



## YARCHEI KALLAH

The Yarchei Kallah Summer Learning Program begins this week.

Yarchei Kallah is our premier learning program for the year and the biggest annual Adult Torah learning program in Australia.

The program offers a smorgasbord of over 40 lectures and shiurim throughout the course of the week.

Each day, our guest scholar **Rabbi Ari Shishler** will deliver a keynote presentation for men and women at 12:00pm.

The morning sessions feature a plethora of presentations on a variety of contemporary and classic topics in Jewish law and thought.

Advanced textual study is also available.

Morning classes run separately for men and women.

The classes are delivered by the Rabbis of Kollel Menachem alongside Rabbis and Rebbetzins from the local community and interstate.

The program is complete with a delicious refreshments buffet each morning before the feature presentation

**Tuesday Dec 25 - Tuesday Jan 1**

**Teves 17-24**

Classes start at 9:45am each day and run from the Yeshiva Multipurpose Building, 1 A'beckett St, St Kilda East.

For full details of the program, topics and speakers, visit

[www.Jewishlearning.com.au](http://www.Jewishlearning.com.au)

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא  
**חידוש** Chiddush



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## A lesson in perspective

Before his father passes away, Yosef brings his two sons, Efraim and Menashe, to receive his parting blessing. Yaakov places Menashe, the firstborn, facing Yaakov's right and Efraim on Yaakov's left.

Yaakov switches his hands, placing his right hand, the primary source of blessing, on the head of Efraim, even though he was the younger brother. The Torah describes this switching of hands a שיכל, meaning that he acted wisely.

Much has been written about the great wisdom and deeper insight in Yaakov's actions. In his Sefer Kedushas Levi, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev offers a powerful lesson on proper perspective.

In Parshas Vayigash, the Torah explains why Yosef named his sons Menashe and Efraim respectively.

On naming Menashe, Yosef says כִּי־נִשְׁכַּח אֱלֹהִים וְאֶת־כָּל־עַמְלִי וְאֶת־כָּל־בֵּית אָבִי, Hashem has caused me to forget all of my problems and all of my father's house.

In contrast, the name Efraim was given because Hashem has made me prosperous (lit. fertile) in the land of my affliction - בְּאֶרֶץ עֲנִי - כִּי־הִרְפִּנִי אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶרֶץ עֲנִי.

Yosef suffered greatly for most of his life until this point. He lost his mother as a young boy, was despised by his brothers who betrayed him and sold him as a slave to a foreign land far away from his father's home. In Egypt he was thrown into prison on false charges before being freed and elevated to his position of rulership.

The name Menashe focuses on the suffering that Yosef had experienced as his 'firstborn' in life. In the name Efraim, Yosef focuses not on his suffering and difficulties, but on the personal success and elevation that ultimately ensued and that he finally enjoyed.

Yaakov too suffered in his lifetime. In switching his hands, he was teaching Yosef a lesson in faith and how to view difficulties and challenges when we have to go through them.

When Hashem causes us to experience suffering and challenge, the true intention is not for the challenge itself. The challenge is there to serve as an opportunity for growth; to bring out deeper qualities and strengths within ourselves and lead us to greater success and accomplishment.

Yaakov is telling Yosef that we have to always remember that even when facing the struggles of Menashe, the true and primary intention always was and always will be Efraim. Latent and hidden within the challenge itself is Hashem's deepest kindnesses. This knowledge strengthens us when we face the challenges of life.

With this, the Kedushas Levi explains a perplexing Gemara. Rabb Elazar taught in the name of Rabbi Chanina that the ways of Hashem are not like the ways of man. The *Middah* of man is to first place the pot on the fire and then pour the water into it. Hashem however, first pours the water into the pot and then places it on the fire.

Water reflects the attribute of Chesed - kindness. Placing the pot on the fire represents the struggles and challenges that a person experiences in life. Fire reflects the attribute of Gevurah.

The difficulties are not random. When Hashem places the pot on the fire, He only does so because He has first placed the water in it. Hashem wants to bestow His kindness upon us. Sometimes, such kindness can only be achieved through difficulties, with the kindness being the growth and prosperity that comes as a result.

The blessing that Yaakov gives to Efraim and Menashe is that "by you Yisroel (the Jewish people) will bless (their children) saying: may G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe".

In our lives, the ability to place Efraim before Menashe, to always see the kindness and opportunity within our challenges and how they come from Hashem to help us grow, is the greatest blessing of all.

# Halachos for road-trips - part 1

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

During the summer holidays many of us are likely to spend time travelling. Halacha governs every aspect of our lives, all year round. So whether you are going on an interstate drive or just out for a family day trip, here are some of the halachos to consider;

## When to Travel

The Gemora says that one should ensure to start one's journey while it is still light and also to enter into the city while still light.

