



# Mesorah Mag

*The Weekly Magazine of the Orthodox Community at Rutgers Hillel*

## Gobble Gobble!

*“Mesorah Mag is my favorite newspaper.”*  
*Andrew Getraer, Executive Director of Rutgers Hillel*

### Women are People, Too!

*by Martelle Spiwak*

I’ve noticed that people have a tendency to use the word “people” to refer to a specific gender. In particular, this often happens (usually by men, but occasionally by women as well) when referring to a minyan (quorum for prayer). Now, I would not have an issue with this in reference to a Conservative or Reform minyan; however, it bothers me greatly when referring to an Orthodox minyan, in which women are not counted. I ask everyone to pay more attention to this. I mean, I am a person, am I not? If I’m not, please let me know-- and tell me what I am!

This week’s parsha, Parshat Chayei Sarah, begins with the words “Vayihyu Chayei Sarah . . .” “And the life of Sarah was 100 years and 20 years and 7 years; the years of the life of Sarah. (23:1)” The parsha mentions Sarah’s death. The first verse is even a bit repetitive – it says her name twice. Since the Torah is known for not using extraneous words, obviously Sarah was important. This really is something everyone should be realizing at this point in history. Women are given all of the same rights as men in the secular world. Now, I am not arguing against the differentiation between men and women in the Orthodox Jewish world, I am only protesting the choice of words used when a gender distinction is important. When counting for a minyan, if there are 3 men and 1 woman there, take caution to say that there are “three men here” or “three guys here” and NOT “there are three people here.” The last wording basically states that you believe only “men” are “people.” Since in the secular world, women are given equal rights, they are legally considered people, and can (and will!)

get offended when they are told they are not people. Since it is important to be politically correct for many things, please practice your political correctness and when a differentiation between the genders is needed, do not use the word people to signify a single gender.



### In this issue . . .

Dvar Torah: Pages 1, 2  
 Parshah Points: Page 3  
 Jewish Joke: Page 3  
 Calendar: Page 4

### Schedule of Times

Shabbat Morning:  
 9:30 am  
 S”Z Kriat Shma: 9:15 am  
 Lunch @ Weiss’:  
 Leaving Hillel @ 12:30  
 Mincha: 4:20 pm  
 Shabbat ends: 5:21 pm

### Weekdays

Shacharit & Breakfast:  
 8:15 am  
 Rambam Shiur  
 following breakfast  
 Mincha/Ma’ariv:  
 4:20 pm

### Next Friday

Candlelighting: 4:16 pm  
 Friday Evening  
 Prayers: N/A



## Parshah Points

*by Miriam Leichtman*

- Sarah passes away
- Abraham buys the Cave of Machpelah from Efron and buries Sarah there
- Abraham sends his servant Eliezer to Aram to find a wife for Isaac
- Eliezer sets forth conditions for a wife for Isaac, which Rebecca immediately fulfills
- Eliezer offers Rebecca and her family many gifts in exchange for taking her back to Canaan to marry Isaac
- Rebecca meets Isaac and they get married
- Abraham marries Keturah and has more children



## Lessons of Eliezer

*by Sam Weiner*

There are two important questions that jump out of this week's parshah, Chayei Sarah, with regard to Eliezer. The first is simple: Why didn't Abraham go out to search for Isaac's bride? Surely after the Akeidah, the only other "test" facing Abraham is finding his son a wife. Abraham certainly isn't too old (he will remarry and have more children) and it seems as though he shirked the major responsibility of securing the mother for the people who would inherit all God had promised. The second question is similarly striking: If Eliezer is important enough to Abraham to be sent out on this crucial mission, why is his name not mentioned? Throughout the entire telling of this story, he is referred to as "eved Avraham" ("the servant of Abraham"). Without prior identification, I would expect the text to name him, even just once.

The answers to both of these questions are just as simple as the questions themselves and I will attempt to answer them in reverse order. By describing Eliezer as "the servant of Abraham," the Torah is giving him the highest of praises. Eliezer fully saw himself as Abraham's right-hand-man and to give him any other name would be to dishonor the way he understood himself and his role in the development of the Jewish people. His association with Abraham is all that is necessary to do justice to his presence. The answer to the first question expresses the depth of the bond between Abraham and Eliezer. Eliezer, in his desire to serve and promote Abraham's vision and service to God, became an extension of Abraham himself. By sending Eliezer, Abraham was really sending himself.

We cannot all be the leader all the time. Eliezer, the ultimate team player, represents all of our opportunities to help each other achieve wonderful goals. Let us learn all we can from Eliezer's example of how to support and uphold those closest to us.

