

קהל שער יתורה  
 CONGREGATION SHAAREY TORAH  
**THE SHTIEBLE**  
 98 WEST END AVE BROOKLYN NY 11235

**SHABBOS BEREISHIS**  
 29 Tishrei - October 16/17  
 Shabbos Mevorchim

Sponsored L'zecher Nishmas Reb Eliezer ben R' Moshe (Schreiber) and R' Shimon ben R' Moshe (Schreiber)

Candle Lighting: 5:55 pm  
 Mincha/Kabalas Shabbos: 6:05 pm  
 Shacharis: 8:45 am  
 Shiur Halacha: 5:15 pm  
 Mincha/Seudah Shilishi: 5:45 pm

**Weekday Schedule**

Shacharis  
 Sunday 8:00 am  
 Monday - Rosh Chodesh Chesvan 6:45 am & 7:45 am  
 Tuesday - Friday 7:00 am and 7:45 am

Mincha/Maariv: 5:55 pm

Mishna Brurah Chaburah M-F 6:30 am  
 Talmud Shiur M-F 7:00 am  
 Night Kolloel Mon & Wed 8:00 pm  
 Torah Tuesday Schmooze 8:00 pm

Candle Lighting for Shabbos Noach 5:45 pm

A Project By The Manhattan Beach Community Kollel

# WEEKLY INSIGHTS - PARSHAS BEREISHIS

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BY R' RON FINKELSTEIN

Let us consider the first murder in history. Kayin and Hevel were the children of Adam and Chava. When Kayin was born, his mother was elated. She exclaimed "I have made man with G-d", yet we find that when Hevel was born there is no such excitement. Interestingly enough we find a major disparity in the names of the two babies. Kayin means to acquire, indicating a hope that parents generally have when having a child that he will be able to do so much, furthering their lineage and carrying their name. Hevel on the hand means nothingness, as though the parents that named him did not give him much thought and all their optimism and expectation rested on their firstborn. We should consider that the naming Kayin and Hevel are not necessarily a reflection of the Torah's perspective on them, but rather that of the parents. Various midrashim state that Kayin and Hevel were twins, as there is no mention of a second birth, which could further the idea that Hevel was an unexpected afterthought to Kayin.

The Torah then relays: "Hevel became a shepherd and Kayin became a tiller of the ground. After a period of time, Kayin brought an offering to Hashem from the fruit of the ground and as for Hevel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and from the choicest. Hashem paid attention to Hevel and his offering but did not pay attention to Kayin and his offering" (4:2-5). It is important to note that Kayin brought the first offering from man to Hashem. The Torah never indicates it as a sacrifice but rather it is regarded as a mincha which is meant to connote a gift. This is an important point because Hashem never requested such an offering. What this means is that Kayin on his own comprehended that a human being should give thanks to his Creator. He tilled the land which Hashem had cursed (3:17) and it brought forth produce despite that fact, which is why Kayin was grateful.

What is interesting at this juncture is that the initiative to bring this gift to Hashem came as we have stated from Kayin, yet the Torah then states that Hevel also brought a gift copying his older brother's actions. As his birth was a mere afterthought of his older brother, also this offering which he brings now is not his brainchild but rather an imitation of what Kayin realized, which is when you suc-

ceed, you bless G-d. This focus can give us a renewed insight into Kayin and his brother's relationship. Most of us have our views tainted by association. We consider Kayin and the murder which he commits on his brother and immediately associate it to him being evil. When considering the events leading up to the murder, we find that Kayin was very much in tune with his Creator and even was the initiator of giving thanks to Him. So the question is what happened that changed this perspective? What brought him to kill his younger sibling?

Many psychologists would couch this episode as being a classic case of sibling rivalry. The parents hold a special place for their firstborn and gave favored treatment that commenced at birth with excitement and joy. The boy grew and was cognizant of Hashem in the world and in the instant that success greeted him he immediately looked for a way to give thanks.

The younger brother, Hevel, was not treated with the same regard. He is not held in the inner pupil of his parents' eyes and is starved for attention. From birth, he was not fully considered. This could have lead to a disposition where Hevel needed to distinguish himself, and when he saw that Kayin was bringing an offering, he decided that this was his opportunity to outshine his older brother. We find this subtly intimated by the fact that the Torah never says that Kayin's offering was rejected. The word the Torah uses to describe Hashem's action is sha'ah which means "gave time to" or "paid attention to", meaning the Torah says that Hashem paid attention to Hevel. This exactly what he was not getting from his parents and exactly what he was after, it was to receive recognition.

