

This Shabbat is the 115th day (of 383); the 17th Shabbat (of 55) of 5765

Six times - 4 with and 2 without the word ET **שִׁלּוּז (אֶת-) עָמִי וַיַּעֲבֹדֵי**

Eight Cups of Wine?

No, not really a serious suggestion for the Pesach Seder, but a closer look at the p'sukim that are linked to the Four Cups, will reveal more facets of the Redemption that give us a deeper understanding of what is involved.

Too cryptic? Let's take it again. The Mishna in Pesachim says that everyone should have (no less than) four cups of wine... Rashi explains that the cups of wine correspond to the "four terms of redemption" - "I will take you out...", "I will save you...", "I will redeem you...", "I will take you unto Me...". Then there is the well-known fifth term, "I will bring you...", which is represented by the Cup of Eliyahu, which makes the statement that bringing us into Eretz Yisrael is as yet incomplete. The prophecy of Redemption is contained within the three p'sukim, Shmot 6:6-8. The first one contains the three terms of Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim, as mentioned above. V'HOTZEITI, V'HI- TZALTI, V'GA'ALTI. Commentaries explain that being free of Egypt involves a combination of an actual end to slavery and imprisonment in the land and a psychological freedom from the feelings of subservience to Egypt.

In the second pasuk, we find a crucial factor in that psychological freedom - namely, that G-d makes us His nation, we accept Him as our G-d, AND that we KNOW - with complete clarity and certainty - that it was G-d Who took us out of Egypt. Without that knowledge, acquired during Maamad Har Sinai, we would still be slaves to Par'o in Egypt, regardless of where we are. VIDA'EM - and you shall know - is an important aspect of the redemption.

And the Redemption is incomplete without the elements of the third pasuk. "I will bring you to the Land I promised your ancestors..." Yes, that's part of the process. That's the fifth term, as mentioned before. But there is another part of that phase of redemption: "And I will GIVE the Land to you as a MORASHA, a Heritage.

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...

Tevet was the third month in a row with only 29 days. Rosh Chodesh Shvat is the third one-day Rosh Chodesh in a row. That's the longest possible run. It happens on average 25.5% of the time.



This Shabbat we bench Rosh Chodesh Shvat, which will be on Tuesday...

**ראש חודש שבט יהיה ביום שלישי
הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל למוצאי:**

The molad will be on Mon 16h 12m 3p

**המולד יהיה ביום שני שנים עשרה דקות
ושלושה חלקים אחרי ארבע בצדקרים.**

That is Mon Jan 10, 3:51pm Israel time

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**The actual (astronomical) molad will
have occurred 1h 49m earlier (14:02)**

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Candle Lighting and Havdala Times
Standard (Winter) Time

Correct for TT 650 • Rabbeinu Tam (l'm) - 6:09pm

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 4:16pm | Jerusalem | 5:32pm |
| 4:35pm | Gush Katif | 5:36pm |
| 4:31pm | Raanana | 5:32pm |
| 4:32pm | Beit Shemesh | 5:33pm |
| 4:31pm | Netanya | 5:32pm |
| 4:32pm | Rehovot | 5:33pm |
| 4:11pm | Petach Tikva | 5:32pm |
| 4:31pm | Modi'in | 5:32pm |
| 4:34pm | Be'er Sheva | 5:34pm |
| 4:31pm | Gush Etzion | 5:32pm |
| 4:30pm | Ginot Shomron | 5:31pm |
| 4:16pm | Maale Adumim | 5:31pm |
| 4:22pm | Tzfat | 5:28pm |
| 4:32pm | K4 & Hevron | 5:33pm |

Ranges are THU-THU 25 Tevet - 3 Shvat (Jan 6-13)

| |
|---|
| Earliest Tallit & T'filin - 5:46-5:46am |
| Sunrise - 6:40-6:40am |
| Sof Z'man Sh'ma - 9:12-9:13am (8:24-8:26am) |
| Sof Z'man T'fila - 10:03-10:05am (9:31-9:33am) |
| Chatzot (halachic noon) - 11:45-11:48am |
| Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 12:15-12:18pm |
| Plag Mincha - 3:46½-3:52pm |
| Sunset - 4:55-5:01pm (4:50-4:56pm) |

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)
Shabbat afternoon shiur 3:15pm
Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher
Mincha 4:15pm
Motza'ei Shabbat, 8:30pm
Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Poupko

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Knowing that G-d took us out of Egypt, knowing that our relationship with Him is two-sided, knowing that He gave us the Land, not just to honor His promises, but to give it to us - all this combines to the appreciation of the Redemption and the Nationhood of Bnei Yisrael, the Jewish People.

There are reasons the number of cups of wine required at the Seder remains four, but the prophecy/promise at the beginning of this week's sedra have 8 elements for us to ponder and appreciate.

וְלִכֵּן אָמַר לְבְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי ה' וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתְּנוּזַת סְבִלֹת מִצְרַיִם וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּיָרֵעַ נְטוּיָהּ וּבְשֹׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים: וּקְלֹזֹתַי אֶתְכֶם לִי לֵעָם וְהִיִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וַיִּדְעוּתָם כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֵלֵיְכֶם הַמּוֹצֵא אֶתְכֶם מִתְּנוּזַת סְבִלֹת מִצְרַיִם: וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נְשָׂאתִי אֶת-יָדֵי לְתֵת אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלַיַּעֲקֹב וְנָתַתִּי אֶתְהָּ לָכֶם מִוִּרְשָׁה אֲנִי ה':

Va'eira Stats

- 14th of the 54 sedras; 2nd of 11 in Sh'mot
- Written on 221.8 lines in a Sefer Torah; ranks 16
- 16 parshiot; 8 open, 8 closed (above average for the Torah; avg. for Sh'mot)
- 121 p'sukim - ranks 20th (4th in Shmot)
- 1748 words - ranks 15th (3rd in Shmot)
- 6701 letters - ranks 17th (3rd in Shmot)
- P'sukim are above average in length

Mitzvot: none of the TARYAG (613)
One of 17 (out of 54, that's 31.5%) sedras with no mitzvot counted among the 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.

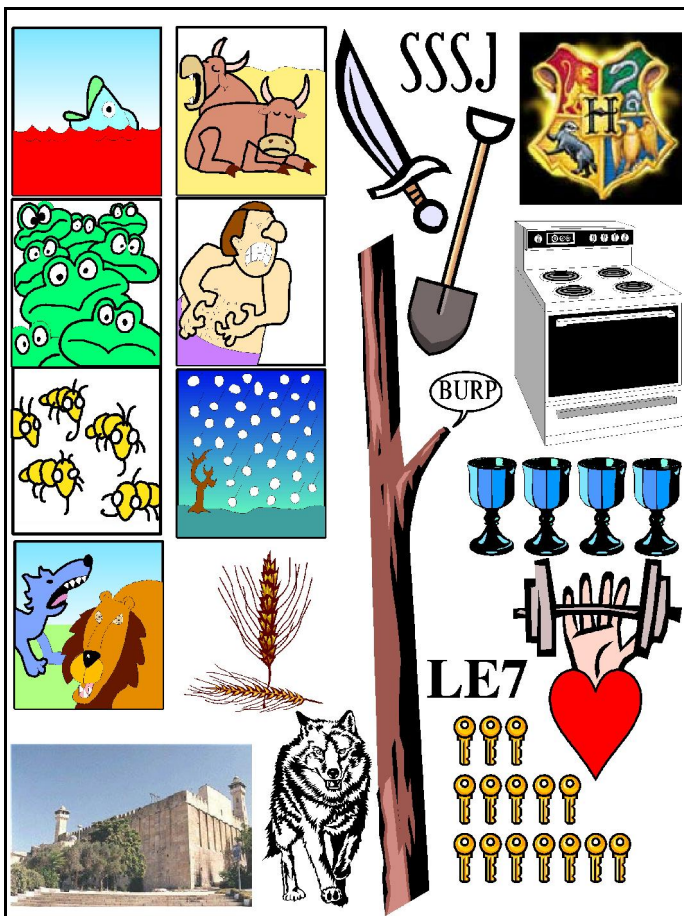
Kohen - First Aliya - 12 p'sukim - 6:2-13

SOT The two most common names of G-d in the Torah are E-LO-HIM and A-DO-NOI (as an act of respect for G-d's sacred names, these two are generally pronounced ELOKIM and HASHEM respectively, when referred to other than in prayer or Torah reading). ELOKIM is usually considered to be G-d's name of strict judgment, whereas HASHEM carries the connotation of Divine Mercy. Notice that in the accounts of Egyptian oppression, the predominant name of G-d is Elokim (especially in 2:23-25).

