



# Special Sichot

**FOR BAT YISRAEL**

by Rabbanit  
**Sarah Kachlon**

**FOR AM YISRAEL**

by Rav  
**Efraim Kachlon**



**BE'EZRAT** **HA'SHEM** INC.  
Published by **Be'Ezrat HaShem**  
Inc.

A decorative scroll with a gold frame and red curtains. The scroll is unrolled, showing a parchment-like surface. The frame is ornate with gold scrollwork. The red curtains are tied back with gold tassels. The background is a soft, golden glow with a subtle floral pattern.

*Special S'ichot*

FOR BAT YISRAEL

by Rabbanit

**Sarah Kachlon**



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A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns, framing the central text. The border is white with a subtle drop shadow effect.

**WITH GRATITUDE**


TO OUR DEAR  
FRIEND

RABBI  
**YARON REUVEN**

AND HIS WIFE  
RABBANIT **LEVANAH**

FOR THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND  
ENDLESS COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE  
PRODUCTION OF THIS BOOKLET

MAY HASHEM GRANT THEM A LONG  
AND HEALTHY LIFE AND MAY THEIR  
REWARD BE FULL FROM HASHEM.

A decorative flourish consisting of a central floral motif with symmetrical scrollwork extending outwards.

# Sichot For Bat Yisrael

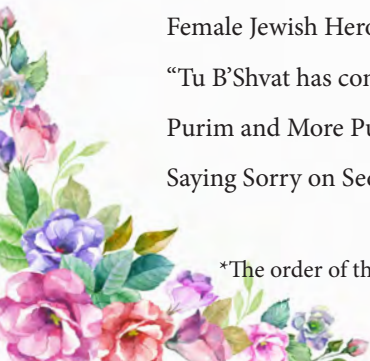


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# Sichot For Bat Yisrael

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Bein  
HaMetzarim



**What's the  
Connection  
Between the  
Woman and the  
Destruction of  
the Temple?**



## What's the Connection Between the Woman and the Destruction of the Temple?

We are in the days of “Bein haMetzarim,” the days of sorrow for the destruction of the Temple, and a simple thought creeps into our minds: what is the connection between us women and the destruction?

After all, all the work of the Cohanim in the Temple was only performed by the men, as well as the singing of the Levites, as it is forbidden for a man to hear a woman sing. In fact, there were not even women who played the instruments at the Temple.

So what do we have to do with the destruction?

And how can we be partners in its rebuilding?

We are told something amazing by the Sages: “In the merit of righteous women our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt, and in their merit we will be redeemed” (Yalkut Shimoni, Ruth, Remez 606, and Yalkut Me’Am Lo’ez Parshat Shoftim “The Virtues of the Decent Woman” and in the Book “Kev HaYsher” Chapter 6).

This is strange and somewhat puzzling as we women do not bother with the affairs of the Temple and do not study Torah. Interestingly though, salvation only depends on us.





## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

And the obvious question is *how*?

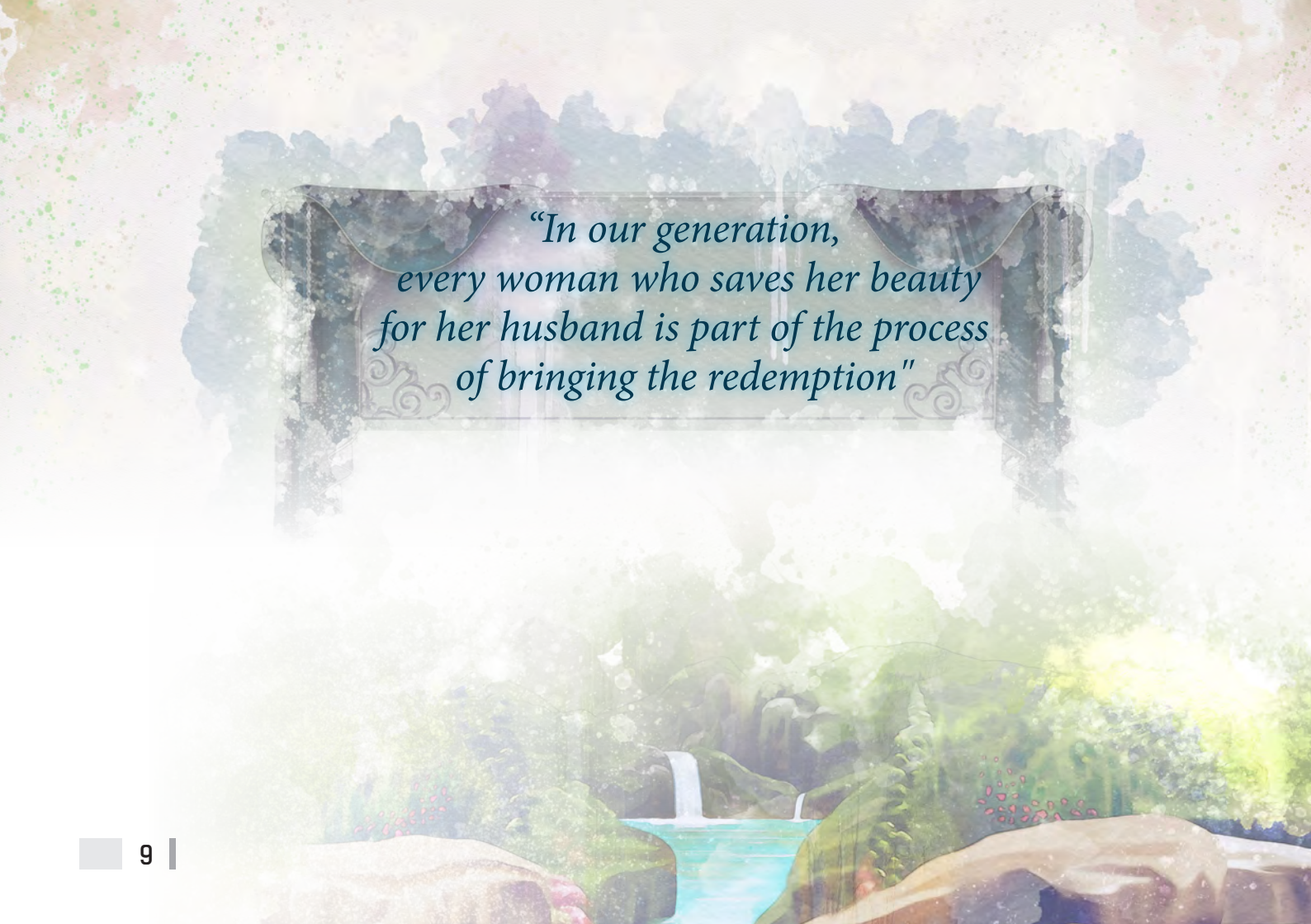
The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni Isaiah Remez 399) says that during the destruction of the First Temple, the Prophet Yirmeyahu rebuked the women for their failure to be modest, according to the standards of Hashem: “Because the daughters of Zion are so haughty; and they walk with neck stretched forth, and winking eyes...” etc. (Isaiah 3:16). And a frightening thing is written in the Midrash. The women, not only did not accept the rebuke of the prophet, but even said that they were waiting for the Gentiles to come and take them as wives, and thereby gain wealth and honor.

As one reason for the Temple’s destruction was immodesty, the way to fix this is through modesty.

The Sages have already taught us (in Yerushalmi Yoma Chapter 1, Halacha 1), “Every generation during which the Temple is not built, it is considered as if it (the Temple) was destroyed during it.” This means that the problem of immodesty has not yet been fixed.

In Egypt, the daughters of Israel would dress up for their husbands and save their beauty only for them, and thus, they were redeemed.

Therefore, in our generation, every woman who saves her beauty for her husband is part of the process of bringing the redemption.



*“In our generation,  
every woman who saves her beauty  
for her husband is part of the process  
of bringing the redemption”*

Tu B'Av



**The Secret of  
Love**



### The Secret of Love

It is accepted in the Israeli public that T"u B'Av is "Love Day." The concept of love has been desecrated and made a cliché in our generation. The word has lost its *true meaning* and now refers to any kind of connection between two people.

Every person who enjoys and likes the company of his friend says that he loves him.

There is a well-known question: Does a fisherman like fish? If we say he does, why does he fish them out of the water, the source of their life? What kind of love is this?

The meaning of true love is to give to another without limits, to give without expecting anything in return.

On "Love Day," you see husbands buying their wives flowers, chocolates in red boxes and jewelry. With these gifts, they intend to express their love to their wives. But did they think, before purchasing those gifts, whether they really love their wives??? Or are the gifts given just to get out of the "Love Day" obligation?

There is a joke that tells about a father who asked his children for a glass of water. The eldest son said, "This mitzvah is so important; you have to sell the merit. I'll give ten shekels to buy this mitzvah."

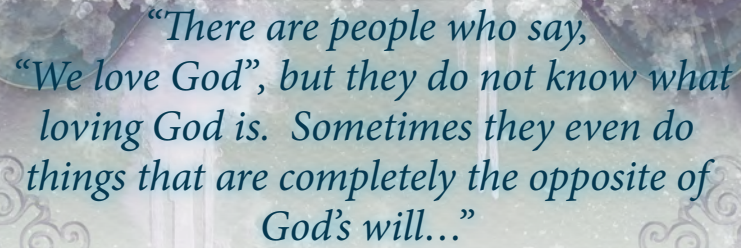
## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

The second son offered twenty; the third son offered thirty. In the end, the eldest son succeeded and bought the mitzvah for one hundred shekels! Then the eldest son said, "This mitzvah is so important and precious, and because I respect my father so much, I want him to earn the mitzvah! He can just get the glass of water himself."

It is easy for us to say that we love, but few people really mean 'love' in its truest sense.

Now we will touch on a sensitive point. There are people who say, "We love God" and sing all day long: "God, we love you!" But they do not know what loving God is. Sometimes they even do things that are completely the opposite of God's will, and all this, of course, is with the excuse of "loving God."

As "Love Day" nears, perhaps we will learn what true love really is, and maybe that way we can truly love ourselves, our family, and especially God.



*“There are people who say,  
“We love God”, but they do not know what  
loving God is. Sometimes they even do  
things that are completely the opposite of  
God’s will...”*

Kids On Vacation



**The Tiring  
Summer  
Vacation?!**



## The Tiring Summer Vacation?!

“When will this long vacation end? It seems like forever!”

These are the sentences I hear on a regular basis. Everywhere I see desperate mothers, anxiously waiting for the first day of school.

And I ask myself, ‘What is so bad about summer vacation?’ The fact that our children, who are so dear to us, are with us all day should be a pleasure. After all, any mother would be ready to do anything for her beloved children. So, what’s different during summer vacation?

It seems that the Western concept of freedom for a woman to be by herself has entered our minds, and it is ruining our vacation. People have gotten used to thinking that summer vacation is equivalent to a nightmare. But summer vacation is a precious time; we can get so much out of it.

We have the opportunity to educate our children the way we want, without anyone interfering. We have the opportunity to teach our children things that no one else in the world can teach them: not math and English, but *a way of life*.

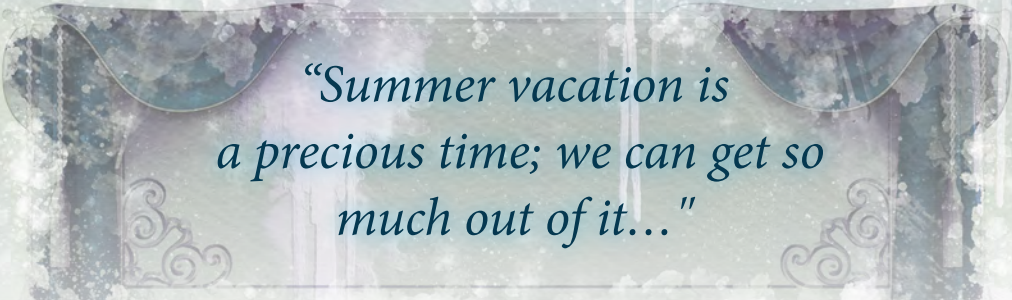
Summer vacation is a time to give each and every child attention, a few minutes of a warm hug and a listening ear. This automatically makes the children calmer and



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

happier. While it is true that the house looks messier than ever, that we need to take care of meals for trips, and do everything possible to relieve our children's boredom, there is no better fun and pleasure than seeing, at the end of a busy and tiring day, satisfied and happy children.





*“Summer vacation is  
a precious time; we can get so  
much out of it...”*

The Month Of  
Elul



**A Drop of  
Attention**



### A Drop of Attention

The month of Elul is coming...


Some of us are thinking, "There is another month from now until Rosh Hashanah. Why worry already?" "Why stress already? Give us a little more freedom," we shout in our hearts to all those who rebuke us in Elul, with a stern face. "Just a little more to do what we want, and then we will repent and start asking for forgiveness."

Such thoughts are a type of "He who says I will sin and repent." The punishment for such thoughts is - that "Heaven would not assist him in doing Teshuvah" (Tractate Yuma page 85b).

We have a great trial that awaits us in another month. All the creatures of the world pass before God as a flock (Tractate Rosh Hashanah page 16a). The sooner we prepare for the day of judgment, the greater our chances of succeeding.

The upcoming Parshah of the week is Parashat Re'eh (Behold). Here, the Torah hints to us to open our eyes and see that we have reached the month of Elul, and not to be blind and regret at the last moment.

All that the Holy One, blessed be He asks of us is just to pay a little attention to our actions, most of our sins happen usually "without our noticing." "We accidentally

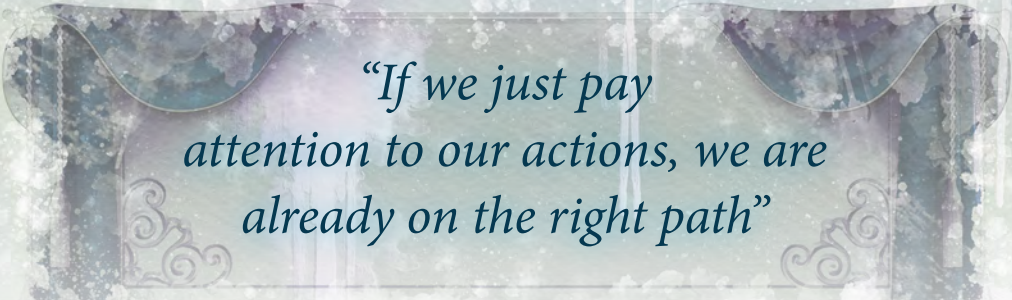


## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

skipped a line at the supermarket; we accidentally spoke badly; or we forgot to say a blessing after the food...

If we just pay attention to our actions, we are already on the right path.

And if we give our full attention to the fact that the Day of Judgment is approaching, and that we should start improving our actions, that is already enough.



*“If we just pay  
attention to our actions, we are  
already on the right path”*

The Month Of Elul



**The Mess is All  
Around**





### The Mess is All Around

Mother went on vacation for a few days. The house now looks very messy: dirty dishes are piled up in the sink; the laundry reaches almost to the ceiling; a hot meal is a distant memory; and the floor is almost invisible. It is all a big mess. Everyone is waiting for Mom to come back from vacation.

When the day has finally come, Mother is at the door, loaded with luggage and exhausted. But here's the miracle. As soon as her footsteps over the threshold, the fatigue disappears completely. After giving hugs and gifts to her family members, she puts on an apron and starts working. She quickly washes the dishes, reduces the laundry pile in seconds, swiftly polishes the floor and, of course, puts pots on the stove without hesitation.

The fragrance of the dishes coupled with the aroma of cleanliness does good to everyone's soul.

The house is back to normal.

It happens in the best of families, "and it also happens within everyone."

During the year, we get carried away by the urge to "go on vacation," ignoring what we have to do, "and the mess is all around."







## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

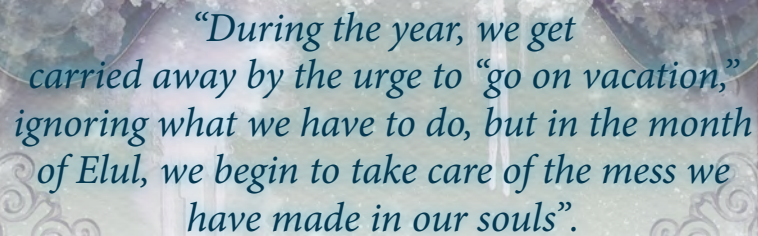
But in the month of Elul, we all come to our senses and begin to take care of the mess we have made in our souls, and we realize how much we must purify and wash them. Every day we are getting closer to the holiest day of the year on which it is said, “For on this day he will make atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins before the Lord; you shall be cleansed” (Leviticus 16:30).

The month of Elul is our time to work and purify ourselves, so that we have time to arrive properly, where it is not obvious that we “went on vacation” all year. This cleanliness is the repentance that cleanses the person and elevates him to the highest level because “where those who did Teshuva stand, a completely righteous person can not stand.” (Tractate Brachot page 34b)

Repentance purifies us, causing us to reach a state as if we had not sinned, as if there was no mess. Even our situation becomes better, because the one who repents is called: Beloved, friend, and pleasant (Rambam Hilchot Teshuva Chapter 7 Halacha 6).

And if we could smell the aroma...





*“During the year, we get carried away by the urge to “go on vacation,” ignoring what we have to do, but in the month of Elul, we begin to take care of the mess we have made in our souls”.*

Rosh HaShana



**The Role of  
Women on Rosh  
Hashanah**



## The Role of Women on Rosh Hashanah

We are already in the middle of the days of mercy and forgiveness, Rosh Hashanah is approaching, and with it- the thoughts, and the sights from years past...

On New Year's Eve, women and children flock to the synagogue, the women's section is loaded with mothers, children, babies in strollers, and of course equipment and nosh, Bamba, pretzels, cookies and all goodies to prevent disturbances.

And then the prayer begins...

But only for the men of course.

Because for the women, the activity is just beginning, to hand out bamba and biscuits to all the hungry infants, to find them a place to sit and still not be disturbed, to go out to calm the crying baby outside, and all kinds of other unexpected things...

A few hours go by for them, standing like that by the door, until the prayer ends.

The mother comes home exhausted - still muttering parts of the prayer and verses of the Psalms, trying to feel that she is part of the prayer in public.

There isn't much time to think, she immediately goes directly to setting the table, serving the dishes, etc.

## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

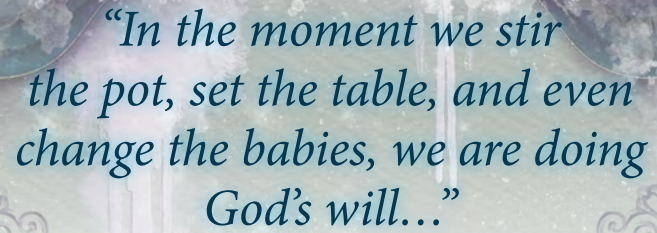
Is this how we want to spend Rosh Hashanah?

We all want to be perfect, to pray, to prepare the food, to serve, to take care of the children, to dress them, to keep them busy, but we need to know our place and our role, and what does God really want from us?

The Vilna Gaon wrote to his wife not to go to the synagogue, for various reasons, we have another reason, we have another role to perform, this is also the reason why a woman is exempt from prayer in a Minyan...

Our main role is to do what is assigned to us, prepare the food, take care of the children, and of course pray, but not necessarily in a synagogue. Sometimes, praying at home is much more successful than praying in a synagogue while trying to silence the children...

Let's just remember: that in the moment we stir the pot, set the table, and even change the babies, we are doing God's will...



*“In the moment we stir  
the pot, set the table, and even  
change the babies, we are doing  
God’s will...”*

Rosh HaShana



**We forgot  
ourselves!!!**



## We forgot ourselves!!!

Have you ever forgotten yourself?

Baruch HaShem, we are so busy with work, child care, house cleaning, etc... we find ourselves sometimes having no time left to care for ourselves.

Have you ever thought that God's will can be manifested even by taking care of yourself and your health? In the Gemara, in Tractate Shabbat (page 118b), it is stated that Rabbi Yossi did not call his wife by her name, but rather called her "my house."

The woman is the main essence of the house, and with a fragile and weak house, it is impossible to have a kosher family.

Every woman likes to invest in her own health, but we don't always do it. Since we are the "housewives" (in Hebrew: Akeret Bayit), the main thing (Ikar) of the house, we are busy with taking care of the needs of the house. But, it is precisely because of this role that we have to take care of ourselves for the sake of our husbands, our children, and our whole family.

And you know what? It can even be a good thing to accept this upon yourself for Rosh Hashanah.



The Day Of  
Judgement



**"Before G-d"**



### "Before G-d"

We thought there was still time until Judgment Day and the sealing of the judgment, but it came too quickly... it caught us when we were not as prepared as we should have been... We felt a little disappointed that we didn't use the month of Elul properly.

But there are those who buy their world *in one hour*. You can repent and decide in your heart that you are really going to change for the better, and you can already win on Judgment Day. The Torah says, "*Before G-d you shall be purified*". Even if you did not have enough time to prepare properly before Rosh Hashanah, and the time "before G-d" has already arrived, you can still be purified.

And in particular, we women, who have been busy all month shopping, cooking and preparing for the holidays, can be purified "before G-d," simply by being *before Him*. We don't need a Siddur in our hand, and we don't need to get up in the middle of the night for Selichot. Let's be content with talking to G-d, and *feel* that we are standing before Him. Let's simply pray to G-d, between preparing a pot of food, baking a cake, and even waiting in the long lines at the supermarket.

Everyone can find time to try and do the work of G-d, and combine the physical preparations with the spiritual preparations for the holiday.

Happy New Year!

Prayer \ Tefilla



**Prayer out of  
Helplessness**



## Prayer out of Helplessness

*“A prayer for a poor man when he entwaps himself...” (Psalms 102:1).*

What is special about this “prayer of the poor”, with which King David opens and connects so specifically to the poor man?

And the answer to that is that in the big world, those who don't have money don't exist and aren't worthy. The poor person is the clearest example of the powerless. He has no money to pay for food, clothes for his children, and other minimal necessary expenses. And so, his helplessness leads him to true prayer and complete dependence on the blessed Creator alone.

You don't have to be poor to feel helpless. Sometimes a person is in a helpless situation when, according to nature, there is no way to get out of it by himself, and only a miracle can rescue him from his situation.

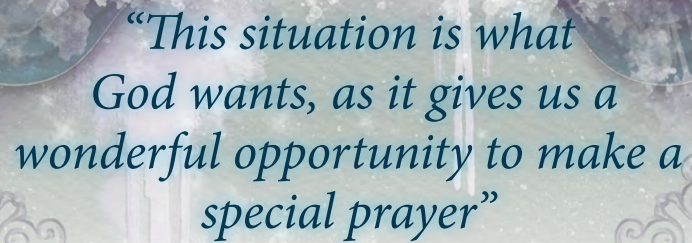
We, as mothers, are also often in a helpless situation, not knowing what to do and how to deal with our husbands, our children and all the problems of life. The only thing that can calm us down and give us hope is the situation we are in, the helplessness. This situation is what God wants, as it gives us a wonderful opportunity to make a special prayer: “the prayer of the helpless.”

## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

And so, we should take advantage of this situation and pray. And of course, we should not forget that the best thing can come out of the worst possible situation. God can turn any situation into the best and happiest situation we can have.

May we all hear good news.





*“This situation is what  
God wants, as it gives us a  
wonderful opportunity to make a  
special prayer”*

Hanukkah



**Female Jewish  
Heroism**



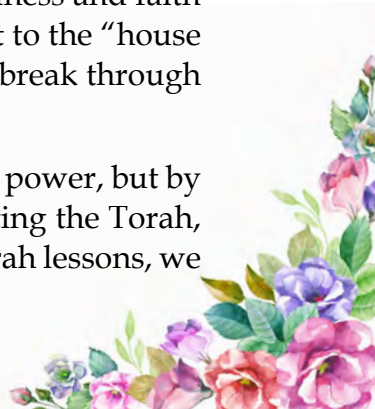
### Female Jewish Heroism

The miracle of Hanukkah and its celebrations are very connected to us women. The miracle was performed by a woman named Yehudit who showed courage and greatness when she cut off the head of the evil Helifornos and saved the people of Israel from his hands (Otzar Midrashim page 204 Hemdat HaHayim part 2 Hanukkah chapter B).

She was a trailblazer in a place where the men were a little afraid and wanted to surrender to the Greeks. Thus, the victory of the Maccabees began.

We women have the power to change the world, to break forward without fear. We are capable of anything. This is the reason that only thanks to righteous women will Israel be redeemed, as explained in the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni Ruth Remez 606), which states that the generations are not redeemed except by the merit of righteous women who are in the generation. It is also written: "He remembered His kindness and faith to the house of Israel" (Tehillim 98:3). It doesn't say "to the Israelites," but to the "house of Israel" - the women. This is because God has given us the power to break through and save Israel with eternal redemption.

We all already know that the salvation of Israel "is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, said the Lord" (Zechariah 4:6). By increasing modesty, supporting the Torah, sending our children to Torah institutions, sending our husbands to Torah lessons, we



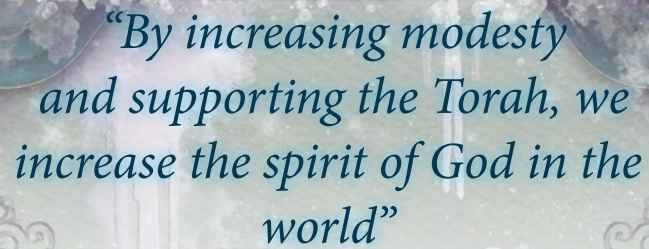


## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

increase the spirit of God in the world. We raise the flame of the miracle and increase it on the way to complete redemption.

Between preparing fritters and frying donuts, whisper to yourself: Yes, I am the simple woman who follows the path of God, a partner in the redemption process. I, too, am a *trailblazer* like Yehudit in her time, "in those days at this time..."

May we all hear good news.



*“By increasing modesty  
and supporting the Torah, we  
increase the spirit of God in the  
world”*

Tu B'Shvat

—  
“Tu B’Shvat  
has come, the  
holiday for the  
trees”





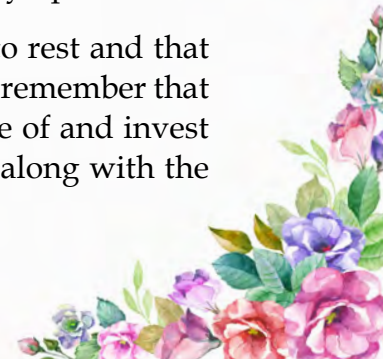
### “Tu B’Shvat has come, the holiday for the trees”

The Holiday of Tu B’Shvat is considered The Rosh Hashanah for the trees. It is known that man is compared to a tree, as it is written “For man is the tree of the field” (Deuteronomy 20:19). We women are really like trees. Similar to the tree which bears fruit, we bear children. We bring them into the world, raise them and take care of all their needs. However, a tree that does not bear fruit is called an idle tree, and similarly, a barren woman is considered dead (Nedarim 64b).

On this great day, we serve as many kinds of fruits as possible. One or two fruits are not enough, because each fruit is special. Similarly, if we liken our children to fruits, we see that every child is unique, like how each fruit has a different taste, smell, etc. Each child is like no other.

Our job as mothers is to rejoice in the fruits, even though they are not always nice, and even when they mess up the house that we have worked so hard to tidy up...

This holiday should also give us a reminder that the tree also needs to rest and that the tree must take care of itself for its own fruits. So we should always remember that with all the great investment in our children, we should also take care of and invest in ourselves, because if the tree is not strong enough, it will collapse along with the fruits on it...



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

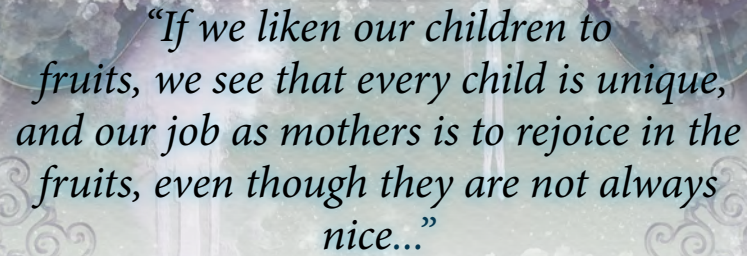
For us and for our children, we need to take care of and invest in ourselves and know how to let go. This is the most important thing. It's not that bad if the house is a little messy, and we didn't have time to wash and iron. This is our holiday, the holiday of the mothers, the so-called trees. When we take care of ourselves, the tree will be stable and strong, and thereby, the fruits it bears will be juicy and pleasant...

Suddenly, we will have patience for everything, including the children, the shouting and even the quarrels. We will not only instill peace around us, but also will give our children a personal example of how a mother should be. Therefore, their ambition will always be to be like their mother.

That will be our pride!

In the Gemara (Ta'anit page 5b), we find that the greatest blessing for a tree is that "All planting that comes from you will be like you."

Let's pray that we succeed in being an example and a role model for our children, so that they will want to be like us and so that they will bless others to be like us. Amen...



*“If we liken our children to  
fruits, we see that every child is unique,  
and our job as mothers is to rejoice in the  
fruits, even though they are not always  
nice...”*

Purim



**Purim and More  
Purim**



## Purim and More Purim

Costumes 109.90 NIS Mishloach Manot 129.90 NIS

I walk between the stalls and see prices...

Conflicting thoughts run through my mind: *to buy or not to buy*. “Isn’t it only once a year that Purim comes...” The song from kindergarten plays in my head. *Is this a reason to pay so much money, or is it a reason not to...*

What mother doesn’t want to see her children dressed up in a fancy costume, walking proudly with original and beautiful clothing?

Each mother has the thought that maybe this year I will be a Purim surprise. Maybe this year I will surprise with a special Mishloach Manot!

But, for something special you usually also need a special investment and a special check...

On Purim we have four mitzvot: the reading of the Megillah, Mishloach Manot, Gifts to the Poor, and a Feast.

Usually, those who invest, invest in the feast, in Mishloach Manot, and in costumes, while when it comes to gifts for the poor, they are satisfied with 10 shekels. “Why not?”



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

He can buy chocolate milk and a bun with that and still be left with a surplus.”

And this is how we go through another Purim and another Purim...

But if we stop for one moment and think, “Which mitzvah is the most worthwhile to invest in on this day, and which mitzvah will please God, who performed this miracle of salvation on that day, more?” It seems that we have missed the point.

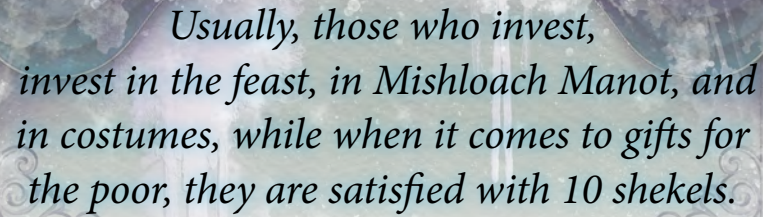
G-d says, “If you make mine happy, on the holidays I gave you, I also make yours happy” (Midrash Tanhuma, Bover, Parashat Re’eh Siman 17). And who doesn’t want joy on Purim for her husband, children, and most importantly for herself...

So that’s it. I gave up on a grandiose costume for the children [Queen Esther and Mordechai the Jew from last year are fine!!!], and on making eye-popping Mishloach Manot.

And believe it or not, I discovered a wonderful thing – that even for 9.90 NIS, you can make a beautiful costume, and even for 29.90 NIS, you can make a nice Mishloach Manot.

And of course, the rest of the money will be donated to those who really need it...

Happy Purim!!!



*Usually, those who invest,  
invest in the feast, in Mishloach Manot, and  
in costumes, while when it comes to gifts for  
the poor, they are satisfied with 10 shekels.*

Pesach



**Saying Sorry on  
Seder Night**



### Saying Sorry on Seder Night

Praise be to God that we came out of Egypt 3300 years ago. In that year, we came out of slavery to freedom. And since then, we work every year in honor of the holiday.

Although the cleaning work is already behind us, it cannot be said that we felt freedom while we worked, cleaned, kept the kids from entering the house with Chametz, and felt the few hours of sleep simply fly by and disappear. It reminds me a little of the slavery in Egypt. What's more, the men and women exchanged roles: the husbands sit with the children in the playground so that the women can work.

This exchange of roles also reminds us of the exchange of roles that existed in Egypt between the men and women in order to make the work more difficult for the Jews.

There is a joke that says that Pharaoh released the Jews earlier than expected, and even though they were sentenced to 400 years, in practice they worked only 210, since Pharaoh knew that the women would continue the work throughout the ages as they prepare for Passover.

Although we taste the hard work now, we will not forget why the Israelites got out of Egypt. The Torah praises the people of Israel for not changing their name, language, and clothing. The people of Israel, despite all the hardships they had

## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

in Egypt and all the hard work they did, did not change their language. Also, not only did they not change their language, but they also did not change their way of speaking. They always spoke as a Jew should – calmly, pleasantly and patiently to one another.

However, today, because of the cleanings and the rest of the pressure before Passover, we are exposed to more unpleasant and impolite talk here and there. We express anger towards the children for dirtying what we have already cleaned. We sometimes quarrel with our husbands, either because they don't help enough, or just for us to take out our frustrations resulting from the workload that was on our shoulders.

In short, the pressure and mess of cleaning and shopping for Passover has brought out *not-so-nice* speech from us, which is typically not heard during the rest of the year.

Now that we are at the very beginning of the Seder night, we will not forget that the Israelites, despite the pressure and the hard work, did not change their language and their way of speaking, and that was praiseworthy.

