Shabbos Chizzuk

Inspirational & Interactive Divrei Torah for the Shabbos Table BS'D

| <u>City</u> | <u>Candle-Lighting</u> | <u>Shabbos Ends</u> |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Jerusalem | 4:02 PM | 5:20 PM |
| Los Angeles | 4:34 PM | 5:31 PM |
| Seattle | 4:19 PM | 5:25 PM |
| New York City | 4:23 PM | 5:23 PM |
| Chicago | 4:13 PM | 5:16 PM |
| London | 3:59 PM | 5:09 PM |

Parshas Vayeira

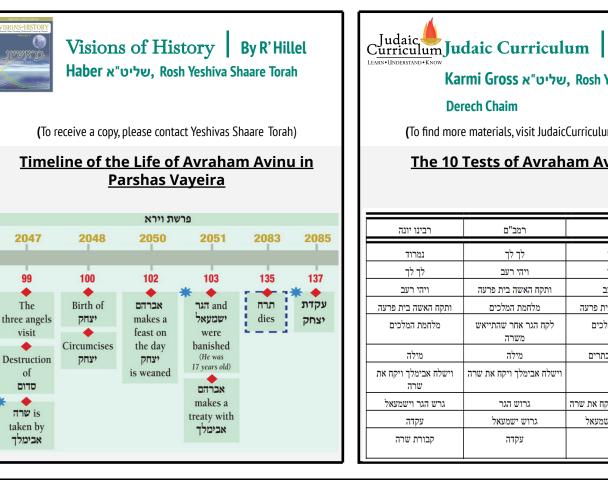
Parsha Summary

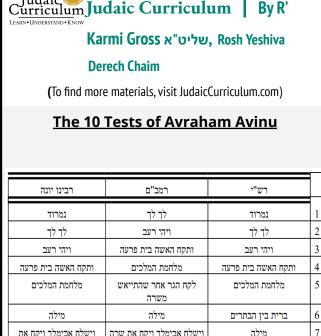
- אַלָיו Hashem reveals Himself and visits Avraham Avinu three days after his circumcision.
- אַיָרָץ לקָרָאָתָם Avraham runs to prepare a meal and show hospitality for three approaching guests who were really angels disguised as men. They came to inform Avraham and Sarah that they will give birth to a son in one year.
- אַבְרָהָם Avraham comes forward and beseeches Hashem to save the city of Sodom. Two of the three angels which visited Avraham came to save Lot and his family from the misfortunate city.
- וויסע משָׁם אַבְרָהָם Avraham journeys to Gerar. In order to protect himself, Avraham says of Sarah that she is his sister. Sarah was taken by the Philistine king Avimelech who was then warned by Hashem in a dream that he will be punished by death unless he returns her to her husband.
- אָת־שָׂרָה Hashem remembers Sarah, she conceives and gives birth to Yitzchak.
- אָת־קוֹל הַנַּעַר Sarah's Egyptian maidservant Hagar and son, Yishmael are expelled from Avraham's home. When wandering in the desert, Hashem hears the cries of the Yishmael and reveals a well to his mother.
- **נְסָה אֶת־אַבְרָהָם** נְסָה אֶת־אַבְרָהָם Avraham is given the 10th and final test from Hashem to offer his son, Yitzchak, as an offering on the mountain of Moriah. A voice from heaven calls to stop him and a ram is offered in his place.



Sefer HaChinuch Mitzvah Count

However, we are taught by our Sages, that of all the mitzvos in the Torah, *"Talmud Torah K'neged Kulam"* – the study of Torah is equivalent to all the other mitzvos. The *Vilna Goan (Shenos Eliyahu)* explains that each and every word of Torah studied is considered its own separate mitzvah with Divine reward, unlike other mitzvos where we only receive one Divine reward for each act of mitzvah performed.





| נמרוד | לך לך | נמרוד |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| לך לך | ויהי רעב | לך לך |
| ויהי רעב | ותקח האשה בית פרעה | ויהי רעב |
| ותקח האשה בית פרעה | מלחמת המלכים | ותקח האשה בית פרעה |
| מלחמת המלכים | לקח הגר אחר שהתייאש משרה | מלחמת המלכים |
| מילה | מילה | ברית בין הבתרים |
| וישלח אבימלך ויקח את שרה | וישלח אבימלך ויקח את שרה | מילה |
| גרש הגר וישמעאל | גרוש הגר | וישלח אבימלך ויקח את שרה |
| עקדה | גרוש ישמעאל | גרוש הגר וישמעאל |
| קבורת שרה | עקדה | עקדה |

| Test your family at the Shabbos table with these trivia questions | (|
|---|---|
| on the Parsha! | |

D What does "Vayeira" mean?