Exile is certainly associated with the stricter side of G-d's treatment of His People. If the quality of mercy were dominant, perhaps we would acclimate too well to conditions and lose our yearning for redemption. (See what has happened in modern times when exile is accompanied by G-d's Midat HaRachamim and people are quite comfortable, and therefore, complacent - a regrettable state of affairs.)

In the opening pasuk of this week's sedra, we find the unusual combination of both names. It is ELOKIM Who speaks to Moshe, G-d Who has judged and treated the People strictly and harshly. (And G-d Who is also speaking harshly to Moshe for his outburst at the end of Parshat Sh'mot). However, His message to Moshe is "I am HASHEM" (which comes with VAYOMER, the softer "tell", rather than VAIDABEIR, the harsher "speak" that began the pasuk). And His words of hope and promise to the People begin with the same declaration, "I Am HASHEM". In this context, we are told that G-d will take the People out of Egypt, save them, redeem them, take them unto Him, be our G-d and ultimately bring us into the Promised Land. These stages of redemption are summed up with the reiteration of the statement, "I Am HaShem". It is as if G-d is saying to the down-hearted People: "until now you've experienced Me as ELOKIM, but rest assured that you will now see HASHEM - the G-d of Mercy - in full measure. The Egyptians on the other hand are being punished by the hand of G-d as ELOKIM. (see 5:15).

[S> 6:2 (8)] The sedra begins with G-d speaking to Moshe Rabeinu and telling him of the promises He had made to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. Also, G-d tells Moshe that He has heard and is responding to the cries of the People of Israel.



[In other words, G-d will be taking us out of Egypt not only because of promises He had made to the Avot, but because of His feelings for us.]

Therefore, G-d will take the People out from under Egyptian oppression, will save them from bondage, and will redeem them with His might. He will then take the People to Him as a Nation and be our G-d. He will then bring us into the Promised Land.

Moshe relates this to the People, who are too exhausted to listen.

[P> 6:10 (3)] G-d then tells Moshe to go to Par'o and demand the People's release. Moshe questions how Par'o can be expected to listen, if the People (Moshe's own people) themselves didn't listen to him.

SDT G-d tells Moshe to go speak to Par'o (about letting the People go). Moshe "demurs", using the logical argument known as KAL VACHOMER - if the People of Israel (my own People) didn't listen to me, how is Par'o going to listen to me. Seems logical, but the Torah has told us why the people didn't listen to Moshe - they were utterly exhausted from their unusually difficult labors. If so, it does not follow logically that Par'o would not listen to Moshe. Maybe he would listen, not being exhausted. On the other hand, Moshe's KAL VACHOMER is based on his own statement - "I have a speech impediment".

In trying to understand his failure to reach the people, Moshe finds fault in himself, not in the People. This is how a leader should behave. When a rabbi or teacher fails to communicate an idea to his charges, he should not conclude that the fault lies with them - they are dumb; they are not committed enough; etc. He should rather be critical of himself - I probably didn't explain things well; I wasn't patient enough; etc. This is one of the signs of humility that is such a desirable characteristic in a leader. This was one of the many qualities that made Moshe Rabeinu The Leader and Teacher par excellence.

[P> 6:13 (1)] (Above Moshe's objections, so to speak,) G-d reiterates to Moshe and Aharon, that they are to tell the People as well as Par'o that the People will be leaving Egypt.

Note that this last pasuk of the first Aliya is one whole parsha. Single- pasuk parshiyot seem to say, LOOK AT ME. Perhaps, G-d is saying to Moshe - all your hesitations and protestations aside, it is time for TACHLIS. You and Aharon are going to tell/command the people and Par'o about leaving Egypt. Period.

Levi - Second Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 6:14-28

[S> 6:14 (15)] The Torah begins to enumerate the names of the tribes and family groups. It is obvious that the intention here is not to review the whole of the nation, but rather to focus on Moshe & Aharon. The Torah starts the list with Reuven and Shimon, and when it gets to Levi, there is much more detail. In this brief section, we meet many of the "main personalities" of the rest of the Torah. The Torah is also giving us the ability to continue to draw the timeline of Jewish history, by giving us the ages at death of Levi (we already know the ages of the three previous generation, those of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov), his son Kehat, his son Amram. That brings us to Moshe and Aharon. We are also introduced to Korach and his sons and Aharon and his family.

SDT Although the purpose of this partial genealogy is to identify Aharon and Moshe, the Torah began with Reuven and Shimon before it gets to Levi. A reason offered for this in one of the sources is that since Yaakov Avinu spoke critically of these three sons, the Torah here lists only them, to teach us that they were important tribes despite their progenitors' "mistakes".

SDT Why are we known as BNEI YISRAEL, and not one of the other Fathers or Mothers? YISRAEL is spelled YUD (Yitzchak & Yaakov), SIN (Sara), RESH (Rivka & Rachel), ALEF (Avraham), LAMED (Leah). The name YISRAEL then encompasses the names of all the Patriarchs and Matriarchs. This is not a reason, but a nice way to look at our main name.

SDT When the Torah tells us who Aharon married, she is identified as Elisheva b. Aminadav AND as the sister of Nachshon. Rashi tells us that from here we learn that when a man marries a woman, he should check out her brothers (because children often take after their maternal uncles). The same idea was previously presented in reference to Lavan.

SDT On the Torah's statement: HU AHARON U MOSHE, Rashi points out that sometimes (mostly) Moshe is mentioned first, and sometimes Aharon is mentioned first, to teach us that they were equals. (That is, on some levels, but on others, Moshe Rabeinu was obviously on a higher standing.)

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 6:29-7:7

[S> 6:29 (2)] After the "digression" of the previous passage, the Torah now repeats that G-d is sending Moshe to Par'o and that Moshe continues to "object" because of his speech- impediment.

BTW, ARAL S'FATAYIM has different meanings in commentaries. Literally, it means: I have uncircumcised lips, it is variously interpreted as, "I have a speech defect", "I can hardly speak", and "I have no self-confidence when I speak".

Rashi says that G-d did not repeat the command, nor did Moshe repeat his objection. It is the Torah that is putting us back where we left off before the genealogical data were presented.

[P> 7:1 (7)] G-d tells Moshe that Aharon will do the talking, that Par'o will refuse the repeated requests to free the People, and that He (G-d) will take His people out, and that it will be clear to Egypt (and everyone else) that it is indeed G-d Who is doing every- thing. Moshe and Aharon do as G-d instructs them; they are 80 and 83 years old respectively.

