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 Presents:

# Shabbos INSPIRE.

MONTHLY PARSHA SHEET

Parshas Vayechi  
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## The End of Days

By Rabbi Moshe Zionce

**T**hen Yaakov called his sons and said, "Gather together and I will tell you what will befall you in the End of Days" (בראשית מט:א).

What were those secret words that Yaakov desired to divulge to the brothers upon his deathbed? The Mishna in Sotah (מט:י) describes the horrific calamities that will befall the Jewish people in the time before the coming of Moshiach. "The most honored people will be crooked... Most of the world will be ruled by heretics, and there is no rebuke... The knowledge of the *Chachamim* will spoil, and those who fear sin will be despised. Truth will be hidden, youths will embarrass elders, and elders will stand in front of the small... A man's enemies are his household... We have no one to rely on, except for our Father in Heaven!" The Mishna is describing a world greatly devoid of Torah values and practice. It is a time when vast numbers of the beloved Klal Yisroel will lack Torah knowledge and understanding.

Rav Elchanan Wasserman writes: "What can we do about this most awesome situation that has (never before) transpired since the inception of the Jewish Nation? Should we give up and do nothing until there is compassion from Heaven? *Chalilah!* In the name of the Gaon, the author of the Nefesh HaChaim (Rav Chaim Volozhin) writes on the (above) Mishna in Sotah: (The end of the Mishna states) 'We have no one to rely on, except for our Father in Heaven.' The Mishna is describing the calamities of the time of Moshiach. This last statement is also a calamity because we will rely only on Hashem. It is the most horrifying of all the (previously listed) curses! It is the people who have fear of Heaven in the time of Moshiach who will give up hope and will neglect to fight Hashem's battle. This is a huge error! The pasuk screams, 'Give power to Hashem!' It is for us to decipher through the Torah how to fight this battle." (דף רסב קובץ) (חלק א, מאמרים). These words are most awesome and frightening. However, how do we actualize our fight in Hashem's war, in this time before the coming of Moshiach? With nine out of ten Jews having little or no true connection to Torah and Mitzvos, what are we to do? The task seems incredibly daunting. What else is there other than to rely on our Father in Heaven to save Klal Yisroel?

For the answer, let us look into the circumstances surrounding Yaakov at the time of his imminent demise: Yaakov was on his deathbed and was about to describe to the Shevatim the time of Moshiach. He requested that the brothers "gather together" through a bond of unity. However, the Shechina departed from him, preventing Yaakov from exposing the secret (פסחים נו, בראשית רבה צג:ב). Yaakov was concerned that the Shechina had left him because one of the Shevatim was unworthy. He feared that the brothers were not completely united in their absolute commitment to Hashem. "How can I be sure that your hearts are all with Hashem?" he asked. The Shevatim therefore declared in unison, "*Shema Yisroel, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad*". The Isbitzur explains in Mai Hashiluach that the words of *Shema Yisroel* were a declaration of the brothers' complete and utter unity. He elucidates that the word *echad*, meaning one/unity, is comprised of an *alef* for the one Yaakov, a *ches* for the eight children

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## Kiruv at the Museum

By Peshie Needleman

**W**e have always told our kids that a Jew is a Jew, no matter what he looks like. Every Jew deserves our love and respect; every Jew is our brother or sister. Last August I was put to the test.

My older children were in Israel with my parents, and my husband, Lavi, and I took our three youngest children, Yosef, Eliyhau and our toddler, Shevy, to Philadelphia for a mini vacation.

In Philly, we visited the fabulous Please Touch Museum. We were there for hours. At one point, we split up. Lavi took the boys to the pretend gas station and mechanic's shop while I took Shevy to a special area for babies and toddlers. It was a nursery rhyme exhibit with lots of interactive displays. At this point I was getting wiped out; ever run after three kids at a kids' museum for five hours? I slumped on a bench and



watched Shevy explore the enclosed area. Most museum-goers have an "upscale" look. (Who else but upscale folks

are going to shell out \$16 a person to watch their kids flip pretend pizzas and run in circles on a life size mouse treadmill?). That's why one couple stuck out. When I say stuck out, I mean really stuck out. The man had all different types of ornaments and tattoos, and the woman sported a somewhat unconventional look with tattoos as well. Together, they hovered over their little daughter named Kaya. I tried not to stare at this couple. At one point the mother commented on my "chilled-out" attitude with Shevy. I told her that my daughter is the youngest of five children, and that by now I tend to take the "let her do her own thing" road, rather than the hovering mother road. What she said next really shocked me, "So... you must be Orthodox if you have five kids?" I opened my mouth and then shut it, a fish out of water. I had just gleaned some important bits of information. She knows I'm Jewish so maybe she's Jewish, especially because she asked if I was Orthodox. If ever there was a time to put my kiruv training from Project Inspire into action it was now! I measured my words carefully.

"Yes, I'm an Orthodox Jew. Are you Jewish?"

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of the *Emos* - Leah's six children and Rachel's two, and the *daled* for the four children of the Shefachos. The brothers therefore were saying "*Shema Yisroel*" - Hear/understand Yisroel, referring to Yaakov himself, "*Hashem Elokeinu*" - Hashem is our G-d, "*Hashem Echad*" - we are all as one in our knowledge and commitment to Hashem.

