

Shabbat Vayigash is the 96th day (of 354); the 14th Shabbat (of 50) of 5766

ויגשק לכול-אנזיו ויבך עליהם... בראשית מה:טו

Calendric Proximity

Sometimes, topics for Lead Tidbits are chosen because of the title. Well, not really, but it is fun sometimes coming up with a catchy title like this week's. You have to admit that Calendric Proximity has a ring to it.

What the title means is that events that have nothing to do with each other, that happened centuries apart, can be viewed almost as related to each other because they are near each other on the Jewish Calendar. Having just finished with the enjoyable holiday of Chanuka, with the taste of latkes and/or sufganiyot (or Herby's Chanuka donuts) still with us, it is hard to approach the commemorations of the 8th, 9th, and 10th of Tevet without making a connection. So too for the events of Parshat HaShavua, which occurred 1100 years before the Babylonian siege, 1200 years before Ezra and Nechemia brought the early Nefesh b'Nefesh groups to Eretz Yisrael, and 1400 before Chanuka happened.

When you put them all together because of the small part of the calendar they share, a variety of thoughts pop into your head. How could brothers do what they did to a brother? How can their tearful reunion in Vayigash not have been the end to strife between brothers - Jewish history has demonstrated that we are too often our worst enemy? How can the people sink to such betrayal of G-d that He allowed the Mikdash to be destroyed? How come so few responded to Ezra's call to return to Eretz Yisrael?

Chanuka is filled with hope. Hope that did not bear everlasting fruit at the time, but whose message continues to give us hope. So too does the reconciliation of the brothers point us in that good direction, even though we continue to stray from our goals. We'll get it right one of these days. (cont. top of next page)

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...

Earliest Kiddush L'vana for the 3-day after the Molad opinion was this past TUE night. First op and favored by other opinions is this Motza'ei Shabbat, eve of 8 Tevet, Jan. 7.



Fast of the Tenth (tenth month, that is - Tevet), a.k.a. ASARA B'TEVET is Tuesday, 10 Tevet/January. Fast begins at 5:23am and ends at 5:20pm. This is a dawn to dark fast commemorating the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians that led to the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash. Tragedies associated with the 8th and 9th of Tevet are also included in the thoughts of the 10th - the Targum Shiv'im (forced translation of the Torah into Greek) and the yahrzeits of Ezra and Nechemia. In our own time, 10 Tevet has been declared Yom Kaddish K'lali for victims of the Sho'a whose yahrzeits are unknown.

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Candle Lighting and HAVDALA
Standard (Winter) time
Correct for TT 698 • Rabbeinu Tam (I'm) - 6:08pm

4:15pm	Jerusalem	5:31pm
4:30pm	Raanana	5:31pm
4:31pm	Beit Shemesh	5:32pm
4:30pm	Netanya	5:31pm
4:31pm	Rehovot	5:32pm
4:10pm	Petach Tikva	5:31pm
4:30pm	Modi'in	5:31pm
4:32pm	Be'er Sheva	5:33pm
4:30pm	Gush Etzion	5:31pm
4:29pm	Ginot Shomron	5:30pm
4:15pm	Maale Adumim	5:30pm
4:31pm	K4 & Hevron	5:32pm
4:16pm	Tzfat	5:27pm
4:30pm	Tel Mond	5:31pm

Ranges are FRI-FRI 6-13 Tevet (January 6-13)

Earliest Talit & T'filin - 5:46-5:46am
Sunrise - 6:40-6:40am
Sof Z'man K' 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 - 3:47-3:52pm
Sunset - 4:55-5:01pm (4:50-4:56pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)
Shabbat 3:15pm (Mincha 4:15pm)
Yaacov Peterseil & Co.
Motza'ei Shabbat 8:30pm
Dr. Michael Feinerman

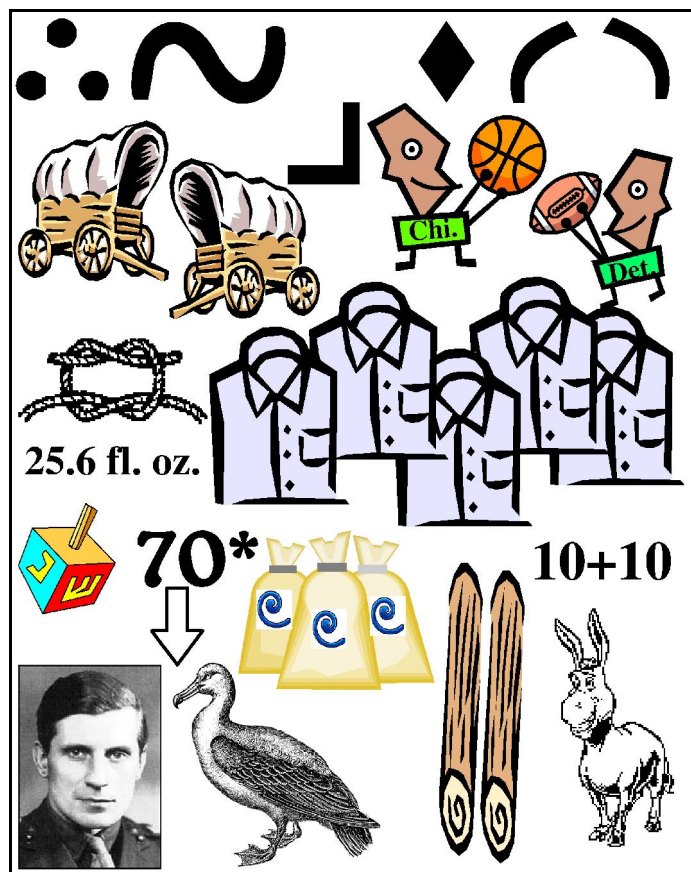
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This week's haftara gives us the promise, the hope, and the challenge - Jewish unity, total acceptance of Torah, return to Israel, everlasting Mikdash.



VAYIGASH STATS

11th of 54 sedras; 11 of 12 in B'reishit

Written on 178.07 lines in a Sefer Torah, rank 34

Vayigash is composed of 3 parshiot, all closed, one VERY closed. Actually, it's 2.89 parshiot; Vayigash is the only sedra that does not end with a parsha break.

106 p'sukim - ranks 28th; tied with To'l'dot & Bo.