Observation When the Torah is specific about ages, it usually is meant to give us an accurate way of constructing a timeline. Perhaps too, in this case, the Torah is pointing out something that we saw very often in the book of B'reishit - namely, the prominence of the younger brother over the older one.

SDT How is it that Moshe Rabeinu is able to speak to the People of Israel throughout his "career" as leader, in light of the fact that he complained of being "speech impaired"? When Moshe spoke to the People of Israel, it was the Sh'china that spoke from his mouth. He had no trouble with his speech defect. He was, however, concerned when it came to speaking to Par'o. See 6:30.

PINCHAS is introduced to us in Parshat VA'EIRA. The g'matriya of PINCHAS is 208, just like VA'EIRA

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 28 p'sukim - 7:8-8:6

[P> 7:8 (6)] G-d tells Moshe and Aharon, that when Par'o asks for a sign, Moshe shall instruct Aharon to throw down the Staff before Par'o and it will turn into a TANIN. Moshe and Aharon appear before Par'o and do as G-d has instructed them.

Rashi says that TANIN means NACHASH, snake or serpent. Not everyone see it that way. When G-d first had Moshe throw his staff down, it changed into a NACHASH, a snake. Here with Par'o, it changed into a TANIN. Strong possibility is that we are talking about a crocodile, venerated and worshiped by Egypt. Many Pharaohs identified with the crocodile as the ruling animal of the Nile.

Adds the Baal HaTurim, that the Tanin reverting to wood was a message to Par'o that just as the mighty crocodile turns to dry wood, so too will the mighty Par'o turn to dust and food for worms.

SDT *Baal HaTurim points out that the pasuk says: G-d says to Moshe that when Par'o will ask for a sign, you (Moshe) shall tell to Aharon to take your staff and throw it (on the ground) in front of Par'o, it shall become a TANIN. It didn't say: AND it will become a Tanin. He explains that the staff was thrown down and then he was to command it to become a Tanin. And that's what happened, to show Par'o the power of speech that G-d has given to Moshe. In other words, the staff did not change upon being thrown down. It changed by a spoken command. That carries a pointed message to Par'o that his wizards aren't even in the same class with Moshe and Aharon.*

Par'o calls his wizards who are able to duplicate (sort of) what Aharon does; however, Aharon's staff (note: not his TANIN) swallows those of the wizards. Nonetheless, Par'o refuses to listen to Moshe and Aharon, as G-d had said.

[S> 7:14 (5)] G-d then instructs Moshe to go to the river (Nile) in the morning, where Par'o will be, and to bring the Staff with him. Moshe is to say to Par'o that G-d has sent me (Moshe) to tell you (Par'o) to release the People and you have refused until now. "With this will you know Who G-d is..." Moshe (actually Aharon) will be striking the water of the river, turning it to blood and killing all the fish therein.

[S> 7:19 (7)] G-d tells Moshe to tell Aharon to take the Staff and strike the waters of Egypt. Moshe and Aharon do as instructed and the waters turn to blood, the fish die, and the Egyptians cannot drink the water. Par'o's wizards again duplicate what was done, causing Par'o to remain stubborn. Egyptians are forced to dig for water (and/or buy water from the Jews). This first plague lasts 7 days.

[P> 7:26 (15)] G-d next instructs Moshe to go to Par'o (at his palace) and warn him that if he does not let the People go, Egypt will be smitten by a plague of frogs. Aharon is to raise the Staff above the river, which he does, and the land is blanketed with frog(s). The wizards are again able to simulate this plague with their magical powers. Par'o calls to Moshe and Aharon to pray to G-d that the frogs be removed, promising that he will let the People go into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to G-d. Moshe asks Par'o when he wants the frogs to leave. (A strange question, to which Par'o gives a stranger

answer). Par'o says "tomorrow", to which Moshe responds "so be it. And that will serve as proof of G-d's powers".

SDT *Why would Par'o ask for the plague to be withdrawn on the following day? He and his people were certainly suffering and would want to rid themselves of the frogs as soon as possible. Par'o (still refusing to see the plagues as Divine, and assuming that there was some natural explanation for them) figured that Moshe came before him when he (Moshe) knew that the frogs would leave. Moshe would give the impression that he (in the name of the G-d of Israel) had power over the frogs. So Par'o tried to trick Moshe by asking the unexpected - do it tomorrow. Moshe's answer was that doing so would demonstrate that it was truly G-d's power that was being observed.*

Egypt saw itself as great because of the Nile and because of the fertile land created by the waters of the Nile. The first plague smote the water. The second was a plague that came from the river and attacked the land. The third smote the land itself.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 12 p'sukim - 8:7-18

So it happens, and after the frogs are gone, Par'o reneges on his promise, as G-d had said he would (an oft-repeated phrase to indicate G-d's active role in the events of the Exodus).

[S> 8:12 (4)] G-d tells Moshe to tell Aharon to strike the dust of the earth (no warning to Par'o this time). The resultant plague of lice was not able to be matched by the wizards, who acknowledge G-d's might. Par'o remains stubborn.

[S> 8:16 (13)] G-d sends Moshe to warn Par'o about the next plague (swarms of insects or wild animals, depending upon which opinion you follow). New element with this fourth plague - the contrast between Egyptian and Jewish experiences.

There was always a contrast between the Egyptians and the Jews - Egyptians had no water during the first plague; the Jews had water. The Midrash even says that if a Jew and an Egyptian drank from the same cup, the Jew would be drinking water and the Egyptian would have blood. Similarly, the Jews did not suffer the plagues and the Egyptians did. Yet it seems that G-d had different messages for each of the plagues. (Or each set of 3 plagues.) AROV was the first plague that the distinction between Goshen and the Jews on one hand, and the land of Egypt and the Egyptians on the other, was so sharp.

Shishi - 6th Aliya - 26 p'sukim - 8:19-9:16

And so the AROV descend upon the land. Par'o calls for Moshe and gives permission for the people to sacrifice to G-d in Egypt. Moshe says that it must be in the wilderness.

Par'o agrees on the condition that Moshe pray for the removal of the plague. Afterwards, Par'o again reneges.

[P> 9:1 (7)] G-d next sends Moshe back to Par'o to repeat the demand for the People's release and to warn him of the consequence of his refusal this time, namely DEVER. And so it happens that the livestock of the

Egyptians all die, with not a single loss to the Jews. This Par'o checks on, yet he still remains stubborn.

[P> 9:8 (5)] The sixth plague (boils) is brought upon Egypt without warning. Although his people are being seriously beaten, Par'o continues to resist (from this point on, with G-d's help).

[S> 9:13 (9)] Moshe is next sent to warn about the seventh (and very powerful) plague.

SOT *In warning about HAIL, G-d says (through Moshe) that this time, I will send ALL my plagues... The Vilna Ga'on explains that G-d uses three main weapons, so to speak, to punish those who violate His commands - Fire, Water, and Wind. For example, to destroy the Generation of the Flood, G-d used Water. To disperse Dor HaP'laga, He used Wind, and to destroy S'dom, His main weapon was Fire. The plague of Blood used Water. Plague 6 was the burning Fire of Boils on the skin. The locust came on the Wind. But Hail consisted of the whole arsenal - the Hail itself was Water, it had Fire in it, and the Hail was accompanied by strong Wind.*

Sh'vi'i - 7th Aliya - 19 p'sukim - 9:17-35

The threat/warning about hail continues. Never has hail like this been seen. There is also a challenge to the Egyptians in that G-d is allowing servants and animals to be saved by taking them indoors.