This was not what Kayin was used to and he was in no way prepared to give up the center piece status that he had grown accustomed to by being the firstborn. In fact the Torah writes that Kayin was very distressed and his face fell (4:5). The words used in the verse is "vayichar le-Kayin me'od", this word vayichar means distressed but also can connote anger (as in Yona 4:1).

Hashem says to Kayin: "Why are you so disturbed and why has your face fallen. Surely if you improve yourself,

you will be forgiven, but if you do not improve yourself, sin rests at the door, yet you can conquer it" (4:6-7). The Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) on this topic states that Hashem was saying if you act appropriately then you will maintain your dignity, but if you do not act appropriately then your evil inclination will be waiting at your door, yet remember that you can discipline it.

The subsequent verse in the Torah then states: "Kayin said something to Hevel his brother and then while they were in the field, Kayin rose up on Hevel his brother and killed him" (4:8).

Strangely, the verse does not indicate what exactly Kayin said to his brother. Rashi (1040-1105) explains that Kayin entered into words of quarrel and contention.

The important component for us to know is not exactly what was said, rather instead that something was said. This pivotal point conveys that murder was not the objective, it was to talk. These words escalated to an argument but the verse relays twice "Hevel his brother" meaning that Kayin never lost sight that this was his family. The fact of the matter is that death and murder were not understood concepts as no one died yet at this point in human history. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 37b) elucidates that Kayin had no idea how to kill, but only because of his rage, began to hit Hevel in many places until he died. The aftermath of this is that the ground took in its first victim of mortality, while Kayin had been sentenced to an eternal wandering.

The lesson of this entire episode can be found in Hashem's interaction with Kayin right before the murder took place. When Hashem asks: "Why are you so disturbed and why has your face fallen?" (4:6), it seems a rather odd question since ostensibly his offering was rejected and that would be the obvious reason for his anguish. Yet as we have learned thus far, there is no indication from the actual verse that the offering was indeed rejected, so the question that Hashem posed was in relation to another cause all together. Kayin was not distressed by his relationship with Hashem, but it was instead distressed solely because of where he stood competitively before Hashem in relation to his brother Hevel. Even if as

the midrash explains that a fire came to consume Hevel's offering, this only means that a special sign was attributed to Hevel's offering and not that his was accepted and Kayin's was not. The core issue is Kayin's jealous response in seeing himself not before Hashem independently but only in distinction to Hevel. The measurement of your value by how you relate to others and not in relation to Hashem is an emotional cyclone that will only lead to a destructive and empty end.

This explains that when Hashem said "Surely if you improve yourself, you will be forgiven, but if you do not improve yourself, sin rests at the door, yet you can conquer it" (4:7), was for Kayin to be cognizant of one necessary improvement to make in his character. It was for him to focus on if he himself is doing well in Hashem's eyes and not be concerned with the personal competition he was having with Hevel. If you are not focusing on yourself with Hashem in mind then any yearning you may have to achieve something will be speckled with the seeds of sin.

This is to say that even if the vehicle was a religious one, as we have seen here with Kayin bringing the first offering, it was tainted with a centered desire on competitiveness and self aggrandizement which can result in turning a religious vehicle into a one of transgression. This is where Kayin failed and ultimately lost his lofty status.

Our desire to succeed is not the end all. It is instead our desire to succeed for Hashem that makes all the difference in the world.

# HALACHA

BY R' HESHY KAHN

**Due to the recent drop of temperature some questions may arise concerning various issues that surround the cold weather on Shabbos.**

**Q: How may one make hot drinks on Shabbos?**

A: Since there is Machlokes as to whether or not using a teabag on Shabbos is permitted<sup>1</sup>, it is most preferable to have ready made “tea essence” prior to the onset of Shabbos. One should first pour the hot water into a clean cup (without residual water from the sink inside<sup>2</sup> and then pour in the desired amount of tea essence into his cup. In the event that one forgot to do so one would be permitted to pour hot water into a Kli Shlishi (from the urn, to a cup, to another cup) and then place the bag inside<sup>3</sup>.

While placing a lemon inside a cup of tea would be prohibited because of Bishul<sup>4</sup>, and squeezing a lemon into tea is Ossur because of Sechitah (M.B. 320:22), one would be permitted to squeeze a lemon onto a spoon of sugar and then mix it into the tea<sup>5</sup>.

