

Thought of the Week

The rabbis of the Talmud declared that children – having them, raising them and how they turn out – are dependent on a degree of mazal, good fortune and luck. In this week's parsha, where the twins Yaakov and Eisav are described and contrasted, this cryptic statement is apparently relevant and pertinent. Both are products of the same parents, raised in the same home and apparently given the same type of education yet they turn out to be opposite personalities.

In fact, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch sees in this the cause for Eisav's evil behavior – Eisav who is a completely different personality than Yaakov should not have been given the same education as Yaakov. It was the inability to raise Eisav according to his own tendencies that turned him into the alienated, rebellious and hateful person that he became.

The story of the twin sons of Yitzchak and Rivkah certainly illustrates the uncertainty associated in raising children no matter how pious the parents and how moral the home. It is this element of unplanned and unforeseen mazal that the rabbis of the Talmud are referring to.

This in no way absolves parents of their responsibilities and duties regarding the raising of their children. But, it does point out they have a will of their own and that there are no guarantees as to how they develop and what their beliefs and actions in later life will be.

In the nineteenth century entire generations and communities of Jewish children turned their backs to Torah life and traditional values. It was due, to a certain degree, to the obvious deficiencies present in Jewish life in Europe – poverty, governmental persecution, social discrimination and the apparent backwardness of the then Jewish society. But I feel that the major force of this secularization of Jewish society was the zeitgeist – the prevailing spirit that was then dominant in European society and life.

Perhaps one can say that this zeitgeist is itself the mazal that the rabbis spoke of. We are all products of the ideas and times in which we live - we are influenced by everything. Some, like Yaakov, are able to shut out much of the outside world by sitting in the tents of Torah for decades on end. Eisav, who did not have that ability to sit for years in the tents of study, though he certainly had that opportunity, was swept away by the zeitgeist of the Canaanites, of Yishmael and the allure of power and wealth.

Following the zeitgeist never excuses bad and immoral behavior in the eyes of Torah. But it does explain how such alienation and rebellion, hatred and prejudice is instilled into children who were raised by great parents and in solid homes and families. Since zeitgeist can never be completely eliminated from our home environments it behooves us to be aware of its presence and attempt to deal with it wisely and realistically. And for that to happen, we will all require a large helping of undiluted good mazal.

Adapted from <http://www.torah.org/learning/rabbiwein/5772/toldos.html> by Rabbi Berel Wein.

בס"ד

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Parshas Toldos

פרשת תולדות

Stone Chumash page 124; Haftarah, page 1207.

November 25-26, 2011

כ"ט חשוון תשע"ב



Shabbos Schedule Mevorchim haChodesh



Light Candles, Mincha and Kabbalas Shabbos:	4:20pm
Parsha Chaburah by Naftali Perlberger:	8:15am
Shacharis:	8:45am
Sof Zman Krias Shema:	9:23am
Shabbos Groups, upstairs, for ages 2 and up. Children under 2 must be supervised by a parent.	9:45am
Kiddush is community sponsored.	
Mincha:	4:15pm
Medical Halacha Shiur given by Dr Daniel Eisenberg.	
Chabura given by Rabbi Michael Taubes, on the topic of Techum Shabbos	
Maariv:	5:22pm

To subscribe to the YIML email list, visit
<http://mail.chaseplanet.us/mailman/listinfo/yiml>

Weekday Davening Times

Shacharis:	Sunday (Rosh Chodesh Kislev):	8:00am
	Monday and Thursday:	6:40am
	Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday:	6:50am
Mincha/Maariv:	Sunday:	4:25pm
Maariv:	Monday through Thursday:	7:45pm
Candle Lighting, Mincha and Kabbalas Shabbos:		4:18pm

Weekday Shiurim

Daily Mussar Shiur:	15 minutes before Shacharis
Mishna Brura:	Mon and Wed after Maariv
Gemora Bekius Shiur:	Tues, Wed, Thurs at 8pm.
Sefer Bereishis Shiur:	Monday at 8pm.
Nefesh HaChaim:	Thursday at 10:10pm

Women's Learning Experience – Winter Schedule

Monday 9:00am: Tehillim for Cholim.
Monday 9:30am: Rabbi Steinberg - Geshet HaChaim.
Monday 10:45am: Rabbi Brisman - Shabbos Kitchen Halachas.
Tuesday 9:30am: Rabbi Shmidman - Sefer Tehillim, at LMS.
Tuesday 8:00pm: Stacey Goldman - Women in Tanach, at 161 Highland Circle.
Wednesday 9:30am: Steve Goldman - Sefer Devarim.
Wednesday 2:50pm: Rabbi Greenspan - Parsha Va'eschanan.
Thursday 9:30am: Rabbi Gold - Parsha HaShavua.
Classes at 8 Concord Circle, unless otherwise noted.
Suggested donation of \$5 per class. Babysitting is available, reservations must be made in advance. For information or babysitting, call Janis Fine 610-888-0477 jfine@comcast.net.

Chevra Mishnayos

The Chevra Mishnayos is learning Seder Zeraim. See shul bulletin board to sign up or email eisenber@pol.net with your name and the masechta (and chapters) you intend to learn.

Bnos and Pirchei

Bnos will meet from 2:45 to 3:45pm at LMS. Craft Program beginning now for those who registered! Please pay yearly membership (\$36/girl). Contact Meira Friedman: 610-617-9529. Bnos Pre-Chanukah Carnival on Dec 4, 2 to 3:30pm. Members \$3, non-members \$10. Spin art, moonbounce, prizes and more! Pirchei will not meet this Shabbos. Contact Rabbi Ari Silver at 610-668-6833 or SilverDollar@verizon.net

Condolences

Young Israel of the Main Line expresses condolences to our dear member, Mrs. Leah Yoffe, and her brothers, on the passing of their mother, Mrs. Sally Margulis a"h. May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Yerushalayim.

Kashrus Announcement

A special arrangement has been reached with the proprietors of "Top This", at 707 Montgomery Ave, in Narberth, allowing regular visits to the store to confirm the kosher status of the frozen yogurt. Please note that ONLY THE FROZEN YOGURT is confirmed kosher.

YIML Cookbook

The Young Israel of the Main Line announces that its cookbook, At the End of the Fork, is now back in stock. The cost is \$15 per book (payable to YIML Women's League). Buy one for yourself and one for a friend. They make wonderful hostess gifts. To preview or purchase, please contact Janet Eisenberg (eisenber@pol.net or 610- 664- 8554).

Rabbi Steinberg's Schedule

Rabbi Steinberg will be away until Monday, Nov 28th. Anyone needing to reach him, in case of emergency, should speak to Shul President, Sherman Frager