

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	4:31 PM
Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush	8:30 AM
Sof Zman K"Z- 9:24 גר"א < 8:48 א"מ	
Mincha- Followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:25 PM
Maariv	5:38 PM

Sunday

Shacharis 8:30 AM
~ Followed by a Shiur

Mincha / Maariv 4:35 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Shacharis

Mon 6:40 AM

Thur 8:30 AM



Tue, Wed., Fri. 6:45 AM

Mincha (Mon-Thur) 1:45 PM

Mincha / Maariv THURSDAY 4:35 PM

Maariv (Mon-Thur) 9:45 PM

**Rabbi Teichman's Thursday Night
Shiur After Maariv**

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Shalosh Seudos

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- #3. You have a set seat at Shalosh Seudos.
- #2. You have seen the same bencher more than 3 times.
- #1. You know all the rabbi's favorite tunes.



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Issue#162

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Hugs and Kisses

One of the greatest displays of affection towards those we feel closest to is an embracing hug and a gentle kiss. Whether a parent showing love to a child, a joyous reunion of friends, or the classic metaphor of affection of a groom towards his bride, which reflects the ultimate bond between the Jewish nation and Hashem, as so poignantly described in Shir HaShirim, a hug and a kiss conveys something very special in a relationship.

In all of Torah there are only three episodes portraying this combined display of fondness.

The first appears last week, when Lavan “warmly” greets Yaakov, his prospective son in law.

וירץ לקראתו ויחבק לו וישק לו (בראשית כט יג), he ran toward him, and embraced him, and kissed him.

In this weeks portion an almost identical description is given when Esav, despite his hard feelings towards his “conniving” sibling Yaakov, breaks down upon encountering him, in a unusual demonstration of love.

וירץ עשו לקראתו ויחבקו ויפול על צוארו וישקו ויבכו (שם לב ד), Esav ran toward him, embraced him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him and they wept.

The final exhibit of warmth through a hug and kiss is described when Yaakov Avinu, in his desire to bestow a blessing upon his beloved grandchildren, Efrayim and Menashe, asks Yosef to bring them near and proceeds to hug and kiss them.

ועיני ישראל כבדו מזקן לא יוכל לראות ויגש אתם אליו וישק להם ויחבק להם (שם מח א) kissed them and hugged them.

In contrasting these three occurrences there are several glaring disparities.

By Lavan and Esav they are running eagerly to express their exploding emotion. In distinction, Yaakov calmly coaxes his grandchildren to come close to him before embracing them.

In the first two incidents they initiate a hug then kiss afterward. Yaakov Avinu however firsts plants a kiss prior to his hugging them.

What is there in the art of hugging and kissing that the Torah is teaching us?

The Midrash (ילקוט שמעוני רמז קלג) points out the similarity between the word *וישקהו*, and he kissed him, and the word *וישכהו*, and he bit him. This anomaly, the Midrash says, indicates Esav's true desire to “bite” rather than kiss Yaakov.

What is the deeper meaning behind this correlation between kissing and biting?

The Targum Yehonason ben Uziel describes how Yaakov's neck transformed into stone foiling the “vampire” Esav's intent to “suck out his blood” (see Yalkut). That is the reason it states *ויבכו*, and they **both** cried, in the plural, Esav in pain over his teeth and Yaakov over his neck!

Why would Yaakov be in pain if Esav's teeth never penetrated him?

A kiss is a symbol of connection, a display of oneness. In Halacha the process of “*השקה*” is employed when a body of drawn water, שאובים, that is disqualified from serving as a liquid in a Mikva, “kisses” a “kosher” collection of forty seah of water, it becomes instantly purified, becoming one with qualified entity.

A hug is not only a sign of unity, but more so of an embracing protection, as the verse describes the promise of Elisha to the Shunamite woman that she would conceive a child and be (והיה בן מלכים ב ד טז) *חובקת בן (מלכים ב ד טז)*, embracing a child “securely” in her arms.

Lavan, the paradigm of תאוה, lust, sought to “embrace” so as to consume rather than to protect, as Rashi there describes his intent to “feel” for gems that might have been secured on Yaakov's body. His “kiss” was merely an effort to discover any jewels that might have been secreted in Yaakov's mouth.

Lavan's “protective” embrace was intended to secure his own interests and desires.

The Torah therefore emphasizes first, *ויחבק לו*, literally meaning; and he hugged “to him”, as opposed to Esav who *ויחבקו*, hugged “him”, indeed embracing Yaakov.

The objective was wealth not Yaakov himself. The ensuing kiss was merely a deeper grasping for riches, without any desire for any union with “Yaakov”.

Esav in his moment of brotherly affection feels a connection to Yaakov, *ויחבקו*, and he embraces “him”. Esav the epitome of קנאה, zeal for power and control, seeks to embrace his brother Yaakov under his patronizing “protection”. He too starts with a “shielding” hug, for this is the power seekers claim.

Esav's “kiss” of harmony, is intended however to stamp Yaakov with his own identity.

The *נשיקה*, the kiss, in this sense is similar to a *נשיכה*, a bite which takes the entity within itself.

Esav is ambivalent in that he feels an affinity but can't disengage it from his own goals. He is in pain, for Yaakov can not exist as a part of Esav. His teeth are blunted.

Yaakov too aches over this kiss that can only fall on a neck of stone. He longs for connection but it is not yet possible.

Yaakov understands the science of hugging and kissing. It begins with respect for the one he kisses.

The Seforno in describing the kiss Aharon placed on Moshe when he went to greet him in the desert, *וישק לו (שמות ד כז)*, וישק, as one who kisses a holy object.

A kiss must represent an admiration and appreciation for the one we kiss. Only then can we proceed to place them under our sheltering embrace. The hug then is not one of expressing possession, but rather devotion to that precious entity we seek to protect.

It must be contemplative and thoughtful and not merely an unleashing of frustrated personal emotion.

When we hug and kiss those dear to us we must make sure it's about our regard for them. A healthy relationship is one where each side regards the other with appreciation for whom they are, only then can one achieve true oneness!

With hugs and kisses,
צבי טייכמן



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