father Joseph were able to pave the way for their community to join them in America later. I am a child of Syrian refugees as Bill DeBlasio reminded us in his speech at Shaare Zion two weeks

ago. He compared us to the present Syrian refugees, but is that a fair comparison?

If you weren't aware that Steve Jobs of Apple fame was the son of a Syrian Migrant, Graffiti artist Banksy's latest work is getting enough publicity to remind us of the fact. A mural, which popped up Friday in a migrant camp in Calais, France, shows a life-size image of Jobs, wearing his trademark glasses and turtleneck, holding an early Apple computer and carrying a sack over his shoulder. The caption of the image, posted on the anonymous street artist's website, reads: "The son of a migrant from Syria." Is he telling us that turning away migrants means possibly turning away the next Steve Jobs.

Is Banksy hoping to convince the American people or Donald Trump who also tops the news each day after releasing his proposal last week to ban all Muslims from entering the U.S.? This morning's new announced that Donald Trump hit a new high in national polling. According to the results of the latest Monmouth University poll surveying voters identifying as Republican or independents leaning toward the GOP, Trump earned 41 percent, nearly tripling the support of his closest rival, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who took 14 percent. And although I am sure that Donald Trump doesn't take his own statements seriously, much of middle America certainly does.

In September, Isaac Herzog, the leader of the center-left Labor Party and head of the opposition, stirred a heated national debate over the issue of Syrian refugees after he said that "Jews cannot remain indifferent when hundreds of thousands of refugees are seeking safe harbor." He added, "Our people experienced firsthand the silence of the world," alluding to the Holocaust, "and cannot be indifferent in the face of the rampant murders and massacres taking place in Syria." The next day Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected those calls, saying that Israel was "a very small country that lacks demographic and geographic depth."

When DeBlasio spoke at Shaare Zion he compared the plight of Syrian Refugees to those in the audience who fled Syria and then went on as did Herzog, to compare them to the plight of Jews fleeing Nazi Germany in 1938.

Is it a fair comparison? The image of the St. Louis German passenger ship remains indelibly stamped within my mind. The ship carried 937 German Jews. Each of them had legally purchased a visa to Cuba for a small fortune. They were denied entry into Cuba in 1939. With nowhere to turn the ship's captain attempted landing in several places in the United

States and Canada, but was met with sealed gates each and every time. Eventually the St. Louis had to return to Europe where many of its passengers perished in Nazi gas chambers.

This denial of help was set 1938 when 32 nations gathered in France for the "Evian Conference" to seek help for the persecuted Jews. Although the U.S. initiated this conference, two thirds of Americans were afraid of letting Jews in at the time. My father often told us that in the days prior to World War Two, America was a very anti-Semitic place with public radio speeches declaring the Jews dangerous. The conference did little to help. Each nation provided a list of wretched excuses as to why each country couldn't help the Jews. Even the US example was ridiculous in the extreme offering a German Quota of 29,000 immigrants per year, requiring each to have a "good behavior" certificate from the German Police. That made sure the US didn't have to accept very many. In the days prior to the War, there was no help for Jews.

So as Jews how do we react?

I was in a cab the other day. The driver was a refugee from Aleppo. I'm not sure how the conversation began, but he appeared to be a religious Muslim and I asked him about how he escaped, where he went, how he got here and how he managed to get a residency card and a license. I also asked about his family back home. He was fascinated that I was a descendant of Aleppo whose ancestors arrived here a century ago and more so that I was a rabbi who still maintained a connection with my past and heritage. The conversation turned to food which made him very comfortable. My inclination based on the realities of the world we live in would be to be afraid that this apparent Islamist fundamentalist would probably want to kill this religious Jew, but by the time I got out I felt that he would have really wanted an American friend to emulate. (No, I didn't give him my number.)

So do I think we should open the doors? The doors are already open and refugees arrive every day and I am in no favor of opening them wider. Is that heartless? I don't think so.

