

Vayeira is the 47th day (of 354); the 7th Shabbat (of 50) of 5766

...וַיִּלְכְּדוּ שְׂפֵיחֵיהֶם יְיָ: בראשית כ"ב, ח

Fine-tuning Our Mitzvot

The opening passage of Vayeira is always pointed to as being the source (or at least one of the sources) of two different acts of Chessed - Bikur Cholim and Hachnasat Orchim, visiting the sick, and hospitality. (Hey, note the word hospital in the latter and its appropriateness for the former.) The first we learn from G-d; the second from Avraham.

It is not only the general mitzva, good deed, act of kindness - whatever we choose to call visiting the sick and hospitality, as well as the many other forms of G'milut Chasadim - but some of the details, as well.

For example, we learn that G-d made the day (third day following Avraham's Mila) exceptionally hot, so that the ailing Avraham would not be bothered by visitors. Then we are taught that G-d saw that Avraham was disappointed and upset that there were no passers-by, so He sent the angels in the guise of people Avraham's way.

You visit someone who needs bedrest and quiet. You take his phone off the hook so that he won't be disturbed. Nice gesture, but what if that particular person thrives on the social contact of phone calls? You commiserate with the person you are visiting. But what if that upsets her? In short, we must think out a visiting strategy to hope to accomplish the purpose of Bikur Cholim, and not the opposite. Even G-d, so to speak, used trial-and-error with Avraham.

Avraham was hospitable, to say the least. He involved his wife. He involved his child. He said little and did much, rather than the other way around. He treated his guests royally. He escorted them on their departure.

These, and other details are the nuts and bolts of hospitality. We need to work on them, not just the broad concept of Hachnasat Orchim. When to offer. When to push a little. When to ease off. How best to make your guests comfortable. Do mitzvot intelligently.

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...

As the first copies of this TT "hit the stands", so to speak, the last opportunity for Kiddush L'vana just past. We will be benching Rosh Chodesh, IY"H, next Shabbat. So let's take a look at some of the dates in Cheshvan coming up.



17 Cheshvan - more than 4100 years ago, the MABUL began. Also the date, according to the mishna in Taanit, that if it hasn't rained by that date (this year, it already has), individuals would accept fast days upon themselves to ask for beneficial rain in a more serious manner.

19 Cheshvan, according to the AR'I z"l is the date on which Kayin killed Hevel. This makes 19 Cheshvan the anniversary of the world's first death, first murder, and the oldest yearzeit possible. (Others dispute the timing of Hevel's death.)

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Standard (Winter) time

Correct for TT 691 • Rabbeinu Tam (I'm) - 5:54pm	
4:03pm	Jerusalem
4:19pm	Raanana
4:19pm	Beit Shemesh
4:18pm	Netanya
4:19pm	Rehovot
4:00pm	Petach Tikva
4:18pm	Modi'in
4:21pm	Be'er Sheva
4:18pm	Gush Etzion
4:18pm	Ginot Shomron
4:03pm	Maale Adumim
4:19pm	K4 & Hevron
4:10pm	Tzfat

Ranges are FRI-FRI 16-23 Cheshvan (Nov 18-25)

Earliest Talit & T'filin - 5:17-5:23am
Sunrise - 6:10-6:16am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma - 8:47-8:51am (8:00-8:04am)
Sof Z'man T'fila - 9:39-9:42am (9:08-9:11am)
Chatzot (halachic noon) - 11:24½-11:26am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 11:55-11:57am
Plag Mincha - 3:33-3:32pm
Sunset - 4:43½-4:41pm (4:38-4:36pm)

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Shabbat afternoon Shiur
3:00pm, followed by Mincha
at 4:00pm
Rabbi Binyamin Wolff



VAYEIRA STATS

4th of the 54 sedras; 4th of 12 sedras in B'reishit
 Written on 252 lines in a Sefer Torah, ranks 5th
 6 Parshiyot; 4 open, 2 closed (pssppp)
 147 p'sukim - ranks 7th (4th in B'reishit)
 2085 words - ranks 2nd (first in B'reishit)
 7862 letters - ranks 3rd (2nd in B'reishit)
 P'sukim above average in length (i.e number of words and number of letters) explain its rise in rankings from p'sukim to words (and letters).
 Vayeira is actually 2nd largest sedra in the Torah. (Naso, is #1 with no rival - Bamidbar, Pinchas, and R'ei all take up more lines than Vayeira, but those sedras each have many parshiyot, which means a lot of blank space between parshiyot which adds to the number of lines.)

MITZVOT:

None of the 613 mitzvot are in Vayeira, however, as mentioned often, there are Midot and values and other lessons to be learned.

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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 - 14 p'sukim - 18:1-14

[P> 18:1 (71)] And G-d appeared to him (Avraham)...

SDT The use of the pronoun "him" rather than using the name Avraham is significant. EILAV (to him) refers us back to the previous parsha - Avraham's circumcision at the end of Lech L'cha, indicating that the purpose of G-d's appearing to Avraham was Bikur Cholim, visiting the sick. Furthermore, the fact that the Torah does not indicate that G-d said anything to Avraham at this "appearance", tells us that He had another purpose, viz. Bikur Cholim. This how the commentaries teach us that G-d was visiting the sick, even though the written word does not say that at all.

He is sitting at the entrance of his tent (watching for travelers to welcome) in the heat of the day.

SDT It was unnaturally hot; that was G-d's doing, to spare Avraham the bother of visitors, He removed the sun from its envelope... However, Avraham is distressed by the absence of visitors, so G-d sends three angels to him in the guise of wayfarers. As mentioned in the Lead Tidbit, we have to be careful to do for others - especially the ill and elderly - what THEY want, not what WE want, and not what we THINK they want.

Avraham sees the three "men" and runs to greet them, after asking G-d to wait for him (so to speak). (From here we are taught the greatness of the mitzva of Hachnasat Orchim.)

This is one of the ways to interpret the pasuk - that ADO-NAI means G-d, and that Avraham was addressing Him. ADONAI can also mean "my sirs", in which case Avraham could have been speaking to the men/angels. Each possibility causes minor awkwardness in the flow of the p'sukim. The word is considered holy (meaning the first opinion prevails), and Sofrim write it with the Kavana for G-d's name, but some say that one should use a conditional "sanctification". This is a touchy subject for Sofrim, since G-d's names are written with a special declaration of sanctity, and words that are not His names are not supposed to be sanctified.

SDT "Speak little, but do much." This maxim from Pirkei Avot is manifest in Avraham Avinu's behavior. He offers the angels a bit of water and some bread, but in fact prepares for them (with the help of Sara and Yishmael) a sumptuous meal. The Mishna states that Avraham's meal for the strangers was proportionally greater than even the feast of Shlomo HaMelech in celebration of the building of the Beit HaMikdash. Avraham and Sarah are the ultimate models for hospitality, one of the hallmarks of the Jewish People.

One of the angels informs Avraham of the pending birth of Yitzchak. Sara's reaction is to laugh (a slight doubt in the ability of a 100 year old to father a child and of a 90 year old woman to give birth). G-d asks Avraham why Sara would doubt His ability to permit an old woman to conceive.

SDT Rabbi Yehuda says in the name of Rav (in Bava M'tzi'a): What Avraham did for his guests by himself, G-d did for the People of Israel by Himself; what Avraham did via another, G-d did likewise. Avraham said: YUKACH NA M'AT MAYIM. Rashi explains the strange grammatical form by saying that Avraham did not provide the water to the strangers himself (it does not say K'CHU...) So too, when G-d was to provide water to Avraham's descendants, He commanded Moshe Rabeinu to throw the stick into the water, to strike the rock, to speak to the rock. But Avraham fed the angels himself - "and I will get the bread, etc." When G-d needed to feed the People, He provided us with Manna. Moshe did not bring it about. G-d gave it straight to the People.