Actually it is considerably smaller than Bo, and a bit larger than To'l'dot

1480 words - 30th; 5680 letters - 29th

9th (of 12) in B'reishit in all 3 categories

MITZVOT:

contains none of the TARYAG (613) mitzvot

FYI: Asara b'Tevet can fall on...

Sunday (29.9%)

Tuesday (27.9%)

Friday (20.1%)

Thursday (18.1%)

Wednesday (3.9%).

And, in our fixed calendar,) never on Monday or Shabbat.

(With the more flexible Kiddush HaChodesh of Sanhedrin, the stats won't apply then.)

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 - 13 p'sukim - 44:18-30

[S> 44:18 (52)] The sedra begins with the dramatic confrontation between Yehuda and Yosef. Yehuda risks his life when he approaches the "Egyptian leader" in an attempt to save Binyamin. The first Aliya ends with the emotion-filled description by Yehuda of the feelings between Yaakov and Binyamin — "V'nafsho k'shura v'nafsho", and his soul is bound with his soul.

SDT *Yehuda confronted the as-yet- unrevealed Yosef as an equal, It can be said, that whenever one approaches a confrontational situation, it is best to think in terms of facing one's adversary on equal footing. Thinking oneself inferior will often create a self-fulfilling disadvantage. One will tend not to fight with sufficient determination because of the expectation of defeat. Feeling superior to one's adversary will often lead to over-confidence. Remember not to under-estimate your enemy... or yourself.*

The Torah notes on the opening words of the sedra explain what was going on. KADMA V'AZLA R'VI'I, ZARKA MUNACH SEGOL (see top row of the ParshaPix, above). The 4th (son) went forward (to confront Yosef), because he had thrown away his place among the Chosen (Nation) (by guaranteeing Binyamin's safe return) - attributed to the GR"A

SDT *The Alshich asks: At the end of Parshat Mikeitz, Yehuda is completely resolved to his (and his brothers') fate. The Egyptian ruler has accused them of stealing his special chalice. Yehuda offers that the one in whose possession the cup is found shall be put to death and that the others would be slaves. When the cup is "found" in Binyamin's possession, Yehuda meekly submits (to the slavery suggestion). Yosef (as yet unrevealed) nobly refuses Yehuda's offer and announces that he will take only the "culprit" as a slave - the rest are free to return in peace to their father. That is the "cliff-hanger" ending of Mikeitz. At the beginning of Vayigash, Yehuda changes from the lamb awaiting slaughter, to the lion which becomes the hallmark of his tribe, risking his life in his confrontation with the enigmatic Egyptian leader. What caused the change in Yehuda's demeanor?*

As long as Yehuda expected all the brothers to be enslaved, he viewed the events as G-d's punishment for the sale of Yosef. This he could accept. When it turned out that only Binyamin would be enslaved - the only one not involved in Mechirat Yosef, Yehuda realized that this was not punishment for what they had done. Now his protective instincts and his promise to Yaakov take over. Yehuda boldly faces this "Egyptian" at the beginning of Vayigash and is prepared to risk all to save Binyamin.

Yosef heard his father referred to as "your servant - my father" ten times (5 from Yehuda and another 5 from the interpreter) and he did not object and/or reveal his identity to prevent the humiliation of his father. For this,

commentators say, Yosef lost 10 years of life and died at 110, before any of his brothers.

SDT Chassdic masters see a "layer of messages" for us beneath the wording of Yehuda's plea. "...and (if) he leaves his father, he will die." If a person abandons his Father (G-d), forsakes the Torah, then he will die a spiritual death.

Did you ever notice that when Yosef interrogated the Brothers, he asked them if they had a father or brother. Not if they had a mother. Baal HaTurim says it was because he knew that their (and his) mother had already died. Let's call this even a subconscious omission. The Torah tells us of Rachel's passing. According to Tradition, Leah died about six years after Rachel did. By the time of the sale of Yosef, both were long gone.

Here's a thought... When they were younger, and when they perceived that Yaakov loved Yosef above all, the brothers were dangerously jealous. Here, Yehuda speaks of the special love bond between Yaakov and Binyamin, and does not seem to be jealous, but rather protective (and fond) of the other son of Rachel - Yehuda's mother's rival. T'shuva? Maturity? Some of both?

Levi - Second Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 44:31-45:7

Yehuda tells Yosef that Yaakov is likely to die if the brothers return without Binyamin. He adds that he has personally guaranteed Binyamin's return and "how can I return to my father without the lad..." (Remember that Yehuda had previously returned to his father without the other lad, Yosef. The current situation with Binyamin is Yehuda's opportunity for complete repentance for what he had done to Yosef.)

Yosef cannot contain himself any longer and orders the room cleared of all "outsiders". He bursts with emotion and announces to his dumb-struck brothers that he is Yosef. Immediately, Yosef asks, "Is my father still alive?" Yosef repeats his shocking revelation, with details, so the brothers will believe what they are hearing. He then admonishes them not to be angry with each other, since it was G-d's plan that should be properly positioned to save his family from the famine.

SDT Torah T'mima brings the Gemara in Chagiga in the name of Rabbi Elazar who makes the following powerful observation: If the children of Israel were not able to respond to Yosef's short statement of reproach, imagine how more so it will be difficult for us to respond to G-d's reproach for the myriad wrong-doings as individuals and as a community.

The sale of Yosef was a monstrous sin, regardless of how G-d planned things to turn out. There is a midrash that says: G-d said - You sold your brother into slavery. I swear by your lives that every year you will say, AVADIM HAYINU L'FAR'O B'MITZRAYIM, we were slaves to Par'o in Egypt.

SDT When Yosef finally reveals himself to his brothers, he makes the following compound statement: "I am Yosef - Is my father still alive?" Many commentaries ask why Yosef would ask that question at this dramatic moment - especially

since he has been hearing about Yaakov from the brothers all along.

Some see in it a short but powerful reproach to the brothers, as if to say, "is it possible that my father can still be alive after what you've put him through?" If this is indeed the meaning of his question, then Yosef too must bear some of the burden and shame, since he also caused Yaakov suffering by not having communicated with him that he was alive during his years as prime minister in Egypt. (Although there are various reasons given in the sources as to why Yosef did not inform Yaakov of his well-being, it is difficult not to throw some criticism in Yosef's direction.)

Another interpretation suggests that Yosef might have assumed that his brothers had been lying to him about their father. They might have told him that Yaakov was alive to elicit sympathy, but he might have been dead. Therefore, now that he has told his brothers who he really is, Yosef asks the most important question on his mind - Is my father really still alive?