The holiday of Passover is called Pesach from the idiom "Peh Sach" (a talking mouth) which is to tell about the Exodus from Egypt. Not only should we talk about the Exodus from Egypt, but we should also reconcile and ask for forgiveness from each



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

other, especially from the members of our household for everything that happened during the cleanings...

**And with God's help, let there be a kosher and happy Passover for all the House of Israel!**



Lag B'Omer



**My Lesson from  
the Bonfires**



### **My Lesson from the Bonfires**

From the window of my house, I see the children sweating, struggling to carry cardboard boxes, boards and combustible materials.

Not a day, not two days, not a week, and not even two weeks, before Passover, the quick ones started collecting trees, twigs, old clothes, and anything else they find is welcome. In a few more days, it will be Lag B'Omer, and then in a few minutes the toil of hours, days and weeks will decay and disappear from the world.

Then I thought to myself: wait, what did they work so hard for? They dragged, went crazy, got dirty, shouted, and even fought a little over a fine tree trunk, in order to set everything on fire which consumed everything in just a few minutes???

For a moment, I saw the role of the mother who runs around cleaning, tidying, washing, and ironing, while the toddler, on duty, runs and decides to showcase his strength by drawing on the washed and polished floor.

And you should know that the little toddler is very talented. For his wall and floor paintings, he prefers to use organic materials like leftover cheese from dinner, the remains of the chocolate milk, and even a piece of cucumber that he found somewhere and used as a brush.



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

*And he goes out dancing.*

Just like in the Lag B'Omer bonfire, where all the toil and hard work for hours disappear in an instant...

The thought of the children who worked hard to collect the boards and wood, gave me no rest...

But then, I hear one of the children shouting, "Shmulik, do you think Rabbi Shimon will be happy about our bonfire?"

"Will he *just* be happy?" asks Shmulik. *"I think he will also dance..."*

And then I realized, when it's in honor of Rabbi Shimon, it's worth burning and disappearing the labor of many days in one moment...

I left my thoughts and returned to reality. The children also contributed to my return to reality, as I had to clean, organize, bathe the kids, and serve dinner. It was the routine of an ordinary evening, but I wished I could bathe the children in honor of Rabbi Shimon...

Wait, why in honor of Rabbi Shimon? A thought flashed in my mind: am I not doing kindness to the children and the family??? And who commanded kindness if not the Creator of the world? So, every shower, cleaning, tidying up of the house is for the



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

glory of God... When we do it for the glory of God, even if the toil is great and the result is little, or the result is destroyed in front of our eyes and collapses, we should not be disappointed, because it is for the glory of God, and for the sake of our husbands and our sweet children. So it is definitely worth it.

Ask Shmulik about it...



The Holiday Of  
Receiving The  
Torah



**The Woman,  
the Oil, and the  
Honey**





### The Woman, the Oil, and the Honey

All the people of Israel celebrate the holiday of the giving of the Torah. Especially we women, who work so hard to prepare dairy products, cakes, and many other surprises for this wonderful holiday.

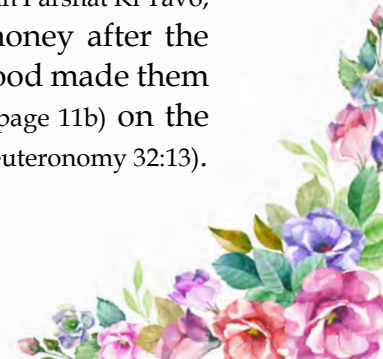
Then, a thought creeps into my heart...

Why do we bother with these things? Isn't this holiday a holiday of Torah study? This is the holiday of the men. They study Torah all night, they rejoice in Torah, they write Torah insights, and it seems to us that we are a little far from that.



Everyone remembers that the Torah was compared to milk. This is one of the reasons for the dairy foods we eat on Shavuot. It is interesting to note that the Torah is also likened to oil and honey, as explained in the Midrash (Deuteronomy Rabbah Parshat Ki Tavo, Parsha 7 letter 3). In Egypt, the babies miraculously received oil and honey after the Egyptians threw them into the Nile. These babies survived, since this food made them grow and gave them strength, as the Sages said in the Gemara (Sota page 11b) on the verse: "And they drank honey from the rock and oil from the flint" (Deuteronomy 32:13).

One must ask what the connection is between the two Midrashim.



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

There are many explanations for why the Torah was compared to these things, but I thought and understood something deeper.

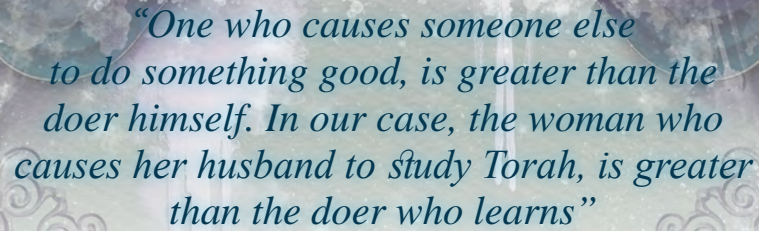
Our role as women is to take care of the oil and milk. In today's terms, managing the house is just like studying the Torah, which is likened to oil and milk. Men deal with their responsibility, and we deal with our responsibility, and things are equal.

The Sages have already taught us in the Gemara (Bava Batra page 9a) that the one who causes someone else to do something good, is greater than the doer himself. In our case, the woman who causes her husband to study Torah, is greater than the doer who learns.

We will continue with the oil and milk and the affairs of the household. This is our part, an important and honorable part, because Shavuot is our holiday.

Now, back to the kitchen! Don't forget to make cakes with lots of oil and honey!

Happy holiday!



*“One who causes someone else  
to do something good, is greater than the  
doer himself. In our case, the woman who  
causes her husband to study Torah, is greater  
than the doer who learns”*

Tisha B'Av



**Education,  
Destruction and  
Everything in  
Between**



## Education, Destruction and Everything in Between

“The hands of merciful women have cooked the flesh of their children” (Lamentations 4:10).

Everyone who reads this verse is shocked. How is it possible that a mother, who is still called “merciful,” who worked and struggled to bring her children into the world and raise them, and who sees them as the most precious thing, is able to do such a heinous act?

Let’s imagine that such an act would happen today. All the social networks and the media would be shocked, and rightfully so. To murder a child and cook it is cannibalism, an act that horrifies us to the depths of our souls.

We got used to taking care of our children physically, ensuring that other kids won’t beat them up, and that they won’t get hurt or sick. When it comes to the spiritual part, however, we sometimes tend to worry less. How many times have we noticed our child spiritually decline or hang out with a bad friend, only when it was too late?

Sometimes even we, as mothers, who like to pamper but not to scold and punish, cause our child to grow up in a crooked way.

While we are concerned for his body, when it comes to his soul, we think it will be



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

fine. More mitzvot or less mitzvot, it doesn't really matter;. The main thing is that the child doesn't cry.

A legend tells us about a thief in Iraq who was so talented that the law enforcement officers eventually got tired of their repeated failures to catch him. Everyone knew that he was the main thief who organized all the thefts in the city, but they were unable to catch him in the act and bring evidence to prove it. All the people of the city would walk in fear, worrying when they would become the next victim of theft.

However, after a long time, the police managed to catch the thief in the act, giving them the joy that knew no bounds. The sentence was swift – death by hanging!!!

Before the thief was hanged, he made one last request: to meet his mother. The judges recognized that, since even thieves apparently have feelings, the thief should be able to say goodbye to his mother before he dies. The approval was given with eagerness; for them, it was a moral necessity.

They went and brought his old mother.

When the thief saw her, he asked her to come closer. He brought his mouth closer to her, and then, suddenly, he bit her ear to the point that it drew blood.

Everyone was shocked, saying, “We have never seen such cruelty!”



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

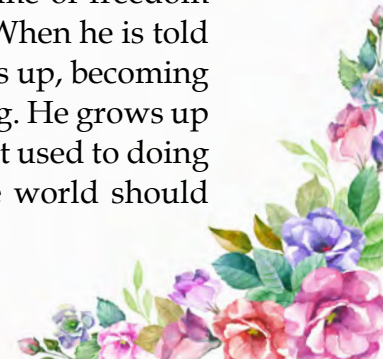
“Why did you do that to your old mother?” screamed the judge at the top of his lungs.

And the thief explained, “This old mother made me get to where I am. She didn’t stop me when I stole the first time in kindergarten; she even complimented me on my agility. She never showed me or explained to me that I was on my way to destruction. Look where I got to! Now I’m going to be hanged, but at least her ear will hurt.”

With these words, the thief said goodbye to the world, and the shocked mother was in grief. She turned a blind eye to her son’s bad deeds, did not interfere, did not educate him properly, but never thought that this would be the consequence...

Unfortunately, even today, there are mothers who raise their children without education, with carelessness, letting them do what they want. They don’t have the energy to get into an argument with them so, for their own peace of mind, they simply give up, and do not educate.

This is how they quietly “cook the flesh of their children,” in the name of freedom and the welfare of the child. A child needs boundaries and structure. When he is told that everything is allowed and he can do whatever he desires, he grows up, becoming more arrogant day by day, and feels that everyone owes him everything. He grows up with no good manners and no respect for people older than him. He got used to doing what pleased him, being the center of the show, and that the whole world should



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

revolve around him.

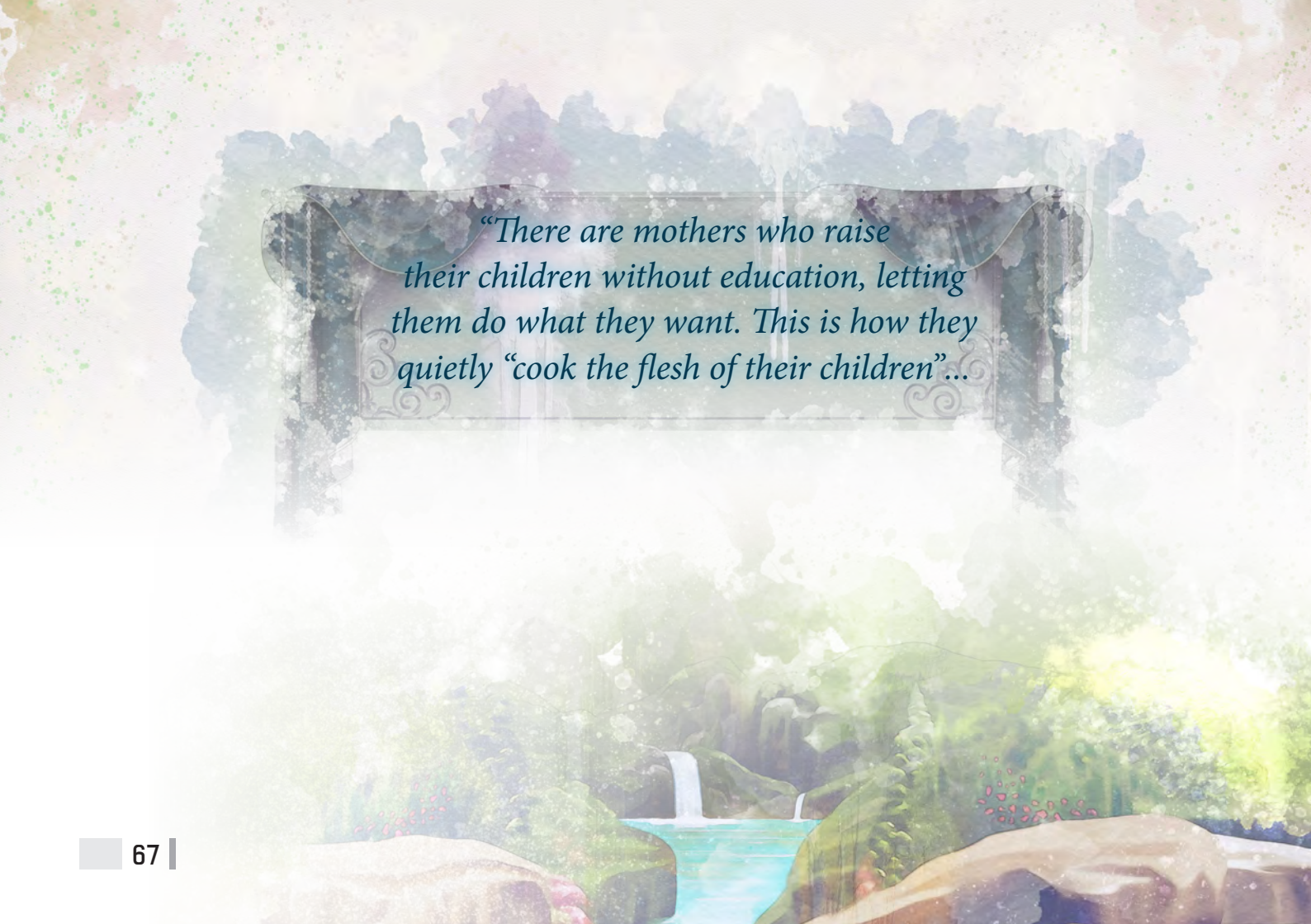
In any case, even in spiritual matters, he understands that if something is difficult for him, he doesn't have to make an effort to do it, because he is the *special* one, and he should do only what is convenient for him.

How many sit in prison or live a life of crime because of their parents' failure to educate???

Every mother should learn from this that educating children is not about doing what appears nice and pleasant to the child. It is about doing what is right and necessary for both his spiritual and physical wellbeing. Even if the child argues and does not like this kind of education, at least he will know what the good and straight path is, so even if, God forbid, he deviates from the path, he will always know how to come back.

And the mother, who truly wants the best for her children, will always educate them in a kosher way, and will not be afraid of arguments and challenges. By doing so, her home will be complete and she will not experience the destruction of her own house...

May we be granted the building of the Temple soon in our days.



*“There are mothers who raise their children without education, letting them do what they want. This is how they quietly “cook the flesh of their children”...*

Rosh HaShana



**“I grew horns.”**





## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

### “I grew horns.”

We all know this expression from when the children go crazy, fight, scream and so on, each one according to their own imagination or reality. This sentence is indeed slang, usually said in high octaves, but it has a strong meaning we must learn from in reality.

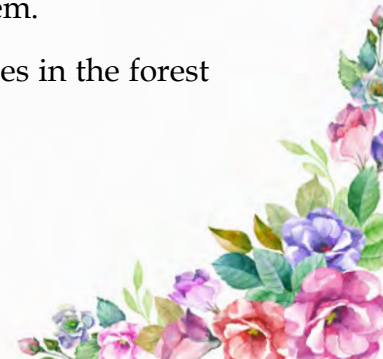
The children’s legend tells:

In a big forest somewhere, a young, beautiful, strong and tall deer stood, his thoughts drifting far away to the pride of lions traveling in the thick of the forest. The deer remembered the wounded and dead members of his family, and decided to prevent the next murder.

The deer watched and understood the tactics of the lions –They would run after the deer towards the valleys of the forest where the trees are dense. As the deer runs, its big horns get tangled in the trees. This is the moment the lions were waiting for. They approach together, calmly, towards the ready-made meal awaiting them.

The solution to this problem seems quick and easy. Simply, all the trees in the forest must be pruned as soon as possible.

The deer raced off and announced his thoughts to his deer friends.





## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

Everyone was enthusiastic, except Grandpa Tzvika. Grandpa Tzvika was the oldest deer in the herd. He didn't have beautiful horns, but he had wisdom for life. Some say that he even managed to escape from a herd of starving lions. No one knew his secret of how he managed to survive in the expanses of the brutal forest.

"I have decided to reveal to you how I have survived until now in this terrible forest," Grandpa Tzvika told the other deer.

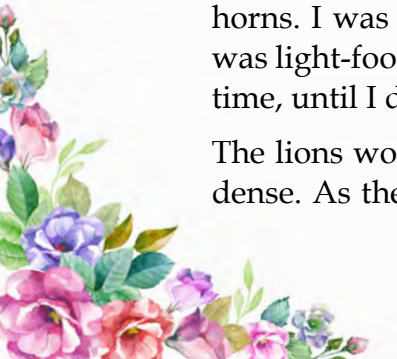
Everyone turned their ears towards the hoarse voice of the herd elder.

"I was also a tall, sturdy and beautiful deer. My antlers reached a great height. I was the most wanted deer in the forest thanks to those antlers, and I was proud of them."

Grandpa Zvi stopped. He took a sip from a nearby puddle and then continued the story:

"During one of my walks in the forest, I saw a scene that changed my life. My best friend was devoured by a herd of lions. Nothing was left of him, except for his beautiful horns. I was terribly intrigued at how the lions managed to catch him. After all, he was light-footed, careful and swift. I followed the lion pride from a distance for a long time, until I discovered their method.

The lions would chase the deer towards the valleys of the forest where the trees are dense. As the deer runs through the forest, his large horns get tangled in the trees.





## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

This is the moment the lions wait for. They then approach their meal, confidently and together.”

“Grandpa, that was exactly my thought! That’s why we decided to trim the trees!” said the young and energetic deer.

“The thought is correct, but not the solution. Pruning the trees will take a long time and the trees will grow again. Then, we will just return to being the favorite dish in the food chain. So, I decided, even then, to break my beautiful, large horns, which I had been so proud of. That way, I can run among the trees, without stops, complications or getting stuck.

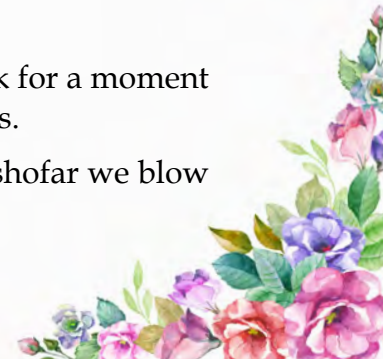
This is the secret of my long life,” concluded Grandfather Tzvika.



This legend is a parable about our lives. The big horns are those bad habits that we haven’t fixed yet – anger, feelings of hatred, and more. We always prefer to cut down all the trees in the forest than to take off our horns.

So, the next time we want to say the phrase, “I grew horns,” let’s check for a moment that these are not the same horns that got stuck and disturbed our lives.

And if you ask how all this is related to Rosh Hashanah, simple! The shofar we blow on Rosh Hashanah is also made of a cut horn...





Hanukkah



**Donuts and  
Children**





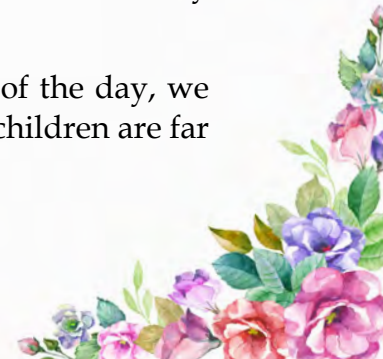
### Donuts and Children

There is no Hanukkah without donuts. It has almost become a law. “Hanukkah without donuts is like a body without a soul,” or like a yeast cake without yeast, or like a birthday party without sweets. What’s more, there is a source for it in the ancient books. So the reason for the party grows and grows.

If we compare our children to **donuts**, we would probably want to compare them to the donuts of “Roladin” (a prestigious and expensive bakery), where each donut gets its own special toppings and personal attention. Each donut is treated like an only child, and the price is set accordingly. You almost have to take out a mortgage to buy a box of donuts there.

This is how we would like to see our children. But sometimes, we are disappointed as the children are not always *well-dressed* and *well-behaved*. The perfection that we wanted for every boy to look like an only son, and every girl to look like an only daughter, has long passed.

Sometimes, we experience the taste of missing out when, at the end of the day, we look like a cheap 10c donut from the local supermarket chain and the children are far from being what we had envisioned.



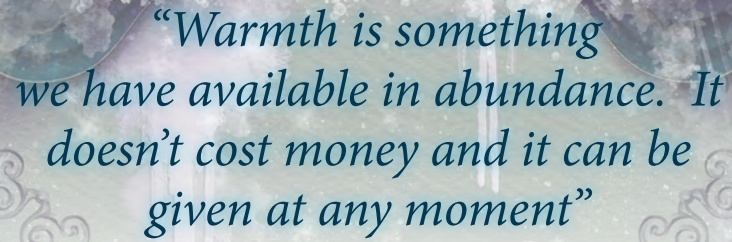
## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

But we must know and remember that the main thing when making a donut is the heat and warmth. A donut that has not received heat and warmth will not be good, regardless of all the toppings you put on it. And warmth is something we have available in abundance. It doesn't cost money and it can be given at any moment.

Yes, even now hug and kiss your children! The love you give them will already influence them to be the most successful and the most special, even without any unnecessary external toppings and glazes.

Good luck!





*“Warmth is something  
we have available in abundance. It  
doesn’t cost money and it can be  
given at any moment”*

Tu B'Shvat



**A Ring in Life and  
a Ring for Life**





### A Ring in Life and a Ring for Life

There is a ring, and there is a ring. There is a wedding ring, and there is a diamond ring. There is no woman who does not like rings, but there are other kinds of rings too.

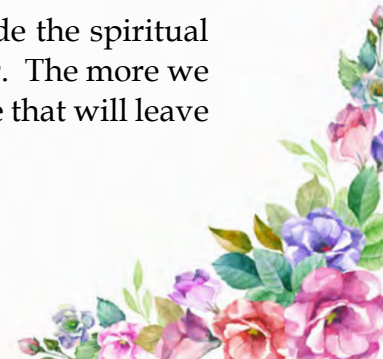
*“Because man is the tree of the field”* (Deuteronomy 20:19).

A tree also has rings, but rings of a different kind. In simple terms, every year that the tree grows, it leaves an impression in its trunk. These are rings, and each one of them tells us about another year that has passed that has left its mark in the body of the tree.

The difference between a ring on a finger and the ring in a tree is that the ring on a finger is on the finger, while the ring in a tree is inside the tree. Moreover, while the ring on a finger can be stolen, the rings of a tree cannot be erased, as they are an inherent aspect of a tree’s identity.

When we invest in imprinting a real seal on our lives, we must include the spiritual part in this imprinting, because anything material does not last forever. The more we can leave a mark of spiritual life among us, the more rings we will have that will leave a mark on our eternal lives in the World to Come.

Fewer rings on the fingers; more rings in life.



Purim



**A Break in a Time  
of Madness**



## A Break in a Time of Madness

“Purim holiday, Purim holiday, a big holiday for the children.” Just the number of sweets the children receive are just as many sweets as there are in any average store on a simple weekday.

The children also become traders: “Take 2 Bambas, and give me one “Mekupelet” (folded chocolate).”

If we listen, we will also understand which sweets are considered *simple*: “Do you want Shalva (wheat grains with sugar coating) for free?”

And what sweets are more *worthy*: “I never give the purple Click (special chocolate); it is the most expensive candy!!!”

And the children eat and eat, while we are under the pressure of making Mishloach Manot, reading the Megillah, preparing the Purim meal, and even giving charity to the poor who knock from time to time. All of this makes us watch less and less of what the children eat.

The little children however have not heard Shlomo HaMelech’s (King Solomon’s) proverb: “You have found honey - eat a little, lest you be full and throw up” (Proverbs 25:16). So, they celebrate and eat everything that comes near.





## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

The chaos, the mess, the costumes and the songs are sometimes very exhausting, especially when the Passover cleanups are around the corner.

And the more you think about the holiday of the freedmen, you will go crazy and yes, it is also because of the group of drunks who decided to settle in your yard, shout and sing.

It is said in the name of the greatest Hasidic Rabbis that the holiday of Purim is the day that requests are being accepted, as it is written, “And the king [the King of the world] said to Esther [a nickname for the people of Israel], ‘What do you ask, and what else is your request, and it will be done’ (Esther 9:12).” And according to the established rule, whoever stretches out a hand should be granted (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim, Section 694, Section C). Precisely because of this, the Hasidic Rebbes say that the Devil does not want us to invest in prayer. Indeed, who can take a time out from all the *mess* of Purim?

And for some reason, precisely on Purim itself we are obliged to take time out and go hear the reading of the scroll, trying not to miss a single word. Nevertheless, we manage to withstand it.

It is just as important for us as mothers, that we keep our own “Venahafoch hu” / (“and it was reversed”). All year we don’t have time for ourselves, as we are busy investing in the family. However, we should take a few minutes of our time out for ourselves, for



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

prayer, to request that the joy of Purim accompany us all year [only without the mess], and that we will truly see our children grow up to be righteous and blessed people. The small moments of prayer and rest on the day of Purim itself will give us strength and preparation to continue our journey...

And finally, remember: if you don't "Take a break" (a kind of chocolate snack), and have a "Little fun" (another kind of a chocolate snack) for yourself, you'll end up "Folded" (another chocolate snack)...

And by the way, those who want Shalva (wheat grains with sugar coating, also translated as "peace") for free, feel free to contact my children...

Happy holiday.



Pesach



**What has  
changed this  
Passover?**





### What Has Changed This Passover?

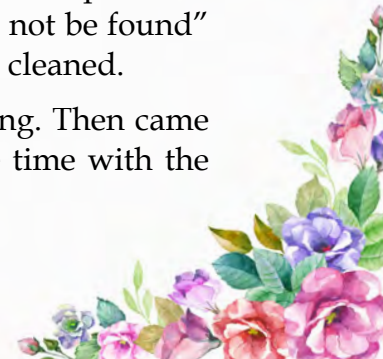
Getting ready for Passover every year is above and beyond the usual routine – the scrubbing, cleaning and moving the closets.

I haven't even talked about the shopping yet. We spend hours and days buying everything we can think of – various utensils, clothes, food and drink. One shopping cart, two shopping carts... And hours of waiting in line.

And this year, "thanks" to the Coronavirus, we were spared all of this. We can barely get the minimum done with the children, who have been at home for several weeks without even the tip of their noses outside. They need non-stop attention. Our progress in preparing for Passover is not improving.

Every year, it was possible to send the children outside to play and run around. The main thing was that they would not wander around the house while we cleaned. Maybe we forgot for a moment that dust is not "Chametz," that we are not a "passover sacrifice," and that the prohibition of "should not be seen and should not be found" does not apply to the children, not to enter the rooms we have already cleaned.

Maybe we neglected the children a little and invested more in cleaning. Then came this year, when God decided for us to have less cleaning, and more time with the children.



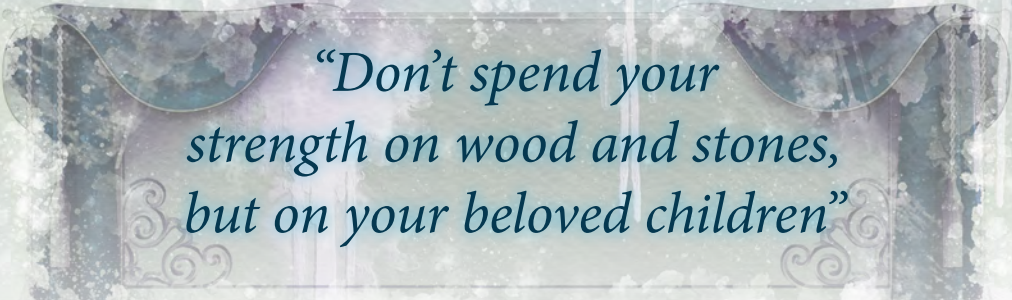


## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

Don't spend your strength on wood and stones, but on your beloved children.

Don't forget that we gained a lot more time because we didn't have to go shopping, since we can't leave the house. We simply buy what we can and make do with what we have. You'll see that even if we don't have the most beautiful set of plates for Passover this year, or any new clothes, we will have much more strength for our children, thanks to the reduction of cleaning and shopping.

And when we all sing "What has changed this night" on Seder night, we will remember that what has changed this night is that we are not exhausted, and we will learn that this is actually God's will for the whole year...



*“Don’t spend your  
strength on wood and stones,  
but on your beloved children”*

The Holiday of  
Receiving the  
Torah



**In Their Merit**



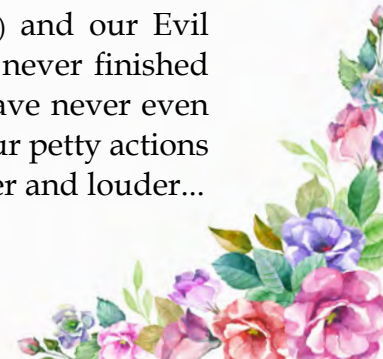


### In Their Merit

The holiday of the Giving of the Torah is a wonderful holiday, but sometimes the thought creeps into our minds that it is apparently a men's holiday. *They* study Torah all year round; *they* are up all night; *they* complete the tractates; *they* have halachic debates; and *they* write books. In contrast, we women have many other reasons to stay up at night: the crying baby and the house that needs cleaning. Our thoughts are more in the direction of 'what to make for lunch, schnitzel, or chicken.' And, our "halachic" ruling is in the solution of a floor puzzle for the children, or a compromise in an occasional quarrel.

The men are engaged in the study of the Torah which was given with thunder and lightning (Exodus 19:16), while we are engaged in thunder and lightning of a different kind, in the form of a screaming child or a loud quarrel. The Torah is said to be "long from the land in its measure" (Job 11:9), and our work is endlessly long.

For these moments, the "old and foolish king" waits (Ecclesiastes 4:13) and our Evil Inclination quietly whispers to us, "What are you worth? You have never finished a tractate; you have never written a responsa in Halacha; and you have never even studied an interesting subject with a "chavruta." Do you think that your petty actions are desirable before God?" That's how the whispering voice gets louder and louder...





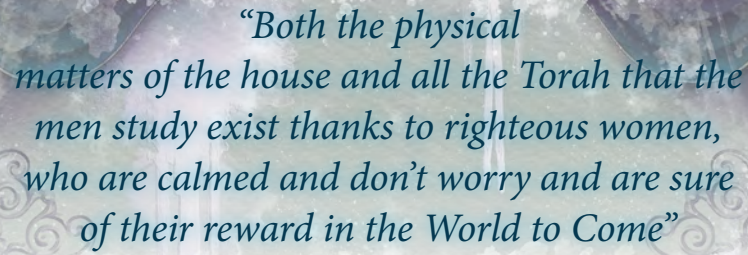


## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

And the echo of a Bat Kol coming out from under the wings of the Shekhinah whispers: "Stop your voice. Both the physical matters of the house and all the Torah that the men study exist thanks to righteous women, who are calmed and don't worry and are sure of their reward in the World to Come" (Brachot page 17a), thanks to whom the voice of the Torah in the world does not cease.

The amazing insight in the giving of the Torah is precisely the power of the woman, since "a woman builds and a woman destroys," according to Proverbs 14:1. The woman who faces the trials of life every day, and prevents herself from disturbing her husband who learns Torah, is the wonderful woman. Those who dwell in heaven, and all the world's creation, cheer for her and say, "Happy are you, the daughter of The King; the world exists thanks to you!"





*“Both the physical  
matters of the house and all the Torah that the  
men study exist thanks to righteous women,  
who are calmed and don’t worry and are sure  
of their reward in the World to Come”*

Giving Thanks To  
HaShem



**The Chirping of  
the Birds**





### The Chirping of the Birds

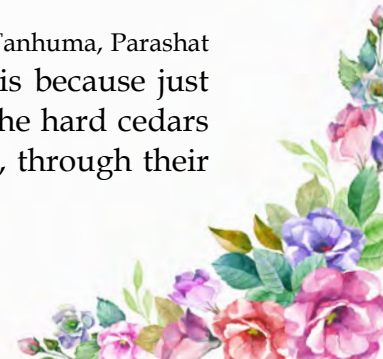
Have you ever heard the chirping of the birds? They chirp without pause.

I went to the forest not long ago, and throughout the day the birds chirped, from the morning until the evening. But, when the darkness came they stopped.

I don't understand the language of birds nor the chirps of birds. Perhaps they pray to the Creator, chirping in groups or alone. But, in the darkness their voices become silent.

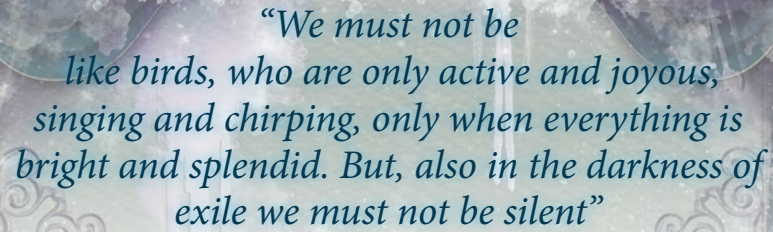
Maybe it is God's kindness that we can have a peaceful sleep (we probably won't be sleeping at noon!) But there is more to this: there is a great lesson we can learn here. We must not be like birds, who are only active and joyous, singing and chirping, only when everything is bright and splendid. But, also in the darkness of exile we must not be silent. Be it a voice of thanks, or a voice of lament, or a voice of crying. We must raise our voice to our Creator.

Our Sages, may their memory be blessed, taught us in the Midrash (Tanhuma, Parashat Beshalach, chapter 9): Why were the Israelites compared to a worm? It is because just as the worm has no power but its mouth, and it softens and strikes the hard cedars with its mouth, so too the Israelites have no power but their mouths, through their supplications.



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

Especially for us women, our power is in our mouths. Therefore, we must raise our voice in this private and general exile to the Holy One, Blessed be He, to have mercy on us and to redeem us, for it is “in the merit of righteous women were our forefathers redeemed and in their merit we will be redeemed” (Yalkut Shimoni Ruth Remez 650, and Yalkut Me’am Lo’ez, Parshat Shoftim ‘Ma’alot haIsha haKshera’, and in the book Kav Hayashar, Chapter 6).



