

This Shabbat is the 108th day (of 383); the 16th Shabbat (of 55) of 5765

וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּדַע אֱלֹהִים: שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵיהֶם

More of the B'Chol Dor VaDor Thing

The Book of B'reishit gave us our first opportunities to learn from the events, trials and tribulations of the lives of the Avot and Imahot and "the Tribes", and to put ourselves into the various situations and imagine what we might have done, if... But the fact is, we are not Avraham or Sara, nor are we Yosef or any of his brothers. We are their descendants and spiritual heirs and we see patterns in our own lives that were shaped by their deeds, but we are not them.

Now we find ourselves at the beginning of the Book of Sh'mot, the first sedra of the rest of the Torah. The giant personalities from this point on are now Moshe Rabeinu and Aharon HaKohein, but there is a big difference between the rest of the Torah and B'reishit. That difference is not measured by comparing Moshe to Avraham Yitzchak, and Yaakov. The difference for us is that the Avot were alone. It was only them. From Sh'mot on, we are there too. Bnei Yisrael. The multitude of the former small family soon to be nation. And with that, the challenge of reliving the events, of putting ourselves into the situations, become much more real, much more possible to do. Certainly, we take note and hopefully internalize Moshe Rabeinu's concern for his fellow Jews, his chivalry with the daughters of Yitro, his humility... and much more. But there are also thousands of "plain" Jews we were enslaved to Par'o and who were confronted with the day to day struggles and challenges.

"They didn't change their language, method of dress, their names." But many did. And those became lost in one way or another in Egypt, to Egypt. What about each of us? When the Hagada "commands" us to relive the experiences of the Exodus, at least on a K'ILU (as if) level, we are also being asked if we are the types of Jews who would have left Egypt, or would we be among the countless Jews who perished during the plague of Darkness - literally and figuratively. Would we call out to G-d; would we rally to Moshe's call; what kind of Jews are we?

Word of the Month



A weekly feature of Torah Tidbits to help clarify practical and conceptual aspects of the Jewish Calendar, thereby better fulfilling the mitzva of HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem...

Aside from being a month, Tevet is also one of the four T'kufot, seasons, of the year - T'kufat Tishrei (officially, the beginning of the fall - autumnal equinox), Tevet (winter solstice), Nisan (vernal equinox), and Tamuz (summer solstice). Actually, the T'kufot do not match up well with the seasons' beginnings because we use an admittedly inaccurate (albeit Traditional) calculation for the T'kufot. Known as the T'kufot of Shmuel, it considers the length of a solar year to be 365¼ days, which was the basis of the Julian calendar, rather than the more accurate calculations of Rav Adda. The only practical use of the T'kufot are the beginning of Tal U'Matar season in Chutz LaAretz (60 days after T'kufat Tishrei), and the once in 28 years Birkat HaChama, on T'kufat Nisan (next one coming IV'H Wed. April 8th, 2009).



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Candle Lighting and Havdala Times
Standard (Winter) Time

Correct for TT 649 • Rabbeinu Tam (I'm) - 6:03pm

4:11pm	Jerusalem	5:26pm
4:30pm	Gush Katif	5:31pm
4:26pm	Raanana	5:27pm
4:26pm	Beit Shemesh	5:27pm
4:25pm	Netanya	5:27pm
4:27pm	Rehovot	5:28pm
4:06pm	Petach Tikva	5:27pm
4:26pm	Modi'in	5:27pm
4:28pm	Be'er Sheva	5:29pm
4:26pm	Gush Etzion	5:27pm
4:25pm	Ginot Shomron	5:26pm
4:11pm	Maale Adumim	5:26pm
4:17pm	Tzfat	5:23pm
4:26pm	K4 & Hevron	5:27pm

Ranges are THU-THU 18-25 Tevet (Dec 30-Jan 6)

Earliest Shacharit - 5:44-5:46am
Sunrise - 6:39-6:40am
Sof Z'man Sh'ma - 9:10-9:12am (8:22-8:24am)
Sof Z'man T'fila - 10:00-10:03am (9:28-9:31am)
Chatzot (halachic noon) - 11:42-11:45am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 12:12-12:15pm
Plag Mincha - 3:42-3:46½pm
Sunset - 4:50-4:55pm (4:45-4:50pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)
The walking-distance public is invited to join the Shabbaton participants for davening and shiurim
See BackPages for details

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Shmot Stats

13th of the 54 sedras; 1st of 11 in Sh'mot
 Written on 215.2 lines in a Sefer Torah; rank: 18th
 7 parshiot; 6 open, 1 closed
 124 p'sukim - 15th (tied with Emor) (2nd in Shmot)
 1763 words - 14th (Emor is 22nd) (2nd in Shmot)
 6762 letters - 16th (Emor is 23rd) (2nd in Shmot)
 Its p'sukim are above average in length
 (number of words and letters)
 (Emor was put in for comparison - look at the differences in rank)

Mitzvot: none of the TARYAG (613)



Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma respectively. X:Y is Perek/Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Kohen - First Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 1:1-17

[P> 1:1 (7)] Sh'mot begins with the conjunctive VAV to link the birth of the Jewish Nation to the foundation laid by the Patriarchs and "Sh'vatim" in the book of B'reishit. The sons of Yaakov are lovingly enumerated once again. The starting number of "70 souls" is repeated to impress upon us the tremendous growth of the people even (or especially) under the oppression of Egypt, as described in the p'sukim.

SDT The opening words of the sedra/book of Shmot - V'EILEH SH'MOT - form the initial letters of

חייב אדם ללמוד שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום

(V'chayav Adam Lilmod Sh'nayim Mikra V'echad Targum) - And a person is obligated to review the Torah text twice and once in translation. Baal HaTurim extends this acronym to the next two words. His whole statement is: "One who learns the sedra 2+1, singing it pleasantly, shall merit long life."

SDT The final letters of the opening words (sofei teivot) rearrange to spell the word T'HILIM. When the People of Israel are in trouble (a play-on-words on Egypt - MITZRAYIM - MEITZARIM), they shall use T'hilim to help them focus their prayers to G-d, thereby meriting redemption.

SDT Our first exile was associated with the number 70, the number associated with the members of Yaakov's family who went down to Egypt. The exile following the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash lasted 70 years. The termination of the final exile will be associated with our dominance over, or recognition and respect by the "70 nations" of the world.

"And Yosef and all his brothers and all that generation died." This pasuk (1:6) has a g'matriya (numeric value) of 981. There is one other pasuk in the Torah with that same g'matriya - D'varim 4:4 -

וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבָקִים בְּה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם חַיִּים כְּלַכֶּם הַיּוֹם:

"And you who cling to HaShem, your G-d, are all alive today." This pasuk is one of the sources of the concept that G-d fearing people live on after their physical death. The pasuk from the beginning of Sh'mot had a certain finality sound to it. The second pasuk (its G'matriya Twin) testifies that the "Shivtei Kah" live on.

[P> 1:8 (15)] A new king "who does not know Yosef" considers the Jewish people a threat and takes measures to enslave and demoralize them. (Ironically, he is the first one to refer to us as a nation - "Am Bnei Yisrael" - sometimes it is our enemies who tell us who we really are.) Par'o called us the Jewish Nation even before we felt that and knew that ourselves.

He instructs the midwives to kill the baby boys at birth to prevent the development of his "potential enemies" (and to kill off the potential redeemer of the People). They refuse to do his bidding and save the lives of the boys.

