



פרשת תולדות  
כסלו תשע"ז

### GALA EVENING

We are very excited for our upcoming Partners in Torah gala evening with guest speaker Rabbi Leibel Groner.

All men and women are invited. Join us on Thursday February 2, 2017 at the Brighton International (separate seating).

**Book your tickets now!**  
**Trybooking.com/NENC**

### YARCHEI KALLAH 5777

The countdown is on to our annual **Yarchei Kallah** Summer Learning Program.

We are thrilled to announce that our guest speaker is the sensational and amazingly popular **Rabbi Ari Shishler**.

Rabbi Shishler has been our guest many times before and never ceases to wow the crowd with his brilliant presentations and shiurim.

He will be joined by a talented local line-up, including Rabbis from the Kollel and community Rabbis and Rebbetzins.

With over 40 classes on offer, presenting a fascinating selection of topics catering for beginners and the advanced alike, there is something for everyone.

December 25—January 2 at the Yeshiva Centre.

Follow us online and to see the full program and all of the topics and speakers which will be available next week.

**www.jewishlearning.com.au**



## What is a Shliach?

An elderly Shliach and Shlucha were engaged in a serious and heated discussion. They were advancing in years and needed to start thinking about bringing in a new Shliach to take over the Shlichus which they had built up. But who should they choose? What qualities and skills would they need to possess to do the job?

The Shliach argued that it was most important that they be able to understand and relate to the lives and lifestyles of their Mekuravim and make an impression. They should be smooth and polished, dress well and have a good sense of humour. He should appreciate worldly matters and be able to speak about politics, sports and world affairs.

The Shlucha argued that first and foremost, the candidate needed to be a Chassidische Yungerman; Someone who was immersed in learning Niglah and Chassidus. Someone to whom Avodas Hatefillah was important and Chassidus was their life. Someone to whom "wordliness" was foreign.

"But how would he relate to the balabatim and their world-outlook" argued the Shliach? "Don't worry," the Shlucha assured her husband, "the qualities that you mention are important, but they can all be learned. But the fundamental values you cannot fake. Either they are there or they are not".

This scenario, although somewhat fictitious, reflects the argument between Yitzchok and Rivka.

Yitzchak and Rivka were Shluchim. They had inherited their Shlichus from Avraham Avinu; to spread the awareness of Hashem throughout the world. They in turn would pass on their Shlichus to the next generation, to perpetuate their holy work.

Yitzchak and Rivka had two sons. These two sons were worlds apart and Yitzchak and Rivka were divided as to whom this mission should be given.

Eisav was an *Ish Sadeh*, a man of the world. Yaakov was the simple *Ish Tam* immersed in the tents of Torah and Avodah.

Yitzchok saw Eisav's strong personality and understanding of the world. Surely he would be best suited to engage and refine the world and navigate its paths? What would Yaakov know about the world?

How would he be effective in influencing and engaging with the world and relate to others to draw them closer? Yes Eisav was coarse, but with Yitzchak's blessings he could be redirected and his wordly strengths channelled effectively.

Rivka however, knew that as a man of the field, shaped and defined by the field, Eisav would be incapable of elevating the field. On the contrary, he would be allured by the temptation of worldly success, giving Chashivus to the world in its own right, and his Shlichus would be compromised. The world would become an ends to itself and not merely a vehicle to achieving a deeper goal. The Brachos would be wasted.

Yaakov who would come from "outside" of this "world", would remain focused on the mission.

But in order to ultimately impact the world, you have to go down into it and interact with it in an effective manner. How would he be able to relate? Rivka's answer was simple. Dress him in Eisav's clothes.

Clothes do not define the person wearing them, they can be changed to suit the occasion. But the person inside of them remains the same, would they be wearing any other clothes. A *Levush* acts as an interface to interact with those around us.

Ultimately Rivka was right. Yaakov, the naïve Torah scholar held his own, ultimately dealing with the savvy and very wordly likes of Eisav and Lavan in their "world" and succeeding.

A Shliach is Yaakov in Eisav's clothes. His *pnimius* is from "another world", the world of *Yichuda Ilaah* and *Yichuda Tataah*, the world of *Ein Od Milvado*. This is who they are, this is their essence. We are motivated and driven by our Hiskashrus to the Rebbe and devotion to the teaching of Chassidus.

To be involved in Birurim, we have to go into the world which we are trying to uplift – the *Levush Habisbarer*. We need to speak the language of the people - literally and figuratively and be in touch with worldly matters. But the *Levush Hamisbarer* remains a *Levush*, inside lies the pure *Tomim* from a different world to whom the real world is

This is the secret to our success on Shlichus and through this we receive all of the blessings to be successful and to triumph.

## In this Edition

What is a Shliach? **P.1**

Asking for Rain Below the Equator **P.2**

# Asking for Rain in the Southern Hemisphere Summer

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

During the rainy season we add a request for rain in the Shemoneh Esrei, saying ותן טל ומטר לברכה. The request for rain is added into the blessing בריך עלינו, the blessing for Parnoso<sup>1</sup>.

In Eretz Yisroel they begin requesting rain from the 7th of Cheshvan. This follows the view of Rabban Gamliel quoted in the Mishna<sup>2</sup>. Even though Eretz Yisroel requires rain immediately after Sukkos, we delay our request for rain for 15 days to allow the last person who had travelled to the Beis Hamikdosh to cross the Euphrates River before rain would make the roads impassable<sup>3</sup>.

Even after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdosh we continue to delay the request for rain until the 7th of Marcheshvan as many Jews would continue to be Oleh L'regel in Yerushalayim even after the Churban<sup>4</sup>.