[P> 9:22 (14)] Moshe raises his hand heavenward and the hail falls. It is extremely destructive, but some plants survive, as do the animals of those Egyptians who heeded Moshe's warning to bring them indoors. Par'o admits that he has sinned and grants Moshe's demands, if only the hail will stop. When Par'o sees that the hail and thunder have stopped, he yet again reneges, as G-d has said he would. Maftir is the last 3 p'sukim.

Haftara - 23 p'sukim - Yechezkeil 28:25-29:21

The Haftara begins with the prophecy of redemption (as does the sedra). The main connection to the sedra is that the Haftara speaks of the downfall of Egypt, albeit at

different times in history. We also find in both the sedra and the Haftara, the extreme arrogance of the Par'o.

Rabbi Jacobson points out in A Haftara Companion, that Par'o is described as a great crocodile, which fits with what the Staff turned into when cast before Par'o by Aharon, at Moshe's instruction (from G-d).

from page 3 PARSHA PIX

7 of the 10 images from the Davka Judaica graphic of the 10 plagues. The final three are in next week's sedra.

Notice the Staff, prominent in the middle of the ParshaPix.

Above it is a sword. This can represent Z'RO'A N'TUYA, the "outstretched arm" with which we were to be taken out of Egypt. Also, the sword is prominently mentioned in the Haftara as that which will befall Egypt.

Next to the staff and sword is a shovel used by the Egyptians to dig for water - only way to get a drink during the plague of Blood.

The oven is what some frogs went into, producing a Kiddush HaShem and a lesson to us that G-d is still in charge of nature - He renews, every day, the acts of Creation. (Each element of nature that was used by G-d in the process of the Plagues and Exodus sanctifies G-d's name because we see His control and involvement in this world. Famous re the non-barking dogs, but frogs, etc. too.)

The Staff is burping from its recent meal of Wizard Staffs.

We have the four cups of wine corresponding to the Four Terms of Redemption, which we find at the beginning of the sedra.

Triple-S J, Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, slogan was Let My People Go.

Lower-right is the pictorial representation of Par'o's heart strengthening, as is mentioned in several places in the sedra and the next one.

Go to the upper-right and the emblem of the Hogwarts School. Par'o's wizards might have been dropouts from Hogwarts since they were not able to cope with the plague of KINIM.

Below BARAD (hail) are the standing wheat and the broken barley in the aftermath of that plague.

Lower right has a game set out. It is KEY-NIM.

That leaves two unexplained elements, which are visual Ttriddles to be added to the regular ones scattered through the pages of TT.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 266 (part two) • Renting of Houses

In the last lesson we discussed how real estate is rented, In this lesson we discuss what happens when the term of the lease is up.

The owner may evict the lessee at the termination of the term of the lease without giving the lessee any notice to vacate. It does not matter what the season, whether winter or summer. Conversely, the lessee may vacate the real estate at the termination of the lease without any prior notice to the owner. Each party is presumed to know the termination date of the lease.

In towns and villages, rental of real estate that has no specific term of time duration follows the practice of the community. If the practice is for such leases, whether in writing or oral, to be

for a year, then it will be held that such rental is for a year, or for a month, or for any other period reflecting the community practice. Very often the laws of the land specify the duration of a lease that does not state any duration, and they are to be followed.

If there is no community practice or law governing, the halacha states that a lease without a specific duration is for thirty days.

When the lease does not provide for any term, the rent must still be paid. Every lessee for a non specified period of time must be given at least thirty days' notice to vacate the real estate. This applies if the termination day specified in the notice falls on a day between Pesach and Sukkot. This is the non-rainy season, and the lessee will find it easier to find a new dwelling and to move. But if the date specified in the thirty-day notice falls after the beginning of Sukkot until the next Pesach, the rainy season, he does not have to vacate until the day following the next Pesach. The lessee must be served with another 30-day notice telling him to vacate after Pesach.

The notices required by the owner to the lessee, must also be given by the lessee to the owner if he is going to vacate the real estate. Thus, in the non-rainy season, the lessee must give the owner thirty days' notice that he will vacate the real estate, and during the rainy season he may not vacate the premises and must give notice that he will vacate the premises after the coming Pesach.

What has been said above applies to towns and villages. However, in large urban areas, a lease for an unspecified duration cannot be terminated by less than twelve months' notice of termination, whether by the owner or the lessee. Should either the owner or the lessee anticipate that he may want to terminate the renting in less than a year, he should insist that the term of the lease be fixed for that shorter period (in the first place).

In commercial leases as well as in residential leases, if the parties stipulate a definite time for the duration of the lease, it governs. In all locations, whether in a city, town, or village, a commercial lease without a definite duration is for a year. The reason is that it may take the merchant in the store that much time to collect all of the debts due to him from the community customers. Although the halacha allows a longer time for bakeries and dyers of cloth - a period of three years, the same consideration should be given to all similar types of merchants who extend long periods of time for their customers to pay the debts due to the merchants.

There are sometimes changes in circumstances in cases of indefinite duration leases. If the lease is for an indefinite period and the level of rents in the community for comparable real estate rises or diminishes, the lessee must pay such higher rent or the owner must accept such lower rent (as the case may be). Such change in the rent to be paid is not effective until the party in whose favor the change is to be made gives written notice to the other party of such change in rent. If either refuses to comply with the foregoing, the other party may terminate the lease.

Assume the dwelling of the owner collapses and he has no place to live. He can give the lessee of a lease for an indefinite period reasonable notice to vacate, and the notice need not be the thirty days' notice required in the non-rainy season, and the notice can terminate during the rainy season. This does not apply to leases of definite duration since the term is fixed and the owner cannot terminate prior to the termination provided for in the lease.

In a case where the owner's commercial real estate is destroyed, the preferred view is that he may not evict the indefinite-term commercial lessee.

What if there is destruction of the leased real estate? The real estate that is rented may be for a specific location, such as a house located at 100 King George Street, or for suite 110 at 100 King George Street. If the real estate is destroyed by fire, flood, earthquake, storm, or any other reason, the owner is not required to rebuild the real estate, since he rented out specific real estate that is no longer in existence. The lessee does not have the option to state that he will rebuild at his own expense.

In such case the rent is to be apportioned between the time that the lessee occupied the real estate and the time left in the lease. If the rent was prepaid, the lessee will be given a refund, and if the rental has not yet been paid, the lessee will pay amount used, to the owner.

If there was only partial destruction, the owner must make repairs to the part that remains to bring the rented real estate to

as close a condition that it was before the partial destruction. There is an opinion that the owner need make repairs only if the total repair does not exceed the total rental under the lease.

If the lease is for the upper floor of a two-story building and the upper floor is destroyed, the law is the same, and the owner is not obligated to repair the upper floor. If there is partial destruction of the upper story, the owner must make repairs.

If the rented real estate is not specific, such as the owner rents to the lessee a house, or a house such as this, and the house is destroyed, the laws are different. The owner is obligated to either rebuild this real estate or to furnish the lessee with comparable real estate.

What if the lessee remains in possession after the term ends? If the lease is for a specific term and the lessee remains on in the premises, without being immediately evicted, he is treated as a lessee who is in possession of real estate for an indefinite period of time and whatever notices are required to be given for indefinite period rentals apply such as thirty days' notice or twelve months' notice.

Assume there is a lease of fixed duration by community practice, such as every lease without a definite term terminates on September 30 of the next year, and the lessee remains in possession of the real estate after the termination of the term without any agreement of the parties. The lessee after some time has passed after September 30, but before the next September 30, wishes to vacate the real estate and to pay for that time that he remained on the real estate. The owner demands that he pay until September 30 next. Since the practice is for all leases without a definite period to terminate on e following September 30, the lessee must pay until September 30.