Levi - Second Aliya - 19 p'sukim - 18:15-33

Sara would like to deny that she laughed (and doubted), but she cannot.

The three angels each had a single task: One to heal Avraham, one to announce the birth of Yitzchak (both missions accomplished), the third to destroy S'dom. That angel is now accompanied by R'fael, whose new task is to save Lot and family. Avraham escorts the angels on their way to S'dom.

SDT Once again, we learn the proper behavior of a host from Avraham: part of hospitality is to escort your guests as they leave your home. It is even said that escorting out is greater than welcoming.

HaShem next tells Avraham of his intention to destroy S'dom. Avraham pleads and bargains on their behalf, but there aren't enough righteous people to save the cities.

The dialog between Avraham and HaShem is an astounding (and unique) example of the close relationship between them.

SDT Avraham's expression of humility before G-d is "and I am dust and ash". Says the Gemara, because of Avraham's humility, his children merited two mitzvot - the ash of the Para Aduma and the dust of the Sota. Torah T'mima explains that the Para Aduma ash is the symbol of spiritual purity (which can be thought of as the realm of "between the Jew and G-d" mitzvot). The hopeful outcome of the Sota procedure is Shalom Bayit, being a major example of interpersonal relationships. Thus the reward for Avraham covers the whole range of Jewish life.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 20 p'sukim - 19:1-20

The two angels arrive in S'dom and are taken in by Lot. [The nephew of Avraham Avinu has learned something from his uncle.] The people of S'dom demonstrate their evil nature. It is clear from the p'sukim as well as Midrashim and commentaries, that Lot was not sufficiently pious or believing in his own right, but he compared favorably with the people among whom he lived.

SDT The word "and he lingered" is read with the rare trup mark, the shalsholet, which musically emphasizes the

reluctance of Lot to (believe what he was told by the angels and) leave. The same word is used in contrast to this behavior of Lot, in describing the haste with which the Children of Israel left Egypt at G-d's command, symbolized by the matza which they hastily baked rather than linger for the dough to rise and produce a "proper" bread demonstrating their faith and confidence in G-d. Interesting, is it not, that Lot is described as baking matzot for the visitors. Rashi's comment: It was Pesach.

Lot is led out of the city by the angels, his wife and two daughters with him. They are told to flee for their lives, without looking back at the destruction of the cities. Lot pleads for permission to seek refuge closer by.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 40 p'sukim - 19:21-21:4

2nd longest R'vi'i in the Torah

Once Lot and family are safely away, the destruction of S'dom takes place. Lot's wife looks back - against orders - and turns into a pillar of salt. (Her punishment is specifically with salt as a measure-for-measure for her stinginess when guests were around. See Portion of the Portion, page 29)

From the episode of Lot's wife, we can draw the following point. Lot and family were worthy of being spared the destruction of S'dom, but they were not worthy enough to be able to witness the destruction.

"And Avraham gets up early in the morning to the place where he STOOD before G-d."

SDT Avraham returns to the same spot to speak to G-d. From here is derived the idea of having a MAKOM KAVUA, a fixed place for prayer. The Talmud says: "he who fixes himself a place for davening, the G-d of Avraham will help him".

Of course, more fundamentally, it is this pasuk and another that combine to "support" the Gemara's statement that Avraham instituted T'filat Shacharit. That AMIDA, to stand before G-d, means to pray is learned from VAYA'AMOD PINCHAS VAIPALEIL. And Pinchas stood in prayer (we can say) - T'hilim 106:30. The pasuk here in Vayeira links AMIDA with Avraham Avinu and with early in the morning, hence Shacharit.

The Torah reiterates the point that Lot was saved in the merit of his uncle Avraham Avinu (and Ruth, the "mother of royalty" who was to come from Lot - G-d can work merit either from the past or the future).

Lot's two daughters, having witnessed the total destruction of S'dom, assume that they are the sole survivors of mankind. They plot to get Lot drunk and sleep with him in order to continue humanity. Moav and Amon are the results.

Note that everything that has happened so far in Parshat Vayeira, make up a single long, 71-pasuk parsha. From the arrival of the angels through the completion of the final task of those angels - namely, the destruction of S'dom. Apparently, the different episodes all belong together more than one would initially think. The common thread, of course, is/are the angels. Their tasks are now complete.

[S> 20:1 (18)] Avraham and Sara now travel to G'rar where they again present themselves as brother and sister. Sara is taken to Avimelech, but G-d appears to him and warns him not to touch her. Avimelech confronts Avraham who explains that his fears were based on the lack of "Fear of G-d" in the place.

Avraham then prays on behalf of Avimelech and his people who were stricken with a disease which rendered them temporarily sterile.

From this point (21:1) to the end of Vayeira, is the Torah reading of both days of Rosh HaShana.

[S> 21:1 (21)] G-d fulfills His promise and Sara becomes pregnant. She bears a son to Avraham in his advanced age, and he is called Yitzchak. Avraham circumcises Yitzchak at eight days of age, as G-d has commanded.

Avraham's having prayed on behalf of Avimelech for children is juxtaposed to Sara Imeinu conceiving. Our Sage teach us that selflessly praying for others can sometimes result in the same prayers being answered for yourself.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 21:5-21

Avraham is 100 yrs. old when Yitzchak is born. Avraham makes a great party upon the occasion of his being weaned.

Although the plain understanding of B'YOM HIGAMEIL ET YITZCHAK is "when Yitzchak was weaned" - Rashi says at 24 months of age, there is a REMEZ (hint/clue) in the word HIGAMEIL to a possible other explanation of the word. HEI+GIMMEL = 8 (days), MEM-LAMED, MAL, was circumcised. It can mean that the party in question was to celebrate Yitzchak's BRIT.

As Yitzchak is growing up, Sara notices the potential negative influence of Yishmael and demands of Avraham that he send Yishmael and his mother, Hagar, away. Blinded by his great "kind heart", Avraham has to be told by G-d to listen to Sara. Hagar and Yishmael once again are on the verge of death in the wilderness, but Yishmael's prayers are answered and they are saved. Hagar is assured by an angel that they will survive.

And indeed they do, and Hagar subsequently marries Yishmael off to a woman from the land of Egypt.

Both Hagar and Yishmael prayed to G-d when Yishmael was dying. G-d heard "the lad's voice". Rashi says, from here we learn that the strongest prayer offered on behalf of someone who is ill are those of the sick person himself (if he is able to pray on his own behalf). And, of course, others should pray on his behalf as well, regardless of whether the person himself is able to daven. In fact, there are opinions that Bikur Cholim MUST include a prayer for the recovery of the patient (the visitee) in addition to anything else one does, for the mitzva to be considered properly performed.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 13 p'sukim - 21:22-34

[P> 21:22 (13)] Avimelech and his commander Pichol enter into a pact with Avraham. The pact has to do with wells that Avraham dug, that the servants of Avimelech stole, the return of those wells and the acknowledgment by Avimelech that the wells do actually belong to Avraham. The city of Be'er Sheva receives its name from the double meaning of the 7 sheep used as tokens of the covenant and the oath sworn between them.

Avraham plants an "Eshel" in Be'er Sheva. In addition to being a type of tree, the word ESHEL is considered an acronym of the Hebrew words for Food, Drink, and Lodgings (or Food, Sleeping, Escort). ESHEL AVRAHAM is the symbol of hospitality for all times.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 24 p'sukim - 22:1-24

[P> 22:1 (19)] This is the portion of the Binding of Isaac - Akeidat Yitzchak. The Akeida is one of the few passages from the Torah to be incorporated into our daily davening (there are those who did not include it in their davening, and there are siddurim that don't have it, but most siddurim put the Akeida with an intro and closing prayer, after the morning brachot and before korbanot). It represents the ultimate manifestation of commitment to and love of G-d. It also belongs to the portion of the davening called KORBANOT for obvious reasons. And then there is the idea of a tribute to the originator of Shacharit.