Some of those Jews who had nowhere to run in the days prior to Europe's attempted extermination of our people, were able to sneak into Palestine against the efforts of the British. The smuggling of people into Palestine continued after the war with many stuck in camps in Cyprus. After the establishment of the State, the new Nation of Israel opened its doors to Jewish refugees and in addition to the European

survivors, almost a million refugees from Arab countries were able to make their home in a country with no money to take care of them. Remember the Jewish population was only about a half a million after the war and about 700,000 in 1948. With few in the world ever willing to take care of us or to help, we often depended only on each other. Think about the ratio and you'll begin to see the beauty of a people where one struggling Jew takes in two struggling Jewish refugees.

So how does one solve the Syrian Refugee problem? And how about solving the Palestinian refugee problem at the same time? We can start by telling the world's 1.6 billion, yes 1.6 billion Muslims to open their doors to their co-religionists. Or let's just start with the 360 million Arabs in the Middle East. Why not propose that each Middle Eastern town or village of two thousand people take in one family, than that would eliminate the refugee problem overnight. Why is that too much to ask? The world must do something. The Arabs must do more.

Joseph arranged to take in his own family, to provide for them and assist them and in a very short time they were self-sustaining and succeeded. Perhaps they were too successful? The example Joseph set of taking in his brothers is one which we have had to follow for millennia from Babylon to Rome, from Spain to Italy, from Turkey to Japan and from England to the Americas. This is Jewish charity.

What happened to Islamic hospitality charity? Maybe it's time they practiced what they preach? And poof, no more Syrian refugee crisis!

Shabbat Shalom,

David Bibi

**Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading
Yosef reveals his identity. Yaacov and his family
come to live in Mitsrayim.**

- 1- Yehuda pleads with Yosef to let Binyamin return home to his father.
- 2- Yosef reveals his true identity
- 3- Yosef tells the brothers to bring Yaacov and move to Mitsrayim as the hunger will last another 5 years
- 4- The brothers return home and tell Yaacov that Yosef is alive
- 5- Yaacov heads to Mitsrayim. The parsha lists the 70 people from Yaacov's family that ended up in Mitsrayim.
- 6- Yosef and Yaacov re-unite. Yaacov and the brothers settle in Goshen. Yaacov meets Paroah.

7- Details regarding the past 2yrs of hunger and how Yosef sold food to the people and acquired all the wealth of Mitsrayim for Paroah.

THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

"And he brought offerings to the G-d of his father Yitzhak." (Beresheet 46:1)

After Ya'akob received the good news that his son Yosef was still alive, he brought offerings of gratitude. Nowadays, we don't have offerings; we have prayers instead, prayers of gratitude.

Rabbi Dovid Kaplan tells a beautiful story with a great lesson. The well-known head of Ezer Metzion, Rav Chananya Cholek, was once at the Kotel with a wealthy man. While standing there, the two noticed a Jew standing by the Wall and crying his eyes out in prayer.

"There can only be one of two things that would make a person cry like that," Rav Cholek said to the rich man. "Either he has a medical problem, or he has some sort of financial problem. Let's make a deal. If it's medical, I'll help him. If it's financial, then you'll help him."

The philanthropist was intrigued by the challenge and immediately agreed to it. Rav Cholek approached the man. "Hello, my name is Cholek, and if you or anyone in your family has any sort of medical problem I will be glad to try and help you out."

The man smiled through his tears. "Thank you very much, but everyone in my family is well, Baruch Hashem."

Rav Cholek went back to the rich man. "Okay, it's your turn," he said. "It's not a medical issue."

"Just tell me how much you need and I'll write out a check right here and now," the rich man said to the man.

"Thank you so much, but the truth is, while we don't have much, we really don't need much. We're doing okay."

"So then why were you crying like that?" the two of them asked.

"Last night we married off our twelfth and last child," the man answered. "Each time I had to marry off one of my kids, I'd come here and ask Hashem for help, and He has never yet turned us down. Today I just came to thank Him for all of His kindness. That's why I was crying. Doesn't everyone do that?"