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@gefepublishing.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

Breaking Bad News

The gemara (Pesachim 3b) relates that when the Amora Rav Kahana was ill, his colleagues sent Rav Yehoshua the son of Rav Idi to check up on him. When Rav Yehoshua arrived, he found that Rav Kahana had already passed away. First he tore his garment and wept, as a person should mourn a great Torah scholar almost like a family member. Then he turned the tear to a covered part of the garment and returned to the Beit Midrash. Yet he did not inform his dispatchers that Rav Kahana had died, and even when he was asked outright, he replied: I am not saying, for "Whoever spreads slander is a fool" (Mishlei 10:18).

We can learn from this story that it is better not to state bad news outright; rather, the news is broken more gently when the listener comes by himself to the realization of what happened. (See Rashi.) A number of Rishonim go further and infer that it is acceptable even to keep bad news from others altogether, and this is the ruling of the Shulchan Arukh: "Someone whose

relative has died and doesn't know, there is no obligation to inform him, even if it his father or mother [who died]. And of this it is said, Whoever spreads slander is a fool" (SA YD 402:12). The Rema adds that if the mourner is a son who would say Kaddish, we should inform him.

This halakha seems alien to the modern sensibility, which has been convinced that informing people of bad news is the greatest of mitzvot. Often it seems that whoever is first with the most shocking and horrible news is the most honored and revered. But we can acknowledge that this ruling seems extreme.

Particularly puzzling is the use of the word "slander" (dibah) in connection with unpleasant news. How is this connected in any way to slander?

In order to understand this, we should take another step back and ask, what is the problem with slander itself? Let us recall that in halakha, malicious speech is forbidden even if it is completely true. What is wrong with retelling truthful but negative information about others?

We have explained before that one of the foundations of the laws of lashon hara is the belief that human beings are fundamentally good. Therefore, in the first place we should judge them favorably, and not be hasty to accept that they did in fact do something wrong. In the second place, we should assume that any missteps that did occur were out of character, and will not be repeated.

Thus, it would be unfair and even misleading to spread the news.

A similar insight applies here. It is a basic belief of Judaism that the world is fundamentally a good place. We believe not only in G^A's sovereignty, we also believe in His benevolence. Furthermore, we believe that in most cases this benevolence is expressed in ways that are meaningful to human beings.

The blessings mentioned in the Torah are primarily blessings of this world.

Therefore, we are reluctant to mention bad news. First of all, we should be cautious in giving credence to bad news which we cannot verify. Beyond this, excessive absorption in the negative may influence a person to have a jaundiced view of human existence; this would be like "slandering" the provience of the Creator. Of course we do transmit bad news whenever the knowledge is necessary for us to carry out G^A's will, for example to fulfill the mitzva of reciting Kaddish. But in general we are not hasty to draw attention to the less pleasant aspects of our existence.

I usually refrain from giving commentary on the halakhot themselves, in order to avoid giving the impression that I am giving practical rulings. But in this case I want to point out that in today's world of instant information, the application of this halakhah is far more limited than in the past. In the time of the Shulchan Arukh, if the death of the relative was known to a single person in a town and he refrained from passing on the news, chances are the mourner would not find out from anyone else for a period of weeks, until some other acquaintance brought the tidings. But nowadays the relative is as likely as not to find out the news within hours or even minutes via the Internet or news media. In this case delaying the news is not practical, and the more thoughtful way of transmitting it is for the relative who knows of the misfortune to transmit it in a sensitive but direct fashion.

Publication Update: Both volumes of the book have already been through page design, type-setting, and proof reading. It won't be long now, *IY"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 2 (Melachim Bet 23)

Much secular literature and bible critical studies have focused on the authorship of the fifth book of the Chumash, D'varim, claiming that it is different in style and contains many new laws and therefore was of much later origin than the other books. Many have ascribed it to the days of Yoshiyahu because of what we are told in our chapter. Our commentators have explained the stylistic differences as due to the fact that, as the Torah itself tells us, Moshe himself wrote it in his own words as his farewell song to Israel. The Chassidic Master Samuel of Sochochow, Shem Mi Shmuel, explained that in view of the human input, it was therefore able to be, as it were, a bridge between the Written Law and the Oral one. The new revealed laws, S. R. Hirsch explained, were only applicable now that Israel was on the eve of entering the Holy Land. Be all that as it may, nowhere does our chapter describe the finding of any new Torah.

When the strengthening of the Temple was underway and he was searching for its treasury, Hilkyah, the Kohen Gadol found a Torah scroll hidden within one of the treasury rooms of the building. This was the same scroll that Moshe himself had written and placed in the Aron Kodesh alongside the Luchot HaBrit (D'varim 31:24-26). Far from this being a new revelation, that scroll had simply been taken out of the Aron for safekeeping when Ahaz, Menashe and Yoram each burnt a Sefer Torah in the Temple. In the spiritual turmoil and physical fear that existed during each of these king's reigns, the kohanim had simply forgotten about that scroll and were frightened to search where they had hidden it. Yoshiyahu latter was to similarly hide "the Ark together with the container of the first measure of manna (Sh'mot 18:33-36), the rod of Aharon with its almonds and flowers (Bamidbar 17:23), and the box of gold that the Philistines had sent as a gift to Hashem when they returned the Ark they had captured in the days of Eli (Shmuel Alef 4). What prompted Yoshiyahu to hide them? He read in the scroll, 'Hashem will lead you and your king... in to a nation that you have not known (D'varim 32:36). Therefore he went and hid all these holy items to prevent them falling into enemy hands" (Yoma 52b).

Our Sages were divided as to what text the scroll was open to when it was found by Hilkiyah. "It was rolled to the verse, 'Cursed be the one who will not uphold the words of the Torah' (D'varim 28:36)" (Midrash Hagadol, D'varim 27:25). "That scroll had only the laws of kingship that Moshe wrote in the Torah that every king was supposed to write, as well as the details of the covenant that Yehoshua made between Israel and

Hashem" (Sforno, D'varim 31:26). Since both verses promised persecution, destruction and exile if the Torah was not observed, Yoshiyahu's reaction to Hilkiyah's reading of the scrolls was to tear his clothes as an act of remorse, sorrow and mourning.

From the day that he had ascended to the throne of Judah at the age of 8 until the time that the scroll was found 10 years later, Yoshiyahu had diligently striven to pursue G-d in everything that he did. He returned all the money, that as a judge he had ordered one party to pay to another as a result of a verdict he had issued. This was out of fear that he had perhaps erred in judgment out of ignorance before immersing himself in Torah study. The reimbursement was made out the king's own money. It is not surprising therefore that the words of the scroll caused him much religious and spiritual agony, so much so that he sent to Huldah the Prophetess to find out what was the significance of the discovery.

Huldah lived in Yerusalayim where she conducted her own Bet Midrash; some authorities hold that it was limited to women scholars only. Her grave there was one of the few that weren't opened and destroyed with the return to rebuild the Bet HaMikdash. She was descended for the marriage of Yehoshua and Rachav of Jericho as was her contemporary, Yirmiyahu HaNavi. Shaar Huldah in the Eastern wall of Yerushalayim, was named after her. It stands at the summit of the 15 steps on each of which the Levites sang one Shir HaMaalot, the song of degrees-steps every day. Given that Yirmiyahu was around, why did not Yoshiyahu send to him, to inquire what the significance of the find at this particular moment was? Some have given the prophet's youthful age as a reason, since nobody would heed the words of such a young man. Others tell us that Yirmiyahu had gone to return the exiled Ten Tribes and that Yoshiyahu later ruled over them together with the kingdom of Judah. The major reason seems to be the fact that women are far more merciful and kind than men and that therefore they hoped that the approach to Hulda HaNevi'ah would perhaps result in a kinder decree. (Megila 4).