Although none of Avraham's descendants (we, the Jewish People) can ever be tested in so drastic a way (because we have the experiences of our predecessors to give us strength), we do derive tremendous inspiration from this portion of the Torah. It is part of our Heritage and, even more, part of our Essence. Tests of Faith are relative to the individual. Each of us is challenged in different ways throughout our lives. This is also so for us as a Nation. May we be always guided by deep commitment to Torah and Jewish values.

MORE. Akeidat Yitzchak is our identity card. It defines who we are... even when our own behavior is contradictory to our Torah standards. We stand before G-d on Judgment Day - Rosh HaShana, and we blow the Shofar made from a ram's horn. We ask G-d to remember Akeidat Yitzchak and have mercy on His (sometimes undeserving) children. We read the Akeida in the Torah and we refer to it repeatedly in our Rosh HaShana davening and Slichot, to inspire us and to identify us.

[P> 22:20 (5)] The parsha ends with mention of the birth of Rivka, to serve as a link to the next phase of the development of Judaism - viz., the means of its transmission and continuity.

Maftir is the final five p'sukim.

Haftara - 37 p'sukim - Melachim Bet - 4:1-37

The sedra shows us the sharp contrast between the kindness and hospitality of Avraham & Sara on the one hand, and the cruel "business is business" and "what's in it for me" nature of S'dom. The haftara is about the widow of a prophet who was facing losing her two children because of her poverty and the twisted state of Israel's society that lost sight of the legacy of Avraham and Sara. The prophet Elisha performs a miracle and the family is spared that plight.

The haftara also tells of the Shunamite woman who prayed so fervently for a son. She had a son but he died. He is miraculously resuscitated by Elisha. This forms a counterpart to the birth of Yitzchak and the subsequent almost- losing him at the Akeida.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW - Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 307 (part four)

TORTS

We come to a topic discussed in the Talmud and frequently studied by students who are beginning the exciting, thrilling life's adventure of studying Gemara (Talmud Baba Kama 31b).

In halacha, this chapter is known as "Pedestrians Carrying Wares Collide in the Street".

This lesson is a continuation of the prior lessons dealing with torts, in that it discusses individuals, such as Reuven and Shimon, walking in a public place, such as a street, each one holding an object. They collide with one another and Shimon's object is damaged. Is Reuven liable to compensate Shimon for the damages?

Following the tradition of several millennia of halacha, Reuven is carrying a wooden beam in the street and Shimon is carrying a jug and walking alongside or toward Reuven. Somehow Reuven's beam impacts on Shimon's jug and the jug breaks. Reuven is not liable since both Reuven and Shimon have the right to walk in a public street. However, if Shimon stops walking and Reuven's beam breaks the jug that Shimon is carrying, then Reuven is liable.

Assume that Reuven is walking in the street carrying his beam and Shimon walks behind him carrying a jug. Shimon walks into Reuven's beam and the jug breaks, Reuven is not liable since Reuven has the same right to walk in the street as Shimon does. However if Reuven stops short to rest and gives no warning to those walking behind him, and then Shimon – not realizing that Reuven has stopped — walks into Reuven and breaks his jug, then Reuven is liable. Anyone carrying a beam in a public street should anticipate that there are others walking there and that if he stops suddenly others may bump into him. If Reuven signaled or gave warning that he was about to stop and Shimon walks into Reuven breaking his jug on Reuven's beam, then Reuven is not liable. Similarly, if Reuven, instead of stopping to rest, merely pauses to shift the beam on his shoulders, and Shimon walks into him, Reuven is not liable. The theory is that Reuven is so preoccupied with shifting the heavy beam that he has no time to give warning or signal that he is

stopping. It is difficult to prove whether Reuven stopped to rest or to shift the beam. The burden of proof would have to be on Shimon, since he is the plaintiff in suing Reuven for his jug and its contents.

Assume that Shimon is walking in the street carrying his jug and Reuven walks behind him carrying a beam. Reuven walks into Shimon's jug and the jug breaks. Reuven is liable. Reuven is considered to be negligent that it is almost as if he intentionally broke Shimon's jug. However, if Shimon stops short to rest and gives no warning or signal to those walking behind him, and then Reuven, not realizing that Shimon has stopped, walks into Shimon and Shimon's jug breaks, then Reuven is not liable. Shimon is deemed to be contributory negligent. If Shimon signaled or gave warning that he was about to stop and Reuven walks into Shimon breaking the jug on Reuven's beam, then Reuven is liable. Similarly if Shimon, instead of stopping to rest merely pauses to shift the jug on his shoulders and Reuven walks into Shimon, Reuven is liable. The theory of this last law is that Shimon is so preoccupied with shifting the jug that he has no time to give warning that he is stopping.

The halacha is similar in related cases, such as when Reuven is carrying a lighted torch and Shimon is carrying flax.

In Shulhan Aruch, the next chapter deals with damaging objects with the owner's permission. Reuven is in possession of Shimon's garment or jug. Shimon tells Reuven to tear Shimon's garment or break his jug and if he does so he will be free of liability. Reuven does so; he is free of liability. There is a second opinion that holds Reuven free of liability even if Shimon did not tell him specifically that he would be free of liability if he accedes to the request to tear his garment but rather Shimon indicates as much. For example, Shimon asks Reuven to tear his garment and Reuven asks if he will be free of liability if he does so. Even if Shimon says "No", it is assumed that Shimon is being sarcastic. In cases of doubt Reuven is free of liability to Shimon. Even in cases where Reuven is free of liability to Shimon, both of them are guilty of wasting assets.

However, if Shimon does not state that Reuven will be free of liability, or according to the second opinion of the prior paragraph, Shimon does not indicate as much, then if Reuven tears Shimon's garment or breaks his jug, Reuven is liable even though Shimon has instructed him to be destructive. In this situation it is deemed that Shimon was joking when he told Reuven to destroy his object.

Assume that Reuven is not in possession of Shimon's garment and Shimon hands Reuven the garment. Shimon then tells Reuven to tear the garment. Reuven is free of liability if he tears the garment though Shimon did not tell him he would be free of liability if he did so. Shimon tells Reuven to throw Reuven's \$100 note into the sea and that Shimon will reimburse him. There are opposing views as to whether Shimon must pay Reuven the \$100. The opinion that Shimon is liable is based on the theory that Shimon is a guarantor similar to the situation in which Shimon tells Reuven to give Levi \$10 and Shimon will reimburse Reuven. The opinion that holds that Shimon is not liable claims that a guarantor is liable only if someone obtains benefit from his guaranty, which is not the case here. If Shimon gives Reuven his money and tells him to throw it into the sea, and if Reuven does so, Reuven is free of liability to Shimon.

Shimon tells Reuven to break Levi's vessel and Reuven will be free of liability; Reuven does so. Only Reuven must pay Levi for the damage that is caused; Shimon is free of liability to Levi. Even if Shimon told Reuven that he, Shimon, will be liable to

Levi, Shimon is not liable since a person cannot be obligated by mere words to Reuven. Reuven was foolish for listening to Shimon. However, Shimon morally shares with Reuven in the wrongdoing and is an evildoer who has put a stumbling block in the path of his fellow man and encouraged lawbreaking. Furthermore, Reuven is also guilty of wasting an asset.

