

THE CLANTON PARK HERALD

A monthly newsletter, intended to provide timely and pertinent information to *shul* members

Vol 3, Issue 3, Kislev 5766 website: www.clantonpark.com email: bulletin@clantonpark.com

From the Rav...

WHAT ART THOU, LOVE?

Love. Even after expending endless effort dissecting and defining love, for all too many people the age-old question of "What art thou, love?" remains unanswered.

Rabbi Eliyau Lopian (1876-1970) in his work, *Lev Eliyahu*, addresses the issue by turning that seminal love question on its head. Rather than defining, "What art thou, love?" he, instead, defines, "What art thou *not*, love?" He does that by observing the mindset of people who "love" fish. Such fondness for fish on the part of those who capture, kill, and eat those poor fish, is, he correctly claims, no demonstration of love. If these fish were truly beloved, they would still be swimming safely and soundly, in the deep blue yonder. It is, rather, themselves and their own desires that these fish-lovers love. The fish is the victim of those desires.

No, love is not to be found in the pleasures of life, not in the things that sweat and work and are sacrificed for us, in our search for comfort, but rather, paradoxically, in the reverse, in the things that we give pleasure to, in the things for which we sweat and for which we work and for which we sacrifice ourselves. The magnificent, all encompassing love that flows from parent to child is, in my mind, where this phenomenon is most obvious. The financial, the emotional and the physical sacrifices that ordinary parents make for their children are, of course, legendary. And yet, it is the parent-to-child relationship that is the ideal paradigm of love, so much so that, one would be hard pressed to find parents who would not give their very lives for their children.

The psychology behind this reality is quite clear, isn't it? By giving unstintingly, as parents do to their children, parents gradually identify more and more with the child to whom they are giving. That identification causes them to view their children as the *raison d'être* of their lives. A child-to-parent relationship, on the other hand, is more about taking than giving. Taking creates no identification, it fosters no feelings, and the end result is, all too frequently, a love and a devotion that is relatively insipid. *Ain mama ken hiten tzen kinder, uber tzen kinder kenen nisht hiten ain mama*, "one mother can take care of ten children, but ten children cannot take care of one mother." The Hebrew word for love, *ahava*, so closely

related to *hav*, which means, "to give," makes the connection between giving and loving so very clear.

Understanding Yitzchak and Rivka and their respective relationships with Esav and Ya'akov, is, beyond our abilities. Nevertheless, certain realities do seem to emerge. Rivka's love for Yaakov, the *Shela Ha'Kodosh* notes, was truly an everlasting love, *ve'Rivka oheves es Ya'akov*, "and Rivka **loves** Ya'akov". The *possuk* is in the present tense. The love continued on into the future. Yitzchak's love for Esav, on the other hand, went awry. *Va'yehav Yitzchak es Esav ki tzayid be'fiv*, "and Yitzchok **loved** Esav", past tense. He had loved in the past, but he did not continue to love. The reason for the deterioration lies in the just quoted latter part of the *possuk*, *ki tzayid be'fiv*, "for [Esav] had trapped for Yitzchak." That love was partly founded on acts of taking. A love based on taking will eventually lose its sparkle. That is why, in the search for Yitzchak's bride, the focal point of last week's *parasha*, one quality seemed to have been of paramount importance. The bride needed to be a generous, giving person. And so, Rivka, the potential bride, was tested to see if she would draw water for the camels of a tired wayfarer. Once Rivka's ability to give and her generosity had been established, all else was secondary.

The ingredients for a good marriage have not changed much over the course of time. A lack of generosity is still a prime factor in the occasional weakening of the marital bonds, a prime reason as to why marital love does not always have the durability of the parent-to-child love. Parents are almost always giving to their children; spouses sometimes neglect the "give" and focus instead on the "take." The end result can be a petrified *ahava* and a Paradise Lost.

It's a sad reality, isn't it? A kind and giving spouse is, of course, eminently more **lovable**; generous people are always easier to love. *Ahava* teaches us that spouses who give to their partners are also more **loving**. Constant giving conditions the giver to view his wife or her husband as the epicentre of his or her existence and to therefore love him or her even more.

