



DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

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Two important things happened this week to the Jewish people. First, we have entered the month of Nisan, and many have begun their Pesach preparations. Secondly, a new book of the Torah has started with Parshat Vayikra. These two events share a common theme: the combination of *Klal* and *Prat*, the national and the personal.

With Nisan, we are thinking about the upcoming *chag*. At our Pesach Seder, we have a mitzvah to not only talk about *Yetziat Mitzrayim*, but to experience it as if we, too, left Egypt. This is the communal, national level of remembering the Exodus. Beyond this, there is our own personal *Yetziat Mitzrayim* at the Pesach Seder. When my wife and I sit with our children and grandchildren, we reflect on how our grandparents and great-grandparents, from North America and France, had their own *Yetziat Mitzrayim* to build their homes in Israel.

Sefer Vayikra also reflects on *Klal* and *Prat*. It focuses on korbanot brought in the Beit HaMikdash. Some are communal, required daily and on *chagim*, while others

are personal, such as a woman bringing a *korban todah* after childbirth or an individual bringing a *korban chatat* after sinning. Again, we see both the personal and the *Klal*.

I reflected on this after spending Shabbat with my wife and daughter at Ulpanat HaRav Baharan in Gedera. This incredible high school is shaping young women who will build Jewish homes, careers, and contribute amazing things to Klal Yisrael. The school holds a Shabbaton for parents when the girls enter 9th grade and again in 12th grade. It was beautiful to see how the school creates an atmosphere where students are encouraged to take responsibility and develop leadership skills.

While in the area, I visited a Shabbaton for girls from our teen centers in Givat Washington. On Friday afternoon, I dropped by, spoke with staff and participants, and was inspired by the diversity, including girls from our newly-expanded Kiryat Malachi branch. The staff gave up their personal Shabbat with family to dedicate themselves to these 150 girls, exemplifying the balance of *Klal* and *Prat*. The energy, excitement, and care put into the programming were palpable, and it was clear how much of an impact these weekends have on the participants.

The Ulpana Shabbaton was uplifting in its own way. The girls took charge, ensuring everything was organized beautifully, from rooms to schedules to clean-up. Their excitement in hosting their parents in their dormitory rooms was palpable. Throughout

May the Torah learned in this
Torah Tidbits be לעילוי נשמת
יהודה אריה בן עזרא הלוי ז"ל
Leopold Edelstein Halevi ז"ל
on his 30th yahrzeit
ז' ניסן תשנ"ה
We miss you very much
The Rosner, Edelstein and Sokoloff families

Shabbat, parents shared *Divrei Torah* reflecting their pride in the school and their daughters.

Two highlights stood out for me. One was seeing Anglo parents who made aliyah from Toronto, Montreal, Florida, New York, New Jersey, and more. Some arrived two years ago, others sixteen years ago. Watching their children seamlessly switch between English with their parents and Hebrew with their friends showed the next generation's integration into Israeli society. Many of them told me how much they enjoy Torah Tidbits, which is always nice to hear.

Some parents spoke to me about the importance of Camp Dror to their children's development. They had story after story about how Camp Dror empowers so many talented youngsters and helps them become leaders. One father shared how, during COVID, his son learned to be a *ba'al koreh* and later, at Camp Dror, gained the confidence to teach Bar Mitzvah boys. This boy took personal growth and gave it back to the *Klal*.

My daughter's teacher invited me to speak at a Shabbat panel, and the topic happened to be one I have been thinking about a great deal recently: the balance between individuality versus the collective, *prat* and *klal*. I shared stories of this dynamic at the OU and how it exists in every family. I spoke about how, as a teenager, I expanded from being



Ulpanat HaRav Baharan Anglo Students and Family Members



OU Israel Teen Center Shabbaton

just Avi Berman to Avi and Penina Berman, and then from just us to being parents, and eventually grandparents. With each stage, our *Prat* grew. Yet I also spoke about when the Vancouver community invited us to come to run NCSY there. This was not an easy decision. It meant leaving family behind and missing smachot. In Vancouver itself, I had to balance my dedication to the community with my role as a father. I spent Fridays calling

**Condolences to
Jonathan & Debbie Inker and family
on the passing of his mother**

Harriet א"ח

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

teenagers to wish them Shabbat Shalom, invited them for meals, and devoted countless hours to NCSY. It was a constant balancing act of my family *prat* and the *klal* that needed my attention at many times.

This theme played out live during the Shabbaton. One father scheduled to be on the panel was called to the army on Shabbat. He knew he was leaving behind his daughter and wife on a special weekend but donned his uniform and left, understanding the balance of *Klal* and *Prat*.

These are the dilemmas we face as Jews. We raise families while a war is happening. We go into battle to protect our brothers and sisters. We learn Torah for their success, enhance our davening for their safety, and dedicate our time and resources to strengthen Am Yisrael. It is this constant interplay of our personal lives and national mission that defines us.

This was a beautiful way to end Adar and enter Nisan, a time to reflect on *Prat* and *Klal*. May we enter Sefer Vayikra and Pesach with a deeper understanding of who we are as individuals and the profound impact we have had, and will continue to have, on the greater whole.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



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**Mazal Tov to
Hadassah & Steve Jacob
and family on the marriage of
their grandson**

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