

# Toronto Torah

## Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Vayishlach

16 Kislev, 5783 / Dec. 10, 2022

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This issue is dedicated by Ruth and Gerald Warner  
in memory of Ruth's dear father Mike Smaye ז"ל, יחיאל מיכל בן יהושע ז"ל,  
to commemorate his 38<sup>th</sup> Yahrzeit on 17 Kislev

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Tanach in a Day: Jews & Non-Jews in Tanach is Sun. December 25<sup>th</sup>! Register at [torontotorah.com/humanity](http://torontotorah.com/humanity)

## Gid HaNasheh: What, Why and How

Idan Rakovsky

### What is Gid HaNasheh?

In our parshah we are introduced to the mitzvah of not consuming *Gid HaNasheh* - the sciatic tendon on the hip of any kosher animal. This ruling is taught after Yaakov fights with a mysterious *ish*, identified in Hoshea 12:5 as a *malach*. The *malach* hit Yaakov on his hip, leaving him stumbling, as the Torah says: "Yaakov remained alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. He [the man] saw that he could not defeat him, and he struck the socket of his hip. Yaakov's hip joint was dislocated as he wrestled with him... The sun shone for him as he passed by Penuel, and he limped due to his hip. Therefore, the children of Israel must not eat *Gid HaNasheh* which is on the hip joint to this very day; because he struck Yaakov's hip joint on the displaced tendon." (Bereishit 32, 25-33. Metzudah tr.)

### A message of hope

The commentators discuss reasons for this mitzvah. On a basic level, we are forbidden from consuming this part of the animal as a reminder of the struggle between Yaakov and the *malach*. The *Sefer HaChinuch* (Mitzvah 3) writes that this mitzvah is actually a message to Israel, expressing that although they will suffer many troubles at the hand of other nations, such as the descendants of Esav, they should still trust that they will not perish and that their descendants will survive forever.

### A rebuke

In contrast, Rabbi Chizkiyah ben Manoach (*Chizkuni* on Bereishit 32:33) takes a different approach. He claims that the prohibition is actually a punishment. Since Yaakov's sons left their father to cross the river alone, with no assistance, we are not allowed to eat this part of the animal, which is associated with his hip injury. Through this we learn that we should escort others.

### A mystical lesson

A different approach is taken by Rabbi Ephraim Luntshitz (*Kli Yakar* to Bereishit 32:33). He understands the prohibition of *Gid HaNasheh* as a symbol of investigation into the hidden aspects of Torah. This hidden part of the animal's body represents the deepest and most hidden insights of the Torah, which one should not "consume"- investigate and reveal.

### Encouraging weakness

Remarkably, Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch (Commentary to Bereishit 32:33) understands this prohibition as an attempt to preserve a physical disadvantage that is inherent in the Jewish nation. The Jewish people, says Rabbi Hirsch, were, are and will forever be less strong than other nations, in terms of material strength. Our power as Jews comes from our spiritual strength, rather than from a physical or material basis.

### A unique dietary prohibition

Some authorities (Rashi Chullin 103b, and Rambam, Hilchot Ma'achalot Asurot 14:1) rule that eating *Gid HaNasheh* is subject to the same laws as all other forbidden foods. This means that one may not eat an olive-sized amount of forbidden food, at a normal pace of eating (*achilat pras*).

However, other authorities rule that *Gid HaNasheh* is a different type of forbidden food. Rabbi Yosef Babad (*Minchat Chinuch*, Mitzvah 3) claims that one does not violate the prohibition against eating *Gid HaNasheh* unless one eats an olive-sized amount all at once. *Gid HaNasheh* is not typical food; it is a tendon, and tendons are not regularly consumed as food. Therefore, Rabbi Babad does not apply the rules of *achilat pras* regarding *Gid HaNasheh*. (For more about this matter listen to a class by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner [here](#).)

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### OUR BEIT MIDRASH

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### Summary

This chapter begins with a verse that belongs with the previous one. On that day (or, as Ibn Ezra renders, “in those days”), Hashem will slay the Leviathan. Following this, as explained by Rashi and Radak, the nations of the world will sing of the Jews. We are a great vineyard that Hashem watches each moment, night and day, so that no harm may come to it. (27:1-3)

Hashem then proclaims to have no anger; Radak says this refers to anger at the Jews, while Rashi says it is about anger at the nations. Hashem will burn up thorns and thistles, but if one takes refuge in Hashem and makes peace with Him, then peace they shall have. In the days that follow, Jacob will take root and the nation of Israel will bloom as the world itself fills with fruit. (4-6)

