

האזינו

Great Identity

זָכוֹר יָמוֹת עוֹלָם בֵּינוּ שָׁנוֹת דּוֹר וָדוֹר שֶׁאֵל אָבִיךָ וַיְגַדֶּךָ וְיֹאמְרוּ לָךְ:

Remember the days of old, Consider the years of ages past; Ask your father, he will inform you, your elders, they will tell you:

שאל אביך. אם אתה אינו יודע מה ליכור ימות עולם שאל אביך ויגדך. יגד לך מיבעי כלשון המקרא באיוב יא ויגד לך תעלומות חכמה. והכי דיוק לשהק אבל שורש הגדה הוא מלשון נמשך כגידים כדאיתא בפ' רע עהפ ויגד משה. וכן המגלה דבר באריכות והמשכת דברים מיקרי הגדה. והבן השואל לאב. דרך האב להוסיף בתשובה עוד יותר משהוא שואל. ונמצא ממשיך את הבן להוסיף לקח וזהו לשון ויגדך ימשיך אותך לדעת הרבה ואחכ אם תחפוץ להתבונן ותשאל זקניך. היינו חכמי הדור:

If you do not know what to remember from the days of old, ask your father and he will relate you. It should (properly) state “He will relate to you like the language of the *possuk* in *Iyov* “He will relate to you the secrets of wisdom,” and that is proper Hebrew grammar. But, the root of the word *hagadah* is from the language of drawn out like *gidim* – sinews as is found in *perek R’ Akiva* on the *possuk* “*Vayaged Moshe*.” One who reveals something at length and draws it out that is called *hagadah*. When a child asks a father, it is the way of the father to broad the answer beyond what the child had asked. In that way, he draws the child to add wisdom. That is the phrasing of *viyagedcha*, he will draw you to know much and after, if you wish to consider, ask your elders, the wise men of the generation.

Haamek Davar

A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.

Marcus Garvey

Identity. It is a term that has become rife with meaning and controversy in the current cultural climate, as many struggle to define their personal identity. Perhaps no generation has ever grown up with so little sense of identity, and perhaps the constant focus on identity is an attempt to fill that void.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the brilliant former Chief Rabbi of the UK, has a fabulous book that is a must read for any beginner to Judaism, and is equally valuable to those who are well-experienced. The book, *A Letter in the Scroll*, is a primer on identity in general, and Jewish identity specifically. In the work, Rabbi Sacks paints a portrait of each succeeding generation adding a new page on to the great scroll that spans across time as we take the heritage of our fathers and guard it to pass to our children.

Our broader society has failed to give our youth a sense of identity and we are now paying the price for that failure. The youth of today often tend to view their elders as sweet, bumbling fools. How smart can people be who can't figure out how to silence their cell-phone or how to program their thermostat? Because of that, many of the youth tend to discount the wisdom of the elders, and many of the elders tend to doubt their own wisdom. That is a terrible mistake in society in general, and is a calamitous error in the Jewish world.

We need to engage our elders to foster a true sense of identity in our youth, and to imbue them with the knowledge of our collective history. History tends to repeat. Jewish history runs in very clear, identifiable and consistent patterns. Viewing the present through the lens of the past anchors our perspective and allows us to make wise decisions that will be vital to Jewish continuity and survival.

Emmanuel Ringelblum was a noted Jewish historian in pre-war Warsaw who was imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto. Ringelblum founded a secret society dedicated to preserving the history of the Warsaw ghetto events for posterity. He also kept a meticulous diary in which he recorded the daily goings-on in the Warsaw Ghetto. In that diary, Ringelblum recounts how the residents of the ghetto looked to Jewish history for guidance and context to understand and process their situation in the ghetto. Without the perspective of history, they would have been completely lost.

Do we have a strong enough sense of our history to carry us through difficult times? Moshe *Rabbeinu* entreats us to remember the days of old; to ask our fathers and have them relate to us, to entreat our elders to tell us. We need to be proactive in engaging the older generation and asking them to talk, to tell their stories and the stories of their elders to our children so that the youth can see themselves

in the broader context of history. It is not enough to wait for the elders to talk. The Torah demands that we question the elders and prompt them to share. As the *Haamek Davar* explains, once you get them talking, they will expand and expound, telling you what you didn't even know to ask.

For those fortunate enough to have parents and even grandparents to engage with their children, *yom tov* is prime season for just such interactions. If you are fortunate enough to have members of the older generation at your *yom tov* table, steer the conversation in their direction. Pepper them with questions and get them talking, and make sure the kids hear their elders. The kids might roll their eyes and protest now, but they will forever treasure the stories they hear from their forebears. If you are blessed with older relatives who may not be at your *yom tov* table, make visiting with and

spending time with them a priority over your *chol hamoed*. If you are not blessed with access to elder members of your own family, adopt a grandparent at the Fountainview or a similar place. There are plenty of elder people with great stories who are looking for an audience with whom to share them.