*“We must not be  
like birds, who are only active and joyous,  
singing and chirping, only when everything is  
bright and splendid. But, also in the darkness of  
exile we must not be silent”*

Life's Chores



**Observation**



### Observation

Children, messes, working, cleaning, organizing, laundry, shopping, cooking, baking – finally, the day ends. Until it all starts again the next day...and repeat...

That's how a full year filled with chores flew by. Now, at the end of the year, we are exhausted and we already have to prepare for the holidays.

Even Moshe Rabbeinu was able to have a gap between the Parashas (Psikta Zutrta VaYikra, Parshat VaYikra 1:10). We probably do not have this privilege.

Who can go on vacation and rest without the children? Vacation and rest with the children is impossible to achieve, like solving an equation with no solution.

I could fill the rest of this article with a few more lines on the tiring, exhausting and debilitating description of the mothers of our time. But there is no need. Your imagination will do that for me...

Each and every one of us thinks about some time to rest. Sometimes, this thought remains just a thought. Rarely ever is it realized and translates to action, or half an action, or only a quarter of an action. Yes, even a quarter of an hour rest at noon on a weekday is a worthy thing.



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

How do you get out of stressful thoughts?

How do you stop for a moment to take a breath?

How do you rest to get strength?

The answer to this is simple – observation!!!

Observe all the goodness around you. Do you have children? Excellent! How many women don't have children?

Are your kids making noise?

Wow!!! I have known deaf and mute children whose parents crave for a drop of noise from them.

Are you under pressure from work?

Thank God that you have a job and earn a decent living.

You have laundry and cleaning? This is a sign that you have children who make a mess, and that you have the privilege of having a washing machine (think of our grandmothers who had to wash by hand).

Stressed out from shopping? Thank God that you have the money to buy and you



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

have people to buy for.

Observation will convert the pressure we have into infinite gratitude to the Creator of the world. So that every pressure that is added to the pile will be another opportunity to observe God's gift to us.

If it's hard for you to look at all this, just imagine your life without all this goodness...

Did you imagine? Did you connect?

Excellent! The dishes in the sink are waiting.

The light is only visible at times of darkness...



Hanukkah



**The Little Jar**





### The Little Jar

We all remember the song we sang in kindergarten, “A little jar, a little jar, for eight days it gave its oil...” The wonderful miracle of finding the pure jar, like the victory of the war, is not as mentioned on Hanukkah.

What the Sages chose to emphasize is the miracle of the oil which lasted for eight days.

Let’s think for a moment: what did the Maccabees think at the moment they found the jar? They did not think of a miracle and did not dream that the oil would be enough for eight days. But they decided: “We will succeed with what we have.” And when God saw their efforts, He already brought the miracle and continued the abundance of oil that would last for eight days.

According to David HaMelech/King David, “I will call upon the Most High God, upon the God Who completes [what He promised] for me” (Psalms 57:3). We should all remember this verse. We must begin the work, pray to God that we will succeed in finishing, and that we will be able to succeed in this with all our small powers.

Our role in the world is to act, with our little powers as much as we can, and not necessarily to succeed.



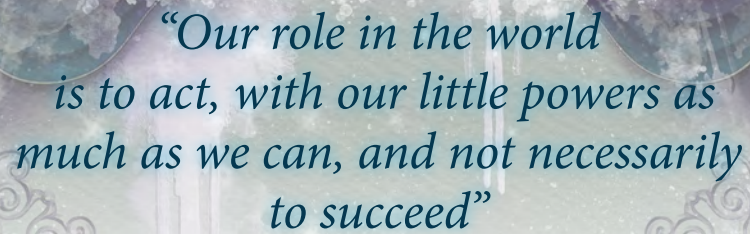
## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

And perhaps it is the greatest miracle of Hanukkah that the Hasmoneans did not underestimate the small hidden jar, which symbolizes the small powers that are sometimes hidden somewhere in our heart, and that we should only use them for the worship of God.

This year too, when we all participate in the lighting of the candles, take a good look at them and draw from them the secret of Hanukkah: small powers that grow stronger with the help of heaven.

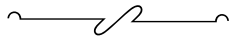
Happy Hanukkah.





*“Our role in the world  
is to act, with our little powers as  
much as we can, and not necessarily  
to succeed”*

Purim



Vaccination /  
Corona





### Vaccination / Corona

The corona kills, and the vaccine heals: this is the constant mantra that brainwashes us, just like in the days of Achashverosh. The Jews thought that Haman was the killer, while Esther and Mordecai were the saviors.

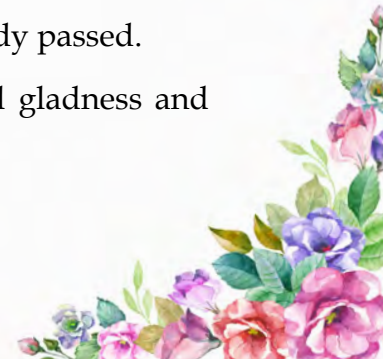
Our Sages taught us: It is not the snake that kills, but the sin that kills (Brachot page 33A). Meaning, Haman or Achashverosh don't kill or pass decrees, as "The heart of a king is in the hand of the Lord" (Proverbs 21:1). When the Jews repented and fasted and their cries were heard in heaven (Esther 9: 31), the mourning turned into a holiday (Esther 9:1).



The masks became the daily routine; but the "V'nahafoch Hu" will one day be, if we don't have to wear them anymore. And as with the noises of the groggers, we've had enough of the background noises all year, 'Corona... Corona...'

Even conspiracies that the vaccine is the "modern Haman" have already passed.

Now, we only have the wish that "The Jews had light and joy, and gladness and honor" (Esther 8:16).





The Holiday of  
Receiving the  
Torah



**The "Milk And  
Honey" Children**





### The "Milk and Honey" Children

On the eve of the Holiday of the giving of the Torah, the house is full and overflowing with milk and foods with honey, to which the Torah is compared (Tractate Chagiga page 13a). We intend to increase the appreciation for the Torah [and perhaps also the calories] among the members of the household.

And our mouths murmur and whisper a prayer: "May they have "honey and milk under your tongue" (Song of Songs 4:11), not only in the physical sense but also in the spiritual sense."



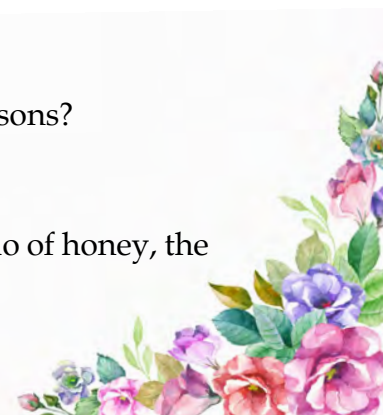
In the Midrash (Zuta - Song of Songs, Parasha 4, Mark 11), it is stated: "Honey and milk are under your tongue" – this is Yaakov who blessed the tribes.

What is the explanation for this?

What do the milk and honey have to do with Yaakov's blessing to his sons?



Let's take a look and see the honey production process: to produce a kilo of honey, the



## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

bees “visit” about 40 million flowers.

For this purpose, they may fly a distance of about 88 thousand kilometers, at a speed of about 24 km/h.

And what is the capacity of the bee?

An average bee lives about 42-45 days. During her entire lifetime, she will produce a total of one-twelfth (1/12) teaspoons of honey.

The trouble is great and the production is small.

On the other hand, to gain dozens of liters of milk, the way is easier: the cow chews all types of grass, leaves, hay and straw, drinks a little water, and you have a special “machine” to make milk.



Anyone who has had the privilege of raising children, especially if they have many children, knows that just as their faces are different, so are their opinions (Yerushalmi, Brachot, Chapter 9 Halacha 1). Each child has their own talents, manners, understanding and outbursts. There are the “milk children” – they don’t need much investment. Just, here and there, a little attention, and they bring good results. 100% in tests is natural for them.

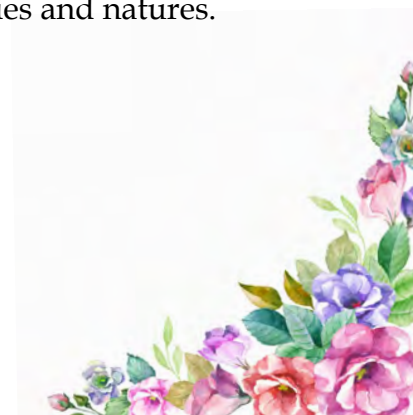


## Sichot For Bat Yisrael

In contrast, there are the “honey children” – a big hassle, and the results are little. They need countless compliments, hugs, caresses, visits and surprises for them to make a little honey and be content. As parents, we must also give our attention to the “honey” children [and not only children; there are also honey or milk husbands]. And remember that “honey and milk are under your tongue” -- the power of the tongue, of compliments and encouragement, can blossom them and turn them into a success story.



And it is possible that this is the explanation in the Midrash, “Honey and milk are under your tongue” – it is Yaakov who blessed the tribes. Yaakov our Forefather, the grandfather of all of us, knew his children with all their weaknesses, some that needed more investment like honey, and some that needed less like milk. He blessed them accordingly, and treated them individually according to their qualities and natures.



A decorative scroll with a gold frame and red curtains. The scroll is unrolled, showing a gold frame with intricate scrollwork. The text is centered on the scroll. The background is a soft, glowing light with a subtle floral pattern.

*Special S'ichot*

FOR AM YISRAEL

by Rav

**Efraim Kachlon**





Tisha B'Av



**The Destruction  
and the Vacation**





### The Destruction and the Vacation

“It’s a bit jarring...” he said.

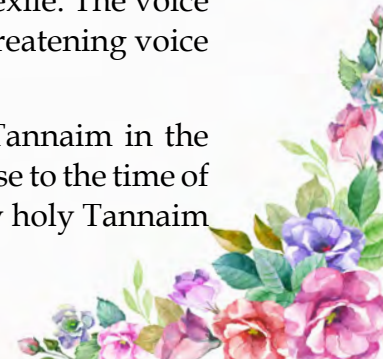
“What’s jarring?”

“The day after the 9th of Av, when we wept (!) for the destruction and regretted it, you see that even Torah and mitzvot observers are enjoying themselves in kayaks in the Jordan River, raving and smiling, as if the Temple had already been built...”

We will now talk about this point, which may seem puzzling, and deal with it.

The survival and regeneration of the Jew is miraculous – the amount of trouble, the suffering, and the holocaust that the Jewish people went through is more than all the hardships of the other peoples, many times over. Few periods in our history are considered a “golden age”. “Every man under his vine and under his fig tree” (1 Kings 5:5), and despite everything, like grapes in the desert, growing out of the arid wilderness, so are the people of Israel growing out of the darkness of exile. The voice of the joy of life and the joy of perpetual renewal prevailed over the threatening voice of death and decay – and this was deemed for eternity.

This secret was always present in Rabbi Akiva, the greatest of the Tannaim in the Gemara. At the end of Tractate Makot, it is said that although he was close to the time of the destruction of the Second Temple [before 1949-1950] and his fellow holy Tannaim







## Sichot For Am Yisrael


wept over the destruction, Rabbi Akiva, with his great virtue and righteousness, would laugh. He was happy about the growth from the darkness, he was aware of renewal after pain and bereavement. This is the secret of the existence and success of the people of Israel.

And from now on, the way we conduct ourselves during Bein Hazmanim, (“between the times” of 17 Tamuz to 9 Av that Heaven caused to be after the 9th of Av), also symbolizes the happiness immediately after the destruction, like Rabbi Akiva had at that time.

Here, the son asks: where did Rabbi Akiva and with him, the entire House of Israel in all generations, draw the courage and determination to continue life on the march of death, joy in the alley of grief, and confidence in the valley of darkness?

The answer lies in the words of Rabbi Akiva himself, who said that the verses promise comfort that “old men and old women will sit in the streets of Jerusalem” (Zechariah 8:4), and that faith in the verses, in the Torah, and in G-d, is the very source of strength needed to wake up and recover from the ashes and from the scorched earth.

Everyone remembers and cherishes Ben-Gurion’s historic speech at the Phil Commission (August 1936), when they asked him to present the KUSHAN and the Jews’ taboo on Palestine. Ben-Gurion immediately waved the book of Torah that was lying next to him proudly and said that this is the best KUSHAN that can prove that the land is ours. The nations of the world accepted his words.





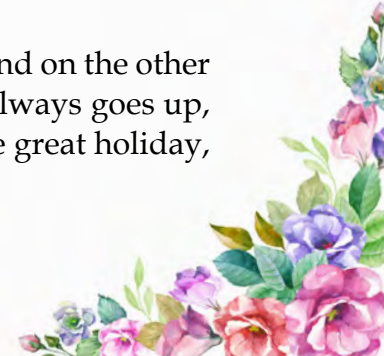
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Several years ago, MK Ahmad Tibi told this story in one of the TV programs. He turned to the Jewish interviewer and asked, “Don’t you know that there are other verses in the Torah that you do not keep, and to which you do not refer? Your attitude towards the Torah is like it’s a bunch of stories that maybe happened and maybe did not. In your eyes, the commandments written in it are only recommendations or old laws that have lost their appeal... and for you, only the happy verses that prove your inheritance in the Land of Israel are the true verses. Could it be that some of the verses are true and some are not???”

The interviewer had no answer. The question is, if you, the reader, have an answer....?

A people who has no connection to its past, to its faith, to fulfilling the commandments, will not be able to rise from the ashes and will not be able to recover from the destruction. Even Salah Tamari, the Palestinian member of parliament who convinced tens of thousands of Palestinians, understood that yes, we Palestinians can beat the Israelis, since they are cut off from their past [the full story is given in the book, “Lalechet Shevi,” by journalist Aharon Barnea].

Now, in this month, the month of Av, which symbolizes destruction, and on the other hand renewal, it is the most suitable time to connect to the path that always goes up, the path of our ancestors, so that we will have a reason to rejoice in the great holiday, the joy after the destruction.



Tu B'Av



**Tu B'Av, 'The  
Love Day'????**





### Tu B'Av, 'The Love Day'????

"Chocolate flowers for Love Day! Who's buying?" he shouts.

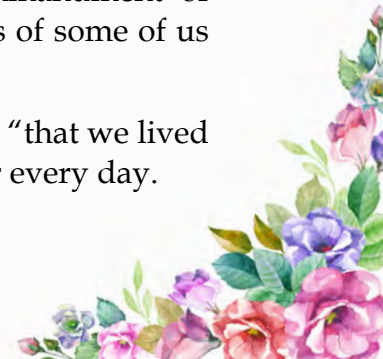
I ignore him. What is 'Love Day' for me?

Now, don't get me wrong. I do love, but why do they make a special day for it, and why should it be noted???

The Gemara in Ta'anit (page 26b) relates that Rabbi Shimon ben Gamaliel said: "There were no good days for Israel like the fifteenth of Av, when the daughters of Jerusalem went out in white dresses and danced in the vineyards, and what would they say: Boy! Open your eyes and see what you choose for yourself. Don't let your eyes go after beauty, let your eyes look at the family, 'False is charm and vain is beauty; a God-fearing woman she should be praised' (Proverbs 31, 30)."

After this historical custom, regarding the observance of the commandment of marriage in holiness and purity, it was burned into the consciousness of some of us that the 'holiday of love' should be celebrated on this day.

A holiday remembers a historical event, in which we should be happy "that we lived and existed and reached this time," since such an event does not occur every day.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



When love is called a 'holiday,' it shows that until today we have not loved, or that it was not in our consciousness and in our thoughts. We were probably too busy to love...

True love, as an emotional action that resides in the depths of the heart, does not need holidays or special days to remind the heart that it loves. Only love that is not real, that is merely covered in noisy and colorful cellophane, but is empty on the inside, needs a reminder once a year with a holiday, a celebration, or a party.



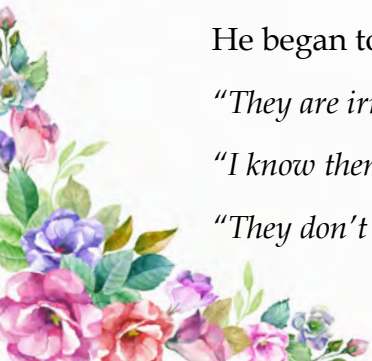
On one of my trips, I got in a taxi with a driver that was far from Torah and mitzvot. He did not excel in having love for others, certainly not for the ultra-orthodox people, and even more so not for the rabbis [as explained in the Gemara in Pesachim (page 49b), there is a deep hatred that the ignorant people feel towards the Torah scholars, even greater than that of the nations towards the Jews].

He began to chatter his heart out about the keepers of the Torah and Mitzvot:

*"They are irresponsible; they neglect their wives..."*

*"I know them, They get married just like putting together a puzzle..."*

*"They don't love each other..."*





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

And, more and more 'clever' sayings.

Since I, by nature, like to hear words of wisdom – and from this you can understand what I don't like to hear – and in addition, believe that rest during a trip is more beneficial to the body than idle chatter, I decided to answer him briefly...

"Are you married?" I asked.

"Sure. 30 years."

"I have a question, but answer me honestly." I stimulated his curiosity and asked, "Does your wife know that you love her?"

"Ah, I think so."

"She doesn't have any doubts that maybe you don't like her??" I inquired again.

"I don't know."

"Listen to me and listen to me well. With us, the keepers of the Torah and the mitzvot – the "irresponsible ones" as you call us – who are stringent on the light mitzvot just like with the difficult mitzvot, and all our lifestyle is according to the Torah, the women are a little more relaxed. Do you know why?"

"Well, why?"

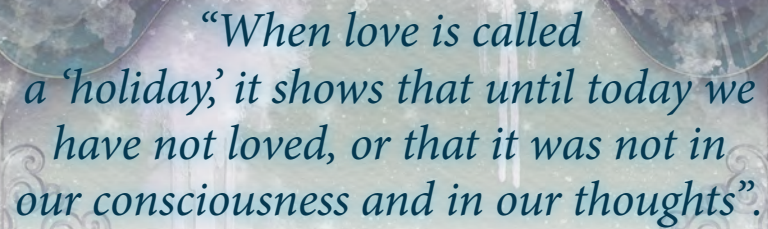


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

“Since our Halacha requires ‘to love the woman as one’s body and to respect her more than one’s body’ (Yevamot 62b, Rambam Hilchot Ishut Chapter 15 Halacha 19), the woman is sure that her husband who observes all the laws of the Torah also observes this. Do you understand???”

He didn’t answer, ending the conversation with thunderous silence. I think I managed to convey the message to him.

I closed my eyes and took a few minutes of rest...



*“When love is called  
a ‘holiday,’ it shows that until today we  
have not loved, or that it was not in  
our consciousness and in our thoughts”.*



Holidays In The  
World



**Holidays, People,  
and Animals**





## Holidays, People, and Animals

International Cat Day is the cat holiday celebrated on August 8.

International Dog Day is the dog holiday celebrated on August 26.

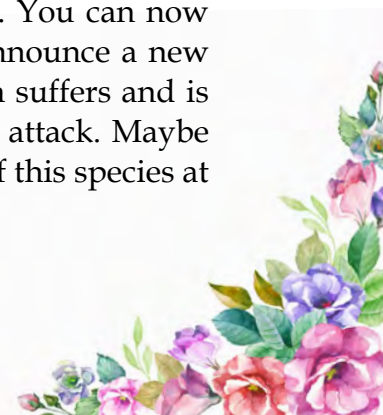
National Horse Day on December 13th is celebrated in the US every year.

Monkey Day on December 14.

Donkey Day on May 1, which is celebrated in Mexico on Workers' Day. The residents of Otumba hold a special fair during which the donkeys are given treats of love.

And the list goes on...

And, why not? Just as they invented Mother's Day, Women's Day, and Lehavdil, the sad ones on Holocaust Day, they also invented holidays for animals. You can now celebrate a holiday for every living being, and soon we may even announce a new holiday called "Cockroach Day," celebrating that brown insect which suffers and is persecuted by housewives using leather slippers and other means of attack. Maybe we will even sadly announce and remember the mass extermination of this species at the hands of exterminators, who poison them to death with a hose...



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Here is some food for thought in the stormy sea of our lives – why do we as humans feel superior to animals? We walk and so do they. We eat and drink and so do they. Why do we consider ourselves better? Is it because of our wisdom? Aren't there many animals with a high level of intelligence?

The prophet says, “An ox knows his owner and a donkey his master's crib; Israel does not know, my people does not consider” (Isaiah chapter 1 verse 3). In this verse, the prophet says that when the people of Israel descend from their spiritual level and do not recognize the existence of G-d, they are worse than animals.

When a man treats himself to a steak, he should think: *why did they kill a cow for me? Do I justify my existence? Am I worthy of having the less important part of creation slaughtered for me?* This is why the Sages said (Pesachim page 49b) that ignorant people are not allowed to eat meat, since, to him, there is no difference between the human race and the animals.

“And the superiority of man over beast is nought” (Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verse 19) – “Only the pure soul” (from the morning prayer). Without the basic understanding that we contain a soul in us, we are in an existential crisis: why should animals, and even plants, be prey for our teeth, but we shouldn't be prey to their teeth?





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

The more a person moves away from the Torah, the more the boundaries of order in creation blur. “Those who sacrifice man may kiss the calves” (Hosea Chapter 13 Verse 2) – this verse was said by Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman, may G-d avenge his blood, before the Holocaust, when he saw a rich lady in Germany kissing her dogs. He added in sorrow, “Humans will be slaughtered here...”

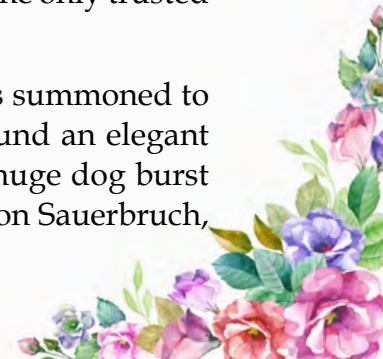
When a person does not understand the limits of creation, and his own role as a person, he can end up killing a person and hugging a dog.

We see this, in its most extreme way, with the horrible murderer, Adolf Hitler – Hitler’s dogs were closer to him than any human being was until his last day.

Hitler’s biographers repeat again and again the fact that Hitler had a more intimate and friendly relationship with his dogs than with any human being.

From the testimonies of those close to him, one can learn about Hitler’s pathological jealousy regarding his dogs. Towards the end of his life, Hitler said that he only trusted his dog, Blondie, and perhaps also his wife, Eva (Waite, 1977).

The veterinarian, Ferdinand Sauerbruch, reported that in 1942, he was summoned to the Führer’s headquarters. He was led to Hitler’s office, where he found an elegant but empty room. While he was looking around in embarrassment, a huge dog burst into the room and began barking furiously. It bared its teeth, jumped on Sauerbruch,



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

knocked him to the ground, and placed its teeth on his neck.

The vet, who had worked with dogs for many years and knew how to calm them down, lay still, and began to talk to the dog gently and stroke it. Then, the furious Hitler entered the room, after a frustrating meeting with the army officers, and was struck with extreme jealousy at what he saw. He screamed at the terrified Sauerbruch, "What have you done with my dog? You robbed me of the only creature that is truly loyal to me. You took my friend...." Hitler announced that he intended to shoot the dog and arrest the veterinarian. Only after the vet's words of flattery, which spoke to his heart, Hitler relented and neither harmed the vet nor the dog.

Hitler's madness when he saw Ferdinand leads us to a real thought - why not? Why not be so jealous regarding the dog if "And the superiority of man over beast is nought," and the dog is the creature that is in the depths of our heart? Why not behave like Hitler?

The Torah's treatment of animals is a fair treatment, which instills and adjusts the status of man in a higher rank and the animal in a lesser rank. But, the Torah makes sure that animals are not made to suffer for nothing.

This is why the Torah cares about helping the donkey that is burdened by its load (Exodus chapter 23 verse 5, and in the Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat in chapter 272, section 10). It



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

even says that a Gentile can milk a Jew's animal on the Sabbath, so that the animal will not suffer for not being milked (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim Hilchot Shabbat chapter 305 section 20). But, bringing the dog into the depths of our heart and feeling that he is closer to us than humans is not the way of the Torah, and as we have seen, it was the way of Hitler...



The Influence Of  
Man In The World



**NASA, the  
Universe, and  
Man**





## NASA, the Universe, and Man

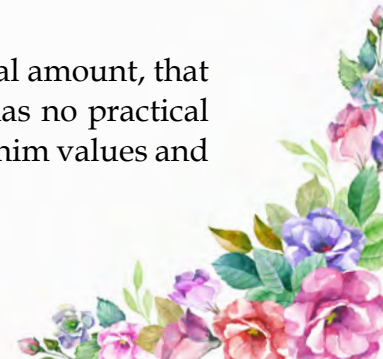
On July 29, 1958, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration was founded, abbreviated as NASA. NASA is the space agency of the United States, which is responsible for the American space program and the research of aeronautics and space on behalf of the United States government. It employs more than 18,100 employees, with a budget of 17.8 billion dollars.

Millions of dollars are allocated by the US government to each development program in order to explore the wonders and secrets of the universe, stars, meteors, other planets, and even extraterrestrial phenomena like UFO conspiracies.

No, I have no connection to NASA. But, despite the huge expenditure of money, in any way, we have something to learn from them.

The Maharsh"a (in Chidushei Aggadot in Brachot page 10a) writes on behalf of the researchers – man is a small world.

What if the US government had invested “the tithe” of the astronomical amount, that they invest in the hidden world of galaxies and stars [research that has no practical benefit to the world], ‘in the small world’ – man – in order to bequeath him values and good features? Maybe ‘the big world’ would have looked different.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael



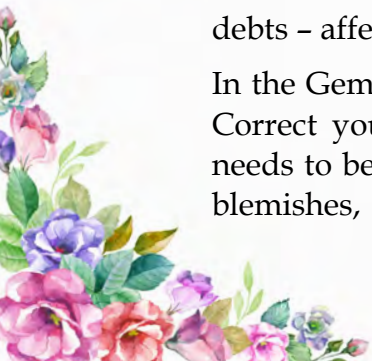
The investment 'in the small world,' of man, is mandatory and obliges *daily* labor, because even if man spends his life doing it, the evil inclination can overthrow him at the last moment. As our rabbi writes in his book, Chovot HaLevavot (Gate 5- Sha'ar Yichud haMa'ase, Chapter 5), one can be asleep, but the evil inclination would still be awake (to trap him).

The investment 'in the small world,' man, is more worthwhile than the investment in the stars. While the harm from the stars is distant, in the 'small world,' there is a constant danger that the animal part of man will overpower the human part of him, and then he will destroy the world – ask the Nazis about it...

The investment 'in the small world,' man, is more worthwhile and rewarding. When the soul is rectified, it has the power to enlighten the world, and 'the small world' affects the big world.

The question being asked is how? How can I, the small one, with a minimal salary, and a maximum number of problems, with all the burdens I have – the mortgage, the debts – affect the world?

In the Gemara in Bava Metzia (page 107b), it is mentioned that the Reish Lakish said: Correct yourself and afterwards correct others! In order to influence others, one needs to be corrected in that same respect. When a person purifies his soul from its blemishes, he beautifies and polishes it, and the spiritual light emanating from his





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

behavior, conduct, deeds, and thoughts affects everyone.

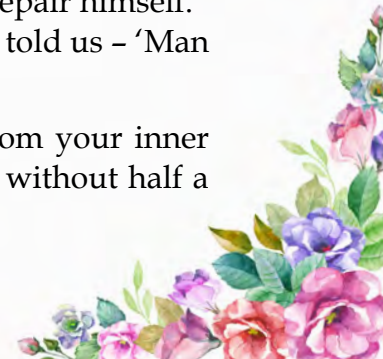
And, there is nothing in the world that rectifies and polishes the soul like studying Torah, which is a fire that purifies and burns any bad part of a man's soul.

The purification of the soul is immediately noticeable outwardly – in every step and stride the man takes, and the gentleness, the joy and smiling face he shows. All of these are part of the repair of the 'small' and 'big worlds.'

The person also fulfills a positive mitzvah by doing this, and as Eliyahu the prophet taught us in Tana Devei Eliyahu Rabbah (Ish Shalom Parasha 26), "And you shall love the Lord your God" (Devarim 6:5), one should cause others to love the Name of Heaven, so that people should say, "Look at this person. He learned Torah. Look at his good deeds, and how pleasant his ways are."

In Sipurei Chassidim, they speak about the meeting between Rabbi Yaakov of Radzymin and Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk. Rabbi Menachem asked his friend, "For what purpose was man created?" Rabbi Yaakov answered, "To repair himself." The other rabbi replied, "Yaakov, don't you remember what our rabbi told us – 'Man was created to sanctify the heavens?'"

Yes, with your power to sanctify the heavens, you can shed light from your inner world upon the entire universe, without 18,100 employees, and even without half a percent of NASA's budget.



The Oversight And  
The Lesson



**The Chernobyl  
Disaster, the  
Omission and the  
Lesson**



## The Chernobyl Disaster, the Omission and the Lesson

The Chernobyl disaster, which occurred on April 26, 1986, was one of the worst in history. Chernobyl is the most famous and catastrophic economic and social disaster in modern history. Fifty percent of Ukraine was affected in one way or another.

More than 200,000 people were forced to relocate and resettle elsewhere, while 1.7 million people were directly affected by the disaster. The number of deaths attributed to the Chernobyl disaster, including those who died later due to cancer caused by radiation poisoning, is estimated to be 125,000.

The cost of cleaning up the contamination, resettling the displaced people, and providing compensation to the victims was estimated to be around 20 billion dollars, while the cost of the concrete shield for the Chernobyl reactor was estimated to be two billion dollars.

The accident was officially attributed to the operators of the plant, who disregarded safety regulations and acted in direct defiance of orders.

But, why look for someone to blame? Let us just decide that the disaster happened by itself by a random explosion, or maybe some molecules decided to combine forces and break the safety regulations to “see the world”?

## Sichot For Am Yisrael

It is not only with this disaster, but with every disaster that happens, that we try to find someone to blame for the omission, the death by negligence and the financial loss.

No one will say that it happened by itself. If it happened, then someone is probably responsible for it.

This simple reasoning is accepted by every intelligent person...

In one of the comedy shows on Israeli television (the “non-educational” TV), the host declared that he does not believe in God, because he has logic and “a sane mind.”

His “sane” mind is more crooked than the leaning tower of Pisa (in Italian: Torre pendente di Pisa), a tower standing in Piazza dei Miracoli in Pisa, Italy, which until its stabilization in the early 21st century, had a tilt of 1.2 millimeters per year. But, the host, with his “sane” mind, is getting more tilted every moment of his life.

If that same host with his “sane” mind goes on the street and gets a slap [and maybe he should, to cool down], he will think that somebody gave him the slap. Or did it happen by itself???

And, an amazing world like this, with endless wonders created with divine wisdom, was created by itself?



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Absolutely not. This was understood by our Patriarch Abraham at the age of three (Nedarim, page 32a), but unfortunately there are people who still do not understand it even at the age of thirty-three...



The End Of A Person  
Is Death



**The Ferrari, an  
Old Man and The  
Murdering Old  
Woman**





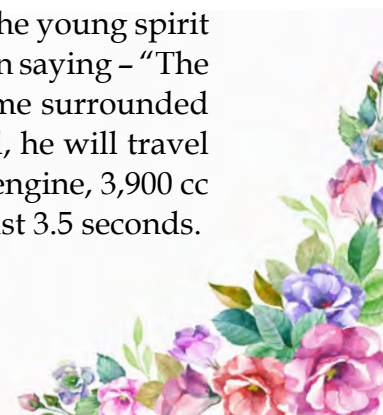
### **The Ferrari, an Old Man and The Murdering Old Woman**

Ferrari, accustomed to the strange requests and whims of its customers, was surprised by the request of the 86-year-old man from Eilat, who had bought their new Portofino with his best money. He asked the company to expedite the delivery of the car, so that he could enjoy it as much as possible.

The company, hearing of the old man's age, responded to the request and shortened the waiting period from eight months to four. The new customer became the oldest owner of the supreme Italian car in Israel.

The old man did not stop at the basic price of 1.7 million Shekels, but added, from the best quality equipment, electric seats with 18 directions, memories, and heating for 62 thousand Shekels, as well as a radar camera for 20 thousand Shekels, and more.

For some reason, this story makes me smile sadly. It is really nice that the young spirit of this old man from Eilat, who probably does not agree with the modern saying – “The world belongs to the young” – refused to be helpless in a nursing home surrounded by the shaking and depressed elderly, who are wasting away. Instead, he will travel the roads of Israel and enjoy his new car with a hard roof, 8 cylinders engine, 3,900 cc turbo, with 591 horsepower, and acceleration from 0 to 100 km/h in just 3.5 seconds.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Really crazy life....

But...

Here comes the big “but” that even the old anonymous man understands: life eventually ends, and when it ends, all the glory and splendor of the Ferrari will be left behind, and he will be buried in a hole one meter deep and less than two meters long, with a lot of sand...

Then, after he is covered with sand, what will happen then?

The simple ideology of this generation is not to think about death and certainly not to think about the moment after death. The heretics state proudly the well-known sentence, “Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (Isaiah 22:13). Having a few more minutes of life to enjoy here in this world is the shallow desire of a person who imagines that he came here to enjoy. Thus, with all his might, he regrets every second of waiting and certainly regrets the four months of waiting until he can drive this dream car...

If we delve a bit into this shallow desire and think – if enjoyment is the purpose of life, then we must fight and be crazy to achieve it. But, we must not just fight, but fight until death, because enjoyment is life itself and its purpose.