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume X chapter 379 and 380 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

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 by

Rabbi Asher Meir

Please note: Two weeks ago (Parshat No'ach), Meaning in Mitzvot was on the topic of Carrying between Private and Public Domains. This week's column was supposed to be in last week's issue, as it deals with a related topic. Last week's was supposed to be this week's. Got it?

Carrying between Two Private Domains

Last week (read that as "Two weeks ago") we gave Rav Natan of Breslav's explanation of the Torah prohibition to move objects from public to private domain or the opposite.

The private domain, "domain of the One", represents the realm of holiness and unity; the public domain, "domain of the many", represents the imperfect material world which is under the influence of destructive forces which are far from holiness, as well as sparks of holiness which need to be brought "inside". The melakha of "taking out" represents the responsibility which even a holy person has to sometimes occupy himself with mundane concerns in order to express the holiness which is found in material pursuits; that of "bringing in" represents the responsibility which the worldly person has to seek the spiritual refuge of Torah and the influence of righteous people. However, Shabbat is a day of perfection, and so we refrain from this kind of clarification. (Likutei Halakhot Shabbat 7:30.)

The Sages tell us that King Shlomo added a new decree: he forbade carrying even between two separate private domains, unless they are joined by an eiruv, meaning that they share a physical border (what we call today an eiruv) as well as a symbolic partnership (through jointly owned means for a Shabbat meal, which is what Chazal generally refer to as an eiruv). (Shabbat 14b.)

Rav Natan explains this as follows: Beyond the clarification and rectification of venturing out beyond the realm of holiness into the realm of division and ambiguity, there is a further rectification in which even righteous individuals learn from each other. This is symbolized by carrying from one private domain to another. This is an important part of our process of self-perfection; each individual has unique traits and ability that are worthy of emulation by others.

However, we have to know that there is a limit to this process. One day a week, the Shabbat, it is forbidden to engage in this kind of transfer.

Each person has to acknowledge and appreciate his own

uniqueness; even if our neighbor prays with greater intention, perhaps this aspect of God's service is beyond our abilities and trying to emulate it would only lead to discouragement. Or conversely maybe our neighbor has no trouble maintaining his devotion to mitzvot even in an unusually trying environment, but if we were to venture into his pursuits we would suffer a loss of deveikut, of clinging to holiness.

However, this caution can be dispensed with when we make an eiruv. When two individuals completely break down the barriers between them, by creating a joint enclosure and sharing their Shabbat meal, this guarantees that the interaction between them will be without the jealousy and self-doubt which lead to counterfeit imitation, as opposed to sincere and modest emulation which knows what traits are appropriate to share.

"Then there will be a joining of domains, that [interaction] between him and his fellow will be only for good and not for bad, God forbid; that they will join together and come near one to the other in love and peace, that each will learn from the other for good, to draw close to the Holy One, blessed be He, and not God forbid to distance himself through this." (Likutei Halakhot Shabbat 7:74)

Rabbi Asher Meir has two wonderful books in print - Meaning in Mitzvot (ask for it at your local s'farim store) and The Jewish Ethicist, available at some bookstores and through the Business Ethics Center of Jerusalem, (02) 632-0222. Both works are highly recommended

TANACH

SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN THE BEREISHIT STORIES by Dr. Meir Tamari

HAGAR and YISHMAEL [2]

"And Hagar fled.... and the angel of the Lord found her by a well in the midbar on the way to Shur" (B'reishit 16:6-7). Midbar conjures up visions of the sand dunes of the Sahara or at least some awesome desolation, but the biblical term seems to mean merely a place not suited for irrigated crops and settled populations. We should bear this in mind when we discuss Avraham's sending away Hagar and Ishmael, so that we do not see the usual pictures showing the persecuted pair as cast away in the terrible wastes of a desert. Although modern scholars are divided as to the exact site of Shur, they all agree that it was somewhere en route to Egypt; Hagar was simply doing what every escaping servant or refugee would do, trying to make her way back to her homeland.

Her reaction to the meeting with the angel, was that of somebody used to the presence of Divine messengers; "In the home of Avraham Avinu she had become used to their presence." (B'reishit Rabba). She was neither troubled nor surprised nor frightened by the angel's presence, unlike Mano'ach who expected to die when the angel appeared to him and his wife to tell them of the future birth of Samson (Judges 13:22). Hagar is told by the angel that Hashem has heard her cry of affliction; there is nothing remarkable about that since in all times Hashem hears the prayers of all who cry out to Him; "My House is a House of prayer for all the nations" (Yishayahu 56:7). Yet Hagar also receives Divine revelation concerning Avraham's son that is to be born to her. Revelation to a non-Jew is theologically fascinating and spiritually of great significance, yet common throughout the Tanachic period when prophecy existed in the world. Furthermore, the revelation is remarkably

like that of Avraham's, a promise of a mighty nation of numerous descendants, yet at the same time radically different in that there is no mention either of slavery, redemption and a Promised Land.

Hagar is told to go back to Sarah and suffer under her. In the merit of being in that household she will have a son whom she is to call Yishmael; "The Lord will hear, [as it is written] and He heard the cry of the youth [Yishmael]". However Avraham called him Yishmael since G-d revealed to him the cruelty with which the descendants of Yishmael would deal with Israel and that He would hear their anguished prayers (Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer 32). "Three in Israel were given names before they were born, Yitschak (B'reishit 17:19), Shlomo (Divrei HaYamim 22:9), and Yoshiyahu (M'lachim 13:2). Amongst the nations of the World, Yishmael " (B'reishit Rabba).

It is interesting to note the two different approaches that the commentators have in explaining the angel's prophecy that Yishmael would be a 'pereh adam'. The Midrash, Rashi and Ramban, see it as referring to a wild uncultured violent person given to stealing and robbery, thus earning the enmity of all, as foretold by the angel. "Everybody steals money but he steals souls" (B'reishit Rabba). Modern Hebrew, following them uses the term primarily in the same way. In contrast, Ibn Ezra, Radak, Sforno and S. R. Hirsch, drawing on the grammar of allied texts, see it as referring to a lover of freedom, preferring the wide open spaces of the deserts to urban living and constantly struggling with those who threaten his freedom. "Pere" literally refers to a wild untrainable young donkey as borne out by the many verses using 'pere' in the Nevi'im to describe Israel's rebellious behavior. "'Pere', a trait inherited from his Egyptian mother since he was to live close to Egypt, and 'Adam' from his father Avraham" (Sforno). "Free from human yoke and from the constraints of cities. Nobody will be his friend and still nobody will dare to oppose him" (S. R. Hirsch).

Before returning to the tents of Sarah and Avraham, "Hagar called the Name of G-d that spoke to her: You are a G-d of seeing; Rabbi Abuha said: For You see the suffering of the miserable. For she said: Could I have seen even here after having seen [angels in the home of Avraham]; She said: Not only have I merited revelation, but also the promise of royalty by the angel; I have merited revelation that my mistress did not; Rabbi Shmuel ben Nachman said this is comparable to an important lady at court whom the king commanded to appear before him. She did appear but in her modesty she covered her face. Her maidservant who had no such modesty, merited seeing the face of the king" (B'reishit Rabba on 16:13).