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 20 p'sukim - 45:8-27

Yosef again tells the brothers that it wasn't they who sent him to Egypt, but rather it was G-d. He then sends them to bring their father down to Egypt (to Goshen) where the family will be well cared for during the remaining years of the famine. The brothers embrace and cry. Only then are the brothers able to talk to Yosef.

Meanwhile, Par'o becomes aware of the reunion and offers his generous hospitality to the family. Yosef gives his brothers clothing, but gives Binyamin even more (specifically, 5 sets of clothing and 300 silver pieces).

Observation... Notice that once again a son of Rachel is being favored by being given a special garment. The first time, the results were disastrous for Yosef and his brothers. Why would Yosef even consider doing this?

The "solution" to the problem of the brothers is not reached by avoiding difficult situations. If there is true repentance, then the brothers can be given the exact circumstances to show their change of heart. Seeing things in a proper perspective, the extra gifts to Binyamin do not evoke the jealousy of the brothers; they have repented.

This same idea can be seen in Vaychi. Yaakov favors Efrayim over Menashe. Yosef gets very upset. Again we can say that the idea is not to avoid anything that would make one brother jealous, the other arrogant. Menashe and Efrayim showed praiseworthy characteristics in the way they handled their different statuses. This is one of the reasons that we bless our sons "may G-d make you like Efrayim and like Menashe..."

Yosef sends his brothers back to Yaakov with wagons (which is a personal coded message between son & father based on the topic they were studying at the time of the Sale of Yosef) and gifts. The brothers tell Yaakov all that has happened. He refuses to believe that Yosef is really alive, until he sees the wagons. Yaakov's spirit is revived.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 8 p'sukim - 45:28-46:7

Yaakov tells his sons to hurry with their preparations so that he can get to see Yosef before he (Yaakov) dies. On the way to Egypt, they stop at Be'er Sheva where Yaakov offers sacrifices to G-d. G-d appears to him and assures him that He will protect him and accompany him on his sojourn. The family continues its trip and arrives in Goshen.

Rashi also points out that G-d promised that Yaakov would be brought back to Eretz Yisrael for burial. The promise of becoming a great nation was not enough to calm Yaakov.

[SDT] In explanation of why Yosef never communicated with his father in all the years of separation, one commentary suggests that had Yaakov known about the sale of Yosef, he would have considered his sons in violation of the Torah's prohibition against kidnapping. Therefore, Yosef had not told his father what had happened.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 20 p'sukim - 46:8-27

[S> 46:8 (20)] The Torah now lists the names of the "70 souls" (including Yosef and his sons) who went down to Egypt with Yaakov. (The seed is planted; the harvest many years hence will be the Nation of Israel.)

THE SEVENTY SOULS...

Note the atypical mention (and counting) of female offspring - Dina and Serach the daughter of Asher. Tradition attributes to Serach great longevity - she was the oldest person to leave Egypt, giving her the unique status as an eyewitness to the entire Egyptian experience. (Yocheved too, perhaps.)

Notice the label of B'CHOR (firstborn) for Reuven, here and in other places in the Torah. Although Levi, Yehuda, and Yosef each ended up with a "feature" that we would identify with the first born, these roles being taken away from Reuven because of his shortcomings, he nonetheless is repeatedly identified as Yaakov's B'CHOR.

Reuven (1) and his sons **Chanoch** (2), **Palu** (3), **Chetzron** (4), **Carmi** (5);

Shimon (6) and his sons **Y'mu'el** (7), **Yamin** (8), **Ohad** (9), **Yachin** (10), **Tzochar** (11), **Shaul** (12); (Rashi says that Shaul was Dina's child from Sh'chem, raised by Shimon as his own);

Levi (13) and his sons **Gershon** (14), **K'hat** (15), **M'rari** (16);

Yehuda (17) and his sons Eir and Onan (both of whom who died in Canaan, but are mentioned here, though not counted among the 70), **Sheila** (18), **Peretz** (19), **Zerach** (20), and Peretz's sons **Chetzron** (21), **Chamul** (22);

Yissachar (23) and his sons **Tola** (24), **Puva** (25), **Yov** (26), **Shimron** (27);

Z'vulun (28) and his sons **Sered** (29), **Eilon** (30), **Yachl'eil** (31);

These are Leah's children plus **Dina** (32).

The Torah says the total from Leah is 33. Rashi says that the 33rd of Leah's "children" is **Yocheved** (33), daughter of Levi, who was born as they entered Egypt. That's 33 souls from Leah.

Gad (34) and his sons **Tzifyon** (35), **Chagi** (36), **Shuni** (37), **Etzbon** (38), **Eiri** (39), **Arodi** (40), **Areili** (41);

Asher (42) and his children **Yimna** (43), **Yishva** (44), **Yishvi** (45), **B'ri'a** (46), their sister **Serach** (47), and the sons of B'ri'a, **Chever** (48), **Malki'el** (49);

The souls from Zilpa are 16.

Yosef (50) and **Binyamin** (51);

Yosef's sons who were born in Egypt (they are nonetheless included in the 70 Souls) from A-s'nat - **Menashe** (52), **Efrayim** (53);

Binyamin's sons **Bela** (54), **Becher** (55), **Ashbel** (56), **Geira** (57), **Naaman** (58), **Eichi** (59), **Rosh** (60), **Mupim** (61), **Chupim** (62), **Ard** (63)

Souls descendant from Rachel are 14.

Dan (64) and his son(s) **Chushim** (65);

Naftali (66) and his sons **Yachtz'eil** (67), **Guni** (68), **Yeitzer** (69), **Shileim** (70);

Those descendant from Bilha are 7.

The Torah's total is 66 who went down to Egypt (actually 67 counting Yocheved) and Yosef and his sons who were already in Egypt, bring the total - not counting daughters-in-law - to 70.

Remember that the "whole world" that came from No'ach was 70 (nations). We now find the same number in Yaakov's descendants. Their 70 became the Nations of the World. Our 70 became the Jewish People. Think about it.

Alternate suggestion: Count Yaakov among the 70 souls and not Yocheved? Total is still 70 with all the names actually mentioned in the text.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 46:28-47:10

[S> 46:28 (34)] Yaakov sends Yehuda ahead, to complete preparations. Yosef sends a royal chariot for his father.

When Yaakov and Yosef meet, Yosef embraces Yaakov and cries.