Parsha Trivia

A And He (Hashem) appeared

- On which day after Avraham's bris milah did Hashem visit? D
- 3rd day Α

Q

- D What did Avraham and Sarah prepare for their guests?
- Α Butter, cream, cakes of fine flour, and cow tongue with mustard
- What are the names of the 3 angels that came to Avraham and what was each of their О roles?
- А 1) Michael: informed Avraham and Sarah that they will have a son; 2) Gavriel: overturned Sodom; 3) Raphael: healed Avraham and saved Lot
- According to the Midrash, on which holiday did the angels visit Avraham?

А Pesach

What does the name "Yitzchak" mean? D

A Laughter



Dvar Torah by. Aharon Mikail

THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION: How did Avraham Avinu know that *Hachnasas Orchim* (showing hospitality to

guests) is greater than receiving the Divine Presence?

It's All About Love!

ַוַיּאמַר ד׳ אָם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אַל־נָא תַעֲבר מֵעַל עַבְדֶךָ

And he (Avraham) said, "My Lord, if I find favor in Your eyes now, please pass not away from Your servant" (Bereishis 18:3).

In this week's Parsha, Hashem visits and reveals Himself to Avraham Avinu on the third day after his bris milah. When Avraham notices three men approaching him from the desert, he excuses himself and asks permission to defer his intimate one-on-one interaction with Hashem to show hospitality and serve a lavish meal to these incoming foreign guests. From this famous scene, *Chazal* derive the lesson, "גְּדוֹלָה הַכְנָסַת אוֹרְחֵין מֵהַקְבָלַת פּגֵי שְׁכִינָה" ("Hospitality toward guests is greater than receiving the Divine Presence").¹

One might raise the question, how did Avraham Avinu know this law? How did he know that serving food to mere strangers is a higher spiritual endeavor than a one-on-one meeting with Hashem, the King of the entire world?

R' Yaakov Shimshon of Shepetovka zt"l says that Avraham Avinu learned this halacha from the first verse in the Parsha as Rashi comments, on that day Hashem caused the weather to be so hot in order that Avraham shouldn't be troubled by travelers. However, when Avraham saw travelers approaching, he inferred that they must have been sent by G-d, and therefore, he felt obligated to accept them.

The *Nesivos Shalom*² presents us with another beautiful reason. He writes that the purpose of creating the entire world and its perpetuation generation after generation is only for the sake of and through the means of the attribute of love and kindness.³ He adds, love is the foundation of the world and the Torah, and is the ultimate Will of G-d. Therefore, Avraham Avinu who independently discovered G-d within nature, understood that Hashem created the world with love and kindness and the only way to repair the world is with the same means.⁴ When we spread love, Hashem showers love upon us. Loving kindness is the highest and greatest of all levels of serving Hashem and the mitzvah of loving Hashem is the greatest of all Mitzvos, for the ultimate purpose of every commandment is only to come to love G-d and to cleave to Him. One who serves Hashem out of love goes over and above the basic letter of the law and every one of their actions is only to fulfill G-d's Will.

The Nesivos Shalom offers a second reason. As Hashem commanded Avraham, "Walk before Me and be wholehearted" (Bereishis 17:1), so too, Avraham asks Hashem, "Please don't pass away from me" (Bereishis 18:3). In other words, Avraham was really asking Hashem to stay with him and always be with him. Each and every action that Avraham did was only to come closer and closer to Hashem.

Avraham Avinu established in the Jewish people the attribute of loving kindness, the love of Hashem, and the love of Hashem's creations. Even without knowing his guests, Avraham knew that they were G-d's children and thus, he loved them and was able to perform kindness for them.