Outside of Eretz Yisroel, in the exile (a reference to Bavel), they begin requesting rain from the 60th day after the Tekufah of Tishrei – the Autumn Equinox<sup>5</sup>. Bavel was a low-lying region and did not require rain until later. Earlier rainfall would damage the fruits and crops which were still out in the field. Based on the halachic calculation this falls on the 5th of December.

In both Bavel and Eretz Yisroel we conclude requesting rain at Mincha on Erev Pesach which marks the end of the winter months. After Pesach one may no longer request rain. If they did so in error, they are required to repeat the Shemoneh Esrei.

## What about countries outside of Bavel and Eretz Yisroel who have different rainy seasons and different rainfall requirements?

The Ri"ף and Ramba"m<sup>6</sup> only quote the dates listed in the Gemora. The Ramba"m writes that in Egypt and Syria they begin requesting rain from the 60th day from the Tekufah, following the Minhag of Bavel. Lechem Mishna explains that since the Gemora uses the generic term "the exile", it refers to all countries outside of Eretz Yisroel.

In contrast, the Rosh asserts that the request for rain depends on the rainy season of each country or region. In his commentary on the Talmud<sup>7</sup>, the Rosh questions why we follow the practise of Bavel in this matter, suggesting that lands who require rain earlier

should be able to begin requesting rain from the 7th of Cheshvan. He notes that this was the practise of the communities in Province.

In a Teshuvah of the Rosh<sup>8</sup> he takes his argument a step further. The Teshuvah begins with an introduction written by his son;

In the year 5073 (1313) the land was in drought throughout the rainy season. On the first night of Pesach Rabbi Asher ben Yechiel (the Rosh) told his students that he had long been bothered why we should be bound by the custom of Bavel. Why in Ashkenaz, whose crops require rain until Shavuot, not continue to mention and request rain after Pesach? He instructed that the Chazzan continue to say משיב הרוח ומוריד המשם in all of the Yomtov prayers. A tumult ensued and in response, even though it was Chol Hamoed, the Rosh wrote his Teshuvah setting forth his position<sup>9</sup>.

The Rosh writes that since his opinion was not accepted by the community, he deferred so as not to create divisions within the Kehillah.

The Shulchan Aruch<sup>10</sup> rules like the Ramba"m and Ri"ף, that throughout Chutz Laaretz we begin requesting rain from the evening of the 60th day from the Tekufah.

However the Rosh's view is not discounted completely. The Shulchan Aruch adds<sup>11</sup> that if one lives in a country which requires rain in the summer and they mistakenly said ותן טל ומטר לברכה after Pesach, they do not need to repeat the Shemoneh Esrei. In this case we rely on the Rosh who would say that one had in fact davened correctly. If they wish to, they can daven a voluntary Shemoneh Esrei but are not obliged to do so<sup>12</sup>. This ruling is also echoed by the Levush, the Alter Rebbe and Mishna Berura.

## This discussion is relevant in the Southern Hemisphere where from Pesach until Sukkos is our winter (rainy) season and from Shemini Atzeres until Pesach is our summer season.

There is a great deal of correspondence from the 1800s between communities in Melbourne, Sydney, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina and the Gedolei Haposkim in Eretz Yisroel addressing how they should conduct themselves with regards to requesting rain in the Shemoneh Esrei<sup>13</sup>.

Based on the above ruling of the Shulchan Aruch, the consensus of most Poskim<sup>14</sup> is that in Southern Hemisphere countries where rainfall

in our summer months is not harmful – either to crops or to people's health – we should request rain from the 60th day of the Tekufah until Pesach.

Even though it is not our rainy season, it is the rainy season for the majority of the (Jewish) world who live in the northern hemisphere and we are requesting for them. In our winter we do not request rain in בריך עלינו since it is after Pesach.

If rain in the summer is harmful, we would not request rain at all during our Shemoneh Esrei at any time during the year.

The leniency of the Shulchan Aruch which relies on the Rosh would apply in the Southern Hemisphere and if one mistakenly requested rain after Pesach, they would not be required to repeat the Shemoneh Esrei.

There is a minority view<sup>15</sup> that in the Southern Hemisphere, where the seasons are completely inversed, we should request rain in בריך עלינו in our winter months from Pesach until Shemini Atzeres.

In a Sicha<sup>16</sup> on the topic, the Rebbe suggests that this view makes sense. However he stresses that this is only as a theoretical Torah discussion. Once the Minhag has already been established especially when it has been observed for generations, we should not change so as not to make Machlokes. Whether we request rain or not and whether the Shemoneh Esrei is thereby invalidated is a case of doubt. Whereas avoiding Machlokes is expressly forbidden by the Torah "you should not be like Korach and his followers".

1. Brachos 33a
2. Taanis 10a
3. Mishna ibid according to Rashi
4. See Shulchan Aruch Harav 117:1 in brackets quoting the Ra"n Taanis 2a.
5. Taanis 10a
6. Hilchos Tefillah 2:16
7. Taanis Ch. 1 Siman 4
8. Teshuvos Harosh Klal 4 Siman 10
9. In the Teshuvah he quotes the Rambam Pirush Hamishnayos which seems to take the same stance.
10. O.C. 117:1
11. O.C. 117:2
12. Ibid with Ram"o
13. See Teshuvos Btzel Hachochma siman 85 who records the history of correspondence and the responses of Rabbi Shmuel Salant (Yerushalayim), Rabbi Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor (Kovno), Rabbi Nossan Adler (London) and others. See Hisvaduyos 5743 volume 1 p389 for a comprehensive list of sources.
14. Including modern day Poskim including the Minchas Yitzchok 6:171.
15. Shevet halevi 1:21
16. Hisvaduyos 5742 4:2119 and 5743 1:389