

Family TORAH JOURNAL

ST. LOUIS
KOLLEL

PARSHA PERCEPTIONS

RABBI YEHUDA BARUCH KAMENETZKY



Before the Children of Israel entered into Canaan, Moshe sent spies to seek out the nature and qualities of the Land of Cana'an. The Torah labels them as "men of character, quality, and of good name." (Numbers 13:3)

But they were not the confident men they were thought to be. They failed in their mission. Not only did they report what they saw, they editorialized. They instilled in the nation a profound fear of the future, claiming that the G-d who redeemed them from Egypt, split the sea, and miraculously sustained them in an empty desert, would be humbled by the giants that they would encounter in their conquest of Canaan. They informed the people: (Numbers 3:33) "We saw the sons of giants, we felt in our own eyes like grasshoppers next to them, and that is how we were considered in their eyes." The Talmud (Sotah 35a) discusses whether the spies actually overheard them say that they saw man-like grasshoppers in their presence or only imagined it.

What relevance is there to relate what the giants may have said or how they perceived the spies? The main thrust of the story is to show lack of faith in the Almighty and their spiritless self-evaluation, not the perception of others. Perhaps the Torah, in repeating the words of the giants and the perceptions of the spies, is teaching us a lesson in human behavior and emotion.

On the day of Jackie Robinson's (the first African-American major league ball player) debut, his wife was excited to attend his first major league performance. Before he left for the stadium he gave her some advice. "You'll have no trouble spotting me out there on the ball field," he said with a smile. Then he paused. "I'll be wearing number 42."

The Torah is relating the story of the meraglim (spies), yet it leaves us with a message of self-esteem. The moment one views himself as a grasshopper in the eyes of others, that is how they view him.

The spies claimed that they felt like grasshoppers, and then they added, "and that is exactly how they viewed us." Their addendum may have had no relevance to their mission, but it is relevant to ours. Perhaps if the spies had the confidence of victory and strong faith in the Almighty, they would have viewed themselves as able-bodied soldiers who had the capacity to defeat any giant. Only when they drew back in fear and trepidation were they viewed as little bugs. (continued on next page)

MOMENTS OF GREATNESS

RABBI SHLOMO EISENBERG



David, a nine year old boy, was suffering with cancer. His friends from yeshiva quickly decided on a plan of action and arranged nightly Tehillim gatherings to pray for the health of their good buddy. Night after night, the boys came together at the local Shul to pray and cry out to Hashem. Over the course of the year, they completed the entire tehillim several times. However, it was difficult for young boys to keep up such a commitment, and as the weather turned warmer and days stayed brighter later, only six boys out of twenty continued into the summer months. One evening, a group of boys were enjoying an exciting and thrilling baseball game. Aaron, one of the boys who was still part of the tehillim group, was up at bat. He checked his watch and realized he was late for the nightly tehillim gathering. He overcame his desire to hit and quickly dropped his bat and ran off to the Shul. Afterwards, Aaron went home and told his father about the sacrifice he had made for David. His father replied, "the self sacrifice that you made will definitely do much good for David". Meanwhile, David had been progressing well in his battle with cancer, and was in intense therapy to help him regain his walking ability. The night of the baseball game, David had a major breakthrough in his therapy and began to walk for the first time in months. The doctor planned a unique therapy session, pitching a ball to David and having him "run to first". This seemingly "random" baseball therapy the doctor chose that day was the direct cause for David to take his first steps, only moments after Aaron gave up his own baseball game to recite tehillim. Is it odd or is it G-d?! You decide.



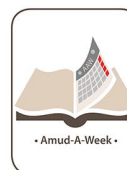
UPCOMING WEEK'S SCHEDULE: YEAR 3, WEEK 8—BRACHOS 52A

Rabbi Gidon Nitsun, Director of St. Louis Kollel's Senior Kollel Division

Rabbi Moshe Taub, Rav of Young Israel of Holliswood

Maggid shiur of the week for the Amud: **R' Daniel Lefton** brother of **R' Aaron Lefton**

For more info, or to sign up to get the weekly video shiurim please contact Rabbi Yaakov Berkowitz



Sponsored by David and Linda Markowitz in memory of their parents Binyomin Avraham ben Moshe and Meira bas Martin whose yahrtzeits were this past week