1 Shabbos 127A

פרשת וירא, עולם חסד יבנה 2

3 As the verse in Tehillim (89:3) "כָּי־אָמָרָתִי **עוֹלָם חֶסָד יִבְּגָה** שָׁמַיִם ו תָּכָן אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָהָם". Similarly, Rebbe Akiva (Yerushalmi Nedarim 89:4), "To love your neighbor as yourself is the fundamental principle of the Torah"

4 "One moment of repentance out of love is worth more than 100 fasts" (Yesod V'Shoresh HaAvodah Section 3, Chapter 5, 14)

Challenge: Think of one person who you think could benefit from an act of kindness. What can you do to help them or make them happy?



A SHORT IDEA From the Malbim

Like The Stars In The Sky And The Sand By The Seashore

ָכִּי־בָרֶךְ אֲבָרֶכְךָ וְהַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכַחוֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל־שְׂפַת הַיָּם וְיִרַשׁ זַרְעֶךָ אֶת שַׁעַר איְבָיו:

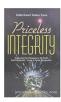
I will surely bestow My blessing upon you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands on the seashore; and your descendants shall seize the gates of their foes

(Bereishis 22:17).

The *Malbim* explains that the duplication and extra emphasis (בָרֶךְ אֲבָרֶכְךָ) of this blessing Hashem gives Avraham Avinu after the *Akeida* signifies the permanence of the blessing and that at all times, Hashem will continuously bestow upon Avraham and his descendants more blessings.

Additionally, the stars, which are countless and massive, represent the bountiful and great offspring Avraham will have. He is promised that his children will possess dignity and importance.

The sands of the sea, in addition to their abundance, also possess the strength to outlive harsh waves which crash on them by the shore. So too, the Jewish people possess the strength to always endure despite the surrounding conflicting nations.



Priceless Integrity: Exploring the Parameters of Truth and Falsehood From a Torah Perspective by. R' Daniel Travis שליט"א author *Praying with Joy* and Rosh Kollel

Toras Chaim, Jerusalem

Talk Is Cheap

וּאָקְחָה פַת־לֶחֶם וְסַעֲדוּ לִבְּכֶם...וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רָץ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקָח בֶּן־בָּקָר רַךָ וָטוֹב

(Avraham said,) Please, take some bread...and Avraham ran to the herd and fetched a tender and good calf (Bereishis 18:5,7).

We must train ourselves to be ever conscious of human sensitivities. It is not always easy to be a guest. Human nature is such that no one wants to feel that he is a burden, nor do people like to accept handouts. A host may ease the discomfort of his guest by speaking of his hospitality in moderate terms. Telling a guest to take "a little something" can quell the pangs of the guest's conscience, and enable him to accept the kindness of his host graciously.

Taking all this into consideration, how can we justify the words Avraham spoke to his guests? While he did display a high level of sensitivity to his guests, was this not done at the expense of truth? He spoke to them of bread, and then served them fine meat and other delicacies. With the best of intentions, it seems that Avraham promised them one thing and then delivered something else entirely.

People who keep their promises small may be foregoing complete factual integrity in the short term, but in the long run such a practice actually safeguards the truth. People cannot always live up to the grand promises they make. In order to ensure that one's words are not proven false with the passage of time, one should always be wary of making expansive promises. Those who make a habit of flaunting their good intentions risk a great deal. Through inflated promises a person accustomed himself to pretentiousness, which grows within him until it becomes a part of his personality.¹ On the other hand, the truly humble make others their primary concern, an intent which is expressed in acts, rather than speech.² Therefore our Sages tell us that the righteous say little and do much.³ Once a young newly wed couple visited a foreign country. They were the guests of the chief Rav of that country. As they were about to leave, the Rebbetzin offered to give them "a little something" for the road. Since it was difficult to get kosher food in that country the young couple graciously accepted. In the blink of an eye, the Rebbetzin had filled two very large bags with a variety of items, providing them with enough food for the rest of their travels.⁴

Upon closer examination, Avraham's words reveal that he did not actually say anything that could be construed as false. He never told his guests that he would give them humble portions to eat. He told them only to take some bread – and then he served them a feast. His words indicated that he was offering his guests the option of helping themselves to simple foods, although he gave them a wide variety from which to choose.⁵

4 Story that happened to the author.

¹ Maharal on Avos 1:15

² Bigdei Shash of Rav Tzvi Dov Kahonowitz, commenting on Midrash Tanchuma, Vayera 4.

