

Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Vayeshev

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Toronto Torah is dedicated by Mervyn and Joyce Fried and Family

in honour of Dr. Albert and Janice Kirshen, on the occasion of their "ארבעים שנה" anniversary. Mazal tov!

The Holiday of Lights

Yaron Perez

Regarding Shabbat, Rambam rules, "Lighting for Shabbat is not optional... Even one who has nothing to eat must beg at people's doors, buy oil and light." (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shabbat 5:1) Regarding Chanukah, Rambam rules, "Lighting lamps for Chanukah is a most beloved mitzvah, and one must be very careful with it... Even if one has nothing to eat other than from tzedakah, he must beg, or sell his clothing, and buy oil and light." (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Megilah v'Chanukah 4:12)

What should one do if he cannot afford to purchase fuel to light for both Shabbat and Chanukah? Rambam (Hilchot Megilah v'Chanukah 4:13) rules that one should light for Shabbat. This seems odd, though, as

Rambam himself stresses the "beloved" character of lighting for Chanukah. Rambam even says that one must sell his clothing in order to afford to light for Chanukah, which he did not say regarding lighting for Shabbat!

Rambam justifies his prioritization of Shabbat not by saying that the mitzvah of Shabbat is more important, but rather "because of peace in the home." The light provided by the lamp brings peace to the family members, who would otherwise be sitting, depressed and suffering, in the dark.

The essence of lighting for Chanukah is accomplished by placing the Chanukiah at the entrance of the home, for the essence of the holiday is the survival of the Jewish home. On Chanukah, the values of the Jewish home were saved

from all of the Greek decrees, including attempts to eliminate privacy by removing the doors of Jewish homes, prohibiting immersion in the mikvah, and abusing newlywed brides. (Otzar Midrashim, Midrash Maaseh Chanukah) Thus, the halachic minimum for lighting is one lamp per household. And since lighting for Shabbat introduces internal peace for the family, it certainly overrides the family-oriented lighting of Chanukah.

When we can light both together, this brings about complete peace. To cite Rashi (Shabbat 23b), "It is written, 'The lamp is a mitzvah, and Torah is light (Mishlei 6)' - Via the mitzvah lamp of Shabbat and Chanukah, the light of Torah comes."

yperez@torontotarah.com

Lives of Israel's Rabbis: Rabbi Aryeh Stern

Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

Rabbi Aryeh Stern

b. 1944 Tel Aviv

Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi of Jerusalem, 2014-present

Rabbi Stern was born in Tel Aviv to a Chassidic Zionist family. He studied in Yeshivat Yishuv HeChadash, Chevron, and Mercaz HaRav. He studied *dayanut* [to become a rabbinical judge] and was a soldier in the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War. He has been a Rosh Yeshiva or Ram in several Yeshivot, as well as a Community Rabbi in Katamon.

He is most known for having established the Halacha Brura and Berur Halacha Institute (<http://www.halachabrura.org/>), which publishes clear in-depth analysis of halachic issues, progressing from the original sources through the practical law. Their Vilna-based edition of the Talmud includes two levels of commentary that are unique. The first is Halacha Brura written by Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook (who chose Rabbi Stern to spearhead this project). It provides a concise halachic perspective by citing the Rambam, Shulchan, Aruch, and some notes from Rabbi Kook. Second, in the back of each volume they summarize

the Rishonim (early commentators), and then provide the final ruling of the Rambam. The goal is to unify the study of Talmud with practical halachah.

In 2014, Rabbi Stern was appointed the Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi of Jerusalem, with wide support from both the Dati Leumi and Charedi communities. He declared his desire to be the Rabbi for all denominations living in the city, and has endorsed the establishment of joint events for religious and secular Jews.

Rabbi Stern opposes establishing physical communities that are unique to specific denominations, encouraging religious and secular Jews to live together. He has endeavored to improve the level of kashrut supervision, although he has not yet succeeded. He has encouraged expanding the women's section in synagogues and at the Kotel to encourage women to pray, and he has allowed a Sefer Torah to be placed in the women's section for dancing on Simchat Torah. He has pushed for religious studies to be removed from the national Bagrut matriculation curriculum.

jziring@torontotarah.com

OUR BEIT MIDRASH

ROSH BEIT MIDRASH

RABBI MORDECHAI TORCZYNER

SGAN ROSH BEIT MIDRASH

RABBI JONATHAN ZIRING

AVREICHIM

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CHAVERIM EZER DIENA, URI FRISCHMAN, NADAV GASNER, BJ KOROBKIN, RONI PEREZ, JOSH PHILLIP, MORDECHAI ROTH, EZRA SCHWARTZ, DAVID SUTTNER

WOMEN'S BEIT MIDRASH

MRS. ORA ZIRING, MRS. ELLIEZRA PEREZ

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The first Divine commandment to humanity recorded in the Torah is “Bear fruit and multiply” (Bereishit 1:28); this is the first biblical affirmation that G-d’s creations are worthwhile, and that Life is objectively good. Per Sefer haChinuch, it is the Torah’s first mitzvah.

