



פרשת לך לך
מרחשון
תשע"ט

NEW KOLLEL MEMBER

Kollel Menachem welcomes our
newest Kollel family

Yisroel and Estee New

In his first week since arriving,
Yisroel has already taken the reins
of the daily Kitzur Shulchan Aruch
Shiur in the Kollel's Tiferes
Zekeinim retirees Kollel, much to
the nachas of his Zeide, a commit-
ted daily participant.

We wish them much Hatzlocha in
their move to Melbourne and look
forward to the contribution that
Yisroel will make in our community
as an active Kollel member.

Yisroel is available for Chavrusa
learning in the evenings. Please
contact Rabbi Barber if you would
like to organise a shiur.

SHAALOS UTESHUVOS

This week's Shaalos Uteshuvos
shiur will be given by Rabbi Doobie
Lisker.

9:30am Sunday in the Kollel

YARCHEI KALLAH COUNTRY RETREAT

Bookings are now open for the
annual Yarchei Kallah country
learning retreat.

This year's program will take place
in Marysville, with a variety of ac-
commodation arrangements at
Camp Marysville and the El Kanah
Village.

The program comes complete with
fully catered meals, a full program
of Shiurim and children's program
and childcare.

For more information email
retreatjewishlearning@gmail.com



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Shielding our kindness

The first Bracha of Shemoneh Esrei is the Bracha of Avos. We mention our Forefathers Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov who stand in our zechus. The Bracha ends with the words ברוך אתה ה' מגן אברהם, blessing Hashem who is the Shield of Avraham.

This phrase is borrowed from Parshas Lech Lecha. When Hashem comes to Avraham in a vision and tells him that he will have many descendants, He says "Do not fear Avraham, I will be your shield" אנכי מגן לך

On the literal level, the Shield of Avraham refers to how Hashem protected Avraham in the War of Kings (Ibn Ezra) or that Hashem would protect Avraham from punishment for having killed in battle (Rashi).

In the Chassidische Parsha, the Alter Rebbe gives a deeper insight in the meaning of this blessing.

Avraham embodied the Divine attribute of Chessed - loving kindness. Chessed was his very nature and was expressed in how he would serve Hashem and relate to his fellow man.

Like the Divine attributes, Avraham's Chessed was unlimited; Everyone was good in his eyes and he would shower them with unbounded love, whether they deserved it or not.

Even the wicked; sinners and idolaters were recipients of Avraham's kindness.

Avraham had a son Yishmael who was less than a savoury character. Yet when Avraham was told that he would father a son together with Sarah he asked "if only Yishmael will live before You." Avraham knew who his son Yishmael was, yet he davened that Hashem bless him with kindness so that he too will live and endure.

Pure unadulterated kindness without discerning whether it is deserved or not, is not necessarily a good thing. In the absence of discipline, kindness alone allows negativity and negative behaviour to thrive.

Our sages describe that "Yishmael went out from Avraham". To a certain extent, Yishmael and his behaviour was a product of Avraham's unlimited kindness and tolerance.

The ultimate purpose of Creation is that negativity will be eradicated from the world. A world run with pure Chessed will not uproot negativity. For this we need

Din - judgement, strictness and discipline.

And so after Avraham came Yitzchak, who embodied the attribute of Din. But strictness and discipline which is too intense and intolerant also leads to undesirable results. Yitzchak was pure Din and as a result, "Eisav came out from Yitzchak".

The proper approach is balance, a synthesis of kindness and discipline. This balance was embodied in Yaakov, the attribute of Tiferes. Unlike with the approach of Avraham and Yitzchak, all of Yaakov's children followed in his ways.

In the macro-sense this is true as well. Hashem sustains all existence with His attribute of kindness. Even the forces of negativity receive their vitality from Hashem. But if Hashem would bestow His infinite, unadulterated kindness to the forces of negativity as well, they would be strengthened and perpetuate.

And so each morning, when the attribute of Avraham - Hashem's kindness flows into the world, we make the blessing Magen Avraham. Like a shield which covers its bearer, we ask Hashem to shield and limit this Chessed so that it does not flow in its full intensity to the forces of negativity.

This idea finds application in our parenting approach. We love our children infinitely. We want to shower them with pure Chessed, see only the positive and give them everything. But this does not mean that we should give our children unlimited freedoms, grant all of their desires or tolerate all of their behaviours.

Some modern-parenting approaches advocate permissiveness and fewer rules and expectations. The permissive parent seeks to be more like a friend than an authority. Not wanting to be mean, they try to grant all of their children's desires and fail to set limits and discipline negative behaviours.

This approach fails our kids. We need to be an authority figure, being able to say no, to set limits and to firmly discipline. Not every desire should be granted.

At the same time, overly strict and rigid discipline without empathy is not healthy either.

Magen Avraham is the ideal parenting paradigm; Genuine love and Chessed, but shielded so that it is applied discriminately in their best interest.

When is the best time for Kiddush Levana?

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

One who sees the moon in its renewal is required to recite the blessing of Kiddush Levana - אשר במאמרו ברא שחקים.¹

The Gemora teaches that whoever blesses the new month in its proper time, is considered as though they have greeted the presence of the Shechina. This is derived by linking two Pesukim which use the word זה; Concerning Rosh Chodesh the Torah says והחודש הזה and at the Yam Suf the people saw Hashem's presence and proclaimed זה א-לי.

When is the proper time for Kiddush Levana?

Night-time

The Ram"o² rules that Kiddush Levana is only recited at night.

