

The DRS Weekly Torah Publication



Making a Kiddush Hashem

By JoBe Silver, 12th Grade

And Avram said to Lot, please let there be no argument between me and you, between my shepherds and your shepherds, because we are brothers...Please separate from me."

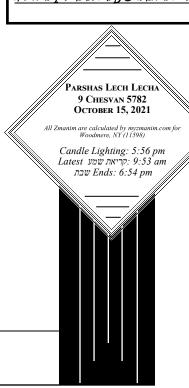
The Midrash Rabbah comments on these pesukim and says that Avram and Lot were not actually brothers, they simply looked alike. The Ksav Sofer explains the logic of the Midrash as follows: If they were really as close as brothers, why would they be fighting with one another—wouldn't the two rather make up than part ways?

The Ksav Sofer asks further, why does the fact that they're "brothers" compel Avram to split with Lot? Was Avram merely becoming sick of Lot's antics, or was there another reason? He answers that since Avram and Lot looked alike, when someone would see Lot acting improperly they might think it was Avram and follow in his ways. This was something that Avram wouldn't stand for, and he had no choice but to split from Lot out of fear of desecrating Hashem's name.

This Medrash can be applied later in the Parsha as well. When Lot is captured by the 4 kings, the pasuk says "When Avram heard that his brother had been captured, he armed his disciples". Why would Avram go through

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Fixing Conflicts

By Joseph Abittan, 12th Grade

ithout effective intervention, a conflict escalates quickly. Whether at work, home, or with friends, if a fight isn't resolved, the consequences can leave a longlasting negative impact. Yet, instead of directly dealing with conflict, some people avoid it. They pretend it doesn't exist even though it is obviously present. Still, other people fall into a cycle of perpetual arguments over an extended period of time, leading to increased tension as the arguments repeat.

After living successfully with each other for years, a conflict (riv) begins between Avram and Lot's herdsmen. Noticing the problem, Avram approaches Lot and says "Please let there not be strife (meriva) between me and you, between my herdsmen and yours, for we are brothers" (Breishis 13:8). Rabbi Moshe Alshich suggests that there is a fundamental difference be-

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

Parshas Lech Lecha Questions

- 1. Aside from this parsha, where else does Hashem command Avraham with the words *Lech Lecha* "Go for yourself"?
- 2. Which two people are called brothers but weren't?
- 3. Which *Brit* ("covenant/treaty") was made between people, and not with Hashem?
- 4. Which body of water, found in Israel, is mentioned in this parsha?
- 5. Where is Avraham called an *Ivri* ("the Hebrew")? Who is the only other person in the Torah called an *Ivri*?
- 6. Who was both a king and a *Kohen* (priest)? Who else in the book of Genesis is called a *Kohen*?
- 7. In this parsha, in what context is the number 10 mentioned? In what context is one-tenth mentioned?
- 8. Which article of clothing appears in this parsha, but nowhere else in the Torah?
- 9. Which birds are mentioned in this parsha? (3 answers)

Answers

- 1. When Hashem tells Avraham to sacrifice his son, He says *Lech Lecha* "And go to the land of Moriah" (Genesis 22:2).
- 2. Avraham refers to Lot and himself as "brothers" (Genesis 13:8). Avraham was actually the uncle of Lot (Genesis 11:27).
- 3. Avraham makes a *Brit* with three men in Genesis 14:13.
- 4. The Dead Sea, is mentioned in conjunction with the war of the four and the five kings (Genesis 14:3).
- 5. When the refugee informs of the capture of Lot, Avraham is referred to as *Halvri* (Genesis 14:13). It is the only place where he is called this. Yosef is the only other person called an *Ivri*, by the wife of Potiphar (Genesis 39:14), and by the butler when he informs Pharaoh of Yosef's ability to interpret dreams (Genesis 41:12).
- 6. Malchei-Tzedek was both the king of Shalem and "a priest to the G-d above" (14:18). Later, Yosef marries the daughter of Poti-Phera who was the "priest of On" (Genesis 41:45).
- 7. Avraham and Sarah wait 10 years in the land of Canaan before Avraham marries Hagar (Genesis 15:3). Avraham gave one-tenth of everything to Malchei-Tzedek (Genesis 14:20).
- 8. Avraham tells the king of Sodom that he will not even take a shoelace from the spoils of war (Genesis 14:23).
- 9. Three birds appear in the parsha: turtledove, young dove and vulture (Genesis 15:9, 11). The first two were used as part of the Brit Bein HaBetarim, and the last one came to eat the carcasses of the dead animals and birds.