SDT VA'T'CHAYENA ET HAY'LADIM ...and they gave life to the boys". The Midrash says that not only did the midwives defy Par'o by not killing the boys, they also were responsible for saving those that might have died during childbirth. It is natural that some babies do not survive birth. The midwives were concerned that if they happened to deliver a stillborn, that it might appear as if they had carried out Par'o's orders. Their prayers were answered, and miraculously none of the babies died. Thus they are credited, not just with assisting in the births, but also with giving life to some of the babies.

There is a parallel idea concerning the night of the Exodus. It is said that even the normal deaths that might be expected in a large population did not occur on the night of the Exodus, lest it detract from the miraculous nature of the Night. Thus, we have then similar miracles at either end of the Mitzrayim experience.

SDT AND THEY EMBITTERED THEIR LIVES... The trup (Torah notes) on these words seem unduly happy for such sad words. The GR"A points out the "happy" result of the unusually harsh oppression, namely, that G-d reacted to Egypt's excess by cutting down our time in bondage to 210 years from the original prophecy of 400, by counting from the birth of Yitzchak, rather than from Yaakov's descent into Egypt.

Understand that this is not just an exchange of 210 years of extra harsh conditions for 400 years of regular slavery. Commentaries say that if we did not get out when we did, we would not have made it to Nationhood.

Levi - 2nd Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 1:18-2:10

When Par'o sees that his goal is not being accomplished, he orders that all male babies (Jew & non-Jew alike) be drowned. The People of Israel miraculously flourish under these adverse conditions.

[P> 2:1 (22)] Amram reunites with Yocheved and a baby boy is born. When he is no longer able to be hidden (some say that Moshe was three months premature; that the Egyptians knew when Yocheved was due; therefore she was able to hide him only for those three months), Yocheved prepares a water-proof basket and sets him on the river under the watchful eye of his sister.

Bat-Par'o finds Moshe and sends Miriam to bring a wetnurse for the crying infant who apparently will not nurse from an Egyptian breast. Miriam brings Yocheved, Moshe's mother, who takes Moshe until he is weaned. From that point on, Moshe is raised in the royal palace by Bat Par'o (Batya). She names him Moshe.

SDT Egyptian astrologers read in the stars that Israel's redeemer was soon to be born. They recommended the systematic drowning of all baby boys (including non-Jews, since they were not sure from what nation this redeemer would come). When Moshe was floated on the Nile, the astrologers reported to Par'o that Israel's redeemer was indeed "cast into the river". As a result of this not quite accurate reading of the stars, Par'o withdrew the decree to drown the boys.

SDT On the phrase: VAYEILECH ISH... And a man (from the house of Levi) went... the Baal HaTurim points out the only other occurrence of that phrase, in the book of Ruth: VAYEILECH ISH MI'BEIT LECHEM YEHUDA... In both cases, a redeemer of Israel results. In our case, Moshe. In Megilat Ruth, the progenitor of David HaMelech, his line, to Mashiach ben David.

"And she called his name Moses, for from the water he was drawn."

Does not quite make it in English. This is one of the demonstrations that the Torah was written in Hebrew. Similarly, ADAM was made from the ADAMA. Try that in English. Copper snake? No, N'CHASH NECHOSHET.

Shlishi - 3rd Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 2:11-25

It is amazing how many significant events are packed into these 15 p'sukim. Moshe goes out to see what is happening with the Jewish People. He kills an Egyptian who was beating a Jew. He breaks up a fight between two Jews (Datan & Aviram). They had seen him kill the Egyptian and report him to Par'o. Moshe flees to Midyan where he saves Yitro's daughters from danger. He takes Tzipora as a wife. She gives birth to son Gershom.

[P> 2:23 (3)] Meanwhile, after much time passes, the king of Egypt dies (or maybe got so sick that it was like he died) and the oppression in Egypt is greatly intensified. The People react by calling out to G-d. He too, "reacts"...

SDT Yosef was identified by the Wine Steward as a NAAR IVRI, a Jewish lad. Moshe was identified by Yitro's daughters as ISH MITZRI, an Egyptian man. Yosef was privileged to have his remains buried in the Land of Israel. Moshe did not have that same "z'chut", although it was mainly Moshe who brought Yosef's remains from Egypt to the threshold of Eretz Yisrael. Gives you pause for thought. No criticism is intended.

SDT When Moshe realized that Datan and Aviram informed on him to Par'o, the Torah tells us that Moshe was afraid. Rashi says that we can understand that literally, and also on a deeper level. With Jews like Datan and Aviram, Moshe feared that the people of Israel might not merit redemption.

(Note that Rashi includes the p'shat (plain) meaning as well as the additional meaning. Both apply in this case. It isn't always so that the plain meaning is retained when there is a drash that is "favored".)

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 3:1-15

[S> 3:1 (39)] Moshe is tending Yitro's sheep. An angel appears to him from a "burning bush that is not consumed". Moshe turns aside; G-d calls to him. He tells Moshe that He has heard the people's screams and that he is going to take them out of Egypt and bring them to a Land of Milk and Honey.

Moshe asks "why me?". G-d assures Moshe that He will be with him and that as proof of the Divine nature of his mission, Moshe will be bringing the people back to "this spot" (Sinai) to "serve G-d" (and receive the Torah).

Furthermore, Moshe is to "reintroduce" G-d to the People. Moshe asks G-d what he should tell the People when he comes to them at G-d's command. G-d's answer spans nine p'sukim (3:14-22). G-d identifies Himself as EH-YEH ASHER EH-YEH (Alef-Hei-Yud-Hei is one of the 7 names of G-d that may not be erased. Probably the least known of the list of seven.) This name of G-d's has the meaning: I will be with you (Bnei Yisrael) in your time of trouble (in Egypt) as I will be with you in future situations of enslavement and oppression.

SDT Baal HaTurim points out that the letters of this unusual name of G-d total 21. The initial letters of the first three names of G-d in the Thirteen Divine Attributes are YUD, YUD, ALEF = 21 (HaShem, HaShem, Keil...). The initials of the Patriarchs are ALEF, YUD, YUD = 21. The initials of the Five Books of the Torah are BET, VAV, VAV, VAV, and ALEF = 21.

At Moshe's suggestion, so to speak, G-d agreed to be identified to the people as EH-YEH, with the more comforting connotation of "I will be with you", without the implication that there will be other periods of oppression in the future. (based on Rashi).

G-d gives Moshe detailed instructions as to what to say to the people. He tells Moshe how the people will react and how Par'o will react. He tells him about the plagues and about the "friendly" reaction of the Egyptian people.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 24 p'sukim - 3:16-4:17

The prophecy at the Bush continues... G-d tells Moshe: (a)

to gather the elders of Israel and tell them that G-d will be taking them out of Egypt and bringing them to the Land of Israel, (b) the elders will accompany Moshe to present the demand for release before Par'o, (c) Par'o will not acquiesce, (d) I will smite Egypt and then they will send you out, (e) the Egyptians will "lend" the People of Israel many belongings.

Moshe asks "on what basis will they believe me?" G-d gives Moshe three signs for Par'o and the People.

The three signs are the staff becoming a snake and then turning back to a staff. His hand inserted into his cloak and emerging stricken with TZORAAT and then being restored. Taking water from the river and spilling it on the ground and it turns to blood.