If this thought is indeed true, we should understand very well why Ms. Anne Myers



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Blasing, 92, killed her son, 72, because she was afraid he would force her to live at an elderly home. When the police arrived at the apartment, she was sitting over her son's body and said, "You took my life, I will also take yours."

What a "pure" thought about the essence of life....



He Who Hates Gifts  
Shall Live



**Did King  
Solomon “Ruin”  
the Party?**





### Did King Solomon “Ruin” the Party?

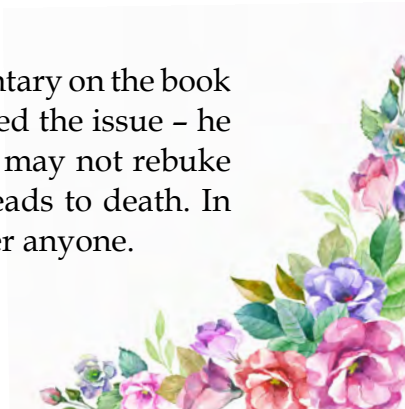
Many would agree with me that the most enjoyable moment of a wedding is after the wedding, when everyone goes home, and you start counting the checks and opening the presents...

But, it seems that King Solomon “ruined” those happy moments for us, by saying, “He who hates gifts will live” (Proverbs 15:27). Who doesn’t want to live? Even animals, from the tiniest to the largest, have the desire to live. But here, King Solomon is saying that only he who hates gifts will live, while he who does not hate will die.

It’s not fun to open an envelope or a present, thinking that it’s bringing us closer to the grave in the Mount of Rest..

So, what does King Solomon really want from us? Not everyone is rich like him (see book of Kings I, 1:6) that they can allow themselves not to accept gifts??

The genius, Rabbi Yehoshua Falk Katz (died in 5374(1614)), in his commentary on the book of Ba’al HaTurim in Pereishah (Choshen Mishpat Siman 249 letter 5), clarified the issue – he who receives a gift needs to flatter the givers, which means that he may not rebuke them even if he sees that their ways are faulty, and this certainly leads to death. In contrast, the one who despises gifts does not need to repay and flatter anyone.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

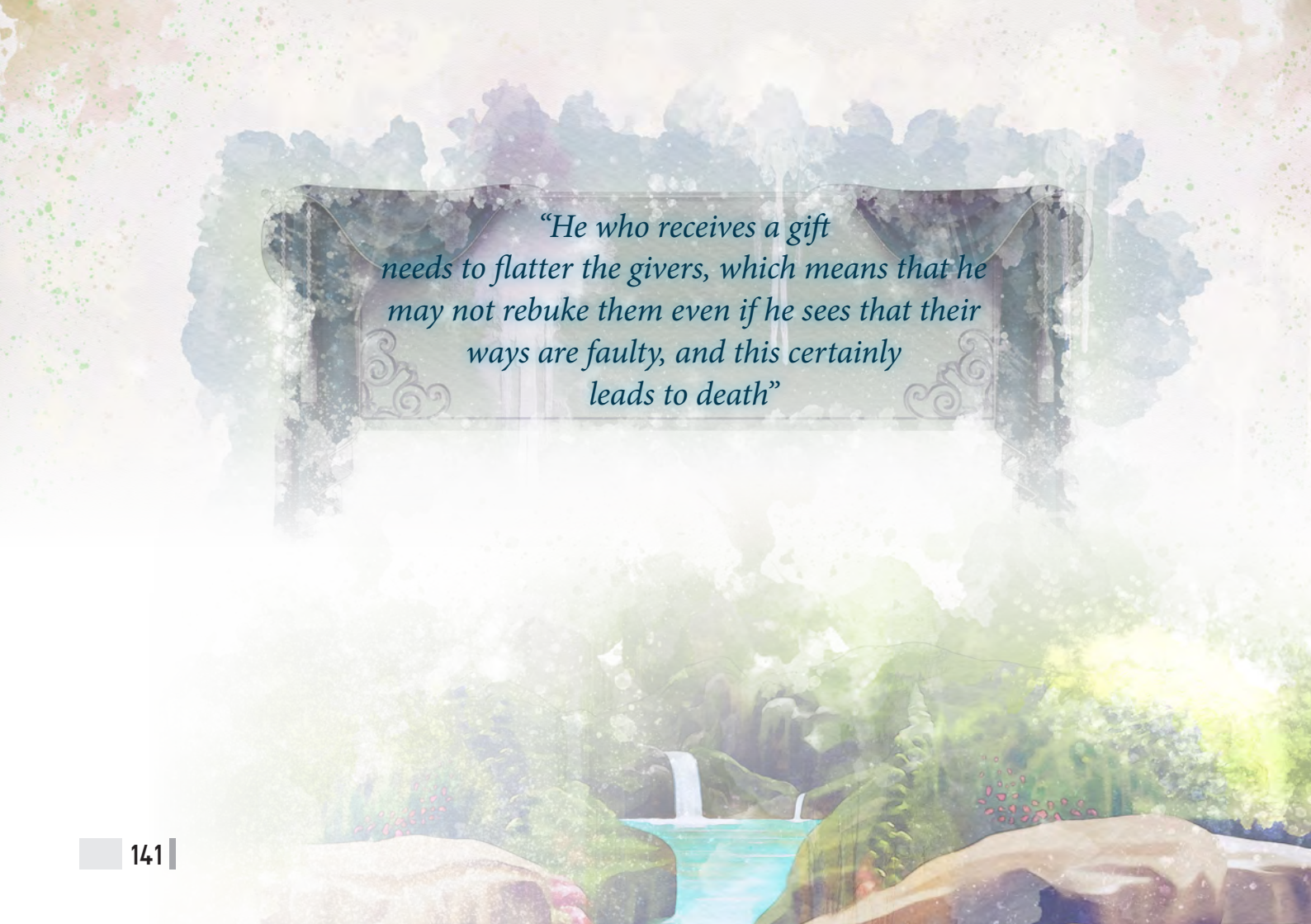


From his amazing words, we learn that there's no need to fear accepting gifts. The problem occurs when the receiver desists from rebuking the givers, and this is what leads to death. As taught in the Gemara in Tractate Shabbat (page 54a), righteous people who do not protest against transgressors die.

Another thing we learn is how important it is to rebuke the sinners and to reveal to them the reward and punishment they would receive in the future. Of course, do this in a way that can positively affect them and with a good attitude, so it will be accepted by the listeners.

And, to the bride and groom, we will send a reassuring message: you can keep counting checks and gifts...





*“He who receives a gift  
needs to flatter the givers, which means that he  
may not rebuke them even if he sees that their  
ways are faulty, and this certainly  
leads to death”*

The Power Of A  
Small Deed



**”And You Said in  
Your Heart Who  
Begot These to  
Me”**





## **”And You Said in Your Heart Who Begat These to Me” (Isaiah 49: 21)**

Somewhere, in 1903, in the clinic of Doctor Edward Bloch ...

The door slammed open and a young woman pushed herself in, scared to death, with a somewhat neglected appearance, which testified to her abject poverty.

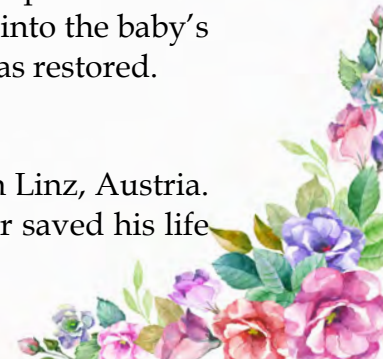
She spoke meaningless sentences and stuttered incessantly, “Save him ... Save him...”

Doctor Bloch hurried to approach her. He recognized her as Mrs. Clara, who used to come to his clinic from time to time. He saw the baby in her arms, pale, weak and almost unresponsive...

He saw with a quick glance that the baby’s medical condition was not good, to say the least. As he was a knowledgeable and skilled doctor, he quickly placed the baby on the treatment bed, and with typical quickness, began to massage his temples. He took out a vial of strong medicine from his pocket and poured a few drops into the baby’s mouth, and with a vigorous massage, the color of the baby’s cheeks was restored.

“Don’t worry. Little Adolf will live...”

Doctor Eduard Bloch (January 30, 1872 - June 1, 1945) was a Jewish doctor in Linz, Austria. Until 1907, he was the doctor of Adolf Hitler’s family, and later, Hitler saved his life







## Sichot For Am Yisrael

out of gratitude, even calling him a “noble Jew.”

In 1903, Bloch treated Hitler’s father, Alois Hitler, and later also his mother, Clara Hitler. Clara Hitler suffered greatly, needing daily medication which was mostly given to her by Bloch. She later died in excruciating agony. Due to the difficult financial situation of the Hitler family at the time, Bloch worked at discounted rates and sometimes did not even take any money at all. For this, Hitler, who was then 18 years old, gave him eternal gratitude. Even in 1937, Hitler asked about Bloch’s well-being and called him a “noble Jew.”

After the annexation of Austria in 1938, the living conditions of the Jews in Austria worsened. Bloch wrote a letter to Hitler asking for help, and as a result, Hitler gave him special protection from the Gestapo. He was the only Jew in Linz with such status. Hitler arranged for Bloch to emigrate to the United States, and in 1940, Bloch emigrated to the Bronx in New York.

We will not go into the fact that a Jewish doctor actually saved this predatory animal, who killed 6,000,000 of our people, nor into the fact that actually saving Hitler brought about his own salvation...

What we will deal with here is – **what is the power of a small act?**

Sometimes a person thinks: what is the use of calling a friend or relative to just speak



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

a few nice and kind words about the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He? What good would a CD of lessons or a Torah book that I send him do? No one knows the significance of a small act that unfolds and its power to change the world.

About five years ago, I had the privilege of getting to know Rabbi Yaron Reuven Shlit" a - a conversation that began with Divine supervision and continues with constant contact to this day Baruch HaShem. Then, the Creator, blessed be He, wanted us to work together on great projects and two years ago, with HaShem's help we established the Be'Ezrat HaShem Organization - a wonderful non-profit organization that was established for the sole purpose of increasing the honor of God in the world...

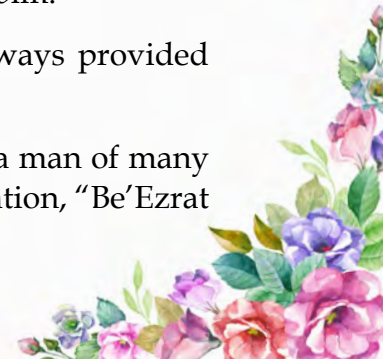
And the achievements have been amazing ...

"And you said in your heart who begat these to me" (Isaiah 21:21).

And, for that, first and foremost, I would like to thank the Creator of the world, who gave us the privilege of spreading the Torah, and doing Zikkuy HaRabim.

And, of course, to my dear parents and my wife's parents, who always provided support and help at any time and at any hour.

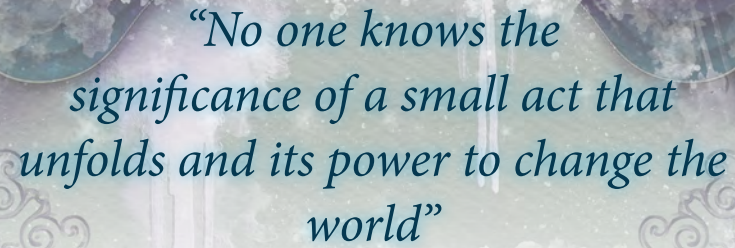
"And the triple thread ..." - thanks and blessings to my dear friend, a man of many deeds, Rabbi Yaron Reuven Shlit" a. He is the chairman of the organization, "Be'Ezrat



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

HaShem," giving his life, day and night, to spread Torah, Judaism and fear of God. May G-d give him and his family strength and greatness, good health, abundant Parnassah, and success in all the work of their hands. "Fortune and wealth in his house, and his righteousness stands forever."

And last but not least, I would like to thank and bless my dear wife, Rabbanit Sarah Kachlon, who takes upon herself all the management of the house, so that I can invest in Torah studies and continue doing Zikkuy HaRabim with even more strength, blessings, and success spiritually and physically. All the best, Amen Selah.



*“No one knows the  
significance of a small act that  
unfolds and its power to change the  
world”*

Ungrateful People



**The Banyan Tree  
and Man**





### The Banyan Tree and Man

The banyan tree, which is a tree from the mulberry family, a species of *Ficus*, develops in a unique way: the banyan's seeds are passed by birds to the top branches of other trees or palms. The seeds are then spread to the head of the tree and develop into branching roots that penetrate the ground.

As the branches reach the ground, they grow into trunks and develop new branches.

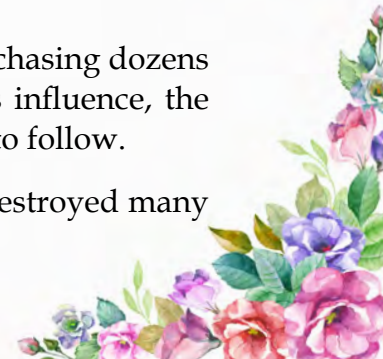
**Over time, the banyan suffocates and kills that which supported it ...**



Rabbi Yaakov Bassevi of Prague, who lived about 400 years ago, was known for his wisdom and cleverness. In 1611, the Czar granted him the title of "Czar's Court Jew." Following his economic proposals, he was granted the title of "The Excellency of the House of Treurenberg."

As a noble Jew, he provided for the Jewish community of Prague, purchasing dozens of houses near the Jewish quarter, expanding its borders. Under his influence, the authorities did not enforce the restrictions that the Jews were obliged to follow.

When Prague was conquered by Czar Frederic II in 1620, his troops destroyed many





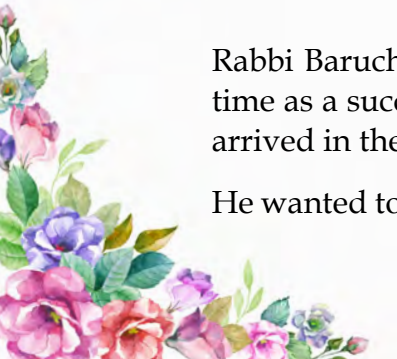
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

houses, and to ensure the Jews would not be harmed, Rabbi Yaakov appointed guards from the Czar's forces over the Jewish quarter.

In his blessed act, he managed to rescue from prison the rabbi and dayan of Prague, Rabbi Yom Tov Lipman Heller, the author of the Tosafot Yom Tov, who was arrested in 1629 after he was accused of insulting the honor of the emperor and the church.

At the end of his life, a group of community members falsely accused him of bias in the distribution of the burden of taxes on the members of the community. They reported to the government that he disrespected the Czar and the Church.

Rabbi Yaakov was arrested and all his property was taken away. Through the help of high-ranking figures, including his close friend, the praised **Marshal Walenstein**, he was released from prison. However, he chose not to return to his **ungrateful** community and rather lived close to his friend, Walenstein, until his death.



Rabbi Baruch ben Shmuel, also known as Rabbi Baruch of Pinsk, was known in his time as a successful doctor and researcher of natural remedies. In August of 1833, he arrived in the capital of Yemen in search of the Ten Tribes.

He wanted to meet the Imam (the ruler) of Yemen, but he knew the Imam was ill. So, he



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

offered his medical service and knowledge of herbal medicine, and managed to heal the Imam from his illnesses, and thus, became his personal doctor and adviser.

However, as was usual among jealous Muslims, they spoke badly of him to the Imam, and during one of his trips with the Imam in Shevat of 1834, **the Imam shot him to death and ordered that the body be thrown to the animals.** But, the animals did not touch him.



Reality shows that the phenomenon of the Banyan tree is not limited to the plant world, as much, if not most, of mankind live their lives like this tree. The statement, "For man is a tree of the field" (Deuteronomy 20:19), in the negative sense of it, is demonstrated by many of the world's people, who not only do not repay goodness, but instead, repay evil.

King Solomon already said, "He that returneth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house" (Proverbs 17:13). What this means is that a person who returns evil for the good he received, evil will stick to him all his life. A species sticks to its species, and so, because he is evil, evil will reign in him, its abode...





Hanukkah



**Anti-Semitism is  
on the Rise**





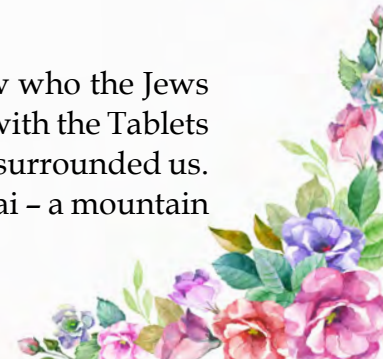
### Anti-Semitism is on the Rise

#### Hanukkah Miracle

The miracle of Hanukkah, which included the victory of the war and the finding of the jar of oil, symbolizes the pure hatred of Israel that existed throughout the generations. The evil Antiochus, who was also called Epiphanus, became king of Greece in the year 3610. In the sixth year of his reign, he attacked Jerusalem and the Temple, set up an idol in the Temple, and decreed that Shabbat, the Jewish holidays, and circumcision should no longer be observed (Seder haDorot part 1, year 3610, page 228).

Why would this evil and tyrannical king care that the people of Israel would keep Shabbat, Jewish holidays, and circumcise their babies??? Why was it so important for him to attack the Temple? This inexplicable hatred is not expressed towards the Jewish people's body nor towards the entity called "Israel," but it is the hatred of evil for good, darkness for light, impurity for purity. This hatred is incomprehensible and inexplicable...

Sometimes, the anti-Semites hate the Jews when they don't even know who the Jews are. From the time we were a nation standing at Mount Sinai, together with the Tablets of the Covenant, the hatred of the nations of the world came down and surrounded us. As explained in the Gemara (Shabbat page 89a), why is it called Mount Sinai - a mountain



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



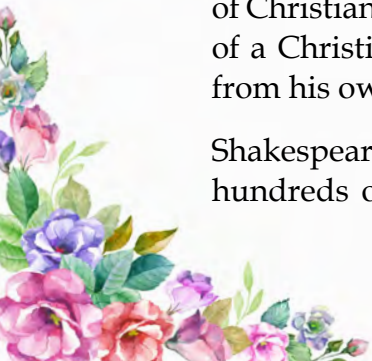
on which hatred (Sin'ah) of the nations of the world (towards the Jews) descended.

### **Marlowe, Shakespeare and the Jews**

The famous play, "The Jew of Malta," written in 1590 by the British playwright, Christopher Marlowe, testifies to the fact that you don't have to know a Jew to hate him. The play presents the Jew as a demon [devil] whose purpose is to harm and do bad. Marlowe's play is considered an anti-Semitic work. The play was written during a period of economic difficulty in England, which caused, among other things, resentment against communities of foreigners who lived in England, even though Jews did not live in England at that time.

Marlowe's play influenced William Shakespeare, and this influence is evident in the play, "The Merchant of Venice," which Shakespeare wrote in 1597. The play is influenced by the anti-Semitism of the time. This is seen especially in the character of the Jewish Shylock, a bloodthirsty man who not only strives to get rich at the expense of Christians, but also tries to destroy them. The play revolves around the commitment of a Christian named Antonio to guarantee his debt to Shylock with a pint of meat from his own body, and around Shylock's demand to collect the actual pint of meat.

Shakespeare himself worked at a time when the Jews had not lived in Britain for hundreds of years, since King Edward I had expelled the Jews from the island in





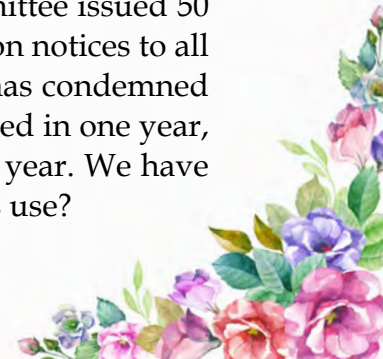
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

1290. This had occurred after a short and bloody history of the Jewish presence on the island in the Middle Ages, which had included bloodshed and riots. Oliver Cromwell returned the Jews to the island, decades after Shakespeare's death, so it must be assumed that Shakespeare did not see any Jews in his time. However, this did not prevent him from hating Jews and staging an entire play about a distorted figure of a bloodthirsty Jew.

### **The Meaning of Hatred**

What is the meaning of this hatred, and why is it useful? These simple questions should be asked by anyone who knows the history of our people.

One can even be content with the history of recent years, since the establishment of the international body of the United Nations, which, according to the organization's statement, is responsible for protecting and promoting human rights. One of the main issues the Human Rights Council of the UN focuses on is criticism of Israel. In the first eight years since the organization's establishment (2006-2014), the committee issued 50 condemnation notices to Israel, which is about half of the condemnation notices to all the countries of the world combined. Over the years, the committee has condemned Israel nine times for human rights violations, of which eight were issued in one year, while no dictatorship in the world was condemned more than once a year. We have already learned where this abysmal hatred comes from, but what is its use?



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

“And you shall be holy to Me, for I, the Lord, am holy, and I have distinguished you from the peoples, to be Mine” (Vayikra 20:26).

The Almighty wishes to distinguish us from the nations. This is the opposite of the unfortunate thought and ambition of some of the people of Israel, who say that the House of Israel shall be like all the Gentiles.

“But what enters your mind shall not come about, what you say, ‘Let us be like the nations, like the families of the lands, to serve wood and stone. As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with poured out fury, will I reign over you. And I shall take you out of the peoples, and I shall gather you from the lands in which you were scattered, with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with poured out fury” (Ezekiel 20:32-34).

Here, the prophet promises in the Name of God that if a Jew does not make “kiddush,” not sanctifying himself by separating himself from the nations of the world and their constitutions, the Gentiles will come and make a “Havdalah” - distinction - and remove the Jews from them.

As is well known, the German race laws included the law for the protection of German blood and German honor. On September 15, 1935, a law was passed that prohibited marriages between Jews and citizens of the state with German blood, or with blood close to it.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Hitler knew that it was necessary to defend himself against the Jew, so he would not interfere with the nations of the world. He revealed this in his book, *Mein Kampf*, at the end of the second chapter, where Hitler's statement of faith appears (p. 679): "I believe today that I am acting in the spirit of the Almighty Creator of the world. **By defending myself from the Jew**, I am fighting for the handiwork of the Master of the world."

We realize that the function of the existing hatred of Israel is to be a factor in alienating the people of Israel, so that they will not want to be like the Gentiles and come closer and behave like them.

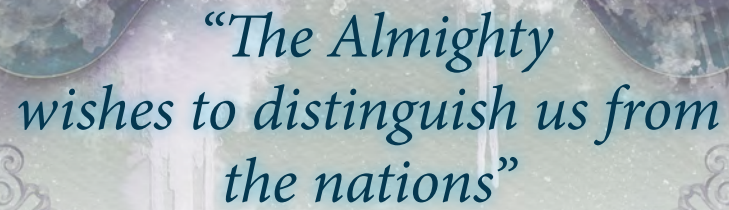
Another benefit of this hatred of Israel is the punishment that God punishes the people of Israel by them. As the prophet says: "Woe that Assyria is the rod of My wrath, and My fury is a staff in their hand[s]." The Creator of the world uses the nations of the world as a rod and a staff to scourge Israel and punish them. This punishment, apart from the big hint that the people of Israel do not fulfill the will of G-d, has a direct rebuke - who did you want to be like, and who did you want to resemble? Those murderers who are now slaughtering you without mercy?

When we light the candles, and when we thank and remember the miracles, we should remember a little about the history of our people and learn from it, and start doing miracles ourselves in our behavior. The greatest miracle is man coming closer to his Creator. Therefore, the secular among us should begin to set times for Torah study



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

and take it upon themselves to observe the same things that the Greeks forbid us from doing, including Shabbat, holidays, and family purity. The religious among us will be the ones who help the secular Jews get closer to the Creator in every way and continue to uphold the Jewish tradition with pride.



*“The Almighty  
wishes to distinguish us from  
the nations”*



Education



**Educational  
Bankruptcy**



## Educational Bankruptcy

The Western world advocates an open education system. A man shall live by his own faith – this is its slogan. There is no one to tell the person what to do and how to act. This education method exists in most of the world, and also in most schools in Israel.

### Darwin's theory

Let's look at the results of Western education:

The initial subject taught in schools is the origin of man. Charles Darwin (1809-1882), a British scientist and naturalist, published his book, *The Descent of Man*, in 1871, in which he explicitly wrote that both man and the ape originate from the same ancestor and detailed how human tools and language developed.

Darwin also suggested in his studies that there is a constant struggle for existence between the species in nature, during which the process of "natural selection" takes place, in which the strongest survive and the others become extinct.

Darwin's concept was appropriated, contrary to his view, by the field of social relations, and it became known as "Social Darwinism."

According to this concept, humanity is divided into superior and inferior races that compete in a war for existence, in which the strongest and the best survive.

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This view holds that man is only an upgraded animal, and therefore, the rules of the game in the animal world – only the strongest survive – apply to him as well.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the teachings of Charles Darwin began to spread and be absorbed in wide circles, sometimes accompanied by a blatant racist commentary. The English scholar, Francis Galton, Darwin's cousin, in the 1880s, expanded Darwin's theory and coined the term, Eugenics, which refers to the improvement of the human race.

### **Nazi Germany**

This philosophy of Eugenics greatly influenced Nazi Germany in the development of race theory and especially in the implementation of the T4 Euthanasia Program (German: Aktion T4), a large operation conducted during the reign of the Nazis in Germany (1939 - 1941), which intended to eliminate all the "unfit" and ensure the "purification of the Aryan race." In this program, which was based on the racist Nazi ideology and Eugenic principles, the Nazis murdered by various means, including gas chambers, about 90 thousand Germans who suffered from physical defects, such as birth defects or chronic diseases, as well as mental difficulties. Ideas and measures implemented in this program, which was managed by the Nazis, were used at a later stage for the operation to exterminate the Jews.



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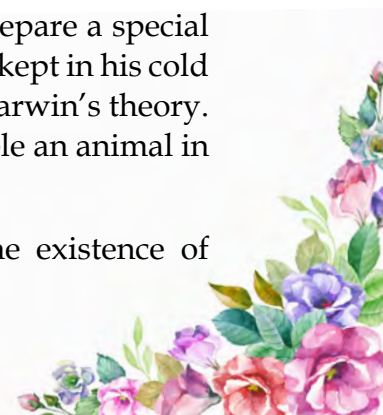
The Nazi ideology was that a weak or damaged person has nothing to do in the world, and as Hitler himself wrote in *Mein Kampf*: “There is only one disgrace: to bring, despite one’s illness and disability, children into the world. And one supreme honor: to refrain from doing so.”

The horror of the world did not stop here. The thought that man is a carnivorous animal was further developed in the cannibalistic mind of the dictator, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, the African man-eater.

The historian, Giles Milton, presents in his book, *Fascinating Footnotes from History*, the things Bokassa was accused of, including cannibalism, mutilation, sadism, embezzlement, and thirty-eight murders. The former emperor of the Central African Republic found himself in court in December 1986.

Prosecution witnesses described the monstrous brutality of his regime. One of his former cooks, Philippe Linguissa, said that he was once ordered to prepare a special meal for Bokassa. The main dish was a human corpse that the emperor kept in his cold room. Bokassa’s gruesome actions are well understood according to Darwin’s theory. If the origin of man and monkey are equal, why wouldn’t man resemble an animal in his behavior???

Intelligence alone can not influence man to behave differently. The existence of



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intelligence without Torah only causes man to perfect the horror within him.

The holy Sages knew the human race and its horrors, and therefore, said in the Mishnah (in Tractate Yadayim Chapter 4, Mishna 6) that one of the reasons for the ruling of defilement of human bones is that a person should not make the bones of his father and mother into vessels. It says in the Gemara that (in Tractate Chullin, page 122A) Ulla said: The Torah says that a person's skin is pure, and what is the reason for deeming it impure? – It's a decree, so that a person should not make a rug out of the skins of his father and mother. We find a shocking testimony in the Midrash (Book of Deuteronomy Parashat Re'eh paragraph 81), where Rabbi Akiva said: I saw a Gentile who handcuffed his father and put him in front of his dog, and it ate him.

This is the result of lack of education, or education according to Western culture.

Western culture went bankrupt. The same practices and laws that they tried to teach did not hold up to the test of action. The Germans, who were at the time the most enlightened and special people, proved that with all their modernism they were not far from the African dictator, Bokassa. Both of them behaved like predatory animals with no morals and no values, but only according to their own ego – me and no one else.

The Torah of Israel in all its laws has proven its greatness in countless cases that



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happened and will happen, it demonstrated and will always demonstrate the value of human life as a sacred and holy value above all.

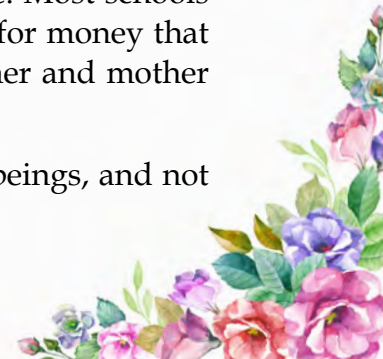
The recognition of the value of life as a supreme value, which is exalted above everything, stems from the divine commandment, “and he shall live in them” (Leviticus 18:5). God, who gave life in order for us to live it, blessed the sanctity of life as a supreme value. If He gave life to the weak, to the old, or to the disabled, it is a sign that they also belong to the eternal sanctity, the sanctity of life.

How sad it is to see parents who love their children, and yet send them to study in schools that do not teach about the value and purpose of life.

This is the reason why suicide attempts among the youth do not decrease. When there is no value and no purpose to life, why live?

Every parent who loves their children and wants the best for them will make sure to send their children to good places that teach about the purpose of life. Most schools today teach about professions and promote a lust for money – a lust for money that can intensify to such a level that a person makes the skins of his father and mother rugs for his feet.

Only the Torah will ensure that your children turn out to be human beings, and not human animals ...



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### The End of Einstein

One of the great Jewish scientists, who believed in God, although he did not observe Torah and mitzvot, was Albert Einstein.

This scientist is praised and admired by tens of millions of people around the world. However, despite everything he contributed to science, he did not receive the respect he deserved after his death.

Einstein died on April 18, 1955 at the Princeton Hospital in Princeton, New Jersey. Within hours, the quiet town was flooded with reporters, great scientists, and people who just wanted to be close to the great man one last time. The pathologist, Thomas Harvey, who performed the autopsy after Einstein's death, decided to take the brain of the genius. During the autopsy, he removed Einstein's brain to examine it, but instead of putting the brain back in the skull, Harvey simply put it somewhere else ... in a jar.

In the name of enlightened science, Harvey stole the important organ from the genius scientist.

Later, in 2007, Harvey died, without ever returning the remains of Einstein's brain to



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his family. In the meantime, his brain was cut up and distributed among the scientific community. The brain's remains are still in the Department of Pathology at Princeton University today.

The end of this scientific genius was that he wasn't buried in a Jewish grave.

These acts also result from lack of education, or from the education of the enlightened Western culture ....





## Purim

An Article for  
Purim - the  
Lesson for  
Generations





## An Article for Purim - The Lesson for Generations

**“These days of Purim shall not pass from among the Jews, and their memory shall not perish from their seed”** (Esther 9:28).

We should always remember the days of Purim. But, is there a lot to remember? Isn't it the custom that when Purim comes, you celebrate, and when the holiday ends, you forget?

In every generation, there is a “Haman” who wishes to destroy the vineyard of Beit Israel. How much fun it is to hit Haman with a rattle, or just to stomp with your feet. The strict ones even add all kinds of explosives [which are forbidden according to the Halacha] and aim at the modern Haman.

You should know that the modern Haman is not at all different from the original Haman. Both want one thing: “to destroy, kill and eliminate all the Jews from youth to old, infants and women in one day and plunder the loot” (Esther 3:13). Or in modern Arabic language, “throw all the Jews into the sea.”

The holiday of Purim symbolizes the victory of the people of Israel over those who desired the elimination of the Jewish people – Haman and his flock. However, it seems that Haman's purpose was ‘only’ to kill the Jewish people physically.





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And, surely the reader will wonder what is meant by ‘only’? Is there something worse than this cruel desire???

Our Sages in Sifre (Deuteronomy, Parashat Ki Teitzei, paragraph 252) wrote: Rabbi Shimon says, the Egyptians drowned Israel in water, but the Torah did not forbid the third and later generations to join the congregation of G-d (Deuteronomy 23:8-9). In contrast, because the Ammonites and Moabites took counsel to cause the Jews to sin, the Torah forbids them from joining the congregation forever (Deuteronomy 23:4). This teaches you that the one who causes a person to sin is worse than the one who kills him, as the one who kills him only takes him out of this world, and the one who causes him to sin takes him out of this world and the world to come [And, it was brought up in Rashi on the Torah Deuteronomy 23:9].

The horrors of Egypt described in the words of our Sages did not fall far from the horrors and events of the Holocaust. Egypt was the largest labor camp, and not only a labor camp, but also an extermination camp: “Every newborn child you shall throw into the Nile” (Exodus 1:22). Every day, Pharaoh would slaughter 150 children in the morning and 150 children in the evening and bathe in their blood (Shemot Rabbah Vilna Parashat Shemot Parsha 1 letter 34). For those who did not have enough of the brick building materials, the Egyptians would put their babies in the walls and crush them to death (Shemot Rabbah (Shenan) Parashat Shemot Parsha 5 letter 21). The Egyptian had absolute control over the body of the Jew (Rashi, Numbers 26:5). However, despite this, the Torah



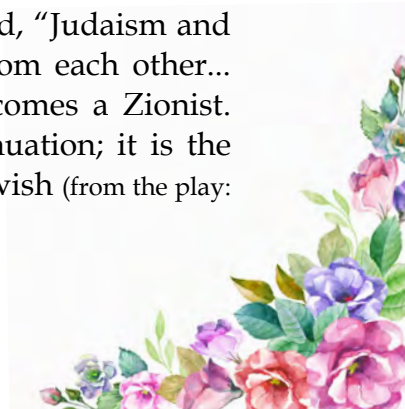
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

says that we should not hold such a great grudge against them, because they simply abused our bodies, slaughtered our necks, and bathed in our blood...

