

- BEREISHIT
- NOAH
- LEKH LEKHA
- VAYERA
- HAYYEI SARAH
- TOLDOT
- VAYEITZEI
- VAYISHLAH
- VAYEISHEV
- MIKEITZ
- VAYIGASH
- VAYEHI

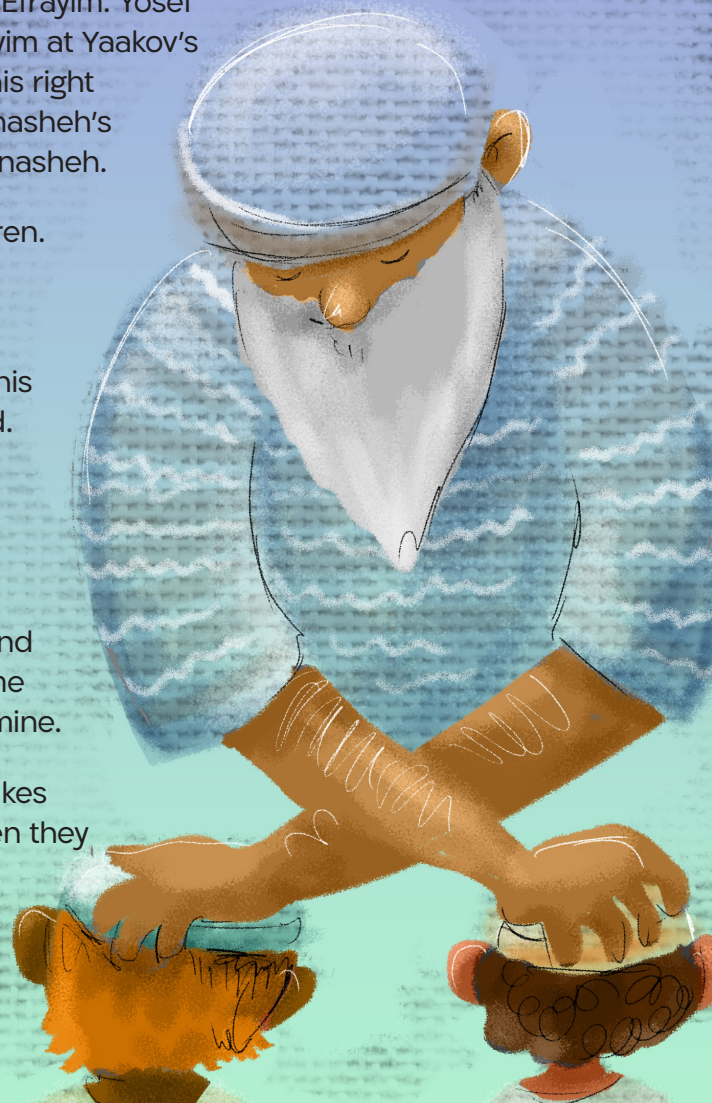


January 1 - 7, 2023 ח' - י"ד טבת תשפ"ג



## מה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ After 17 years in מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim, Egypt), Yaakov feels his life coming to an end.
- ◆ Yaakov blesses Yosef's two sons, Menasheh and Efrayim. Yosef places Menasheh at Yaakov's right side and Efrayim at Yaakov's left side, but Yaakov crosses his hands to place his right hand on Efrayim's head and his left hand on Menasheh's head, saying that Efrayim will be greater than Menasheh.
- ◆ Yaakov gives a final message to each of his children.
- ◆ Yaakov instructs his children to bury him in the מְעָרָה (me'arah, cave) in the field of Makhpelah, back in the Land of Canaan. This is where Leah, his parents, and his grandparents are already buried.
- ◆ Yaakov dies. His family and Egypt mourn for him, and they bury him as he asked.
- ◆ Yosef's brothers are afraid that Yosef will take revenge against them. Yosef calms them down and says that it was part of God's plan for him to come to Mitzrayim so he could save the family from famine.
- ◆ Yosef lives to see his great-grandchildren. He makes his family swear to take his bones with them when they eventually leave Mitzrayim, and then he dies.







## פְּשֻׁט הַפְּסוּקִים • Understanding the Verses

Before Yaakov dies, he gives each of his sons a poetic blessing. Here's the one for Dan:

Before or after Shabbat, scan to listen to a discussion of these pesukim! The Varei episode of TORAH TIME will be live on January 2, 2023.