Yosef then prepares (some of) his brothers to meet Par'o. It is a sensitive issue because Yaakov and family are shepherds (sheep being the deity of Egypt). Yosef presents his father and five of his brothers to Par'o. Par'o again offers the best of the land to Yosef's family. Par'o asks Yaakov how old he is. Yaakov replies that he has lived 130 bitter years and that he does not expect to live as long as his father or grandfather. Yaakov blesses Par'o (having done so when first presented to Par'o - Rashi says that these were courtesy greetings to royalty) and Yaakov takes his leave.

Rashi brings a Midrash that says that Yaakov's bracha to Par'o was that the Nile should rise above its banks when he approaches it. And so it was, from then on.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 47:11-27

Yosef sets up his family with the best the land has to offer. Meanwhile, the famine intensifies in Egypt. Yosef carefully controls the food supplies and before long has amassed for Par'o all the wealth, possessions and land (except for that of the clergy) of the people. Finally, the peoples of Egypt become slaves to Par'o in exchange for sustenance.

Yaakov's family flourishes greatly.

As mentioned earlier, this is the only sedra that does not end with a parsha break (in a printed Chumash, that means no PEI-PEI-PEI or SAMACH- SAMACH-SAMACH. The significance of this is explained by the commentaries of the opening pasuk of next week's sedra. 3 p'sukim are reread for Maftir.

Haftara - 14 p'sukim - Yechezkeil 37:15-28

The antagonism in the beginning of Parshat Vayigash between Yehuda and Yosef is the forerunner of the split of the Jewish People into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel (represented by Efrayim, Yosef's son). In this portion from the Prophets, G-d tells Yechezkeil to take two sticks - one marked for Yehuda and one for Yosef/Efrayim- and hold them together until they merge into one. When the people ask the meaning of this, the prophet is to tell them about the reunification of the tribes. This reconciliation, which is also the theme of the sedra, will produce the One Nation that will once again be the "dwelling place" of G-d. We will know that, as will the nations of the world. As happy as is the reconciliation of the brothers in the sedra, both the sedra and haftara remind us of rough times to come, throughout Jewish History. The "pot of gold" is at the end of the proverbial rainbow, the time of the Complete Geula, when the people will be united, the people will all keep Torah and mitzvot, the people will return to Eretz Yisrael from the far-flung places of their dispersion, and the Beit HaMikdash will stand in Jerusalem forever, **גב'א**.

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

Lesson # 314 (part two)

The forewarned ox

Up to this point we have been discussing animals that caused damage "with its foot" or "with its tooth" or "with its horn". In all of these situations there was property damage and Reuven, the owner of the ox was liable to Shimon the owner of the property that was damaged.

We come now to a different situation where Reuven's ox gores Shimon. It is stated in the Torah "If an ox shall gore a man or woman and he shall die, the ox shall be surely stoned" (Sh'mot

21:28). The verses go on to say that if it was an ox that gores habitually then the ox is stoned to death and in addition thereto, the owner makes compensation to the victim of the goring; the payment is called "ransom".

The place of goring is important

1. Assuming that Reuven's ox is a fore-warned ox and it killed Shimon in Reuven's yard, the ox is put to death but Reuven does not pay the ransom and does not make monetary payments. This holds true if Shimon is in Reuven's yard without permission. If Shimon is there with permission, then Reuven is liable for the goring.

2. If the ox kills Shimon in Shimon's yard, the ox is put to death and Reuven makes payment to Shimon's estate.

3. If the ox kills Shimon in a public street, the ox is put to death and Reuven pays the ransom.

The goring ox is put to death whether the person who is killed by it is an adult or minor, male or female, slave or freeman.

The method by which the ox kills is not important. The ox is to be stoned to death whether it has killed by goring, biting, pushing, kicking or any other method that causes death. The result is the same whether the ox is innocuous or forewarned - it is put to death. The question arises, if the ox has already killed a person and must be put to death, how does it kill a second time and a third time to become a forewarned ox? Various answers are given including that the ox after goring a person to death ran away and repeated such fatal injuries twice again and was finally caught after the last goring.

The defendant in a criminal case must be present in the courtroom when he is being judged. So too the owner of the goring ox, whether a man or woman must be present in the courtroom when Beth Din judges whether or not the ox is put to death and determines the amount of the ransom. If the ox has no private owner, such as an ox that comes from an uninhabited place, or from the desert; or an ox that belongs to the Holy Temple (may it be rebuilt, speedily in our days) or an ox that belongs to a convert who has died without heirs, then the trial is held without the presence of the owner. (Every Jew has heirs, except a convert who has yet no child conceived after he converted.) An ox that belongs to a legally incompetent person, such as a minor, or mentally deficient, is treated as an ox that has no owner. The ox is put to death only if caused Shimon's death by itself without outside intervention. If a human was also a contributing factor, the ox is not put to death. Thus, if Reuven provoked the ox to gore Shimon, the ox is not put to death and Reuven is also free of the death penalty at the hands of Beth Din but is guilty to the judgments of Heaven. The same holds true if a person provokes a dog to kill a person. However, if Reuven opens the dog's mouth and places Shimon's hand into the dog's mouth and the dog bites Shimon causing his death, Reuven is liable to the death penalty for murder. The same holds true if Reuven shoves the ox and as a result thereof the ox shoves Shimon, causing his death.

The owner of the killing ox pays the ransom. If the killing ox belongs to two persons, Reuven and Levi, each pays the full ransom to Shimon's heirs, since each requires a full atonement. Those persons who are deemed to be legally incompetent to be responsible for their actions or the action of their animal, such as a minor, or mentally deficient, do not have to pay the ransom even if they have a guardian. The ransom is for atonement and these persons are not required to make atonement. If an ox intending to attack another ox instead killed Shimon, the ox is

not put to death. However Reuven must pay the ransom for the death of Shimon. All that has been said about the forewarned ox that causes death "with its horn" also applies if the ox that causes death of a person "with its foot". For example, Reuven's ox enters Shimon's yard and while walking, crushes a baby in the yard. Reuven must pay the ransom to the baby's heirs. The ox is not put to death since it did not have intent to injure. If the occurrence was in a public street, there is no liability for ransom since the owner of the ox has no liability for damage caused by his ox "with its foot" in a public street.

