

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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Chabad of North Beverly Hills, 409 Foothill Rd. Beverly Hills, 90210

beverlyhillshabad.com

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In the Torah portion of Vayechi, Yaakov blesses Yosef's two sons who were born in Egypt, Menashe and Efraim. These names were chosen by Yosef because they alluded to his circumstances in Egypt at the time when they were born.

Yosef named his firstborn Menashe, "For G-d has made me forget (nashani) all my troubles, and even my father's house." Far from home, Yosef was in danger of assimilating. Yet he remained connected to his people and to G-d. In choosing the name Menashe, Yosef indicated that he had, in fact, not forgotten his father.

Yosef named his second son Efraim, "For G-d has caused me to become fruitful (hifrani) in the land of my affliction." Not only have I not been influenced by the Egyptians, Yosef was saying, but precisely here, "in the land of my affliction," I established a family, became wealthy and made spiritual progress.

Menashe is symbolic of the bond Yosef shared with his father and the deep yearning he continued to feel for him. Efraim is symbolic of Yosef's success in Egypt, a land that was vile and depraved. Our situation in exile is similar to that of Yosef in Egypt. In exile, we are far from our Father's house -- the Holy Temple -- and G-dliness is concealed. What can we do to overcome our predicament? How are we to conduct ourselves during our sojourn in "Egypt"? The answer is to learn from Yosef, and emulate him.

On the one hand we are obligated to remember our "Father's house," to yearn for the Holy Temple and G-d's closeness. A Jew must never resign himself to the exile. Rather, we must always look forward to the Redemption, continue to observe Torah and mitzvot, just as Yosef refused to acclimate himself to Egypt and named his son Menashe.

On the other hand we must always remember that it is precisely in exile, where poverty of the spirit prevails, that we must remain strong. Just as Yosef remained righteous and flourished in the land of his "affliction," so too must we spread Yiddishkeit and foster the belief in G-d precisely in a world that does not recognize His greatness.

When Yaakov blessed Yosef's sons he placed his right hand on Efraim's (and not Menashe's) head, saying, "His younger brother shall be greater than he." For even though Menashe was the firstborn, and the beginning of our service must be the longing for our Father's house, the main objective of our service in exile is expressed in the name Efraim: an increase in Torah and good deeds, thereby causing G-d's Name to be known in the world. By emphasizing this aspect we will merit G-d's light to shine, even within the exile. (Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, vol. 15, From: L'Chaim 5757, # 449) - lchaimweekly.org

And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years (47:28) These seventeen years were the best years of his life -- years of prosperity, goodness and peace; his other 130 years were filled with toil and pain. (Midrash; Baal HaTurim)

When Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (1789-1866) was a child attending cheder, his teacher taught the verse, "And Jacob lived for seventeen years in the land of Egypt," according to the commentary of the Baal HaTurim -- that Jacob lived the best years of his life in Egypt.

When the child came home he asked his grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi: How can it be that our father Jacob, the greatest of the Patriarchs, lived the best years of his life in pagan Egypt? Replied Rabbi Schneur Zalman: It is written that Jacob "sent Judah ahead of him... to show the way to Goshen" (Genesis 46:28). The Midrash explains that this was to establish a house of learning, where the sons of Jacob would study Torah. When one studies Torah, one is brought close to G-d, so that even in Egypt one can live a true "life." (HaYom Yom)

Nevertheless, in the very next verses we read how Jacob entreats Joseph: "Carry me out of Egypt!" So great is his urgency that he is not content with an agreement or promise on Joseph's part, but insists that his son take a solemn oath to fulfill his request.

A Jew might find himself living a most ideal life in galut (exile)--a life of material comfort and spiritual fulfillment, a life of Torah, mitzvot and charitable works. Nevertheless, galut can never be our true home. We constantly sense that this is not our place, constantly beseech G-d to "carry us out of Egypt."