SDT Rashi says that the first two signs were also reprimands to Moshe for speaking against the people and doubting in advance their potential to believe what he would tell them. This is Lashon HaRa, and both the snake and the Tzoraat are associated with Lashon HaRa. The third sign seems to have been specifically selected by G-d (so to speak) to be a bridge and introduction to the MAKOT (plagues), the first of which was an extension, shall we say, of the third sign.

Moshe still questions G-d as to "why me"; G-d gets angry at Moshe for doubting His choice of leader. G-d informs Moshe that Aharon will assist in these matters. Moshe is instructed to have his special staff with him when he presents himself to the People and Par'o.

SDT The Staff, HaMateh. Baal HaTurim says that there is/was a scribal custom to put Torah crowns on the TET in the word THE STAFF. This, to say that Moshe was the ninth (TET=9) righteous individual who had the miraculous staff in hand. (Pirkei Avot tells us that the Staff was one of the items created in the instant between the Six Days of Creation and the first Shabbat B'reishit.) The previous eight are: Adam, Chanoch, No'ach, Shem, Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yosef.

SDT The Midrash says that Moshe had several names - Yered, Chever, Y'kutiell, Avigdor, Avi-Socho, Avi-Zanu'ach, Tovia, Heiman, Sh'maya. The Midrash further tells us that of all his names, he is only called Moshe - even by G-d - to give honor to the acts of kindness of the one who found him and saved him from the water - Bat Par'o, the future Batya.

Rashi says that Moshe's experience at the Burning Bush and his communication with G-d there lasted for SEVEN DAYS! All during that time, G-d was trying (so to speak) to convince Moshe to undertake his mission.

Try this on your kids and/or Shabbat guests. Ask them how to say MATEH (staff) in Aramaic. If they don't know, give them a hint: Pesach Seder. The answer is in CHAD GADYA - CHUTRA.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 14 p'sukim - 4:18-31

[P> 4:18 (9)] Moshe returns to Yitro and tells him that he must go to his brethren. Yitro sends Moshe on his way. G-d tells Moshe that it is safe for him to do so. Moshe takes his wife and sons and returns to Egypt. G-d reminds Moshe about the signs he is to use before Par'o, that Par'o will not listen, and that he (Moshe) is to say to Par'o that if he does not release the People, G-d will kill his firstborn. (Thus the last Plague was really the first warning to Par'o. All the other Plagues served their purposes, but all pointed to MAKAT B'CHOROT.)

On the way, Tzipora circumcises her son. Commentaries explain that Moshe had neither circumcised his son Eliezer because of the danger in traveling when recently circumcised, nor did he postpone his return to Egypt, which would have been in defiance of G-d's command. It seems that he was in error in not having circumcised him, hence his life was in jeopardy until Tzipora performed the circumcision. Another question on this episode concerns the acceptability of a female circumcising. Commentaries get out of that problem in different ways.

[P> 4:27 (29)] G-d tells Aharon to greet Moshe. Moshe tells Aharon all that has happened. They gather the elders and Aharon tells them what will occur. The People believe what they hear and bow to G-d.

SDT Rashi says that the donkey that Moshe used to bring his family to Mitzrayim was the same one that Avraham took to the Akeida and the one that the Mashiach will ride upon. Why not a regular donkey? To tell us that these monumental events were not haphazard, but rather specially prepared parts of G-d's master plan for the world.

Sh'vi'i - 7th Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 50:21-26

"And then, Moshe & Aharon go" to Par'o and say to him "Thus says G-d - Let my People go..."

SDT Notice that the elders are not mentioned. Rashi tells us that one-by-one, the elders "disappeared" (in fear of Par'o) as the entourage was going to Par'o, until only Moshe and Aharon were left. Because of this, it was to be this way at Sinai also. The elders were left at the foot of the mountain and Aharon and Moshe ascended. (Then Aharon stopped and Moshe proceeded to the top alone.)

Par'o refuses, questioning who this G-d of Israel is. He then increases the burden on the People (who obviously have too much free time because they ask for a 3-day release) by requiring them to also collect the straw for the raw materials of the bricks they have to make.. The leaders of the People bear the brunt of the new edicts and complain to Par'o. Par'o blames Moshe; the People react with anger and disappointment. Moshe tells G-d that his efforts were counter-productive. G-d says that NOW you (Moshe) will see what G-d will do to Par'o... Maftir is the last 3 p'sukim.

Haftara - 23 p'sukim - Yeshayahu 27:6-28:13 and 29:22-23

As the sedra tells of the family of Yaakov in exile, so does the prophet tell of the exiles of the People of Israel. The sedra contains G-d's prophecy to Moshe Rabeinu at the Burning Bush of the redemption of Israel, the subsequent Standing at Sinai, and the entrance into the Land flowing with Milk and Honey. The Haftara contains the prophecy that there will come a day when the Great Shofar will sound, and the exiles will come from their places of dispersion, and they will come to serve HaShem and bow to Him in Jerusalem. The sedra speaks of the First Redemption; the haftara refers to the Complete Redemption.

from page 3 PARSHA PIX



Pyramids, of course, represent our descent into Egypt. The head of lettuce is MAROR from the Seder table. It relates to the pasuk in the beginning of the sedra which describes the Egyptian's embittering the lives of Bnei Yisrael. Lettuce, explains the Yerushalmi, is a kind of vegetable that is tasty when picked ripe. The longer it stays in the ground, the more bitter it becomes. Lettuce, therefore, is very appropriate for the Seder table, even more so than horseradish, which is only bitter and misses the extra commemorative feature that lettuce has. That pasuk continues to specify the work with bricks (see the trowel and bricks) and the field work (see the planting of the seedling). The ball and chain represents enslavement in Egypt. Davka Graphics of baby Moshe floating on the Nile with sister Miriam watching over him. Another Davka Graphics of Moshe at the Bush. Point the sheep out to your children and ask them if they know any of the stories about sheep. Don't restrict the discussion to Moshe; extend it back to the Avot. Along the left side of the Pix is the MATEH, Moshe's staff. Now in the middle of the top of the ParshaPix, you find the three signs that G-d gave Moshe to catch Paro's attention. The snake, the hand that turned leprous like snow (represented by the snowman), and the turning of water into blood (symbolized by the 4 common bloodtypes: A, B, AB, and O). The goal of the Exodus: the land flowing with milk and honey (lower-right of the Pix. There are 2 visual TTriddles.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 265 (part one) • Renting of Houses

We now embark on a topic that will take several lessons. A topic that almost everyone is familiar with, the leasing (renting) of real estate. The parties to the lease are the landlord (owner) and the lessee (tenant).

Unless otherwise indicated, I draw no distinction between houses and other types of structures and even vacant real estate, and therefore I employ the term real estate to mean all of them.

The rental of a house is one of the most important decisions that a person makes since it affects so many aspects of his and his family's life. Similarly, the location of a commercial enterprise may be of utmost importance to the success or failure of the enterprise. Both the owner and the lessee should consult a lawyer for the legal aspects of the rental agreement. The lease should clearly set forth their rights and obligations. But as so many lawyers and so many laymen find out to their dismay, even with well-drawn leases, there may be unanticipated problems, so much more so when the lease is not expertly drawn to reflect the desires and agreements of the parties, and even more so when the parties enter into the landlord/tenant relationship without any written lease.

CAVEAT: Unless otherwise specified, the leases mentioned in these lessons, may be either written or oral or partly written and partly oral.