ZMANIM: CANDLELIGHTING: 8:06 PM SOF ZMAN KRIAS SHEMA: M.A. 8:42 AM GRA": 9:18 AM

SHABBOS ENDS: 9:10PM (RABBEINU TAM: 9:37 PM)

ALEF TO TAV: INSIGHTS INTO THE ALEF-BEIS

Letter: Vav
Numerical value: 6
Spelling: Vav,(alef), vav



The word *vav* means “hook” as the design of the letter *vav* appears like. A hook is something that joins two things together, and in fact *vav* is the letter that joins and makes concepts continuous, as we find throughout the Torah. (See *Rashi* to Exodus Ch. 21v. 1) Interestingly, while the numerical value of the letter *vav* is 6, the hidden value (*vav*, *alef*, *vav* / 6 + 1 + 6) equals 13, which is the same numerical value as *echad* (אחד) one (*alef*, *ches*, *dalet* / 1 + 8 + 4). This is quite fascinating. The letter which signifies connecting two things, in its hidden essence, is telling us that everything, even that which it is connecting, is really *echad*, one. In this world our goal is not merely to use and connect the two spheres, spiritual and physical, rather our mission is to show that physical is really one and at peace with spiritual.

PARSHA PERCEPTIONS (CONT.)

The blessing in Leviticus 26:8 that, “five of you (Israelites) shall pursue one hundred,” applies only when the spirit of Hashem is with us. Without it, we don’t have vision.

When we view ourselves with pride and ability, then we are giants, too. But when we look at ourselves with unreasonable insecurity and lack of faith, then we hear our adversaries calling us insects. In order to feel like a giant you must have the vision of one. You can’t have the vision of a giant when you have the eyes of an insect.

Rabbi Kamenetzky was a member of the St. Louis Kollel from 2008 through 2011. He and his family currently reside in New York where he is the Director of Student Activities for Yeshiva of South Shore.

KOLLEL KASHA KORNER

RABBI YAAKOV SILVERMAN



Which verse in this week’s parsha starts and ends with the same three words?

Last week’s question: Which four people in Sefer Bereishis share the same name? (Answer: Chanoch was the name of the son of Kayin (4:17), the son of Yered and father of Mesushelach (5:18), the son of Midyan who was Avraham’s son from Keturah (25:4) and the name of Reuven’s son (46:9))

I DIDN'T
KNOW THAT!

RABBI YITZCHAK KOWALSKY



Q. A relative of mine (over whom I would be obligated to mourn over) has been in critical condition for a prolonged period. Am I allowed to study the laws of mourning with my relatives or is it considered a bad omen?

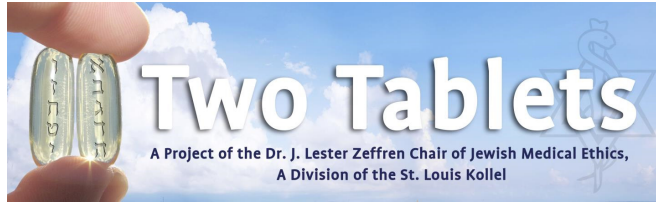
A. Rav Chaim Kanievsky shlit”a (*Leket Sheilos Mitzuos* Vol. 3 pg. 108) rules that there is no bad omen in studying Torah, no matter which subject. If one nonetheless is hesitant to study the applicable laws he can preface his studying by giving some *tzedakah* as a source of merit.

Q. My *tzitzis* strings often fray at the ends. Am I allowed to make a knot at the ends in order to keep them from splitting apart?

A. It is a common problem with *tzitzis* that have been used well, to start fraying. The *poskim* bring a difference of opinion if it’s appropriate to “add” knots at the end of the *tzitzis* strings (see *Mishneh Brurah* 11:18). Rav Shmuel Wosner zt”l offers another solution (Shu”t Shevet Halevi 10:8:2). He says one may add some clear glue or clear nail polish on the tips to avoid splitting of the strings. If all else fails...Stop by your local St. Louis Kollel Bookstore to purchase a new pair of quality *tzitzis* (affordably priced.)

Please consult your Rav for a final ruling.