Yoshiyahu had sent to her to pray for them even as the Tanach is filled with examples of other leaders who had approached a prophet to pray in times of danger and persecution. This was one of the tasks of the prophets in Israel and we find that from Moshe on they all fulfilled it. Shmuel stressed this role when he departed from the people after giving them the king they had asked for: "G-d forbid that I should now desist from praying for you".

Yoshiyahu had asked Hulda what would G-d's anger kindle and forthcoming as a result of the non-observance of the Covenant as promised in the scroll, mean to him and what would it mean for Israel. Chazal saw it as a shortcoming that Hulda showed great disrespect to the king when she answered. She never referred to him by name rather as that man who sent you even not granting him his royal title; when she does refer to the king, it is to an anonymous one. "There are two prophetesses who were arrogant and therefore they both have derogatory names, Devorah was arrogant when she sent for Barak instead of going to him, that is a bee, and Hulda that is the feminine form of rat, for ignoring Yoshiyahu's kingly title and his very name" (Rabbi Nachman, Megila 14b).

The nation was told that the destruction and exile foretold in the Torah (Vayikra 26:14-46 and D'varim 28:1-69) were imminent, the strengthening of the Temple and its purification notwithstanding. However, Yoshiyahu's piety, his pursuit of the Jewish kingly mission to do righteousness and justice both towards Heaven and towards Mankind, and his dedication to

Torah, all despite the example of his father Amon and his grandfather Menashe, earned the postponement of the destruction of the Temple till after his death.

This is the 66th installment in Dr. Tamari's series on "Tanach and its messages for our times"

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[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 I want to walk to my synagogue, which is 4 kilometers away (within city limits) on Shabbat, but I learned that one may not walk beyond 2,000 amot [almost a kilometer, assuming an ama is 48 cm. / 19 in.]. Do I need an eiruv or multiple eiruvim, and how do I make it?

A Not many people understand the laws of eiruv techumin (=ET; the halachic device that allows one to walk where he otherwise could not). Let us summarize the basics, based primarily on Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 396,398, and 408.

The Torah forbids one to "leave his place on the seventh day" (Shemot 16:29). A person's place is defined as the area of a city, which, regarding the laws of Shabbat, is based on Bnei Yisrael's encampment in the desert (24,000 amot, squared). Based on smaller city-areas found elsewhere in the Torah, the Rabbis forbade walking more than 2,000 amot (=2Kam) in any direction from his place of inhabitation or base (Rambam, Shabbat 27:1). An ET does not increase the distance one is allowed to walk. Rather, it redetermines a person's base for Shabbat, from which we count the 2Kam that he can walk. (We "draw a box", north-south/east-west, whose closest points are 2Kam from the end of the base on each side. "Walking diagonally" one can exceed 2Kam.)

Let us investigate what a person's base is. Every person's minimum base is the 4 amot around him. However, if a person is in an area that is fully enclosed for the purpose of human inhabitation, that whole area is his base from which we count 2Kam. When an area is surrounded by a valid eiruv chatzerot (which allows carrying in the streets) the whole area is the minimum base of all within. Even without one, a string of continuous inhabitation is considered a city and is the base of those who start Shabbat within it. They can walk throughout the area and "make the box" outside its boundaries. The

complicated things are determining whether someplace is an uninterrupted area and determining its boundaries. The local rabbi(s) should make this determination after studying the area's layout, as the geometric/ halachic rules are difficult.

We will mention a couple of rules, after pointing out that conventional halachic wisdom is that within built up, residential areas of cities, one can usually walk to wherever he has occasion. An adjacent area of 70l amot rings every house, and counts as its extension. Where the extensions of two houses overlap (i.e. they are separated by less than 223 ft.), they create a link that expands the city. After determining a block of inhabitation, one encloses it (assuming its boundaries are jagged) in a north-south/east-west rectangle. This usually increases the block's size significantly (and, according to some, connects it to other areas). An "outer box" is "drawn" 2Kam around the rectangle. Even if the "outer box" extends into a new block, one cannot walk further.

It may be advantageous for one to make his "place," from where we determine his personal "outer box," somewhere other than the location where he lives. This can be done either by being physically present in the place he wants when Shabbat begins or by placing food there and making a proper proclamation of intent. The latter is the ET. One can be based in only one place for Shabbat, and therefore, multiple eiruvim do not work concurrently. The person must be physically within the 2Kam radius of his ET-created base, or else he cannot walk anywhere. If he puts the ET, say, 1500 amot west of his location, he will be able to walk 3,500 amot to the west but only 500 to the east. In your case, if you put an ET in a block that extends within 2Kam of your location on one side and 2Kam of the synagogue on another, you can walk more than 4,000 amot, as the entire middle block, no matter how large it is, is the base that "does not take up space."

Your local rabbi will tell you whether an eiruv is needed and will work in your situation. If so, he will teach you where and how to place it.

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] Candle by Day

Did you ever say "Thank You " to G-d?

I don't mean "Great is the grandeur of Your glory" or "Blessed be the Keeper of this clod",

But simply, "Thank You", with no added story;

If you haven't, then re-appraise your attitude,

For though you've paid Him praise,

You owe Him gratitude.

- From A Candle by Day by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

[3] CHIZUK and IDUD

(for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively)

In the opening verses of this week's parsha, God describes the impending redemption from Egypt, using the famous 4

expressions (Sh'mot 6:6,7). In the next verse, God adds a fifth expression, the promise to bring the children of Israel to the land of Israel. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 111a) describes the relationship with this fifth declaration in a perplexing way:

Rabbi Simai said: The verse says: "And I will take you unto me as a nation," and it says: "And I will bring you to the land." This connects their exodus from Egypt with their arrival in Israel. Just as only two men out of 600,000 ultimately arrived in Israel [Yehoshua and Calev], so too their departure from Egypt actually concerned only two out of 600,000.

How can this be correct? We certainly know that more than two Jews were taken out of Egypt? Rabbi Simai is not rewriting history. Instead, he is telescoping it to teach us a powerful lesson about the merit of Eretz Israel. If the final stage of redemption was the delivery of the Jews to Israel, then technically God performed all of His miracles for only two (out of 600,000) people - the two that left Egypt and actually entered Israel 40 years later. God changed the world's natural and political order so that two men would enter the land. Just think then how much He must cherish all those who have chosen to live in Eretz Israel in our day.

Rabbi Steven Ettinger, Hashmona'im

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

[4] Torah from Nature • LICE - KINIM

Louse (singular) is the common name for members of either of two distinct orders of wingless, parasitic, disease- carrying insects. Lice of both groups are small and flattened with short legs adapted for clinging to the host. The sucking lice, of the order Anoplura, are external parasites of humans and other mammals, feeding on blood by means of their piercing-and-sucking mouth- parts. The group includes the body lice and head lice, considered varieties of the same species, *Pediculus humanus*, and the crab louse, named for its crab like appearance. A female sucking louse lays about 300 eggs, or nits, in her lifetime, cementing them to body hairs and underclothing... the life cycle takes about 16 days... The chewing or biting lice, of the order Mallophaga, have chewing mouth parts and feed on hair, skin, or feather fragments of the host. They attack birds, rodents, and domesticated animals... Lice are in the phylum Arthropoda, class Insecta... Head lice need human blood to survive... spread easily from person to person by direct contact... they are not spread to humans from pets or other animals... can infest anyone, regardless of personal hygiene... Head lice develop in three forms: nits, nymphs, and adults. Nits are head lice eggs. They are hard to see and are often mistaken for dandruff or droplets of hair spray. Nits are found firmly attached to the hair shaft. They are oval and usually yellow to white. Nits take about 1 week to hatch. Nits hatch into nymphs. Nymphs are immature adult head lice. Nymphs mature into adults about 7 days after hatching. To live, nymphs must feed on blood. Adult lice can live up to 30 days on a person's head. To live, adult lice need to feed on blood. If a louse falls off a person, it dies within 2 days. Lice do not jump or fly.

