

### DELVING DEEPER

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR RABBI ADI ROLAND

## Mama Rachel's Real Greatness

[Leah] said to [Rachel], "Is it insignificant that you took my husband, that you also want to take my son's [flowers]?" (30:15)

ALL THE COMMENTATORS ASK: HOW COULD Leah be upset at her sister, Rachel, for marrying Yaakov? Rachel was the one who was supposed to marry Yaakov, and only because Rachel gave the signs to her sister Leah did Yaakov end up marrying Leah!

Let us take a look at a gemara:

As a reward for Rachel's discretion, she merited to have King Shaul descend from her... And what [moment of] discretion defined Rachel? ...Rachel said to Yaakov, "[I will marry

you... but] I have a sister who is older than I, and [Lavan] will not allow me to marry before her." Yaakov then gave her signs [to identify herself with at their wedding]. When the [wedding] night approached, [and Lavan was about to give Leah to Yaakov], Rachel said, "Now my sister will be humiliated!" She related the signs to Leah [so that Yaakov wouldn't know that she wasn't Rachel]. (Megilla 13b)

The question is obvious: Why does the gemara describe Rachel as being *discrete* when she gave the signs to her sister? It's quite obvious that she acted out of *compassion*, so her sister wouldn't be embarrassed!

Rashi explains that Rachel displayed discretion by giving the signs to Leah in a way that nobody would recognize. She "happened to mention" something to Leah about signs that Yaakov might ask for, without letting on that she had made up these signs with Yaakov to prevent anybody else from marrying him! She was careful to relate them in such a way that Leah would never be aware of their plan.

— CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE —>

### A RIDDLE FOR YOU



reprinted with permission from ohr.edu—  
Ohr Somayach Institutions (Jerusalem)

A person ate meat, waited six hours, and washed and cleaned out his mouth. In what situation would he still not be able to eat milk?

The answer will appear next week's edition.

#### LAST WEEK'S RIDDLE:

**Q** I'm too young to be *pareve*.  
Who am I?

**A** I'm an undeveloped egg inside a chicken, which is considered part of the chicken. (Later, when the egg develops, it will be considered a separate entity, even though it's still inside the chicken—and it will be *pareve*.) 🥚



R' A.Y. Braunstein  
speaks to the Night Kollel chabura

### A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

The three daily services were instituted by our Avos (Patriarchs). Today they substitute for the Temple offerings, which we, unfortunately, can no longer bring (Talmud, B'rachos 26b)—and, just like improper intention invalidates a sacrifice, improper thoughts invalidate a *t'filla* (prayer). (Yerushalmi, B'rachos 43)

Ideally, one should concentrate on the meaning of the whole *Sh'mone Esrei*, aka the *Amida*, the most important part of our prayers. However, if it's difficult to

— CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE —>

### THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On the 5 Kislev, 5416 (1655), Oliver Cromwell convened a gathering of English notables to decide if the Jews should be readmitted to England, following their expulsion almost 400 years earlier. An English soldier and statesman, and later "Lord Protector" of the Commonwealth, he was an outspoken Puritan who had commanded Parliament's forces against the Royalists in the British Civil War. Although Cromwell was interested in attracting the rich Jews of Amsterdam, clergy and merchants were opposed, so Cromwell dissolved the gathering.

In 1656, England declared war against Spain. To avoid arrest as Spaniards, London's Marranos avowed their Judaism. Cromwell then gave informal permission for Jews to reside and trade in England. By 1657, London's growing community of Jews had purchased a private home to be used as a synagogue. 🏠

#### Sponsorship & feedback:

parasha@cincynollel.org

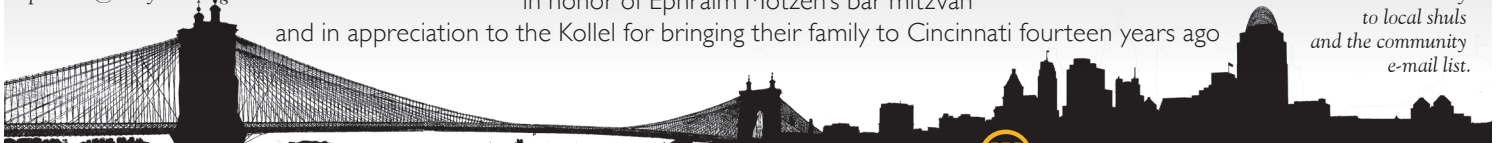
sponsored by **Rabbi A.D. & Shifra Motzen**

in honor of Ephraim Motzen's bar mitzvah

and in appreciation to the Kollel for bringing their family to Cincinnati fourteen years ago

#### Cincinnati Torah

is distributed weekly  
to local shuls  
and the community  
e-mail list.



