

Agudas Yisroel Anshei Kielce



Zmanim

Candle Lighting: 4:24 pm

Mincha/Kabbalas Shabbos: 4:25 pm

Shacharis: 8:45 am

Mincha/**SEUDAS SHLISHIS: 4:15 pm**

Maariv/Motzei Shabbos: 5:27 pm

Motzei Shabbos Rabbeinu Tam: 5:54 pm

Sunday Shacharis: 8:00 am

Parshas Vayeishev

Adapted from Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein [www.torah.org]

An Almost Perfect Family[1]

How do we balance our understanding of the greatness of the Founding Family of our people with the reality that they showed deficiencies at times? The answer may be that even their deficiencies contributed to the development of the Torah nation.

The key may be an implied contrast in the pasuk that introduces us to the young Yosef. It would be a mistake to see the word "batzon" as the object of phrase "he was a shepherd." This erroneous translation would then mean only that Yosef was a shepherd of flocks of sheep. Rather, batzon indicates the context of the preceding phrase. The Torah tells us that he shepherded with his "brothers," meaning the sons of Leah. But it informs us that the time he spend with those brothers was only batzon – only during working hours. It means to underscore that Yosef's life was artificially and unsatisfactorily split between his vocation and the rest of his day. He spent the work part of the day with some of his brothers; by contrast, he spent the na'ar part – the part in which he lived out the development of his youth – with the sons of the Bilhah and Zilpah.

What could this mean? It points to the unfortunate dilemma of Yosef's early years. The rest of his brothers had the advantage of both a nurturing mother, and the companionship of brothers with whom each was particularly close. Yosef had neither. He lost his mother while very young, and he never quite found unambiguous brotherhood. Binyamin was the brother for whom

he could have had the greatest affinity. Because he was younger, though, Binyamin did not offer Yosef the close companionship he needed. With the sons of Leah – who like Rachel was a full wife, in contradistinction to the maidservants – the relationship remained somehow a professional one. When work was over, he gravitated to a different group, the sons of the maidservants.

It might very well have been some youthful vanity that took him there. In the last parshah, we saw that while Yaakov may have treated all four of his wives equally, the distinction between them was never fully erased. It is likely that some of the hierarchy of the way the women viewed themselves continued on in their children, with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah feeling themselves not quite on an equal footing with the sons of Leah. Yosef, the one destined to rule, may have been drawn to those who would more easily stroke his ego.

Should such subtle differences in status exist in Yaakov's household? Shouldn't all the brothers have lived in harmony and complete equality, united in their understanding of their great Divinely-ordained mission? Our first reaction is to be confounded by the lack of absolute unity among them. This, however, would be naive and unperceptive.

The ideal Jewish household does not grow out of ideals that are grasped and shared by a group of human beings, no matter how lofty. The Jewish household is a product of our G-d given Torah, and of the destiny to which we have committed ourselves.

We require certain personality tools to nationally

achieve what Hashem has in store for us. Chazal call us the strongest and fiercest of the nations. Utilized properly, this capacity for might, this tenacity in the face of adversity would allow us to survive the challenges of our history. It might also, at an early stage of our development, predispose us to some unpleasant capacities, such as revenge. Indeed, we even detect some jealousy and hatred in the actions of the shevatim, likely stemming from the same source.

If we had to extrapolate forward, what would we predict from the nation that would grow from such a clan? We would certainly expect to see this fierceness express itself at times in terrible crimes of murder and immorality. Instead, the heirs of this family became a people known for its humaneness, for its compassion and kindness to each other. History would subject them to conditions that, among other people, would pit father against son, and siblings against each other. We would have expected that the seeds of discord planted at the infancy of our people would sprout bumper crops of intra-familial ugliness and communal discord.

That is not what happened. The might and fierceness in the Jewish psyche served our people well, rather than turn into a festering sore. We can find only one explanation for this. Torah did its job. The element that turned a potential problem into a national asset was Hashem's Law that shaped and guided us. Our success did not come from ourselves, but was given to us. The first manifest victory of Divine law was that it conquered us! It tamed and reshaped our nature, and steeled us for survival in the most difficult of circumstances.

The small faults and imperfections that we find, then, should not disturb us. To the contrary, they show the greatness of Torah in two ways. They make it apparent that Hashem's Torah is an effective agent of character change and development. Furthermore, they are the raw stuff out of which the Torah's master craftsmanship molds sublime beauty and utility.

[1] Based on the Hirsch Chumash, Bereishis 37:2

[2] See his comments above 33:6-7, where the difference in background of the women displayed itself in a different capacity to humbly bow to Esav.

Good Shabbos

Mazal Tov to Mr. & Mrs. Efraim & Chani Reichmann on the aufruf and upcoming marriage of their son Tzvi to Malia Weiss.
The Reichmann family would like to invite the members of the shul to the aufruf this shabbos at Toras Emes Congregation (Viewmount)

**This week's kiddush is sponsored by:
 The Bernstein family in honour of a yahrzeit.**

The kids' program will take place downstairs beginning at 9:30 am.

**Seudas Shlishis is sponsored by:
 Mr. Shraga Fishberg in honour of the yahrzeit of the Tolner Rebbe of Yerushalayim OB"M and the yahrzeit of Shraga's step-father Menachem Meir ben Moshe OB"M.**
The guest speaker for seudas shlishis is Rabbi Michoel Liani of Kollel Avreichim.

The cholim list is being updated for Chodesh Teves. If you would like to submit a name to the cholim list please email gabbai@agudahsouth.com or contact one of the gabbaim.

Shacharis	Weekday Schedule	Mincha
Sunday, Monday & Tuesday: 8:00 am		4:30 pm
Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: 6:55 am* & 7:50 am		Maariv 4:50 pm

To sponsor Kiddush/Seudas Shlishis contact Baruch Klein (kiddush@agudahsouth.com.)
 All those wish to submit names to the cholim list can email gabbai@agudahsouth.com or contact one the gabbaim.
 Have a Simcha to announce? Email announcements to mailings@agudahsouth.com.
 To subscribe or unsubscribe to the email bulletin please email mailings@agudahsouth.com.

Rav's Chumash Ramban Shiur?
 The Rav's Chumash Ramban Shiur will take place weekly on Thursday evenings at 8:45 pm @ 15 Reddick Court.

Chanukah Party
 The shul will be hosting a Chanukah Party for children this coming Wednesday.
 For more info email mailings@agudahsouth.com.

Mishnayos Kids' Chaburah
 This week's Chaburah will take place at 3:55 pm. Refreshments will be served.
 If you have a child who is interested in attending, please email info@agudahsouth.com.

Friday Night Learning Program (FNL)
 Learning Seder: 8:00 pm
 Rabbi Kaufman's Parsha Shiur: 8:30 pm
 This week's FNL is sponsored anonymously.
 Kugel & Cholent will be served.