In the very next verse we read: " He [Avraham] called the well, Well of Living One who sees me"; so he added recognition of the transcendence of G-d over life/time to the independence of G-d towards space recognized by Hagar. The well situated at the entry to the desert was suitable as a memorial for the Arab people. G-d as the absolute Master of space and time, and his guiding and watching Providence are thoughts taught to them by Hagar and Avraham. They are the thoughts which all Arab thinkers and philosophers developed with such fineness, that the thoughts of the Unity of G-d in the works of Jewish philosophers as they are developed philosophically, rest predominately on the works of Arabian writers, who have the Emuna but not the mitzvot. It is not sufficient to have spiritual thoughts of the Unity of G-d only, for to Shema must be added V'ahavta, the practical submission of all forces and efforts to Him. From Avraham, Yishmael got the dedication of the mind,

but he lacked the dedication of the life of his senses that comes from Sarah. Where a Jewish mother bears, feeds and brings up the children, there the senses are dedicated in their very roots. So the story of Hagar and Sarah is interposed between Brit Bein HaBetarim with its spiritual message of Nation, exile-redemption, and Land, and the mitzva of Mila, the practical subjection of all our senses to the Word of G-d (Rabbi S. R. Hirsch).

This is the 103rd installment in Dr. Tamari's series on "Tanach and its messages for our times"

MISC section - contents:

- [1] **Vebbe Rebbe**
- [2] **Candle by Day**
- [3] **From Aloh Naaleh**
- [4] **A Touch of Wisdom, A Touch of Wit**
- [5] **Torah from Nature**
- [6] **Parsha Points to Ponder**
- [7] **Micro Ulpan**
- [8] **Portion from the Portion**
- [9] **Very short DT**
- [10] **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 Toward the end of a snack, I decide to stop eating after one more cookie and change my mind later. Do I need to make a new b'racha before continuing to eat?

A Intention regarding what one plans to eat affects the need for additional berachot in two different ways, and at two different points of the eating process. After discussing the principles of each (without getting into much details), we will see where your case fits in.

Intention at the beginning of the eating

If when one recites a b'racha, he has in mind to eat several foods, the b'racha covers other foods of the same b'racha, including those that are not before him or which he has no specific plans to eat (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 206:5). If one intends at the time of the b'racha to eat only a certain food or foods, then he needs a new b'racha before eating other foods, even of the same b'racha (Mishna Berura 206:20). When one does not give the matter thought, according to most poskim, one does not make a new b'racha. This is because we assume that the standard situation is that the extent of one's eating is

open-ended (ibid.). However, the Rama (ad loc.) says that to remove doubt, it is best for a person to have in mind to cover with his b'racha everything that may come his way.

Intention at the end of eating

The gemara in different places discusses situations that end a meal: 1) Removal of the tray/table from which a person was eating (B'rachot 42a); 2) Rinsing one's hands with mayim acharonim (water used before Birkat HaMazon) (ibid.); 3) Announcing that the group is ready to recite Birkat HaMazon (P'sachim 103b). In the third case, the gemara uses a phrase that is the heart of the issue, namely HESECH HADA'AT (removal of thought). By performing an action that indicates that he is preparing for the b'rachot that follow eating, he shows that he has removed his mind from the eating that was included in the original b'racha. Thus, to continue eating, he requires a new b'racha. (Discussion as to whether he can eat before reciting Birkat HaMazon is beyond our present scope.) The Mishna Berura (179:3, based on the Rambam, B'rachot 4:7) says that a clear thought that one has finished eating constitutes a HESECH HADA'AT without verbalizing that he plans to bentsch. Some Rishonim (see Shulchan Aruch OC 197:1) distinguish between the type of eating one was doing. If one was drinking (or having a snack - Shulchan Aruch Harav, Seder Birkat Hanehenin 5:1), then verbal or mental HESECH HADA'AT is effective. If one was eating (a meal - ibid.), then only an action causes a break. The Bi'ur Halacha (ad loc.) says that it is difficult to decide between the different opinions on the matter and urges one to avoid having mental HESECH HADA'AT and then changing his mind during a meal.

Let us return to our case. If one were to decide to have a snack of one cookie, then the b'racha would never have taken effect on other foods. However, once the intention was open-ended enough to apply to other foods, only positive HESECH HADA'AT removes it. All of the poskim we have found discuss HESECH HADA'AT from the perspective of the present (for example, see the language of the Rambam (ibid.) and the Mishna Berura (206:20)). In other words, one says to himself: "I no longer plan to eat," which is equivalent to the actions of preparing for Birkat HaMazon. There is no halachic precedent for HESECH HADA'AT on delay (i.e. "I hereby declare that after one more cookie, I will have stopped eating").

Thus, if you continue to think clearly after finishing the cookie that it was indeed the last one, then you have HESECH HADA'AT at that time. As you are referring to a snack, you would need a b'racha before eating more. However, if your resolve to stop eating wavers before finishing to eat, then you could continue eating without a new b'racha.

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

G-d causes events to coincide, and we call them "coincidences".

From A Candle by Day by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

[3] CHIZUK and IDUD

(for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively)

The Midrash relates that this week's parsha contains the second command of LECH LECHA given to Avraham Avinu. The first LECH LECHA in last week's parsha commanded him to go to Eretz Yisrael and the second one in this week's parsha commands him to go to sacrifice his son Yitzchak. The Midrash raises the question which LECH LECHA is greater. It answers that since the verse says, EL ERETZ HAMORIYA - to the land of Moriah, the second LECH LECHA is greater.

This Midrash may, perhaps, be understood as follows: Avraham Avinu was commanded to leave his land, his birthplace and his father's home. He was to go to Eretz Yisrael where the negative influence of chutz la'aretz would no longer exist, where his birthplace and his father's home would no longer play a part in his life. He was commanded to run away from the negative, LECH LECHA ME'ARTZECHA... "go away FROM your land". His greater mission, however, was to do good, to advance forward towards nobler, positive goals. Hence, LECH LECHA EL... "go to" is the greater command.

Many people heed the call of LECH LECHA, and exert great effort that involves considerable expense and personal sacrifice to make Aliyah to Eretz Yisrael. They will certainly be rewarded profusely for this great mitzva. One must realize, however, that Aliyah does not end at Ben Gurion Airport; that is where it only begins. Aliyah to Eretz Yisrael is an ongoing LECH LECHA EL, going up to higher and higher levels of Torah learning and mitzva observance, holiness and spirituality, and higher and higher levels of character development. This LECH LECHA EL is not only for ourselves, but also to bring our children with us to reach even higher levels than we are capable of reaching. The pure and holy environment of Eretz HaKodesh and the enlightening atmosphere of Eretz Yisrael make this possible.

May those who have not yet been able to fulfill the call of the first LECH LECHA merit to do so, and may those fortunate to have already made the first LECH LECHA merit to continually fulfill the second LECH LECHA in an unending quest for perfection in Eretz Yisrael.

Rabbi Zev Leff, Moshav Matityahu

[4] A Touch of Wisdom, A Touch of Wit

A young man who was a true Torah scholar once came to R' Zalman of Mariampol to be tested for semicha. R' Zalman tested him at length, and found that the young man was really fit to receive semicha.

"Do you know the fifth Shulchan Aruch?" R' Zalman asked him.

The young man didn't know what to answer, because the Shulchan Aruch only has four parts.

"Rebbe," he finally blurted out, "I've never heard of it."

"There is indeed a fifth part," said R' Zalman smiling, "and its first line reads, 'One must always be a mentch, a decent human being.'"

Once a very poor woman came to R' Eliye Meir to rule whether or not a chicken was kosher. R' Eliye Meir searched and searched, but couldn't find a way to permit the chicken to be eaten.

Taking a ruble from his pocket, he gave it to the woman along with the chicken, and ruled, "It's treif".