[5] MicroUlpan

An intersection of two roads, which has four "arms" is called a TZOMET. What about a "T" or "Y" intersection with only three "arms" converging has a different name. MIS-AF.

And speaking of TZOMET - what's its plural? TZ'MATIM

To make a star-shaped cookie, for example, you use a cookie cutter on the dough. And in Hebrew? MEIKAD

[6] **Nechama** - Trauma & Bereavement Counseling

ASK THE COUNSELOR

Q A good friend of mine died recently and I miss her terribly. I feel I have no right to really mourn her. After all look at her mother and husband and children and siblings. How can I complain to them how much I miss her? And yet I felt that I should have been sitting shiva with the family and have had people comfort me as well. My husband thinks I'm being ridiculous and yet I feel so sad and depressed and angry. Is this normal or am I over reacting?

A Please accept my condolences on the loss of your very close friend. You are what comes under the category of what we call: "a disenfranchised mourner", i.e. although the death of your friend has affected your life in a very real sense you are not able to mourn her in any religious or socially acceptable way. (Other such losses include: the death of an ex-husband or wife, death of a pet, loss of a Rabbi, teacher, co-worker etc.) You may even have felt closer to her than some members of her family who sat shiva. It can be almost devastating.

Your feelings are legitimate. You are sad because you have lost something special and important to you and it is irretrievable. You are missing your friend very much and as of now you have no one or nothing to fill the vacuum her death has caused in your life.

You are probably depressed because you have no way to vent your anger at the fact that she has left you and that no one understands how much it hurts. Depression is usually anger that we turn inward when we feel unable to do act on our feelings and the anger at feeling helpless can be debilitating. You may be angry at her family that they didn't invite you to "be with them" or at your own family for not accepting how you feel, or your mutual friends who don't feel like you do. But a little examination will reveal its source. Often time itself can help, but not always.

I would say that you should give yourself time to mourn. Feel the sadness. Feel the loss. Don't try to fight it. You can cry or write her a goodbye letter or share memories with members of her family or whatever feels good to you. (A few sessions with a bereavement counselor could be very helpful in moving the process along.)

As the pain begins to subside I suggest that you find some way to memorialize her; whether it be a regular shiur in her memory or by donating money or the like to a charity you both would have supported. It could be to get a group of your mutual friends together and take on some project in her memory. The act of doing will relieve some of the helplessness that we all feel in the face of death.

NECHAMA is a non-profit organization that provides counseling for those who have lost a loved one. Call (02) 573-4413 or (02) 651-8319.

*To address a question to NECHAMA,
email: counselor@nechamaIsrael.org*

[7] **Divrei Menachem**

Parshat Va'eira forces us to reflect on our motivations in life and to what extent circumstances color our views of what goes on around us. For, although Moshe speaks plainly to the people, reiterating Hashem's promises to redeem them, "they did not heed Moshe from shortness of breath and hard work" (Sh'mot 6:9).

Most of the commentators concur that this lack of response was not an indication of unfaithfulness. Rather, the Jews did not, could not, respond favorably because of the extreme pressures that they faced. For the Sforno, however, Bnei Yisra'el displayed an insufficiency of spirit that cost them the privilege of their generation entering Eretz Yisra'el.

Moshe, for his part, rationalized yet again that his own speech defect was at fault, for despite his having presented his case, there was nothing to show for it (ibid 6:12).

No wonder then that the Torah stresses the Divine imperative that propelled Moshe and Aharon forward: "Hashem commanded them regarding Bnei Yisrael and Pharaoh... [and] they were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh" (ibid 6:13;27). It seems that not only Moshe and Aharon needed to internalize this principle; but so did Pharaoh and Bnei Yisrael and their offspring - until the present day.

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.

Thoughts on Korbanot Rosh Chodesh

The Torah says, "On a day of your gladness, and on your festivals, and on your New Moons, you shall sound the trumpets over your Olot (burnt elevation) offerings... (Bamidbar 10:10). Interestingly, the Musafim (the "additional" Korbanot sacrificed on the Chag, Shabbat, and Rosh Chodesh) on Rosh Chodesh and Pesach and Shavu'ot were identical: two bullocks, one ram, seven lambs for Olot (10 animals), and one he-goat for a Chatat, a sin offering. The Chatat offered on New Moon was an atonement for the inadvertent ritual contamination of the Mikdash and/or consecrated foods such as sacrificial meat by Kohanim, Leviyim or Yisra'elim. Since the Chatat had a higher level of Kedusha (sanctity) than did Musafim, it was offered first, that is immediately after the morning Tamid. If Rosh Chodesh fell on Shabbat, the Musafim of both Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat (two lambs) were offered, with Musaf of Shabbat going first. On that day, the Levitical choir sang only Shir Shel Yom of Rosh Chodesh and this was to emphasize the importance of Rosh Chodesh. The Leviyim did not sing Mizmor Shir Shel Yom HaShabbat.

On Rosh Chodesh, King Saul and his entourage had a festive banquet to which David, though invited, refrained from attending. King Saul, upon noticing David's absence said, "...he is (ritually) impure, surely he is impure." Radak and Ralbag raise the possibility that the meat ingested at Saul's Rosh Chodesh feast were from Sh'lamim sacrifices. (Before the building of the Beit HaMikdash, Korbanot could be offered up on "private altars" anywhere in Eretz Yisrael). This would explain why it was necessary for the invitees to be in a state of

ritual purity. Previously, Saul's son Jonathan had told David, "And on the third day... come to the place where you hid yourself in the day of work (i.e. the day before Rosh Chodesh) (Shmu'el Alef 20:19). Rashi quotes the Targum (Aramaic translation) of R. Yonatan ben Uziel which translates Beyom Hama'aseh as Beyoma Dechola. The day before Rosh Chodesh is considered an ordinary work day but Rosh Chodesh itself is not a work day. The prophet Amos describes how dishonest merchants cried out. "When will the New Moon be gone, that we may sell grain... and falsify the balances of deceit? (Amos 8:5). These unscrupulous merchants may have been cheats, but they "kept" Rosh Chodesh! Rosh Chodesh was celebrated by a suspension of productive labor and trading. On Rosh Chodesh, David's family celebrated a Zevach Mishpacha - a family sacrifice - in Beit Lechem, their home town (Shmu'el Alef 20:29). On Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat women would go to the Navi for spiritual instruction. The husband of the "great woman" of Shunem was surprised when his wife expressed a desire to visit Elisha HaNavi during the middle of the week. "Wherefore wilt thou go to him today? It is neither New Moon nor Shabbat" (Melachim Bet 4:23). In the beginning of the Bayit Sheini period, the Anshei K'nesset HaGedola ordained that, similar to Chol Hamo'ed, four men would be called up to the Torah on Rosh Chodesh. These sages wished to accentuate the fact that Rosh Chodesh and Chol Hamo'ed were in their eyes not work days. (On Mondays and Thursdays, which are work days, only three men are called up to the Torah.) Nevertheless, the popular observance of Rosh Chodesh seems to have declined during and after the Babylonian exile. One interesting theory was that as long as the Musaf of Rosh Chodesh was offered in Bayit Rishon, the Isur Melacha (prohibition of work) was in force, but with the suspension of the Bayit Rishon Musaf, the Isur fell into abeyance. Yechezkel HaNavi indeed prophesies that "the people of the land shall worship at that gate (oft he restored Beit HaMikdash) before G-d on the Sabbaths and on the New Moons (Yechezkel 46:3). But standing by the rivers of Babylon, Yechezkel already places Shabbat before Rosh Chodesh. Today men are permitted to work on Rosh Chodesh but women are permitted to do only what is "really necessary". The Midrash notes, "When the men came to remove the golden earrings from the ears of their wives to make the golden calf... the women refused and would not give their jewelry to their husbands to make the calf. They said, 'To make an abomination which is an abhorrence and which has no power to help! We will not listen to you. Therefore the Holy One Blessed be He gave the women a reward in this world, they were exempted from working on Rosh Chodesh. In the Future World, women will be renewed monthly as is the moon (Perkei De'rabbi Eliezer 45).

