

# Living Jewish



## Tell your Children

### Open 24/7

A festive spirit pervaded the town of Sanz, Poland. Several tzadikim had arrived and were staying with Rabbi Chayim Halberstam, who was the chief rabbi of the town since 1830 and Rebbe of thousands of chasidim. But one morning, a day or two after Pesach Sheini in the middle of Shacharit, the atmosphere was compromised by an unpleasant incident. It began when the prayer leader completed the repetition of the Amidah. R. Chayim instructed him to skip Tachanun, the penitential prayer - omitted only on festive days. When queried, he explained that his ruling was based on the holy Zohar, which states that during the seven days following Pesach Sheini, the Gates of Heaven remain continuously open.

Present was the oldest of his seven sons, Rabbi Yehezkel-Shraga, who objected strenuously. "Excuse me, Father, but the Remah (Rabbi Moshe Isserles - the main Ashkenazic codifier of Jewish Law) writes clearly, 'On Lag b'Omer (Iyar 18) Tachanun is not said.' From this we derive clearly that on the rest of the seven days (3 days before and 3 days after Lag b'Omer) Tachanun is said!"

They debated back and forth, with R. Yehezkel insisting Tachanun must be said and R. Chayim refusing to budge from his decision and stated reasoning. In the end, R. Yehezkel stamped out with a minyan of his own followers, so as not to be seen acting against his father's position in his presence. Outside, in the courtyard, they recited Tachanun and completed praying by themselves. As soon as both groups had finished praying, R. Yehezkel reignited the 'debate.' Their words became more heated until R. Chayim proclaimed to his son, "I don't want you ever again to step over the threshold of my home!" As the shul was in a dedicated room inside R. Chayim's house, R. Yehezkel climbed out the window of the shul in order not to disobey his father's command.

Also in the shul that day was Rabbi Mordechai-Dov of Hornosteipel, the husband of Reitze, the oldest of R. Chayim's seven daughters. Like everyone, he was



Painting by Alex Levin, [artlevin.com](http://artlevin.com)

shocked at the argument that had flared between the father and son, both Torah giants, and the harsh words they had exchanged. It was even more bizarre in that he knew the great respect that R. Yehezkel had always displayed towards his father. His amazement increased when his father-in-law whispered in his ear, "I don't know what extraordinary merit I have that I should be blessed with such a holy son as this one." R. Mordechai wondered: "Such a holy son? Because he initiates a quarrel with his father and then disrespectfully walks out!" But he replied ambiguously, "In my opinion it is not so wondrous to think that you have such great merit."

After returning home, R. Chayim prepared to sit at the table for his first meal and sent a messenger to summon R. Yehezkel for the meal. But his son refused! The chasidim and the Rebbe's household were astounded. The argument was intense, but to such an extent?

Many years passed. In 1876, Rabbi Chayim of Sanz departed to his heavenly reward, leaving sons and sons-in-law worthy to shepherd the chasidim. A few years later, Rabbi Mordechai-Dov was in Sanz, again during the week immediately following Pesach Sheini. His brother-in-law, Rabbi Yehezkel, the chief rabbi and Rebbe in Shiniva since 1856, was also in Sanz and in the same minyan as he for Shacharit. The prayer leader, who knew well R. Yehezkel's strong position about saying Tachanun during these days, began saying Tachanun immediately upon his completion of the repetition of the Amida. How surprised the man was when R. Yehezkel instructed him to skip the Tachanun prayer.

The Hornosteipeler was astonished. He well remembered the fierce debate years before, and how obstinate R. Yehezkel was about the obligation to say it. He could still picture his brother-in-law leaving with a minyan of his disciples to say Tachanun away from his father.

When they finished praying, R. Mordechai approached his brother-in-law and requested an explanation. R. Yehezkel smiled. "I'll tell you what really happened that morning all those years ago. It was not as it seemed to you and the others. I arose very early to prepare myself before entering my father's room. All of a sudden I was overwhelmed with tiredness; I had to close my eyes. Immediately I was asleep...and dreaming.

