



# Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Vayishlach

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## Everything Counts

Rabbi David Ely Grundland

Yaakov Avinu prepares to face his brother Esav for the first time in twenty years, not sure what to expect. He sends messengers and gifts, hoping to appease Esav's burning anger, as Esav approaches with an army of four hundred soldiers, each with the same might as Esav himself. (Bereishit Rabbah 75:7) Yaakov moves his family and his possessions across the Yabok River, where they will camp before meeting Esav. However, Yaakov leaves his family and retreats, alone.

Why did Yaakov spend the night alone, exposing himself to potential attack? Rashi, based on the Talmud (Chullin 91a), explains that Yaakov had forgotten some small jugs, and now he went back to retrieve them. The Talmud (ibid.) learns from Yaakov Avinu's behaviour that even the smallest objects are more valuable to a righteous person than his own life. The Talmud writes that this is because "righteous people don't get involved with theft." However, the Talmud does not explain what that means. Further, the Torah forbids us from endangering our lives except in the direst of circumstances, which this pursuit of small jugs did not seem to be. This sharpens the question: what justified Yaakov's actions?

**Personal value**

The Talmud (Bava Kama 40a) may offer insight. In a case where an ox gores and kills a person, Shemot 21:30 requires the owner of the ox to pay the victim's family. Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Yochanan ben Berokah argues that at some level the owner of the ox deserves death. (Gur Aryeh to Shemot

21:30) However, rather than execute him, the Torah demands that he "ransom" himself by paying the value of his own life. People's responsibility for their property makes them personally liable for all damage it causes, and at some level identifies them with it. Perhaps righteous people, like Yaakov, are particularly sensitive to their responsibilities for, and thus their connection to, their property. This is why righteous people are uniquely careful to avoid theft, and it is also why Yaakov was careful regarding his minor assets.

**Religious value**

On another level, Yaakov's concern with small objects may reflect the scope of a righteous person's service of G-d. The Torah (Devarim 6:5) teaches us to love Hashem with all our hearts, our souls and our wealth. Indeed, the Talmud (Pesachim 25a) points out that there are people who care more about their money than their lives; this is what righteous people seek to combat. When righteous people ensure that everything they do with their money is directed towards serving Hashem, they show a profound level of commitment; every cent can be used to connect to G-d.

**Ethical value**

In a separate context, Rabbi Shlomo ibn Aderet (Rashba to Bava Kama 105a) underscores the ethical value of caring about such small amounts. He notes that a court case cannot be initiated unless the dispute is about at least a *perutah*. However, once the case has been opened, the court will make a ruling even regarding smaller amounts; one party can have ethical

responsibilities to pay, even when there is no financially significant loss.

The Talmud (Shabbat 31a) emphasizes ethical business practices, stating that the first question in a person's final judgment is, "Did you do business faithfully?" That is: Were your business practices honest and ethical? In light of the Rashba we can add that "faithful business" includes that we not cheat others by even insignificant amounts. By being careful with every cent, we express impressive moral sensitivities.


Yaakov Avinu, recognizing the importance of every penny, cannot in good faith abandon even the smallest of objects. (Maharsha to Chullin 91a) By endangering himself to go back for this small value, Yaakov shows his ultimate faith that Hashem had been guiding the smallest details of his journey, and will continue to do so. It is this faith that allows Yaakov to stand up to all those who fight him, human and celestial, and to succeed.

May Am Yisrael be blessed to know Hashem in the smallest details of our lives, and may we resolve to care about each individual; to ensure no one is left behind or forgotten!

[dgrundland@torontotorah.com](mailto:dgrundland@torontotorah.com)

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We are grateful to  
Continental Press 905-660-0311

**Days of Deliverance, Essays on Purim and Chanukah**  
**Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik**  
**Ktav (2007)**

**What is unique about this book?**

Rather than try to squeeze a rich and varied biography into a few words, we will focus on why Rabbi Soloveitchik's perspective on Chanukah and Purim is of special interest.