ALIYAH SUMMARY

1st Aliyah- The parsha begins with Hashem telling Avram to leave his father's house and travel to the land which He will show him. Avram listened and began to travel with his family. As a reward for listening, God promises Avram that he will be a father and the leader of a great nation. Once they arrived at Eretz Canaan, Hashem told Avram that when the day comes, He will hand over this land to Bnei Yisrael. Avram travels the land until a famine forces him and his family to travel to Mitzrayim. Avram feared that they would kill him in order to take his wife Sarai so he pretended to be Sarai's brother.

2nd Aliyah- After Pharaoh took because of her beauty, Hashem brought a plague on the house of Pharoah, forcing him to release Sarai from captivity. After the plague, Pharaoh gave Avram and Sarai gifts and escorted them out of Mitzrayim at which point they returned to Canaan.

3rd Aliyah- Shifting the focus to Lot, the Torah describes how he is quite wealthy. One day, Lot's shepherds got into a fight with Avram's shepherds, resulting in them parting ways. Lot chose the way of Sedom, a city known for it's evil. Afterwards, Hashem spoke to Avram and reiterated the promise and guaranteed that he would make sure the Jewish nation would be numerous like the soil of the earth.

4th Aliyah- In the southern part of Eretz Canaan, a major war involving many different kings took place. After the war, the kings that won took all the citizens of Sodom captive, including Lot. When Avram heard about this, he rushed to Sodom, fighting the kings and ultimately saving Lot and all the others held captive.

5th Aliyah- Avram was offered the spoils of the war but turned down the reward. Hashem reassures Avram that he will be greatly rewarded for his righteousness. Avraham asks Hashem what the point of all this was if he wasn't going to have any heirs to inherit, and He responds by telling him that Avram will, in fact, have children, and they will be as numerous as the stars.

6th Aliyah- Avram receives "Bris Bein Habisarim." Hashem informs Avram that Bnei Yisrael will be in galus for 400 years, but at the end, they will with great wealth, their enemies will be punished, and they will inherit Canaan. Sarai suggests to Avram that he should father a child with their maid Hagar; Hagar conceived a child but, as a result of disrespect towards Sarai, was forced to leave their household. Hagar, after encountering an angel, returned back to Sarai and gave birth to Yishmael. At the very end of the Aliyah, Hashem changes Avram's name to Avraham.

7th Aliyah- Hashem seals a bris with Avraham and his offspring. The sign of the bris is a cir- cumcision which all males receive on the 8th from birth. Hashem changes Sarai's name to Sarah, and He promises Avraham that he will father another son, this time with Sarah. At the age of 99, Avraham gives himself, Yishmael, and all the members of his household a bris milah.



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Smart Locks on Shabbos

With new technologies surfacing daily, everyone must know how the new technology will impact their lives on a Halachic level. Smart locks, which allow someone to lock their house with a push of a button through their mobile device, fall into this category and must be examined deeply. On Shabbos, it's definitely Asur for someone to access their smart lock on Shabbos, as it's Asur to use a phone. After all, one cannot create an electrical circuit on Shabbos. However, even if one disables the smart locking mechanism, it still tracks how many people are entering and leaving the house. So, the question is, is that considered your action at all, since it's inevitable that the system will track your activity, and is it considered Nicha Lei, which would be a problem, since you're enjoying the Melacha, or Lo Nicha Lei, which is a Derabanan, and we would be Meikel?