Never mind the answer. Let it suffice to say that we should. We should cry in gratitude to Hashem for all that He gives us, and now let's do it. Rabbi Reuven Semah

"And Ya'akob saw the wagons that Yosef sent him." (Beresheet 45:27)

Rashi tells us that Yosef sent his father, Ya'akob, a sign that he still remembers the Torah that he was taught, and he reminded Ya'akob of the last subject they had learned together. When Ya'akob saw that, he knew that his son was truly alive in a spiritual sense, and he rejoiced! Similarly, when Ya'akob sent his son, Yehudah, to Egypt before the whole family, he instructed him to establish a Torah academy so that they could study Torah in Egypt. We see from here how important the Torah was to our forefathers. Although we only read of their deeds and their character in the perashah, the Midrash is teaching us how pivotal the study of Torah was to them. They were engaged in it constantly, and this is what kept them alive. Ya'akob mourned very deeply for his son for twenty-two years, yet the only thing that kept him strong was Torah study. Yosef was in a very difficult position for many years in Egypt, spending twelve years in jail, yet his faith and trust never wavered because he was constantly reviewing the Torah he learned.

This should be an inspiration for us to strengthen our Torah learning, especially when the going gets tough. The more we are connected to Hashem through Torah study, the more we can endure all of life's challenges. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

ONE PERSON

It is not healthy to allow your ego to grow wildly out of control. Our Sages teach that not only is this despicable in the eyes of our Creator, but it also creates dissension between people.

Yet, for individuals to suppress their egos to the point where they lack self-confidence is an unacceptable alternative.

You – and all others – were created with a specific job to complete in your lifetime. Therefore, you must gather your power to overcome obstacles that inevitably block the road to success. Self-confidence and drive are required to get the job done.

Often, people are driven down the road to failure by a negative self-image. "I don't have any special talent. I am no genius," they may say, or, "What can I do? I am only one small person without a lot of resources. Whom can I influence?"

Mordechai said to Esther (Book of Esther 4:14): "And who knows, if perhaps for this very moment, you became the queen." His message: She had a mission to complete, and should not take it lightly.

The world is full of organizations that fill the needs of great masses of people. Each began with the idea of a single individual who could not tolerate the suffering of others, or realized that a specific situation needed to be remedied. One group might be the brainchild of a person who wanted to alleviate

the loneliness and pain of extended hospital stays, while another might be the project of someone whose concern was to provide poor young brides with the basic necessities for setting up a new home. There were individuals who were worried enough about feeding the hungry or clothing the poor, about helping others find a job or a mate, to go out and say: "I will do something about this!" There are long lists of free services that cover every imaginable need of our complex society, and each was started by one person with an idea.

You may not feel you are "the one," but you are. Who knows – maybe that special accomplishment or project is the reason that you are here! (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

RABBI ELI MANSOUR Yosef's "Rebuke" To His Brothers

Parashat Vayigash tells the dramatic story of Yosef revealing his identity to his brothers, who had sold him into slavery twenty-two years earlier. Yosef declares to his brothers, "I am Yosef – is my father still alive?" (45:3), and the Torah tells that the brothers were so terrified that they could not even respond.

The Midrash comments on this verse, "Woe to us on the day of judgment; woe to us on the day of rebuke!" If the brothers were unable to respond to the rebuke of Yosef, a mortal, and their younger brother, then all the more so will we be humiliated and put to shame on the final day of judgment.

The question arises, where in this verse did the Sages detect any indication of rebuke? Yosef simply revealed his identity and inquired as to the well-being of his father. How does this qualify as "rebuke," comparable to the rebuke we will endure when we are judged?

A famous answer to this question is cited in the name of the Bet Ha'levi (Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik of Brisk, Lithuania, 1820-1892), who claimed that the Sages refer here to the exposure of the inconsistency and hypocrisy with which many of us live our lives. Yehuda, the leader of the brothers, had just offered an impassioned plea that Yosef allow Binyamin to return home because otherwise his father, Yaakov, would suffer great anguish to the point where he would likely die. Yosef thus asks his brothers, "I am Yosef – is my father still alive?" In other words, he asks them where their concern for Yaakov was twenty-two years earlier when they sold him into slavery. They speak now as righteous Sadikim, genuinely concerned for the emotional condition of their father, yet they themselves had sold Yosef into

slavery and subjected Yaakov to years of mourning and grief. He showed them that the excuses they give to justify their conduct are hypocritical, that they have been living an inherently contradictory life.