One of Rabbi Soloveitchik's projects was the attempt to find the biblical core of every rabbinic law and custom. In light of the talmudic statement that "Everything instituted by the sages was instituted as if it was biblical law" (Gittin 64b), he aspired to uncover the biblical model hidden in or mimicked by all aspects of Jewish law. Chanukah and Purim, two of the earliest and most prominent rabbinic commandments (see Shabbat 23a), provided a rich field for him to plow, as beautifully demonstrated in the essays "Purim and Chanukah" and "Reflections on Maimonides' Laws of Chanukah".

In addition to the brilliant halachic analysis in these essays, the book also contains powerful, Chanukah-rooted lessons for Jews as a nation and as individuals.

**What is the national message of Chanukah?**

In two of the essays, "The Everlasting Chanukah" and "The Concealed World Of Chanukah", Rabbi Soloveitchik argues that Chanukah is widely misunderstood in our days. Too much emphasis is put on the political and military courage exercised by the Chashmonaim, while their religious and spiritual positions have been overlooked. Rabbi Soloveitchik notes the absurdity of those who celebrate the Chashmonaim's victory with songs affiliated with other religions' holidays, in complete defiance of everything Matityahu's sons stood for.

The real heir of the Chashmonaim, Rabbi Soloveitchik asserts, is not necessarily the Jewish soldier; rather, it is the Jew who stands fast in his beliefs, even in the face of economic and physical harm. Along with recognizing the importance of political leaders, Rabbi Soloveitchik concludes, we must acknowledge those who by their patience and insistence kept the inner world of Jewishness alive and pure. The miracles they have wrought are even greater than those brought about by political leaders.

**What is the message of Chanukah for individual Jews?**

In an article entitled "Joseph and Chanukah", Rabbi Soloveitchik expands upon the idea of Jewish destiny. Each one of us finds himself carried by what seems to be an absurd, invisibly guided tide of events which are part of the unique Jewish destiny. Gavriel, the angel of Jewish history, meets each and every one of us, and we must play our role in the Jewish drama, willingly or unwillingly. Sometimes, participation in this story requires almost unbearable sacrifices, as discovered by both Yosef and the Chashmonaim.

Rabbi Soloveitchik continues to teach us that Jewish destiny does not manifest itself only in the public sphere; rather, the dreams and visions of each individual Jew are equally part of that vision. Just as the Jewish warriors of Chanukah knew how to put aside their swords and dream about the purification of the Temple, so too the simple Jew is required, every Shabbat, to put aside his business and political realities and dream about something else: spiritual greatness.

*bweintraub@torontotorah.com*

**613 Mitzvot**

**Mitzvah 472: Neveilah and Kashering**

**Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

The Torah presents four mitzvot requiring Jews to eat meat or poultry only after it undergoes *shechitah*:

- Shemot 22:30 says, "Do not eat torn flesh in the field," prohibiting eating animals and birds which are mortally wounded. *Sefer haChinuch* counts this as the Torah's 73<sup>rd</sup> mitzvah. (Toronto Torah 2:17)
- Devarim 12:21 predicts, "When the place in which Hashem your G-d will choose to place His Name will be far from you, you will slaughter of your cattle and your sheep that G-d has given you, as I have commanded you." This informs the Jews that once they enter their spacious new land, they will be allowed to eat meat even absent the context of bringing a korban, so long as they perform the act of *shechitah* which Moshe has taught them. *Sefer haChinuch* counts this as the Torah's 451<sup>st</sup> mitzvah. (Toronto Torah 6:42)
- Devarim 12:23 warns, "Be strong and refrain from eating the blood, for the blood is the spirit, and do not eat the spirit with the flesh." "Eating the spirit with the flesh" is explained by the Sages (Sifri Re'eh 76) to refer to eating flesh which had been cut from an animal while the animal was still alive. *Sefer haChinuch* counts this as the Torah's 452<sup>nd</sup> mitzvah. (Toronto Torah 7:2)
- Devarim 14:21 instructs, "You shall not eat any *neveilah*," prohibiting eating animals and birds which die of any cause other than *shechitah*. *Sefer haChinuch* counts this as the Torah's 472<sup>nd</sup> mitzvah.