These lessons set forth some of the laws that apply absent agreement to the contrary, whether because no lease was drawn or the lease failed to adequately provide for the questions that arose.

Halacha makes a distinction between leases that have specified terms of duration, whether for a short period, as, for example, for a day, or for an extended period, such as for 99 years, and anything in between, on the one hand, and leases of real estate that have no specified terms, on the other hand. Halacha also

distinguishes between a lease for residential space and one for commercial space.

I have divided the lease for residential space into two sections: (1) where there is a definite term of duration of the lease, and (2) where the lease has no definite duration.

Anything stated in these lessons to the contrary notwithstanding, the agreements between the parties will generally be controlling. This applies to all of the terms upon which they have agreed, whether for the term (length of the lease), rentals to be paid, termination of the lease, holding over by the lessee after the end of the lease, destruction of the premises, changes in circumstances, repairs, paying of taxes and fees, and any other stipulations that are agreed upon between the parties.

In halacha, a lease for real estate is entered into the same way that real estate is purchased. In prior lessons it was stated "In many matters dealing with real estate the halacha specifically follows the law of the land."

The lease is effective even if the lessee has not yet entered upon the real estate; the lease protects him. The lessee may enter upon the real estate whenever he desires.

If the rented real estate is in poor repair before the lessee enters upon the real estate, halacha requires the owner to make repairs, unless it was otherwise specified.

A lease for real estate, whether residential or commercial, may or may not have a definite period of duration. It may have a definite termination date or until the rent paid is used up. A lease of definite duration for real estate may not be unilaterally rescinded, canceled, or revoked by the owner or the lessee without the consent of the other party.

Unless otherwise stipulated between the parties, a lease for a night's lodging is held to be for 24 hours, a lease for a weekend is held to be for 48 hours, and a lease for a wedding is deemed to be for 7 days.

The owner may not cancel the lease before the termination date even if he needs the real estate for himself, for example, when the house in which he resides collapses and he has no other place to live, or if the owner becomes impoverished and must sell his residence to obtain cash and now requires the rented real estate to live in.

The owner cannot compel the lessee to vacate the real estate because the owner wishes to rebuild the improvements on the real estate, even if the owner will provide the lessee with superior real estate during construction and the lessee will be moved back to the real estate when the construction is completed. Unless the lease provides otherwise, the lessee need not permit the owner's workers to enter into the rented real estate to make repairs.

The owner cannot compel the lessee to vacate the real estate even if animosity evolved between the parties unless such a reason for terminating the lease was part of the lease as negotiated between the parties.

Assume that the lease contains a provision that the owner can terminate the lease if he requires the real estate for his own use, and the owner sells the real estate to a purchaser. The purchaser cannot take advantage of this clause; the clause is held to be personal to the owner who entered into the lease and cannot be sold since the requirement of the new owner is not known when the sale takes place.

The rental payments provided for in the lease may not be unilaterally changed even if there is a rise or fall in the cost of living or inflation or deflation, unless the lease so provides.

The owner pleads that the lease was for a definite term and the lessee pleads that it was for an indefinite term, or the pleadings are reversed, the owner pleading that the lease was for a definite term and the lessee pleads that the lease was for an indefinite term. Each party who pleads that it was for an indefinite term demands that he is entitled to notice of termination of the lease, which notice was not given, and the party pleading that it was for a definite period pleads that the term ended and no notice is required. In all these situations the lessee has the burden of proof. Should the lessee fail to produce proof, the owner takes a hesseth oath (an oath of Rabbinic origin) and wins the case. If there is a dispute regarding the rent or other monetary terms, the defendant in the lawsuit must take a Torah oath if he admits part of the plaintiffs allegations, and if he does not admit any part of the plaintiffs pleading, he takes a hesseth oath and wins the lawsuit.

Two persons, Reuven and Shimon, live in the same premises and each pleads in Beth Din that the real estate belongs solely to him and that the other is a trespasser. Assume that Beth Din decides that the premises belong to Shimon, Reuven must vacate immediately. Since Reuven was not a lessee he is not entitled to any notice.

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume IX chapter 312 of A Restatement of Rabbinic Civil Law by E. Quint. Copies of all volumes can be purchased via email: orders@gefenpublishing.com and via website: www.israelbooks.com and at local Judaica bookstores. Questions to quint@inter.net.il

MEANING IN MITZVOT by Rabbi Asher Meir

Each week we discuss one familiar halakhic practice and try to show its beauty and meaning. The columns are based on Rabbi Meir's Meaning in Mitzvot on Kitzur Shulchan Arukh

Kosher Slaughter of Fowl

Kosher animals and fowl can be eaten only after shechita. Fish do not require such slaughter (SA YD 13:1). We have explained this in previous columns as follows: While our lower tendencies can be elevated and sanctified, as they are when we eat the meat, this has to be preceded by overcoming and subduing their lower, animal nature. This is done by slaughtering them, to cut them off from their dependence on their bestial vitality, and by draining out the blood which is the ultimate symbol of our lower nature.

Fish, however, live in a totally distinct environment. This reminds us of those talmidei chakhamim (Torah scholars) who are totally submerged in the world of Torah. Torah study and observance has the ability to elevate and sanctify even our basest tendencies. For example, indulgence in eating and sleeping are a mitzva when they contribute to Shabbat delight. Those fish that are kosher, which are susceptible of assimilation to holiness, do not require a demonstrative separation from their environment to become permissible.

While this explanation encompasses both animals (mammals) and fowl, actually there is a difference between them. Shechita of animals must include both the windpipe (the passage for air) and the esophagus (the passage for food). But birds are kosher even if the shochet severed only one of these two passages (SA YD 21:1).

According to one explanation in the gemara, this is because birds are an intermediate level of creation, between animals and fish. "Ovar Glila'ah learned: Animals, which were created from the land, require two signs [windpipe and esophagus]; fish, which were created from the water, require no preparation; birds, which were created from the mud, require one sign." (Chullin 27b. The idea that birds were created partially from the land and partially from the water is found in Rashi on Bereshit 2:8 and 2:19.)

In a previous column we explained the difference between domestic animals (whose abdominal fat is forbidden) and birds and wild kosher animals (whose abdominal fat is permitted). One explanation was that "these animals have more freedom and independence than domestic beasts. Wild animals are completely free, while even domestic birds have the where-withal for freedom in their wings. Our tradition esteems this natural free state; the Yaavetz writes that the reason we have to feed our animals before ourselves is because by domesticating them we have deprived them of their freedom to provide for themselves (Sheilat Yaavetz I:17). More precisely, wild animals obtain their sustenance directly from the Creator, without human intervention. (See Rashi on Bereshit 8:11.) This same explanation can help us here, for birds exemplify freedom and independence even more than wild beasts.

Assembling these elements, we get the following picture: The greatest danger is for man to be enslaved to his animal nature. This is the state represented by domestic beasts. Sanctification can take place only after completely subduing this kind of connection to the material world, as represented by cutting of both signs.

A somewhat higher level of consciousness is where we are still limited to the world of physical reality, but we fully exercise our human freedom. This is the ultimate ideal in many modern ideologies; we see that this level has some value in Torah, but it is not the ultimate value. Even someone at this level is required to attenuate his connection to materiality, as represented by the single sign we sever in a bird. (We may point out that according to halakha, even birds should be slaughtered in both signs when possible.)