There is a Rashba which talks about a case where a person wants to close his door on Shabbos because he is concerned about cold air or thieves, and there is a deer roaming around his house, which he is aware of. Can he close the door, even though he is trapping the deer in his house, meaning he would be violating the Melacha of Tzida? According to the Rashba he can, even though he is trapping the deer in his house.

The Ran disagrees. You're doing a single action with two intentions, which is the same as doing the two actions. It's considered as if you are violating the Melacha of Tzida. Even if the person didn't intend to trap the deer, it would be Asur anyway, since it's inevitable that it's going to happen.

The Shiltei Giborim has a different approach. If you have Kavanah to trap the deer, it's Asur to trap it even if you want security. If you don't have Kavanah to trap the deer, even if you know it's going to be trapped, it's Mutar to close the door. However, this Shiltei Giborim sounds problematic:

It's a Psik Reisha only if you intend to have both results? Isn't the definition of the Psik Reisha that it's definitely going to happen? Who cares if you don't intend to trap the deer? R' Shlomo Zalman explains that this is special to the Melacha of trapping. Kavanah is critical to the very definition of Tzida. In general, if someone did a Mutar action with an inevitable Asur consequence, it's as if you had Kavanah for the Melacha that resulted. By a Melacha where there's significance not only to the result, but to the Ma'aseh itself, then not having Kavanah is enough to take away the Asur. The Oneg Yom Tov explains a different approach. A Psik Reisha is only Asur when the person himself had a direct physical interaction with a result from that action. For example, when someone drags a bench, he has a direct physical interaction with the result from that action, i.e., the hole that the bench creates. However, if the Melacha that one did was removed from the activity that they were doing, meaning it had nothing to do with your action, it's going to be Mutar. That's what the Shiltei Giborim was talking about. Rav Schachter agrees with this understanding of the Shiltei Giborim.

Now, what about security cameras? Nowadays, one can't leave his house without being tracked by a security camera. Rav Schachter says that since security cameras shoot such grainy footage, we're Meikel that one can walk outside on Shabbos. What about the smart lock? Unlike security cameras, smart locks are direct, meaning you're accurately logging every entry and exit of your house. Is that called Nicha Lei? Rabbi Schachter points out that R' Elyashiv holds that Nicha Lei is defined by whether one benefits from the Melacha taking place, even if it's not the particular effect that you are triggering. So, this case of the smart lock is a Psik Reisha Denichah Lei. One benefits from the logging system. Rav Zalman Nechemia Goldberg and Rav Ovadia Yosef point out that this is a Psik Reisha Deloh Nicha Lei, since you don't care about this specific log. You would like to know other people's entries and exits, since you want to know if they're walking in or out. But this entry, since you know who is walking in or out, i.e. you, it's a Psik Reisha Deloh Nicha Lei. Rav Schachter says that if it's your own house, it's Nicha Lei anyways. Since the system is beneficial to you, and it's functioning the way you set it up, it's considered Nicha Lei.

Various Rabbanim, including Rav Mordechai Willig, are Meikel on this question. Anyways, one should set up his smart lock in a way that won't, according to everybody, violate Shabbos.

דברים היוצאים מן הל"ב

SPARKS OF With CHASSIDUS Ari Ivry

Lot was a wicked man. His corrupt attitude led Avraham to part from him. When Avraham told Lot that he was parting from him, Lot responded and said to Avraham "I care neither for Avram nor for his god (Perek 13: Rashi v.11)". Lot then proceeded to dwell in the worst place possible: Sodom. This begs the question: Why is Lot's story mentioned at all in the Parsha? Lot's story isn't relevant to the theme of this week's Parsha which is all about self-sacrifice and Abrahams's devotion to Hashem! So, why are we reading about Lot's corrupt actions and beliefs? One possible answer to this question, given by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, is that the mentioning of Lot is to inform us about Avraham's influence on him. Meaning, Avraham's whole goal was that even a wicked person like Lot should come to appreciate God, and sometimes even self-sacrifice to observe a mitzvah. Even when it became necessary for Avraham to send Lot away, Avraham still kept a connection with him as he said, "Wherever you live, I will not distance myself from you, and I will stand by you as a protector and helper" (Rashi to v.9). We see that Avraham's commitment was so strong that he was willing to risk his own life to fight a war against four kings to save Lot and it was this mesiras nefesh that convinced Lot of the greatness of Avraham and the Torah. Thus, even though Lot remained wicked and dwelled in Sodom, he was nevertheless inspired by Avarahams mesiras nefesh and risked his own life to welcome guests into his home. The lesson Avraham teaches us is that we should never give up trying to inspire another yid no matter how far they have strayed.