### Bereishit 49:16-18

Dan shall judge his people,  
As one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent by the road,  
A viper by the path,  
That bites the horse's heels  
So that its rider is thrown backward.

I hope for Your salvation, God!

### בראשית מט:טז-יח

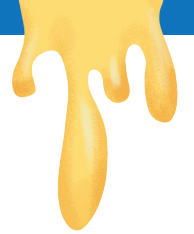
דָן יִדִין עַמּוֹ  
כְּאַחַד שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יְהִי דָן נָחֵשׁ עַלֵי דֶרֶךְ  
שׁוֹפֵיפֹן עַלֵי אֲרֶחַ  
הַנֶּשֶׁה עֵקְבֵי סוּס  
וַיִּפֹּל רֹכְבוֹ אָחֹר:

לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִוִּיתִי ה':

- ◆ What do you notice? What makes you curious?
- ◆ What could it mean that Dan will judge "as one of the tribes"? Could this be a message about leaders seeing themselves as part of the people they are leading? What message is that telling us?
- ◆ Imagine the scene with a serpent, horse, and rider. What strengths and weaknesses does each one have? What is each one afraid of? Which one would you like to be? Why?
- ◆ Why might it be a blessing to be like the serpent? What's the kind of situation when it might be important to have this blessing?
- ◆ Do you notice anything strange about the final line that makes it very different from what's before? (Try to think of it yourself before you read ahead!) Besides being very short, Yaakov isn't really talking about Dan anymore. Instead, he seems to be asking God for help in a very direct way. Why do you think he might be doing that right now? Do you think this is still part of Dan's blessing, or is it something else? Could something about the snake and horse have made Yaakov think about something from his own life? (Hint: Look at Bereishit 25:26.)





### Bereishit 48:1

...Yosef was told, "Your father is ill."  
So he took his two sons, Menasheh and Efrayim.

### בראשית מח:א

...וַיֹּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה  
וַיִּקַּח אֶת שְׁנֵי בָנָיו עִמּוֹ אֶת מְנַשֶּׁה  
וְאֶת אֶפְרַיִם:



I'm surprised Yosef didn't already know his father was sick!

Bzzzz  
A lot of midrashim are bugged by something unusual in the Torah text

### Pesikta Rabbati

Yosef's greatest quality was respecting his father, so didn't he visit Yaakov regularly? If other people hadn't told Yosef that his father was sick, would he not have known?

We learn from this about how righteous Yosef was. He didn't ever want to be alone with Yaakov, because he worried that Yaakov would ask for details about what the brothers had done. Then Yosef would have had to tell him, and Yaakov would curse the brothers... so Yosef didn't visit Yaakov regularly.

Great question!



### פסיקתא רבתי ג

הָרִי כֹּל שְׂבָחוֹ שֶׁל יוֹסֵף  
שֶׁהָיָה מְפָלִיג עַל כְּבוֹד  
אָבִיו, וְלֹא נִכְנָס אֶצְלוֹ  
בְּכֹל שְׁעָה?! שְׂאֵלוֹ לִי  
שְׂבָאוֹ אַחֲרַיִם וְאִמְרוּ  
לוֹ: אֲבֵא חוֹלָה, לֹא הָיָה  
יּוֹדֵעַ?

אֲלֵא לְהוֹדִיעָה צְדָקוֹ,  
שֶׁלֹּא רָצָה לְהִתְיַחַד עִם  
אָבִיו, שֶׁלֹּא יֵאמַר לוֹ:  
הָאִיךָ עָשׂוֹ בְּךָ אַחִיךָ? –  
וּמְקַלְלֵם... לְפִיכָּה לֹא הָיָה  
הוֹלֵךְ אֶצְלֵ אָבִיו כֹּל שְׁעָה.

If someone hurts you, you should tell a parent or another trusted adult right away. Talking about what happened can make you feel better, and the adults in your life can help keep you safe.

Yosef's situation was different, though, because he was grown up now, and he was the most powerful person in Mitzrayim after Pharaoh. So now he had to ask himself: Is it still worth telling Yaakov what really happened, if that might ruin his relationship with his brothers or if they might get cursed?



- ◆ You might think that Yosef would have been ok with his brothers getting cursed! What can we learn from Yosef about when and how to forgive?
- ◆ Why might Yosef have sacrificed having a closer relationship with his father, so that his brothers could continue having a relationship with Yaakov, too?



## פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

Yaakov asks Yosef to promise to bury him in **מְעַרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה** (me'arat ha-makhpelah, the cave of Makhpelah) back in the Land of Canaan. Later, he talks to Yosef again, and here is part of what he says:

### Bereishit 48:7

"When I was returning from Paddan, Rachel died on me in the Land of Canaan, along the way, some distance from Efrat. I buried her there on the road to Efrat—which is Beit Lehem."

### בראשית מז:ז

וְאָנִי בְּבֹאִי מִפָּדָן מָתָה עָלַי רָחֵל בְּאֶרֶץ  
כְּנַעַן בְּדֶרֶךְ בְּעוֹד כְּבָרַת אֶרֶץ לְבֵא אֶפְרָתָה  
וְאֶקְבְּרָהּ שָׁם בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרָת הוּא בֵּית לֶחֶם:

**Why does Yaakov mention these details about where Rachel is buried?** Our פְּרָשְׁנִים (parshanim, commentators) seem to agree that Yaakov is trying to offer some reason for why he should be buried in me'arat ha-makhpelah, even though Rachel (Yosef's mother) wasn't. The parshanim disagree about what that reason might be.





### Ramban (Spain, 800 years ago)

Yaakov mentioned that Rahel died **in the Land of Canaan**—she wasn't buried outside the Land, which is what Yaakov wanted to avoid for himself. Yaakov also mentioned that she died **along the way**, suddenly, to explain that he couldn't have just left the whole family and their flocks out there on the road to go bury Rahel in me'arat hamakhpelah...

### רמב"ן

אמר לו כי מתה בארץ כנען, ולא נקברה בחוצה לארץ, באשר תהיה קבורת מצרים ליעקב. ומתה בדרך, בפתע פתאום, ולא יכל לקברה שם, כי איך יעזב את בניו ואת מקנהו בדרך וילך מהרה עמה למערת המכפלה...

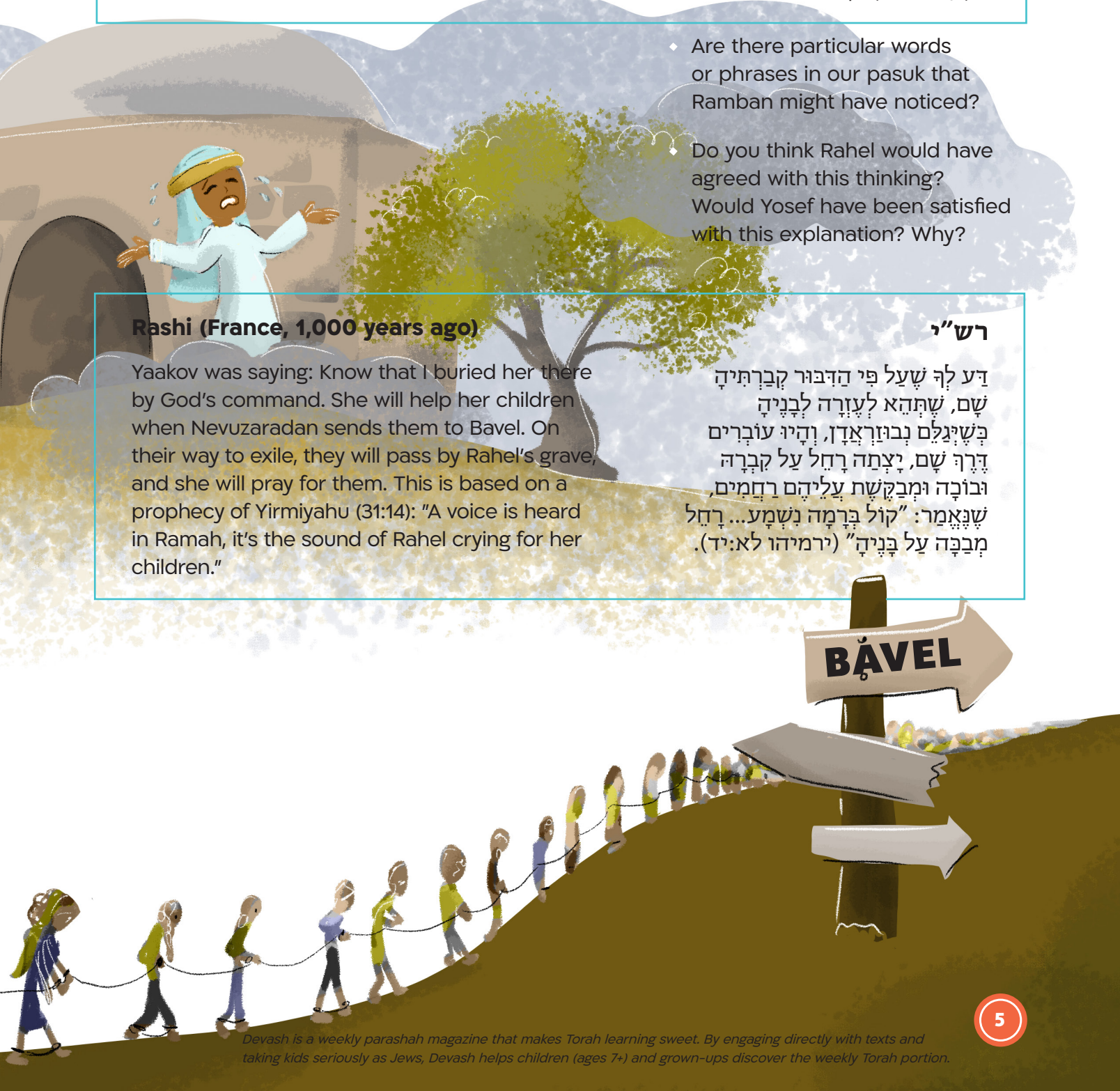
- ◆ Are there particular words or phrases in our pasuk that Ramban might have noticed?
- ◆ Do you think Rahel would have agreed with this thinking? Would Yosef have been satisfied with this explanation? Why?

### Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

Yaakov was saying: Know that I buried her there by God's command. She will help her children when Nevuzaradan sends them to Bavel. On their way to exile, they will pass by Rahel's grave, and she will pray for them. This is based on a prophecy of Yirmiyahu (31:14): "A voice is heard in Ramah, it's the sound of Rahel crying for her children."

### רש"י

ידע לה ששעל פי הדבור קברתיה שם, שתהא לעזרה לבניה בשיגלם נבוזראדן, והיו עובדים דרך שם, יצתה רחל על קברה ובוכה ומבקשת עליהם רחמים, שנאמר: "קול ברמה נשמע... רחל מבכה על בניה" (ירמיהו לא:יד).



- ◆ Rashi is also noticing clues in pesukim, but mostly not from our parashah! He's looking at the book of Yirmiyahu, which is in a different part of הַתַּנַּ"ךְ (Tanakh, the Bible). Can you tell which word in our pasuk Rashi is connecting to Yirmiyahu?
- ◆ According to Rashi, Rahel was buried in Beit Lehem for a reason. She has an important mission there—to pray for the Jewish people being exiled after the destruction of the first בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ (Beit Ha-Mikdash, Holy Temple). What do you think we can learn from this?
- ◆ Do you think Rahel would have agreed with this thinking? Would Yosef have been satisfied with this explanation? Why?



## רָגַעַ שָׁל עֲבָרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

### Bereishit 49:22

Yosef is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches **climb** over the wall.

### בראשית מט:כב

בֵּן פֶּרֶת יוֹסֵף בֶּן פֶּרֶת עָלֵי עֵינַי בְּנוֹת  
צִעָדָה עָלַי שׁוֹר:

לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַצֵּעַד הָרִאשׁוֹן  
To take the first step  
(la'asot et ha-tza'ad ha-rishon)

לַצֵּעַד (שׁוֹרשׁ צ.ע.ד.)

◆ To march or walk  
(litz'od)

= מִצְעָדָה, צִעָדָה  
Parade, march,  
or rally (mitz'ad,  
tze'adah)

= צֵעַד צֵעַד  
Gradually, one step at  
a time (tza'ad tza'ad)

### Find the Word!

One of the בְּרָכוֹת הַשַּׁחַר (Birkhot Ha-Shahar, morning blessings) that we say at the beginning of Shacharit is about God making our steps firm. Can you find the berakhah that includes this שׁוֹרֵשׁ (shoresh, root)?





## שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.**

### aliyot:

- 1) Bereishit 47:28 to 48:9
- 2) 48:10 to 48:16
- 3) 48:17 to 48:22
- 4) 49:1 to 49:18
- 5) 49:19 to 49:26
- 6) 49:27 to 50:20
- 7) 50:21 to 50:26

### haftarah:

Melakhim Bet 2:1-12



1 Where does Yaakov tell Yosef that God appeared to him?

2 Who was Yosef's firstborn son?

3 According to Yaakov, which of Yosef's sons will achieve more greatness in the future?

4 Who will live by the sea?

5 Who don't the archers like?

6 When Yosef went to Canaan to bury Yaakov, who went with him?

7 Who comforts whom?

9 Which of his own sons does Yaakov compare Menasheh and Efrayim to?

8 In last week's parashah, after being reunited with Yosef, Yaakov said that he was ready to die (46:30). According to our parashah, how long did Yaakov end up living after he said that?

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\*  
Look for the answers on page 11!



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10 **From the haftarah:**  
King David is about to die, but he still has some scores to settle. Whom does he ask his son Shlomo to punish, and whom does he ask Shlomo to reward?



## דְּקָה שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate

**Debate: Yosef shouldn't have tried to untangle his father's arms.**

When blessing his grandchildren, Yaakov crosses his arms, placing his right hand on Yosef's younger son, Efrayim, and his left hand on Yosef's older son, Menasheh. Yosef tries to stop him from doing this, but Yaakov says he has a good reason (Bereishit 48:14-19).

### How to play:

- ◆ Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- ◆ For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



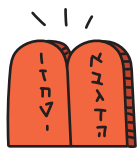
### Agree!

- ◆ It was disrespectful to Yaakov to try to override his choice.
- ◆ Yosef must have known the story of how Yaakov—himself a younger brother—got the special firstborn blessing from his own father, Yitzhak (back in Parashat Toldot). It was a family tradition to give preference to the younger child!



### Disagree!

- ◆ Yosef thought Yaakov was confused. The Torah tells us that Yaakov was having trouble seeing. Yosef was just trying to help.
- ◆ Yosef must have been nervous about giving preference to the younger child. That's what got him thrown into a pit and sold as a slave!



## הֲלָכָה • Halakhah

When you walk in the door to your home or into your classroom, how does it feel when someone greets you with a smile? What if no one looks up from what they're doing—what's that like?

Here's a teaching from the Gemara that emphasizes just how important it is to greet people in a friendly way. Notice how the lesson is connected to a pasuk from our parashah!

Learn one way the parashah practically impacts our lives



SMILE!!

SAY HI OR GIVE HIGH FIVES





## Talmud Bavli Ketubot 11b

R. Yohanan said: When you show the whites of your teeth to a person (by smiling at them) it's even better than giving them milk to drink.

This is based on the words (in the blessing to Yehudah in our parashah): "u-le-ven shinayim mei-halav" (Bereishit 49:12). Instead of reading it le-ven shinayim mei-halav (which means, "his teeth are white from drinking milk"), change the vowels a little and read it: libbun shinayim mei-halav (which means, "white teeth—smiling—is better than milk").

## תלמוד בבלי מסכת כתובות דף יא עמוד ב

אמר רבי יוחנן טוב המלבין שיניים לחבירו יותר ממשקהו חלב, שנאמר "ולבן שיניים מחלב" (בראשית מט:יב) - אל תקרי לבן שיניים אלא לבון שיניים.

A similar idea is expressed by Shammai in Pirkei Avot (1:15), who says we should always greet people with a friendly face: בְּסֵבֶר פָּנִים יָפוֹת (b'sever panim yafot).

Avot De-Rabbi Natan (13:4) adds that if you give someone all the gifts in the world, but without a smile, it's as if you haven't given anything. On the other hand, simply greeting someone kindly—b'sever panim yafot—can be as good as giving them tons of gifts!

You can show sever panim yafot in lots of ways:

**Try it!** Spend a day really focusing on how you greet every person you see—whether it's in the hall at school, or at the grocery store, or anywhere you go (don't forget at home, too). What's your experience? How do people seem to respond?





## חֲזָרָה • Bereishit in Review

This week we complete Sefer Bereishit. We've met so many interesting and inspiring characters.

### WHO STANDS OUT AS A ROLE MODEL FOR YOU? WHY?

Here's how some Devash readers answered this question.