And the highest level is someone who manages to connect all his acts to the transcendence of Torah. Such a person is submerged in a completely different world where all of our tendencies are elevated and sanctified, and thus has no need to cut himself off from the world.

Publication Update: Both volumes of the book have already been through page design, type-setting, and proof reading. It won't be long now, Y"H, that we will see it IN PRINT.

Rabbi Meir authors a popular weekly on-line Q&A column, "The Jewish Ethicist", which gives Jewish guidance on everyday ethical dilemmas in the workplace. The column is a joint project of the JCT Center for Business Ethics, Jerusalem College of Technology - Machon Lev; and Aish HaTorah. You can see the Jewish Ethicist, and submit your own Qs — www.jewishethicist.com or www.aish.com

TANACH Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Historical Books of Tanach; JOSHUA, JUDGES, SAMUEL, KINGS (Nevi'im Rishonim) by **Dr. Meir Tamari**

The Glorious Renaissance - A Jewish King!
Part 1 (Melachim Bet 21:1-23:30)

With the ascension to the Davidic throne of Yoshiyahu, the righteous grandson of Menashe, we return to a glorious spiritual period in Jewish history, reminiscent of the days of Shmuel, David, and Shlomo. Of him it is written, "He did that which was 'Yashar' - righteous in the sight of the Lord" (22:2). That is what is written of all the righteous kings of the House of David who did righteousness and justice. However, in the same verse, Yoshiyahu is paid extra tribute, one that we do not use to describe any other king. "He departed not, neither right or left". This was conduct actually required of every Jewish king as we read in the Torah's Law of the King: "in order that He shall not depart [from the Torah], neither to the right or left" (Deut. 17:18-20). So much so, that Yirmiyahu thought of Yoshiyahu as the Mashiach. However, with his death in the battle of Megido [that lies at the eastern entrance of the Jezreel valley leading to present day Afula], the final stage of our first destruction and exile set in.

The syndrome of the pious king with an evil heir, followed by a righteous son is a recurring theme in the stories of the kings of Judea. Menashe who had repented from evil, was the son of Hezkiyahu the righteous. His son, Amon, was an evil and sinful king who fathered the tzadik Yoshiyahu. It is interesting to note that Amon's mother came from a town, Yotva, [the site of a present day moshav shitufi of that name] in the Galil, in the former territory of the exiled Ten Tribes. This is further evidence that not all of those tribes were exiled and that the kings of Judah, among them Menashe, kept close connections with the remnants, if not actually ruling over them. Yoshiyahu actually extended his kingdom to include the major areas of the Shomron and Galil in to present day Syria and Lebanon.

Coming after the 22 years of the reign of the reformed Menashe, his son Amon did not follow in the footsteps of his repentant father. Rather, "He walked in the path of his father, Menashe; that is, not following him in his teshuva but in all his previous evil" (Abarbanel, 21:21). In his short reign of two years, he did evil similar to Menashe's first 33 years, in which he had worshiped every form of idolatry imaginable, as well as committed bloodshed and social crimes. The Sages (Sanhedrin 104a) explained that despite his evil acts, it was out of respect for the saintly Yoshiyahu that Amon was not included amongst those kings who forfeited their share in the World to Come. Finally, the Am Ha'Aretz rebelled and assassinated the king in his palace and anointed Yoshiyahu in his stead, although he was only 8 years old, the second youngest of all the kings.

Avraham had dealt with the Am Ha'Aretz of Hevron who sat as city fathers in the gates, in order to have them witness and approve his purchase of Ma'arat HaMachpeila from Efron (Gen.22). In Eishet Chayil we read, "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land" (Mishlei 31:23). In Israel in the days of the Tanach the phrase 'am ha'aretz' had none of its latter day connotations. They were neither people who were careless of the laws of purity as in Mishnaic times nor ignoramuses as in our own days. They were communal leaders, laymen who were actively engaged in every aspect on national life and influential in court circles. Their loyalty to the House of David was an important factor in maintaining the throne of Judah for that house, unlike the constant changes that characterized the Northern Kingdom of Israel through the generations.

Yoshiyahu set about strengthening the Temple buildings as these had weakened during the 200 years that had passed since Yeho'ash had repaired them. There are instructive similarities and differences between these two cases.

In both cases the funds were collected and administered by Levite treasurers and in both of them it was unnecessary to supervise the accounts rendered by the artisans, suppliers of raw materials or the laborers. All of them pursued their work "b'emuna", in faith; that is not merely honestly, but also with trust in Hashem. Unlike, during the building of the Temple by Shlomo HaMelech, we do not read in either of these cases of foreign workers being used nor of a tax of labor imposed on Israel. The funding in Yoshiyahu's case came from the free will contributions of the people both of Judah and the remnants of the Northern Tribes in Israel. Yeho'ash, in contrast, first tried to finance the work from the annual ½-shekel meant to pay for the communal sacrifices that had not been collected for years under his father and grandfather, and the monies meant for the sin offerings and asham etc. When that proved ineffective, he still relied on the Temple funds and placed a chest next to the mizbei'ach into which the people placed their gifts for the repair of the Temple. Yoshiyahu did not have to purify the Temple, nor remove idols and asheilot that his father and grandfather had placed there, as he did that in the two years previously. On the other hand, Yeho'ash did not remove the bamot at which the people continued to sacrifice despite the ban on such localized worship. Furthermore he had to clear the obstacles that the Queen Mother Atalya bat Achav had erected after she murdered the rest of her grandchildren, in order to make the people's pilgrimages to the Bet HaMikdash more difficult.

It is interesting that neither of the two kings thought it necessary, as an act of, 'zeh keili v'anveihu - He is my G-d and I will glorify Him', to embellish, gild or add to the beauty of the Bet HaMikdash as did Hezkiyahu in his day.

This is the 65th installment in Dr. Tamari's series on "Tanach and its messages for our times"

MISC section - contents:

- [1] **Vebbe Rebbe**
- [2] **Touch of Wisdom; Touch of Wit**
- [3] **Candle by Day**
- [4] **From Aloh Naaleh**
- [5] **Torah from Nature**
- [6] **G'matriya Twins**
- [7] **From the desk of the director**

[1] From the virtual desk of the **OU VEBBE REBBE**

The Orthodox Union – via its website – fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and the Israel Center. The following is a Q&A from Eretz Hemdah...

Q In the shul where I am gabbai, there are a few parts of chazarat hashatz (= chaz/hash; repetition of Shmoneh Esrei) where we sing along with the chazan, sometimes a few words and occasionally an entire section. A member of the community complained that it prevents him from hearing the chazan, as he should. Should I step in?

A Public policy matters, certainly in regard to running the tefila, are the local rabbi's domain. In this response we assume that either your shul does not have a rav or you want to know whether or how to bring up the matter to him.

The Tur (Orach Chayim 124) cites the Rosh, who strongly opposed those who recite chaz/hash along with the chazan, for a few reasons. Most of his concerns do not apply (or apply less) in this case, but one main, possible issue may remain (the Rosh's opinion seems to be in dispute). Let us address the Rosh's issues.

Issue 1 - If one says chaz/hash along with the chazan, he is making berachot l'vatala, as he has already said his own Shemoneh Esrei. In our case, congregants recite only sections or words and do not recite the beracha part (see Beit Yosef, ad loc.). The fear that they might continue on to the beracha's conclusion (see Shaarei Teshuva, 124:7) does not apply, assuming there is a standard procedure for singing along in your shul and people never continue on to the beracha.