*Sefer haChinuch* (#451) suggests two benefits which emerge from the act of *shechitah*. One benefit is the associated

removal of blood, which one may not eat; as *Sefer haChinuch* writes regarding the mitzvah of covering blood after *shechitah*, we avoid consuming blood in order to forestall descent into carnivorous cruelty. A second benefit is that the *shechitah* method minimizes pain for the slaughtered creature.

The Torah adds regarding *neveilah*: "Give the *neveilah* to the stranger at your gates, and he will eat it, or sell it to a non-Jew." Two laws are learned from this passage:

- This "stranger" is a *ger toshav*, a non-Jew who accepts the mitzvot which are incumbent upon all human beings. We are instructed to support such people, and so we should ignore our financial loss and give them the *neveilah* free of charge. (Pesachim 22a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Avodah Zarah 10:4)
- The Torah only prohibits eating a *neveilah* which is edible, such that a normal human being would eat it. As *Sefer haChinuch* (#472) writes, this is the basis for our permission to *kasher* a pot in which non-kosher food has been cooked. Waiting twenty-four hours allows the food absorbed in the pot to become inedible, and then it is no longer biblically prohibited. One then boils water in the pot, to the point that the absorbed taste emerges in the water. The taste will then be re-absorbed by the pot, but it will be an inedible taste and it will not prohibit the pot. (Avodah Zarah 67b-68a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Maachalot Asurot 17:2; and see Tosafot Chullin 108b *shenafal*.)

*torczyner@torontotorah.com*

## Biography

### Rabbi Klonymus Kalman Shapira

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Rabbi Klonymus Kalman Shapira was born in Grodzisk, Poland in 1889. Part of a rabbinic family, he could trace his lineage back to Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk (Noam Elimelech), the Chozeh of Lublin, and the Maggid of Kozhnitz.

Orphaned at the age of three, Rabbi Shapira nonetheless grew in Torah scholarship from childhood, and was appointed Rabbi of Piaseczno, in central Poland, at the age of twenty. Rabbi Shapira's wife, Rochel Chaya Miryam, helped him write his books.

In addition to his rabbinate, Rabbi Shapira led a yeshiva, *Daat Moshe*. He wrote a book on education, *Chovat haTalmidim* (The Duty of the Students), in which he emphasized the importance of self-respect and self-confidence for scholastic success.

Rabbi Shapira lost his only son, his daughter-in-law and his sister-in-law, in the Nazi bombing of Warsaw; his only daughter also died during the war. After the Nazi invasion he was interned in the Warsaw Ghetto. A collection of the stirring speeches he delivered in the ghetto, acknowledging and addressing the suffering and the religious doubts of Jews around him, has been published under the name *Eish Kodesh* (Sacred Fire).

While in the ghetto, Rabbi Shapira was approached by young men who wished to grow in their spirituality; in response, he authored a book called *Bnei Machshavah Tovah* (literally: People of Good Thought). In this book, Rabbi Shapiro prescribed ways to develop sensitivity to G-d in our lives and daily activities. Rabbi Shapira felt that *Bnei Machshavah Tovah* was a special work; he sent the manuscript to his brother in Jerusalem, so that the first copies would be printed in that holy city. Further, he prohibited all copying of the book without his permission, a decree which was only broken after his death at the insistence of several Chassidic rebbeim. (For more on this book, see Toronto Torah 6:22.)

When the Ghetto was liquidated, Rabbi Shapira was transferred to the Trawniki work camp; offered the opportunity to escape, he refused to abandon his community. He was shot to death, along with the rest of the Jews there, on November 3 (5 Cheshvan), 1943.

[torczyner@torontotorah.com](mailto:torczyner@torontotorah.com)

## Torah and Translation

### Harness the Power of Singing

Rabbi Shapira, Bnei Machshavah Tovah #18

Translated by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

בקולה בוקעת לך נפשך דרך עד למרום, ובשמים כאילו אחזו בהמייתה ומשכוה בלשונה. ליבה, מעיה וכל פנימיותה עם נגינתה יוצאים, ודרך הקולות עולים, ועליותיה נפילותיה וכל גלגולי דרכה בקולה נחקקים, ותנועה דמנגנא בו נחרתים, והניגון תרקס, את נפשך נושא הניגון במעיו לשפכה ולקרבה לד'.