On the other hand, Ammon and Moab, who did not shed a single drop of Jewish blood, but sent their daughters in a lack of modesty to cause the people of Israel to sin (Numbers 25:1 and Deuteronomy 23:5), which was not a permanent obstacle or even one that lasted for very long. Nevertheless, the Torah teaches us that there is no atonement for such a thing forever, because those who cause others to sin are worse than those who kill them.



When we look closely and read the words of the Zionist writers and leaders, it seems that their goal was that the name of Israel would no longer be remembered. It was another attempt to eliminate every sign of holiness in the people of Israel. As **Haim Hazaz** (one of the greatest writers and thinkers of the Zionist movement) testified, "Judaism and Zionism" are not one thing, but are really two different things from each other... contradicting each other. When a person cannot be a Jew, he becomes a Zionist. Zionism begins with the destruction of Judaism. It is not a continuation; it is the opposite. I believe that the Land of Israel is no longer considered Jewish (from the play: The Sermon).






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This attitude towards the Jewish religion is a disdainful attitude. As **Nachman Syrkin** (from the head of "Poalei Zion") said: The masses of the people are engrossed in "the vanities of religion." The rabbis of the community keep the masses in this ignorance and those vanities. Zionism calls in the name of light, in the name of truth, "for war" against all these forces of darkness and malice ("The writings of Nachman Syrkin", Davar publishing house, 5699).

Zionism does not have a problem with 'religion,' but a problem with the Jewish religion. This is the reason why the writer, **Yosef Haim Brenner** (a leader who also participated in the founding conference of the General Histadrut in early 1921) said: "The New Testament" is our book. It is a bone from our bones, flesh from our flesh. A Jewish person can be a good Jew, devoted to his nation with all his heart and soul, and not be afraid of Christianity as he is of some "Treif thing" On the contrary, he should refer to it with religious reverence... ("In literature and the press", Hapoel HaTzair, 22 Cheshvan 1910).

This same reverence was not expressed by those Zionists when they referred to the Torah and its holiness.

We see here a few thinkers of the Enlightenment and Zionism, who at all times did everything in their power to be like the gentiles. Not only did their thinking fail, but they were lost from the world, while the world of the Torah and Judaism is still moving on and on.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

It is interesting to note that many of those who celebrate the holiday of Purim do not understand what the holiday is about and what its essence is. Why did Haman want to destroy the people of Israel out of all the nations (Esther 3:13)? Why is God warring with Amalek from generation to generation (Exodus 17:16)?

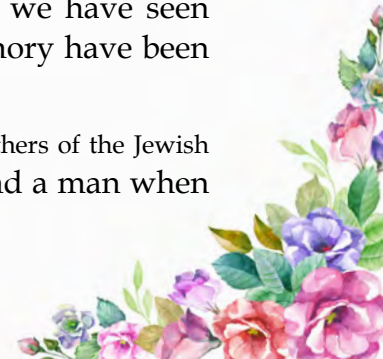
Both Haman and Amalek wanted to eliminate the name of Israel in body and spirit, and our constant war on all fronts is against these enemies.

Let's not give in to the wrong thought that it is enough for us to preserve the body without the soul, the state without the religion, and the people without the Torah. From both biblical and non-biblical history, we see that when the people kept the way of God, His commandments and teachings, the people enjoyed all the blessings written in the Torah (1 Kings 5:5). But, when they did not follow the way of God, the people suffered.



In the last two hundred years since the Enlightenment (18th century), we have seen that whoever wanted to eliminate the name of Israel, he and his memory have been forgotten.

**Moshe Mendelssohn** (a Jewish-German philosopher, thinker, and one of the fathers of the Jewish Enlightenment movement) coined the sentence: "Be a Jew in your home and a man when you go out."





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He paid a high price for his seemingly small and insignificant deviation from the path of the Torah, although Mendelssohn himself lived a Jewish-religious lifestyle. Four of his six children converted to Christianity, and of his nine grandchildren (including the composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy), only one remained Jewish. His grandson, Dr. Arnold Mendelssohn, also converted from Judaism to Protestantism, and later to Catholicism.

The effects of Moshe Mendelssohn's failure to educate properly was not only evident with his sons, but also with his students. **David Friedländer**, a student and friend of Moshe Mendelssohn, saw himself as his distinct student and spiritual heir following Mendelssohn's death. He translated some of Mendelssohn's Hebrew letters into German, and sent anonymously in 1799 to the Protestant pastor, Wilhelm Avraham Teller: "A letter from a number of Jewish family heads," in which he offered him that he and some more affluent Jewish families will convert to Christianity.

**Ahad Ha'am, also known as Asher Zvi Ginsberg** (founder of the movement and thinker of the ideas of spiritual Zionism), expressed his opinion on Judaism and the faith, saying, "I can hold to that scientific heresy that bears the name "Darwin" without any danger to Judaism arising from it" (his words were quoted by Ben-Gurion in HaAchdut, 19 Shevat 1911). He also stated that in his opinion, "Not only the plight of the Jews should be dealt with, but also the plight of Judaism." Despite his religious upbringing, being a



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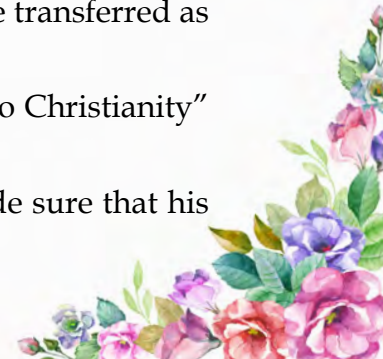
secular educated man, he believed that the Jewish state and its people did not need to adhere to religious ideas, but should renew modern ideas in the spirit of the times. Ahad Ha'am sought to establish the restoration of Judaism without its religious dimension.

Indeed, his youngest daughter, Rachel, decided not to bother with the plight of Judaism and simply to run away from it, and married the non-Jewish journalist, Mikhail Osorgin. In this marriage, Ahad Ha'am saw a terrible disaster, and he severed his connection to her.

**Benjamin Ze'ev Herzl** (the state visionary, the one that turned Zionism into a "national movement"), in 1892, wrote that it would be better for all Jews to convert to Christianity. In a letter to Moritz Benedikt, he stated, "I have a son. I would prefer to become a Christian today or tomorrow, so that his period of membership within Christianity would begin as early as possible... but I cannot do this for two reasons: first, I would hurt my father... and second, one cannot abandon Judaism as long as there is hostility towards it... a situation of tolerance must first be created, and then all Jews should be transferred as one body to Christianity."

His plan for solving the "problem of the Jews" by "mass conversion to Christianity" was preserved in his writings ("Herzl's writings" vol. 2, diary 1, p. 14).

Herzl also celebrated Christmas and lit their traditional tree, and made sure that his





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children prayed the Christian prayers every morning and evening (“Negohot min haAvar,” Tel Aviv 5721, p. 69).

Today’s youth are taught to admire Herzl blindly, the ‘state visionary’ of the Jewish state. In what way did Herzl show his Jewishness? We will never know.

And, what is left of his whole family?

Herzl’s wife, Julie, died in 1907, at the age of 39, apparently of heart disease. She asked that her body be cremated. The jar with the ashes was entrusted by her son, Hans. On one of his journeys, he forgot the jar on the train, and it disappeared.

Herzl’s eldest daughter, Paulina, in her youth, behaved promiscuously [even with sex education in his home, Herzl did not succeed], underwent several psychiatric hospitalizations, married, divorced, and moved to the city of Bordeaux in France, where she became addicted to morphine, was arrested for vagrancy, and died in 1924, at the age of 40.

His son, Hans, born in 1891, was not circumcised after birth, nor was he given a Jewish name. After Herzl’s death, the Zionist movement saw him as a possible heir and organized a circumcision ceremony for him at the age of 15. However, this did not bring him closer to Judaism. In fact, Hans converted several times: he was a Baptist, a Catholic, a Protestant, a Unitarian, and a Quaker. At the end of his life, he asked to



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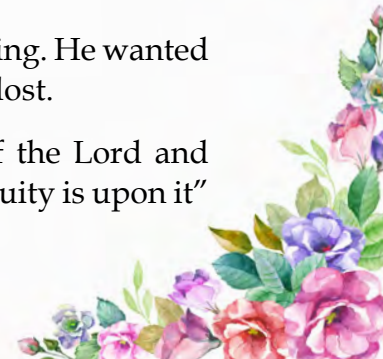
return to Judaism. But, when the news of Paulina's death reached him, he felt that he lost his purpose in life and shot himself.

The youngest daughter, Truda, married and gave birth to Herzl's only grandchild, Stefan Theodor. Immediately after giving birth, she was admitted to a psychiatric hospital almost permanently. When the Nazis evacuated the Jewish patients from the Vienna psychiatric hospital, she was sent to the Theresienstadt camp, where she died of starvation in March, 1943.

Herzl's only grandson, Stefan Theodor, the last descendant of the family, attended a boarding school in England and changed his last name to Monroe. Despite his relatively successful life [He bore a distinct physical resemblance to his grandfather. Stephen enlisted in the British army and was an officer, and in 1945, he visited Palestine and was received with royal honor. Several kibbutzim offered him to settle in them, but he refused. Instead, he got a British government job in Washington], in November, 1946, he jumped from a bridge on Massachusetts Avenue, committing suicide.

How Herzl's punishment was measure for measure was clear and striking. He wanted to eliminate the name of Israel, and thus, his name and memory were lost.

Indeed, the Torah itself promises, " For he has scorned the word of the Lord and violated His commandment; that soul shall be utterly cut off for its iniquity is upon it"





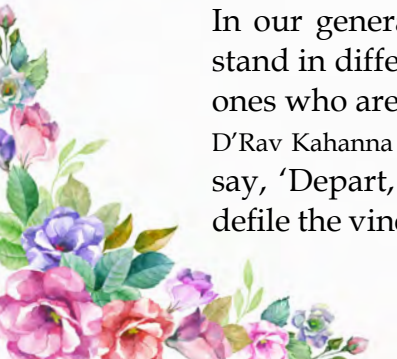
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(Numbers 15:31). The verse says that if one scorns and disrespects the words of G-d, he and his descendants will be cut off in this world and in the world to come, just as was the case with Herzl. Some found a clue of Herzl's end in this verse - "scorned," which is "bazah" in Hebrew, spells the initials of Benjamin Ze'ev Herzl.

**Max Nordau**, also known as **Shimon Südfeld** (a friend of Herzl, and an active partner in Zionism), said, "When I reached the age of fifteen, I abandoned the Jewish way of life and the study of the Torah... Judaism remained for me nothing more than a memory, and since then, I have always felt myself German, only German."

What is left of him and his family? Not a single Jewish person. After his death, only his wife, Anna-Elizabeth Donnes, a Danish Christian, and their child, Maxa, were left.

His name and memory were also lost...



In our generation, we see the war for God against Amalek, where the Amalekites stand in different disguises, as wolves in sheep's clothing, and try to trap those weak ones who are in the back, to cool the cauldron, which is the essence of Amalek (Pesikta D'Rav Kahanna Mandelbaum, paragraph 3 - Parashat Zachor letter 10). About them we read and say, 'Depart, unclean!' they called out to them" (Lamentations 4:15). "Do not come to defile the vineyard of the Lord of hosts." "And they shall not graze nor defile in all my



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holy mountain” (Isaiah 11:9). We can see what happened to those who tried to cool us off, and where they are today. This is the memory and lesson from the days of Purim that should accompany us and our seed all year long.

“And their memory shall not perish from their seed”



The Status Of The  
Woman In Judaism



**Feminism and  
Redemption**



## Feminism and Redemption

Feminism (from the Latin word 'Femina', which means 'woman' or 'female') is an umbrella term for ideologies, political movements, social movements and theories, whose central goal is to obtain and establish rights for women in all respects. It is customary to attribute the beginnings of feminism to the 19th century in Europe, when the beginning of the movement focused on obtaining formal basic rights, such as the right to vote.

Since then, feminism has become a kind of obsessive competition between its leaders to be more like men. Whatever a man does or can do, a woman can do as well. There are already pilotesses in the air force, ministeresses in the government, and we even had one Prime Ministeress [Golda Meir, who was said to be the only "man" in the government at the time]. Even the religious aspect was mobilized by the feminists for this purpose, from putting on Tefillin and performing the public reading of the Torah in the Reform square of the Western Wall to becoming strange rabbis dressed as men [and sometimes with terrible immodesty, because apparently 'not only men are allowed to go shirtless'], who give sermons and share their thoughts from every stage.

It seems that except for a circumcision ceremony and growing a beard, those feminists are ready to do anything to show that they can do it too, not just the men!!!

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It is strange to see that precisely these women consider themselves as feminine liberators, while in all their actions they prove to be the complete opposite.

The two sexes in creation, the male sex and the female sex [and to all the feminists, please don't blame me for writing the "male" first], are part of the total perfection of creation, or in the language of the Torah, "**Male and female** He created them and He blessed them and called their name **Adam**" (Genesis 5:2).

Only together can we reach the desired perfection. One without the other is considered half a body, and as the Holy Zohar says (Volume 3 Parashat Vayikra, page 7b):

Rabbi Shimon said (translated from Aramaic): The pairing of the male and the female is called "one," and only where the female is, it is called one - whole, **what's the point?** Since the male without the female is called "half a body," half is not a complete one. And when two halves come together they become one body, and only then are they called one].

When a woman tries to imitate a man's acts or compare the two sexes, she shows that she does not understand her role in the world and how much power she has to change the world with her femininity (without any need for masculinity).

This is the mistaken thought of a stupid equality between the sexes in everything, and that therefore, in order for the female public to consider itself great, it has to resemble



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the male public in everything. This is clearly anti-feminist thinking, which traces back to the time of ancient Egypt.

Hatshepsut (1508-1458 BC approximately) was the fifth queen in the 18th dynasty of ancient Egypt, one of the most important Egyptian pharaohs. She was the first woman to serve as pharaoh. Her appointment and manner of ruling demonstrated the power of women in ancient Egypt, at least among the upper class. The Egyptologist (a scholar engaged in the study of ancient Egypt) James Henry Breasted described her as “the first great woman in recorded history.” The meaning of the name, Hatshepsut, is “the chief among the women of the nobility.”

A female pharaoh was an almost unimaginable thing. In the beginning of her reign, her sculpted figures were in the form of a woman. Later sculptures, however, depicted her increasingly as a man, through elements like male dress and even a beard.

What caused the artists of ancient Egypt to change and distort reality and turn the female pharaoh into a male one with a beard?

The thought that a woman had reached a high position did not give them rest. This is the reason why Hatshepsut’s legacy was shrouded in fog, to such an extent that most of her sculptures and paintings were thoroughly vandalized in the quest to erase her memory. In fact, Hatshepsut was also comprehensively erased from the ordered lists





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of Egyptian kings and the annals of dynasties.

Judaism not only does not hide the power of the legendary women who existed in our people, but also emphasizes them at the 'expense' of men, such as Sarah, our Matriarch:

“And God said to Abraham... whatever Sarah says to you, listen to her voice” (Genesis 21:12).

And, on this, our rabbis said in the Midrash (Shemot Rabbah Vilna Parashat Shemot Parsha 1):

From this, you learn that Abraham was subordinate to Sarah in prophethood.

Despite all the greatness of our Forefather, Avraham, the Torah emphasizes that his wife surpassed him in prophethood, the highest degree of nearness to God. What's more, she did this even without growing a beard or putting on Tefillin throughout Be'er Sheva at that time, but from the tent (see Genesis 18:9), she radiated strength and immensity, and thereby, influenced the whole world.

The Sages in the Midrash (Icha Rabba Pethaitot, starting in: Kad Rabbi Yochanan) do not hide the fact that the only one who managed to convince God to redeem the people of Israel again after the destruction of the First Temple was Rachel, our Matriarch. They actually emphasized this fact that all the great men of the world – Avraham, Yitzchak,



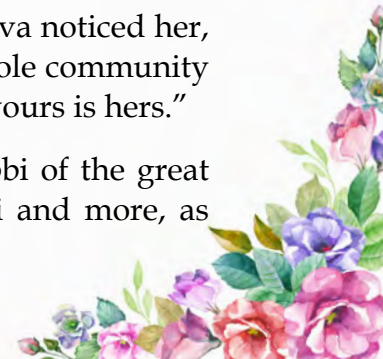
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Yaakov, Moshe Rabbeinu – have failed to convince God, while a woman succeeded. As the prophet Jeremiah said:

“So says the Lord: A voice is heard on high, lamentation, bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, she refuses to be comforted for her children for they are not. So says the Lord: Refrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for there is reward for your work, says the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for your future, says the Lord, and the children shall return to their own border “ (Jeremiah 31:14-16).

Later in Jewish history, we are exposed to the tremendous strengths of Rachel, the wife of Rabbi Akiva, the ‘queen of the oral Torah.’ As recounted in the Gemara in Ketubot (page 63a), she sent her husband to study Torah for 24 years, despite all the difficulties she would face, so that he may become someone great in the Torah world. After the legendary transformation he made from an ignorant man into the greatest Sage of the generation, he returned to his city with 24,000 huge Torah students. She came out, in her clothes of poverty, to welcome him. When Rabbi Akiva noticed her, he not only made way for her, but also announced, in front of the whole community and congregation, the touching and memorable sentence: “Mine and yours is hers.”

All the Oral Torah that we have today is from Rabbi Akiva, the rabbi of the great Tanaim, such as Rabbi Meir Ba’al Hanes, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and more, as



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explained in the Gemara in Yevamot (page 62b). Everything, absolutely everything, according to Rabbi Akiva, belongs to his wife Rachel!

How symbolic that the famous gift that Rabbi Akiva bought for his wife was a gold crown of Jerusalem, as explained in the Gemara in Nedarim (page 50a, and briefly in Shabbat, page 59a), a gift truly proper for 'the queen of the Oral Torah.'

If feminism is excessive female freedom, we found great women of the generation who were shockingly independent, about whom the Gemara also tells. The list includes: Bruria, the wife of Rabbi Meir, who, when she saw a student who did not behave in a fair way in her opinion, kicked him (Erovin p.53b); and Yalta, the wife of Rabbi Nachman, who felt hurt by one of the visiting rabbis of her great husband, and therefore, decided to break 400 barrels of wine (Berachot 51b). Such behaviors today would not be responded to with silence. But, the Talmud tells us these facts to teach us that these women did not feel that the Jewish religion or the Sages deprive women or belittle them.

It is interesting to note that the Talmud defines the role of the woman as bringing up her sons to the Torah, and that in doing so, they are granted the life of the world to come, as mentioned in the Gemara Brachot (page 17a). It is not mentioned in the Gemara that their role is to be chefs, careerists, or feminists.

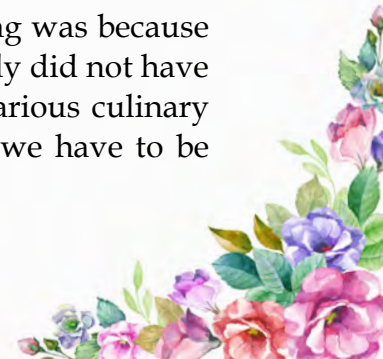


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

But, precisely with regard to Bruria, the wife of Rabbi Meir, our Sages implicitly comment that she crossed the line, since, in the Gemara in Pesachim (page 62b), it is said that Bruria was studying 300 halachot from 300 rabbis every day. It can be assumed that when she was busy studying Torah, in imitation of her great husband Rabbi Meir, the education of the children was neglected, and their closeness to the Torah decreased. Indeed, we found in the Midrash Yalkut Shimoni (Proverbs, subsection 964), that two of her sons died on Shabbat, and although she dealt with this tragedy in a more admirable way than her husband, Rabbi Meir, the Midrash concludes on a critical note and says:

Rabbi Hama bar Hanina said: Why did Rabbi Meir's sons die at once? Because they were used to leaving the beit midrash and engaged in eating and drinking. [And despite this fact, it is mentioned in the Midrash that Rabbi Meir wept over them and mourned: "My sons, my sons, my Rabbis, my Rabbis," my sons in manners, and Rabbis who enlightened my eyes in their Torah].

It is possible that the reason they were engaged in eating and drinking was because their mother was too busy studying Torah. It is possible that she simply did not have time to instill in them the value to prioritize studying Torah over various culinary experiences. This will remain a mystery [we cannot determine and we have to be respectful towards Rabbi Meir's wife] but with a warning signal...



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



This is a warning to all Jewish women: don't change your roles, and don't be tempted to follow the feminist Gentile ideology that one should be like a man in everything. The woman's role is no less than the man's, and the Sages not only did not reduce the value of women, but they also stated in the Gemara in Yevamot (page 62B):

Rabbi Tanhum stated that Rabbi Hanilai said: Any man who does not have a wife is without joy, without blessing, without goodness; and in the West [in the Land of Israel] they said: without the Torah, without a wall.



"See, only this one have I found, for God made man straight, but they sought many intrigues" (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

The calculation and the desire to transform the human nature of the woman into a different type, while suppressing the shame and female emotion, led to a disaster also among the nations of the world. This is the reason why, during its development, feminism accumulated critics and opponents. Among the opponents are conservative activists such as the Christian preacher, Pat Robertson, who described feminism in his program, The 700 Club on the CBN channel, in 1992 as follows:

"Feminism encourages women to kill their children (to have abortions), to engage in witchcraft, to destroy the foundations of society and the foundations of human marriage."





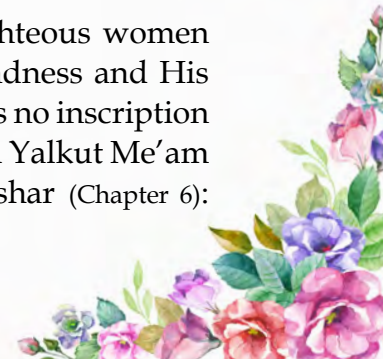
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

It seems that this desire and wish to make the two sexes lies completely equal in the impurity of ancient Egypt, and as mentioned in Sifra (Parashat Acharei MotParsha 9 letter 8), “You shall not do as the land of Egypt did, and you shall not conduct in their laws” (Leviticus 18:3). The Torah speaks about the laws that were designed by them and their fathers and their fathers’ fathers, and what would they do? A man would marry another man, a woman would marry another woman, a man would marry a woman and her daughter, and a woman would marry two men.

The obsession with the idea of “freedom” and the desire to break up traditional family roles and values lie somewhere in the impure constitution of Egypt, which saw a supreme need to glorify complete equality in such a distorted and filthy way that men married men, women married women, and some women even married two men.

In conclusion, we have to enlighten the eyes of the entire Israeli society. In the words of the holy Sages quoted in Midrash Yalkut Shimoni (Ruth subsection 606):

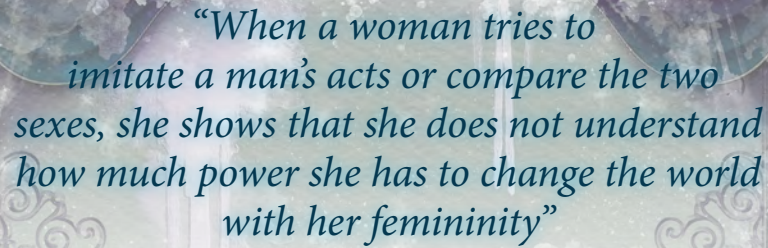
“And the generations are not redeemed except by the reward of righteous women who are in the generation where it is said: “He remembered His kindness and His faith to the house of Israel” (Tehillim 98:3), for the children of Israel there is no inscription here, but to the house of Israel.” And it is also explained in the Midrash Yalkut Me’am Loez (Parashat Shoftim, ‘The Virtues of a Woman) and in the Book Kav Yashar (Chapter 6):



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

“Redemption depends on righteous women, thanks to righteous women our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt, and just as there was a first redemption, there will also be a last redemption.”

We will not be redeemed in the merit of women who are prime ministeresses, ministeresses, members of the Knesset, careerists, or feminists, but only by righteous women who will make the great and real revolution - from exile to the eternal redemption, soon in our time. Amen.



*“When a woman tries to imitate a man’s acts or compare the two sexes, she shows that she does not understand how much power she has to change the world with her femininity”*



Lag B'Omer



**The Biggest  
Explosion in  
History**



## The Biggest Explosion in History

### and the Death of Rabbi Akiva's Disciples

*It was the largest man-made explosion in history up to that time and the largest unintentional explosion in history since then. An explosives accident is one of the biggest nightmares of any country.*



It was the Canadian people who experienced the horrific accident at the beginning of the 20th century.

The city of Halifax in Canada was a very important logistical center for the Allies during the First World War. One of the main reasons for this was the structure of its port: the anchorage was hidden deep within the land, and to enter it, one had to pass through a narrow channel known as The Narrows. The narrow channel protected the anchorage from enemy submarines, and therefore, the port in Halifax attracted ships from all over the world.

On December 5, 1917, late at night, the huge French ship, *Mont-Blanc*, arrived at the port.

## Sichot For Am Yisrael

This ship carried 2,147 tons of picric acid (a known explosive), 223 tons of TNT, 56 tons of gasoline, and 56 tons of nitrocellulose (a type of highly flammable explosive).

The gates of the harbor were closed every night to ship traffic as a defense against submarines, and *Mont-Blanc* had to drop anchor outside the harbor. Early the next morning, the crew rushed to sail the ship to the port.

At that time, a Belgian merchant ship named *Imo* left the port on its way to New York in order to collect food and supplies for Europe.

Just at that moment, the *Mont-Blanc* ship also entered the narrow channel. Its captain noticed the *Imo* approaching, so he blew his horn once, which means in the language of sailors: "This is my lane; return to your lane."

The captain of the *Imo* refused to change his course. He decided that this was the path that suited him. Maybe even a thought crossed his mind – "They have to move. Why me?!" But, we will never know his thoughts, because twenty minutes later, he and most of the crew of the *Imo* were no longer among the living. But, what we do know is that he decided not to back down and to ignore the approaching ship...

The *Imo* blew its horn twice, signalling to the *Mont-Blanc* that it intended to stay on course and that the *Mont-Blanc* should turn left and clear the lane. Between the two ships, there was a frantic siren communication, and none of the ship's leaders agreed



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

to compromise. Within a few minutes, the two captains realized that if they did not do something soon, the ships would collide.

*Mont-Blanc* broke sharply to the left, towards the center of the channel. The *Imo* swung her propellers back in order to brake, but this braking caused her bow to veer to the right, also toward the center of the canal. The collision was inevitable...

At eight thirty in the morning, *Mont-Blanc* and *Imo* collided. Metal hit metal, and sparks flew everywhere. A fire broke out on board the *Mont-Blanc*.

*Mont-Blanc's* crew initially tried to put out the fire, but when the sailors realized the fire got out of control, they hurried to abandon ship. While rowing in the lifeboat, away from the burning barrel of explosives that was their ship, the French sailors shouted to the crew of the *Imo* that the ship beside them was a death trap from hell. Unfortunately, no one on the *Imo* – whose sailors were mostly Norwegian – knew French.

The Halifax port authorities, who also had no idea of the extent of the danger, sprang into action. Fire ships were sent to spray water on the *Mont-Blanc*, while rescue teams concentrated on the docks, ready to take in casualties if there were any.

Hundreds of curious spectators gathered on both banks of the channel.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



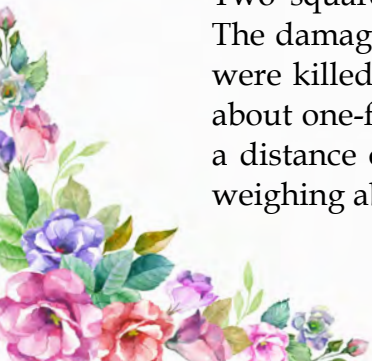
In the meantime, the sailors of *Mont-Blanc* had time to reach a safe place and ran as far as they could, hoping to get away from the place as soon as possible. On the way, they passed by a train station and met Vince Coleman, one of the inspectors. They managed to explain to him what was happening, and Vince started running away as well. A moment later, however, the inspector remembered that in a few minutes, a train loaded with hundreds of passengers was supposed to enter the station. Although he initially hesitated, he then sprinted back into his office.

At 9:04, *Mont-Blanc* exploded.

This was the largest man-made explosion in history up to that time and the largest unintentional explosion in history since then. The TNT that was on the ship created a tremendous shock wave at a speed of up to eight kilometers per second.

The result was destruction and doom!!!

Two square kilometers of urban area near the harbor were completely flattened. The damage was so great that the area was completely unrecognizable. 1500 people were killed where they stood. The shock wave of the explosion, whose power was about one-fifth of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, shook ships sailing in the sea at a distance of about thirty kilometers. Part of *Mont-Blanc's* anchor, a piece of metal weighing about half a ton, was blown four kilometers away.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

To the horror of the people in Halifax, the intense explosion even raised an 18-meter-high tsunami wave that washed over both sides of the channel and uprooted trees, twisted railroad tracks, and destroyed buildings and ships. The people who had survived the explosion itself, now drowned under the raging water, too stunned to try and save themselves. All over Halifax, gas lamps and stoves, that heated the houses during the cold Decembers, were damaged, and huge fires consumed entire neighborhoods. Another five hundred people were killed in the fires. The explosion even shattered windows in the city of Truro, 100 km away.

About nine thousand people were injured in varying degrees of severity. One of the most common injuries was an eye injury, as many, while watching the efforts of the firefighters through the windows of their homes when *Mont-Blanc* exploded, were hit by glass fragments from their windows. Hundreds of people were left injured, and dozens of them were permanently blinded.

Vince Coleman, the train inspector, was killed in his office, but not before he sent panicked messages to all incoming trains, ordering them to stop. The lives of hundreds of passengers were saved thanks to the heroism and supreme sacrifice of one railway inspector. Coleman is today considered one of Canada's greatest heroes.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

If we look at this alarming story, it seems to consist of two stubborn and arrogant captains who stood their ground and decided not to respect each other. Their behavior resulted in a horrible apocalyptic disaster, which killed thousands of people.

This story really reminded me of the death of Rabbi Akiva's disciples. As described in the Gemara in Yevamoth (page 62b), Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of disciples, from Gevet to Antipers, and they all died in one period of time because they did not respect each other. The world became desolate...

Of course you can't compare the stubborn, arrogant, and lazy captains to the holy disciples of Rabbi Akiva, but yes, they died and the world was desolate. These were both terrible and horrifying apocalyptic disasters, and all because they did not respect each other.

If we wonder about the seemingly unfair punishment for a small offense of lack of respect, we probably don't understand how important it is to respect another Jew and how strict God is about that.



The heroism of Vince Coleman, the railway inspector who was killed in his office, is engraved in the annals of the Canadian people. How one inspector sacrificed himself to save others is a heroism that undoubtedly deserves appreciation and admiration.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

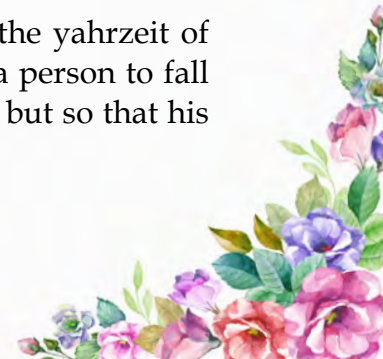
Vince's noble act was a kind of counterbalance to the human race, against the stupidity and pride of the captains. The resourcefulness and self-sacrifice he displayed became a national symbol for the Canadian people.

But, the holy Sages require much more from us than just the sacrifice of a life to save the lives of many people. As they said in the Gemara in Bava Metzia (page 59a), Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai: It is better for a man to throw himself into the fiery furnace and not whiten the face of his friend in public.

The Sages say that killing yourself in a fire is preferable to insulting your fellow man.

It is interesting to note that this saying was said by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who was one of the last five students of Rabbi Akiva after the terrible disaster, as mentioned in the Gemara in Yevamoth (page 62b). He learned and understood the terrible lesson from the rest of his friends who died hard deaths by the thousands, just because they didn't treat each other with respect.

Perhaps this is the reason why we light bonfires in Lag B'Omer on the yahrzeit of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai – to remember the rule that it is better for a person to fall into the fiery furnace, not only to save his friend from physical harm, but so that his friend is not humiliated.





The Sages'  
Emotions



**The Point of  
Emotion**





### The Point of Emotion

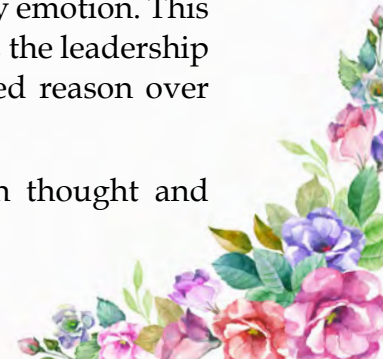
One of the maxims used by Albert Einstein, one of the greatest physicists of all time, is: "The main thing in life is not to let dead laws kill a healthy emotion."

The healthy emotion is one of the most beautiful qualities that God created in his world. The word "emotion" is translated in Hebrew as רגש, which also means grouping and connection [see the commentaries on Tehillim 55:15]. It instructs the relations between one person and another. The emotion comes from momentary observations and paying attention, which raise the heart to new heights and fill the eyes with tears.