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all of this trouble to go save Lot, who he just fought with? HaRav Ovadia Yosef zt"l learns from the words "When Avram heard" that after capturing Lot, Nimrod announced to the world that he had captured Avram and that Hashem had done nothing to save him. Because everyone believed that Avram had actually been captured, Avram was forced to assemble his disciples and come with his students to save Lot and defend the glory of Hashem.

The second Belzer Rebbe further explains this situation. He tells the story of when Nimrod stayed at the home of Avram. As Nimrod turned to leave, Avram stopped him at the door and presented him with a huge bill, infuriating Nimrod, who thought everything he was served would be free of charge. Avram responded that normally when someone would leave his house they would give him a bracha saying "God should repay you double for your efforts". But you, Nimrod, claim that you are a god so now it is time for you to repay me for all of those people. However, if you sign this document that you are not a god, then you will also be exempt from paying this hefty bill. Having no choice, Nimrod signed the document and went on his way. The Belzer Rebbe continues: now that Nimrod captured Avrams' look-alike, his plan was to make Lot sign a document nullifying the one Avram had presented him. It was with this intent that Avram set out with his students to make a kiddush Hashem by clearing His name.

Adapted from Derachim beparsha.

Eitan Schafler "Go to You"

The beginning of parshas lech lecha starts out with its namesake: "Vayomer Hashem el avram lech lecha mei'artzicha umimoladitcha Umibeit avecha el ha'aretz asher ar'echa." Hashem tells Avram to go from Charan to the place that he will reveal to him. In most practical applications of the word, "lecha" usually means "to you", but most meforshim interpret the words "lech lecha" as "go FOR you"! And if the translation is "go TO you", what does that mean? Furthermore we all know that part of the test that Hashem gave to Avram is that he didn't know where he was going. But if I was telling my friend where to go and I didn't want to tell him where he was going, he would still need to know which direction to walk in to get to that location, even if he doesn't know the end point! So why is it that the Pasuk is worded so strangely and that its directions are so lacking?

In the beginning of Rav Kook's Oros Hateshuvah, he relays a tremendous chidush. He says that doing teshuvah is not to temporarily enter into a state of abnormal purity and then (chas veshalom) go back to one's regular ways of sinning, but it is to return to one's natural state of perfection which was created in the beginning of time by the ribono shel olam in each one of our neshamos. And that state of inner purity and perfection is the real us. However, says Rav Kook, to do teshuvah is not easy - one must do it in levels: first they must leave the influence that is leading them to this distortion of their natural state, but little by little.

In the same light, Hakadosh Baruch Hu says to avram "go to you", denoting not just a geographical journey but a spiritual one as well. Hashem wanted Avram to reach his full potential - to go to his true self. And regarding the lack of direction given to avram, it's really all there! Hashem had given him the directions! He told Avram that in order for him to "go to himself", to reach his true inner avraham (yes, with a hei), he needed to rid himself of the influences around him. Yet He could not ask that Avram separate himself from his home all at once; Hashem understood that one must do it in stages. Therefore he told avram: Go "from [the influence of] your land, [then go] from [the influence of] your birthplace [and lastly (the hardest task of all) leave] from [even the influence of] your [loving] father's household". We should all learn from this that to reach our full potential and to return to our original state of bliss and perfection, we must separate ourselves from that which distorts our true selves to bring the mashiach quickly. We should all be zocheh to have the koach to return fully to our greatness quickly with the coming of moshiach bimheira biyameinu amen selah vaed.