This, the Bet Ha'levi explains, is precisely the kind of rebuke that we will have to face when we are judged in the next world. We give all kinds of excuses for why we do not involve ourselves in Torah learning, Misva observance and charity, generally pointing to our limited resources of time and money. Yet, we freely spend time and money on all kinds of less important activities. We will be shown that whereas we excuse ourselves from Torah learning because of our time constraints, we spend several hours a week in front of the television or computer. People complain about the price of Masa on Pesah, but have no compunction spending \$30 for spaghetti at an Italian restaurant. "Woe to us on the day of judgment; woe to us on the day of rebuke!" On that day, we will be silenced; all our excuses will be exposed as false and hypocritical.

Others suggested a different explanation, namely, that Yosef "rebuked" his brothers by showing them how wrong they were in their assessment of him. They had felt justified in their mistreatment of him because they presumed he had attempted to defame or possibly even kill them. In their view, Yosef had to be eliminated for the sake of the family. At the moment when Yosef revealed his identity, the basis underlying their entire attitude was proven wrong. As viceroy of Egypt, he could have easily killed them on several different occasions. Their suspicions were thus completely baseless and misguided; he never harbored any ill-will towards them. This, perhaps, is the most crushing rebuke of all: to discover that a path one has chosen and followed for so many years is fundamentally flawed.

Just as Yosef declared to his brothers, "Ani Yosef" ("I am Yosef"), so, too, will the Almighty proclaim to each and every one of us in the next world, "Ani Hashem" – "I am God." At that moment, we will face the harsh reality that we had led our lives on entirely erroneous assumptions. During life we think that we can achieve happiness and satisfaction through material possessions and physical indulgence, and we therefore tend to neglect our spiritual responsibilities and focus our attention on comfort, luxury and gratification. At the moment when we hear the words "Ani Hashem," we will suddenly realize that our entire lives were lived on error, that life in this world is about serving our Creator, and not about serving our physical and material cravings. This is the most humiliating and agonizing rebuke

imaginable – to suddenly realize that everything we had assumed during our life is fundamentally wrong.

Indeed, "Woe to us on the day of judgment; woe to us on the day of rebuke!" Unless we work towards correcting our assumptions during our lifetime, we will likely experience shame and humiliation when we stand judgment before God – much like the embarrassment felt by the brothers as they stood before Yosef.

VICTOR BIBI - SOD HAPARASHA TWO TREES OF GAN EDEN - 70 SOULS - 70 NATIONS

The Ohr HaHayyim teaches that the souls of man were planted into the two Trees that grew in Gan Eden. On a spiritually elevated plateau is the Tree of Life, associated with the mystical dimension of Binah (World of Beri'ah). Though this Tree contains 70 branches, it manifests itself as a single unified force. Beneath it, planted in a spiritually inferior terrain is the Tree of Knowledge - Good and Evil. It likewise has 70 aspects, but here, the aspects all manifest themselves as distinct forces.

SOULS OF TREE OF KNOWLEDGE - 70 DISTINCT NATIONS

As a result of the sin of the Tower of Babel, Hashem directed the souls associates with the Tree of Good and Evil into 70 distinct nations who would converse in 70 distinct languages. He assigned each branch of souls its own ministering angel to lead them in the celestial realm. As it says in Devarim (32:8) "When the Most High gave nations their heritage and split up the sons of man...He set up the borders...." In their assigned spiritual borders, the nations remain constantly subject to the impurities of their soul root - the Tree of Good and Evil. This is the spiritual inferior dimension where Evil has access; beneath the dimension of Binah, known as the realm of the Seven Lower dimensions (Worlds of Yesirah and Asiyah).