Along the same lines, the Torah explicitly prohibits permanently neutering any bird, animal or human being, saying, “You shall not perform this in your land.” (Vayikra 22:24) Sefer haChinuch records this as the Torah’s 291st mitzvah. There is some dispute in rabbinic literature regarding the application of this law for women:

- The Vilna Gaon (Biur HaGra Even haEzer 5:25) said it is biblically prohibited
- The Taz (Even haEzer 5:6) felt it is prohibited under a separate prohibition against causing pain;
- The Beit Yehudah (2:47) ruled that it is rabbinically prohibited.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (Igrot Moshe Even haEzer 3:13 and 4:32-36) followed the view of the Vilna Gaon, recommending certain forms of contraception over such a surgery.

Popular thought approves of neutering animals rather than allowing them to breed beyond their means, but this is also included in the Torah’s prohibition. For more on this, see an article by Rabbi Howard Jachter at http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/english/halacha/jachter_1.htm.

In a third mitzvah, the Torah (Devarim 23:2) prohibits males who have been manually neutered from marrying; Sefer haChinuch lists this as the Torah’s 559th mitzvah. As Sefer haChinuch writes, this intensifies the barrier against such operations. There is some dispute regarding the status of a man who is neutered by disease. (Shulchan Aruch Even haEzer 5:10)

torczyner@torontotorah.com

Weekly Highlights: Dec. 24 – Dec. 30 / 24 Kislev – 1 Tevet

Many of our shiurim are on break this week, but opportunities remain

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
שבת Dec. 24				
After hashkama	Adam Friedmann	Parshah Analysis	Clanton Park	
Before minchah	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Daf Yomi	BAYT	
After minchah	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Gemara Avodah Zarah	BAYT	Simcha Suite
Sun. Dec. 25 Chanukah Day 1				
8:45 AM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	Not this week
9:15 AM	R’ Shalom Krell	Book of Shemuel	Associated North	Not this week
9:30 AM to Noon	R’ Jonathan Ziring Yaron Perez Adam Friedmann R’ Mordechai Torczyner	A Secular Zionist Chanukah Yours is Greater than Theirs Fact-Checking Chanukah Chanukah: It’s All Hallel	Shaarei Tefillah	A Chanukah Marathon!
Mon. Dec. 26 Chanukah Day 2				
7:30 PM	Adam Friedmann	Arvei Pesachim in Depth	Clanton Park	Men
8:30 PM	Adam Friedmann	Gemara Arvei Pesachim	Clanton Park	Men
Tue. Dec. 27 Chanukah Day 3				
1:30 PM	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Ezra and Nechemiah	Shaarei Shomayim	Not this week
Wed. Dec. 28 Chanukah Day 4				
2:30 PM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Narratives of Vayikra	For location: carolleser@rogers.com	Not this week
8:00 PM	Adam Friedmann	Why do we do that?	Shaarei Tefillah	
Thu. Dec. 29 Chanukah Day 5				
1:30 PM	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Book of Shoftim	49 Michael Ct.	Not this week
Fri. Dec. 30 Rosh Chodesh Tevet				
10:30 AM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Laws of Onaah	Yeshivat Or Chaim	Advanced

OUR MISSION: TO ENGAGE, INSPIRE AND EDUCATE THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF THE GREATER TORONTO AREA. WE APPLY OUR TORAH HERITAGE TO THE DAILY LIVES OF MODERN JEWS, THROUGH CLASSES, DISCUSSIONS AND CHAVRUTOT IN OUR HOME BEIT MIDRASH AND OUR BNEI AKIVA SCHOOLS, AS WELL AS THE SYNAGOGUES, CAMPUSES AND WORKPLACES OF THE GTA. We are funded by the Toronto community. To support our work, please email info@torontotorah.com or go to <http://www.torontotorah.com/support>. Thank you for your continued partnership.