The ransom is paid to Shimon's heirs. If the victim was a married woman, the ransom is paid to her descendants or to her paternal heirs. This is a departure from the halacha that holds that a husband is the sole heir of his wife. The woman's husband is her heir to the assets on hand at the time of the death but not to collectibles. (At the time of her death the ransom was not part of her estate. Beth Din determines the amount of the ransom, taking into account the earning capacity of the victim, the expenses that the estate has as a result of his death, and any other factors that Beth Din deems appropriate. Beth Din has wide latitude in setting the amount. (The ransom that is paid for killing Shimon's heathen slave or heathen maidservant, whether a minor or adult, is always 30 shekels of fine silver, regardless of the actual value of the slave or maidservant.)

A payment for wrongful death differs from a ransom in the following ways:

- (1) Ransom affords atonement while the monetary payment does not;
- (2) If Reuven has no funds he must make every effort to pay the ransom, but he does not have to make the monetary payment except if he has the funds.

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume X chapter 405 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

Adjoining Geula to T'fila

The gemara tells us that there is special merit in adjoining geula (the blessing gaal yisrael following the shema) to t'fila (the amida prayer), meaning that he makes no interruption in between (B'rakhot 4b,9b). And this is the ruling of the Shulchan Arukh (OC 66:8, 111:1, 235).

The Zohar mentions this rule in our parsha (I 205b), and while the passage there doesn't connect it to the events of our parsha, a number of commentators do.

In the commentary cited by Yedid Nefesh, Yehuda represents geula. This is logical because geula or redemption is naturally associated with kingship, as the essence of our redemption is the restoration of Jewish sovereignty. This in turn is identified with Yehuda, who was promised kingship by Yaakov (B'reshit 49:10) and was the progenitor of King David, from whose line

will arise the Moshiach.

Yehuda's approach to Yosef is parallel to the approach of the blessing of redemption to prayer. His appeals and pleadings before Yosef represent the need to justify and defend the Jewish people prior to standing before Hashem in prayer. The implication is that this is accomplished by the recitation of shema and its blessings, which augment and recount the merits of the Jewish people particularly at the time of the Exodus.

The Sefat Emet has a similar commentary, but the roles are different. Yehuda and the house of David represent prayer, which is the service of the heart (as we find in Taanit 2a). This is presumably because we find Yehuda and David being emotional and open in their actions. By contrast, Yosef represents the brain, or rational thought. This may be because Yosef appears in the Torah to be more cerebral and calculating, or perhaps because in the encounter in our parsha Yosef is in a position of superiority, just as the brain ultimately rules over the emotions. This in turn corresponds to the recitation of shema, which the Sefat Emet describes as "hearing in the brain".

The approach of Yehuda to Yosef is thus understood as follows: The heart or emotions is in some sense intermediate between the body, or lower faculties, and the brain. On the one hand we feel emotionally the pains and sorrows of the body. On the other hand, our emotions are also capable of finding joy in the deeper understanding of our mental faculties.

As a moral lesson, this means that while our emotions need to be connected to our material experience, we also have to elevate them and teach them to appreciate the higher joys which are detached from our material existence and connected to our higher faculties, particularly our Torah learning. (While the Sefat Emet doesn't say this explicitly, it seems clear to me that when he refers to our mental faculties and identifies them with shema and with "hearing in the brain" he means our Torah insights.)

In the context of adjoining geula to t'fila, this would mean that while our prayers have to express our wants and needs, the many sorrows we feel, it has to approach also our higher faculties, in particular our Torah learning, represented by kri'at shema. This will bring us to the highest level of prayer with joy, which we can particularly attain on Shabbat. (Sefat Emet, Vayigash 5665)

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

"To Sacrifice Your Son" [2]

At the very outset Avraham is told: "Get your-self to the Land of Moriah" (22:2), in order to teach us that the place of the Akeida is of the greatest significance to the test, and to whole future mission of the Abrahamic Nation to do acts of Righteousness and Justice. The connection between the place and the Akeida is a direct consequence of the choosing of the

Holy Land simultaneously with that of the Chosen Nation (B'reishit 12:1-2); both preceding Hashem's promise to be our G-d (B'reishit 14:7). This connection is not an accident nor the effect of chance but rather an essential part of the Land-Nation unity. Everything has a core, a center or a specific inner point that exemplifies and motivates it to fulfill its special function or to realize its full potential. So, Har HaMoriah is all of these to the Holy Land, a Land destined to be the framework within which the Chosen Nation can become a Holy Nation and a Kingdom of Priests.

"On the 3rd day Avraham saw the place from afar" (22:4); HaMakom, The designated place. Makom, this is one of the Names of G-d [symbolic of His Omnipresence]. Avraham saw a cloud of Glory signifying the Divine Presence" (Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer). "This Cloud of Glory was not meant as a guide as to which mountain Avraham was to go but rather as a sign of Avraham's reward for his devotion and love of Hashem. In the same way, the Clouds of Glory were not meant to guide the Children of Israel in the desert, since Hashem Himself led them; rather they were the sign of G-d's reward for the faith that Israel showed by going into an unknown and uncharted land merely in accordance with His Command" (Shem Mi Shmuel). "The place known to him (Ramban); he saw that it was the place of the sacrifice" (Abarbanel). However we explain this verse, to Chazal its historic connection to sanctity and worship is quite clear. "HaKadosh Baruch Hu pointed out with a finger to Avraham the place of the Mizbei'ach there. Hashem said: "On this spot Adam used to sacrifice, here Kayin and Hevel brought their offerings, and here No'ach and his sons sacrificed" (Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer 31). Here lived Malki-tzedek, [Shem ben No'ach (N'darim 32b)] who was king of Salem, and the priest of G-d, the Most High (B'reishit 14:18), in the days of Avraham's war with the 4 kings. "Hashem called it Yerushalayim in deference to the name YIR'EH which Avraham named it after the Akeida, and SHALEM which Shem had called it" (B'reishit Rabba 56:16-22). "He was a "melech" over a place known for its "tzedeck" [Ibn Ezra]; as it was a place that does not tolerate any form of injustice or a lack of holiness (Radak); because he ruled over the place of the future Bet HaMikdash that was known even then to be a sacred site (Ramban).

