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**Parshah Vayechi in a Nutshell**

*(Genesis 47:28–50:26)*

lives the final 17 years of his life in Egypt. Before his passing, he asks Joseph to take an oath that he will bury him in the Holy Land. He blesses Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, elevating them to the status of his own sons as progenitors of tribes within the nation of Israel.

The patriarch desires to reveal the end of days to his children, but is prevented from doing so.

Jacob blesses his sons, assigning to each his role as a tribe: Judah will produce leaders, legislators and kings; priests will come from Levi, scholars from Issachar, seafarers from Zebulun, schoolteachers from Simeon, soldiers from Gad, judges from Dan, olive-growers from Asher, and so on. Reuben is rebuked for "confusing his father's marriage bed"; Simeon and Levi, for the massacre of Shechem and the plot against Joseph. Naphtali is granted the swiftness of a deer, Benjamin the ferociousness of a wolf, and Joseph is blessed with beauty and fertility.

**Kiddush**

This week's kiddush is sponsored by Yaakov and Raizel Rusanov in honor of Levi's Bar Mitzvah

A large funeral procession consisting of Jacob's descendants, Pharaoh's ministers, the leading citizens of Egypt and the Egyptian cavalry accompanies Jacob on his final journey to the Holy Land, where he is buried in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron.

Joseph, too, dies in Egypt, at the age of 110. He, too, instructs that his bones be taken out of Egypt and buried in the Holy Land, but this would come to pass only with the Israelites' exodus from Egypt many years later. Before his passing, Joseph conveys to the Children of Israel the testament from which they will draw their hope and faith in the difficult years to come: "G-d will surely remember you, and bring you up out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." ❖

**Anshei Lubavitch Congregation**

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

*Adult education:*

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

*Youth Outreach:*

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

**Shabbos Schedule  
Parshas Vayechi**

**Erev Shabbos – Dec. 21, 2018**

Candle Lighting.....4:14 pm  
Mincha .....4:15 pm

**Shabbos – Dec. 22, 2018**

Shacharis.....9:30 am\*  
Torah Reading .....10:35 am  
Rabbi Neubort's Drasha.....11:10 am  
Kiddush .....12:10 pm  
Gemara (2-31 Summit) .....Postponed  
Mincha .....4:20 pm  
Rabbi's Drasha.....4:35 pm  
Shabbos Ends .....5:18 pm

*\*Latest morning Shema is now 9:34 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

**Weekday Schedule**

**Minyan**

Shacharis.....6:15 am  
Mincha .....1:45 pm  
Maariv.....9:15 pm

**Classes**

Chassidus, Mon-Fri .....5:55 am  
Halachah, Mon-Fri .....1:40 pm  
Torah Studies Postponed  
Tuesday Talmud .....9:30-10:00 pm

**This week's bulletin  
is sponsored by  
Rabbi Martin**

**Rosenfeld**

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Divorce Mediator

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Fair Lawn, NJ

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## Chassidic Masters

### “The 3 Lives of Jacob”

*Based on the teachings of  
the Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of righteous memory, notes that Jacob’s 147 years can be divided into three general periods:

The first 77 years of his life were spent in the Holy Land, secluded in “the tents of study” and sheltered from the entanglements of material life.

These were followed by 20 years in Haran, in the employ of Laban, during which Jacob married, fathered 12 of his 13 children, and amassed much material wealth.

Following a further period in the Holy Land, Jacob “descended” to Egypt, where he lived for the last 17 years of his life.

The years that Jacob dwelled in the Holy Land were years of tranquil perfection—years in which nothing alien to his soul intruded upon his life of Torah study, prayer and service of G-d.

In contrast, Jacob’s sojourn in Haran was characterized by challenge and struggle. In Haran, Jacob locked horns with “Laban the Deceiver” and bested him at his own game. To marry and support his family, he worked to exhaustion, as “heat consumed me by day, and frost at night; and sleep was banished from my eyes” (Genesis 31:40). In the words of Esau’s angel to Jacob upon Jacob’s return from Haran, “You have struggled with G-d and with men, and have prevailed” (ibid. 32:29).