Shmuel Himmelstein 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

[5] Torah from Nature

• KUKU

Not the cuckoo, this bird is also known as Kereru, Kukupa, or New Zealand Pigeon, which tells you where the bird is from - Chatam Islands too... and what kind of bird it is - large (up to 50cm bill to tail), herbivorous, primarily eating fruit from native trees. It plays an important ecological role, as it is the only bird capable of eating the largest native drupes (stonefruit) and thus spreading the seeds. This is the MA RABU MAASECHA point in its purest form. They are the only birds still found in New Zealand that can open their beaks wide enough to eat the big seeds of some native trees, such as the puriri, miro, and karaka. These trees would vanish if the kuku became extinct. One illustration of many, of the interconnection of the animal and plant kingdoms. Its head, throat, and wings are a shiny green-purple colour, its breast is typically white, and its bill, eyes, and feet are red. The Kereru makes an occasional soft coo sound and its wings make a very distinctive whooshing sound as it flies. It nests in trees, laying a single egg per year (that's very slow breeding compared to other birrds) which is incubated for 28 days. The young bird then takes another 36 days to fledge. Declining population, shortened life span, low nesting success rate... dwindling food supply (competition from possums). Some of the seeds they eat are poisonous to people (unless the seeds are soaked in saltwater, cooked or roasted).



[6] Parsha Points to Ponder - VAYEIRA

- 1) The Torah describes that Hagar moved away from Yishmael to a distance LIKE THE ARCHERS (21:16). What is the significance of this metaphor?
- 2) Why is the akeida viewed as such a great test? As difficult as the command might be to fulfill, wouldn't most people follow a direct command from G-D assuming that they knew definitively that it was coming from G-D?
- 3) Following the Akeida, G-D proclaims NOW I KNOW THAT YOU ARE A PERSON WHO FEARS G-D (22:12). Didn't G-D know this from the nine previous tests which Avraham passed?

Parsha Points to Ponder is prepared by Rabbi Dov Lipman Mashgiach Ruchani, Yeshivat Yesodei HaTorah in Bet Shemesh, author of "DISCOVER: Answers for Teenagers (and adults) to Questions about the Jewish Faith", soon to be republished by Feldheim - ppp@israelcenter.co.il

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

Ponder the questions first, then read here

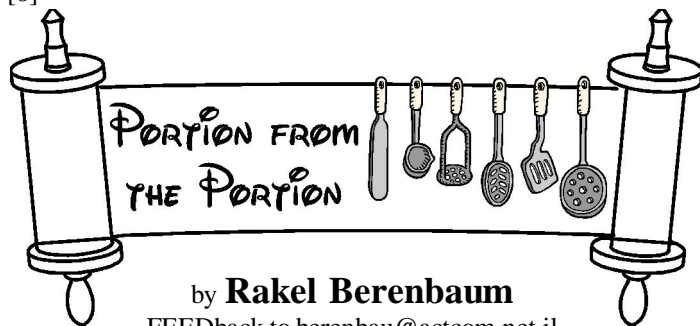
- 1) Ravi Hirsch explains that an archer moves away from the target to the furthest point from where he can still see the target. Similarly, Hagar moved far away from Yishmael to avoid seeing him in distress but she made sure that as far as she moved, she could still see him and what transpired to him.
- 2) The Drashos HaRan points to the word NA used by G-D in His command (22:2) to answer this question. G-D said PLEASE when presenting the akeida to Avraham. This reveals that it was not an absolute command. Rather, G-D encouraged Avraham to do this knowing that great growth and reward would come his way as a result. Had Avraham chosen not to perform this act, he would not have been transgressing anything and it would not have been held against him. Thus, this was a great test to see if Avraham would do this extremely difficult act to achieve great spiritual growth.
- 3) The Vilna Gaon answers that while Avraham did successfully pass the previous tests, they went along with his inclination towards mercy and compassion. However, the test of the akeida made him go completely against his nature and required him to act with cruelty. Avraham's willingness to do this act wholeheartedly, displayed that all along he was fulfilling the will of G-D and not simply acting according to his nature.

[7] MicroUlpan

Plain numbers without objects should be in feminine form. (With an object, the gender of the object determines the gender of the number.)

ACHAT, SHTAYIM, SHALOSH, ARBA, CHAMEISH, SHEISH, SHEVA, SH'MONEH, TEISHA, ESER

[8]



In this weeks parsha we see how two different people serve food to guests: Avraham and Lot. Avraham is remembered as the one who teaches us about welcoming guests and Lot isn't. It seems that they both exerted effort in preparing for their guests. The Torah even relates that Lot made MISHTA, a feast including wine, and by Avraham wine isn't mentioned. And Lot did all this in a town where inviting guests was illegal. What is the difference between Avraham and Lot? Why is Avraham's name connected with inviting guests and not Lot's?

Rav Levi from Berditchev explains - By Lot it says VA'YA'VOU SHNEI HAMALACHIM, the two angels came, and by Avraham it says VA'YAAR V'HINEI SHLOSHA ANASHIM, he saw three people. Lot saw angels (special, honored people) so he invited them into his house. Avraham on

the other hand saw simple people, covered in dust, hungry from their journey. Those are the type of people Avraham invited in. And that's what *hachnasat orchim* is all about. Inviting people who really need.

Another difference between Avraham and Lot is that, by Abraham, his wife also

believed in the importance of the mitzva of inviting guests, whereas Lot's wife was

against it. Whereas by Abraham, Sara helped him by making the cakes, *LUSHI V'ASI UGOT*, you - Sara make cakes. Lot had to make the matzot that he served to his guests all by himself *U'MATZOT AFA*, he himself. The Midrash says that Lot usually invited guests in secret. He didn't even tell his native born Sodomite wife, Irit. This time he asked her for a bit of salt for the guests and she didn't want to give it to him and started arguing with him. Another midrash relates that Lot's wife stooped so low as to go around to all her neighbors asking for salt "to give to the guests" so that the inhabitants of Sodom would know that Lot had invited some people and they would deal with him.

Lot's wife, ended up turning into a pillar of salt, because she turned around to look at her burning city. The midrash tells us that this was a punishment meted out *mida kneged mida*, measure for measure for her behavior in Lot's house - not wanting to give salt. The *Kli Yakar* points out the significance of salt - he equates it to *tzedaka*- just like salt (salting) protects meat from spoiling, so giving *zedaka* (in this story food to guests) protects us and our belongings. Lot's wife didn't have this protection because she didn't want to give to others .

Lot's (wife's) Salt Pretzels

Ingredients:

- 1 packet (2¼ tps) active dry yeast
- 1 Tbsp honey or sugar
- 1½ cups warm (40-45°C) water
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 cups wholewheat flour
- 2-2½ cups white bread flour (or unbleached flour)

Glaze and Topping:

1 egg, beaten with 1 tsp water

Coarse (kosher) salt

Mix the yeast and honey with the warm water. Let the mixture sit for about 5 minutes, or until foamy. Stir in the oil, salt, whole wheat flour and about 2 cups of the white flour, enough to make a soft dough.

Turn out onto a lightly floured board and knead it for 5 to 10 minutes, or until it is smooth and just a bit tacky. Add small amounts of flour as necessary. Pinch off a piece of dough; then roll it on a flat surface until it forms a rope that is 1/8 inch to 1/2 inch thick. Brush the top of each pretzel with some of the egg glaze; then sprinkle it with coarse salt Bake at 425 F. 15-20 minutes (you can let them rise first for a half hour if you prefer).

As an activity with the kids you can also grow salt crystals and put them on the table. See the following website:

<http://chemistry.about.com/od/growingcrystals/ht/saltcrystals.htm>

You can also use a matza for one of your *chalot*, since Lot served Matza.

[9] VSDT

VAYOMRU EILAV - Dots on the ALEF, YUD, HEI to hint to us that just as the angels asked Avraham where Sara was, they asked her, *V'AYO?* And where is your husband? To teach us courtesy.