That specific place reflects the Akeida not only because of its historical connections but because it was destined to be the realization of Avraham's prophetic words after the Akeida: "Hashem Yireh as it is said this day, 'on the Mount of G-d Hashem is seen". This was the place that Yaakov Avinu acknowledged as being none other than the House of G-d and the Gate to Heaven, when he received there the vision of the Ladder (B'reishit 28:18). Here "Shlomo HaMelech built a House for G-d at Yerushalayim, on Har HaMoriah (Divrei HaYamim bet 3:1); at the threshing field of Arona (Shmuel bet 24:18)" (Ibn Ezra). Chazal taught: "It is named Moriah since from there teaching - hora'ah goes out to the whole world" (Ta'anit 17a); the seat of the Sanhedrin was in the Lishkat HaGazit of the Temple on Har HaMoriah (Rashi, there), and "From Zion goes forth Torah and the Word of G-d from Yerushalayim (Yeshayahu 20:3). "Har HaMoriah, the Land in which they will worship G-d [as Onkelos translates], with Moriah derived from Morah - Fear" (Ramban). When Shlomo HaMelech prayed at Chanukat HaBayit, he first said: "And You Hashem will hearken to the prayers of Your servant and Your people Israel that they will pray to this place" (Melachim Alef 8:36). But as that Place is not meant only for the People of Israel, he continued: "And the nations that are not of Your people shall come from a far land... and You shall hear all the

prayers in order that all the nations shall know and fear Your name" (8:41). This resonates in our prayers on every fast day and during the 10 days of T'shuva: "For My House shall be called a House of prayer for all the nations" (Yeshayahu 56:7).

"In the desert, the Mishkan was constructed out of materials from the plant and animal worlds; in Shilo they erected walls of the inanimate world - of stone, using as the roof the animal and plant materials from the Mishkan while Shlomo HaMelech built the Bet HaMikdash entirely from stone. Israel in the desert had the spiritual strength and ability to sanctify only the worlds of plant and animal kingdoms. Their entry and settlement in the Holy Land gave them the additional power to partially sanctify even the inanimate world. With Kingship the People gained the spirituality and holiness that enabled them to sanctify even the inanimate world, so Shlomo HaMelech was able to build entirely of stone" (Shem Mi Shmuel).

That the Akeida was in that special place does not mean that it was the center and innermost point of the Land-Nation to serve only as a place of altars and Temples, for pilgrimages and the rituals of priests. Rather that whole Land was intended as the physical body within which that Nation would perfect all the acts of life subject to the guidance and law of Hashem; the spiritual, the communal and national, the political and social, war and economics. Therefore Har HaMoriah was to be the core of that life. The inspiration for its development was to be the integrated Torah that would go forth from Zion and Yerushalayim.

This is the 110th 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...



What b'racha should I make on sprouted grain breads?

 It is difficult to rule on this matter for a few reasons. Firstly, we have not found written halachic rulings on this relatively unknown topic, which hinges on complicated questions. Also, different people may prepare the bread differently, to the extent that the halacha may vary. Finally, we should better understand the botanical, chemical processes that accompany sprouting. We, therefore, propose a joint project with our readers. We will describe what we know and ask the public to add their insights. After compiling information and discussing the matter among ourselves and with other rabbis, we will share our findings. Let's show how the information age can help further the world of halacha.

We received the following information (and samples of grain and bread) from a local producer of sprouted wheat bread. One soaks organic wheat kernels for several hours in water, which causes the kernels to sprout (into roots and stalks) over the next few days. When the roots are somewhat longer (but much thinner) than the kernels (which still look much the same), one grinds the whole thing. One bakes the moist "flour" without water or yeast. The result is a loaf with a color similar to whole-wheat bread and a moister and somewhat coarser texture (presumably because of the sprouts). It tastes quite sweet (like honey cake), to the extent that one would not guess that it is the product of only wheat and water. This bread is reported to be extremely healthful because of the chemical processes involved in the sprouting. We would like to know of significantly different processes that may be used.

Now let us briefly raise some of the pertinent halachic sources and deliberations.

The b'racha on edible sprouts is ha'adama. When one makes bread out of grain-like foods (kitniyot) that are not from the five, major forms of grain, its beracha is shehakol (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 208:8). These halachot should apply even to sprouts attached to wheat because they in no way resemble wheat's taste. However, the Shulchan Aruch (ibid.:9) rules that bread made from a mixture of wheat flour and other flour is halachic bread if it contains a reasonable percentage of wheat (a sixth or an eighth). Our case easily meets that requirement.

The question is as follows.

A wheat kernel, if planted, breaks down and is replaced by a stalk, formed by the grain and other nutrients from the ground. There are various opinions on how long it takes for grain to be considered rooted in the ground, as the beginning of a new entity. (See T'rumat HaDeshen 191 and Shaagat Aryeh, Chadashot 7, in regard to stalks that become permitted when the omer is brought, who rule three days and two weeks, respectively. See also, N'darim 57-59, regarding t'ruma and other halachic entities that lose their status after being planted.) However, one can distinguish between being rooted in the ground and maintaining wheat's characteristics.

At what point of the kernel's decomposition does it lose the status of wheat? Does it depend on its outer appearance or perhaps the taste of its product? Is the process uniform throughout the kernel or do certain sections change chemically more quickly? If it is not uniform, what is the halacha when part of the kernel is significantly altered, while other parts remain intact?

There are four arguable approaches:

1) The kernel remains wheat, and the bread made from it is regular bread (including regarding taking challah, which our

local producer does);

2) Although the kernel is wheat, its unique taste makes it deserve the b'racha of mezonot (see Shulchan Aruch, OC 168:7); 3) It is not wheat, but the bread is a normal use of sprouted grains which warrants ha'adama (see Mishna Berura 208:33);

4) It is like corn bread, upon which we make shehakol (Shulchan Aruch 208:8). The main choices seem to be #1 and #4; our present inclination is #4.

Our readers' input on any of the related issues is welcome at: info@eretzhemdah.org.

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.eretzhemdah.org. And/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by email weekly, by sending an email to info@eretzhemdah.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**

We sometimes mistake a statement for the truth because what is said "applies" so well. We must be aware, however, that almost anything can be made to apply to anything. Remembering this we might be better able to judge what is only made to apply, and what, indeed does apply.

From A Candle by Day by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

A Candle by Day • The Antidote • The World Of Chazal by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein, Now available at 054-209-9200

[3] **CHIZUK and IDUD**

(for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively)

In this week's Haftara, the prophet Yechezkel outlines the stages of the Geula scenario that has given the Jewish People hope throughout the dark Galut. He describes the extraordinary renewal of our relationship with God, followed by the climax of this great prophecy - the promise of the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash and the return of God's presence: "I will establish my sanctuary among them in their midst forever."