These, however, were struggles in which Jacob held his own, and in which he eventually triumphed. But in the 17 years he lived in Egypt, Jacob experienced, for the first time in his life, a state of true galut—subjugation to an alien environment. In Egypt, Jacob was compelled to pay homage to Pharaoh, the arch-idol and demigod of the land (see Gen. 47:7–10). Upon Jacob’s passing in Egypt, his body was for 40 days in the possession of the Egyptian “physicians,” who embalmed it after their custom. Indeed, one of the reasons Jacob commanded Joseph to bury him in the Holy Land (a feat which required much maneuvering and manipulation to secure Pharaoh’s consent) was that he feared that, in Egypt, his body and gravesite would become an object of idolatry.

After a lifetime in which he either inhabited his own sanctum of hermetic holiness or struggled against adversity, Jacob’s Egyptian years were a time of subjugation to a society which the Torah calls “the depravity of the earth.”

And yet, the Torah regards these 17 years as the very best years of Jacob’s life! For Jacob knew to exploit his galut in Egypt to drive the strivings of his soul and further its aims. Indeed, it was in Egypt, under the rule and subsequent enslavement of the pharaohs, that Jacob’s descendants were forged into the people of Israel.

“Everything that happened to the Patriarchs,” writes Nachmanides in his commentary on the Book of Genesis, “is a signpost for their children. This is why the Torah elaborates its account of their

journeys, their well-digging and the other events [of their lives] . . . these all come as an instruction for the future: for when something happens to one of the three Patriarchs, one understands from it what is decreed to occur to his descendants.”

For we, too, experience in the course of our lifetimes the three states of being which Jacob knew: sovereignty, struggle, and subjugation.

We each harbor a vision of a transcendent self—of a soul, pure and inviolable, at the core of our being. This self, we are convinced, is not subject to the caprice of circumstance, and remains forever aloof from the shifting dictates of society and convention. And though this core self is not always accessible to us, there come moments in our lives—“moments of truth,” we call them—in which it asserts its will over every and any influence save its own internal truth.

But these moments, for most of us, are few and far between. More often, we are in a state of struggle—struggles with our environment, struggles with our own habits and behavior patterns, struggles with the passions of our divided hearts.

A state of struggle indicates that we have not attained full mastery over our existence; but it is also a sign that we are free. We are resisting the forces that seek to sway us from our internal truth; we are engaging them and battling them. Indeed, this is life at its fullest and most productive—even more so, in a certain sense, than those “moments of truth” of resolute perfection.

But we also know times of powerlessness and subordination. Times when we are faced with circumstances which we have the ability neither to control nor to even resist; times when it seems that life has been stopped dead in its tracks, arrested by an impregnable wall of helplessness and despair.

“Everything that happened to the Patriarchs . . . is decreed to occur to their descendants.” Not that they occur in exactly the same manner. Our own moments of transcendence seem fleeting and inconsequential in comparison with Jacob’s decades of tranquil perfection in the Holy Land; our own struggles seem wan and inept when measured against Jacob’s Haran years; our own lives under circumstances of subjugation and oppression seem black indeed when set against Jacob’s Egyptian period. Yet the three lives of Jacob are “signposts” that guide, inspire and enable our own.

Jacob’s life in the Holy Land empowers us to experience moments of true freedom— moments in which we assert our true will over all forces, both external and internal, that seek to quell it.

Jacob’s Haran years inspire and enable us to not only persevere in our struggles but to revel in them, to experience them as vibrant and exhilarating periods in our lives.

And Jacob’s Egyptian period teaches us how to deal with those situations in which we feel overpowered by forces beyond our control. It teaches us that these times, too, are part and parcel of our lives: that these times, too, can be negotiated with wisdom, dignity and integrity. That these times, too, can be realized as vital and productive seasons of our lives.

### **Haftorah in a Nutshell – Vayechi**

*1 Kings 2:1-12*

In this week’s haftorah, King David delivers his deathbed message to his son and successor, Solomon, echoing this week’s Torah reading that discusses at length Jacob’s parting words and instructions to his sons.

King David encourages Solomon to be strong and to remain steadfast in his belief in G-d. This will ensure his success in all his endeavors as well as the continuation of the Davidic Dynasty. David then goes on to give his son some tactical instructions pertaining to various people who deserved punishment or reward for their actions during his reign.