Many commentaries mention the rule of thumb for dots over letters of a word. If the dots are over every letter of a word or phrase, the word or phrase is being marked for special attention. If more letters than not are marked with a dot, but not all, then the marked letters spell another word that becomes a hinted at point to make.

[10] Divrei Menachem

Parshat Vayera introduces us to the notion of how we measure a person's worth. In the first well-known instance, we encounter Avraham pleading with G-d over the destruction of Sedom in which he raises the possibility of the wicked being saved in the merit of the righteous.

The case of Avraham's nephew Lot is less notorious. When Sedom is about to be destroyed, angels visit Lot, offering him and his family the opportunity to save themselves before the city is overthrown. Why, we could ask, would Lot deserve such goodwill, having knowingly deserted Avraham's home to live among the evil people of his generation?

In his favor, we note that Lot upheld some of the moral virtues learned in his uncle's home: He offers the angels hospitality and he risks his life to defend them against the crazed people of Sedom. On the other hand, in lieu of the angels, Lot is prepared to offer his daughters to the mob to be dishonored!

No wonder that Rashi ascribes to Lot as saying that when in Sedom, G-d viewed him as righteous; but, when he was told to 'flee to the mountains' to Avraham, Lot declared, "I must [now] be regarded as wicked." Ultimately, Lot is saved in the merit of Avraham (cf. Rashi on Bereishit 19:29). No wonder, therefore, that living in our times and in our circumstances, we three times a day invoke the merit of our fathers.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

Towards better Davening and Torah Learning

TT Reader Feedback

[Nov. 13] Dear Reb Phil,

In the TBDATR column of last week's TT you wrote about when LAMA is MIL'EIL and when MILRA. Unfortunately what you wrote was not quite accurate. Before a word starting with ALEPH, HEH or AYIN (but not CHET or RESH) it is laMA, MILRA without a DAGESH in the MEM. Before any other letter it is LAMma, MIL'EIL with a DAGESH in the MEM. The rule is included in *Sefer Dikdukei HaT'amim* written some 1100 years ago by Aharon Ben Asher, the Masorete responsible for the Aleppo Codex. He lists 8 exceptions to the rule in Tanach (none are in the Torah). The Radak gives the same rule in his *Sefer HaMichlol* with the same list of exceptions.

... There was also an example in last week's Parsha, which I

thought was why you chose this topic in last week's TT, so it was a pity that you didn't mention it - see 12:18 and 19.

Bivracha, DL

[Nov. 14] After sending you the message about last week's column, I checked R. Nissan Sharoni's sefer Eim LaMikra HaShaleim and found there the source of what you wrote. As LAMA is never MILRA before CHET or REISH, I called R. Sharoni and spoke to him about it. He agreed that he had made a mistake and said that I am not the first person to bring it to his attention. He has a note to correct it in the next edition of the sefer. D

[Nov. 14] I thank you, DL, for the clarification... and so do the 145 LAMAs in the Tanach.

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.

"Inner Sin-Offerings" - Par & Sa'ir of YK [cont.]

Standing in Kodesh HaKodashim, the Kohein Gadol slowly drew blood from the Mizrak (the Mikdash serving vessel which he had filled from blood "received" from the neck of his slaughtered Par, bullock) and sprinkled it with his finger eight times in the direction of the Aron (or in Bayit Sheini, where the Aron would have been). Upon exiting the Kodesh HaKodashim, he placed the Mizrak on one of two gold stands which were positioned outside the two Parochet which separated the Kodesh HaKodashim from the Heichal. When he descended the Bayit stairs, the Kohanim presented him with the "Hashem goat". (as opposed to the Sa'ir HaMishtalei'ach- "goat which is to be sent", "scapegoat") He slaughtered it and received its blood in a Mizrak. The Sa'ir (goat) was also an "inner sin-offering" and like the Par, its blood applications would be performed within the Bayit. As the Par atoned for Kohanim who entered the Mikdash and ate Kodashim in a state of ritual impurity, the Sa'ir atoned for similar transgressions by the rest of Am Yisrael. The Par, the larger of the two animals, atoned for the Kohanim and the smaller Sa'ir effected atonement for the rest of Israel. The reason given is that these sins were more prevalent among Kohanim because they entered the Mikdash and ate Kodashim more often than other Jews. (I find this very interesting because I would have said the opposite. Did not vastly more non-Kohanim enter the Mikdash compound during the course of the year than Kohanim? Consider the enormous crowds that flooded into the Azara during the Shelosh Regalim! Would not the untutored masses of Am Yisrael, who were not as conversant with the laws of purity as the Kohanim were, need the greater "atonement power" of the larger Par even more than the fastidious priests?)

The Kohein Gadol returned to the Kodesh HaKodashim with the Mizrak containing the Sa'ir's blood and sprinkled blood in the direction of the Aron, the same way he previously sprinkled the Par's blood. "He then entered where he had entered (when he sprinkled the Par's blood) and stood in the place where he stood (when he sprinkled the Par's blood), and (like the blood of the Par), he sprinkled the (Sa'ir's) blood once upward and seven times downward... as though he was wielding a whip. And thus he used to count: 'One, one and one, one and two, one and three, one and four, one and five, one and six, one and seven.'" Exiting

Kodesh HaKodashim, he placed the Mizrak containing the remaining blood on the second gold stand near the Parochet. He then removed the Mizrak containing the Par's blood from the first gold stand, turned towards Kodesh Hakodashim, and sprinkled the blood eight times towards the Parochet. After sprinkling the blood of the Par, "he took the blood of the Sa'ir, put down the blood of the Par, and then sprinkled the blood towards the Parochet opposite the Aron..." Similar to when he sprinkled the blood of the Par, "he sprinkled as he was wielding a whip" ...he counted "One, one and one, one and two, one and three, one and four, one and five, one and six, one and seven." Referring to the Sa'ir, the Torah says, "And he shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of Bnei Yisrael" (Vayikra 16:16). The Gemara comments, "It is possible in this phrase to include three types of uncleanness - the uncleanness of idolatry, the uncleanness of incest, and the uncleanness of bloodshed... Now I might have thought that even for these three types of uncleanness the Sa'ir (also) atones, therefore the text says. "Of the uncleanness of Bnei Yisrael and not ALL the uncleanness (of Bnei Yisrael)" (Shevu'ot 7b).

After having sprinkled the blood of both the Par and the Sa'ir inside Kodesh Hakodashim, and afterwards in the Heichal, the Kohein Gadol then "emptied out the blood of the Par into the (Mizrak containing) the blood of the Sa'ir. Then he poured (the contents of the full Mizrak which contained the blood of both the Par and the Sa'ir) into the empty Mizrak" (Yoma 5:4). "He shall go out to the altar - the gold incense altar in the Heichal - which is before Hashem, and make atonement upon it. He shall take some blood of the Par and of the Sa'ir and place on the horns of the altar all around" (Vayikra 16:18). Ramban explains (ibid.) that "the sprinklings (of the Kohein Gadol) before the Kaporet (i.e. the ark cover within Kodesh HaKodashim) atoned for impurities introduced into Kodesh HaKodashim and its sanctities. The sprinklings (of the Kohein Gadol) on the Parochet of the Ohel Mo'ed (or in the Heichal in the Beit Hamikdash) atoned for impurities in the Heichal and its sanctities such as the Menora, the table for Lechem Hapanim ("showbread") and the Parochet itself. The blood application on the gold incense altar atoned for contamination of the altar itself and the Ketoret. That is why the Torah mentions each 'means of atonement' separately..." Grasping the Mizrak containing the mixed bloods, the Kohein Gadol strode to the Mizbei'ach HaZahav, the gold incense altar. The Sages are at variance as to whether he circumambulated Mizbach Hazahav or simply stood in one place as he applied the blood to the horns of the altar. "...where does he begin? From the northeast corner, to the northwest corner, then the southwest, then the northeast" (Yoma 6:5). The language used by the Mishna for the "blood application" is instructive. "Machteh Ve'yoreid" is usually translated "sprinkle downwards", but Machteh is also related to the word "Chitui" or "purge from sin" (Shemot 29:36). Tiferet Yisrael [38] notes that the Mishna employs a language of purification; the Kohein Gadol is purifying the altar with every blood application."). Bartenura writes, "Toharo", he then sprinkled on the top (or on the cleansed) surface of the altar". After he completed the blood applications on the corners of the gold incense altar, he then sprinkled blood on its top seven times... Toharo (its "purity"...the place where (the altar) is revealed. The (Kohein Gadol) moved aside the ashes (usually found on the incense altar) revealing the actual (pure) gold of Mizbach HaZahav). He sprinkled the blood on the exposed gold." The Mishna notes, "The lack of one of these acts of sprinkling impaired (the atonement). The residue of the blood (left in the Mizrak after the Kohein Gadol finished the blood