Nor do we content ourselves with the guaranties and promises written in the holy books that the redemption will eventually come. After praying for the redemption in the morning prayers, we do so again in the afternoon prayers, and yet again in the evening prayers. We approach G-d every day, many times a day, to plead and clamor: Take us out of Egypt! (The Rebbe) - chabad.org

Beyond Comprehension : Let us address the contention that it is virtually impossible to faithfully observe the laws of shmiras haloshon for more than a day or two: Even if this were correct, is it reason enough to ignore this mitzvah? Imagine a person walking along the seashore, who sees that the sea has washed ashore precious gems. Would such a person -- even if he were wealthy -- refrain from picking up any gems because he knows it will be impossible to gather them all? It is exactly the same regarding shmiras haloshon. It is well known that the Vilna Gaon (in his famous letter) quotes the Midrash which says that for each speaking the forbidden, he merits a Note that the Midrash does not speak of month, a week, or an hour -- but for only

Scripture states: "If you will seek it like treasures, then you will understand the d you will find" (Mishlei 2:4-5). One must

that he would seek the greatest valuables that this world has to offer. This is the intent of the statement, "Do not distance yourself from a quality that is without limit." Avoiding forbidden speech brings infinite merit; if we will only pursue this quality, and not tell ourselves that it is out of our reach, then we will have achieved that which no angel can fathom. Battle and never be discouraged by failure. With knowledge of what the Torah requires of us and proper resolve, our efforts will ultimately succeed.

Breaking Bad Habits: In truth, there is no basis for the contention that the average person cannot avoid forbidden speech for more than a day or two. It is a proven fact that the longer one persists in guarding his tongue, the easier it becomes. To gossip is a habit, and habits, as time goes on, become a part of a person's nature. But bad habits can be broken, especially when one becomes aware that a given habit involves numerous Torah prohibitions and is described by our Sages in most severe terms. Such an awareness, coupled with a bit of zealotry, goes a long way. One who would speak whatever came to mind without a moment's hesitation, will now find himself weighing his words before expressing them. One should not grow frustrated if, after he resolved to avoid forbidden speech, his evil inclination got the better of him and he spoke loshon hora. Even if this happens time and again, nevertheless, he should not despair. Rather, he should forever strengthen himself to avoid improper speech, and persevere. This is how one should conduct himself his entire life. This is the intent of the Talmud's statement, "One should forever arouse his good inclination to subdue his evil inclination" (Berachos 5a). Life is an ongoing struggle with one's evil inclination. One must forever be poised for battle and never be discouraged by failure. With knowledge of what the Torah requires of us and proper resolve, our efforts will ultimately succeed. (translation from the Chofetz Chaim's writings on the philosophy of proper speech from the Sefer Shmiras Halashon.) - chofetzchaim.shemayisrael.com



The Tzemach Tzedek told Reb Hendel 1 at yechidus: "Study of Zohar exalts the soul; study of Midrash arouses the heart; Tehillim with tears scours the vessel." (From Rebbe's Hayom yom TEVET 16).

FOOTNOTES

1. Reb Hendel was a chassid who exemplified many chassidic traits - humility, warmth of heart, compassion, fervent worship - though he did not excel in the intellectual mastery of chassidic thought. An elder chassid when the late Rebbe, R. Yosef Yitzchak, was a child, he had a profound influence on the Rebbe-to-be, and was often cited in the Rebbe's sichot.

Even one Dollar that's circulating is worth more, than many stagnating.

- Jerusalem, Peah 8.

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chassidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

There will be no class on Tuesday, December 24.

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM
Sunday 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 4: 50 PM

VISIT BEVERLYHILLSCHABAD.COM

Chabad of Beverly Hills has hundreds of hours of online audio Torah classes by Rabbi Y. Shusterman. Subjects include Gemara, Tanya, Chassidut, Jewish Law and Customs, Chumash, and Stories. The audio classes are accompanied by online text. There are online lessons on how to read Hebrew and how to read the Torah. You can view our Weekly and Halacha Newsletters from the past years. We also have an Ask the Rabbi Section and the Mezuzah and Tefillin Information Center.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYECHI

December 20, 2002

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 4:30 PM

Friday Mincha: 4:45 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:23 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

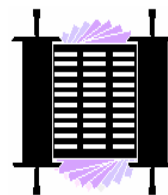
- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent**
- **Chumash 3:55 PM**
- **Mincha 4:25 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 5:30 PM**

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Rabbi and Mrs. Dovid Sulami in memory of the yartzheit of Dovid Sulami's mother.

Yartzheits: Esther Monkarsh – Teves 16, Alexander and Augusta Marshall – Teves 19.

Happy Birthday to Tammy Urman.

Happy Anniversary to Rabbi and Mrs. Shmuly Kornfeld, Avraham and Gilda Beroukhim.



A Sefer Torah is being written in memory of the fathers of Rabbi & Mrs. Shusterman. Anyone who is interested in participating should contact Mendel Shusterman at (310) 497-2643

GOOD SHABBOS!