The haftorah concludes with David’s death and his burial in the City of David. King Solomon takes his father’s place and his sovereignty is firmly established. ❖

## **MAKE THE SHABBOS MORNING MINYAN IN PATERSON**

Dec 29 Parshat Shemos,      Jan 12 Parshat Bo,      Jan 26 Parshat Yisro

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510 East 27th Street/Corner of 12<sup>th</sup>  
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## Dvar Torah Questions and Answers

By Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky

"ויאמר יוסף אל אחיו אני יוסף העוד אבי חי ולא יכלו לענות אתו כי נבהלו מפניו"  
"ויחי יעקב בארץ מצרים שבע עשרה שנה"  
"Yaakov lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years." (47:28)

**QUESTION:** We already know that Yaakov was 130 years old when he arrived in Egypt. We also know that he died there at the age of 147. Why is it necessary to state that he lived in Egypt for 17 years?

**ANSWER:** When the Tzemach Tzedek (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the 3rd Lubavitcher Rebbe) was a young boy, his teacher taught him this pasuk and explained it to mean that the best years in Yaakov's life were the 17 years he lived in Egypt. (The word "tov" (טוב) means good and has the numerical value of 17.)

When he came home he asked his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe (Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi), "How can we say that Yaakov's best years were the years he lived in the sinful land of Egypt?" The Alter Rebbe explained: Before Yaakov arrived in Egypt, he sent Yehudah to build a Yeshivah so that the children of Yaakov would have a place to devote themselves to Torah study.

When a Jew learns Torah, he comes closer to Hashem. Therefore, since the family of Yaakov learned Torah, even in the sinful land of Egypt, "Vayechi Yaakov" — Jacob's life was vibrantly 'alive,' full and rewarding.

(היום יום ח"י טבת)

"ויאמר ישראל אל יוסף ראה פניך לא פללתי והנה הראה אתי אלקים גם את זרעך"  
"And Yisrael said to Yosef: 'I had not thought to see your face; and, lo, G-d has let me see also your seed.'" (48:11)

**QUESTION:** The word "oti" seems superfluous; grammatically, instead of saying "her'ah oti Elokim," Yaakov could have said "herani Elokim." What was he alluding to?

**ANSWER:** Yaakov told Yosef: "Upon learning that you were in Egypt and had achieved great fame, many thoughts went through my mind about your loyalty to Judaism and spiritual situation. I began to doubt if your appearance would be the same as when we last saw each other, and I feared that your children had probably assimilated, resembling the young Egyptian boys with whom they associate.

Not only do I see your face the way I would wish it to be, but looking at your children, I see in them a replica of myself. Thus, 'her'ah oti Elokim' — G-d caused me to appear — 'et zarecha' — through your children — due to their similarity to my appearance. They, too, look like young chassidische bachurim, filled with Yiddish taste and spirit."

(עיטורי תורה בשם חרש אבן) hem

**Fair Lawn Orthodox Jewish Community Events**

• **Dec. 16 – United Hatzalah of Israel Event**, featuring Eli Beer, Founder & President, sharing amazing and powerful stories of life saving rescue and chessed. Childcare to be provided. Sunday morning, 9:00 AM, at Shomrei Torah. To attend or support the organization, contact Jason@israelrescue.org.

**Would you like to sponsor the Weekly Bulletin?**  
It's a wonderful way to honor a loved one, remember a yahrzeit,  
or celebrate a special occasion, etc.  
For more information, please contact the Rabbi.

**Daily Minyan:** Please join us each day for a rewarding prayer experience in a warm and welcoming environment. Schedule is posted below. It's OK if you can't come every day. You can begin by choosing one or two days a week. We look forward to seeing you!

**Shhhhh**

Talking during the prayer service and during the Torah reading is inappropriate and disturbing to fellow congregants. If you must talk, PLEASE go outside. And children should not be running in and out during the Rabbi's D'var Torah.

**Good Shabbos to all!**

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**One of the central principles of Judaism is:  
"All Israel is responsible for one another."**

**The new Anshei Security Committee is asking for volunteers for Shabbat morning.**

**Shifts are only 30 minutes.**

**We can use any help you're willing to offer.**

**Please contact Jordan Rockowitz at [rockowitzj@gmail.com](mailto:rockowitzj@gmail.com) with questions or to volunteer your time.**

**Halachic Zmanim**

**Shabbos, December 22  
Eastern Standard Time**

Earliest Tallis ..... 6:16 AM  
Latest Morning Shema..... 9:34 AM  
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) 12:19 PM  
Plag Hamincha..... 3:39 PM  
Earliest Evening Shema.... 5:04 PM



**שבת שלום! גוט שבת!**