SPOTLIGHT ON



Founded in 2006 by Dr. Neil Abramson a"h and Dr. Alan Lyss
Educates professionals and general public in medical ethics
Chair named in honor of Dr. J. Lester Zeffren, a"h in 2008
Current Chair is Rabbi Yitzchak Kowalsky—St. Louis Kollel
Monthly sessions at SSM St. Mary's in Richmond Heights
Free and Open to the public. Email ykowalsky@stlkollel.com

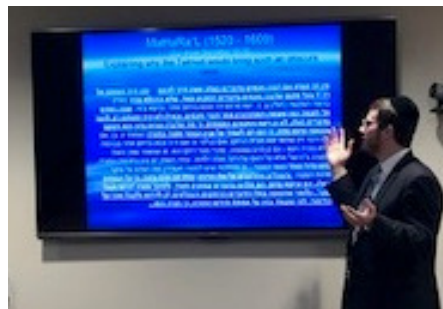


Dr. J. Lester Zeffren

**TOPICS PREVIOUSLY
EXPLORED INCLUDE:**
Embryonic Stem Cells
End of Life Decisions
Rationing Medical Care
Medical Marijuana
Uterine Transplants
Bedside Prayer
Ebola and Ethics
Bullying & Harassment
Medical Fraud
Dementia Dilemmas

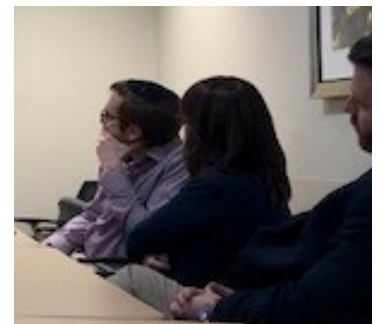


"Extraordinarily interesting. We hear from medical experts about cutting-edge medical innovations, and Rabbi Kowalsky then shows us how our timeless Torah wisdom has provided the solutions to ethical dilemmas long before they even came up. Come and be amazed." —Dr. Barbara Olevitch



"We have been able to glean knowledge from each of the talks both medically and halachically. Dr. Josh Rosenblum's talk on uterine transplants was most interesting and Rabbi Kowalsky's information and halachic insights were most surprising."

—Barry and Hessie Needle



"Our Jewish medical ethics meetings allow for an enriching discussion weaving together current medical technology and patient care scenarios with a Jewish perspective that may go back centuries or more. The conferences bring together medical providers and interested learners from wide backgrounds together for an intimate discussion where we all learn so much about both medicine and Halacha. Rabbi Kowalsky brings an energetic and deeply knowledgeable teaching perspective each time. I am always amazed at how much he prepares and has a grasp of the medical concepts in addition to Judaism." —Dr. Scott Kaar, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Sports Medicine, SSM St. Louis University



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THIS SUNDAY!



Missouri Torah Institute's 11th Annual Dinner— Sunday
June 10th at 5:45 P.M. at the Hilton St. Louis Frontenac

Paying tribute to **Rabbi Dr. Yitzchok Abramson Z"L.**

Memorial Dedication of the Bais Medrash Shiur Room

Honorees are

Dr. & Mrs. Yochanan and Jennie Silverman

Parents of the Year

Mr. & Mrs. Dovid Love Alumnus of the Year

Mincha at 6:30 PM

To RSVP and/or to put in an ad, call **636-778-1896**, go
to www.missouritorah.org or email dinner@missouritorah.org.

Did You Know? You can dedicate a whole day of learning at the Kollel to wish a Mazel Tov, remember a yahrtzeit, honor a friend, express appreciation...For any occasion, the gift of Torah learning is always in good taste. Call 314 726-6047 or email office@stlkollel.com for more information.



Eishes Chayil and Missouri Torah Institute
Mesilas Yesarim Women's Siyum Brunch
Sunday June 17th 10:30 a.m. to Noon
MTI 1809 Clarkson Road Chesterfield
Celebrate Our Successes ~ Be Inspired
 For more info, email cbregman@stlkollel.com



What will be?
"Mitzvah Observance in the Times of Moshiach"

This Sunday June 11th
 Special Shiur from
 Rabbi Yitzchak Kowalsky
 9:45am—10:30 am
 Agudas Israel



Join Renee Kanefield for a
TRX Suspension Class and
Eishes Chayil for a "Lesson A Week"
Wednesday Mornings at 10:45 AM
Through July 4th Only \$45 for 6 Classes
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 Email cbregman@stlkollel.com for more info



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Tomer Devorah With Rabbi Gidon Nitsun
Next Class This Monday, June 11th
 Join Us For Lunch at 12:30 PM ~ Class Begins at 1PM
All Classes At U City Shul 700 North & South
 No charge for lunch but RSVP required. Call the Kollel
 314 726-6047 or email office@stlkollel.com



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