ויש לפעמים שבלא ידיעתך דבר גם דיבורים לפני המקום, אם בתחילתם עוד את רצון גופך יודיעו, אבל כל כמה שתרגש, ויותר תצא נפשך מנרתיקה לעוף אל על, במדה זו תעזוב את העולם, ומעומק לבך תצחק נפשך בתפילה טהורה תפילה לד' כגון אלה: "רבנו של עולם אין הימעל האב רחמנות אויף מיר, און העלף מיר אין אלא ענינים, אוי געוואלד און געשריגן ווי ליג איך עפיש, רבנו של עולם ראטעווע מיך ארויס." מתחיל בישועה בכל ענינים שלו ומסיים בצעקה להצילו ממקום נפילתו, וכן כיוצא באלו, ואל יקטונו בעיניך דיבורים כגון אלו כי מחצב הנפש הם...

ולאו דוקא בניגון של שבירת הלב, רק גם בניגון של שמחה, בכולם תוכל להשתמש לגילוי הנפש וכך דרכו של החסיד, הוא בוכה לפעמים בניגון שמח, וגם בשעת רקידתו, ולפעמים רוקד גם בניגון של "כל נדרי".

לכן כשתהיה בחברת חסידים בשעה שמנגנים אם בתפילה, בסעודה, או באופן אחר, תרנן גם אתה עמהם, לא רק להשמיע קול בחי' "נתנה עלי בקולה וכו'" (ירמיהו י: ח) רק כדי להוציא את נפשך ולהעלותה בחינת, "ויהי כנגן המנגן ותהי עליו רוח ד'", מן ניגון החופה שמזווג את החתן והכלה, ודי למבין.

ולאו דוקא בשעה שאתה בחברת חסידים בשעה שמנגנים, רק גם בביתך בכל עת שתרגיש את עצמך מוכשר לזה תוכל לרנן כנ"ל. ואין אתה צריך לצעוק בקולות, כי יש מי שמנגן רק המיה בלחש וקולו נשמע במרום.

Through the [musical] sound, your soul bursts forth on a path to the heavens, and in the heavens it is as though it had been gripped by its moan, and drawn along by its tongue. Its heart, intestines and all of its innards emerge with its tune, and via the sounds they ascend. The soul's ascents, falls, and all of its travels are engraved in its sound, inscribed in the movement of the tune, and the tune is embroidered, carrying your soul with its intestines to pour them out, to draw it closer to G-d.

Sometimes, without your knowledge, you will begin to speak before G-d. At first your speech will express the will of your body, but the more you are moved, and the more your soul emerges to fly upward, in the same measure you will leave this world, and from the depth of your heart your soul will cry out in pure prayer, prayer to G-d like this: "Master of the Universe in Heaven, have mercy on me, and help me in everything! Oy gevalt, I cry out, be with me a bit! Master of the universe, save me, take me out!" He begins by asking to be rescued in all of his affairs, and concludes with a cry to save him from the place where he has fallen, and the like. These words should not be small in your eyes, for they are mined from the soul...

And it is not only with a brokenhearted tune, but also a happy tune; you can use all of them to reveal the spirit. This is the way of the pious person, crying at times during a happy tune, and even when dancing, and sometimes dancing to the tune of *Kol Nidrei*.

Therefore, when you are among pious people as they sing, whether in prayer, at a meal, or in any other situation, sing along with them – not to make your voice heard, as in "She set her voice upon Me (Yirmiyahu 12:8)", but only to produce your soul and elevate it, like "And it was, when the player played, and the spirit of G-d was upon him. (Melachim II 3:15)", from the tune of a wedding, joining groom and bride. This is sufficient for one who understands.

And not only when you are among pious people as they sing, but also in your home, whenever you feel yourself ready, you can sing thus. And you need not shriek; there is one who sings only with a quiet moan, and his voice is heard in the heavens.