As vitally important as Hershey Park and Great Adventure are, Great Identity is even more important. Give your children a gift that will last a lifetime over *yom tov*. Your grandchildren will thank you.

Good Shabbos,
Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb
Principal

A Very Good Moed

Note: This piece was originally distributed before Pesach 5779. The message remains as timely and relevant as ever.

A number of months ago, I wrote a piece on *parasha Mikeitz* on the theme of why be visible. In that piece I discussed the advice that Yaakov had given his sons prior to their descent to *mitzrayim* for food. His succinct advice – “*lamah tisra'u*”, “Why be visible?” In that pithy comment Yaakov *avinu* captured a truism of Jewish history. Visibility is never good for the Jews. We have always done well when we keep a low profile, not as well when we don't.

There are, however, times where by force of circumstance, we find ourselves quite visible and on display for the world at large, and it is at those times that we must be extra-vigilant. *Chol Hamoed* is one such time.

Chol Hamoed and the bevy of activities that we avail ourselves of to entertain us and our families create multiple points of intersection between the Orthodox Jewish world and the broader society. Those interactions do not always paint us in the best light, and, in doing so, endanger our mission and our place in the broader society. We often loosely use the term *chilul Hashem* to describe those negative interactions and conversely the term *Kiddush Hashem* to describe those that are positive. That sometimes leads people to misguidedly debate the finer points of the *halachic* intricacies of *chillul*

and *Kiddush Hashem* as laid out in the *gemara* in *Sanhedrin*,

distracting them from the point.

I would suggest that there are three overarching considerations that should color all of our interactions with the broader community as we embark on our varied *Chol Hamoed* trips.

The first is our broader mission in the world. Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch writes extensively of the purpose and goal of the *galus*, in part, as a means for us to spread the light of *Torah* values to the broader society. We are to be an *Ohr LaGoyim*, a light unto the nations, setting the example for morality, propriety, decency, and respect for them to follow. Our public behavior needs to always meet the standard of being worthy of emulation. When we fall short of that standard, we have failed in our mission, and have brought darkness instead of light into the world. As the *gemara* tells us in *Yoma*, *she'tihei shem Shamayim mis'aheiv al yadecha*, we must cause, by our actions, the Name of Heaven to be beloved in the world. If people don't point to us, to our children and our families and say “Fortunate are those parents who raised their children in *Torah* values”, then we have failed to live up to the mandate of the *gemara*.

The second point is what is often our failure to display and to act with true concern for the welfare of others. We are commanded to have compassion for all living things, and to act upon that compassion. That compassion extends to all human beings. The *Neztiv* of Volozhin, in his introduction to

the *Ha'amek Davar* to *Bereishis*, points out the genuine concern and compassion that Avraham displays for all human beings, even the amoral residents of the city of S'dom. That concern displayed by the *avos* for all of mankind is what earns *sefer Bereishis* the title of *sefer HaYashar* in the eyes of *Chaza"l*. We sometimes fail to display and possibly even fail to feel compassion for others. We are in a rush to get ahead in line, to reach our destination, and to get our needs met and we sometimes don't display the necessary compassion for our fellow travelers or our service providers. That too is a failure on our part should it happen.

The third point is more pragmatic and transactional in its nature, but no less important. This past Friday, I had a conversation with the daughter of a Holocaust survivor who related the following story: Her father had been the last in a long line of *shochtim* in a small town in Germany. After the Nazis passed anti-*shechita* laws, he risked his life to continue providing kosher meat to the community. One night, at midnight there was a knock on his door. A local town policeman informed him that he had overheard that the Nazis were going to arrest him the next day and ship him off to a concentration camp. He quickly packed whatever he could and escaped in the dead of night. I asked the daughter why she thought the German police officer had risked his own safety to save her father. She responded that the German police officer had been a classmate of her father's in school and her father had been nice to him. Now he wanted to repay her father's kindness.

It is not the first nor second time I have heard a similar story. The fact is that the vast majority of the non-Jewish world will ultimately draw their conclusions about Jews based on their own personal interactions and experiences with Jews. If they see Jews as kind, caring, considerate and compassionate, they are likely to harbor that image for life. If they see selfishness, rudeness and indifference, they will carry that impression as well.

Many years ago, Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky *zt"l* was sitting in a doctor's waiting room. In the waiting room was a five-year old non-Jewish child. Reb Yaakov spent the time in the waiting room playing with the child, rolling a ball back and forth. When asked why he saw fit to spend his time playing with the child rather than immersed in a *sefer* Rav Yaakov explained that he wanted to make sure that the child would grow up with a favorable impression of an elderly Jew with a beard.

