

THE HARRY H. BEREN TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel

Parshas Chayei Sara

November 11, 2017

A Taste of Torah

Meeting Their Match

by Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher

A police officer in a small town stopped a motorist who was speeding down Main Street. The fellow pleaded to explain his actions, but was ignored by the officer, who decided to incarcerate the hapless driver until the police chief returned to the station.

A few hours later, the officer looked in on his prisoner and said, "Lucky for you that the chief is at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back."

"Don't count on it," answered the prisoner. "I'm the groom."

Funny things can happen on the way to a wedding. Take this week's parsha. Avraham's faithful servant Eliezer travels to Charan to find a suitable mate for Yitzchak. He is led by amazing Divine providence and quickly meets Rivka. All that's left is to convince the prospective in-laws.

After hearing the incredible details of Eliezer's journey, Rivka's father, Besuel, and her brother, Lavan, exclaim that it was truly G-d's Hand that had guided this match, and they tell Eliezer that he can take Rivka back with him to marry Yitzchak.

The next morning, though, is another story. Besuel has died during the night (see Rashi 24:55 s.v. *Vayomer*), and Eliezer must contend with Rivka's mother along with Lavan. Suddenly, they are not so interested in the match, and they propose that Rivka stay a year or ten months. Eliezer insists that he must fulfill his mission now, and the family decides to ask Rivka what she wants to do. Rivka states, "I will go," and Rashi comments that her terse reply implies, "I am going, whether you allow me to or not." Left with little choice, Rivka's mother and brother begrudgingly acquiesce, bless her and send her off.

What changed overnight? Yes, Besuel had died, but had both he and Lavan not agreed that Rivka was Divinely ordained for Yitzchak? Why the attempts at forestalling the wedding?

The Shem Mishmuel (Rabbi Shmuel Bornsztain; 1855-1926) explains that although Besuel and Lavan had initially agreed enthusiastically to the match, they had ulterior motives. Yitzchak was very rich, and they figured they'd get a generous slice of the pie if he married their family member. This created a problem for Eliezer, though, because he wanted Rivka's wicked family to be as minimally connected as possible to this match. After all, Yitzchak and Rivka were about to establish the next step in the founding of the Jewish People, and evil people the likes of Besuel and Lavan maintaining any sort of connection would have a negative influence on the nascent nation. Although their interest in the match was for financial reasons, it was a connection nonetheless, and Eliezer was determined to nip it in the bud. The Torah makes a point that after Besuel and Lavan gave the okay, Eliezer took out gold and silver vessels... and gave them to Rivka. The other family members, the Torah tells us, were treated to luscious fruits. This was deliberate; Eliezer wanted them to realize that their dreams were a pie in the sky, and they would gain little by letting Rivka go.

Upon seeing the bitter fruits of their efforts, Rivka's family members were left a bit disillusioned, and rethought their support for the proposed union. This played right into Eliezer's designs, for the family now wanted to break the match. Ultimately, it was left for Rivka to decide, and she made it very clear that she was going, even without any parental (or sibling) consent. This was the final piece of Eliezer's plan. Rivka was declaring her

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Because Torah Is for Every Jew

Stories for the Soul

Business Holiday

Based on a story on revach.net

Mr. Irving Bunim (1901-1980) was a well-known philanthropist and activist in America from the 1930s until his death in 1980. He was involved in all sorts of charitable causes, from assisting the poor to supporting yeshivos to helping European refugees emigrate to America. Mr. Bunim was also a successful businessman, working in textiles.

On one occasion, a company named A.D. Julliard, which manufactured corduroy and velveteen, sold Mr. Bunim a significant amount of velveteen. Mr. Bunim had a long and respectful relationship with the owner of the company, Burnet Valentine. When Mr. Bunim received the bill, he looked it over and saw that the first carton was labeled as containing 38 yards, the second carton was labeled as 42 yards, and the rest of the cartons were labeled as containing similar amounts. Mr. Bunim was puzzled since he had ordered much larger quantities. He went to the basement and checked the cartons and realized what had happened. The billing clerk had dropped the first digit of each carton. The first carton actually contained 338 yards! Similar errors had occurred on the rest of the cartons, as well. Mr. Bunim had been under-billed by \$40,000 due to these errors. \$40,000 was a huge amount of money at that time, and Mr. Bunim was certain that the company would soon realize their mistake and correct the bill.