If you notice that a bit of Paradise Lost has crept into your relationship, that your feelings are not quite as strong or as positive as they should be,

take note of how much time and effort you are putting into your relationship. Ask yourself if you view your relationship as the epicentre of your existence. If you don't, perhaps the answers lie within your reach. Do more for your family, do more for your spouse. All of that additional effort will, of course, make you more **lovable**. It will also make you more **loving**.

Mazel Tovs

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Aaron and Yaffa Weitz, on the birth of a son, Shmuel Eliezer. Mazel tov, as well, to the grandparents, Harry and Sally Weitz.

Steve and Sarah Sherman, on the bat-mitzvah of their daughter, Elisheva.

Moshe and Renee Shields, on the bat-mitzvah of their daughter, Meira. Mazel tov, as well, to the grandparents, Dr. Yehudi and Ruth Shields.

Arthur Herzig, on the bat-mitzvah of his daughter, Leora. Mazel tov, as well, to the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. David Herzig.

Jeff and Pauline Dorfman, on the bar-mitzvah of their son, Coby. Mazel tov, as well, to the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Mandel.

Shlomie and Breindy Ehrentreu, on the engagement of their daughter, Estie, to Tzvi Hertz, of New York

Norm and Arlene Weisbart, on the marriage of their daughter, Shevy, to Nechemia Weinberg, son of Hershy and Elaine Weinberg. Mazel tov, as well, to the grandmothers, Ruth Gilbert, and Bernice Zubata.

Drs. Heshy and Esther Sturm, on the birth of a granddaughter, Naomi Arielle, to their children Rivka and Benzion Grossman, in Boca Raton, Florida. Mazel tov, as well to the great-grandmother, Agnes Sturm.

Gerry and Madeline Greenberg, on the birth of a granddaughter, to their children, Binyamin and Michaela Rapaport, in Israel. Mazel tov, as well, to the great-grandmother, Mrs. Mozelle Kanner.

Mark and Lindy Mandelbaum, on the birth of a grandson, Arye Leib, to their children, Binyomin and Rivki Bakst. Mazel tov, as well, to the great-grandfather, Sandy Hofstedter.

Condolences

To the Levenstein family, on the passing of Mrs. Levenstein.

Shul News and Rules

New Kiruv Minyan to begin soon at Clanton Park ... Plans are underway to start a new *Kiruv Minyan* at our *shul*. A portable trailer is being set up on the *shul* property to accommodate this new and exciting *minyan*. Guest Rabbis will be invited in each Shabbos to lead the *minyan*. We hope to attract many new potential members from the greater community. For more information, see Sammy Nussbaum.

Yasher koach to Yossi Adler ... who organized the screening of the award-winning film, "Hiding and Seeking: Faith and Tolerance after the Holocaust," as part of Holocaust Education Week. The post-film discussion was led by the film's director, Menachem Daum, and by Rabbis Weber and Yaakov Kerzner. Over fifty people were in attendance.

Yasher koach to Miriam Frankel... for her Rosh Chodesh talk on her personal experiences, during Holocaust Education Week.

Youth News

We are so excited!!! The shul youth programs are off to an amazing start!

We have a line up of the most amazing group leaders!!

Nursery: Miriam Klein, Shira Shieds, Tirtza Spiegel, Nadavya Stollon

Girls' minyan: Chana Kopstick Atara Herzog,
Boys grades 1- 3: Yehuda Levi, Shlomo Marmer, Aryeh Rosen

Boys grades 4 - 5: Moshe Adler, Amitai Kubayov, Yair Silberstein

Seudah Sheleshit: Moshe Cohen

The biggest credit goes to the Young Men's Youth Minyan; the calibre of *Davening*, *Laining* and *Devrei Torah* has really been excellent. The new homey environment has enhanced the atmosphere tremendously.