## A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

(CONTINUED)

maintain that level of focus, one should try to have as much concentration as possible—at the very least, during the first blessing (“Avos”), the blessing of “Modim,” and the ending of every blessing (from “Baruch atta...”). (M.B. 101:1)

If one is momentarily unable to concentrate, even for the first blessing, he’s better off waiting and davening later. If that means he will miss the halachic time for davening, he should say the next *Amida* twice, to make up for it. (M.B. 101:3)

Even though someone who just rattles off the first blessing, without thinking about the words, has not fulfilled his obligation to say the *Sh’mone Esrei* (O.C. 101:1), he may not repeat it or start again—we are afraid that he will not focus the second time, either. Rather, he should pause and think through the first blessing in his mind, without articulating the words (*Chazon Ish*), then continue reciting the *Sh’mone Esrei*, with particular concentration on the blessing of *Modim*. If, however, he catches himself before finishing the first blessing, he should start anew from “Elokei Avraham.” (MB 101:4, quoting *Chayei Adam*)

The Chofetz Chaim (*Sha’ar haTziyun* 96:2) points out that if someone has failed to focus during the first blessing due to a specific distraction, e.g., a disruptive child, he may repeat the first blessing once that distraction is gone.

Rabbi Matisyahu Solomon once heard someone comment that there are no more opportunities for self-sacrifice in America. He responded, “Focus on every word of the *Sh’mone Esrei* for a full day. That requires real self-sacrifice!”

### Mama Rachel CONTINUED

It turns out that Leah never knew about the deal between Yaakov and Rachel—and that, as far as Leah understood, she had always been Yaakov’s only intended wife.

(This also explains the poetic justice in King Shaul’s descent from Rachel. After Shmuel privately anointed him as the first king of the proud Jewish People, the gemara relates that Shaul didn’t tell anyone; only after Shmuel gathered the nation, and proclaimed Shaul king, was it publicized.)

Now we can understand why Leah got

## At the Kollel

EVERY DAY

EVERY WEEK

### 👉 “Dirshu” Gemara Shiur (Maseches Y’vamos)

Rabbi Yitzchok Preis.....  
Sunday 7:15–8:15 AM  
Monday–Friday 5:50–6:45 AM

### 👉👉 Kollel Yisgaber K’ari (amud-a-day of Mishnah B’rurah)

Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....  
Monday–Friday 6:55–7:20 AM

### 👉 Daf Yomi

Rabbi Meir Minster.....  
Sunday–Thursday 8–8:45 PM  
Shabbos (at CZE) 1:00 pre-mincha

### 👉👉 Night Seder Chabura

in the Annex Library  
(Maseches Avodah Zara)  
led by Rabbi Tzvi Fishman  
Monday–Thursday 9–9:50 PM  
followed by *Ma’ariv* at 9:50

KEY: 👉 Beginners   👉 Intermediate   👉 Advanced   Ⓜ for men and women

Chavrusos are available for private and group learning—

speak to Rabbi Chaim Heinemann!   weekdays noon–1 PM • Sun.–Thurs. 8–9:45 PM

DAVENING TIMES CAN BE FOUND AT [CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE/](http://CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE/)

## GREAT ACTS OF SIMPLE PEOPLE

New!

RABBI REUVEN FEINSTEIN, THE ROSH YESHIVA of Yeshiva of Staten Island, recently received the following letter, which praised his students for their respect and courtesy.

Rabbi Feinstein,

*I was so impressed with the Staten Island Yeshiva and the young men of which you are the head, that I must write this email to you.*

*In February of last year, I drove a Jewish friend of mine from Lakewood, NJ, to upper Staten Island for therapy on his knee.*

*Rabbi Beane needed to say afternoon prayers and determined your Yeshiva was a convenient place to do so. That February day was cold and snowy. I helped Eli up the icy steps to the Yeshiva and waited in the hallway while he prayed. I watched the students as they traversed the halls. I cannot help but be in awe*

*of the dress-code, the demeanor and the courtesy, shown to me, a stranger—a non-Jew.*

*I live in a non-Jewish world—a world that is low in respect to teachers, parents and themselves. The lexicon, the revealing clothing, the shameful “sewer” mouths uttered, are to me an abhorrence to the Almighty... Rabbi Beane remarked to me once that without a high degree of morality the world sinks into cannibalism and savagery. The world is there.*

*The only hope I see, if any, is the islands of young men studying Torah and Talmud, living its commandments and influencing others.*

*May the Almighty bless you, the yeshiva, the rabbis and your students—may your yeshiva be an example of what humanity should be!!*

Shalom,

Gerry Mullen 🙏

## PARASHA PONDERABLE

RABBI MICHAEL SOROKA

...[YAAKOV] ENCOUNTERED THE PLACE (VAYIFGA BAMAKOM) AND HE SPENT THE NIGHT THERE, FOR THE SUN HAD SET. (28:11)

There is a dispute in the Talmud (B’rachos 26a) over the time a person may begin davening Ma’ariv—is it from sunset, or from *p’lag haMincha*, which is approximately 1¼ hours before sunset? The gemara also tells us that we learn from the words above, “*vayifga bamakom*,” that Yaakov established the prayer of Ma’ariv. If so, we should be able to bring proof from this verse to the opinion that one may daven Ma’ariv before sunset. The Torah says first that Yaakov davened, and only afterward that the sun set!

How might we defend the other opinion? Feel free to share your thoughts. 🙏

upset at Rachel for marrying Yaakov. As far as she was aware, she was the sole intended wife of Yaakov, and her sister Rachel was

the one who had intruded! We also now understand how great our Mama Rachel really was! 🙏