The concept of emotion works in every person from the depths of his heart outwards. The emotion that permeates the heart shows its signs in tears and crying, and the pure crying that comes from excitement is a clean cry, without sorrow, without disappointments. It is simply an emotion.

Sometimes, it seems that the Torah is intellectual, cold, and without any emotion. This is indeed how the leadership of the judge should be, and even more so, the leadership of the Sanhedrin who dealt with the death penalties, who considered reason over emotion. The less emotion, the more reason,

But, it is interesting to note the fact that our Sages were kings in thought and





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

emotion in a gripping and amazing way. This is necessary, because our holy Torah is not like any other book of laws about which we must warn “not to let dead laws kill a healthy emotion.” Rather, it is eternal life, and not just eternal life, but “eternal life that is planted within us,” and within the inner world of man, emotion is also planted...

The concept of emotion that arose in the hearts of the Sages was recorded in Jewish literature. The excitement of the great men and the lights of the nation was not an ordinary excitement. Rather, their excitement came from the depths of the divine perception and thought, an excitement that marvels at the depth of the divine thought, its knowledge, and its guidance.



The Gemara in Sanhedrin (page 103b) says that when Rabbi Yonatan read the verse, “For the bed is too short for one to stretch, and the ruler-it shall be narrow when he enters” (Isaiah 28:20), he would cry and say: G-d, about whom it is written: “He gathers in the water of the sea as a mound” (Psalms 33:7), a Narrow mask would be made for Him.

The verse speaks of the time of destruction of the Temple, when the people of Israel chose to worship idols rather than worship God. The Almighty is in sorrow and



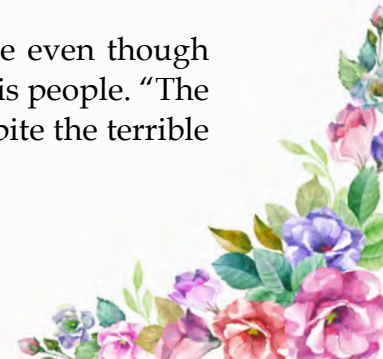
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

delivers a prophecy to His prophet and says, “So says the Lord: What wrong did your forefathers find in Me, that they distanced themselves from Me, and they went after futility and themselves became futile?” (Jeremiah 2:5). Not only did the people of Israel worship the idols, but they brought the idols and their abominations into the Temple. As mentioned in the Prophets about King Manasseh, “He placed the graven image of the asherah that he made, in the house concerning which the Lord had said to David and to his son Shlomo: ‘In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, will I establish My Name forever’” (2 Kings, 21:7 and see further in Sanhedrin, page 103b).

It is possible to understand in the simplicity of the words that Rabbi Yonatan regretted the sorrow of the Almighty that the mask [idolatry] became a צרה, which means in Hebrew, a trouble, and also a second wife, known as “Tsara,” since she is the trouble of the first wife.

But, you can get excited...

You can be moved by the wonderful leadership of the King, because even though they worshiped idols in His house, He did not go and did not leave His people. “The mask” was difficult for Him, meaning that he stayed to live there despite the terrible sorrow.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

When a person observes this deeply, and imagines the Father, our Father in Heaven, who, despite all the sorrows, betrayals, and transgressions, insists on staying and being with His sons, as the verse states, “The One who dwells with them in their impurity” (Vayikra 16:16), their heart will be moved and amazed by the love of the Creator for him. For Rabbi Yonatan, this excitement ended in intense crying.



We find another example of this great emotion in the Gemara in Tractate Kiddushin (page 81b). The holy Tanna, Rabbi Akiva, when he reached the verse, “But he does not know, he is guilty, and he shall bear his transgression” (Vayikra 5:17), he would weep and say: one who intended to eat fat that is permitted for eating and by mistake, ended up eating fat that is forbidden to eat, the Torah said, “But he does not know, he is guilty, and he shall bear his transgression.” Whoever intended to eat non-kosher fat and ate it, all the more so!

In simple terms, it can be thought that Rabbi Akiva’s cry is a cry of sorrow or fear from the Creator, that even for unintentional transgressions one must bring atonement, and even more so when transgressions are committed on purpose.

But, you can get excited...

The Creator of the world, the King of Kings, whom billions of angels are serving



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

every moment and every second, cares about every Jew, regardless of who he is. He is saddened even by the lack of attention that caused a Jew to replace kosher fat with fat that is forbidden to eat, and which he then ate. Therefore, the Creator of the world, who loves the Jew and cares about all his actions, asks us to bring atonement also for the mistakes.



In Midrash Rabbah (Vilna Parashat Emor Parsha 26 letter 7), it is stated that Rabbi Hiya, when he came to his reading of the verse, “For behold, He forms mountains and creates the wind, and declares to man what his speech is” (Amos 4:13), he said: What does “declares to man what his speech is” mean? Rabbi Huna said Yabe”tz said: that even conversations which have no real meaning, such as a simple conversation that a man has with his wife, are written on a man’s notebook, which will be read in front of him at the time of his death.

Again, what is the meaning of crying while reading the verses?

As mentioned, we are used to interpreting this as a cry from the threat of judgment, but we will explain that here too that it is a cry of emotion.

It is a tremendous emotion to know that the great and Almighty King of Kings listens to our conversations. We are so important to Him that our every word is transcribed.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

The King himself listens. Is there greater excitement than knowing that we are so loved by the King???



We will end with a final example from the words of the Holy Zohar (Parashat Beshalach page 57a and a commentary “Matok MiDvash” on page 636), which tells that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai also wept when he came to a certain verse. The verse that evoked the tears of the holy and great Tanna, Rabbi Shimon, is: “He has withdrawn His right hand” (Eicha 2:3). Rabbi Shimon wept and said: How is it possible that G-d withdrew His right hand, and it would be placed in the back, where all the impure and evil powers dwell, and they would get all the abundance of graces from G-d? But, since the impurity descended into the world with the transgression of the First Man, Adam (see the words of our Rabbi the Arizal in Etz Chaim Sha'ar 25 chapter 2), and with the destruction of the Temple, the right Hand of G-d remained in the back to give powers to the impure powers.

Those who love simple explanations will say that the reason for crying is sorrow, as the Shekinah is in exile, allowing for the rule of the impure powers.

But, if we look at the words of the midrash in Yalkut Shimoni (Eicha subsection 1025), which explain the reason that the Almighty withdrew His right hand, we will understand the words differently. It says as follows: Rabbi Yehuda, son of Rabbi Simon, said, since

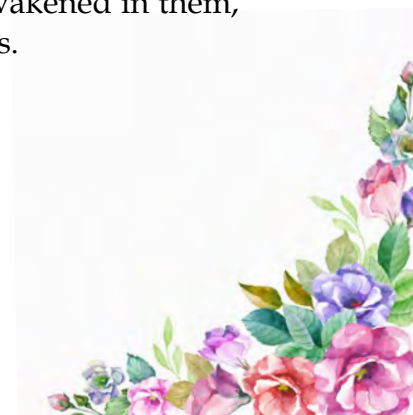


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

the transgressions of the people of Israel caused their enemies to conquer Jerusalem, the enemies entered and handcuffed them, and put their hands behind their backs, so the Holy One, blessed be He said: I said: With him I am in trouble, and now my children are in sorrow, with hands cuffed behind their backs, while I am “free.” That is why “He has withdrawn His right hand.”

It is a wonderful and moving thing for us that God decided to “limit” himself and grieve himself as a sign of participation in the sorrow of His sons. How much emotion there is in the fact that even when the father punishes, he cries and feels sorry for the sorrow of His beloved children, and thereby, shows everyone that love still beats in his heart despite all his son’s sins.

The perspective of our Sages on the aforementioned verses came from a heart full of emotion and a mind full of understanding. In this, they differed from the rest of the crowd – while reading the verses, not even a single fine emotion awakened in them, as it does in the soul of the person who really understands the verses.





Geulah \  
Redemption



**Redemption  
in the Last  
Generation?!**





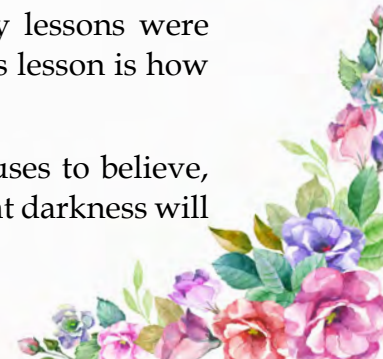
### Redemption in the Last Generation?!

The American writer, Mary Mapes Dodge, published her book *Hans Brinker*, also known as *The Silver Skates*, in 1865 – a children’s book that became famous all over the world.

In chapter 18 of the book, which is called “Friends in Need,” Hans and his classmates read a story called “The Hero of Harlem.” The hero of the story, an unidentified 8-year-old boy, goes out of town to the other side of the local polder dam (an area of land surrounded by dams) to deliver cakes to a blind man. On his way back to the city, the boy notices a tiny hole in the dam through which water has begun to flow. The boy understands that the water may sweep away the dam and flood the city. In the blink of an eye, he climbs the embankment and closes the hole with his finger. He cries out for help but no one hears and he spends the cold night on the embankment. Only at dawn do they notice him and arrive to repair the hole in the dam.

This story has become a cultural example all over the world. Many lessons were learned from this story, which never happened. But, the most obvious lesson is how great the power of a small act, of a small child, during a flood is...

Klal Yisrael is in a state of longing for redemption, but the heart refuses to believe, especially in this difficult generation, which is full of temptations – “that darkness will





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

cover the land and a mist the nations” (Isaiah 60:2). The dam of impurity, immodesty, adultery, and apostasy keeps breaking through. How will redemption come?

This question was asked by Rabbi Chaim Vital, the great disciple of the great Kabbalist, Rabbi Yitzhak Luria, the Holy Ari. Our Rabbi the Arizal’s answer was:

In this orphaned generation, even a small thing that a Jewish person does sincerely for the sake of heaven is much more important to God, blessed be He, than the great things that were done in the first generations. And, when there is some real enlightenment in his heart, even a little, it is more important before God, blessed be He, than a great light in the first generations, which, according to the level of the orphan generation, counts for a lot. (Pri Tzadik Parashat Ki Teitzei, letter 12, Parashat Ki Tavo letter 16).

Reality proves that in great darkness, even the smallest light illuminates a great deal. Therefore, the merit of each and every one of the people of Israel in this generation, when one observes the Torah and mitzvot, his merit is greater than the first generations.’

Precisely because of the multitude of troubles and exiles, when one sacrifices their life, they ascend to much higher ranks than their ancestors. And as the Chatam Sofer writes in his book, *Torat Moshe*, regarding this verse in the Torah, “Take a census of the sons of Gershon, of them too, following their fathers’ houses, according to their families” (Bamidbar 4:22):



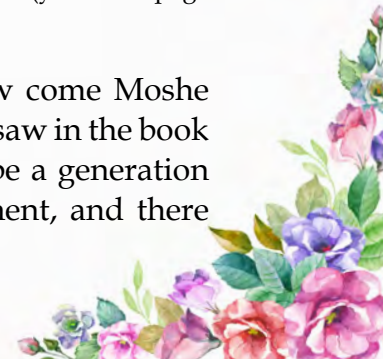
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

The reason why it was not said in the Bnei Marari, “Take a census,” as it was said in the Bnei Kohath (Bamidbar 4:2) and the Bnei Gershon (Bamidbar 4:22), is because the Levites are alluding to the condition of the people of Israel, and when the people of Israel are in a “Marari” (state of “bitterness”), where their enemies make their lives bitter and destroy them, and the sons of Marari, “Machli and Mushi” (Bamidbar 3:20), plague them, (“Machli” – every disease and every plague, and the second name “Mushi” – they were removed from their tents and outside they were thrown to the birds of the sky) why would he say to them, “Take a census of the sons of Gershon, of them too, following their fathers’ houses, according to their families?” Isn’t it that their ancestors are a lesser level, and they are greater than them?

We see that the slavery of exile and the darkness of troubles can make man greater than his ancestors.

But, the great virtue of our generation is not only because of the troubles and calamities, as the holy genius, Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneerson zt”l (the fifth Rebbe in Chabad dynasty, known as: Rambam of Hasidic doctrine), already wrote in Otzar haMa’amarim (year 5679 page 464):

“Now this man Moshe was exceedingly humble” (Bamidbar 12:3). How come Moshe Rabbeinu was not proud at all? Didn’t he acknowledge his virtues? He saw in the book of the first Adam (see Shemot Rabbah Parsha 40 Siman 2) that there would be a generation in the time of Mashiach in which there would be no divine attainment, and there





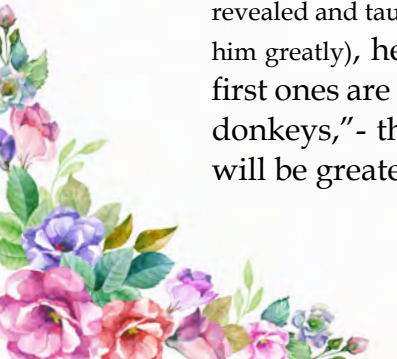
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

would be no real worship in the heart and mind, but only the actual observance of the Mitzvot, and this too would be difficult for them, and they will be devoted to it, as there would be many obstacles and hidden things. They will stand against every obstacle and observe the mitzvot with devotion and pass the trials. And so, Moshe felt completely humble by this advantage – that they are much bigger than him.

And the thing is startling, that the virtue of withstanding the trials of our generation, caused Moshe Rabbenu his great humility.

These things are also explained in the words of the holy Gaon, Rabbi Meir Rotenberg zt"l, the Admor of Apta, in his book, *Or l'Shamayim* (parashat Tetzaveh page 138):

In the Sefer Brit Menucha (Nikud 8), by Rabbi Avraham maRimon the Sephardi zt"l (in the Sefer Etz Chaim, Rabbi Chaim Vital Zt"l writes about this book: The Sefer Brit Menucha is genuine, and its author is a great Sage in Torah and wisdom, and is faithful to the spirit and who covered his words in depth. This book was made by the soul of one ancient righteous person, to whom Eliyahu the Prophet was revealed and taught. Also, in the introduction to the book published by the Ramha"l Institute, they praised him greatly), he wrote that what they said in the Gemara on Shabbat (page 112a) "if the first ones are like angels, we are like humans. And, if they are like humans, we are like donkeys," - this was said to the previous generations, but in the last generation they will be greater than the first generations.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Even the Mashgiach, Rabbi Yeruham Leibovitz, in his many conversations, talks about the value of the generation and the Torah scholars of this generation, and as explained in his book, *Da'at Torah* (Bamidbar, page 147):

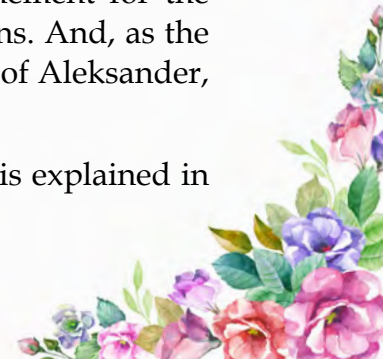
**Today in our very dark generations, Yeshiva students are certainly greater than the great ones from the previous generation.**

Not only in the acts of keeping the mitzvot and the Torah is the virtue of the people of our generation greater, but even in the ways of repentance. The Sages say in Avot DeRabbi Natan (Nuscha 1, chapter 12):

“For a live dog is better than a dead lion” (Ecclesiastes 9:4). “For a live dog is better” – this is the wicked that live in this world. “Than the dead lion” – even from Abraham, Yitzchak, and Jacob who passed away.

Moreover, it is explained in Pesikta Zutra (Lekach Tov, Ecclesiastes chapter 9, point 4), regarding the matter of repentance and observance of the mitzvot. Even atonement for the transgressions is easier for this generation than for the first generations. And, as the holy genius, Rabbi Yerachmiel Yisrael Yitzchak Danziger, the Admor of Aleksander, says in the book, *Yishmach Yisrael* (Drush l’Hanukkah letter 56):

The students of Rabbi Chaim Vital z”l asked their Rabbi about what is explained in Tractate Shabbat in the Jerusalem Talmud (end of chapter 5):





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

The cow of Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah used to come out with a leash between its horns on Shabbat, against the ruling of the Sages, and Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah's teeth turned black from fasting (to atone for it). The disciples asked Rabbi Chaim Vital Z"l: Our Rabbi, if he made himself suffer so much for such a simple thing that his teeth turned black from the fasts, what would we say and do to atone for our sins? And, he answered them: At this time in the darkness of exile, even one true cry and sigh of a Jewish man, from the bottom of his heart, is considered as fasting in earlier times.

Rabbi Yerachmiel Yisrael Yitzchak Danziger, at the end of his book, *Yishmach Yisrael*, says: From the time of Rabbi Chaim Vital Z"l until now, the exile and the troubles are increasing and every day's curse is multiplied by the following day's. Surely the cry of a Jewish person, from the bottom of his heart, is as precious in the eyes of God as those fasts in earlier years were.

We will add and say that over a hundred years have passed since the time of the Rabbi, the writer of *Yishmach Yisrael* (who died on the eve of Rosh Chodesh Shevat 5670), and the level of the generations is lower. Thus, the value of the cry from the bottom of the heart has increased twelvefold in the eyes of God.

This is the reason why we must take advantage of our actions. At every moment, we are standing in front of mines of gold and diamonds, and we can reach high ranks with simple actions. The holy Gaon, Rabbi Aharon Karliner, the late Admor of Karlin,



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

wrote in his book, *Beit Aharon* (Page 87):

My beloved brothers, believe me, and it is full in all the books, that what the first righteous people needed to achieve in several days and months can now be corrected in one hour. (In the book, *Michtav Me'Eliyahu*, part 4, page 108, he explained his words further- see there).

After all, we are in a situation of “for behold, darkness will cover the land and a fog the nations.” If we lighten the darkness with our actions, the end of the verse will be fulfilled in us – “And the Lord will shine upon you and His glory will be upon you” (Isaiah 60:2).

Finally, we must remember that by making sacrifices and standing up to the test, a person becomes a “Heroine of Harlem,” or even a “Hero of the World” (see *Avot*, chapter 4, mishnah 1).





The Greatness  
Of The Creator



**Wretched King**



## Wretched King

### Insulting the King of Thailand

On November 23, 2011, the verdict of the Thai court was published: 20 years in prison for an SMS that insulted the king.

The royal family is considered a particularly sensitive issue, and the 61-year-old Ampon Tangnoppakul paid a heavy price after he was convicted of sending messages that insulted the royal family, including the king.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej was the king in question (died on October 13, 2016). His people considered him a demigod. That was why the punishment for offending him was so severe.

Ampon got off cheaply though, because four years later on 09/08/15, the verdict of the Thai court against Pongsak Sriboonpeng was a sentence of 30 years in prison, merely because of six posts he wrote on a social network.

A local rights organization called iLaw said that more than 56 similar cases have ended this way.

The laws of the countries of the world, even without monarchical rule, have understood

## Sichot For Am Yisrael



that it is necessary to give respect to every public servant, since he is part of the rule of law. In Israel, for example, the law, “insulting a public servant,” which appears in section 288 of the Penal Law, is: “He who insults with gestures, with words or in actions, a public servant, or a judge or an official of a religious court, or a member of a committee of inquiry according to the Law of Committees of Inquiry, 5729-1968, when they fulfill their duties or in relation to the fulfillment of their duties, shall be punished by imprisonment of six months.”

### **You hurt the king; you will pay...**

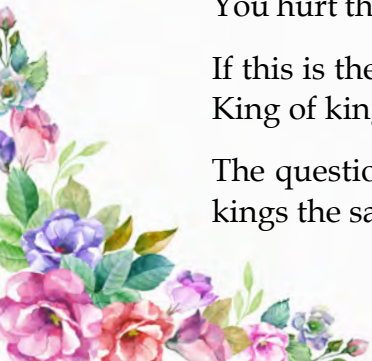
In today’s modern and free age, it is difficult for us to grasp in our minds what the concept of a king is. In order for us to get the necessary understanding, we will look at the saying of the Sages in the Gemara in Ketubot (page 17a):

“A king who forgoes his honor – his honor cannot be forgone.”

You hurt the king; you will pay, and the payment will be painful, immediate, and fast.

If this is the case with a king of flesh and blood, what is said about harming the holy King of kings, blessed be He, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing?

The question expands– why don’t you see the punishment for insulting the King of kings the same way you see the punishment for insulting a king of flesh and blood?





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

### **The leadership of the King of kings**

God's wonderful leadership in that He allows everyone to make choices and decisions in an absolute manner, sometimes creates a sense of lull in the general public, for what are the heroics and wonders of the King of kings who hears His blasphemy and remains silent?

This great bewilderment is not only difficult for the Israeli man in the 21st century. The question was difficult for the great men of our nation, including Jeremiah the prophet and Daniel "Ish Hamudot" in the days of the first Temple. And, as the Gemara says in Yoma (page 69B):

Moshe praised God by saying: The Great, The Hero, and The Awesome God. However, at the time of Jeremiah the prophet, when the gentiles came, Jeremiah said; "in what way is God Awesome, if the foreigners invaded His temple?" Jeremiah didn't call God "awesome". Then after Jeremiah came Daniel who said "foreigners enslave His sons, where is His Heroism? So Daniel also did not call God a "Hero".

After all, the great men of the nation decided, due to the concealment of G-d that existed in their time, not to mention and praise the Creator's virtues.

Moreover, the Gemara continues:

When the members of the Great Assembly came [the supreme institution of the Sages





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

of Israel from the end of the last prophets of Israel to the beginning of the period of the first Sages, the Sages of the Mishnah period] to correct the wording and order of the prayers, they corrected them to say again, “the Great, the Hero and the Awesome God,” and said: Rather, “this is His heroism, He who waits a long time for the wicked to repent, and this is His awesomeness, that if it were not for the fear of the Holy One, Blessed be He, how could one nation exist among the nations?”

### “Wretched King”

Unfortunately, heretics pop up from all around, as it is no longer a shame to speak as an infidel. The common infidel can disbelieve that God created everything and think instead that man came from a monkey (Darwin’s theory) or that the world came from an explosion (a theory which Stephen Hawking supported), and still be considered normal and even an educated person.

If that’s not enough, you also occasionally hear blasphemy towards heaven. And the Sages have already said regarding this in the Gemara in Gitin (page 56a): Abba Hanan says: “Who is like You that is immune” (Tehillim 89:9) – who is like You that is immune, that You hear the taunts and blasphemy of the wicked and remain silent. Rabbi Ishmael says: “Who is like You among the powerful, O Lord?” (Shemot 15:11) – who is mute like You. Rabbi Moshe Cordovero (one of the important Kabbalists of Safed in the 16th century), at the beginning of his book “Tomer Devorah” explained that because of



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

this, they called God, Blessed be He, “a Wretched King,” in Sifrei Heichalot (chapter 18), for there is no greater insult to Him than this: that with the life He blessed the man and with the organs that He made for His servant, that he would use them to sin against Him (his Creator). It is compared to a king who gave his servant some money to buy bread, so that he can make a living with it. Nevertheless, the servant came and bought a stick to hit the king with it. Is there a worse servant than this? And with all of it, G-d is a Wretched King, and forgives. He is willing to wait a long time for the wicked to do Teshuva. We should follow His example and also wait and hope for those lost souls to return and do whatever we can to help lead them back to the right path [Also brought up in Reshit Chochma, the Gate of Fear, end of chapter 10].

### **A promise for a good year**

As we stand at the beginning of the year, the Sages amended the regulation to mention in our prayers again and again that God is King “and His kingdom controls everything,” so that we always remember that even though sometimes He seems to be a “Wretched King,” we must not take advantage of this. It is our job to show and publicize His majesty, and to be careful not to rebel against Him. With this conduct alone, we buy ourselves a promise for a good and blessed year.

**Happy New Year!!!**



The Holiday Of  
Hanukkah



**The Greek  
Culture**



## The Greek Culture

“On the right side stands the opponent with 90 kg of steel muscles,” shouted the announcer, “and on the left side, ‘the monster’ 110 kg of muscles...” The audience held its breath...

When the gong sounded, he was ready, focused, and with an iron will to win. There was a quick and precise jump in the air, a tactical move with his legs that were placed on the “monster’s” head, and the battle was decided. The swift landing towards the ground and the ‘monster’s’ head hitting the floor of the arena, were the most overwhelming proof of his shining victory.

And, the judge knocked 1... 2... 3...

And, the winner is...



The Greek and mainly Athenian boy began his education at the age of seven. The main institution was the “Playastra,” a wrestling school. It was a typical Greek building with an open courtyard in the center, and in its wings, there were cloakrooms, and massage and bathing rooms. The Greeks attached utmost importance to the wrestling branch.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

The boys, who finished their studies at the age of 16, continued their education in the second track – the gymnasium – until the age of 18. In the gymnasium, which was an institution that treated physical culture as the highest priority, the boys were trained and educated, and they competed in various sports.

The word, “gymnasium,” is derived from the word, “gymnos,” which means naked in Greek. It was in accordance with the desire to demonstrate the physical strength that the Ionian culture worshiped.

The writer, Lucianus (a Greek writer in the 120s AD), referred to this when he said: “For we believe that when they (the athletes) come to know how much we respect the winners, and with what solemnity we announce and publish their names among all the Greeks, their desire for gymnastic exercises will increase, and in order for them to arrogate this honor to themselves, they must appear naked in front of a distinguished and numerous people, and then their concern for the body and for maintaining its proper condition will increase. Anyone who diligently strives for victory will deserve to appear without shame in his naked body.”

The Greeks were not satisfied with the culture of the body as a method of education, so they also added religious elements to it. The sports games in ancient Greece were called ‘holy games.’ These games had a strong connection to the Greek religion and carried a religious and prestigious stamp.



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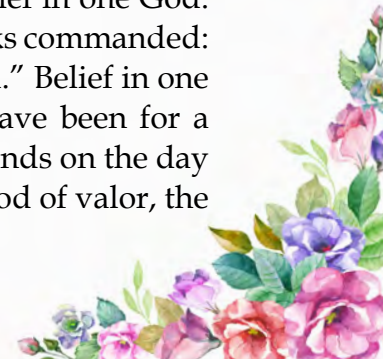
The blind worship of the culture of the body and its pleasures also later entered the culture of the Romans who learned it from the Greeks (see further in Rasha"r Hirsch, Genesis chapter 9 verse 27). In the Gemara on Shabbat (page 13b), the holy Tanna, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, said: Everything they fixed and built is only for their own desires. They built markets to put prostitutes in them, baths to refine themselves, bridges to take payment.

The love of self and the worship of the physical body are the main things in Greek culture.



The Greek religion was polytheistic (belief in several gods), since when you worship the culture of the body and its pleasures, every pleasure is a deity, and the deities are as many as the pleasures.

The main point of the Greeks' war against the Jews was about the belief in one God. As explained in the words of the Sages (Megillat Ta'anit chapter 7), the Greeks commanded: Write for you on the bull's horn, "We have no part in the God of Israel." Belief in one God means having obligations, since, if God created you, it must have been for a specific purpose. So, it is not possible to have a physical purpose that ends on the day of death. Therefore, they chose to believe in multiple deities, like the god of valor, the



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

god of beauty, the god of wealth, and the common denominator between all of them is the pleasures of the body and its cultivation.



In the Midrash Tanhuma (Buber Parashat VaYeichi Siman 13), it is stated that Levi, who was the third tribe, is the power against the third kingdom of Greece. Levi (in Hebrew לוי) has three letters, and Greece (in Hebrew יון) has three letters. One sacrifices bulls, and one writes on the horn of the bull that they have no part in the God of Israel. Those from the majority and those from the minority, Moshe saw them and blessed them, as it is said, “May the Lord bless his army” (Deuteronomy 33:11). After all, the fighting force against Greek culture is the Levi tribe.

The Hasmoneans did win, but they did not succeed in defeating the Greek culture – the culture that says, “Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (Isaiah 22:13), and that advocates the development of the body as a supreme goal. This culture is alive and *kicking*.

The adoration and worship of the “golden calf,” or of another occasional calf belonging to this culture, is also found on the Jewish Israeli streets.

Many mitzvot in Judaism take us out of our natural comfort zone, such as sukkah and eating matzah on Pesach, and even take us out from the warmth of the home, such as



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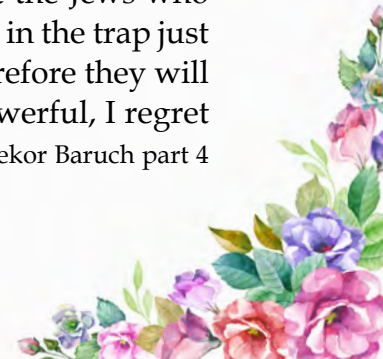
the mitzvah of family purity. Anti-Semitism also doesn't help make the situation more ideal, so it is not always comfortable to be a Jew, especially a devout Jew.

The poet, writer, and journalist, Heinrich Heine (December 13, 1797, Dusseldorf – February 17, 1856, Paris), defined it well in a letter he wrote to his Jewish friend, Immanuel Wohlwill, two years before he became a Christian:

“I also don't have the strength to grow a beard, and be called “Judenmauschel,” and to fast and all. I don't even have the strength to eat matzot regularly. I now live with a Jew (moss and geese across the street), and I get matzos instead of bread and break my teeth. But, I console myself when I think: after all, we are in exile!”

After he converted, Heinrich wrote to his friend, Moshe Moser (January 9, 1826):

“If I were allowed, according to the laws of the state, to steal silver spoons, I would not have converted to christianity. And on Shabbat, I visited the temple (the Reform Prayer House), and I heard Dr. Salomon with his sharp tongue, talking about the Jews who converted to Christianity, and ridiculed them: ‘They would be trapped in the trap just because they hope to have one of the roles of the government, and therefore they will betray their faith’ – in my faith that his moral words are good and powerful, I regret that I have converted, which was a foolishness and stupidity” (Sefer Mekor Baruch part 4 chapter 43 page 927a).





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The constant search to satisfy the needs of the body led him and many like him to leave the Jewish religion.



The Gaon Rabbi Baruch Epstein in his book, *Mekor Baruch* (Part 4, Chapter 43, Page 926b), says: With all the greatness of the soul and the strength of the patience that my uncle, the Gaon, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Berlin [the Netziv of Wolozin], had in his attitude towards people with different viewpoints and opinions, he could not tolerate and suppress the sorrow and grief he had when he heard that one of the “maskilim” had converted his religion and thus he would say: “They did not take this step because of religious criticism or choosing a different religion, but only for the purpose of achieving a goal in life: a life that has a good **physical** life. And this teaches that this man is flesh and blood, with a great appetite and a great thirst, and the desire of physical life is like a burning fire in his heart, and that he has no advantage over any beast and animal that only fills its desires, and this is their purpose of life.”



When the days of Hanukkah come, we see the rule of the Sages, who established a remembrance of the miracle of finding the jar of oil, but almost did not remember the miracle of salvation from the great war (see Peri Chadash Siman 570 Subsection A, and in

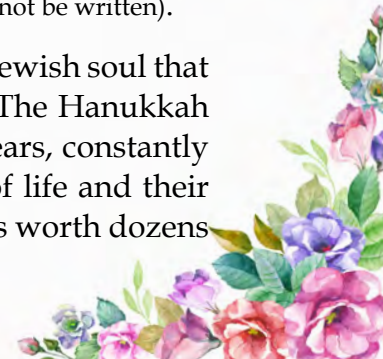


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the Mishneh Sachir – Moadim, in the article, “The Miracle of Hanukkah was for a Different Year,” and in the book, Maasei laMelech on Rambam, Laws of the Temple, Chapter 1, Halacha 1, letter 10 and more), because they praised the greatness of the victory of the spirit of purity over the Greek spirit of impurity and their glorification of physical strength, and they feared that the victory of the war would lead to a glorified imagination of “my power and the strength of my hand” (Deuteronomy 8:17) and the intoxication of the feeling of victory and worshiping the physical body, which are central to the culture of Greece.

For this reason, the Sages commanded that the preferred place to light the Hanukkah candles is in the doorway facing the street, below ten tefachim (Shabbat page 21b), so that it should be at the lowest place of the peak of worldliness and be located close to the ground, which is not a holy place, since it has never been that the Shekinah descended below ten tefachim (Sukkah, page 5a). It is also towards a public place that usually belongs to the forces of impurity. Precisely there, the Hanukkah candle should be lit to remind us of the victory of the spirit over the body (Mishneh Sachir to Rabbi Issachar Shlomo Teichtel of Hungary Mishna – holidays, in the article, Ness Hanukkah-Hanukkah miracle could not be written).

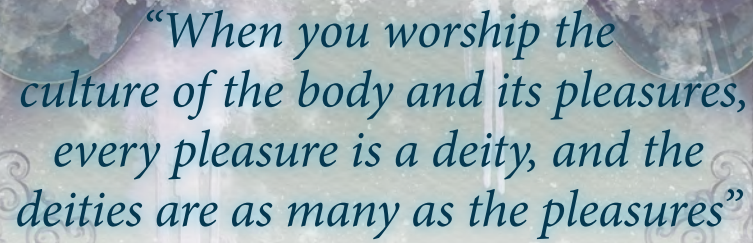
The flame that flickers in the dark Hanukkah nights is the flame of the Jewish soul that never goes out, despite all the surrounding darkness and obscurity. The Hanukkah candles come to light the way for us even today after thousands of years, constantly directing us in the treatment we should give towards the pleasures of life and their physicality, and in what the value of spiritual life is among us, which is worth dozens



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

times more than the physical life. Although the physical life seems like a “monster” that threatens every step and the life of the spirit, this “monster” can also be defeated with agility, precision, and the will to succeed.