When we interact with the broader world, we are investing in the future of the Jewish people in this country. If we leave a favorable impression of Jews, we lay the groundwork for future security and peace for the Jewish people. I leave the converse unsaid.

How do we apply these principles in practice as we engage the world on *chol Hamoed*? Some simple suggestions:

Whatever activity you are engaged in, learn and follow the rules of engagement, and stay in bounds. You, or your children may find it amusing to bowl any way you please or to play mini-golf or drive go-karts against the usual practice. Don't.

Do show genuine care and concern for other people and their children. Befriend and be kind to those whom you encounter. Be kind and courteous to the service providers who help you. Tip generously, but not ostentatiously. The idea isn't to flaunt your wealth, but to share your blessings with those around you.

Don't litter. Pick up after yourselves and be neat and careful. Even if others are doing it, your *yarmulke* or *sheitel* holds you to a higher standard. Keep your children close and watch them carefully. Treat them with respect and insist that they treat all with respect as well.

Talk to your Uber drivers and the bus drivers. Learn their names and use them. Always be kind, polite, considerate and aboveboard, and if you're ever asked why you are so kind and considerate, tell them your religion demands it!

Chag Sameach,
Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb
Principal

מחזיקי תורה זכרון יצחק

התמדה בחג הסוכות

Program

Grand Raffle:
October 30th
50 prizes will be raffled off

לז"נ הרב ירחמיאל
שלום משה בן הרב ישראל זצ"ל
מגיד שיעור - ישיבה דרך חיים

BONUS SUKKOS RAFFLE:

For learning a minimum of
12 hours over Yom Tov: \$100

BONUS SUKKOS RAFFLE:

For learning a minimum of
9 hours over Yom Tov: \$75



BONUS SUKKOS RAFFLE:

For learning a minimum of
6 hours over Yom Tov: \$50

BONUS SUKKOS RAFFLE:

For learning a minimum of
3 hours over Yom Tov: \$25

Earn one ticket towards the raffle for each half hour of learning starting Friday, October 11th,
אתרו חג סוכות, through Wednesday, October 23rd, ערב שבת פרשת האזינו (except during Yeshiva Hours)
You can earn tickets for any learning over יום טוב, except during תפילה or קריאת התורה.

Name _____

Yeshiva _____ Grade _____

Phone _____

MINUTES LEARNED

PARENT'S SIGNATURE

First time participants should also fill out the information below:

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Completed forms must be received by October 27th to be included in the raffle.

Completed forms should be faxed to 646-595-2402 or emailed to egoldberg417@gmail.com.

Grand raffle will take place on October 30, 2019
50 PRIZES WILL BE RAFFLED OFF!!

For more information or for sponsorship opportunities please call
Rabbi Eliyohu Goldberg 347.420.0906 or email egoldberg417@gmail.com

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נפטר כה' מר חשון תשס"ג

Machzikei Torah
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מחזיקי תורה
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WILL RESUME
AFTER SUCCOS!**



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bplotzker@ohrreuven.com

First

Last

Name of תלמיד (Please Print Clearly)

Class: (Please Check One)

- ☐ 2nd Grade – 10 פסוקים
- ☐ 3rd Grade – 15 פסוקים
- ☐ 4th Grade – 20 פסוקים
- ☐ 5th Grade – 25 פסוקים
- ☐ 6th Grade – 30 פסוקים
- ☐ 7th Grade – 40 פסוקים
- ☐ 8th Grade – The whole פרשה

My son completed שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום for
this פרשה in the amount specified for his class.

Parent's signature

בס"ד

QUESTION OF THE DAY



Each day there will be a different question posted on the bulletin board.

You have the whole week to answer the questions from that week.

You cannot answer the previous week's questions.

Fill out a paper from below the 'mailbox', and place in the mailbox.

**WEEKLY & MONTHLY
!!!!!! RAFFLES !!!!!**

ת"ס
**QUESTION
OF THE DAY**

!!WEEKLY RAFFLE – 5 WINNERS!!
YOUR CHOICE - CAN OF SODA OR ITALIAN ICES

**MONTHLY RAFFLE
AFTER ROSH HASHONO
WIN A SLICE OF PIZZA
AND A CAN OF SODA
!8 WINNERS!**



ט"ו

QUESTION OF THE DAY

THIS MONTH'S PIZZA & SODA WINNERS

LEVI TENEMBAUM

ZEVY DEUTSCH

CHAIM TZVI EISENSTADT

YOSEF FRIEDMAN (5th)

YONAH FEINER

CHANOCH BOOK

DANIEL SILBER

KOBE KURTZ

(On Friday: Extra slice will come with class pizza. Come to Rabbi Plotzker for soda)