Time passed, and Mr. Bunim realized that Julliard had not become aware of their mistake. Mr. Bunim called Valentine, and asked to meet with him the next day. When the meeting began, Mr. Bunim said to Valentine,

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Kollel Happenings

RABBI REISMAN WEEKLY IN DENVER

Join thousands around the globe in listening to the renowned weekly Navi shiur of Rabbi Yaakov Reisman! Rabbi Reisman's weekly Motzoei Shabbos class is shown at Beth Jacob High School, 5100 W. 14th Ave., this week at 8:30 pm. For sponsorships and info, contact info@denverkollel.org.

SHOW THEM WHO'S BOSS: DEALING WITH UNETHICAL SITUATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

Join neurosurgeon Fredric Sonstein, MD, and Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, Senior Educator for the Denver Community Kollel, as they discuss how to deal with ethical challenges in the workplace. Wednesday, December 6, at 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP info@denverkollel.org.

A DEEPER LOOK AT THE PARSHA WITH RABBI SOMMERS

Join Rabbi Shachne Sommers as he discusses a number of difficulties encountered in the weekly Torah portion and develops a comprehensive approach to resolve the issue, simultaneously conveying a deeper understanding of the material being discussed. Tuesday nights at Aish Denver (lounge area), 8:15-9 pm, for men and women.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: What book of *Tanach* (Scriptures) is written with *setumos* (literally: closed; a blank space in the center of a line) only, and why?

A: The book of Esther has 16 *setumos* and no *pesuchos*. While *pesuchos* and *setumos* are generally based on *mesorah* (tradition) only, here is an exception. The reason Esther has only *setumos* is because it more closely resembles a letter and Megillas Esther is called an *igeres* (letter,

Esther 9:26).

Sources: Rema Orach Chaim 691:2 and Mishna Berurah 691:12. See also Chidushei Maran Riz Halevi, page 26.

This week's question: In Torah scrolls, there are two styles of spacing between chapters. If the wrong type of space was used, the scroll is invalidated! Regarding what is the halacha that if one made a different type of break, it is still kosher?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email ryz@denverkollel.org.

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Aryeh Leib Gunzberg, the Shaagas Aryeh - Part VII

Rabbi Gunzberg's most famous and impactful work is the great analytical halachic work *Shaagas Aryeh*, which is studied, analyzed and quoted in matters of practical halacha until this day.

In addition, Rabbi Gunzberg wrote two *sefarim* on a number of Talmudic tractates titled *Turei Even* and *Gevuras Ari*. These works also became classics in the Torah world and are regularly studied and quoted.

A Taste of Torah

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abandonment of the wickedness of her family and her readiness to begin a new life with the righteous Yitzchak.

Every marriage is sacrosanct. It is the creation of a new home in the Jewish People, and it should be done with much care and forethought. While we may not be on the sublime level occupied by Yitzchak and Rivka, we can certainly strive

to keep negative influences out of our homes. Those negative influences take many forms in today's day and age, and we must be on guard to ensure that they do not work their way in via innocuous, innocent-looking packages. With proper effort and dedication, we, too, can keep the Lavans of our time out of our families and lives, and make our homes a place of sanctity.

Stories for the Soul

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"I want you to know that today is a Jewish holiday." Valentine said, "I didn't know that. What holiday is it?" Mr. Bunim answered, "Today is the day that a Jewish businessman shows you what our Torah's ethics and morality demand of us." He then explained what had occurred and handed Valentine a check for \$40,000. Valentine was shocked but grateful. He admitted that he would never have discovered the error. He told Mr. Bunim, "I don't know anyone else in the business world who would have returned this money."

Mr. Bunim later related this story to his family. He said, "That moment when Mr. Valentine realized what Hashem's holy Torah means to us was the greatest *kiddush Hashem* (sanctification of G-d's Name) a man could ask for."

Avraham needed to purchase a burial site for his deceased wife Sarah's burial. He needed to deal with Efron, who offered the world but delivered nothing. Despite the difficult circumstances, he maintained his honesty and dignity throughout the negotiations.