The process begins, however, with the in gathering of Klal Yisrael, with Yechezkel's words thundering forth: "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from amongst the nations... and I will gather them and bring them home to their Land."

Is it too much to imagine that the extraordinary influx of Jews from all over the world, fast making Israel the home of the world's largest Jewish population, is the beginning of the realization of this prophecy of Kibbutz Galuyot? Is this not the "in gathering" preceding the Redemption?

In the words of Rav Kook ZT"L "...It is clear that the eventual Geula is dependent upon the increase of Jews living in Eretz Yisrael, 'a holy nation in the holy land'."

When God tells us unequivocally, "I will return them to their Land...", He is revealing His desire - which is incumbent upon us to carry out by encouraging and fostering a massive Aliya effort.

As such, we depend upon our co-religionists to join us and be part of this great process of Geula that our Prophets have outlined for us and of which we have so long wished to be a part. L'hitraot b'artzeinu hakedosha.

Rabbi Meyer Fendel, Har Nof, Jerusalem

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

R' Eliyahu Chaim of Lomza accepted the invitation to become the rabbi of Lodz. On the day he was expected to arrive in the city, all got dressed up in their Shabbat clothes and went to the train station to honor their new rabbi and to escort him to his new home. The train arrived, and a few passengers descended - but not R' Eliyahu Chaim. People began debating what had happened: could he have been hurt? But then he would have informed them of the delay. They finally decided that he must have changed his mind and remained in Lomza.

The next day, without any fanfare, R' Eliyahu Chaim got off the train and made his way to the Beis Medrash. When the community leaders found out that the new rabbi was in town, all rushed to welcome him; they found him deeply involved in learning.

"Rebbe, why did you act this way?" they asked him. "Yesterday, we all went out to greet you, and today you arrived without anyone even being present to welcome you."

"You all went out yesterday in my honor, although I had done absolutely nothing yet on behalf of the city," said R' Eliyahu Chaim. "Honor must be earned, and I don't like being paid in advance for something I have not done."

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] **Parsha Points to Ponder - VAYIGASH**

1) Why is the word CHALIFOT referring to the clothing Yosef gave his brothers written with a VAV while the same word is written without a VAV regarding the clothing he gave to Binyamin? (See 45:22)

2) Why does the Torah describe Yaakov's offering in Be'er Sheva as being offered to the G-D OF HIS FATHER YITZCHAK specifically? (46:1)

3) The Torah already established in a few places that Goshen was in the land of Egypt so so why does it teach the seemingly superfluous AND ISRAEL SETTLED IN THE LAND OF EGYPT IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN? (47:27)

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) The Gemara in Megila (16) questions how Yosef could give Binyamin more clothing than the other brothers considering that the brother's sold Yosef because he was favored by Yaakov. The Gemara answers that Yosef gave Binyamin five articles of clothing to hint that in the future his descendant, Mordechai,

would be blessed to wear five garments of royalty. The obvious question is that the brothers had no awareness about this hint so how does this in any way answer the question? The Vilna Gaon answers that we learn from the missing VAV in the description of Binyamin's clothing that each of his articles of clothing was less valuable than the ones he gave the brothers whose clothing includes the VAV in the spelling. All five of what Binyamin received collectively equaled what each brother was given. Our Sages mentioned the hint regarding Binyamin to explain why Yosef gave Binyamin five items and not one but the issue was not a difference in values.

2) The Meshech Chochma teaches that Yitzchak brought this offering because of a specific fear that he had. Yosef was removed from Yaakov for 22 years as a punishment for the fact that Yaakov stayed away from his father, Yitzchak, for that period of time. Yaakov was concerned that Yosef would not offer him proper respect as result as is indicated by the mentioning of his father in connection with this offering.

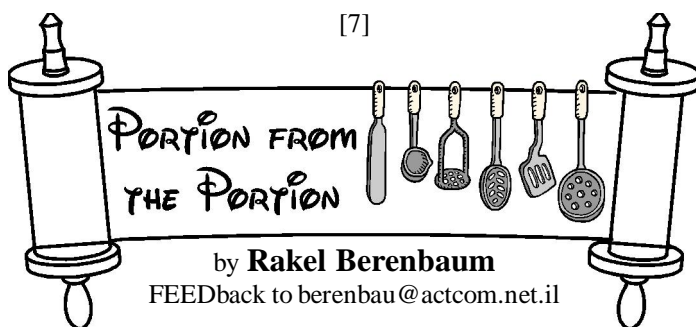
3) Rav Moshe Feinstein answers that the Torah is teaching us that while the Jews were geographically within the borders of Egypt, they remained in the region of Goshen. They were deliberately isolated to shield themselves from the decadence of Egyptian society.

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

[6] **MicroUlpan**

How do you say kite-shaped in Hebrew? DALTON

Anyone know an English word for this particular type of quadrilateral? (2 pairs of adjacent sides equal; opposite angles equal.



In Parshat Miketz we find Yosef basically running the whole Egyptian empire. And yet in seven different places in Miketz, VaYigash, and Vayechi (B'reishit 42:24, 43:30, 45:2, 45:15, 45:16, 46:29, 50:17), the Torah makes a point of telling us that Yosef cried. This doesn't seem to be the behavior we would expect of such a powerful leader. It doesn't seem so "masculine". What is the Torah trying to teach us about Yosef and about crying in general?

What are some of the emotions that Yosef exhibited with his tears? Yosef brought up tears of happiness (42:24) when he realized that his brothers were on the path of teshuva for their having sold him into slavery (Rashi).

When Binyamin is brought down to Egypt and is presented to Yosef (43:30), Rashi says that Yosef asked him about his

family. Binyamin told him that he had a brother who was lost and he himself had ten children. He gave each of his children a name related to the story of his lost brother (i.e. 'CHUPIM because my brother never saw my CHUPA, my wedding). This answer made Yosef cry out of sadness realizing that his brother and father were never able to stop mourning his disappearance. All these instances of crying were done privately because he still didn't want his brothers to know that he was their lost brother Yosef.

When he finally (45:2-3) revealed himself to his brothers, he was filled with emotion, yet he was careful not to embarrass his brothers in front of others. Therefore he sent all the Egyptians out of the room so he could discuss the events of the past with his brothers freely. Then he was able to shed tears of mercy for his brothers in front of them and cry so loud that all of Egypt heard him.