By all of Israel’s sufferings, their sins will be atoned for, but only if the nation destroys the idols they had made - shattering all the altars, leaving nothing left standing. Then, the protected cities of Israel’s enemies, having been deserted, will be inherited by Israel. Hashem will show no mercy. (7-11)

On that day, the people of Israel will be gathered together, and a shofar will be

sounded. All who were lost and dispersed will return to worship Hashem in Jerusalem. (12-13)

### Insight

This chapter contains many fascinating possibilities for insight - largely because of how symbolic the prophecy is. One aspect worthy of note is how each part of Yeshayahu’s poetic language seems to mirror the story of the Jewish people:

- The Leviathan is often understood to have been one of Hashem’s first creations. (Bava Batra 74b)
- The vineyard could potentially be seen as parallel to *Gan Eden*, and the punishment to an exit from the garden, as seen in Yeshayahu’s reference to “thorns and thistles.”
- Hashem’s lack of anger is one of the Divine attributes Hashem taught Moshe, and siding with Him for salvation has been a key part of our nation’s narrative from the beginning.
- Our nation worshipped idols, as recorded throughout Tanach - but the possibility always exists for repentance and return. Then, and only then, will the Jewish people achieve full redemption and return to our homeland together.

In other words, from start to finish, this prophecy could be read as sharing the story of the Jewish people all the way from the creation of the universe to our future redemption and return to our homeland. This chapter of Yeshayahu, which also provides the haftorah for Parshat Shemot, is then a call for each member of the Jewish people to find themselves in that grand story and to ask: *What am I doing to eliminate the idolatry around me and bring my people closer to that final redemption?*

One easy starting place may be by engaging more deeply with the Torah. Indeed, Rashi understands 27:5 as calling for the Jews to grab hold of the Torah and utilize it in order to bring redemption closer. This is precisely the way for our people to properly move forward - aligning our will with Hashem’s will, and aligning the world with the latter.

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## Siddur Insights: Why do we say *Pesukei deZimra*?

At daybreak, in the middle of Yaakov’s wrestling match, Yaakov’s opponent requests to be released. While the Torah does not explain the reasoning, the Sages (as quoted by Rashi on Bereishit 32:27, s.v. *ki alah hashachar*) explain that with the start of the new day, this man - who was really an angel (Hoshea 12:5) - desired to leave to sing praises to G-d. Though we are not angels ourselves, we too praise G-d every morning, with the recitation of *Pesukei deZimra*.

*Pesukei deZimra* consists of a series of psalms and verses of praise. It is bracketed on either end with a blessing - *Baruch she’Amar* at the beginning and *Yishtabach* at the end.

The Talmud (Shabbat 118b) quotes Rabbi Yosi who states that he desires to be among those who complete Hallel daily. The Talmud challenges with another statement which condemns one who recites Hallel daily as a blasphemer! (Rashi suggests that over-recitation of Hallel leads to a lessening of its significance.) In its resolution of this apparent contradiction, the Talmud offers that when Rabbi Yosi said “Hallel” he meant “*Pesukei deZimra*.”

Why does Rabbi Yosi desire to be among those who recite *Pesukei deZimra* daily? Tosafot (Berachot 31a, s.v. *rabbanan avdei kematnitin*) presents that reciting *Pesukei deZimra* puts one in a joyous mood of performing a mitzvah, thereby fulfilling the rabbinic teaching that one should pray from a place of happiness of a mitzvah. [See Berachot 31a.] Singing praises to G-d awakens us to the amazing daily wonders that G-d brings for us. Rabbi Yosi wanted to recite *Pesukei deZimra* because it would enable him to achieve this feeling before praying.

Another answer can be gleaned from Rabbi Shimon Schwab’s teachings on prayer. In his general discussion of prayer, Rabbi Schwab explains that the morning prayer reflects the structure of the Beit haMikdash. (*Iyun Tefillah* pp. 22-23) According to this model, *Pesukei deZimra* corresponds to the *Ulam*, the entranceway into the inner area of the Beit haMikdash. Perhaps Rabbi Yosi is so insistent on reciting *Pesukei deZimra* every day because it is a prerequisite for the rest of Shacharit. Just as it is impossible to enter the Holy of Holies without first passing through the *Ulam*, so too it is inconceivable to pray the Amidah without first praising G-d; prayer must always be preceded by praise.

Rabbi Soloveitchik presents yet a third potential explanation for the significance of *Pesukei deZimra*. He writes (*Shiurim LeZecher Aba Mori II*, page 26) that *Pesukei deZimra* is a form of Torah study. The reason for reciting it daily is so that we can learn G-d’s ways and live our lives accordingly. Rabbi Yosi’s dedication to *Pesukei deZimra* reflects his commitment to praising G-d and learning the ideal way to live life.