In honor of the yahrzeit of my grandfather, "Papa" Bernie Schecter, HaRav Baruch ben Meir Tzvi zt"l



## A Few Good Words

*by Yael Novick*

Immediately after Abraham seals the deal with Efron on Ma'arat Hamachpela in this week's Parsha, he decides it is time to find a wife for his son Isaac. Abraham summons his trustworthy servant Eliezer and makes him take an oath, by putting a hand under his thigh, that he will



go out of town to find a suitable, non-Canaanite bride for Isaac. There are two general categories of promises: a neder and a shevuah. A neder is a vow that impacts and transforms an object; e.g. saying "I will not eat that food" makes that food forbidden. A shevuah is an oath relating to the subject, not the object: Eliezer's shevuah to Abraham was binding on himself. But how is it that a few words can obligate man to the extent that he becomes bound to honor his word, as the case of Eliezer and Abraham?

We learn in Devarim, 23:24, "What your lips have uttered you must keep," signifying that the Torah does not take speech lightly. The very creation of the world came about through speech! Speech is the connection between the body and soul; it is what sets humans apart from every other creature and defines humanity. It is speech that reveals who a person is, essential for relationships with other humans and with G-d. Because speech emanates from and relates to the soul, it is naturally holy!

Serving God is done through thought, speech and action. The words that come out of our mouths are an outward expression of our inner essence and hold a great power. Speech is such a holy and powerful privilege that many of us do not think twice about. Through speech, we have the power to praise God and our peers. But it also comes with the ability to profane God's name or speak Lashon Hara (evil speech) of our friends. May we all be conscious of the magnitude of our words, and only use our speech for good!

Ideas taken from Rabbi Osher Chaim on Torah.org

## Mesorah Mag

**Editor - in -Chief:**

Miriam Leichtman

**Layout Editor:**

Jeff Rabinowitz

**Calendar Editor:**

Talia Friedman

**Contributing Writers:**

Martelle Spiewak, Sam  
Weiner, Yael Novick

Want to write for us?  
Sign up after Havdalah in  
the Hillel lobby.

You can reach us at:  
[Mesorahmag@gmail.com](mailto:Mesorahmag@gmail.com)

## Jewish Joke

Maurice and Sarah were getting old and Maurice felt his wife was losing her hearing. He decided to stage a test. One day, as Sarah read the paper, he stood a bit behind her chair and said, in a conversational voice, "Can you hear me?" Silence.

He moved closer. "Can you hear me?" Still silence.

Finally, he moved directly behind her chair and bent over, just inches from her ear "Can you hear me?"

Sarah replied "For the third time, Maurice, Yes I can!"



# Mesorah Calendar

Sunday	The People of Abraham Against Hunger -- 8 am @ Muslim Foundation Inc. Mosque, 47 Cedar Grove Ln Turkey Bowl -- 7 pm @ Hillel
Monday	What's Brewin' -- 9:30 @ ABP
Tuesday	Men's Shiur w/ R' Lewis -- 7:30 @ location TBA Women's Shiur w/ Miri Cohen -- 9 pm @ location TBA
Wednesday	Shiur & Beer -- 9:30 pm @ TBA
Thursday	Thanksgiving -- 12:00 am @ the United States of America

## Bonus Joke

Two beggars are sitting on the pavement in Ireland. One is holding a large Cross and the other a large Star of David. Both are holding hats to collect contributions. As people walk by, they lift their noses at the guy holding the Star of David but drop money in the other guy's hat. Soon one hat is nearly full whilst the other hat is empty.

A priest watches and then approaches the men. He turns to the guy with the Star of David and says, "Don't you realize that this is a Christian country? You'll never get any contributions in this country holding a Star of David."

The guy holding the Star of David then turns to the guy holding the Cross and says, "Chaim, look who's trying to teach us Marketing."

Do you want the eruv to be UP?  
We really could use at least two more people to help check - it won't take more than 20 minutes each week! Contact Andrew Cohen or Sam Kaplan if you want to make sure you and everyone else can carry on Shabbat.

There are no minyanim at Hillel over Thanksgiving Weekend.  
See you in two weeks!

Get psyched for the annual Turkey Bowl! Gobble Gobble up some Turkey with your friends from Mesorah !  
(No, seriously, tons of food. Be there.)

This weekend is the Jewish-Muslim Weekend of Twinning, go to the Hillel website for more information on what's happening!

Interested in Shiur and Beer? Talk to Dan Rosenblum to see how you can help out.