³ Bava Metzia 87a

^{5.} Sefer Chasidim 1112



Parenting and Parashah by. R' Yisroel Boruch Sufrin שליט"א

One Size Does Not Fit All

The Torah describes the people of Sedom as "evil and wicked." The *Yalkut Shimoni (remez 70)* gives an example of what made them evil and wicked from a midrashic lens. The residents of Sedom set up the guest's bed using a one-size-fits-all system. If the guest was taller than the bed, they would amputate the person's feet, and if the person was shorter than the bed, they stretched him or her to match the size of the bed. What message does this midrash teach through this example?

The people of Sedom demanded that others bend to their expectations. Those who did so were deemed acceptable. Those who did not were forced to conform even at the cost of their lives. When the Torah demands empathy and compassion toward others, it asks us to do the exact opposite of the Sodomite people. Torah expects us to personalize and individualize when it comes to helping others.

This is why halacha (Jewish law) teaches that the amount a person donates to the poor should be dependent upon each poor person's needs. If the person in need was used to a higher standard of living before falling on hard times, the requirement is to give him or her more than a person would give to someone who generally lives on less. We believe that compassion requires individualization. When teaching our children the art of giving and caring for others, let's teach them how to see the world through the recipient's lens. One size does not fit all when it comes to taking care of others!

For Discussion: Think of someone who looks or acts different from you. What can you do to make that person feel comfortable in your presence? What would you add to your Shabbat meal for that person to feel at home? What if that person is allergic to your favorite Shabbat food? What would you do then?



Kindness with Love & Honor In honor of *Parshas Vayeira*, which emphasizes the themes of *hachnasas orchim* and *chessed*, we interviewed Yossi Segelman, Executive Director of OBKLA – Our Big Kitchen Los Angeles!

Question: How did your incredibly impactful Chessed organization get started?

Yossi Segelman: Firstly, there's an original Our Big Kitchen located in Sydney, Australia which I'm delighted to have been able to also be one of the founding directors and members of. It was started by Rabbi Dr. Dovid and Laya Slavin in their home in 2005. Laya was originally a hairdresser specializing in wigs and somehow got involved in supplying wigs and assisting those who were unfortunately undergoing cancer treatment, *Rachmana litzlan*. While she was looking after their wigs, she would speak with them and over time, she had eventually discovered that many of them were not coping well. She started taking meals from her own fridge that she had prepared for her family and gave it to her clients. After doing that for a while, she and her husband decided to gather volunteers and prepare meals at a more frequent basis until they grew out of their home into a couple thousand square-foot facility in Sydney. Since then, hundreds of thousands of meals have been prepared a year. Last year, there were about 250,000 meals that were prepared by thousands of volunteers and distributed to about 35 charity partners across the entire community. It is a great Kiddush Hashem and Chessed opportunity from the heart of the Jewish community. They have also got involved in disaster response and other causes.

My family and I moved to Los Angeles about 10 years ago from Sydney and we've been wanting to take on this endeavor for a while. During covid, we thought we would take that leap and we got started in our garage. My son had a healthy snack food subscription box business where people would pay by subscription per month and get the latest gluten-free kosher snacks. There happened to be a huge trade show in San Francisco and it was unfortunately canceled because of covid. Him, along with his vendors, donated their products and also got others to donate their products to Our Big Kitchen which was already a registered non-profit organization with the intent of distributing food to those who needed it. Our garage became absolutely full of these healthy snacks, so we got some volunteers to help pack boxes and deliver them to many of the emergency services such as: fire departments, nurses, doctors, and national guards.

Once we had a kitchen available in August 2020, which was very kindly given by Lieders La Brea, we brought our first group to prepare food. We prepared sandwiches for about a dozen people, and by the time the year 2022 came about, we had 1,000 volunteers on our list and about 15,000 meals made within 12 months. We were bursting out of that location, so the Feder Family Foundation very generously gave us the ability to get us into the premises we have today on the corner of Pico Blvd. and Bedford St., which is about a 4,500 square-foot facility and called "Our Big Kitchen Margeret Feder," named after Margeret Feder *z*"l. Margaret Feder *z*"l was an Auschwitz survivor and had worked in the kitchen in Auschwitz. She wouldn't eat anything that she could have eaten for 16 hours, but smuggled out some scraps in her clothes to help herself, her sister, and a number of others survive. She then moved to Israel, South America, and then Beverly Hills. She established a family and became a tremendous supporter of institutions especially those focused on education and food insecurity.