Whatever his motivation, we follow in Rabbi Yosi’s footsteps. We begin every day with *Pesukei deZimra*, singing praises to G-d just like the angels.

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## Biography

### Rav Shlomo Wolbe

Mrs. Elyssa Goldschmiedt

Rabbi Shlomo (Wilhelm) Wolbe was born in Berlin in 1914. Raised in a non-observant Jewish home, he attended the University of Berlin, and he became interested in Judaism through his association with the Orthodox Students Union.

After completing university, Rabbi Wolbe learned in the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary, the Montreux Yeshiva in Switzerland, and then the Mir Yeshiva of Poland under the guidance of Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz and Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein. Unable to follow the Mir Yeshiva when it moved into Russia during World War II, Rabbi Wolbe spent the war years serving as a rabbi in Stockholm, Sweden, where he lived with the family of a yeshiva colleague.

After the war, Rabbi Wolbe created a school for Jewish refugee girls and eventually moved to Israel, where he married Rivka Grodzinski. He served as *menahel ruchani* at the Be'er Yaakov Yeshiva for thirty years alongside its Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Moshe Shapiro. In 1981, he became the mashgiach of the Lakewood Yeshiva in Israel and then opened Yeshivat Givat Shaul.

A unique leader, Rabbi Wolbe placed an emphasis on the importance of individuality; that each Jew should not view himself simply as a member of the herd, trying to conform to the general Jewish population. To quote Rabbi Frances Nataf in a eulogy that appeared [here](#), Rabbi Wolbe was "one of a very few contemporary rabbis who had something unique and important to say to those of us with a Western education." He passed away in Jerusalem in 2005.

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## Weekly Halachah: The Fearful Child

By Rabbi Yehuda Mann

It was 4:10 PM on a Friday afternoon. The parents were busy preparing for Shabbat and still had a lot to do. One of the regular tasks of the father was to plug in the hotplate, however he wasn't fully prepared for Shabbat and Minchah was in a few more minutes. He saw his ten-year-old son, David, that was sitting in the living room playing with his toys. "David," said the father. "Do me a favor and please plug in the hotplate for me, can you do that?" "Yeah, yeah" replied little David without taking his eyes off the toys. "Thank you" shouted his father, who got dressed and left for shul.

An hour later, little David heard his father enter the house and say, "Shabbat Shalom!" David remembered that he was supposed to plug in the hotplate and he didn't do so; immediately, he ran to the kitchen and plugged it in, violating Shabbat. His mother saw him do so and asked him, "Why did you plug it in on Shabbat?" David replied, "I was afraid that Daddy would be upset and disappointed in me..." Now the question is - may the family use this hotplate that was plugged in on Shabbat?

If someone performs a transgression on Shabbat, no one may benefit from it on Shabbat. However, if a child does the *melachah* (forbidden task) then Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan distinguishes between whether he is doing it for an adult or for himself. If he does the *melachah* for himself, everyone may benefit from his *melachah*. But if he does so for the sake of an adult, it is considered as if the adult had done the *melachah* and one may not benefit. In our case, did the child do it for his father or for himself?

In this case, some rabbis rule that the family may not benefit from the hotplate, since the child plugged it in due to his father's instructions. However, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach says that the child plugged it in for himself, in order to avoid rebuke or punishment.

(Shulchan Aruch 318:1, Biur Halacha 325:10, Piskei Teshuvot 318 footnote 79)

*This question and many more practical contemporary halachah issues are discussed in the weekly Hilchot Bishul shiur that takes place @ Clanton Park Synagogue, Sundays at 9 AM, with Rabbi Zev Spitz and Rabbi Yehuda Mann.*

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## Sefer haChinuch, Mitzvot 5-6: The Korban Pesach

By Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

The fifth biblical mitzvah (Shemot 12:6) is the instruction to prepare the korban pesach, and the sixth (ibid. 12:8) is to eat the korban. By performing these mitzvot, we commemorate the departure from Egypt, re-creating the original departure. Groups gather and select a lamb or goat, and bring it as their offering. Part of the meat is burned on the altar; the rest is eaten by the members of the group.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Kalischer published arguments for bringing the korban pesach in our own age. Rabbi Kalischer dealt with numerous technical objections - identifying the location of the altar, requiring a prophet, attaining taharah, identifying kohanim, creating proper clothing for the kohanim and more. Nonetheless, Rabbi Kalischer was opposed by Rabbi Akiva Eiger and Rabbi Yaakov Ettlinger, among others, and he was never able to implement his ideas.