Some Poskim consider the teabag to be a specialized “utensil” for doing Borer, as when one removes the teabag from the cup, the bag serves as a mini sieve to allow the water to drip out of the tea sediments into the cup<sup>6</sup>. If one is looking to be Choshesh for all of the Poskim he can take out the teabag with a spoon as that would be permitted according to everyone. As a rule of thumb when making coffee, or any other hot drink on Shabbos one should prepare it in a Kli Shlishi to avoid all Halachic issues<sup>7</sup>.

**Q: In the event that the house became very cold on Shabbos may one ask a non-Jew to turn on the heat or radiator?**

A: Depending on exactly who is suffering from the cold will determine the Halachic status of this situation. If the people in question are all adults of which there is no concern for illness as a result of the decreased temperature then there would be no alternative but to wait until after Shabbos. If however there are small children in the house then it would be permitted to ask a non-Jew straight out to turn on/raise the heating device<sup>8</sup>. If the house got oppressively cold even for the adults then it would be permitted to ask a non-Jew to do the same as well, as “everyone is

considered ill in regards to the cold”<sup>9</sup>.

**Q: If it is not so cold, then how young do the children have to be to warrant a non-Jew to turn on/raise the steam?**

A: There is a dispute amongst the Poskim, some say that the child needs to be under 3 years old<sup>10</sup> while others hold 6<sup>11</sup>, and then some hold that it is up until the age of 9<sup>12</sup>. One should be stringent and only apply this Halacha to a child up to 3 years of age<sup>13</sup>.

**Q: At what stage does one have to be suffering from a malady in order to be permitted to take medication on Shabbos?**

A: As a general rule of thumb, whenever someone is so ill (i.e. flu, fever, virus etc.) that he requires bed rest (or even if bed rest wouldn't help his particular situation, such as a bad toothache, strep throat etc., however if it would help he would take that up as a remedy<sup>14</sup>), one would then be permitted to take medication on Shabbos<sup>15</sup>. [This is referred to in Halacha as a Choleh Sh'ain Bo Sakanah].

**Q: If one is directed to take antibiotics for a 10 day period, may he continue to do so even if he is feeling fine?**

A: If one started his medication and should he stop taking it he would be in danger of having his illness return, it would then be permitted to continue with his medication<sup>16</sup>.

**Q: Is it permitted to take vitamins on Shabbos?**

A: While there are certain Poskim who permit vitamins as they are considered food for healthy people<sup>17</sup>, one should only take vitamins to maintain his already good health. However, if one is weak and is using vitamins to give him strength (i.e. Vitamin C therapies, fish oil, iron etc.) then unless one is under the category of Choleh Sh'ain Bo Sakanah one should refrain from taking them as they would be considered “medicines” in those situations<sup>18</sup>. [Note: Expectant women may take vitamins in all situations<sup>19</sup>].

**Q: May one take nasal decongestant on Shabbos?**

A: Assuming that he is not confined to bed as a result of his congestion, it would be considered “Refuah” and is

prohibited from use on Shabbos<sup>20</sup> .

**Q: If someone is ill and is having difficulty sleeping may he take sleeping pills on Shabbos?**

A: Although in general majority of the Poskim prohibit the use of sleeping pills on Shabbos<sup>21</sup> , in a situation where not sleeping will further intensify the illness one would be permitted to take them on Shabbos<sup>22</sup> . [Warning: It should be understood that research has proven sleeping pills to be highly addictive on both a psychological as well as physiological basis and one should be very cautious even when taking them during the week].

**Q: Is there any Halachic issues with taking candies (I.e. Ricola's) or drinking tea to soothe a soar throat?**

A: All foods that are used for healthy people are permitted for anyone suffering from an ailment providing that it is not recognizable that it is for Refuah<sup>23</sup> . In certain locale's where throat lozenges are used as medicines, having them will be tantamount to taking Refuah and would therefore be prohibited. .

**Q: May one take his temperature on Shabbos?**

A: Assuming that one will not be using a an electronic device one may shake down and use a mercury thermometer on Shabbos without any Halachic concerns as it is considered a measurement for a Mitzvah<sup>24</sup> .