Since we've moved into our new facility in June 2022, we've had almost 3,000 volunteers and have prepared tens of thousands of meals. Thank God, it's been a tremendous effort from the community and that's exactly why we call it "Our Big Kitchen" because it's a collective effort. We are now hosting multiple sessions a week with about 75 people per session.

<u>Question</u>: R' Avraham Pam zt"I asks, why did Avraham Avinu need to add mustard to his guests' dish? And he answers that Avraham Avinu understood that the small details are important and he also understood the needs of others. The Lubavitcher Rebbe zt"l also said that sensitivity is the main part of hospitality. I've noticed that everything you do at OBKLA is honorable, from the location, to the packaging, the quality of food, and hosting chefs. Why is it important to go the extra mile and go over and above in everything you do?

Yossi Segelman: One of our cornerstone values is dignity and honor, both for the recipients and the participants. From when you walk into the facility, you are greeted with a smile, you are thanked for coming, the place is clean and bright, it's welcoming, music is playing, and it's joyous. The reason for that is to create a meaningful volunteering experience. The purpose here is to bring people together to help prepare beautifully packaged food for the people who need it most, to make people more aware, to teach that every person counts and that there are resources and people that really care about others. I believe that the more you give, the more you get. When you give with the right intent, with dignity and with love, it really flows into everything you do. This is Avodas Hashem. Just like prayer and learning, there's *gemillus chassidim*. When you do it with full energy and simcha, it flows through everything else and brings together the Torah and Tefillah that you did and makes the world a brighter place.

To watch or listen to the full interview, visit our channel Hashem Loves U or scan the QR Code below:





Hilchos Shabbos by. R' Mordechai Lebhar שליט"א author *Magen Avot,* Rosh Kollel **Link Kollel Los Angeles**

Redacted by Dr. Emile Amzallag

What kind of bread should be used on Shabbat?

The Shulchan Aruch (O.H. 274:1) writes that one should recite the blessing of hamotzi for the Shabbat meal over two whole loaves of bread. One should hold them both in one's hands and then break off from the bottom loaf to eat and distribute to those present. The requirement for two loaves, known as Lechem Mishne, is derived from the extra portion of Manna that Bnei Yisrael received on Shabbat when they were in the desert.

A guestion arises as to whether *Lechem Mishne* applies to foods that are *mezonot*. On one hand, if someone has a sufficient quantity of certain *mezonot* foods, then it has the status of bread, and therefore it would seem that *Lechem Mishne* would apply. On the other hand, in its present state, the mezonot is not actually bread and so Lechem Mishne might not apply. The Kaf Hahaim (K.H., O.H., 274:14) rules that Lechem Mishne does apply to mezonot. Thus, if one wished to have Kiddush at synagogue with some *mezonot*, for example, one could take two pieces of bourekas or two danishes, and recite the blessing of *mezonot* and also fulfill the Mitzvah of *Lechem Mishne*. Rabbi Ovadia Yosef (Hazon Ovadia, vol. II, pg. 191), argues and says that if one is not actually reciting the blessing of hamotzi, then there is no Mitzvah of Lechem Mishne. Nevertheless, he continues, if it means he may lose out on Lechem Mishne, one may recite hamotzi even over two slices or incomplete loaves of bread.

In certain cases, one only has one loaf of bread and the only other loaves one has are frozen. Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul (Or Lezion, vol II, ch. 21, § 2) categorically permits the use of a frozen loaf since it has the status of bread and even though it is frozen in its current state, it can eventually thaw. Furthermore, if one is careful to only eat bread that is Yashan (made from wheat that took root before the 16th of Nissan of a particular year), then it is not permitted to use loaves that are not Yashan. However, if one is unsure whether the bread is Yashan or not, Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul (ibid., vol. I) says one would be permitted to consume it and all the more so on Shabbat when there is a special requirement to eat bread and of Lechem Mishne.

If one finds oneself in a situation in which one has a piece of bread for hamotzi that is less than a Kezayit, the Siddur Bet Menuha (pg. 51), which was commonly used in Morocco says one fulfills one's obligation with such a piece. On the other hand, Rabbi Haim Palagi (Kaf Hahaim, § 36:44), the Kaf Haim (ibid:8), and Rabbi Binyamin Pontrimoli (Petah Hadevir, § 6) disagree and say one would not fulfill one's obligation.

