

# THE Kibbitzer

Issue 36



**I bought a loaf of bread but returned it to the store because it was overbaked. It was a Mekach Toast.**

*You get it? Mekach Taot is a faulty sale. Toast. Add an 's'.*

## RABBI ANSWERS HIS PUPILS

**D**ear Rabbi. I've been working on my Hebrew, so that I am better equipped for shul. However, now my rabbi is using these English words I don't understand. Can you tell me what English I should be studying for the rabbi's sermon?

My Dear Pupil. I have no idea when rabbis started using preShakespearean English. Today, I will empathize with you and share some of my experiences of times I had no idea what the rabbi was talking about.

•*A Deluge* At my Bar Mitzvah, the rabbi gave a sermon about a deluge and I was confused. My whole life, I learned about Noah and a flood, 'mabool,' and the rabbi was going off on some kind of water park ride sounding thing. People later told me that the deluge was the flood, and I wondered why the rabbi didn't just say that. My British friend was applauding the brilliant use of the language. I was stuck.

•*Childhood of Not Understanding* The same rabbi sprung a word on me. He said, 'The synagogue is going to need you for a quorum.' No idea what quorum means. I thought I was being punished. What did I do to deserve for

a group of ten men to give me a quorum? I protested, and then the rabbi pulled out what he called 'phylacteries.' I was confused. Growing up, I never knew what phylacteries were. I had an idea of what Tefillin were. It was at that point that I requested from my rabbi, 'Please translate the English back into Hebrew, so that I can understand.'

•*The Exegesis* The rabbi began with his 'Exegesis from Leviticus from the Pentateuch.' I didn't even understand the title of that speech.

**Advice For My Rabbinic Colleagues** Start translating the English back to Hebrew so your congregants and I can understand. I was also poorly educated. To help you, here is a list:

•*List of Words I Don't Understand* Legumes, beadle, sexton, firmament, countenance, quorum, tabernacle, imprecation, benediction, exegesis, Pentateuch, phylacteries, tassels, deluge, invoke, Ecclesiastes, penitent.

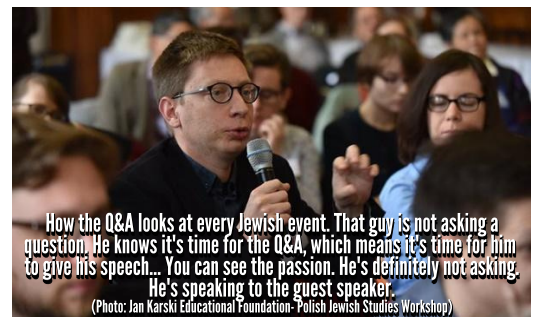
•*List of Words I Do Understand* Beans and peas, shul helper, heaven, face, Minyin, Sukkah, curse, blessing, sermon, Torah, Tefillin, Tzitzit, flood, call, Kohelet, staring into the sun.

## SERMON OF REBUKE- VAYICHI

**S**habbat Shalom Koolam, Last Parsha in Bereishit... No. We're not finished. We continue reading the Torah after this. It's not a read it once kind of book. You read it again... I know you know the ending... Really. How does it end, Sima?... Thank you Shlomo. Thank you for reading the last few Psukim and interrupting the sermon. You killed it for everybody. Now nobody's going to show up to shul... Because they all know the ending. Shlomo. It's the same reason many of our congregants still haven't seen *Wonder Woman*, Shlomo... You don't say 'The Torah is a good read.' You learn it... We wouldn't have a people if it was 'a read.' You don't know how it ends, because we are still living... Michael. You are part of the Torah. Kimmy. You're part of the Torah. No. Bernie. You're not. You're an annoying father-in-law... (Bereishit 47:28) 'And Yaakov lived in Mitzrayim.' The Torah uses the word 'וַיֵּחַ' - 'lived.' A word used to mean living, life, something that is not felt in our town. With all the deadbeats showing up to shul. I have not seen a smile in a half a year, since the Bat Mitzvah tripped over the Bimah... Does anything positive happen in this congregation... I know we're not in Israel. Sadie. You could've joined us. You skipped out on the last trip... COVID wasn't around then. That's not an excuse... How do you live?... Yaakov was crying for Eretz Yisrael... He cared Mushky. He cared... Men cry too, Mushky... If the back left corner let out a tear every once in a while, they would be happier people... (46:3-4) H' tells

Yaakov- 'Don't fear from going down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there... I will go down with you, and I will also bring you up.' There's no great nation being made in Topeka. We're fighting over the Walmart vs Tom's Hardware & Brooms... H' didn't say He'll make us a great nation in Topeka. No nachis here... I'm on Tom's side, but there's no nachis when your kids can't share a Tonka truck... *Yaakov had to be consoled. He didn't want to leave Israel (Rashi).* Knowing the future is good. Your kids will do something with their lives. They won't go to Kiddish club. Brings happiness... H' tells him, 'I will go down with you.' When there is H' with you, there is meaning. Life. Is H' with us here?... That was rhetorical, Bernie. He is not at the Kiddush club. You can pass on that message to the members of the Kiddush club, drinking schnapps right now, (48:3-5) *Yaakov has strength, so he tells Yosef that Ephraim and Menashe are his children.* He takes credit for Yosef's kids. Phil. You're just a bad father-in-law. You get in the way... Shlomo definitely takes credit for his grandkids... Overbearing. That's what it is. That's why your daughter-in-law hates you. If Michael would bring nachis... Yes. Your Zayde would have strength. He would feel life and take credit for you... I know that would get your mom mad...

*Rivka's Notes on Rabbi Mendelchem's Drasha:* The rabbi said 'deadbeats' and he lost everybody under sixty. When he was asked how it ends, the rabbi started talking about the Nevim for a good twenty-five minutes. Around thirty people walked out of the sermon in protest of the Torah, which they declared is not the reason they come to shul. They were mad that Kiddish wasn't starting soon. Ron walked out real angry, exclaiming, 'I can care less how the Torah ends.' Then he looked at Sima and told her she should've gone to Hebrew school. At Kiddish, Michael told me that he would've been not happy if Sima was in his class. He doesn't like when people ask questions and keep the class going longer. He calls them 'recess killers.'



How the Q&A looks at every Jewish event. That guy is not asking a question. He knows it's time for the Q&A, which means it's time for him to give his speech... You can see the passion. He's definitely not asking. He's speaking to the guest speaker.  
(Photo: Jan Karski Educational Foundation - Polish Jewish Studies Workshop)

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