SOULS OF TREE OF LIFE - 70 MAKE UP THE UNIQUE SOUL OF ISRAEL

With the birth of Yaakov, a pure soul with its roots in the Tree of Life emerged. A soul associated with Adam HaRishon prior to his partaking of the Tree of Knowledge -Good and Evil. This is what the Talmud (BM 84) alludes to when it describes the beauty of Yaakov's soul and compares it with the soul of Adam prior to the sin. After enumerating the family of Yaakov the Torah writes, "Thus on entering Egypt,

the house of Yaakov totaled 70 souls- נפש שבעים. The Shelah explains that the entire nation is considered a single entity. This is why the Torah refers to these 70 as נפש - a single soul already at the time of their descent into Egypt. This paralleling the Tree of Life which expresses itself as a single force with 70 cohesive aspects. This Tree; unlike the Tree of Knowledge is under the rule of God alone. As it says in Devarim 32:8, "But his own nation remained God's portion ..." Additionally 4:19, "He took you and removed you from the iron crucible - Egypt to be for him his very own nation." Though these souls have their source in the Tree of Life - they descended from their lofty level as a result of certain transgressions. They therefore required exile as a unit in order to be cleansed of transgressions associated with their souls. That is why it was only until all 70 aspects of their unified soul had been born; do they descend to Egypt for cleansing.

SOULS ABOVE AND SOULS BELOW

The Torah in Devarim 32:8 teaches, "He set up the borders of nations to parallel the number of Israel's descendants.." Namely, that the 70 nations enumerated at the end of Parashat Noah somehow parallel the number of Yaakov's descendants who go down to Egypt. Is the Torah merely advising us that each group totals 70? That point is obvious from anyone who can read the Torah! What exactly is the Torah trying to convey to us about this relationship? In order to understand this relationship, we need to reiterate their differences in spiritual make up. The 70 souls of the family of Yaakov are described as emanating from a single unit while the latter are 70 distinct nations. The secret behind the matter is that Israel is rooted above in the spiritual dimension of Binah; a single force with 70 cohesive branches. This being the level of the Tree of Life. No evil is associated with their soul root - only Life! The nations on the other hand are sourced in the Seven Lower dimensions beneath Binah and express themselves as 70 distinct parts. This being the level of the Tree of Knowledge; a realm subject to the forces of Evil. The concept of Binah being a single unit and the lower dimensions expressed as seven (70) individual units is alluded to in the Seder HaAvodah of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippour. When sprinkling the blood he directs למעלה אחת ושבוע ; One above (a reference to Binah) and seven below a reference to the Seven Lower dimensions. We all recall counting as follows אחת

אחת ואחת אחת ... One (above), One (above) and One (below), One (above) and Two (below)...

SOULS OF TREE OF LIFE - SUPPORT THE THRONE OF GOD

Binah, the dimension of the Tree of Life is synonymous with a realm where the unified people of Israel can cleave to the Creator. There, God is perceived as sitting on a throne. See Melakhim I 22:19 - "Therefore, listen to the word of YHVH. I have seen YHVH upon his throne ..." The floor of the throne is Binah (Beri'ah), supported by Israel. Misconduct or disunity amongst Israel in the terrestrial world undermines the floor upon which the throne is based. As long as we as a nation preform properly, we experience an affinity with the Tree of Life and uphold the throne of the Creator.

RESULT OF FAILURE - NATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL LEVELS

If we fail on a national level to uphold the throne we descend into exile; namely into the domain beneath Binah- associated with of the Tree of Good and Evil. We are no longer free to unify unabated the 70 facets of Torah or to be ruled by the 70 elders or sages of the Sanhedrin. Rather we descend to a sphere where the nations exist as 70 distinct parts. In this realm it is almost impossible to unify amongst ourselves as Evil pervades these dimensions. On an individual level, if one commits certain severe sins that are subject to a punishment known as כרת -he will in turn cause his particular branch to be cut off from the Tree of Life. This resulting in the individual transgressors descent into the domain below; with all of its impurities.

REMEDY FOR INDIVIDUAL FAILURE

God provides a remedy known as Teshuva - or a method of return to the domain of the Tree of Life. The penitent must elevate himself to reattach his branch back onto its source. In his inner world all his forces and 70 years of life must be directed in unity.