A gut Shabbos to all!!!



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STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: ARIEL KORORI

It was just after the end of World War 2. He walked in with a dazed look on his face. The explosive sounds of Torah in the Ponovezh beis medrash had surprised him. Searching up and down the rows he looked for a familiar face, though he did not expect to find one. Finally he approached a prestigious-looking individual with a long grayish beard streaked with white and asked him for help. "Who are you looking for?" the kind man asked, his eyes brimming with warmth. The bewildered boy, rail thin with jutting cheekbones and eyes set back deep in their sockets, mentioned that he was searching for Rabbi Kahaneman, the Ponovezher Rav. "I'm Rabbi Kahaneman. How can I help you?" The young man seemed genuinely lost. "My name is Shloime Reichberger and I would like to come to your yeshivah and learn here. I wasn't sure if I should come here or go to learn in Kfar Chassidim so I figured I would try to come here first and see what happens." The boy spoke clearly, yet his thoughts seemed to be focused elsewhere. The Rav asked him where he had come from and what had brought him here. The young man's response shook the Ray to the core. "I come from Auschwitz." Shloime spoke as if there had been nothing before and nothing after that dreaded place. The words resounded in the Ray's heart with a deep and utter horror. Ray Kahaneman now stared at the young man who stood in front of him. He no longer viewed him as a child but instead as an adult. He should have known from his skeletal build that he had come from a concentration camp. "Do you have any family that survived the war?" Shloime's silence was telling. He obviously had no one. He was all that remained. The Rosh Yeshivah's heart cried for this lonely boy. "Shloime, where did you learn before the war?" Shloime responded that he had studied in a yeshivah in Hungary, but that was four and a half years ago.

"Do you remember which mesechta you learned at that time?" The Rav watched with respect and admiration as Shloime closed his eyes and allowed himself, for the first time in many years, to travel back in time and remember the warmth of the yeshivah where he had learned. He heard the sounds of learning and recalled the fire of Torah that had infused the bochurim who were now no longer among the living. "Yes. I remember that we were learning Masechet Chullin before we were sent away." Shloime tried to picture the room where his rebbe had given shiur. He imagined the rebbe sitting in the front of the room swaying back and forth in front of the shtender explaining the sugya they had been learning. He envisioned himself asking a question on the Tosafos which had just been explained. These images had been all but buried in the deep recesses of his soul and Shloime was proud and a bit shocked that he was able to unearth these memories. "Can you tell me anything that you remember from the last sugya you learned?" This was quite different from the standard entrance examination to gain admittance to the yeshivah. The Ray was hoping that this young man had retained something, anything, from before he went through the Gehinnom of Auschwitz. Shloime thought long and hard. The furrows of his forehead wrinkled as he struggled to recall a piece of Torah he had learned. Finally he looked up and proudly declared. "The last piece of Gemara we learned was daf mem ches amud beis (page 48b) in Masechet Chullin. I remember the machlokes Rashi and Tosafos. Shloime proceeded to tell over what he remembered. Each word he spoke served as a testament to his determination to prevent the flames of Torah from being extinguished. Rav Kahaneman watched as Shloime spoke, the boy's emaciated face beaming with joy. As he concluded, the Rosh Yeshiva grabbed him and held him tightly. "Shloime! Shloime!" He placed his arm around the boy's shoulders and ran out the doors of the Ponovezher beis medrash. Holding onto the boy's hand, he ran through the streets of Bnei Brak toward the humble home of the gadol hador, Rav Avrohom Yeshayah Karelitz, the Chazon Ish. When they arrived at the home the Rav burst through the door and shouted, "Rebbe, Netzach Yisrael Lo Yeshaker! Klal Yisrael and the Torah will survive forever! This boy lost everything in the war. He has no mother! He has no father! No sisters or brothers! There is only one thing he has left. Torah! This bochur held onto the machlokes Rashi and Tosafos through the Gehinnom of Auschwitz." The Rav brought Shloime close to the Chazon Ish and the three of them shed bittersweet tears over all those who had died and for Hashem's Torah that had survived.