Issue 2 - By singing along, the person does not get to say "amen," which he is not allowed to say right after he himself makes the same beracha. This too does not apply in our case.

Issue 3 - It is haughty (Mishna Berura 124:16) and lightheaded to sing along out loud. This applies when the chazan is accompanied by a self-appointed assistant(s). However, when the congregation finds it uplifting to sing sections together, it need not be haughty or lightheaded.

Issue 4 - The Mishna Berura (124:18) and Igrot Moshe (OC IV, 19) understand that the requirement that nine people listen to chaz/hash (see also Nefesh Harav, pg. 126) applies not only to the end of each beracha but to its entirety. (The Perisha does not mention this as one of the Rosh's concerns, but he may refer to a case where many others were listening quietly and could hear the chazan.) One might want to claim that since shomei'a k'oneh (one who hears is as if he recites) one can hear part of the chaz/hash from the chazan and hear other parts from others. We do find that when a chazan is unable to continue, we allow someone else to continue (Shulchan Aruch, OC 126:2), so one can fulfill chaz/hash (b'dieved) with multiple chazanim. However, that is only in between berachot. If chazanim change in the middle of a beracha, the new one must start at the beginning of the beracha (ibid.) even if he had been listening to every word until that point (see Mishna Berura 126:8). So, two cannot share one beracha. Furthermore, there is a problem concentrating on words that a group recites in unison (Shulchan Aruch, OC 141:2).

There are a few ways to deal with this problem. Firstly, when only a few words are sung together, the words that are not heard properly usually do not disqualify the beracha (see Mishna Berura 126:10). Even in critical sections, if the congregation only provides some background voices, then there will be nine (if not many more) who hear the chazan clearly enough to fulfill the requirements of chaz/hash. When the congregation drowns out the chazan on entire sections of the tefilla, it is proper for him to wait to recite that section after things quiet down.

Let's put things in perspective. From a purist's approach, it is best for everyone to listen silently to the chazan with great concentration. But we must be realistic. Practically, in most of our shuls, joint singing adds a lot to the atmosphere and increases concentration. Therefore, trying to prevent it is not only unfeasible but is probably counterproductive in regard to the atmosphere necessary to keep our shuls inviting, vibrant and focused.

Ask the Rabbi Q&A is part of Hemdat Yamim, the weekly parsha sheet published by Eretz Hemdah. You can read this section or the entire Hemdat Yamim at www.ou.org or www.erezhemdah.org. And/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by email weekly, by sending an email to info@erezhemdah.org with the message: Subscribe/English (for the English version) or Subscribe/Hebrew (for the Hebrew version). Please leave the subject blank. Ask the Vebbe Rebbe is partially funded by the Jewish Agency for Israel

[2] ArtScroll Series • Mesorah Publications Ltd.

A TOUCH OF WISDOM A TOUCH OF WIT by **Shmuel Himelstein**

A poor Torah scholar came to R' Reuven Leib Himelstein of Warsaw, and asked for a donation. R' Reuven Leib gave the man a sum of money, and they began to talk in learning. As the man was ready to leave, R' Reuven Leib reached into his pocket and took out some more money.

"Rebbe", the man asked him: "Why are you giving me more money? You already gave me a donation."

"In the time that we spent talking, you could have been seeing other people. Just because I enjoyed our conversation is no reason why you should have to lose money."

Shmuel Himelstein has written a wonderful series for ArtScroll: Words of Wisdom, Words of Wit; A Touch of Wisdom, A Touch of Wit; and "Wisdom and Wit" — available at your local Jewish bookstore (or should be). Excerpted with the permission of the copyright holder

[3] **Candle by Day**

Our intellectual joy in discovering hidden motives sometimes makes us too ready to see them where they do not exist at all. -
From A Candle by Day by **Rabbi Shraga Silverstein**

[4] **CHIZUK and IDUD**

(for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively)

Throughout the Book of B'reishit, we find numerous references to G-d's promise to the Avot to give Eretz Yisrael to them and their descendants. Yet B'reishit ends with Yaakov and his family in Egypt, with bad times to come. And the Book of Sh'mot begins with the future Jewish People plunged into slavery and terrible oppression.

In the context of this dismal situation, the Torah introduces us to Moshe Rabeinu. In the very first prophecy to this Father of Prophets, G-d tells him that He will go into Egypt and take the people out OF Egypt... TO BRING US TO A GOOD AND EXPANSIVE LAND, A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY... to bring us to Eretz Yisrael. Yes, Eretz Yisrael was a promise to the Avot, for them and their descendants, but for us, Eretz Yisrael is the reason for our redemption from Egypt, the reason for our existence as a nation.

G-d's plan, stated right up front, so to speak, was not merely to free us from Egyptian bondage and oppression. His Plan was to take us from there, give us the Torah, and bring us to Eretz Yisrael.

If we believe in the G-d Who said, "I am the Lord your G-d Who took you out of Egypt...", then we must also believe that He wants us in Eretz Yisrael.

We have caused interruptions in His Plan for us by behaving in such ways that brought about the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash (first and second). We have the opportunity in our own time to strengthen our commitment to Torah and Eretz Yisrael and do our share in bringing about the Geula Sh'leima.

Phil Chernofsky, Jerusalem

TORAH THOUGHTS as contributed by Aloh Naaleh members for publication in the Orthodox Union's 'Torah Insights', a weekly Torah publication on Parshat Ha'Shavuah

[5] Torah from Nature • Dunnart

Never heard of it? Now you have. It is a cute mouse like marsupial with wide face, big eyes, and a sharply pointed nose... small limbs, large ears, thick tail... soft ashy gray coat on the back, lighter on the belly. It reaches a length of 7.5cm and weighs 15-30g... active at night, consumes as much as its own body weight daily, living almost exclusively upon small insects and spiders... when food is scarce it can draw upon fat reserves stored in its thick tail, just as a camel uses its hump. The dunnart burrows in the ground, lives under rocks, or builds nests of leaves and grass in sheltered places such as hollow logs... Females breed year round, producing successive litters of up to ten young each time. Gestation is only 13-16 days... 10-18 different species of dunnart... a 1-day old dunnart in pouch is as big as this box: ☐



[6] G'matriya Twins

וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת-נַאֲקָתָם וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת-בְּרִיתוֹ
אֶת-אַבְרָהָם אֶת-יִצְחָק וְאֶת-יַעֲקֹב:
וַתִּקְוּ מִרְיָם הַנְּשִׂאָה אֲמוֹת אֶהְרֹן אֶת-הַתָּהָה בְּיָדָהּ וַתִּצְאֶן
כָּל-הַנְּשִׂאִים אֲחֵרֶיהָ בַּתַּנְּפִים וּבַמְּזֻזוֹת:

The first pasuk can be seen as the beginning of the Yetzi'at Mitzrayim process. G-d heard our cries...

The second pasuk can be seen as the closing of the Exodus phase, with very different sounds that emerge from the people.

The two p'sukim are G'matriya Twins, with a numeric value of 4699 each. No claim is being made here - just the observation that gives a numeric balance to the p'sukim that form the bookends to the Exodus.

[7] Divrei Menachem

Parshat Shmot introduces us to the first rumblings of what today we call anti-Semitism and the oppressive consequences to our people of this pernicious ideology.