Thanks to all the volunteers: Josh and Bronya Levy, Marty Hoffmitz, Dr. Judah Habot, the leadership from Rabbi Weber, as well all the other parents who have offered their assistance. Please forward any suggestions to us. We are now planning Chanukah and working on our *Chazanut/Nusach Tfilah* programs. As always your assistance helps make our programs the best the city has to offer our children.

Contact: Manuel Kanner (416) 636-6268

The Bereishis Quiz 2

by Dr. Leibe Warner

- 1) Which man asked for a city to be saved and had his request fulfilled?
- 2) Where is honey mentioned for the first time?
- 3) Identify two times that the number 17 is mentioned.
- 4) The number 100 is mentioned in connection with each of the three Avos. Identify each instance.
- 5) Identify a *possuk* that ends with the words “*va-yomer Yaakov*”.
- 6) How many years did Yishmael live?
- 7) Where are teeth mentioned for the first time?
- 8) Identify a *possuk* that all its words end with the same Hebrew letter.
- 9) Name 3 men who each had 12 children.
- 10) Identify 2 *possukim* that each contain 5 consecutive two-lettered words.

Send your correct answers (after *Shabbos*) to bulletin@clantonpark.com, and your name will be entered into a draw for a gift certificate to **Negev Books**. Also, go to the *shul* website to see the answers to last bulletin's quiz.

D'var Torah

What is Humility? – Part Three

Ken Stollon

In his writings, Rav Nachman of Breslov states: “There is a form of humility which is the ultimate in arrogance. This is when a person acts humbly because he knows that people look down upon those who flaunt themselves. All he wants is to gain their respect and approval. His humility is for show: he really wants honour.”

False modesty, then, as defined by Rav Nachman, is a kind of duplicitous, manipulative behaviour. Lavan immediately comes to mind as the model for such behaviour. As his name suggests, he appears “white”; his actions and speech seem pure, but his motives are not.

He feigns *chesed* and hospitality toward Eliezer: “Come, O blessed of Hashem! Why should you stand outside when I have cleared the house,

and made place for the camels?” (Bereishis 24:31). This is only after taking notice of the gifts that Eliezer has brought.

He feigns piety: “The matter stemmed from Hashem! We can say neither bad nor good. Here Rebecca is before you, take her and go...” (24:50). We know from the incident of the stolen *teraphim* that Lavan is an idol-worshipper, and therefore whatever reverence he seems to have for Hashem is surely hypocritical.

Later, with Yaakov, Lavan pretends to be a “fair employer”: “If I have found favour in your eyes... specify your wage and I will give it. (30:27)

Still later, after cheating Yaakov for fourteen years, he accuses Yaakov of not being fair to him: “What have you done that you have deceived me and led my daughters away like captives of the sword? Why have you fled stealthily, and cheated me? Nor did you tell me – for I would have sent you off with gladness, with songs, with timbrel, and with lyre! And you did not even allow me to kiss my sons and daughters...” (31:26).

Lavan only humbles himself when he sees that there is profit in doing so. Yet his false humility is really only one aspect of his overall falseness. One might say: he is false, period.

Controversially, Rabbi Yissocher Frand, quoting the *Yefe Toar*, suggests another candidate for false modesty: Avraham *Aveinu!* In this example, the definition of false modesty has a different emphasis; it has to do with taking a secondary role when one should rightly be taking the primary role.

Avram made himself “secondary” to Sarai, as it says: “Say you are my sister, in order that will be good with me for your sake, and I will live as a result of you”. (Bereishis 12:13). As a result, the *midrash* says, he in fact became secondary, as it is written “And Avram was given good because of her...” (12:16).

The *Yefe Toar* comments on this *midrash*: “This is an open rebuke against false modesty. At a time when one is supposed to take charge, when the hour calls for him to be main character, he should not claim that he is not worthy and shun the limelight. Modesty does not mean denying one's talents and one's role. Modesty means knowing one's talents and one's role.”