applications in the Kodesh HaKodashim and in the Heichal) was poured over the western base of the outer (sacrificial) altar" (Zevachim 5:1). Upon the completion of the Avodot of the sprinkling of the blood of the Par and Sa'ir and the pouring out of the remaining blood, the Kohein Gadol walked to the eastern side of the Azara. There he put his hands on the head of the Sa'ir HaMishtalei'ach (the "the goat that is to be sent, the "scapegoat") and confessed all the sins of Am Yisrael. A Mikdash appointee chosen before Yom Kippur- the Ish Iti - "escorted" the goat to the wilderness where it was sent to its death. While the Sa'ir HaMishtalei'ach was being taken to the wilderness (lit. 'a cut-off land"), the Kohein Gadol extracted the Emurim (the inner parts of the sacrificial animal which are burnt on the Mizbei'ach) from the bodies of the Par and Sa'ir and placed them in a receptacle to be burnt on the Mizbei'ach. He then intertwined their bodies, placed them on a "stretcher", and Mikdash appointees carried them out of Jerusalem. These "inner sin offering" were burnt in the Beit HaDeshen, the "place of ashes" outside of Jerusalem.

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

from page 3 PARSHA Pix

On the right is the thermometer with kipa, glasses, and stethoscope, wishing someone who is sick a REFU'A SH'LEIMA. This is one of the lessons we learn from G-d, Who visited the ailing Avraham.

Upper-right are the UGOT that Sarah LUSHied - if they look like matza, that's because the angels' visit was on Pesach. And Lot made matzot for his visitors too.

Upper-left is one of the three BEN BAKAR that Avraham ran to, in order to prepare the most sumptuous dish for the visitors, tongue in mustard sauce (Rashi quoting the Gemara).

In the middle of the ParshaPix is Braille writing, reminding us of what the angels did to the people of S'dom who demanded of Lot that he send his visitors out to them (blinded them). The Braille message is something the blinded S'domites might have graffitied on Lot's door (when they finally found it). It says, - make it a TTriddle.

The skull is the symbol of acid-rain, a good description of that which destroyed S'dom and the other cities.

Wine? Lot was given wine by his daughters to make him drunk...

The alarm clock set for very early in the morning, is to remind us of the many times the Torah tells us that Avraham got up early, to enthusiastically do G-d's bidding. (Avimelech too.)

The baby in the cradle represents the birth of Yitzchak.

Drawing of a metal shield is used by many mohalim in their set up for Mila.

Father and son walk hand in hand, VAYEILCHU SH'NEIHEM YACHDAV.

Of course, there is an Akeida graphic (from Davka) and a Shofar that is connected to the story of the Akeida.

Dorothy and Co. (UTZ), the chef (TEVACH, TABACH), the

bottle of liquor(BUZ, BOOZE), the sea cow (TACHASH) are for some of Yitzchak's cousins, mentioned at the end of the sedra.

The donkey, ATON, is mentioned in both the sedra and the haftara.

The olive oil is from the haftara.

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 (LECH L'CHA) TTriddles:

- [1] Bera can be bad for the eyes if you don't spell or pronounce words accurately
- [2] He lived in Shreveport?
- [3] The Anti-Lebanon Mountains
- [4] Avram-Sarai; Adoniyahu-BatSheva
- [5] plus 2 elements from the ParshaPix

And the envelope, please...

[1] Sometimes an idea for a TTriddle jumps up and insists it become a real TTriddle, even if it a bit of a stretch. Here's one. BERA was Melech S'dom, the king of S'dom. Melech with a misspelling and a mispronunciation comes out MELACH, salt. Melach S'domit, S'dom salt is one of the reasons for the requirement of MAYIMACHARONIM. Such salt could get on a person's fingertips during a meal (especially a cutlery-challenged meal), and if rubbed in one's eyes, could cause damage. Washing before Birkat HaMazon (i.e. after one finished eating) was important for good eyecare. [Washing one's hands at the end of a meal is also a respectful preparation for Benching.]

[2] A number game we've played before, but more appropriate here than most places because of the use of the number in the Torah and the g'matriya Rashi teaches us from it. The plain reading of the text is that Avra(ha)m took with him into the battle to free his nephew (and with him all the people from the S'dom confederation) 318 members of his household. Rashi says that he took only his faithful servant Eliezer, the g'matriya of his name being 318. This makes Eliezer closer to his name's g'matriya than most other individuals. 318 is not just the numeric value of his name, it is a synonym for his name. Consequently, Eliezer might have been comfortable living in Shreveport, LA, whose area code is 318.

[3] The battle referred to in [2] in which Avraham was successful, culminated, according to B'reishit 14:15, in a place called CHOVA, to the left of DAMESEK. Checking modern maps of Syria, one finds Damascus almost as far west in the country as you can get without going into Lebanon, and a little further south to the Hermon. What is shown on a map as being MISMOL L'DAMESEK are the Anti-Lebanon mountains, a

150 km long range that marks the border between Syria and Lebanon. The highest peak of the range, and its southernmost point, is Mt. Hermon, in the Golan Heights.

[4] IMRI NA, please say... (feminine form), with please, appears only twice in Tanach. First in Lech L'cha, when Avra(ha)m requests of Sarai that she identifies herself as his sister. In Melachim Alef, Adoniya asks Bat Sheva to speak to Shlomo on his behalf to receive Avishag.

[5] Inside the circle formed by the map of Eretz Yisrael, the birthday cake and other stuff, the branched arrows, and the tent is a LIVER. KAVEID in Hebrew. The word KAVEID makes two prominent appearances in Lech L'cha. First, as a description of the intensity of the famine that drove Avra(ha)m and Sara(i) to Egypt. And then in the description of the "serious" wealth Avra(ha)m had upon their return from Egypt. (Just like his descendants would experience four centuries later.)

[6] Which brings us to the Israeli coins making change. The 10 shekel coin is changed into two 5s. As was the YUD (numeric value of 10) in SARAI's name was changed into two 5s, HEIs that is. One went into AVRAM's name to make it AVRAHAM. The other HEI went back to SARAI, making her name SARAH.

This week's TTriddles:

[1] If Utz is Oz then who might have been the wizard?

[2] Former first lady, originally a second one

[3] Just beginning to say too much, sirs, for me found the city

[4] Avraham and Yaakov too, but Yehuda was the headliner

[5] Avraham, Yishmael, Yosef, Par'o, moshe, david, Sha'ul, shim'i, and a what?

[6] The peace is questioned more than twice as often as it is definite

[7] Leah four times referring to Yaakov, the oil lady and the Tekoan

[8] plus one element from the ParshaPix