

Mr. Ghassan N. Cohen
Hon. President
079 8938 7881
Ghassancohen@gmail.com

ק"ק אהל דוד

OHEL DAVID EASTERN SYNAGOGUE

Established 1959

4-14 Broad Walk Lane, London NW11 8HD

Rabbi Asher Sebbag — 07732 731786

Hazan: Jacob Oved - 07971 119865

Telephone: 020 8455 3491

Web site: www.oheldavid.org Email: info@oheldavid.org

Mr. David Gigi
Treasurer
Mr. Adil Darwish
Hon. Gubbay



Shabbat - Lech Lecha,

Sat. 19 - 20 Oct. 2018 - 11th of Cheshvan, 5779 - י"א בחשוון תשע"ט

שבת פ' לך לך

Issue Number 868

Baal Koreh	Rabbi Asher Sebbag	(Page - 54).
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Birkat Halevana

ברכת הלבנה

Shir Hashirim, Mincha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.	17:30
Shabbat Candles.	17:43
Shabbat Shahrit - Followed by Kiddush. (Shema 9:32).	08:30
Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a. (Sunset - 17:56).	16:20
Mincha Shabbat - Followed by Seuda Shlishit at 17:45.	17:20
Arbit Motzei Shabbat.	18:48
Shahrit Weekday - (Sunday - 07:30). (Mon. & Thu. – 6.40)	06:45
Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a.	16:45
Mincha & Arbit	17:30
Next Friday: Mincha, Shir Hashirim, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.	17:15
Next Friday: Candles. Shabbat. Vayera	17:29

Lech Lecha 5779 (Genesis 12-17)

Oct 15, 2018 | by [Rabbi Kalman Packouz](#)

GOOD MORNING! What would you be willing to give up your life for? Your kids, your spouse, your community, your country? How about for God?

The following story is retold from [Incredible](#), the biography of Rabbi Yossi Wallis, CEO of the renown outreach organization, Arachim. Rabbi Nachman Seltzer, the author, shares a story as incredible as the title -- the transition of a young man from youth gangs in the Bronx, to encounters with the Mafia, service in the Israeli air force to ultimately discovering his Torah heritage while waiting in a restaurant for a *treife* (not kosher) sandwich. The story spans generations from the Spanish

Inquisition to his father in the Holocaust to the present.

Rabbi Wallis' maternal grandfather, Shraga Feivel Winkler, was a *tzaddik*, righteous man. During the Holocaust he was sent to do back-breaking labor in a work camp. Though fed starvation rations, he never ate non-kosher food.

Everyone in the labor camp admired this man who dared to go hungry for his beliefs, when everyone around him was succumbing to their ravenous hunger and eating whatever they could. Everyone, that is, except for his Nazi captors.

As the Russians were about to liberate the camp, the head SS officer addressed the inmates at the morning roll call. He had one more cruel game to play

before the officers and guards fled for their own lives. The Nazi grabbed Rav Shraga Feivel Winkler and forcibly pushed him to the center of the circle. "We have heard that he is a man of unbending belief. Now we want to find out the truth."

The Nazis brought out a plate with a piece of pork. "If you eat this, you'll go home with everyone else, but if you refuse, Rabbiner, you will be the last one to be killed in this camp."

No one breathed as they waited to see what Rav Shraga Feivel was going to do. What a terrible dilemma! A bite of pork suddenly equaled life. Every face turned to their beloved spiritual leader, waiting to see what decision he'd make. What was the tzaddik going to do now?

The German pulled out his Luger and held it against the rabbi's temple. Without wavering, Rabbi Winkler responded "I will not eat this pork."

The German shot Yossi's grandfather and he crumpled to the ground, dying on the spot, the final Jew to perish at his camp. That's how he died, refusing to relinquish the holiness that made him so unique, refusing to compromise on the highest ideals of what it means to be a Jew.

How could Rabbi Winkler give up his life? Isn't life the most important thing? Doesn't the Torah teach "You shall keep my decrees and laws which a person shall keep and live by them" (Lev. 18: 5) which the Talmud (Yoma 85b) understands to mean "and not die by them"? Life takes precedence over 610 commandments -- with the exclusion of murder, forbidden sexual

relations and idolatry -- and sanctifying God's Name.

Every day, three times a day, we recite the Shema. In it we reaffirm, "And you shall love God, your Lord, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deut. 6:5). The words "with all your soul" imply even with your life. If one is forced by a non-Jew to violate a commandment for the non-Jew's pleasure, then writes Maimonides, "If he (the Jew) is alone and there are not ten other Jews present, he should transgress and not sacrifice his life. However, if the non-Jew forces him (to transgress) with the intention that he violate (a *mitzvah*) in the presence of ten Jews, he should sacrifice his life and not transgress" (Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 5:2). This is called "Kiddush HaShem" - - sanctifying the Almighty's name.

As Yossi Wallis waited in line at that restaurant for a pork sandwich, he thought of his grandfather who chose to give up his life rather than to eat one bite of pork. He had an epiphany! He owed it to his grandfather's sacrifice to find out what was more important than life that his grandfather chose to die as a righteous Jew rather than live.