**This Week in Israeli History: 20 Kislev 1961, 21 Kislev 1956  
Moroccan Aliyah**

**Rabbi Jonathan Ziring**

*20-21 Kislev are Wednesday and Thursday*

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of Kislev (November 28), 1961, Israel began Operation Yachin, the third mass aliyah of Moroccan Jews. The operation took three years and brought 80,000 Jews to Israel. The king of Morocco allowed it on condition that it was carried out by a non-Zionist body. Hence, it was executed by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, and Israel paid Morocco \$50 for each *oleh*.

Since its founding, Israel has been a safe haven for the Jews of the world, and those who have made aliyah have been critical in the building of the state. For example, the city of Ashdod, which is now Israel's sixth largest city and a major port city, was founded by twenty-two families of Moroccan

Jews from a Mossad-arranged aliyah on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Kislev (November 25), 1956. Ashdod has continued to be a home for Jews who came to Israel in mass immigrations. From 1990-2001, for example, Ashdod grew by 150%, absorbing 150,000 immigrants from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

The role of Israel as a haven for world Jewry remains critical today, although Israeli politicians debate whether to idealize the *oleh* who comes to Israel to find safety, or whether to prefer those who choose to come with no external pressure. This debate flared up earlier this year, when Prime Minister Netanyahu invited French Jews to "come home" after attacks in Paris.

*jziring@torontotorah.com*

**Weekly Highlights: Nov. 28 – Dec. 4 / 16 Kislev – 22 Kislev**

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
<b>שבת Nov. 27-28 Shabbaton in Clanton Park: Jews and Greeks</b>				
<b>Fri. 8:00 PM</b>	<b>R' Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Jews and Philosophy</b>	<b>4 Tillingham Keep</b>	
<b>After Hashkamah</b>	<b>Yisroel Meir Rosenzweig</b>	<b>Wellsprings of Redemption</b>	<b>Clanton Park</b>	
<b>Derashah</b>	<b>R' Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Why did Yaakov go back?</b>	<b>Clanton Park</b>	
<b>After musaf</b>	<b>Yisroel Meir Rosenzweig</b>	<b>An Empire Clad in Copper</b>	<b>Or Chaim</b>	
<b>Before minchah</b>	<b>Yisroel Meir Rosenzweig</b>	<b>Deception of the Rabbit</b>	<b>Clanton Park</b>	
<b>Before minchah</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Daf Yomi	BAYT	
<b>Seudah shlishit</b>	<b>R' Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Where Wisdom Originates</b>	<b>Clanton Park</b>	
<b>Sun. Nov. 29</b>				
<b>8:45 AM</b>	R' Josh Gutenberg	Contemporary Halachah	BAYT	<b>The Temple Mount</b>
<b>8:45 AM</b>	R' Jonathan Ziring	Hosheia	BAYT	<b>Hebrew</b>
<b>9:15 AM</b>	R' Shalom Krell	The Book of Shemuel	Associated (North)	<b>Hebrew</b>
<b>10:00 AM</b>	R' Aaron Greenberg	Gemara Chullin	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<b>For Chaverim</b>
<b>Mon. Nov. 30</b>				
9:30 AM	Mrs. Ora Ziring	Women's Beit Midrash	Ulpanat Orot	
<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>R' Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Switching Shifts with Non-Religious Soldiers</b>	<b>Yeshivat Or Chaim</b>	<b>Beit Midrash Night</b>
<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>R' David Ely Grundland R' Mordechai Torczyner</b>	<b>Daf Highlights Medical Halachah</b>	<b>Shaarei Shomayim</b>	<b>Beit Midrash Night</b>
<b>Tue. Dec. 1</b>				
<b>10:00 AM</b>	Mrs. Ora Ziring	Women's Beit Midrash	Ulpanat Orot	
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Iyov: Chap. 24: Concession?	Shaarei Shomayim	
<b>Wed. Dec. 2</b>				
<b>10:00 AM</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Pursuit of Peace II: Peace Between Jews	Beth Emeth	<b>Register with savaloretta@gmail.com</b>
<b>11:15 AM</b>	R' Jonathan Ziring	Playing G-d II: Cloning	Beth Emeth	
8:00 PM	Yisroel Meir Rosenzweig	Electricity on Shabbat I	Shaarei Tefillah	
<b>Thu. Dec. 3</b>				
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Yehoshua: Land of Dan	49 Michael Ct.	