(Joseph Abittan- Continued from page 1)

tween the word used for conflict in the first verse (riv) and in the second (meriva). "riv" is a small disagreement whereas a "meriva" is when the disagreement spirals into a much bigger issue. Noticing the "riv," Avram quickly takes charge to fix it before it becomes a "meriva." The Talmud (Sanhedrin 7a), in the name of Rav Huna, elaborates on the above and suggests that an argument is compared to a puncture in a hose, which causes water to burst out. If the hole is not repaired quickly, it will widen to the point where it can no longer be fixed. Similarly with a dispute, if it isn't worked out immediately, the damage can be irreversible. Noticing that there was no way to effectively stay together, Avram then suggests a "win-win" solution, where both parties could expand and grow in their own direction, ending the source of the conflict while still on good terms. First, Avram, being in the position of power, could have just brazenly demanded that Lot leave. Yet Avram speaks very peacefully and politely, using calm and inviting language; he states, "Please let there not be strife..." (Genesis 13:8). Second, Avram states the issue without placing the blame completely on Lot. Avram takes partial responsibility, even mentioning himself and his herdsmen in relation to the conflict before mentioning Lot and his herdsmen. Third, in order to avoid a "me vs. you mentality," Avram reminds him of their closeness and strong relationship. Finally, Avram empowers Lot with the autonomy to choose which direction he wanted to go in. Avram was willing to compromise and accommodate Lot to avoid creating tension.

From this situation, Avram serves as a role-model for us by teaching us to approach conflicts rather than letting them fester and by teaching us the best ways to work on resolving conflict. By using a soft start up, not blaming, taking responsibility, focusing on the shared relationship, and compromising, Avram and Lot were able to move forward on good terms, setting the stage for the next phase of their shared story.

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דברים היוצאים מן הל"ב

Rani Bosner

11th Grade

WHY WAIT SO LONG?

years old when he was circumcised". The Hashem actually assisted in performing obvious question is if Avraham had been the Bris Milah. Now that Avraham was following and learning Torah all of his properly circumcised, he was qualified to life, why did he wait so long to get a Bris circumcise others, and he thus continued Milah?

Bava Kamma. "The physical body is the "Once who performs a precept having property of Hashem and not one's per- been commanded is greater than one who sonal asset. Consequently, it is forbidden performs a precept without having been to cause injury or pain to one's self. commanded to do so." Tosfos says that Therefore, though Avraham definitely the one who is obligated is more worried wanted to perform a Bris Milah earlier, and anxious lest he not fulfill than the the halacha of not damaging Hashem's one who is not obligated and therefore property prevented him. Once Hashem his reward is greater. gave him a direct command, it was no the performance of a mitzvah.

imo haberit" - "And He cut with him the do so. covenant". Rashi explains that since it

The Parsha says "Avraham was 90 says "With him" and not "For him", that to circumcise all the members of his One answer is brought down in household. A Gemarah Kiddushin says,

Therefore, Avraham performed all longer considered inflicting injury, but mitzvot with the anticipation that when Hashem commanded him he would do Alternatively, according to Gema- them again and receive the greater rerah Avodah Zarah, someone who is un- ward. Unlike all other mitzvot, circumcicircumcised is not qualified to perform a sion can only be performed once during a circumcision. Since neither Avraham nor person's lifetime. If he had circumcised any of his household was circumcised, it himself voluntarily, he would have not was impossible for him to perform a ha- been able to do it again anymore as one lachically kosher Bris Milah. Ultimately, who is commanded and thus receive a not only was he told to do so, but Ha- greater reward. Hence, with this mitzvah, shem assisted him, as it says "Vecharto he waited till he would be commanded to

The DRS Yeshiva High School For Boys 700 Ibsen Street, Woodmere, NY 11598 Phone: (516) 295-7700 • Fax: (516) 295-4790

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