There is something more important than physical life. The Almighty did not just place us in this world to grow old and be comfortable -- and most of the people on this planet do neither. He placed us here to develop our souls through living righteously and fulfilling the *mitzvos* and to earn our place in the World to Come.



TORAH PORTION OF THE WEEK

Lech Lecha, Genesis 12:1 - 17:27

The Almighty commands Avram (later renamed Avraham) to leave Haran and go to "the place that I will show you" (which turned out to be the land of Canaan -- later renamed the Land of Israel). The Almighty then gives Avram an eternal message to the Jewish people and to the nations of the world, "I will bless those who bless you and he who curses you I will curse." Finding a famine, Avram travels to Egypt (once renamed to be part of the United Arab Republic) asking Sarai (later renamed Sarah), to say she is his sister so they won't kill him to marry her (the Egyptians were particular not to commit adultery ... so they would kill the husband instead).

Pharaoh evicts Avram from Egypt after attempting to take Sarai for a wife. They settle in Hebron (also known as Kiryat Arba) and his nephew Lot settles in Sodom. Avram rescues Lot -- who was taken captive -- in the Battle of the Four Kings against the Five Kings.

Entering into a covenant with the Almighty (all covenants with the Almighty are eternal, never to be abrogated or replaced by new covenants), Avram is told that his descendants will be enslaved for 400 years and that his descendants (via Isaac, "... through Isaac will offspring be considered yours" Gen. 21:8. Isaac, not Ishmael!) will be given the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."

Sarai, childless, gives her handmaid Hagar to Avram for a wife so

that he will have children. Ishmael (the *alter-zedeh* -- the grandfather -- of our Arab cousins) is born. The covenant of *brit mila*, religious circumcision, is made (read 17:3-8), God changes their names to Avraham and Sarah and tells them that Sarah will give birth to Yitzhak (Isaac). Avraham circumcises all the males of his household.

* * *

Dvar Torah

from Twerski on Chumash by Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.

The Torah states:

"And he (Avraham) trusted in God, and God reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

Why was Avraham's trust in God considered to be righteousness? If God spoke to any of us, would we not have an unshakable faith? We do not have faith that there is a moon or that two plus two equals four. That which we see or understand does not require an act of faith.

The answer was given by Rabbi Mordechai of Lechovitz, who cited the Talmud that on a person's Judgment Day he will be asked, "Did you transact in faith?" (Talmud Bavli, Shabbos 31a). This is usually understood as asking whether one transacted business honestly.

Rabbi Mordechai said that it has an additional meaning. When a person transacts in business, he negotiates and tries in every way to maximize his profit. He does not settle for a meager

gain. This is what one will be asked on Judgment Day: "Did you transact in faith? i.e., did you do everything possible to maximize your faith, or did you just accept whatever you were given?"

Abraham transacted in faith. He, of course, knew there was a God. He did not have to have faith in His existence. However, he tried to strengthen his faith by coming to an ever greater knowledge of God.

Some people take their faith in God for granted. Of course they believe

that there is a God. However, they may not have gone beyond that to try to know more and more about God. We have great works available to us to increase our knowledge and therefore our faith and understanding of God. If we fail to do so, we will have no answer on Judgment Day when we are asked, "Did you seek to improve the quality of your faith? Did you transact in faith?"



Shabbat Shalom,
Kalman
Rabbi Kalman
Packouz

Kolel every Sunday: We are still having a Kolel every Sunday at the Synagogue hall from 09.30am - 12.00pm. Everyone is welcome.

Security Alert: Please be very vigilant when you leave the Synagogue. Do not stand in groups and chat, go home without gathering on the main road. Be safe and alert.

A message to those saying Kaddish: please gather behind the TEBBA and recite the Kaddish together. As it will be a good help to the new Kaddish readers.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE" TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 03 Heshvan - Mr Yakdhan Cohen | 20 Heshvan - Mr Ezra H. Eddie Cohen |
| 03 Heshvan - Mr Ghassan Cohen | 20 Heshvan - Mr Abraham S. Cohen |
| 03 Heshvan - Mr Dhia Cohen | 21 Heshvan - Mr Adil S. Darwish |
| 03 Heshvan - Mr Asad Cohen | 22 Heshvan - Mr Nadir Baher |
| 05 Heshvan - Mr Nadir Baher | 23 Heshvan - Mr Joseph Laniado |
| 07 Heshvan - Mr Y. Kelly Saltoun | 26 Heshvan - Mr Yakdhan Cohen |
| 09 Heshvan - Mr Eliot M. Cohen | 26 Heshvan - Mr Ghassan Cohen |
| 12 Heshvan - Dr Maurice Gubbay | 26 Heshvan - Mr Dhia Cohen |
| 13 Heshvan - Mr Harry Fattal | 26 Heshvan - Mr Asad Cohen |
| 13 Heshvan - Mr Jack Fattal | 28 Heshvan - Mr Joseph Laniado |
| 13 Heshvan - Mr Meir Fattal | 28 Heshvan - Mrs Helen Georgy |
| 15 Heshvan - Mr Ernest Elias | |

Quote of the Week

**Know what you are willing to die for...
and then live for it**