### AVRAHAM

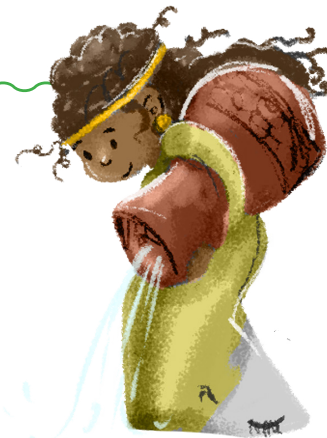
Sometimes in my life, I have to do the right thing even if it's hard, and I think that is what Abraham did in the story of the Akeidah.

-Gabriel, age 11

### RIVKAH

Her kind action represented selflessness and what you should do when you see someone in a situation where they are thirsty or hungry.

-Amit, age 12



### SHIMON (YOSEF'S BROTHER)

He went into prison, even though it was hard. Something I try to do in my life is to persevere through something even if it is hard.

-Ari, age 12





## NOAH

Noah was a righteous man. Noah was a good person. When I grow up, I want to be a good person and help people in need. Noah influences me to do so many good deeds that I'll be in the Guinness World Records!

-Amy, age 12

Noah was in a life or death situation, and he saved humanity. We learn from him about helping everyone and being a mensch.

-Julian, age 12

## HAGAR

She had a lot of hardships. She lost her job as a slave and ended up in the desert, with nothing but a jug of water and her son. When her son Yishmael was about to die, she cried out to God. God heard Yishmael's cry, and helped them.

-Simone, age 12



## SARAH

The midrash presents her as a prophet and a righteous woman whose actions are worthy of emulation. I think she is a good role model because of the way she acts.

-Eyden, age 12

## Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. Luz (48:3)
2. Menasheh (48:14)
3. Efrayim (48:19)
4. Zevulun (49:13)
5. Yosef (49:22)
6. Pharaoh's servants, all the elders of מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim, Egypt), Yosef's family, and his brothers and their families (just not the children) (50:7-8)
7. Yosef comforts his brothers (50:21)
8. 17 years (47:28)
9. Reuven and Shimon (48:5)
10. Punish Yoav ben Tzeruya and Shimi ben Gera; reward the sons of Barzilai (Melakhim Bet 2:5-8)





## Prayer in the Parashah

There's a story in the Gemara that imagines Yaakov feeling worried.

He wonders: After I die, will my children really continue in the ways that I taught them?



### Talmud Bavli Pesahim 56a

His children said to him: Shema Yisrael, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem ehad.

They explained: Just as there is only one God in your heart, so too, we only have one God in our hearts.

### תלמוד בבלי פסחים דף נו עמוד א

אָמְרוּ לוֹ בְּנָיו: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה' אֶחָד.

אָמְרוּ: בְּשֵׁם שְׂאִין בְּלִבָּךְ אֵלֹהִים אֶחָד, כִּי אִין בְּלִבֵּנוּ אֵלֹהִים אֶחָד.

"Shema Yisrael" is usually a message directed to all of us, meaning, "Listen, Benei Yisrael, God is one." But in this story, "Shema Yisrael" is a message for just one person: Yaakov (whose other name is Yisrael). His children are telling him, "Listen, Yisrael/Yaakov, our God is one. Don't worry that we'll stray from the path!"

At that moment, Yaakov opened his mouth and said: Barukh shem kevod malkhuto le-olam va-ed (blessed be the name of the glory of God's kingdom forever and ever).

The rabbis wondered what to do with this response.

They thought, we can't say it as part of Shema, because it's not in the Torah.

But since Yaakov said it, we can't leave it out!

They compromised and decided to say it quietly.

בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה פָּתַח יַעֲקֹב אֲבִינוּ וְאָמַר: בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

אָמְרֵי רַבָּנָן: הֵיכִי נַעֲבִיד? נֹאמְרֵיהּ, לֹא אָמְרוּ מִשָּׁה רַבִּינוּ.

לֹא נֹאמְרֵיהּ, אָמְרוּ יַעֲקֹב.

הִתְקִינוּ שְׂיֵהוּ אוֹמְרִים אוֹתוֹ בְּחֻשָּׁאִי.

- ♦ Try it out! When you say Shema, try having the different meanings in mind. One time, imagine you are talking to all of Benei Yisrael and telling them that God is one. Another time, imagine you are reassuring Yaakov and telling him that you still believe that God is one. How does each one feel? Which one do you like imagining better? Why?