In an extraordinary Gemara, R. Simeon ben Pazi points out a contradiction (between the beginning and the end of Bereishit 1:16). "One verse says, 'And G-d made the two great lights, and then immediately continues, "the greater light... the lesser light". The moon said unto the Holy One Blessed be He, 'Sovereign of the Universe! Is it possible for two kings to wear one crown? He (G-d) answered, 'Go then and make thyself smaller.' 'Sovereign of the Universe! Because I have suggested that which is proper, must I then make myself smaller?' G-d answered, 'Go and thou wilt rule by day and by night.' 'But what is the value of this?' cried the moon, 'Of what use is a lamp in broad daylight'. He replied, 'Go and Israel shall reckon by thee the days and the years.' 'But it is impossible', said the moon, 'to do without the sun for the purpose of reckoning of the seasons, as it is written, 'And let them (the moon and the sun) be for signs, and for seasons,, and for days and years' (Ibid 14).... On

seeing that the moon would not be consoled, the Holy One Blessed be He said, 'Bring an atonement for Me for making the moon smaller.' This is what is meant by R. Shimon ben Lachish when he said, 'Why is it that the Chatat - sin offering he-goat - offered on Rosh Chodesh is distinguished by that it is written concerning it, "unto the Lord" (Bamidbar 28:15). Because the Holy One Blessed be He said, "Let this he-goat be an atonement for Me because I made the moon smaller"' (Chullin 60b). Some authorities postulate that R. Simeon ben Pazi, by means of a parable, is touching on the "secrets of Creation, its 'foundation' and order". The Rif, who seldom comments on Aggadita (the homiletical sections of the Gemara), writes, "this (Chatat) does not atone for the Holy One Blessed be He... rather it atones for Israel... G-d said to the moon, 'in exchange for your diminution, I am bestowing upon you an exceptional honor... that Israel will offer to Me every Rosh Chodesh a Chatat to effectuate atonement for their sins...'". The Maharal notes that the Korban is offered on Rosh Chodesh when the moon is at its smallest. It is peculiarly at this time of humility and self-depreciation, when the moon is but a sliver, a special Korban is offered to effectuate repentance and to symbolize reconciliation with G-d. The Gur Aryeh insists that "it cannot be that the Holy One Blessed be He requires atonement for his acts, as if He did something that He should not have done and is contrite" (Bamidbar 28:15).

Perhaps we should look at this Gemara from a totally different vantage point altogether. Even if HaKadosh Boruch Hu does not really "sin", nevertheless, by asking that a Korban Chatat be offered on His behalf, He points the way to repentance.

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

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-TTtriddles 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 (SH'MOT) 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

And the envelope, please...

- [1] Names is Sh'mot, S'fardi names means the haftara of Sh'mot according to the S'fardi tradition. Which is, first chapter of Yirmiyahu. Which Ashkenazim read on the first Shabbat after 17 Tamuz, which is either Parshat Pinchas or Matot. EB and YYK both solved this one (and most of the others).

[2] Eliezer took out silver and gold vessels for Rivka's family. Bnei Yisrael got silver and gold vessels (and other things) on their way out of Mitzrayim, as prophesied in Parshat Sh'mot.

[3] One of the things in the Torah that say "Make a TTriddle out of me" is a distinctive phrase that has relatively reoccurrences. One such phrase from Parshat Sh'mot was VAYISHMA ELOKIM, and G-d heard (so to speak). It occurs only three times in Tanach: ...ET KOL HANAAR, the voice of the lad, referring to Yishmael. G-d heard Leah's plea (says Rashi, to have more of the Sh'vatim). And G-d heard the cries of Bnei Yisrael, and He remembered His covenant with the Avot... BTW, there are 10 VAYISH- MA HASHEM, but only these 3 VAYISHMA ELOKIM. That's how TTriddles work sometimes.

[4] Similarly (see [3]), The phrase VAYEIRA MAL'ACH HASHEM, and an angel of G-d appeared... is quite rare. The words appear only with Moshe at the Burning Bush and to the wife of Mano'ach, mother of Shimshon. This certainly makes it TTriddle- worthy.

[5] This one was gotten only by EB (as of this writing) and earns him a perfect score this week and top honors. By his own admission, this one took him a good while, but he got it. The key word is ANOCHI. The word appears 293 times in Tanach. That is definitely too often for making a good TTriddle. But, if we look at only those times that ANOCHI is the first word of a pasuk or the last, then we've got it. As a first word, it most refers to G-d, but once to Yehuda (who was committing himself to being responsible for Binyamin), and once when Moshe Rabeinu tells the people that he stands between G-d and them... As a last word, it was used by KAYIN when he arrogantly asked if he was his brother's keeper, when Eliezer announced that he was Avraham's servant, when Rachel said she would die if she had no children, and when Moshe declared himself as having a speech impediment (or whatever K'VAD PEH means). There is something powerful with the word ANOCHI, in contrast with ANI, that calls our attention - for TTriddles, and for more serious analysis.

[6] This one too is based on a word and the curiosity as to other occurrences. VATEIRED, and she went down... The word is used for the four mentioned women, with Par'o's daughter being given her other name for this TTriddle, rather than Bat Par'o. Speaking of which, in Divrei HaYamim, she is called BITYA. If anyone knows how the name BATYA came about, let us know.

[7] Top-center of the ParshaPix was a flint arrow- head. It stands for the TZOR that Tzipora used to circumcise her son, thereby saving Moshe's life.

[8] The other graphic turned out to be much easier than it was supposed to be, because it can be solved without knowing what the graphic really is. This was a reference to the haftara, where the phrase TZZAV LATZAV TZAV LATZAV, KAV LAKAV KAV LAKAV appears twice. It is an ear-catching sequence of words. Turtle is a play on TZAV, with turtle being spelled TZADI-VET and the words from the haftara are with VAVs. The turtle and lines are from an old graphics drawing program for computers called LOGO. But that's what you didn't have to know.

Readers of this column are requested not to be intimidated by the likes of EB or YYW, and to send in solutions even for a couple of TTriddles. We like giving prizes to new solvers.

This week's TTriddles:

- [1] This word might explain the Birds' Head Hagada
- [2] Moshe's cousin: two brothers in Va'eira;his namesake's two partners in book 23
- [3] Father and sons aliteration champs
- [4] It uniquely extends the commonest pasuk
- [5] Va'eira connection to 7th or 8th Chanuka candle
- [6] Partners in two plagues, the result of another, and a later battle
- [7] Used several times in Torah and Nach to verify a certain knowledge
- [8] plus 3 elements from the ParshaPix

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