Being on the road at night between cities was not considered safe. One concern was poor visibility—that one may not see pits and ditches in the road. Another concern was for bandits and highway men.

Therefore Chaza"l advise that when travelling, one should only leave the city during daylight hours and should arrive at their destination while still light. Though essentially a safety issue, it is brought as halacha in the Shulchan Aruch.

Nowadays, with safer roads and vehicles and the advent of headlights and street lights, this ruling does not generally apply. But it gives us an appreciation of the need to act safely when travelling and to avoid travelling through dangerous areas.

A similar halacha is that one should not travel alone at night outside of the city. Again due to changed travel conditions, the practise is to be lenient, but one should always take the necessary safety precautions.

## Erev Shabbos

On Erev Shabbos the Shulchan Aruch rules that one should not travel a trip of more than (approximately) 4 hours. This is in order to have adequate time to prepare for Shabbos. However, if one is already prepared or someone else will be taking care of the preparations, this ruling does not apply.

Nonetheless, when travelling on Erev Shabbos (including day trips) one should leave enough time to reach their destination, allowing extra time for unforeseeable delays or traffic.

## Road Safety

Safety when travelling is not just good advice, it is also mandated by the Torah; וּנְשַׁמְרֶתֶם מְאֹד, לנפשותיכם, you should be very careful with guarding your life.

On the road, this would include following all road signs and regulations, including speed limits. It also includes the proper use of seatbelts and child safety restraints. One should also be conscious of driver's fatigue, taking adequate rest breaks, especially when driving late at night or early morning.

The Rebbe advises that when travelling at night one should stop to rest every hour, or change drivers where possible.

Nowadays, the requirement of being safe while travelling would include having a map or GPS as well as a working mobile phone. (The same applies when going on hikes).

## Travelling Before Davening

The Shulchan Aruch rules that one is not allowed to begin a journey before having davened in the morning. The Ram"o brings a lenient opinion which permits travel after having recited some Brachos. However he rules that it is preferable to be stringent.

Most Poskim understand this law to apply only when leaving after the time of Shachris (Alos Hashachar) has arrived.

The Shulchan Aruch makes an exception if one is travelling in a convoy which will not wait for him to daven first.

If one is in a place where there is no minyan and they are travelling to a place where there will be a minyan which davens before the zman, one may travel before davening.

If there is a pressing need to leave before davening or it will cause great delay (e.g. to avoid traffic) or extra cost, one can rely on the lenient opinion and leave after reciting Brachos. If the purpose of the travel is for the sake of a Mitzvah one need not delay.

## Davening on the Way.

If one needs to daven while travelling, the following halachos apply;

Be aware of the proper times for davening.

One should wash their hands and dress appropriately as per usual for davening.

Today with the various Phone apps, one can find a compass with which to determine the direction to face when davening. If one does not know the direction one should have kavanah in their heart to be davening directly to Hashem.

One should preferably stop their travelling and

stand for davening (Shemoneh Esrei).

It is preferable not to daven (Shemoneh Esrei) in an open area. Rather one should daven in or near a building or near trees or in a secluded area.

When travelling by train the Rebbe Rashab would stand for Shemoneh Esrei. However, when traveling by carriage the Rebbe would sit while davening. The primary issue is being able to have proper kavanah.

When davening Shemoneh Esrei while sitting, one should have the legs placed together. If possible one should rise when bowing during Shemoneh Esrei. One should also still take 3 steps back at the end of Shemoneh Esrei.

## Words of Torah

The Alter Rebbe rules that when travelling, once should speak words of Torah, as it says in the Shema וּדְבַרְתָּ בָּם... וּבִלְכַתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ, and you shall speak them (Torah)... when you go on the way.

The Shela"h writes that it was the practise of Chassidim and Anshei Maaseh to have a Mesechta or Mishnayos to review by heart while travelling.

A number of entries in Hayom Yom address the importance and the powerful effects of reciting words of Torah by heart.

## Kiddush Hashem

Whether we are away on holiday or out on a day-trip, we should remember that we represent Torah and Yiddishkeit. Our conduct and our interactions with others should be in a manner which ensures that שָׁם שְׂמִימִים מֵתְאָרָה, שָׁם עַל יְדֵךְ, - bringing about a Kiddush Hashem and not הִיפּוֹת the opposite.

This would include; politeness and Derech Eretz, following rules and regulations and not littering. It also applies in our driving and being courteous and patient on the road. One should also teach their children about making a Kiddush Hashem.

The Rebbe also stresses that we should use our holiday trips as an opportunity for Mivtzoim - to spread and promote Yiddishkeit to those we come in contact with. One should keep their Tefillin accessible. One can also ask the RARA shluchim if there is anyone on the way or near their destination that they can visit or bring anything to.