REMEDY FOR THE NATION - THE 70 ABOVE (ISRAEL) PREPARING FOR THE 70 BELOW (NATIONS)

On a national level our return is seen as a two step process. The first consists of our attempt to unify once again as a single source. In order to reach a state of perfection our multiple parts must all be unify as a single nefesh. As we say in the Amida of Shabbat Minha, "Israel is a singular nation." The second is to prepare and transition the world toward the messianic

era. As the 70 nations prepare to exit a domain subject to impurities (Tree of knowledge - Good and Evil) and submit ideologically and spiritually to a higher level (Tree of Life) where the 70 integrates into 1. Israel is perfectly suited to assist the global community in this matter as a light to the nations.

THE FINAL ERA - ALL PREPARE TO NOURISH FROM THE TREE OF LIFE

On Sukkot, we prepare ourselves and the 70 nations to herald in this new era. We thereby offer 70 oxen during this 7 day holiday on behalf of the nations. While Shemini Aseret culminates with a single ox being offered. The time is also known as Hag HaAsif; the time of the gathering. When under the united rule of Mashiah, the 70 nations will gather - initially passing through the stones set up at the entrance to the Land of Israel upon which the Torah was written in the 70 languages (Devarim 27:8 - Sotah 32). This appears as a reference to their ascent to be able to suckle from the words of Torah which is the physical manifestation of the Tree of Life. As is written regarding the Torah הֵיא חַיִּים עַץ - The Torah is as the Tree of Life.. At that time the Jewish people will unify as one and then integrate all of humanity under the influence of the one God all nourishing from the Tree of Life.

Rabbi Wein KEEPING OUR DISTANCE

It seems fairly obvious to me that American Jewry should stay out of Israeli politics and that Israeli politicians should stay out of the affairs of American Jewry. However, our politicians somehow feel impelled to visit America as often as they can and to act or pontificate on all sorts of matters over which they have little knowledge or deep understanding. We should agree in advance that most Israelis, including our public and political leaders, have little understanding of the American mindset and of the true mechanisms that govern American Jewish life, no matter what level of Torah observance the target audience may be.

It is also foolhardy and dangerous for American Jewish leaders, again of all stripes, factions and levels of Torah observance, to mix in to Israeli political, economic and diplomatic policies and affairs. Our Minister of Education would have served the interests of Israel and of an already fractured American Jewish community by simply staying home and tending to the important ministry that he heads.

Instead, he blundered into a theological dispute for which there is no solution and for which there are no compromises. Our Chief Rabbi compounded the original blunder by somehow feeling impelled to issue a statement regarding the visit of the Minister of Education to a non-Orthodox school.

This in turn has embroiled everyone in a useless debate from which none of the protagonist's can escape unscathed. The struggle between the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox in the United States is not the same struggle as the problem of state and religion and of an official rabbinate that exists here in Israel.

The Israeli politician who cannot stay home should nevertheless not say or do things that only serve to heighten tensions and exacerbate the already existing divisions in American Jewish life.

The Israeli left, led by the Haaretz newspaper and other savants, politicians and media experts, mounts a continual campaign exhorting American Jewry to interfere in domestic Israeli politics and to "save Israel from itself." And there are sufficient American Jewish leaders who really believe that they somehow know better than the Israeli electorate or those of us who actually live and work here, what is best for us.

The arrogance of academia, both in America and Israel, is well known and has become so tiresome that, in the main, it is discounted as having impact or import. However the arrogance of the left or the right here in Israel to constantly appeal for support of their positions from American Jewry is to me quite bewildering.

The average American Jew and the average American Jewish leader is far removed from understanding and appreciating the complexities, dangers and challenges of every-day living in modern-day Israel. As such, it would be a wise course for all concerned not to meddle in each other's business.

Brazenly appealing to the Jewish diaspora to somehow solve the problems that face the Jewish state is a fundamentally flawed and absurd idea. The people who dwell in Zion are responsible for dealing with the problems that exist in Zion. It is foolhardy to believe that either Borough Park or Harvard have the answers to the daily existential issues that confront us here in the Jewish state.