"In my dream I saw my father, sitting on his chair and surrounded by hundreds of chasidim. The next moment they all turned away from my father and faced me. They started chanting, 'Long live our Rebbe! Long live our Rebbe!' My father remained sitting in his chair, alone and abandoned. I awoke from the dream. My thoughts were disturbed and my whole body was trembling. I understood the dream to be a hint that my father was soon to transfer the leadership to me. And since our holy books state, 'one royal reign cannot overlap another,' the implication was that my father would soon depart from the world in order that his 'throne' would pass to me. I was horrified at the thought and my heart felt crushed.

*Continued on page 3*

### Shabbat Times

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat
Jerusalem	6:44	7:59
Tel Aviv	7:02	8:01
Haifa	6:55	8:02
Beer Sheva	7:00	8:00
New York	7:34	8:38

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## A Higher Purpose

This week's Torah reading describes the sacrificial worship carried out in the Temple on Yom Kippur, but it prefaces that description with an allusion to the death of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Avihu.

Why did Nadab and Avihu die?

The Torah relates previously that they entered the Holy of Holies with "a strange fire that G-d did not command them [to bring]."

## Consuming Desire

Now on Yom Kippur, the High Priest would enter the same sacred place, the Holy of Holies. And so, the Torah warns him not to repeat the error made by Aaron's sons.

What was the mistake of Aaron's sons? They sought closeness to G-d and were willing to give up everything, even their lives, to achieve that.

The Or HaChayim, one of the classic commentaries on the Torah, explains that their death did not come as a punishment. Instead, their souls appreciated the G-dly light manifest in the Holy of Holies and clung to it.

Their desire for G-dliness was so great that

their souls simply expired.

## Serving G-d in this World

This was the error that the High Priest was to avoid on Yom Kippur. Although he would enter the Holy of Holies and come face to face with the Divine presence, he was warned to keep in focus that the intent of his service was life in this world, not a bond with G-d in the spiritual realms.

Rather than seek out closeness with G-d, his purpose in entering was to evoke atonement and blessing for the Jewish people as they exist in this material realm.

What is the core of the issue? Aaron's sons sought their own spiritual satisfaction; what was gratifying for them.

The High Priest, on the other hand, is a servant, carrying out G-d's will, aware that what G-d desires is not a bond with Him in the spiritual realms, but rather the observance of His will and His mitzvot in this material world.

## The Most Encompassing Bond

Similar concepts apply with regard to the ultimate, desired state of existence.

Maimonides maintains that the ultimate is the spiritual world of souls, the afterlife. All material existence, even the heights to be reached in the era of the Redemption

and the era of the Resurrection, he maintains, is secondary to the G-dliness to be experienced when the soul leaves the body.

The sages of the Kabbalah, the Jewish mystic tradition, differ and maintain that the ultimate state will be the Resurrection of the Dead. Souls that have enjoyed spiritual bliss in the afterlife for thousands of years will descend and live again in a material body.

For G-d's essence is invested in this material world, and it is through life in this world that the most encompassing bond with Him can be established.

*Adapted from the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Shabbos Table, Moshiach Now! reprinted from Keeping in Touch, Sichos in English. From our Sages reprinted from www.LchaimWeekly.org – LYO / NYC*

## 5:30am... Not 6am

A man once called 770, Central Headquarters of Chabad, requesting an urgent blessing for his wife. As she went into labor, they were experiencing serious complications to deliver the baby.

Finally, in the morning, news came that, baruch Hashem, at 6:00am the baby was born and baby and mother were healthy. When hearing the news, the Rebbe strangely wanted to know the exact time the baby was born. Rabbi Groner forwarded the message to the father, who went to ask the medical staff for the exact time of birth.

When hearing the uncommon question, the reaction was uncomfortable: Be happy your baby is healthy! What difference does it make what time he was born?