It seems that the first generation of slaves in Egypt took building cities for Pharaoh in their stride, for, "as much as they would afflict it [the people], so they would increase and spread out" (Shmot 1:12). But, as the decrees got worse, civil disobedience began, as the Jewish midwives defied their tormentors.

However, it took 116 years of servitude and 86 years of backbreaking oppression before the groans of the people reached G-d, as it were. At first, the Ohr Hachayim notes that the cry (Na'akatam) was one of despair, not prayer. Later, G-d tells Moshe that He heard the outcry - Tza'akatam - of [all] the Children of Israel. The strength of this term lies in its collective

nature, which the Sforno renders as a true reaching out to G-d and which Ibn Ezra describes as Teshuva, repentance.

In all, five terms of outpouring of the heart describe the intensity of the people's reaction to their oppressors, each, it seems, more directed to Hashem as the servitude increased. We thus learn not only of the importance of crying out against injustice but also of directing our prayer so that, like in the days of old, Hashem will "hear" and "know" (ibid 2:24-25). Perhaps we could also learn the urgency of prayer now rather than when we are desperate.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

SHEYIBANEH BEIT HAMIKDASH...

A series of articles on Beit HaMikdash-related topics by Catriel Sugarman intended to increase the knowledge, interest, and anticipation of the reader, thereby hastening the realization of our hopes and prayers for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Beit HaMikdash.

Surmounting the Wave - Clarifications

In the TT #647 article (Dec. 17-18), I quoted Professor Fergus Millar that by Roman times, "We might be tempted to suppose that a 'Syrian' identity will best have been preserved in the context of 'native' temples and cults, perhaps attended by a traditional or hereditary priesthood. But no dynasties of 'Syrian' priests are traceable at all; and in the most remote of rural or mountain-top locations, the temples that we can find, are built in the Graeco-Roman style and marked with Greek inscriptions... The only priesthood known from the Near East under Roman rule which represented both an actual and a conscious inheritance from a distant, pre-Hellenist past, was the Jewish High Priesthood in Jerusalem..." (The Roman Near East pg. 505). I have been asked to expand on this. "How did we succeed when so many others failed?"

The magnificence of torpid Achaemenian Persia was reserved for the Shah and his entourage hidden away in Persepolis and Shushan HaBira. For this reason, the art and culture of Achaemenian Persia had no real influence on the private lives and tastes of the subject peoples of the empire. The Greeks, on the other hand, threw open the doors of their new bouncy cosmopolitan civilization to all. The Greeks became the world's best architects, artists and sculptors; they wrote magnificent plays and composed melodious music. They were philosophers, scientists, mathematicians and debaters. The fact is that the Greeks did enjoy a more refined life and a higher standard of living than any but their most royal neighbors. The new Greek cities planted in the East by Alexander and his successors, whether Ptolemaic and Seleucid, or Roman, radiated Greek mores, culture, and philosophy throughout the "known world". Unlike previous conquerors, the Greeks permitted, if they did not encourage, additions to their ranks by the process of cultural assimilation. There were no racial or national barriers. It was no wonder that so many members of the "native" upper classes and literati in Judea and elsewhere in the oikoumene were hypnotized by the brilliance of this new world wide civilization and speculated how they might participate. II Mac. 4:12 describes how young Kohanim, "despising the Temple, and neglecting the sacrifices, hastened to... the place of exercise... not setting by the honors of their fathers, but liking the glory of the Grecians best of all." Josephus notes how the aristocratic Tobiads and their "cultured" friends "retired to King Antiochus (IV) and informed him that they were desirous to leave the laws

of their country (i.e. the Torah), and the Jewish way of living... and to follow... the Grecian way of living." The steady "brain drain" of the "best and the brightest" that was suffered by local cultures throughout the oikoumene over generations and centuries, caused them to weaken, atrophy and die. There was, however, one exception.

Judaism had one very important advantage over other local cultures. In contradistinction to the hide-bound sacerdotal cultures of Egypt, Babylonia, and our own Sadducees who restricted religious learning only to members of the priesthood, the Yahadut of Chazal demanded of all Am Yisrael "to occupy themselves with words of Torah." Under the patient tutelage of Chazal, the written Torah and its Oral Tradition became the heritage of Am Yisrael collectively, and not just the property of a small coterie of Mikdash-based Kohanim. This difference in outlook between the Sages and the Sadducees is dramatically illustrated in an absorbing narration from the Gemara. King Yanai asked a Sadducee leader, Eleazar ben Poirai, how he should punish the sages whom he believed affronted him. The Sadducee replied, "Trample them under foot." The king then asked, "And what will happen to the Torah?" The Sadducee answered, "It will be wrapped up and laid in a corner, and all who wish to study it, let them come and study" (Kiddushin 66a). Contrast this Sadducee lassitude with the virile "affirmative action" of Chazal who taught, "Raise up many students!" In Babylon, under the corrosive influence of Hellenic civilization, the ancient Babylonian civilization withered away and entered a long twilight ending in extinction. The number of priests who were able to read and write the sacred cuneiform script and perform the hallowed rites in the Babylonian temples continually decreased; the latest extant cuneiform tablet was written in 76CE. High priests from all over the oikoumene had to "modernize" and "update" their temple rites to assuage Greek taste. Even the venerable Egyptian cults were largely Hellenized. Josephus comments, 'Of the nations, some still preserve the names given to them by their founders, some have changed them, while yet others have modified them to make them more intelligible to their neighbors. It is the Greeks who are responsible for this change of nomenclature; for when after ages they rose to power, they appropriated even the glories of the past, embellishing with names which they (the Greeks) could understand and imposing on them forms of government (and religion), as though they were descended from themselves' (Antiquities I,5,5). Professor Millar summarizes, "When Seleucus I had been spreading Greek colonies over much of the Fertile Crescent, it is very likely that there had been a large-scale immigration by Greek speakers from Greece itself, the Aegean, and Macedonia... There may even have been some immigration during the Hellenistic period, for instance, when the Greek cities of the Decapolis... came into existence. But, paradoxically, while the full expression of Greek city-culture in the Near East was a feature not of the Hellenistic but of the Roman period, there is nothing whatsoever to suggest that this was achieved by further immigration or settlement from the rest of the Greek world. It was not that, but the adaptation of the norms of Greek city culture by both dependent kings (such as Herod) and local communities which progressively transformed not only cities, old and new, but a vast network of villages into urban, or suburban, communities using Greek" (pg 524). Deprived of new leadership for generations, the local cultures had stagnated and finally ceased to exist! "By the moment of the conversion of Constantine in 312CE, there was almost no place west of the Euphrates where texts were being inscribed in any other language except Greek and Latin. One isolated...

exception is provided by (one) Arabic inscription; another (exception) is a few Nabatean texts... and the third is the continued use of both Hebrew and Aramaic in the epitaphs, mosaics, and building- inscriptions from the Jewish areas of Syria- Palaestina. This last exception of course is the major one... (Jewish culture) was to survive... and express conceptions of a single deity which were wholly at variance with the anthropomorphic cults of Greek paganism. Judaism cannot but be seen in sharp contrast to Graeco-Roman culture" (p.521) "...If we think of a 'culture' in the full sense, as a tradition, an educational system, a set of customs and above all, a collective understanding of the past, then we can find in the Roman Near East only two established cultures: Greek and Jewish" (p. 517). But the dazzling all-encompassing Greek oikoumene is long gone, the Roman Empire, "eternal and divine" has vanished and ... B"H, we are still here!