<u>Summary</u>: One should recite *hamotzi* on Shabbat over two whole loaves of bread. If one will be eating mezonot instead, there is no Mitzvah of Lechem Mishne. One may use a frozen loaf of bread if needed to complete Lechem Mishne.



Stories of Tzadikim | From R' Moshe Zelig Pliskin שליט"א (Seen on emunadaily.com)

<u>Hachnasas Orchim</u>

R' Chaim Ozer Grodzenski zt"l hosted a guest during Chag HaSukkos. At mealtime, R' Chaim Ozer went outside to his Sukkah, but then due to his ill health and the hardship he experienced in the cold weather, he was not obligated to eat there. However, his guest, who was not troubled by the weather, still felt he was obligated to eat in the Sukkah.

A few minutes later, R' Chaim Ozer joined his guest in the Sukkah to eat the meal. The guest was surprised to see him and asked R' Chaim why he had changed his mind.

R' Chaim replied, "Suffering does not free one from the mitzvah of entertaining guests."



A woman came to the door of R' Moshe Feinstein ztl"s home and asked to speak with the Rosh Yeshiva. The person who answered the door explained that R' Moshe was extremely busy, but the woman was not quick to give up. She explained that she had just received a letter from her sister in Russia, and the letter was written in Russian which she couldn't read. She wanted R' Moshe to translate the letter for her. The man who answered the door was shocked and said, "The Rosh Yeshiva cannot be bothered with such things," he explained to her.

The woman then explained, "What do you mean?! He has been translating my letter for twenty years!"



Scenes for the Soul by. Ami Adler

In his blog, "Scenes for the Soul," (<u>https://scenesforthesoul.com/blog</u>) Ami shares a photo he has taken, along with some background details and a spiritual message that we can apply in our daily lives.



Milkyway near Goblin Valley State Park, Utah

The Background: This shot was taken late at night near Goblin Valley in Utah. It was unbelievable just how many stars were visible in the night sky, including large portions of the Milky Way. Compared to the small number of stars we see in Los Angeles, it was quite breathtaking.

The Message: It is eye-opening to recognize that the stars that are visible in this image are always there in the sky above us – but are only visible in very remote areas. I think this is an important lesson in what lies beneath the surface of each person. There is so much about others that is present, but we don't see, and so much about ourselves that others may not see. This can be true in terms of hidden pain or struggle – and so we must be sensitive and understanding to those that we interact with. It is also true in terms of internal growth and aspirations. How many times have we decided in our own minds to be better or to start the day with a new attitude – only to find that we can't put the good intentions into actions. Sometimes this is a result of the weakening of our will or our strength, but other times, we fail to follow through as a result of the expectations of others or the boxes that others have put us in. Let us try and see others - as well as ourselves - as full of points of light ready to shine forth – if we just give them the space...



Zemiros Birchos Habanim By. Simcha Leiner (Ohad)

Before Shabbos, scan the QR-Code below to listen and prepare this week's song for the Shabbos table!

<u>Lyrics</u>



Vihi ratzon milifnei Avinu Shebashomaim, sheyitein belibcha ahavaso veyiraso. Vesiyeh yiras Hashem al panecha, kol yemei yemei chayeicha (x2)

Veyitein lecha banim, banim uvanos Tzadikim veTzadikos osgim baTorah ubaMitzvot (x2)



 Super Hero
 Q) What do you call a superhero who likes to cook?

 A) Souper-man!

BeesQ) How do bees let guests into their apartment building?
A) They *buzz* them in

 Knock, Knock Knock, knock. Who's there? You. You who? Yoo-hoo! Anybody home?



Reader Submissions

We are super excited to announce the newest addition to the *Shabbos Chizzuk* Newsletter! We welcome and would love to include your Divrei Torah, art, stories, jokes, or any other idea you may have!

This Week's Challenge

Submit a Dvar Torah, art, story, or joke, and we will send you a free Hashem Loves U wristband of your choice! Please submit entries to info@HashemlovesU.com.



Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, beautiful, happy, uplifting, and restful Shabbos Kodesh!

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