But the man insisted. It was a little unclear, amongst the confusion they were not thinking of marking the precise time. But finally, the nurse in charge was able to confirm that the birth actually took place at 5:30am.

When reporting back to the Rebbe, the Rebbe explained to Rabbi Groner: When I heard about the complications, it bothered me the whole night and it didn't let me fall asleep. Finally, at 5:30 I fell asleep. I realize that the actual birth could not have been at 6am...

*As told by the Rebbe's mazkir (secretary) Rabbi Leibel Groner OBM during the night-long farbrengens in which he would pour out his memories, and let the inspiration live on. Reprinted from COLlive*

## From our Sages

*On the tenth day of the seventh month you shall afflict yourselves" (Lev. 16:29)*

The Apter Rav, author of Ohev Yisrael used to say: "Were I only to have the authority I would annul all the fast days on the Jewish calendar with two exceptions. Those are the Ninth of Av, the date of the destruction of the Temple - for who can eat on such a day - and Yom Kippur (the tenth day of the seventh month), the holiest day of the year - for who needs to eat on such a day?"

*And you shall keep My statutes, and My ordinances, which if a person will do them (otam) he shall live by them (Lev. 18:5)*

The word "otam" - "them" - is spelled without the Hebrew letter vav. It is therefore the same letters as the word "emet," which means "truth." This hints to us that if a person lives his life according to truth, acts truthfully in all areas, speaks and thinks honestly, it is promised him that "he shall live by them." For clinging to truth is a special merit for long life.

*(Degel Machane Efraim)*

*Because the life of all flesh is in the blood. (17:11)*

The blood is the "soul" of man and beast. G-d permitted us to eat only an animal's body, and not its soul. Since the blood of a beast is its soul, we do not want to take an animal's soul into our bodies. We must have an elevated consciousness in order to study Torah and perform mitzvot. That which a person eats turns to blood in his body and his mind is nourished by it.

*(Ramban)*

*Do not follow the ways of Egypt where you once lived, nor of Canaan, where I will be bringing you. Do not follow any of their customs (Lev. 18:3)*

This verse is not exhorting us concerning transgressions; those are detailed later. Rather, it is informing us concerning the actions and deeds which are permitted; they must be performed in a different manner from the non-Jewish people in Egypt and Canaan. Even our eating and sleeping should be done in a Jewish way.

*(Sifte Emet)*



# Chassidus page

## The Second Passover - Pesach Sheini

One of the leaders of a yeshiva for men who did not grow up religious was describing his program to the previous Gerer Rebbe, Reb Simchah Bunim. "We understand the mentality of our students and appreciate what they have gone through. This comes from years of work. It's not that we come from such an environment. I have been studying Torah all my life. I did not have to turn to G-d in repentance." Upon hearing these words, the Gerer Rebbe answered: "Maybe it's about time that you did."

Every Jew was commanded to bring a paschal sacrifice on Passover. However, to bring this sacrifice a person had to be ritually pure and in Jerusalem. If a person was impure, far away from the Temple in Jerusalem or even if he just did not want to bring the sacrifice on Passover, the Torah does not give up on him. He is given another chance. A month later on the Second Passover, he could bring the sacrifice. The lesson is apparent: There is no room for despair. No one is ever lost. A person can always correct himself.

In commemoration of this sacrifice, it is customary to eat matzah on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Iyar, the day the second paschal sacrifice was brought. A question, however, arises: Most of the people commemorating the Second Passover are the same ones who celebrated the first. If they celebrated Passover the first time, why must they be concerned with the Second Passover?

The resolution to this question is depend-

ent on the concept that our spiritual service must be a continuous upward progression. Today cannot be like yesterday; it must be an improvement. So great an improvement that when looking back at yesterday, a person should feel that he was impure and far away, that the Passover service he rendered was not sufficient. So he is given a Second Passover, a chance to make another advance on his new level of consciousness.