Part of the problem is that Israel has not weaned itself away from American money. This is true of our government and certainly of our educational,

charitable and Torah institutions. Current day Israel is not the impoverished, poor and economically destitute country of the 1950s. There is a lot of money floating around in Israel today. Yet the average Israeli is not trained to think that somehow it is his or her obligation to support the institutions that he or she favors. One rarely sees or hears of any wealthy Israeli tycoons endowing projects or institutions here in Israel.

The religious community in Israel is constantly inundated with requests for money and it responds but in a relatively small way. Most of the great Torah institutions here in Israel have been built with foreign money, from generous and well-meaning Jews of the Diaspora.

By always looking outside for help and support, both financial and moral, Israel and its population invite the meddling of outsiders in internal affairs. Usually this leads to problems, unnecessary disputes and divisions and a deepening feeling of insecurity. It could be that we are wholly dependent on the United States for F 35 fighter-bombers. But there is no reason that we cannot build kindergartens and soup kitchens on our own.

Our mentality of dependence must change...and then everyone in the Jewish world will learn how to keep their proper distance and deal with their own problems in their own fashion

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks Reframing

Maimonides called his ideal type of human being – the sage – a rofe nefashot, a "healer of souls".[1] Today we call such a person a psychotherapist, a word coined relatively recently from the Greek word psyche, meaning "soul", and therapeia, "healing". It is astonishing how many of the pioneering soul-healers in modern times have been Jewish.

Almost all the early psychoanalysts were, among them Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler, Otto Rank and Melanie Klein. So overwhelming was this, that psychoanalysis was known in Nazi Germany as the "Jewish science". More recent Jewish contributions include Solomon Asch on conformity, Lawrence Kohlberg on developmental psychology and Bruno Bettelheim on child psychology. From Leon Festinger came the concept of cognitive dissonance, from Howard Gardner the idea of multiple intelligences and from Peter Salovey and Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence. Abraham Maslow gave us new insight into motivation, as did Walter Mischel into self-control via the famous "marshmallow test".

Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky gave us prospect theory and behavioural economics. Most recently, Jonathan Haidt and Joshua Green have pioneered empirical study of the moral emotions. The list goes on and on.

To my mind, though, one of the most important Jewish contributions came from three outstanding figures: Viktor Frankl, Aaron T. Beck and Martin Seligman. Frankl created the method known as Logotherapy, based on the search for meaning. Beck was the joint creator of the most successful form of treatment, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Seligman gave us Positive Psychology, that is, psychology not just as a cure for depression but as a means of achieving happiness or flourishing through acquired optimism.

These are very different approaches but they have one thing in common. They are based on the belief – set out much earlier in Habad Hassidim in R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi's Tanya – that if we change the way we think, we will change the way we feel. This was, at the outset, a revolutionary proposition in sharp contrast to other theories of the human psyche. There were those who believed that our characters are determined by genetic factors. Others thought our emotional life was governed by early childhood experiences and unconscious drives. Others again, most famously Ivan Pavlov, believed that human behaviour is determined by conditioning. On all of these theories our inner freedom is severely circumscribed. Who we are, and how we feel, are largely dictated by factors other than the conscious mind.

It was Viktor Frankl who showed there is another way – and he did so under some of the worst conditions ever endured by human beings: in Auschwitz. As a prisoner there Frankl discovered that the Nazis took away almost everything that made people human: their possessions, their clothes, their hair, their very names. Before being sent to Auschwitz, Frankl had been a therapist specialising in curing people who had suicidal tendencies. In the camp, he devoted himself as far as he could to giving his fellow prisoners the will to live, knowing that if they lost it, they would soon die.

There he made the fundamental discovery for which he later became famous:

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken

from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.[2]

What made the difference, what gave people the will to live, was the belief that there was a task for them to perform, a mission for them to accomplish, that they had not yet completed and that was waiting for them to do in the future. Frankl discovered that "it did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us." [3] There were people in the camp who had so lost hope that they had nothing more to expect from life. Frankl was able to get them to see that "life was still expecting something from them." One, for example, had a child still alive, in a foreign country, who was waiting for him. Another came to see that he had books to produce that no one else could write. Through this sense of a future calling to them, Frankl was able to help them to discover their purpose in life, even in the valley of the shadow of death.