**Q: What may one use a Chap Stick on Shabbos?**

A: Using chap stick is prohibited because of the Melacha of Memachek/Smoothing.<sup>25</sup> Spreading oil on one's lips would be prohibited as well as people know that you are doing it for medicinal purposes.<sup>26</sup>

FOOTNOTES

- 1 M.B. 318:39, Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:16
- 2 Be'ur Halacha 318:12 D"V'H V'Hue, Igros Moshe O.C. 1:93
- 3 Based on a written Psak by R' Chaim Kanievsky Shlita
- 4 S.A. 318:4
- 5 Chai Adam 16:3
- 6 Minchas Yitzchok 4:99:20, SSK"V 3:footnote 171
- 7 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:16
- 8 M.B. 276:40
- 9 S.A. 276:5
- 10 Chazon Ish 59:3
- 11 Tzitz Eliezer 8:15:12
- 12 Minchas Yitzchok 1:78
- 13 Oral Psak heard from R' Plutchok Shlita citing the fact that nowadays with the availability antibiotics common viruses etc. are not fraught with as much danger as when the more lenient responsa was written.
- 14 Rama 328:17
- 15 M.B. 328:107
- 16 Oral Psak heard from R' Plutchok Shlita
- 17 Be'er Moshe 1:33
- 18 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:54, SSK"V 34:20
- 19 SSK"V 36:1, Az Nidbaru 6:72
- 20 Minchas Yitzchok 8:5, SSK"V 34:10
- 21 Chelkas Yaakov 4:41, Az Nidbaru 1:30
- 22 Oral Psak heard from R' Plutchok Shlita
- 23 328:37
- 24 M.B. 306:36, Tzitz Eliezer 11:38
- 25 One can assume the Igros Moshe O.C. 1:114 would concur with this ruling as he states that even toothpaste which is of more fluid consistency than chap stick is considered smoothing.
- 26 S.A. 328:22, M.B. 328:77

# MACHSHAVA

BY R' MOSHE WARSAWSKY

As we start with the first Dvar Torah in a new series, I feel it necessary to explain the premise upon which this column will be based. Let's begin with the Maharal; he compares the Jewish calendar not to a circle, but to a spiral staircase. Wherein lays the difference between these two? While a circle comes back to the same points at each rotation, the spiral staircase hits the same points on each revolution but on a different level. Let's apply this; the Succos that we just experienced is not the same Succos that we had last year, nor will it be experienced again next year. To each individual person, every milestone throughout the year brings new insight and strength to those experiencing it, which gives the extra necessary boost for success at that particular stage in life.

For instance, perhaps this Rosh Hashana, you told yourself that you're really going to be careful with the way you Daaven. By the time you reach Rosh Hashana 5771, after a full year of working on Tefilah, the challenge facing you will be in a different realm; therefore the strength hidden within Rosh Hashana will emerge with a new appearance, that of the new task that stands to be conquered. At different times, our holidays, and Shabbosim will yield varying results, dependant on what is going on in the life of the one experiencing it. With this we reach the Tachlis (purpose) of our column. From week to week we'll try to draw out a slightly deeper approach to experiencing the life and challenges which we've all experienced so many times before. The more a person peers into our world the more we catch a glimpse of the unfathomable depth that lies beneath. In Lashon Hakodesh (old Hebrew is what we're referring to, not modern Hebrew) words that have similar roots are inherently related in concept. The Hebrew word for World is Olam. The Hebrew word for hidden is He'elam. There is no coincidence here; our world effectively carries out the task of hiding that which is spiritual. Our job in this world is to peer past the physical reality in which we live, and reach out and connect ourselves to that which is divine.

At this time of the year we find no Yom Tov in sight, the only light in a distance seems to be the rabbinically ordained Chanuka (pun intended). This should be no cause for alarm however, because on a weekly basis we have the

esteemed presence of Shabbos with us. As a result of Shabbos frequenting us so often, we sometimes unfortunately forget about its gifts and messages that are so necessary in aiding us through the week. After all; without Shabbos, where would we get our Sunday night leftovers? Seriously speaking though, this week being Parshas Bereishis, the Parsha with which Shabbos was created; it would make sense to peer a little bit behind the veil and try to tap into the energy of Shabbos.