One of the objections was that we don't presently have a Beit haMikdash - and even if we were licensed to build a Beit haMikdash, some authorities rule that it would not be holy without a prophet and a new ritual sanctification. [See Divrei haYamim II 28:19, and Rambam and Raavad, Hilchot Beit haBechirah 6:14.] However, other authorities rule that korbanot, and especially the korban pesach, may be brought without a Beit haMikdash. [See Mishnah Eduyot 8:6, Hilchot Beit haBechirah 6:15 and She'eilat Yaavetz I 89.]

For more on this debate, see Rabbi J. David Bleich, Contemporary Halakhic Problems I pp. 244-269 and Rabbi Chaim Jachter [here](#).

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All times ET. Classes are free & open to all, unless otherwise noted.

### Shabbat Dec. 9-10

#### Shabbaton at Shaarei Shomayim: The Pursuit of Peace

8:15 PM FRIDAY NIGHT LEIL LIMMUD IN THE COMMUNITY

*Yaakov's Internal Struggle*, with Yoetzet Halachah Sarit Anstandig, 3000 Bathurst Apt 403

*What's So Special About Shabbat?*, with Rabbi Steven Gotlib, 1 Elway Ct. Apr 3 *Special time 8:00 PM*

*Must Esav Hate Yaakov?*, with Idan Rakovsky, 30 Manor Haven Rd.

*Rabbi Soloveitchik's Response to the Vatican*, with Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, 85 Glen Park Ave.

#### DIVREI TORAH AND SHIURIM AT SHAAREI SHOMAYIM

Friday night davening: Rabbi Steven Gotlib: *Shabbat, Shalom, and Us*

Shiur After Hashkamah Minyan: Rabbi Jared Anstandig: *Fighting for Peace*

Derashah, Sharp Sanctuary: Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner: *Sometimes, Peace Is Not the Goal*

Derashah, Downstairs Minyan: Rabbi Yehuda Mann: *Making Peace With Yourself*

Derashah, Lower Level Social Hall: Idan Rakovsky: *Gut Shabbos or Shabbat Shalom?*

3:40 PM Pre-Minchah Shiur, Sharp Sanctuary: Idan Rakovsky: *The Endless War?*

Seudah Shlishit: Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner: *When Yaakov Became Esav*

### Sunday Dec. 11

9:00 AM R' Zev Spitz & R' Yehuda Mann, Semichat Chaver Program, Clanton Park (men)

10 AM to NOON: CHANUKAH LEARNATHON at SHAAREI TEFILLAH!

Rabbi Jared Anstandig, The Torah Reading: Why the Repetition?

Mrs. Prielle Rakovsky, Jewish Thought: Between the Candles - Shabbat and Chanukah

Rabbi Steven Gotlib, Tefillah: Why Do We Sing to the Chanukah Candles?

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, Halachah: Is a Musical Menorah Kosher?

*Light Refreshments Served*

### Monday Dec. 12

9:00 AM R' Jared Anstandig, Halachic Philosophy of Rav Soloveitchik, Yeshivat Or Chaim (university men)

7:30 PM Prielle & Idan Rakovsky, Song of the Week, ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklysong>

7:30-9:00 PM LEGAL ETHICS: VACCINES AND YOUR CLIENT with Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

On ZOOM at <http://tiny.cc/mtethics>; With CPD Credit; Register at <https://torontotorah.com/cpd>

### Tuesday Dec. 13

9:00 AM Idan Rakovsky, Tzidkat haTzaddik, Yeshivat Or Chaim (university men)

1:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Wisdom of King Solomon, ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt> (men)

7:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Shemuel (Chap. 17), ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt> (men)

### Wednesday Dec. 14

10:00 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Jews and Clothes Week 7 of 7

There is a fee, Register at <https://torontotorah.com/wednesdays>; On ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt>

8:15 PM R' Yehuda Mann, Contemporary Halachah, Clanton Park

### Thursday Dec. 15

1:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Shemuel (Chap. 29), ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt> (women) *not this week*

8:00 PM R' Yehuda Mann, Gemara Beitzah (advanced), email [ymann@torontotorah.com](mailto:ymann@torontotorah.com) for location (men)

### Friday Dec. 16

9:00 AM R' Jared Anstandig, Parshah, Yeshivat Or Chaim (university)

10:30 AM R' Jared Anstandig, R' Mordechai Torczyner, R' Yehuda Mann, Ketuvot Perek 1 *advanced*

In-person at Yeshivat Or Chaim, on ZOOM at <http://tiny.cc/frishiur>

#### COMING UP!

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Sunday December 25

TANACH IN A DAY: JEWS AND NON-JEWS IN TANACH

Full flyer and Registration at <https://torontotorah.com/humanity>