The manner in which the possibility was granted to bring the second paschal sacrifice is also significant. The Torah relates that in the first year after the Exodus, when the Jewish people were preparing to bring the Paschal sacrifice, "There were [certain] men who were impure.... They came before Moses... and said, 'Why should we be held back from bringing the offering of G-d in its time?...'" Moses brought their complaint before G-d and He granted them — and likewise any Jew in a similar situation in subsequent times — a second opportunity to offer the Paschal sacrifice.

This shows us the importance of making demands of G-d. When a Jew feels a sincere spiritual desire, he should insist to be given an opportunity for this desire to be expressed. This concept applies today for every one of us. We all lack Moshiach. This is not just a small matter, but something that affects every element of our lives. With a sincere and positive stubbornness, we should persist in our calls for the Redemption, asking and demanding of G-d to end our exile.

## Moshiach Now

### Recognizing G-dliness

The ultimate fusion of the material and the spiritual will come in the era of the Redemption. At present, we know that every material entity contains sparks of G-dliness, but that knowledge is merely intellectual. In the era of the Redemption, that will change. Material reality will continue to exist, but its connection to the spiritual will be readily apparent. We will appreciate the G-dly energy that grants life to every creation.

Describing the nature of the reality that will prevail during the era of the Redemption is not intended merely to arouse our desire for the advent of that era. Instead, it gives us the potential to anticipate that era by living our lives in that spirit in the present age. That endeavor will precipitate the blossoming forth of this truth into manifest reality. For when man turns his attention to the G-dliness embedded into creation, that G-dliness becomes more evident and overtly recognizable.

### Open 24/7

*Continued from page one:*

"The first thing I did was vow to undergo the 'Fast for a Bad Dream' (recommended in Jewish Law to help nullify a negative dream's effects), starting right then. After I calmed down a bit, I struggled to come up with a plan. And, praise G-d, with the help of Heaven I thought of something. I reasoned that the principle of 'one royal reign cannot overlap another' applies only when it is one and the same kingdom, but when it is two separate kingdoms the concept of 'overlap' is not relevant. So, I decided to initiate a division between myself and my father's court, starting with diverging customs, thereby declaring that in effect I and my followers were establishing a separate 'kingdom', a different chasidic court. In that way both courts would be able to co-exist without any tragic loss of a leader.

"My actions turned away the Heavenly judgment hovering over my father and dissolved the Divine decree. However, when my father, who understood what I had done and why, requested my presence at his table that day, I was still in the midst of the fast I had accepted upon myself, and could not participate in the meal in his house, as I usually would."

At last, R. Mordechai-Dov understood the perplexing remark of R. Chayim about the special holiness of his son, and the reason for R. Yehezkel's behavior that day many years before. R. Yehezkel concluded by finally answering the Horowitz's original question: "As for whether or not to recite Tachanun during these seven days here in Sanz, his city, G-d forbid that I would allow a change from the customs of my holy father of blessed memory," he exclaimed.

*Translated and slightly adapted by Yeraachmiel Tilles from the rendition in the Hebrew weekly, "Sichat HaShavua", #1533, based on Tzvi Tiferet. Rabbi Tilles of Tsfat is a co-founder of ASCENT. His mailing list (ytilles3@gmail.com) is now in its 23rd year. The first two of his "Full Moon" storybooks (Koren Publ) are available for purchase at Kabbala-Online-shop.com and Jewish bookstores.*

## Human Interest

### Online Smicha

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the learning schedule of yeshivas, schools, and seminaries, many are experiencing the live classes that today's technology offers. For some, this experience is not new. Over the last decade, hundreds of students received their Smicha (Rabbinic ordination) through the OnlineSmicha.com program, led by Rabbi Nachman Wilhelm. Now, Online Smicha will open three new classes in the next few weeks.

The program has attracted people from different backgrounds from all



over the world: chassidim, shlichim and professionals.

"I have found the program to be of the highest quality," writes Dr. Elliot Grossman. "The live shiurim are interactive, with the opportunity to ask questions and give comments. They are presented clearly and there are many prerecorded shiurim on many related, and even unrelated, topics. The whiteboard charts are extremely helpful in mastering the Halachos."