*“When you worship the  
culture of the body and its pleasures,  
every pleasure is a deity, and the  
deities are as many as the pleasures”*



Tu B'Shvat



**The Feelings of  
the Plants**





### The Feelings of the Plants

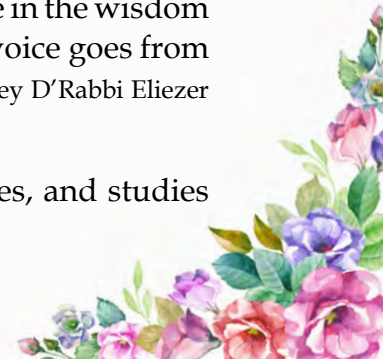
Tu B'Shevat has arrived – a holiday for trees, plants, and branches. The world of plants deserves to be remembered and celebrated once a year, or to be mourned over because of the millions of trees, fruits, and vegetables that are chopped down, burned, and cut from the source of their life.

The world of science is controversial about plants' feelings. Some of them are subjective because they are vegetarians and are simply afraid "that they won't have anything left to eat," and some of them have not yet seen the results of various studies.

In the winter of 1968, Cleve Backster published the findings of his botanical research, in which he tested many plants with a polygraph machine and found that they respond to truth and lies. Baxter, a doctor of alternative medicine and a polygraph expert, claimed that plants experience a range of sensations and emotions.

The world of science is still shrouded in fog on this issue. But, we believe in the wisdom of the Sages who said, "When you cut down a tree that bears fruit, its voice goes from the end of the world to the other end and the voice is not heard" (Pirkey D'Rabbi Eliezer chapter 34).

Science is slowly creeping towards discovering the words of our Sages, and studies



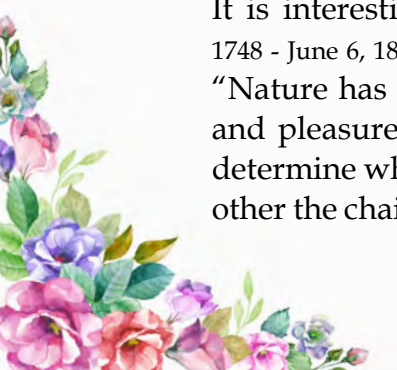


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

have found that apparently plants have the ability to feel pain and even the ability to send “chemical signals,” through which they convey messages of danger and pain to other plants. A study by the pair of researchers, Apple and Cockroft, from 2014, found that when a caterpillar chews on white cruciferous plants (it is a flowering plant from the Cruciferae family, along with cabbage and mustard plants), the plants react to the air vibrations of the eating noise and secrete a poison that deters it. Another study showed that there are plants that transmit electrical signals when they are in pain.

The findings are piling up and the plants feel and react more than we see, but most researchers explain that these are not emotions, but survival responses of sensory means.

So, according to science, the plant can feel pain and pleasure, but not real emotions.



It is interesting to note that the English philosopher, Jeremy Bentham (February 15, 1748 - June 6, 1832. He was a political philosopher, jurist, and British social and legal reformer), wrote, “Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

we do, in all we say, in all we think” (Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Oxford Clarendon Press, 1907 Chapter\_9\_Bentham.pdf).

According to this philosopher, there is not that much difference between the common sedge plant, and man. Both are motivated by pain and pleasure. Is it possible that we are nothing but an upgraded bean plant?

Many unbelievers and idiots who believe in Darwin’s theory are comfortable with this – either they are a developed monkey, or they are a climbing plant with feelings. But, when we study the Torah, we see that man was created as a creation in itself and with special attention, and as stated in the Midrash (Kohelet Rabbah Parsha 7, siman 13):

*At the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the first Adam, He took him and showed him all the trees of heaven and said to him: Look how beautiful and fine my creations are, and everything I created for you I created, make up your mind that you do not spoil and destroy my world, that if you spoil it there is no one to fix it after you.*

After all, we humans are the most important in the world, and our function is to keep the world from being spoiled. And, from this thought, Tu B’Shevat can also become a day of small soul-searching.



The Torah  
Protects And  
Saves



**Recruitment of  
Yeshiva Students**



### Recruitment of Yeshiva Students

“On the basis of Section 12 of the Security Service Law, I released yeshiva students from the obligation of regular service. This release applies only to yeshiva students who are actually studying Torah in yeshiva and as long as they are studying Torah in yeshiva” – so wrote the first Prime Minister of the State of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, in January 1951, to the Chief of Staff at the time, Yigal Yadin. The goal then was to grant an exemption to 400 yeshiva students, due to the severe blow that the yeshiva world suffered in the Holocaust, as well as the desire to reach agreements with the ultra-Orthodox leadership.

Seven decades have passed and the same social moral question haunts the ultra-orthodox public in its various factions.

The question of recruiting yeshiva students – some will define it as a social problem, some will define it as a moral and emotional problem, and the fools in society will call it a national security problem. The question is more serious, as presented in 1958 by Ben-Gurion in a letter to the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Yitzhak Herzog zt”l, after the settlement, ‘Their Torah is their Art,’ was secured. The Prime Minister at the time wrote: “This is first of all a great moral question, whether it is appropriate that the son of a certain mother be killed for the defense of the homeland, and the son of another mother will be sitting in his room and studying safely, while most of the young people of Israel are risking their lives to die?!”

## Sichot For Am Yisrael

In fake piety, Judge Elyakim Rubinstein (in February 2012) cited in the ruling to annul the Tal Law [a law that eased the recruitment of yeshivas], a verse out of context: “And Moshe said to the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuven: Your brothers will come to war and you will sit here?” (Chapter 32 verse 6).

Again and again, this question comes up in different and different versions by heads of government, alarming belligerents, bereaved parents, and even ordinary citizens – why is there this exemption for yeshiva students???

As we are commanded to walk “in the footsteps of the flock,” following past generations (Song of Songs chapter 1 verse 8), we will go into a brief overview of one of the periods of our people.



In the year of 3404-5, (355-356 BCE), our nation was in terrible danger of destruction. The evil Haman, from the seed of Amalek, planned, initiated, and organized the “Final Solution” for the Jewish people, a mass slaughter of the entire House of Israel in all 127 of Ahasuerus’ countries in one day. Everything was with the approval and encouragement of Ahasuerus, who reigned over the whole world (Megillah page 11a), after Haman gave him ten thousand kikar (a big amount) of silver as an incentive (Esther chapter 3 verse 9).



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Anyone who reads the story of the scroll, even superficially, will see the unrealistic reaction of the Jews to the decree of Haman: “Weeping, fasting, mourning” (Esther chapter 4 verse 3), “Sack and ashes” (ibid.), repentance (see the interpretation of Alsheikh ibid.), and Torah study (Megillah page 16a). Not a single one rebelled in a natural way: they did not initiate a rebellion, they did not collect weapons, and they did not dig fighting positions.

Mordechai the Righteous knew that if indeed the whole nation repented, they would not need weapons and an army of rebellion. Everything would work itself out, and history proved that he was right.

The interesting thing is that even Haman understood this. As it is told in the Tractate Megillah (page 16a), when the fall of Haman began before Mordechai the Jew, Haman arrived at the Beit Midrash and saw Mordechai studying Torah with the little children. Haman asked them what they were doing. The children told him about the semolina offering that they would bring to the Temple. Haman’s response was: “Your semolina offering rejected my ten thousand silver kikar (a big amount).”



It is difficult to explain to a person who does not observe the Torah and mitzvot what is so simple to the keepers of the Torah – that the Torah protects and saves. Even when





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

the Chazon Ish met with Ben Gurion (on October 20, 1952) and told him about the famous parable of the full cart and the empty cart (and its origin in the Gemara, Sanhedrin page 32b), Ben-Gurion responded indignantly: "And the mitzvah of settling the land is not a mitzvah? And is it not a burden? And the mitzvah of protecting life is not a mitzvah? And the young men you are so opposed to, sitting on the borders and guarding you, is this not a mitzvah?" he wondered.

The Chazon Ish replied: "If the Lord does not guard a city, it is in vain that one guards" (Psalms 127:1). He continued: "Thanks to the fact that we study Torah, you can do what you do."

Ben-Gurion stood his ground and said, "If it weren't for those who guard and protect, the enemies would have slaughtered you."

The Chazon Ish stood his ground and replied, "Thanks to the fact that we study Torah, they exist. Thanks to the fact that we study Torah, they can work and keep."

If you thought that was the end of it, it was not...

Ben-Gurion argued again and said, "I do not despise the Torah, but if there are no living people, who will learn the Torah?"

To this, Maran Chazon Ish replied, "A tree of life. It is the elixir of life."



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Ben-Gurion answered, "Protection of the soul is also a mitzvah. As it is written, 'The dead shall not praise Him'" (Psalms 115:17).

"This is how the conversation continued," described Yitzhak Navon, who was present during the conversation. "The two repeated their same positions without coming close to each other regarding the content."

From this conversation with the Chazon Ish, we learned that we don't have to convince these people, because they won't be convinced. What we have to do is tell them as well as memorize it over and over again to reinforce this simple knowledge within us.

We will end with a prayer: that the same moment of enlightenment, which was for the wicked Haman, who realized that the Torah and the commandments that the people of Israel keep, these and only these, can stand against all the decrees, will also reach our wayward brothers. And, we will have the merit to have the verse fulfilled in us "For the Jews there was light and happiness, joy and glory" (Esther chapter 8 verse 16).



## The Holiday Of Pesach



**Passover in  
Isolation?!**





## Passover in Isolation?!

The year is 2448 since the creation of the world.

### Thursday at midnight:

Everything is deserted outside; we are all in isolation. We are not allowed to step outside the house. From time to time, we hear of another house where someone has died. "There is no house where there are no dead."

This is terrifying and frightening, but we must perform the Seder. The smell of the roasted lamb that spreads in the air is not a normal smell. It is the smell of heaven. The matzah and the "maror" are also ready. Some of the family members who were not circumcised, went to Moshe Rabbeinu so they can be circumcised, and in turn, be able to eat from the Passover sacrifice. There is no time for unnecessary thoughts. We are all packed and ready to leave, and, at any moment and at any hour, we are waiting for the first light to appear, so that we can go out.

### Dawn time:

Everyone is already ready. We didn't sleep all night. In all the houses of Egypt, there has been disaster and wailing. Pharaoh has been rampaging through the streets for



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

several hours looking for Moses and Aaron. He shouts in the streets that we are no longer his slaves, but “slaves of God.” We are waiting for the instruction finally to get out of this terrible country.

### **The fifth and $\frac{3}{4}$ hour of the day:**

At this very moment, all our brothers of the House of Israel – millions of men, women, and many children – are leaving Egypt. The moment has come, and the hour has come – the hour of our redemption. We are full of all the good things that the Egyptians lent us, and now they are urging us to leave. Even the bread we tried to bake did not have time to rise. Moshe and Aaron stand at the head of the crowd, and we all follow them.



Our people have experienced 3,331 days of Passover until now. Some of them, while we were in terrible hardships, from disasters, murders, inquisitions, and holocausts. But, they did not manage to break the wonderful Jewish tradition of observing this holiday. Even when the Jew was beaten, tortured, humiliated, and killed, his spirit – the spirit of God in his midst – did not allow him to surrender to his persecutors, as, “There is no person who controls the spirit to imprison the spirit.”

This year is the 3,332nd link in the chain of generations of the people of Israel. We should not be content with a dry description of the Exodus and the miracles of



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

redemption, and making the Seder night without joy, because of the situation. Rather, we should do more and more, and be 'increasing in holiness' in matters of the story of the Exodus. We must also instil in our children on Seder night this holy tradition of Israel, because the divine commandment, "So that you may tell in the ears of your son and your son's son how I made a mockery of Egypt," does not make concessions, even in the situation where we are in isolation, without the whole family.

And, if we look, we will see that the 'isolation' actually reminds us of the Exodus from Egypt, since even then a person was forbidden to leave his house. It is also part of the signs of redemption which will be in the last generation.

And the Torah has already promised us, "As in the days you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show you wonderful things."

And from now on, we should increase our study of the Midrashim that tell what happened in Egypt, so that we know what we, in the generation of redemption, are going to go through...

Happy holiday.



The Holiday of  
Shavuot



**The Power of the  
Holy Torah**



## The Power of the Holy Torah

The power of the Torah is measured in the eyes of the public by the number of miracles and wonders, and it has already been written in the Ohr HaChaim haKadosh (Shemot 10:27), that The Holy One, blessed be He, conditioned all creation to be subject to the Torah and its learners, and to do whatever they dictate to them and they rule over them acting as the government of the Creator, blessed be He. And every Tzaddik who lives after receiving the Torah will bring in his hand one promissory note to bend nature in front of him.

In honor of Shavuot, we compiled a wonderful article from an old book called “The Talmud and World Sciences” by Rabbi Yekutiel Aryeh Kamelhar (one of the Sages of Ashkenaz about 100 years ago), regarding the power of the Torah: From among the clouds that cover the surface of the sky... there are times when the sun will be seen between the clouds, and fragments of the sun will spread their rays of light through their intertwining, so also from the gloom of the days of the first generations which were in the fog, and from among the clouds spread out in the sky the rays of our great Sages, the late Geniuses, and the veil over their deeds and the wonders they did, sparks of light will shine before our eyes, in the light of which we will be able to see and know the strength and valor of those late Geniuses, to govern creation and witness the very favor of God. This will be from the short lists that we find here and



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

there, we will be able to recognize the continuation of Moshe with the strong hand and the signs and wonders that he did before the eyes of all Israel, here they are as in every generation.

It is written in book Shibley haLeKet about Rabbi Shimon the Great, a friend of Rabbi Gershon Maor haGola (died in Mitz in 856) in the name of Rabbenu Tam, who testified that he had performed miracles.

It is also written in the Book of Faiths (chapter 44) about our Rabbi Avraham bar Yitzchak, a student of Rabbi Moshe the Darshan, and the father-in-law of Raba'd Baal Hasagot, to whom Elijah the prophet revealed himself and gave him secrets of the Torah, and from whom his son-in-law, the Raba'd learned. See there. And in Mahara"m Rikanti (Parashat Naso) he wrote, that Elijah the prophet revealed himself to the Raba'd Baal Hasagot, and gave him the traditions of the wisdom of Kabbalah, and he gave them to his son, Rabbi Yitzhak "Sagi-Nahor" (the blind). And there in Parshat Vayeshev it is written: "...and I heard that the Chasid Rabbi Yitzchak ben Raba'd used to tell a person whether he was one of the new ones or one of the old ones, that is, if he had a new or an old soul".

Also in Parashat Tetzeh he wrote: "... and they have already testified about the Chasid Rabbi Yitzchak ben Raba'd zt"l, that even though he was blind, he would feel in the air and would say about sick people: "he will live and he will die" and also because



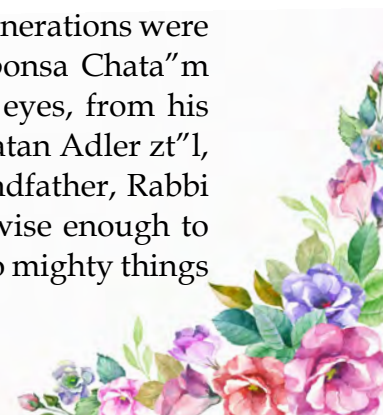
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

he was as great in his prayer as Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa regarding the sick, according to his time (see Brachot page 34b). See there.

And in the order of the generations and the progression of Kabbalah, it will be recounted of the miracles done by our Rabbis Rashi and Rambam zt"l and more.

And in the books *The First Chassidim* in the history of Rabbi Shmuel haKadosh, and the prophet and his son Rabbi Yehuda the Chasid, I brought some wonderful stories of what was done according to practical Kabbalah. There in *Kuntress Dor Dorim*, are wonderful stories from important people, in the days of great genius, who used the power of holy names, from ancient scrolls found in "Genizah" that had not been published in the world. And therefore the "smart ones", thought that the facts written in the Shas and interesting Midrashim like these, are only in a parable and admonition way.

And if the miracles and wonders performed by holy names in recent generations were famous, such as those facts brought by Maran Chata"m Sofer (*Responsa Chata"m Sofer* part "Orach Chaim" Siman 197), which he saw with his own eyes, from his teacher, the Chasidic Genius who was our teacher and rabbi, Rabbi Natan Adler zt"l, and also what Chacham Zvi told over (Siman 93), from his holy grandfather, Rabbi Eliyahu Baal Shem zt"l, at that time even the "Maskilim" were not wise enough to deviate from the paved path, which was in the power of our Sages to do mighty things



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

by means of holy names and were very common in all generations, except that they were not published at the time and remained in the scriptures in the Genizah among many hidden manuscripts.

As an example I will bring here some of them that have been discovered in our days:

In the notebook "For The Chronicles of the Decrees on Israel" (part 3, page 32), he brings what he wrote in the order of Slichot according to the Lithuanian custom at the beginning of the hymn "Israel is Saved", as follows: "This hymn, and Slicha number 9: I Will Be Afraid; I found that they were composed by Rabbi Shaftia, according to the decree of Polo the Evil, who decreed destruction throughout the land of Greece and forced more than a thousand communities to convert to Christianity, and then there were only 5 congregations left in the land of Greece, which Rabbi Shaftia saved by healing the daughter of that wicked man. She had become insane and he healed her by use of a "holy name" and annulled that decree which did not take place in those communities...

In the collection notebook "From The Words of Yosef" to Rabbi Yosef ben Yitzchak Sambari, which was printed from a handwritten note, it is quoted as follows: Rabbi Shimon bar TzemachDodan, called Rashba"tz, and he was from the city of Gozaid and was one of the king's advisors who sat first in the kingdom, because God caused this. In the year 5320, Emperor Carlos set out with a large army by sea to fight with

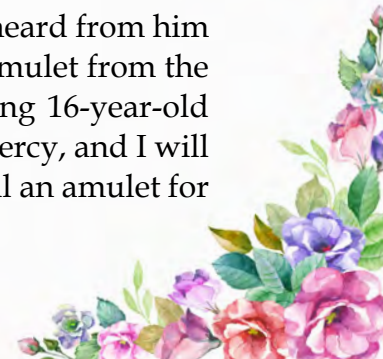


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

the king of the Arabs in the city of Gizair, to take his kingdom from his hands. And the Spirit of God rested upon him and he saw that because of the war, all the Jews in the kingdom of Gizair would be destroyed and killed and lost, so he threw into the sea one tablet with a holy name, and God threw a stormy wind into the sea and the ships were broken, and many of Carlos's army sank like lead in the mighty waters, and when the emperor saw that it was decreed from heaven, he returned to his country in shame. The King of Gizair knew that the aforementioned rabbi, out of his great love for the king, destroyed Carlos's army, and since then, the rabbi carried grace and kindness before the king, more than all his lovers, and thus, the king ordered a house to be built for him in the courtyard of the king's palace, and the rabbi received great honor until the day he died.

And in the book "Ein haBdolach" at the opening in Kuntress Match Levy, a letter from the genius Rabbi Akiva Iger zt"l to the author is printed, as follows: "Today our Torah teacher

Rabbi Gershon from the Warsaw community came to my place and I heard from him that with the help of God, blessed be He, his wife was healed by the amulet from the honor of his Torah... and here in our city there is another God-fearing 16-year-old boy...wrapped and crushed by sickness, he is falling, may God have mercy, and I will very much ask his honor to do this for me and send to me by early mail an amulet for him. Akiva Ginz.





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Also see in Shem haGdolim (A letter 16) about Rabbi Avraham Azulay, what the holy Gaon Ohr HaChaim heard about his great power in amulets.

And about the facts mentioned in Tractate Ta'anit (page 19a), from our Sages z"l that they brought down rains through their prayers, we can show those who doubt and deny the wonders of the Sages, from what happened in the not-too-distant past, from events that were published not long so ago in print from a manuscript, Sefer Devrei Yosef to Rabbi Yosef ben Yitzhak Sambari (and was published by the late Professor A. Berliner), this is what it says there: "During the deportation in those places, the Jews agreed that if there was a stoppage of rain, they were obliged to stand in prayer to send rain to the land, and on this condition the king allowed the Jews to stay in his land, and it happened in those many days during the days of our teacher Rabbi Rabbi Yitzhak Abuhab zt"l, there was a stoppage of rain and there was no rain over the entire land, and the mentioned Rabbi was asked to pray about the rains, and he passed before the ark, and prayed to God and implored in his prayer, and when they took out the Torah scroll, he talked about the midrash in Parashat Toldot, "Let Us have the water" (Bereshit 26:20), and shouted a loud and bitter cry: "Lord of the world! It is clear and known before the Throne of Your Glory that Israel is in sorrow before the nations because of the water, because we must bring down to the earth rains of blessing, have mercy on Your people, give us the water, give us the water, give us the water", and he almost threw words upwards and said: I am not moving from

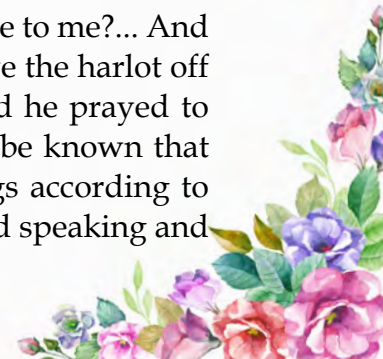


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

here until You have mercy on Your children. And the sky grew thick and heaven immediately answered him, but he came down from the ark with one eye...”

“Likewise in the kingdoms of Aragon, when the rains stopped, they threw all the Jews outside the city and closed the gates against them until the water came, and the late Rabbi Hesdai Crescas demanded, at the beginning of his words, “Let us have the water”; and God blessed His people and gave them water”;

And it is told about Rabbi Yitzchak Hayun Ba”al haNess, that once the rains stopped and the king forced him to pray to God to send rain on the land, and the rabbi ordered to close all their platforms and bring the keys to him, and he also ordered the prostitutes to be removed outside the city, no one would be left and then he would pray, and in order to try it, they put one open platform and one prostitute inside it, and brought the keys to the rabbi. In the morning, he sent and called all the wise men of the city and the ministers, and the rabbi said to them: Who are you laughing at and whom are you asking: please pray for us for the rain? Don’t you know that a certain harlot whom you hid in a certain platform, can pray for you, and why have you come to me?... And when they heard the rabbi’s words, they panicked and hurried to drive the harlot off the stage outside the city, and they brought the key to the rabbi, and he prayed to God and said: “God of Abraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov, today it will be known that You Are God and I am your servant and I have done all these things according to Your will, answer me, O God, Answer me”; And when he was finished speaking and



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praying, the sky grew thick with cloud, and he sent to the king to say: Come to me and the rain shall not stop you, and the rain on the earth was a rain of blessing. [See Tractate Ketubot, page 5a, 'The work of the righteous, who says? The sky!' And Rashi interpreted that the sky testifies to the people that they are righteous, that when they pray for rain, the rain falls].

And also in the facts recounted in Tractate Moed Ketan (page 25b), that when Rabbi Abuho passed away, the Caesarian pillars shed blood. When Rabbi Yossi passed away, the gutters of the city of Zippori overflowed with water. And when Rabbi Jacob passed away, stars were seen in the day. And when Rabbi Assi passed away, all the trees were uprooted [and this shows that the natural world has changed because of grief - Rashi].

Of course, the philosophers interpret these things in a parable and admonition way, but the fact that Rabbi Shriria Gaon brings in his letter will be slapped on their face, he said as follows: "Rabbi Yosef was a righteous and innocent Genius, and Elijah the prophet always studied with him, and on the day he died there was a great storm..."; (The Book of Genealogy and the Order of Generations 560).

And in the book Koreh HaDorot, he brings a story as follows: "The genius Rabbi Avraham Aspenia was a great Sage and an extremely old man in Thessaloniki and died in the year of 5391 of the creation of the world, and on the day he died, a lot of



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

fine dust fell from the sky instead of a rain, and I, the writer, was a 13 or 14-year-old boy, and I remember that they would take some of that dust and put it away for a reminder, to show those who come to the world how great the works of God are...”;

It is also told in Tractate Ketubot (page 17a), about Rabbi Shmuel bar Rabbi Yitzchak that when he died, a pillar of fire erected between him and the whole world. And there (page 62b) they saw a pillar of fire. Likewise, the Tosefta wrote in Tractate Brachot (page 17b), in the name of Rabbi Barzilay, that the pillar of fire came down from heaven upon them in “the months of bride”; during the month of Adar and the month of Elul (these are the days when everyone would gather to hear the words of the Torah), about Mr. Zutra Gaon, when he went out to fight the people of Amgosh, who had put their hands in the sack of Israel’s colonies in Babylon and desecrated the sanctity of the House of Israel with lewdness, then the hand of God was revealed in the sight of the heroes of Israel in the pillar of fire going in front of the Reish Galuta camp...

And it is told about Abba Mari Rabbi Gershon zt”l, whom all his days would tell the truth, in his testimony he attested to what he saw with his own eyes, at the time of the passing away of the holy Rabbi- Rabbi Zvi Cohen of Romanov zt”l: “We saw the signs of heaven in the house, for a great light shone in front of the window, and those who were walking outside saw that heaven opened and flames of fire reached the land and then it disappeared, and they saw eye to eye that a pillar of fire stood between him and the whole world”; (in his book Mevaser Tov; published in 660).

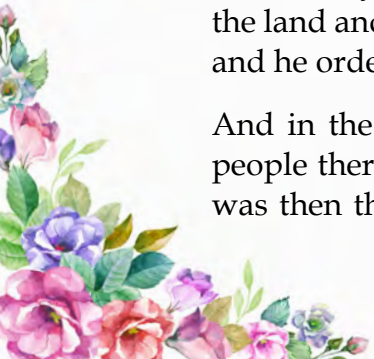




## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Also what is written in tractate Baba Metzia (page 85a) about Rabbi Zira who sat in an oven and did not burn. And similarly in tractate Ketubot (page 67b), it is told about Mar Ukba and his wife who were not burned by the fire of the oven. We can derive from what is said in Megilat Gezerat 931 (written by Rabbi Efraim bar Yaakov of Buna), of the three holy heroes, disciples of Rabbi Tam and the Rashba"m, the Chasid Rabbi Yechiel bar Rabbi David HaCohen, and the righteous Rabbi Yekutiel ben Rabbi Yehuda HaCohen, and Rabbi Yehuda ben Rabbi Aharon, who were thrown into the fire and the wicked handcuffed their hands, and the fire caught fire with the ropes on their hands and the ropes were cut off, and when the three of them came out they said to the servants of the evil ruler, why don't we go out if the fire does not control us? So they returned them again to the house of the focus and threw them on the hearth twice and three times with terrible cruelty... and Slichot for the twenty of Sivan in piyyut "Emoney Shlomei Yisrael"; mentions this fact, and said: "When the fire reached the shackles of the priests' hands, the ropes were cut off from the boys' hands, they screamed: The fire broke us (free) and we came out honest, the kings of the land and princes will stand, the anger of the oppressor over them did not subside, and he ordered his servants to return them to the fire..."

And in the year 408, Hamiletsky came with his army to Austria and killed many people there, the Gaon Rabbi David Halevi zt"l the writer of the Turey Zahav, who was then the head of the court of the city of Elik fled. And when Hamiletsky with





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his army besieged the city of Elik, the Rabbi was in it, and it happened one day that Hamiltsky and his troops came, and in the storm of war they began to climb the wall, and the rabbi with the holy congregation in the synagogue poured out their prayer before God and wept profusely, and Rabbi Turey Zahav zt"l was very weak from the fasting he had done, he bowed his head in his hands and slept and dreamed that they were calling before him the verse "And I defended this city for salvation for My sake and for David My servant"; (Kings 2, 19:34). And he awoke from his sleep and said, "God's people, be strong and let's strengthen ourselves with prayer and supplications, for today God will show us wonderful things, and there in the fort stood old cannons that had been battered by many days, suddenly they made terrible noises, and the fear of God fell on Hamiltsky and his troops and they fled from there in a panic. (See the memorial to the great men of Austria by R"m Bieber, and in the Slichot for Yom 20 of Sivan, compiled by Turey Zehav, this is also mentioned, and was printed in Yalkut Menachem, and in Peles 662 page 519 under the name "Magen David").

These are the stories so far compiled from the wonderful book "The Talmud and the Sciences of the World", and this is only a small part of a tremendous and rare complex on the power of the Torah of the early and late Sages.



The Destruction  
Of The Temple



**Stones from  
Heaven**





### **Stones from Heaven**

‘Itzik the successful’ – this is the nickname he stayed true to since childhood. Wherever he put his hand, he would see great success. Some said he had great luck or golden hands, but the truth was that he had both together.

Everyone sought his presence. In every trip, he was the initiator and organizer, and in the elections for the class party, everyone voted for Itzik – “he always succeeds.”

He later grew up and went into the business world, joining a high-tech company that recognized his talents. He was initially recruited as a junior employee, but he quickly moved up the management ladder, so much so that he found himself, at the age of 23, a senior manager. He was young and successful with a very respectable salary.

He then decided that now was the time to fulfill his life’s dream – since he was little, he saw himself in his rosy dreams racing through the country’s roads in a luxurious Jaguar. *Now was the time.*

The wait of almost a year was worth it, since such a luxury car was only for privileged individuals in the world. And, now this car was his and only his. It was a car equipped with the best refinements in the world, and it gave him feelings of security and strength and the feeling ‘that the sky’s the limit.’





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Finally, for the first time, he got into the car and, beaming with happiness, pressed the button, causing the car to turn on. The intoxicating aroma of the leather seats made his head spin. "I made it! I made it! I made it!" he muttered to himself.

Soon, he reached the neighborhood street, hoping to show everyone that 'Itzik the successful' had succeeded above and beyond. However, the narrow roads did not allow him to use the large volume of the engine, so he would need to finish the round in the neighborhood before going out into the open spaces to show off.

Suddenly, a brick hit the windshield of the Jaguar, and a large and ugly crack formed on the windshield. Itzik stopped with a screeching brake and drove back to the place where the brick had been thrown, only to find a frightened little boy standing on the side of the road. Itzik jumped out of the car, grabbed the boy with an animalistic grip, and screamed: "What is this supposed to be? It's a new car! Why did you do that?"

The little boy apologized: "Sorry... I'm sorry, but I didn't know what to do." He began to stammer, tears rolling down his cheeks, "I threw the brick because no one stopped..."

He pointed across the road and said, "It's my brother. He rolled off the sidewalk and fell out of his wheelchair. I can't lift him." The boy's crying became louder and his tears streamed down his face, as he asked, "Will you please help me lift him back into



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

his wheelchair? He is injured and is too heavy for me, but you will surely be able to lift him.”

The emotional and agitated Itzik tried to swallow the uncomfortable lump in his throat, and he quickly crossed the road to lift the crippled boy into his wheelchair. He then took out a cloth handkerchief and cleaned the boy’s wounds before hopping into the nearest kiosk and buying two drinks for the kids. He shyly handed them to the boys For some reason, he felt immense shame.

“Thank you very much and may God bless you,” the children told him in unison.

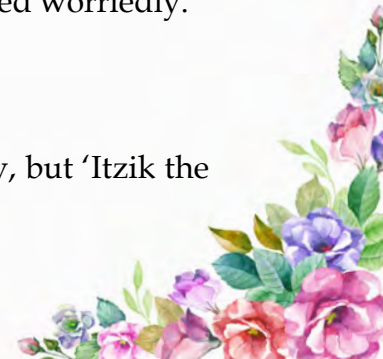
“I only have one question: Why did you only throw a stone at my car? Didn’t many cars pass here?”

“The truth is, I was afraid of throwing a stone at the cars while they were driving,” said the boy. “They were too old. I was afraid that the driver would be injured. But, when I saw your new luxurious vehicle, I knew that its windshield would last and you would not be injured. Do I have to pay you for this?” The boy asked worriedly.

“Absolutely not,” Itzik answered, “you helped me a lot...”

The way back to the Jaguar was long and drawn out.

The damage that had been done to the windshield was large and ugly, but ‘Itzik the successful’ never bothered to repair it.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Every morning, he would stop and look at the cracked window and remember two lessons: 1. Sometimes the stone that is thrown at you is not a punishment, but a way to gain your attention for a special task assigned to you by heaven. 2. A stone is not thrown at everyone, but only at those who can endure...



The destruction of the Temple is a heart-breaking and terrible event in the history of our people. The Sages teach us that the Lord poured out His wrath on trees and stones, and not on the people of Israel (Lamentations, Rabba Parasha 4 letter 15). The breaking of the holy stones was a whisper to the inner soul to awaken its dormant heart, so that we will begin to pay attention to our actions and those around us. “The sound of my uncles knocking” (Song of Songs chapter 5 verse 2) – the knocks were in different forms of different decrees that passed on our people, the knocks were variably repeated in each generation. Apparently, we still have not understood the meaning of the knocks that intend to wake us up.

The reason for the destruction of the Second Temple was baseless hatred (Yoma page 9b). Each person ran his own race of life, and would not look enough at those around him to see if there are any who fell physically or spiritually that he could help and heal. It is this race of life that “threw from heaven the land of the glory of Israel” (Lamentations 2: 1). The purpose of this throw was not to create a rift in our people or to break it, but



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

only to provoke it, because when we don't have time to listen, the Creator is forced to throw a brick at us. It is our choice to pay attention or ignore...