This I believe, is the answer to our question of how to fight for Hashem. The words of *Shema Yisroel* are a reference to the End of Days. As it says in Zechariah, "Hashem will be King over all the world - on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One" (ו:ד). The Shevatim were saying that in order for us to endure and triumph in the End of Days, the Jewish people must be united. Only when we **all** work together will we succeed.

We live in an era when unfortunately few in proportion to our numbers have risen to the challenge to reach out to our Jewish brothers and sisters. There are approximately five million Jews in North America, 500,000 of whom are frum. There are approximately 1,500 kiruv professionals in North America. If each one of the kiruv professionals would succeed in reaching out to 100 people, there would be only 150,000 affected people. Even if that number were doubled, there would still remain over 4 million Jews unaffected! There are simply not enough kiruv professionals to make the colossal impact needed.

Every day lives are lost, seemingly forever. The solution can only materialize through **us**. Only through the efforts of each and every one of us working together towards this common goal can we be victorious in Hashem's battle for the survival of His children. We can make the difference...we must make the difference. Hashem is waiting, watching to see if we feel deeply enough about our Jewish brethren to reach out and share with them the beauty and relevance of Yiddishkeit.

It is easier than you think. Project Inspire offers, free of charge, the "Home Kiruv Training Experience". It is a two-part series that gives you the tools and the confidence to reach out to your less-affiliated neighbors, relatives and co-workers. You will learn the basics of successful kiruv in this informative and entertaining presentation, complete with a great teacher, videos and lively discussion. You can host the home kiruv training. Ask us how. Contact Chaya Wolbe at [cwolbe@projectinspire.com](mailto:cwolbe@projectinspire.com), 845-364-7067. (The Home Kiruv Training is not available in all areas).

Recently, there was a massive *asifa* in Lakewood, attended by some 1,500 people in support of *Acheinu* - a successful kiruv organization in Israel. (The sheer enormity of the numbers in attendance is testament to the increased awareness in our community of the need for kiruv.) HaGaon HaRav Aaron Leib Shteinman, אש"ל, spoke via satellite and vehemently impressed upon all the unequivocal obligation to get involved in kiruv. "We must *chaparein*, seize the opportunity. Moshiach is almost here. Once Moshiach comes there will no longer be an opportunity for us to bring them back. It will be too late. Once he comes, you won't be able to have the *zechus* any longer."

*Chazal* teach us that a negative prophecy does not have to come to fruition. It is up to **us** to annul the decree! Together we can impress upon every frum Jew the message and the responsibility to reach out. Together we can turn the overwhelming tide of assimilation and together we can transform a curse into a *bracha*. **PI**

Good Shabbos,  
**Moshe Zionce**  
Director, Project Inspire Toronto

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The woman, who introduced herself as Betty, smiled. "Can't you tell? Look at my tattoo!"

I squinted at it, but still couldn't figure out what it said.

Betty beamed. "It says me'chapess ha'emet."

I gulped. "Searching for the truth. Ah, that's real meaningful." I mustered a smile, recognizing that this was her way of searching for the truth. Hadn't they heard of going to shul on Rosh Hashanah? A lot less painful than all the tattoos.

We conversed some more and I learned that she was Israeli and that her husband was an American Indian. I thought that her daughter's name might be Chaya, but no, it was Kaya, an Indian moniker. As we spoke, I put in a good word for Judaism whenever I could. When she told me that her Israeli family had been upset when a cousin married a "black" Jew (she meant Chareidi), I told her that many families initially are upset to see a fellow family member become a baal teshuva. Their wariness can turn to respect when they see what a happy and healthy lifestyle Judaism promotes. The whole conversation had a surreal quality. She was by far the most intriguing person I had ever spoken to. Different, yes, but with a Jewish heart. She inquired if I lived in Philly because she was thinking of putting Kaya into daycare and was considering an orthodox daycare center. After a while we parted ways.

I met up with my husband and told him what had happened. I felt unsettled, as if I had closed a book halfway through without waiting for the ending.

My husband is one of the founders of Shabbat.com, a fabulous new website that helps less-affiliated Jews find hosts for Shabbos meals. Lavi always keeps Shabbat.com business cards in his wallet. On one side of the card is the website info and on the other side is tefillas haderech.

I'm sure there are people who would have given out their contact info or invited this couple to come to New York for a Shabbos. For various personal reasons this idea wouldn't work for us, but I did want to leave them with an indirect means of staying in touch. I told Lavi to look out for them. (There weren't too many people wandering around the museum who fit my description). Sure enough, a few minutes later, Lavi pointed them out to me. I ran over to Betty and presented her with the Shabbat.com card. I told her I hoped it would help her connect with some folks in Philly. She was so touched that I had sought her out that she kissed me!

I felt so grateful that I was able to make a Kiddush Hashem and that I hadn't missed an opportunity to reach out to a fellow Jew. I walked away from her triumphant in the fact that I HAD done something. I hope that I made a serious impact on her view of Jews and Judaism, and would like to continue to be in touch with her. I silently thanked Hashem for letting me be the shaliach to start the job; I know He won't let my efforts go in vain. **PI**

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If you would like to bring a Shabbos Inspire Parsha Sheet to your shul or for sponsorship, please contact Rabbi Yisroel Weinberg at (646) 961-4961 or [yweinberg@projectinspire.com](mailto:yweinberg@projectinspire.com)

Project Inspire is a grassroots movement inspiring the Jewish people to share the beauty and relevance of our heritage with our fellow Jews.