Rabbi Zalman Posner writes that this is also the message of Moshe Rabbeinu in *parashas Netzavim*. Moshe tells the people to beware of false modesty. If you want to study and understand and practice Torah, you can. It is not

an abstraction without meaning in your life, nor is it a mystery to all but the select few. It is not in heaven, but right here on earth, teaching us how to live at home, in business and at play. The Torah is close to you, to "do it" Moshe insists. Do not think that you are too humble to follow the *mitzvos*. (The final instalment of this series will be published in the next issue of *The Clanton Park Herald*).

Alan Dershowitz's "The Case for Peace"

A Review by Professor Paul Socken

One of the consolations of getting older is getting birthday presents like a gift certificate to a bookstore and buying books you might not otherwise have purchased. So it was this summer when I wandered through Barnes and Noble near my daughter's home in New Jersey and saw *The Case for Peace* by the renowned Harvard law professor, Alan Dershowitz. I read it and I'm glad I did; I would recommend it to others.

No one can agree with everything said in a book with such a highly-charged topic. Dershowitz, for example, would consent to the division of Jerusalem and believes NATO or U.S. troops could be used between Israelis and Palestinians, positions which many people, including myself, would find anathema. However, having said that, I must state that there are few people who can articulate the Israeli position and give historical context to Israel's case with more force than Dershowitz. His ability to marshal the historical facts and explain Israel's legitimacy and principled position is truly inspiring.

The book is divided into two parts, *Overcoming the Geopolitical Barriers to Peace* and *Overcoming the Hatred Barriers to Peace*. There are seventeen short, well-written chapters that deal with all the major issues concerning Palestinians and Israelis and even beyond: the security barrier, terrorism, Israeli counter-terrorism, a potentially militarized Palestinian state, a nuclear Iran and more.

In the second half of the book, he takes to task those who are "more Palestinian than the Palestinians" and those who are "more Israeli than the Israelis". He objects strenuously to those Arabs who incite anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatred and thereby condemn Palestinians to fighting instead of finding a compromise and living side by side with Israelis in peace. He also criticizes those Jews who insist on refusing compromise but he is always fair and does demonstrate that mainstream Jews have always

been willing to share the land from the very earliest days.

As fair and even-handed as Dershowitz tries to be, he does make many telling points for Israel. He shows how every time the Arabs have turned down a reasonable offer, they have received the next offer with less for them. The Peel Commission partition plan of 1937 was generous to the Arabs compared to the 1948 partition and the 1948 partition was generous compared to the deal offered in 2000. Each time Israel said yes and the Arabs said no, thinking they could have it all. They launched war or terrorism and each time they were offered less. Dershowitz argues that this is only right as anything else would be a reward for war and terrorism.

In a chapter that is alone worth the price of the book, he demolishes the reputation and tactics of Noam Chomsky, Norman Finklestein and Alexander Cockburn. He exposes their deceitful attacks and hateful methodology. He demonstrates the danger they represent, the hatred they spew and the support they enjoy. His detailed analysis of their falsehoods and betrayal of the truth shows the extent to which some people are willing to go to discredit Israel and undermine its legitimacy. I found this part of the book terrifying in its sinister aspect.

In the conclusion, he outlines the extraordinary contribution Israel has made to the world in every sphere of human endeavour. He poignantly evokes an Israel at peace and the enormous accomplishments that it could bring to its citizens and the citizens of the world.

The subtitle of the book, *How the Arab-Israeli Conflict Can Be Resolved*, is misleading. Dershowitz does not really have a specific plan or detailed strategy for peace. I suspect that the subtitle was the product of an editor anxious to sell copies of the book. This ploy was unnecessary as the book is worth reading on its own merits and Dershowitz's reputation alone would make the book a success. Instead of offering a solution, he demonstrates effectively how all barriers to peace, whether physical or psychological, can be overcome if the participants in the struggle really wanted peace. Whether Dershowitz is overly optimistic or not depends on your reading of his text. Someone said that an optimist is someone who says that we live in the best of all possible worlds and a pessimist is someone who fears he's right. In any event, what Dershowitz argues in this book is that there really is no good excuse for not achieving peace other than human folly.