The second conclusion: on the private and personal level, the stone is not thrown at everyone, but only at those whom the one who throws the stone, the Creator, blessed be He, knows has the strength to bear the suffering without a total collapse. The Creator sends His signals and the strength of the stone and the throw is carefully calculated according to the strength of each person's suffering (according to Ramban, Genesis, chapter 22 verse 1). If a stronger stone is thrown at you, it means that you are not an old and ordinary vehicle, but rather, you are more like a new Jaguar...





The Difference  
Between The Jew  
And A Non-Jew



**The Purpose of  
Life**



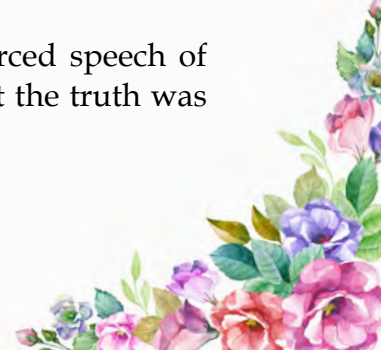


### The Purpose of Life

About four hundred years ago, one of the studies of the philosopher, Galileo Galilei, was published. In this research, he discovered and proved that the world revolves around the sun, as opposed to what the church thought at the time, which was that the sun revolved around the earth.

This research and his discovery led the church to take harsh and bitter measures against him, even to the point of endangering his life. In a speech delivered on June 22, 1633, at the Minerva Monastery in Rome, he said: "I, Galileo Galilei, son of Vincenzo Galilei, a man of Florence, seventy years old, stood personally at the trial and showed myself kneeling before your majesty, that you are the inquisitors in the entire Christian world against the humiliation of the infidels. The Pope commanded me, in accordance with the law, to completely abandon my erroneous view that the sun is the center of the universe and is not in motion, and that the globe is not the center of the world and is in motion."

When the great Galileo rose from his bow after this famous and forced speech of denial, it is said that he muttered, "And yet, it moves!" He knew that the truth was with him, but he was not ready to give his life for his research.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



What bothered the church leaders so much? Did they have shares in the rotation of the sun, which would explain why they insisted so much on the idea of the sun rotating around the earth? Why was his research and discovery so problematic that it was considered to be endangering all the institutions of the church and the Christian religion, inciting them to persecute him so much?

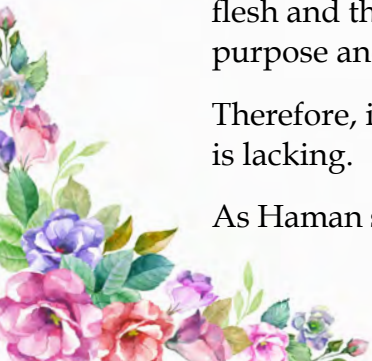
The answer is simple and surprising: among the nations of the world, the main thing is desire, and what they do not succeed in achieving, they achieve by force.

This force is included in Yitzchak's blessing to Esav: "By your sword you shall live" (Bereshit 27:3), and in the angel's message about Ishmael: "And he will be a wild man, his hand over everything, and the hand of everything in him" (Bereshit 16:12). This embodies the thought of the gentile – I am the center of the world, and there is nothing else besides me.

It was not for nothing that the prophet called them: "the flesh of donkeys is their flesh and the stream of horses is their stream" (Ezekiel 23:20), It conveys that this is their purpose and strength.

Therefore, if a gentile person is deprived of one of the world's pleasures, his purpose is lacking.

As Haman said, "All this has no worth to me whenever I see Mordecai the Jew" (Esther





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

5:13). The feeling that there is someone in the world who does not accept his malice ruins his momentary pleasure, and since the pleasures of this world – in the mind of a Gentile – are the purpose, everything that is lacking in them, means that the desired purpose has already been lost.

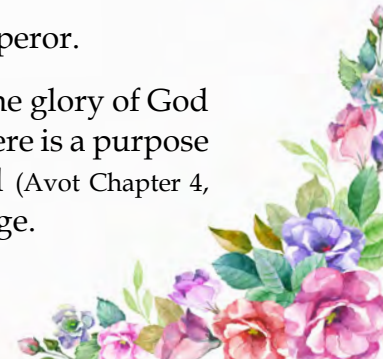
The 'I' is symbolized by earth, which is this world in which physical desires are included.



On the other hand, we find in the Gemara (Hulin, page 60a) that the emperor said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananiya: My desire is to see the Creator. Rabbi Yehoshua told him to look into the sun at the time of Tammuz, and he would see. When the emperor tried to look at the sun, and did not succeed, Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: If at one of the thousands of servants and angels of the Creator, you were not able to look, how would you be able to look at the Creator Himself?

This answer and proof of the power of the sun was enough for the emperor.

We see that the manifestation of the sun's power shows and declares the glory of God in the world and proves that there is a Creator of the world, and that there is a purpose for the world beyond this world and its pleasures. As the Sages said (Avot Chapter 4, Mishna 16): Prepare yourself in the lobby, so that you can enter the lounge.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



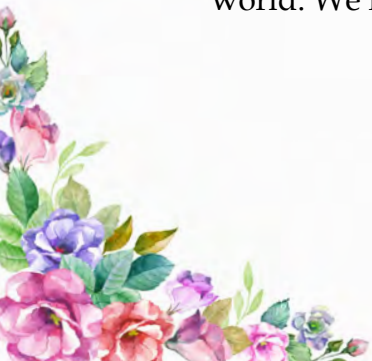
And, they also said that whoever worked on the Sabbath evening, shall eat on the Sabbath (Tractate Avodah Zarah, page 3a).


For this study, the people of the church persecuted Galileo Galilei, as he showed in his research that the earth itself is the one that revolves around the sun, and it is the servant of God's servants, and disproved the idea that earth is the most important in the world. The Church, enraged, whipped and persecuted him to the point of disgrace, because their belief is that the earth and even the celestial bodies of the sky, and every creature serve man in this world to fulfill the lusts of this world.



This is the difference between the mind of a Jew and a Gentile.

And now that we are back on the high holidays, we come before God as poor and destitute, and beg like a servant who begs his Lord for the continuation of life in this world. We need to remember the purpose of life, and why we need more life.





*“Since the pleasures of  
this world – in the mind of a Gentile – are the  
purpose, everything that is lacking in them,  
means that the desired purpose has already  
been lost”*

The Holiday Of  
Hanukkah



**(Tripoli) Libya  
and its Scholars**





### **(Tripoli) Libya and Its Scholars**

In preparation for the days of Hanukkah, donuts in all colors, flavors, and sizes will be seen on every corner and street. Unfortunately, many of our people do not know, and do not understand, what it is and what it is for – Why do we celebrate and what for? The recipes for the milk pancakes will be passed down in tradition from mother to daughter, but the reason for frying them precisely on Hanukkah will be forgotten.

In this article, we have chosen to recall some of the great people of the Libyan community, which unfortunately has diminished in the last generation, where there are those for whom the tradition of their fathers, or rather their mothers, is summed up in a pile of holiday recipes. May it be His will, that this article will awaken the hearts of Your people, the House of Israel, so that they will remember the ways of our ancestors and walk in their ways, in the way of Torah and holiness, Amen.



Some members of our community are used to thinking that “Libyan culture” or “Libyan Judaism” consists only of a few customs and its delicious and famous foods. This is most unfortunate because the holy Jewish community of Libya, had most of its members following Torah and Mitzvot. And as My grandfather, Mr. Gabriel Kachlon







## Sichot For Am Yisrael

z"l, testified that they would not even ride bicycles on Shabbat, and that the court would punish anyone who did.

However, when they arrived in Israel, many of their customs faded and they were swallowed up by the "Israeliness" here. Even the Jewish embers and the observance of the laws of the Torah decreased somewhat in the audience of our congregation. Therefore, each and every member of our congregation has the duty to glorify, elevate, and strengthen the household standards of the congregation, and to show and publicize its great Sages and geniuses, who, due to their humility (like other communities in Spain for generations), did not receive the proper respect and appropriate publicity.

Several members of our congregation heard about Rabbi Zebulon Hayun ztz"l, who lived at the time of the Holy Chida (Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai ztz"l) and was the head of the slaughterers. Due to Rav Zebulon's strong eyesight, he did not have to inspect the knife, but simply looked at it with his eyes and knew exactly where the flaw was (until the Chida asked him to stop this custom, so that people who are not of his rank should not learn from him). In fact, the Chida signed a letter to him that for anyone who learns the craft of slaughtering, if the certificate is not signed by Rabbi Hayun, it is not a proper certificate (Responsa Camus Amedi to R. Camus Agiv part 2 p. 127-128).

And Rabbi Zebulon Hayun ztz"l was not the only one of his generation in Tripoli in Libya. Another sage and genius from that time was Rabbi Avraham Kalfon ztz"l,

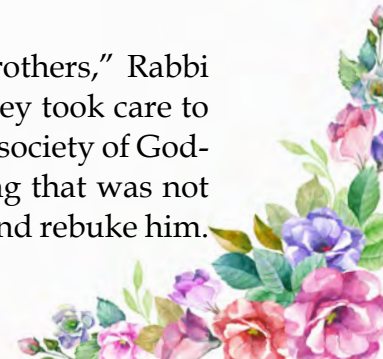


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

who was born in 5495, and corresponded with the Chida in argumentations on Torah issues. He authored the book, *Chayey Avraham*, on the value of the mitzvot and their meanings, and the piyyut “Who is like you” about the events of “Purim baRegel”, the miracle that happened in Tripoli.

The observant will see that not only hundreds of years ago lived the great Sages and the lights of the nation, but also several generations ago, there were geniuses, saints and supremely righteous people in Tripoli, Libya. And as Rabbi Camus Agiv zt”l (Rabbi of Or Yehuda) testified that he once asked the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Chaim Dabush zt”l, son of the holy Rabbi Frijia Dabush, if it is true what is said about his holy father – that King David used to come to him, and Elijah the prophet and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai? Rabbi Chaim Dabush zt”l replied to him with his testimony of what he saw and that it was indeed true. By virtue of his holiness, he protected his community so that no spiritual and physical trouble would come at their hands. Even after his death, miracles and wonders are told about the room in which he resided (Responsa Camus Amedi, part 2 pages 130-132).

Also, among the geniuses and saints of that time, were the “holy brothers,” Rabbi Moshe Haddad Borta, and his brother, Rabbi Shalom Haddad zt”l. They took care to educate and protect the audience of their congregation, and founded a society of God-fearing reprovers, who, when they heard of someone doing something that was not according to religion and correctness, would invite him to their place and rebuke him.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

And the words that came from of their hearts would enter his heart, and he would accept them with good will and a cheerful soul.

Many stories about those saintly scholars were known by everyone. The fact that they were the recipients of the revelation of angels and righteous people, from previous generations, is famous. Indeed, my grandmother, Kochava Najima Atia, stated that her great-grandfather, the holy genius, Rabbi Camus Yamin ztz"l, studied with angels and tzaddikim from previous generations.

This became known because once his wife, the rabbanit, began to prepare coffee for the rabbi in the morning, but since she heard several voices coming from his study room, she peeked in to see how many people were there so she would know how many cups of coffee to prepare. After she prepared the coffee, she brought the three cups and entered the room of her husband, the holy rabbi. Unexpectedly, she saw him alone, and asked him: Where are the two people who were with you? Her husband, the rabbi, said to her: Blessed are you that you got to see them. They are not people...

And so, it is told about the holy rabbi, Rabbi Yitzchak Vathori Zatzuk"l, who passed away in 5671 (see Sefer Camos Amedi part 2 page 154), and about his friend, the holy Rabbi, Rabbi Moshe Esarosi Zatzuk"l, who had the revelation of Elijah the prophet (ibid. p. 158).

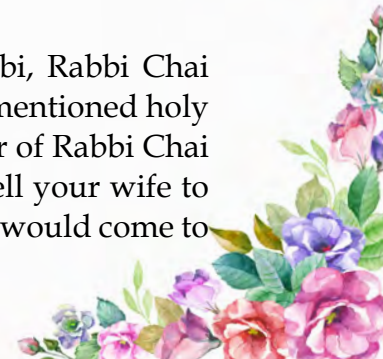


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

When they suggested to the holy rabbi, Rabbi Shalom Agiv zt"l, when he had reached an old age, that he should go to the Land of Israel and have the merit to die there, as was the custom of some geniuses and saints of the world who did so at the end of their days, the rabbi answered them: If they (the deceased rabbis of the Land of Israel) came to me here, why would I go there... (Camus Amedi part 2 p. 146)

Another miraculous story is told about the holy genius, Rabbi Yitzchak Guetta ztz"l (who, in the beginning, was an innocent boy serving one of the gentlemen from the cities of Italy, but, in the end, he gained wealth and wisdom and "two tables'), who once studied Tractate Chulin in the yeshiva of Rabbi Avraham Adadi ztz"l. He was sitting on a mattress by the window and was looking at the signs of a crow mentioned in the Gemara (page 62 and in the Tosafot there beginning with: Mipney), but he didn't quite understand its signs. Then, in the middle of his learning, a crow came in and sat on the rabbi's Gemara. The rabbi grabbed it with his hand and checked its signs (Camus Amedi part 2 p. 152). One of his answers was cited in the book, "*krach shel Rome*," and was briefly mentioned in the book, *Camos Amedi*, by Rabbi Camos Agiv (part 2 p. 152).

I also saw in the book, *Camus Amedi* (part 2 p. 152), that the holy rabbi, Rabbi Chai Maimon ztzuk"l, said that he heard from the son-in-law of the above-mentioned holy rabbi - Rabbi Shaul Hayun ztzuk"l, that once, a man came to the father of Rabbi Chai Maimon ztzuk"l - Rabbi Ya'akov Maimon zt"l, and he said to him: Tell your wife to sanctify herself with extra holiness, because in the evening, a holy soul would come to



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you, of Abayey or Raba's. Indeed, his holy son, Rabbi Chai Maimon, had the privilege of sanctifying himself and purifying himself, and all saw that the name of God was called upon him, and they feared him. And as it is said that when he was walking along the road, they would see him as a shining lamp. Moreover, on the night of Kippur, when he would read a section of the Holy Zohar in Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's article, they would see the ark of the Great Synagogue as if it were burning and as if Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was standing by the ark. He died in the year 5645, on the 27th of Elul, on Friday, and thus, that year, there was a big mourning in Tripoli and there were no joyous events that whole year (Camus Amedi's book, p. 152-153).

A miraculous act is told about him that is not told about the great geniuses of the world - that after his death, he would visit every Shabbat night to make Kiddush for his wife before returning to his place. Their neighbors would hear every Shabbat night, the Kiddush, and they would not know who was doing Kiddush, until they asked his little daughter, and she answered innocently that it was her father, and from that Shabbat he stopped coming and did not come back to them anymore.

That holy rabbi wrote a book of discourse called, *Be'er L'Chai*, for Shabbat and holidays, Chidushim on the Torah, the articles of the Sages, and more.

This wonderful act of him returning after his death is an act that is told about the Tannaim (as told in the Gemara, at the end of Tractate Ketubot, about our holy Rabbi, Rabbi Yehuda



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Hanasi, the author of the Mishnayot), see what the holy Jew, who died only 132 years ago, was able to achieve?

Another miraculous deed of another Sage and saint, who preceded Rabbi Chai Maimon, and that also resembles the stories about the Tannaim, is told in a story about Rabbi Shalom Tshuva Zatzuk'l, who was a great rabbi and famous for his knowledge of the Talmud and the Poskim. Even though he was blind he preached the Torah widely and made many disciples.

Rabbi Camus Agiv said that one of the rabbi's neighbors said that when Rabbi Shalom was teaching his students, she would see a kind of fire surrounding them, and out of fear for the lives of the rabbi and his students, she shouted because she feared for the lives of the rabbi and his students. Then, the rabbi answered her: Don't be afraid. This is a spiritual fire, and there is no danger, that all occurred due to the great amount of Torah they studied for the sake of Heaven in holiness and purity. They had this merit. The above-mentioned holy rabbi died in 5474 (Sefer Camus Amedi part 2 page 154).

We have almost not found such a story about the Sages in recent generations. However, the Tosafot, in Tractate Hagigah (page 15a, beginning with: Shuvu Banim), attributes such an act to the greats of the Tannaim. Happy is the nation and happy is the congregation whose Sages are like this.





## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Not only miracles, wonders, kings, and angels were with the Sages and saints of our community, the worldly geniuses who labored in the Torah with all their might and wrote important and great books in all Torah subjects. However, not all Sages composed books out of humility (as did many of the Sephardic Sages), and even those who authored did not always have the privilege of having their books published. As the holy Zohar says (Edra Raba Vol. 3 Parashat Naso page 134a), everything depends on mazal, even Sefer Torah in the Temple.

The Gaon, Rabbi David Tayyar Zatzuk'1, or "The Father of Wisdom," as Rabbi Avraham Adadi Zatz''1 calls him in his book, *Hashomer Emet*, who was a student of Rabbi Yosef Zarka Zatzukal'1. Even though he was a Dayan, and it is told that he knew all the parts of the Shulchan Aruch by heart, no writings or books by him have been found. In contrast, his friend and brother, who sat with him in the court, Rabbi and saint, Rabbi Mas'oud Chai Rukah ztz''1 (who was born in Izmir in Turkey and immigrated to Jerusalem and was sent as an emissary\messenger of the Sages to Tripoli), authored many books including, *Ma'aseh Roke'ach* on the Rambam, another book of chidushim about the Shas, a collection of chidushim on the Brayta called, *Divrei haBrayta*, and other books. There sat on the judges seats both holy rabbis mentioned together, with Rabbi Binyamin Vaturi ztz''1, "and the triangular thread will not soon be disconnected"

Another Sage and saint who wrote a book on Kabbalah, and left it as a manuscript, is the holy rabbi, Rabbi Hachmon David Zatzuk'1, who was born in Tripoli in the year

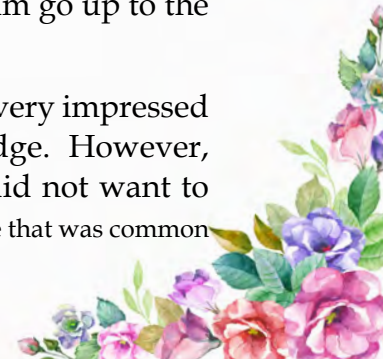


## Sichot For Am Yisrael

5604, and died in the year 5668 (about 109 years ago). He was famous throughout the country with a reputation of one who knew to heal by the Holy Name, and all day, he was sitting wrapped in a tallit, and crowned with a tefillin, in his room and studied the Torah. When he was about forty years old, he left Tripoli and immigrated to the Land of Israel to worship God in purity and holiness. There, he lived in the city of Safed, where he joined a group of Kabbalists and studied the Torah with them day and night (Responsa Camus Amedi part 2 page 159).

Another wise man who was known for his sharpness in the Talmud and his quick understanding is the Rabbi HaGaon, Rabbi Camus Ajrabi, who was born in Tripoli in the year 5600 and when he was teaching his students, he would comment while studying the Gemara on almost all the questions and answers and Chidushim of the commentators of the Talmud and all with the sharpness of his mind and the depth of his understanding. Despite the great poverty he suffered as a child, he labored in the Torah, and in his youth, he would work in hard and simple jobs so that he could buy some oil for lighting in order to study at night. You would often see him go up to the roof at night to study by the moonlight...

When Rabbi Shlomo Selant zt'l came as an emissary to Tripoli, he was very impressed with Rabbi Camus Ajrabi's sharpness and extraordinary knowledge. However, because of his righteousness and his humility, Rabbi Camus Ajrabi did not want to accept a public role on himself, and he traded in ostrich feathers (a trade that was common







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in Tripoli at that time). And finally, only when he could no longer refuse the pleas of the heads of the congregation, he was appointed as the head of the rabbinical court along with the Dayanim, Rabbi Avraham Habib, and Rabbi Shalom Tshuva ztz"l. He died in the year 5673 on the 19th of Tevet. May his merit protect us, amen.

Go out and see how many geniuses and saints, scribes and sages, Kabbalists, and miracle workers, were in our community! They are the crowns of our heads and our pride is upon them, and each and every one should find out from the members of his family if there were any worldly geniuses in them "Ask your father and he shall tell you, your grandfathers and they will tell you" This was written in the book as a testimony for many days. Our children, and our children's children, will know the "glories of the community," and they will long to walk on their way, the way of G-d, and on the path that goes up to heaven.

And to every man or woman from our community (and all the Jewish communities in general), please do not treat Am Israel as sheep without a shepherd, as if our opinion and our chances were taken away, and as if we did not receive great honors. Do not give more validity to the community's foods or its celebrations than to its Sages, writers, and books. Every mother shall be proud, not of knowing how to prepare the couscous, or the Hraymeh, or the Mafrum, or the Mesiyar, but in bequeathing to her children, and her children's children, the heritage of the religion of Israel, which was passed down like a silk thread by the elders and the teachers of the Tripolitanian Libyan



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community to the saints who are in their land and who are still living in the Garden of Eden.

May it be His will that soon in our days, Yehudah will be saved and even Israel will dwell in safety, and Yaakov will return and be at peace and be satisfied, and there will be no terror. Amen, so be His will.



The Holiday Of  
Purim



**The Super  
Designer Who  
is Now Buried  
Beneath**



## The Super Designer Who is Now Buried Beneath

Karl Lagerfeld is a famous name in the fashion world. The German Lagerfeld has become recognised as one of the greatest designers in recent years.

His sudden death about two years ago left this 'empty' world helpless. The astonishment intensified when it became clear that in his will, he gave his beloved she-cat (Choupette) 'comfort' in the form of a high percentage of his inheritance, amounting to 150 million pounds. It turns out that German law allows this type of inheritance to be distributed, as long as a union or association is appointed for the cat.

If you were really interested in the pedigree of the she-cat, here are its details: she is a nine-year-old Birman type who had accompanied Lagerfeld in his last years. He said that she was his only true love. The late German designer even claimed in the past that he would have married the cat if it had been legal. However, that didn't stop him from calling her "the woman of my life" in various interviews either. He had since showered her with love and gifts, including her own bedroom with a sound system, trips on private jets, a security guard, makeup, and a collection of diamond necklaces. Her meals are meticulously prepared four times a day by a senior chef, who meets all her expectations and tastes.





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If you were amazed by his attitude towards the cat, you will be doubly amazed by his attitude towards humans. His arrogance was infamous; he would humiliate and disgrace anyone he could think of. He had no friends. He even refused to stay with his biological mother before her death. What's more, in an interview with a French reporter in 2018, he expressed disdain and indifference towards the Holocaust.

The fact that his people massacred tens of millions of the human race, including six million Jews, did not bother him at all. Instead, the cat, Chouquette, was more important to him.

When the renowned genius, Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman zt"l, may God avenge his blood, arrived in Germany on the eve of the outbreak of the Holocaust, he saw an elegant lady kissing her dog. He was shocked and said, "Those who sacrifice man may kiss the calves" (Hosea 13:2). In this place people will be slaughtered" (Walls of the Beit Midrash, vol. 4, page 242). When you fill your heart with love and compassion for animals, it immediately comes at the expense of loving others.



What does all this have to do with Purim?

Did you know that Haman also had feelings of pity? This is what our Rabbis say in the Midrash (Rabba Parashat Emor Parsha 27, Mark 11), "And my mercy to the wicked is



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

cruel” (Proverbs 12:10). This is the wicked Haman, who decreed “to destroy, to kill, to perish, etc.” (Esther 3:13). It is not explained what Haman had mercy on. It is possible to imagine that maybe he would have mercy on animals, beasts and birds, or ‘other vegetables,’ but what is clear is that he really had no mercy on the Jewish people and the children of Israel!!!

Haman’s feelings of love were also not revealed, as we found with Ahasuerus (Esther chapter 2 verse 17). Haman was loved, and it seems that he did not love others but himself. If you ask, *isn’t it “as the water, so is the face to the face, and so is the heart of man to man”?* The answer is simple: “Yes, the heart of man is for man.” Haman distorted all his human feelings and, like a carnivorous animal, he used the feelings of love for himself.

“See, only this one I have found, for God made man straight, but they sought many intrigues” (Ecclesiastes chapter 7 verse 29). God created man with the set of good powers and feelings, including mercy and love, “but they sought many intrigues” – conspiracies and thoughts of sin (Rashi).

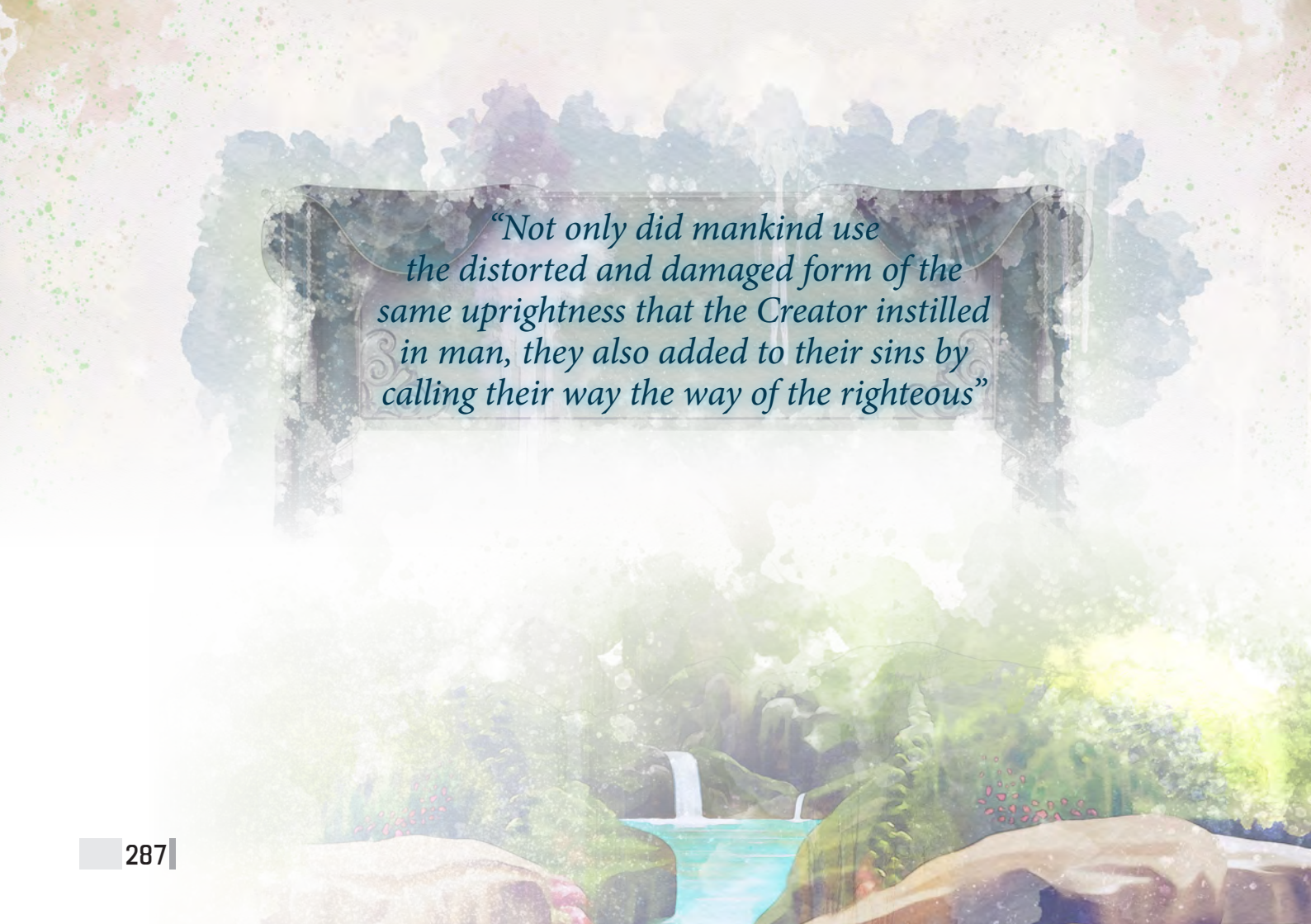
Not only did mankind use the distorted and damaged form of the same uprightness that the Creator instilled in man, they also added to their sins by calling their way the way of the righteous – “every way of a man is righteous in his own eyes” (Proverbs 21:2). Moreover, the Sages have already said (Yuma page 75a) that to a drunkard, all the offenses in the world appear to him as a flat land– as a straight path.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael

Some are drunk with wine, and some are drunk with lust, confusion, and the evil inclination.

When we protest and revile Haman during the days of Purim, we must also remember to protest the Haman within us, who perverts and spoils every good part of us, and uses the morals and upright leadership that the Creator instilled in man for his desires.



*“Not only did mankind use  
the distorted and damaged form of the  
same uprightness that the Creator instilled  
in man, they also added to their sins by  
calling their way the way of the righteous”*



Say Little And  
Do Much



**The Hot  
Air Balloon  
and Keeping the  
Mitzvot**



## The Hot Air Balloon and Keeping the Mitzvot

The year was 1783. Joseph Michel and Jacques Etienne Montgolfier, two determined French brothers, were responsible for building the world's first hot air balloon, the invention that began man's journey in the kingdom of the sky.

Members of the Montgolfier family were paper manufacturers. One time, while they were working in the family factory, they noticed the phenomenon of paper debris rising in the hot air. They began to experiment with paper bags to see if they would fly over the fire. When the bags responded as desired, the brothers decided to investigate and test the impressive phenomenon in a larger vessel, and they did so with all their might.

The two conducted many experiments, but most of the time, the balloons exploded and crashed before landing. That's why they invested in designing a reliable balloon that would ensure a safe flight without any malfunction.

After several years of labor, they created the first hot air balloon in history.

The first flight was expected to take off in a large and impressive ceremony in which thousands of people would take part and watch from below the manned balloon soaring towards the sky.

## Sichot For Am Yisrael

They were looking for five people who would agree to join the first flight in history.

Ministers, Counts and very famous public figures were invited to the ceremony, and a huge crowd of people agreed to pay an entrance ticket. A few days before the ceremony, the huge balloon was placed in the center of the city, well anchored with strong ropes, catching the attention of all the city's residents. Starting from the morning hours of that day, the crowd started flowing into the area.

The trumpet blast silenced the crowds. With that, the ceremony began...

Joseph Michel and his brother came on stage to the cheers of the audience. Joseph began to speak about the various procedures that they went through until they managed to reach this moment. At the end of his speech, the five people, who agreed to join his journey, were summoned by Joseph to the stage. They were then invited to ask any question they could think of regarding the safety of the balloon, and the audience became fired up. Joseph together with his brother stood confidently in their places, and answered the questions comprehensively and in good taste.

Their reasons were very convincing. Everyone present knew that they were dealing with experienced and learned experts who had been involved for many years in the field of aerodynamics (the study of air movements).

The last question in the series and the answer that followed stunned the audience:



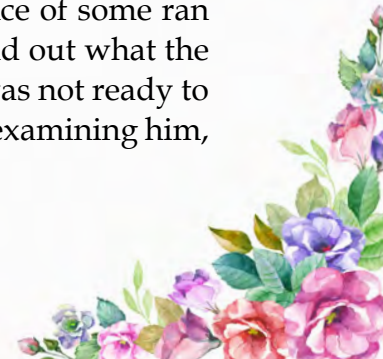
## Sichot For Am Yisrael

“Which is safer? Standing on the ground or staying on the balloon?” asked one of the participants. Joseph answered without a doubt: “Obviously, it is safer to stay on the balloon. When you stay on the ground, you are subject to the danger of a sinkhole opening up under your feet, but when you are floating in the air, you are very stable.”

The audience cheered at the answer.

The big moment came, and the audience stood and waited with excitement and tension. Joseph and the five people got off the stage and approached the special bench that was connected to the balloon with strong iron cables. Joseph invited the five men to take their seats on the bench. Immediately after them, Joseph was supposed to go up and sit down.

Time passed, and something inexplicable happened there near the balloon. The whole crowd stood in confusion while their eyes were fixated on what was happening. Long minutes passed and many began whispering amongst each other. Still, there was no movement. The clock continued to tick, and eventually, the patience of some ran out. They broke through the barriers and stormed to the balloon to find out what the matter was. It turned out that the main actor, Joseph Michel himself, was not ready to join the journey. His personal doctor was called to the scene, and after examining him, found clear symptoms of stress and fear.



## Sichot For Am Yisrael



The five passengers emphatically announced that they were not ready to participate in the journey: "If the inventor is afraid to board, we won't take the risk."

The arguments and the difficult exchanges continued, until the people slowly dispersed and headed home, but not before asking for a refund of the entrance ticket.

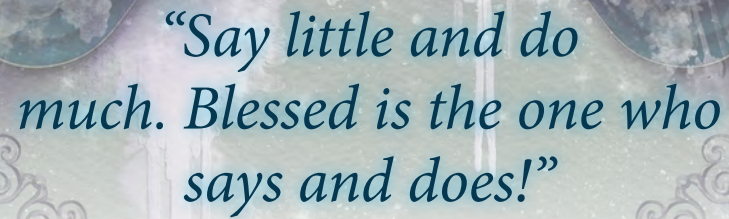


"Words are like sand and there is nothing to eat." The person who declares at every moment that he believes and loves G-d, but in his actions chooses not to overcome his lustful impulses and decides to stay in his natural environment – the environment of sins that he is used to – is similar to Joseph, whose convincing explanations became meaningless the moment he refused to get on the hot air balloon. It is not for nothing that our Sages commanded us: Say little and do much (Avot Chapter 1 Mishna 15). Blessed is the one who says and does!



End of the Sichot in English





*“Say little and do  
much. Blessed is the one who  
says and does!”*