Our world is a world of sevens. Seven colors in the spectrum, seven musical notes, seven heavens, seven continents, the mind on average remembers seven numbers, and perhaps most glaring, a world of 3D which presents seven sides. How do we get to seven sides? Wherever you are right now there exists around you six directions, North, South, East, West, Up and Down. Where then does the seventh direction come from? It's actually not much of a side, rather it's the medium which holds together all of the other six. Picture a Rubik's cube. You have six sides and that little ball thingy in the middle keeping it all together. Without the internal core holding it all together, there are no longer six sides, everything collapses. So the seventh side is that which keeps the others in place, and effectively gives them purpose and cohesion. In our world we are the seventh side, because without us the other six directions have no commonality or purpose bringing them together.

Ever wonder why a week has seven days? NOTHING in nature apparently dictates this cycle of a week. We can recognize a solar year, that's when the sun returns to its spot (what it appears like from earth) every 365 days. A lunar month is detectable every 29 to 30 days when the moon refreshes itself. But who made up a week? G-d did. He built this world with infinite wisdom, and every aspect of the physical world that we perceive resonates with his awesome power. Six days a week (5 days for those that have Sundays off) we busy ourselves with day to day life. Besides for a minyan here a minyan there and a couple of hours learning, how much do we really feel and interact with the omnipotent? Shabbos is the 7th side that keeps it all together. Shabbos brings us to a recognition of that

which is hidden within the other six days. I won't go into the halacha aspects of Shabbos (see Heshy Kahn's article for that), but anyone with a basic familiarity of Shabbos can sum it up with one word; rest. Shabbos is the day we rest, but not for the sake of simply relaxing, it's a day where our rest is supposed to help us hear the message, and help you look at that which is hidden in our world. Realize how fleeting this world is, recognize who created it all, and carry this message with you into the week. (It's interesting to note that from Shabbos to Shabbos there are only six days, perhaps any longer our minds wouldn't be able to maintain focus on our goal). Shabbos is not merely another day to be labeled as "day seven." The way we should count the week is day one, two three, four, five, six, Shabbos. All week long we say the Shir shel yom that counts everyday in its relationship to Shabbos. Our job is to always be relating to that which is beyond this world and Shabbos is our opening to doing that. Shabbos comes from the root which means to rest, but it's also related with the word return. Shabbos is the day that we come back to our roots, so let's do our part in keeping ourselves connected all week long.

## TEFILLAH

### מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ...

I gratefully thank you, O living and eternal King, for You have returned my soul within me with compassion - abundant is Your faithfulness!

Hashem has given you another day. When we awake in the morning, we are grateful, grateful that we are still here in this world, alive. Grateful that our souls have been returned to our bodies and that Hashem has shown us compassion in granting us another opportunity in life.

The origin of this type of prayer is expressed in the Talmud (Berachot 60b) in the form of "Elokai Neshama" where we express appreciation for having our souls restored to us. In Talmudic times the Jews were meticulous about washing their hands before saying their prayers, a prerequisite before one can say Hashem's name. Since

that prayer has in it Hashem's name and one cannot say Hashem's name until after washing his hands, it was later later moved and Modeh Ani was formed at the end of the 16th century in its place as the initial prayer of the morning.

The essence of the first word Modeh (or for women Modah), is that in our first moments of wakefulness we are expressing gratitude towards Hashem. The reason why the emphasis is on our thankfulness to Hashem is to internalize that our lives are here in order to serve Him. As Rabbi Yosef Kairo (1488-1575), who writes in the Shulchan Aruch: "One should arise like a lion in order to serve Hashem"(1:1). That is to say the gratefulness that we have is because of the opportunity we now have to fulfill more mitzvot. It is only thereafter that I say the word "I", expressed in Hebrew as "ani", but only in the context of being before Hashem who is the eternal King.

The Vilna Gaon (1720-1797) points out that that the prayer indicates that our souls have been returned to us with great compassion in order to remind us of the fact that Hashem has bestowed upon us a great kindness. This is part of our first thought in the morning so that it should resonate with us to show kindness and have compassion towards others. As the Rambam (1135-1204) states: "Just as Hashem is merciful so to you should be merciful"(Hilchot Deot 1:6).

The last portion which expresses the abundance of Hashem's faithfulness is there to indicate the faith that Hashem has in us. It conveys to us that it is not "I" which has awakened, but rather it is Hashem which has awakened "me", He has awakened me for a purpose, because He has faith in me, faith that today I will grasp my opportunities and fulfill them.

### Mazel Tov

- Suri & Joey Aron on the birth of their daughter Leah
- Baila & Shaya Manne on the birth of their son Dov
- Leah & Yisroel Meyer Berg on the birth of their son Dan
- Dovid Balser on his Bar Mitzvah

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