The mental shift this involved came to be known, especially in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, as reframing. Just as a painting can look different when placed in a different frame, so can a life. The facts don't change, but the way we perceive them does. Frankl writes that he was able to survive Auschwitz by daily seeing himself as if he were in a university, giving a lecture on the psychology of the concentration camp. Everything that was happening to him was transformed, by this one act of the mind, into a series of illustrations of the points he was making in the lecture. "By this method, I succeeded somehow in rising above the situation, above the sufferings of the moment, and I observed them as if they were already of the past." [4] Reframing tells us that though we cannot always change the circumstances in which we find ourselves, we can change the way we see them, and this itself changes the way we feel.

Yet this modern discovery is really a re-discovery, because the first great re-framer in history was Joseph, as described in this week's and next's parshiyot. Recall the facts. He had been sold into slavery by his brothers. He had lost his freedom for thirteen years, and been separated from his family for twenty-two years. It would be understandable if he felt toward his brothers resentment and a desire for revenge. Yet he rose above such feelings, and did so precisely by shifting his experiences into a different frame. Here is what he says to his brothers when he first discloses his identity to them:

"I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with

yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life ... God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God." (Gen. 45:4-8)

And this is what he says years later, after their father Jacob has died and the brothers fear that he may now take revenge:

"Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as He is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." (Gen. 50:19-21)

Joseph had reframed his entire past. He no longer saw himself as a man wronged by his brothers. He had come to see himself as a man charged with a life-saving mission by God. Everything that had happened to him was necessary so that he could achieve his purpose in life: to save an entire region from starvation during a famine, and to provide a safe haven for his family.

This single act of reframing allowed Joseph to live without a burning sense of anger and injustice. It enabled him to forgive his brothers and be reconciled with them. It transformed the negative energies of feelings about the past into focused attention to the future. Joseph, without knowing it, had become the precursor of one of the great movements in psychotherapy in the modern world. He showed the power of reframing. We cannot change the past. But by changing the way we think about the past, we can change the future.

Whatever situation we are in, by reframing it we can change our entire response, giving us the strength to survive, the courage to persist, and the resilience to emerge, on the far side of darkness, into the light of a new and better day.

[1] Rambam, Shemoneh Perakim, Ch. 3.

[2] Viktor Frankl, man's search for meaning, 75.

[3] Ibid., 85.

[4] Ibid., 82

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z"TL

"And Joseph said to his brothers: I am Joseph, is my father still alive?

And his brothers were not able to answer him, for they were affrighted before him". (45:3)

The Torah has taken us along on the roller coaster ride which has been the life of Yosef Hatzadeek.

Yosef's bitachon in Hashem's providence is the model for us.

In our Perasha, the final confrontation between Yosef and his Brothers is described in all of its depth. As Yosef says the famous words, "I am Yosef, Is my Father yet alive"?

The Brothers' response is "And they could not reply, because they were bewildered & terrified."

This tremendous lesson that even the most righteous must suspect their motives, and even the wisest can be led astray by envy, stands out as one of the great teachings of Hashem's Torah.

Our Sages have learned that from the Brothers' stunned & terrified reaction to the rebuke of the truth of Yosef's revelation, we learn great principles.

Firstly, that on the great Day of Judgment we will have to face the truth about our own lives since Hashem will be our Judge. We will be terrified and without answers.

Secondly, we will also discover that we have deceived ourselves. Just like the Brothers who had felt they were entirely justified until Yosef finally revealed himself and the truth. They saw that they had been in error for 22 years and were shocked.

Everyone is deceived about his character flaws. Instruction (mussar) is needed before it is too late. Only by going to a Hacham to ask for advice on what and how to correct and improve your character, and by learning, can a person find out the truth about himself.

We are all deceived about ourselves and filled with flaws. Only by learning can we rescue ourselves before the Great Yom Hadin.