For more information or to apply, visit [onlinesmicha.com](http://onlinesmicha.com) or contact [admin@onlinesmicha.com](mailto:admin@onlinesmicha.com)

*Adapted and reprinted from COLlive*

### Cooking Tip of the Week

**Frozen Bananas:** After Pesach I was left with more bananas than I could eat. My spouse doesn't like bananas. My friend Rochel Ginsberg suggested peeling and freezing them. Great snack even after Pesach.

*Alizah Hochstead,  
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### Halacha Corner – Shehecheyanu on Grafted Fruits

There is a debate among *poskim* whether the blessing of *Shehecheyanu*, which is said before eating a new fruit, may be said if the fruit is a *murkav*, grown on a tree that is *kilayim* (one that was grafted with another species), since grafting trees is not permissible according to halachah. Many citrus fruits come from trees that were originally grafted.

However, for a number of reasons the prevailing custom is to make a *Shehecheyanu*:

1. Perhaps the tree was grafted in a permissible manner.
2. It is likely that the tree was grafted by a non-Jew, and according to many opinions non-Jews do not have the prohibition of *harkavah*.
3. It is most likely that the fruit in question is not a direct product from the originally grafted tree, and according to many opinions, in that case it is permissible to say *Shehecheyanu*.
4. Many *poskim* are of the opinion that when there is a *halachic* doubt regarding saying the blessing of *Shehecheyanu*, we may be lenient and say it.

For all the above reasons, *Shehecheyanu* is recited before eating a citrus fruit for the first time that season.

*Rav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita, member of the Beis Din of Crown Heights; Once Minute Halacha, #276, [crownheightsconnect.com](http://crownheightsconnect.com)*

## Farbrengen

**Question:** I was eating dinner late one night. Everyone else had already eaten since I had to work late, which is not uncommon. As I was eating my son came in and asked, "Aba, I really do not understand why you work so much! How much money you will make was already decided on Rosh HaShana. I do not understand why you even work at all!" I told him I would speak with him later but, in truth, he had a point and I did not know what to say.

**Answer:** There are a few issues to consider: 1. Why work at all?; 2. If there is a need to work, why work so much?; 3. What was behind your son's question?

The Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek explains in the Chassidic discourse, *Tiglachat Metzora*, *Derech Mitzvetecha* (pgs. 211–214), that on Rosh HaShana a general life force comes into creation to provide life for the coming year. On Yom Kippur this general life force is divided into particulars, providing each creation its portion for the new year. However, this life force can remain in the spiritual realms and not descend below to provide physical sustenance.

Our Sages teach that a person is judged each day. Chassidus explains that the judgment hinges on whether the person will merit that the life force culminate in material sustenance or remain above, in the spiritual worlds. Therefore, in addition to learning Torah and performing mitzvos, we ask Hashem three times a day during the Amida prayer to fulfill our needs and we beseech Hashem for Divine compassion.

Yet, just as the lifeforce must descend from the spiritual to the physical, the vessel to receive this blessing must be in accordance with what will be received. In Parshas Devarim (15:18) we are taught, "Hashem your G-d will bless you in all that you **do**." By working to earn a livelihood we create a vessel to receive Hashem's blessing of physical sustenance. In addition, the profession one chooses (the vessel) should be in accordance to the amount of money one needs for his expenses. Working excessively is like making a huge pot to hold a small cup of water; it is unnecessary. Such conduct will even cause harm; like making pants that are too long.

Regarding your son, on one level, a question is a request for information. However, there are underlying motivations behind each question: unfulfilled needs, to make a point, introduce a topic, create closeness and more. Perhaps your son was saying, "Aba, can you make time for me too." The answer to your son's question might not be what you originally thought.

*Aharon Schmidt - marriage & individual coaching - video and telephone available. For an appointment or to share a question contact: [coachingandcounseling1@gmail.com](mailto:coachingandcounseling1@gmail.com)*

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