Even if the moon is present during daylight, Kiddush Levana is not recited because the moonlight is insignificant and we apply the Talmudic dictum "What does a candle contribute in daylight?"

Even during twilight (בין השמשות) when the sky is darker, Kiddush Levana is not recited because it is still considered daytime³.

The Ram"o further qualifies that the blessing should be at a time when the moon has risen and one benefits from its light. Aruch Hashulchan⁴ measures this by being the point in time when the moonlight casts shadows on the ground.

Until When?

The Talmud requires that the blessing be recited when the moon is in its state of renewal. When does this period extend to? The Gemora⁵ teaches that Kiddush Levana can be recited until the time that the moon's blemish (cavity) has been filled.

Rav Yehuda rules that this means up until 7 days of the month. Halacha follows the Nahradeans who rule that the blessing may be recited until 16 days of the month. "Until" the 16th of the month is not inclusive of the 16th day itself, since on the 16th the moon has already reached its fullness and is now waning⁶. For this purpose, the days are counted from the *Molad* (which may or may not be on Rosh Chodesh).

The Mechaber⁷ and Tur rule simply that Kiddush Levana can be recited until 16 days from the *Molad* but not including the 16th day i.e. 15 days. The Magen Avraham⁸ explains that

these 15 days are counted as fifteen 24-hour periods (360 hours) from the exact time of the *Molad*.

The Ram"o rules slightly differently. A lunar month is actually 29 days, 12 hours and 783 *chalakim* (each chelek being 1/1080 of an hour). Technically the moon will reach its fullness at the midway point of this measurement. Hence Kiddush Levana may only be recited until that point and not the entire 15th day period⁹.

From When?

The Gemora in Sanhedrin does not qualify the earliest time for reciting Kiddush Levana.

The Rambam¹⁰ writes that one may recite Kiddush Levana already on the first day. Talmidei Rabbeinu Yonah¹¹ write that because the moon is too small, one should not recite the blessing on the first day but may do so anytime after.

The Mechaber¹² rules that one should only recite Kiddush Levana after 7 days have lapsed. The Mishna Berura writes that most of the Poskim, including; the Bach, Magen Avraham, Taz, Pri Chadash, allow Kiddush Levana to be recited already after 3 full 24-hour periods from the time of the *Molad*. From this time, one is able to benefit from the moonlight.

They challenge the Mechaber's ruling based on the fact that according to Rav Yehuda (in the Gemora quoted above) the seventh day is actually the end-time for Kiddush Levana!

The Mechaber's opinion of waiting 7 days is based on Kabbalah since the moon has now received from all of the seven Sefiros. Elya Rabbah¹³ explains that according to this view one may recite Kiddush Levana from the beginning of the seventh day and need not wait for the full 7 days to elapse. The position of the Elya Rabbah is disputed.

Motzai Shabbos

Meseches Sofrim teaches that Kiddush Levana should be recited on Motzai Shabbos when one is in a state of joy and dressed in their Shabbos clothing. This is brought in the Shulchan Aruch.

Maggid Meisharim writes that if one recites Kiddush Levana on a Motzai Shabbos that month will be successful. Mishna Berura¹⁴ rules that Motzai Yomtov has the same status.

An additional reason for this hiddur is that on Motzai Shabbos more people will be present and the Mitzvah can be performed ברוב עם הדרת מלך

Whilst the literal reading of the Shulchan Aruch

suggests that Kiddush Levana can only be recited on Motzai Shabbos, the Poskim explain that it is only a hiddur¹⁵.

The Ram"o writes that this hiddur is only followed if Motzai Shabbos is before the 10th of the month. After this one should not wait for Motzai Shabbos since one runs the risk of a few consecutive cloudy nights and missing out altogether.

Shaar Hakollel records that during the winter, the Tzemach Tzedek was not makpid on waiting 7 days. He explains that this is because the hiddur of 7 days is not found in the Kabbalah of the Ariza"l.

A Clash of Two Hiddurim

For those who follow the Kabbalistic practise of waiting for 7 days, what happens when Motzai Shabbos falls on the 3rd, 4th, 5th or 6th day?

To wait for the 7 days would be sacrificing the hiddur of reciting Kiddush Levana on Motzai Shabbos. Waiting until next Motzai Shabbos could be too risky due to the concern of clouds quoted above.

In such a case the Levush rules that the hiddur of Motzai Shabbos takes precedence and one recites Kiddush Levana on the first Motzai Shabbos.

Through learning the halachos of Kiddush Levana and being mehader in its observance, may we merit the fulfilment of the assurance of the words we say; והן עתידין להתחדש כמותה; that the Jewish people will be renewed like the moon with the Geulah Shleimah.

1. Shulchan Aruch OC 426:1. Sanhedrin 42a
2. ibid. Based on the Agur
3. Mishna Berura 426:2
4. OC 426:5
5. Sanhedrin 41b
6. Kneses Hagedola interprets the Talmud literally as being inclusive of the 16th day. Pri Chadash relies on this opinion to permit someone who has not yet recited Kiddush Levana to do so on the 16th albeit without Hashem's name in the Blessing שם ומלכות בלא שם ומלכות
7. 426:3 This is the opinion of the Rambam Brachos 10:17
8. 426:12
9. If one did not recite Kiddush Levana before this
10. Brachos 10:17
11. Brachos 21a as quoted in Aruch Hashulchan
12. 426:4
13. See Shaarei Teshuvah 426:10
14. 426:5
15. The Bach challenges the hiddur based on the premise that we do not push off Mitzvos. Therefore Kiddush Levana should be recited at the earliest opportunity irrespective of the day of the week.