Catriel's book in progress: The Temple of Jerusalem, A Pilgrims Prospective; A Guided Tour through the Temple and the Divine Service

Towards Better Davening and Torah Reading

- Concerning last week's comments on Y'SI - M'CHA and other words like it, ZF wrote in that basically we had things explained backwards. It is not the METEG that turns the CHIRIK into a CHIRIK MALEI, which then switches the SH'VA under the MEM to NA. The CHIRIK under the SIN is a CHIRIK MALEI (or CHIRIK CHAZAK, as ZF put it), because that is what it is supposed to be in that particular construction of the verb. The fact that a YUD does not appear after the SIN does not (should not) make the CHIRIK any weaker. The METEG is there to remind us that the CHIRIK is strong even though the usual sign of that - namely the YUD following it - is absent. Thank you ZF for turning us right side around on this issue.

- As we've featured many times, there are many verbs (at least 10 in Sh'mot), that are in future (or command) tense because of a VAV prefixed to the past tense form of the verb. In most cases, this is accompanied by an accent-shift from the next to the last syllable to the last syllable.

E.g. G-d says that He will "send His hand" and smite Egypt... (Sh'mot 3:20). sha-LACH-ti, I sent. Accent is MIL'EIL. sha-LACH-ti. Prefix a VAV and leave the accent alone would produce v'sha- LACH-ti, meaning "and I sent". The tense stays past. The VAV is conjunctive. For the VAV to be the tense-switcher, in most cases the prefixing of the VAV is accompanied by the word becoming MILRA. v'sha-lach-TI. That means "(and) I will send", future tense. [The (and) is in parentheses, because there are differing opinions as to whether a tense-switching VAV is also conjunctive, or just tense-switching. We've probably presented this in the past, but we will see what comments we get from our cadre of experts.]

Aside from the ten examples in Parshat Sh'mot giving your Baal Korei a headache, this fact of pronunciation/accent life is very important to every Jew who says the Shma (at least) twice daily. As we've pointed out many times in the past, if you say v'a-HAV-ta in the Sh'ma and wrongly accented it as indicated (MIL'EIL), there are opinions that not only does the word change meaning, but that the validity of the fulfillment of the mitzva to recite Sh'ma is thrown into question. This sounds very tough, but please check out the seriousness of this point with the posek of your choice.

It was this specific issue (of the words in Sh'ma that change meaning with a miss-accent) that launched this whole TDBATR column a few years ago.

[Personal comment: I went through over 30 years of saying v'a-HAV-ta, v'di-BAR-ta, v'na-SA-ti (that would be v'na-TA-ti for some readers, both words are mispronounced), and others. But there's more. I had learned about the tense-switching VAV in elementary school, high school, and college, and never paid enough attention to it to correct my own reciting of the Sh'ma. In a way, this column is part of a T'shuva process for sloppy davening all those years. I again ask all readers to close their eyes and start the Sh'ma by heart. Do you say v'a-hav-TA with the accent on the last syllable (MILRA)? Yes, good. How about v'di-bar-TA? v'na-sa-TI (or v'na-ta-TI)? Fine. But if you say v'a-HAV-ta, v'di-BAR-ta, v'a-SAF-ta, v'a-CHAL-ta, and others like them - All those words should be MILRA. Each mis-accenting changes the meaning of the word. I know that this sounds obsessive, but it really isn't. Many times that I've mentioned this to friends, their reactions have been, "you mean Rabbi So-and-so who taught me in first grade was wrong?" "You mean my father says the Sh'ma wrong?" That's sort of what I am saying. But please check it out with your Rav. If I would write that the bracha for popcorn is HaAdama or that something is permitted or forbidden on Shabbat, I would expect you to check it out further - please do it here too. — Phil]

TTRIDDLES are Torah Tidbits-style riddles on Parshat HaShavua (sometimes on the calendar). They are found in the hard-copy of TT scattered throughout, usually at the bottom of different columns. In the electronic versions of TT, they are found all together at the end of the ParshaPix-TTriddles section. The best solution set submitted each week (there isn't always a best) wins a double prize a CD from Noam Productions and/or a gift (game, puzzle, book, etc.) from Big Deal

Last issue's (VAI-CHI) TTriddles:

- [1] the intelligent hand motion
- [2] Why would this week's haftara go with Tazri'a, TTriddly speaking?
- [3] Should Daniel get the last Aliya this Shabbat?
- [4] Bracha, Hagada, Bracha and opp.
- [5] What is common to 40 days and 12 months?
- [6] The pair within the dozen. Of what?
- [7] Eliezer/Avraham, David/Shim'i, who&who/Yaakov

And the envelope, please...

- [1] The unusual hand-motion in Parsha Vai-chi is Yaakov's crossing his hands to put his right hand on Efrayim's head... SIKEIL ET YADAV. SIKEIL can be read with different vowels as SEICHEL, hence the intelligent hand motion.
- [2] Vaichi's haftara told us that David reigned for 7 years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem. The same numbers, 7+33, are mentioned in Tazri'a concerning the Tum'a/Tahara status of a woman having given birth to a boy.
- [3] The words CHAZAK V'CHAZAK were said to Daniel, Ish Chamudot. On the other hand, CHAZAK (once) V'NITCHAZAK (not V'NITCHAZEIK) comes from Shmuel Bet, so he can get that Aliya too.
- [4] BAYOM HAHU LEIMOR, on that day - saying... The phrase appears three times in Chumash. In Vaichi, it is used to describe when Yaakov blessed Efrayim and Menashe. It also

appears in the command to tell the story of the Exodus on Seder night. And again in the description of the Brachot and curses to be pronounced on HarGrizim and Har Eival.

[5] KI CHEIN YIMLU Y'MEI... for thus is the full time required for embalming (40 days) and for the beauty treatments of the women in Achashveirosh's harem (12 months). The phrase is ear-catching and only appears twice in Tanach. That's what makes it TTriddle-worthy.

[6] You should know that all seven TTriddles were solved - this one was vague enough to produce a few acceptable solutions, with no one hitting the originally intended solution. The "official" answer is Shimon and Levi who are called ACHIM, as are all 12 brothers, hence they are the pair of BROTHERS within the dozen.

[7] VAYISHAVA LO, and he swore to him... The phrase (exactly as is) appears only four times in Tanach. Eisav swore to give the B'chora to Yaakov and Yosef swore to bury Yaakov in Eretz Yisrael.

EB and YYW share the honors this week. BTW - there is a recurring type of TTriddle that very few have even commented about and no one has solved. This week there are several forms of that same TTriddle.

This week's TTriddles:

- [1] Pinchas or Matot are like S'fardi names
- [2] He took them out; they got them on their way out
- [3] Yishma'el, Le'ah, Bnei Yisra'el
- [4] Only Moshe and Eishet Mano'ach with these words
- [5] First: HaShem, Yehuda, Moshe; Last: Kayin, Eliezer, Rachel, Moshe
- [6] Rivka, Batya, Avigayil, Ruth
- [7] plus 2 elements from the ParshaPixPuzzle

ברוך... שכוחו וגבורתו מלא עולם.

ברוך דיין האמת.

We are awed and humbled by the colossal display of G-d's power through nature.

We are saddened and sobered by the tremendous loss of life.

Our prayers are with the many bereaved families and those still wondering about their loved ones.

And our thoughts turn to trying to understand a message in all of it.

May our reactions and responses be appropriate.