Before sending his brothers back to bring Yaakov to Egypt (45:15) he shed tears of love for his brother, Binyamin. Then he kissed each one of his brothers and cried on their shoulders as well.

In verse 46:29 we see his tears of remorse that his father actually bowed down to him. Maybe these tears were Yosef's own process of repentance for having caused his father anguish for the 22 years he had been in Egypt and hadn't sent a message to his family.

Throughout we see Yosef as a strong ruler, but full of emotions that he is not embarrassed to express. The underlying feeling we see from his tears is a concern for other people, in this case, his brothers. He cried because he was able to feel their pain. Although they had hurt him personally, he still cared for them as a brother and was able to think about their feelings and treat them with mercy. For example, his tears on each one of his brother's shoulders helped break the barrier they might have felt toward him, or they feared he might have toward them. As Rashi explains after the brothers saw him cry and understood that Yosef's heart was with them, they were able to talk to him and were no longer embarrassed.

And how did Yosef develop this trait of caring for others, putting others before himself? He inherited it from his mother, Rachel Imenu, who let her sister Leah marry Yaakov before she herself did. And she is the one who cries for the whole Jewish nation throughout time - she feels the pain and suffering of all the generations KOL B'RAMA NISHMA N'HI BE'CHI TAMRURIM RACHEL M'VA'KA AL BA'NEHA.

We should follow in the path of our ancestors Rachel and Yosef and not be afraid to shed tears if they bring us closer to other people and awaken G-d's mercy for his people.

You can make a salad with tear drop tomatoes or make any type of tear shaped cookies. If you use only yellow or white candies for the following recipe the cookies will really look like tear drops.

Stained glass teardrop cookies

- 1 c. margarine (softened)
- 1¼ c. sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 3 c. flour
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. soymilk

6 ounces hard candies

Big and small tear-shaped cookie cutters

Beat margarine and sugar, until smooth and creamy. Mix in egg and vanilla. Sift flour and salt together. Add half to margarine mixture. Add soymilk and remaining flour mixture. Crush the hard candies. Roll dough ¼ inch thick. Cut out cookie with large cookie cutter, and cut out the center of this cookie with the small cookie cutter. Use the small piece to make a small cookie sprinkled with (colored) sugar. Put ½-1 tsp. crushed candy in center (cut out part) of each big cookie. Bake 13 minutes at 375°F.

Rakel Berenbaum, our Portion from the Portion columnist, will be talking at the Nefesh conference (Heb.), Jan.18-19 [www.nefeshisrael.com] on Memory Improvement Techniques: from Jewish sources and professional literature. She can also give lectures and workshops on memory improvement.

[8] Divrei Menachem

Parshat Vayigash throws us again into that dramatic moment when Yosef reveals himself to his brothers in Egypt. Yosef had been consistently acting to actualize the dreams that he revealed to his family years earlier. And insofar as he had to extract from his brothers an admission of their wrongdoing, Yosef dealt with them- and his father - in a harsh way.

While we are perturbed that during all the years that Yosef was viceroy in Egypt he did not maintain contact with his grieving father, we are equally surprised that the first comment he makes after exclaiming to his brothers, "I am Yosef!" is, "Is my father still alive?" This, especially, since Yehuda had just so eloquently alluded to Ya'akov in his plea for mercy.

Perhaps Yosef could not believe that his father survived the pain of so many years. Maybe, as the Ralbag suggests, he wanted to know if everything said about his father was really true. Alternatively, Yosef may have been implying that there was a disparity of sympathy over his disappearance compared with Binyamin's separation from his father?

Whatever the reason, the Chafetz Chaim explains that Yosef's call "I am Yosef!" is the precursor of the time when G-d will declare, "I am Hashem!" At that time we will understand the perplexing events that have befallen our people; at that time all will become clear.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

Towards Better Davening and Torah Reading

Some people follow the GR"A, Aruch Ha- Shulchan and others and say only the three p'sukim of Kedusha and leave the Chazan's parts to him. Others have the practice that the KAHAL says the Chazan's parts too, either with him or right before him. If one says the Chazan's parts, it should be the same words that the Chazan uses in that particular shul. In other words, if you personally daven Nusach Ashkenaz and you are in a Nusach S'fard shul, you should say NAKDISHACH rather than N'KADEISH, M'SHAB'CHIM V'O'M'RIM rather than BARUCH YOMEIRU. KETER and YACHAD rather than NAARITZ'CHA. And vice versa. Or just say the p'sukim, which are the same in all Nuscha'ot. Private prayers can be in your own Nusach, but one should not separate himself from the TZIBUR for things that require a Minyan.

Watch the Commas

We say it in Korbanot, in U'VA L'TZIYON, in ATA KADOSH, and in Havdala.

HASHEM TZVAKOT I'MANU, MISGAV LANU ELOKEI YAAKOV, SELA.

The statement from T'hilim 46:8 and 12 is made of three parts. HASHEM T'VAKOT (is a compound name of G-d, written here the way it is referred to out of the context of prayer or Tanach reading) IMANU - G-d is with us; MISGAV LANU ELOKEI YAAKOV, a refuge (or stronghold) for us is the G-d of Yaakov; and SELA, a separate ending word of 70 p'sukim in T'hilim. We should say it with pauses at the commas, to help our understanding.

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.

From the Mikdash Mailbag

Chaver Catriel, three points:

1. I think you should be more careful in quoting Josephus. You should be even more careful in quoting Josephus when he contradicts Chaza"l. You know that Josephus had contempt for Chazal and did what he could to undermine their authority and blacken them. It is the equivalent of quoting a traitor to the Jewish people in our generation and asking him to give his expert opinion on something Jewish. A traitor always has his own ax to grind and we should not give him a platform to spread his warped ideas. There is no reason why should we give a traitor prominence if he supports the enemies of the Jewish people. I think we need more self-respect, or at the very least, critically analyze what we quote and not accept everything that Josephus says as fact just because he lived 2000 years ago. Remember, there were Meshumadim (apostates) in those generations too...

The credibility of Josephus is a subject that we have touched upon many times. The brutal truth is that Josephus was a Roman propagandist and therefore had his own political agenda; i.e. justifying and white-washing Roman atrocities and blackening the memory of the heroes of his own people. A quisling, he is even less trustworthy when he talks about himself and his role in the war against Rome. After deserting to the enemy, the turncoat proudly boasted, "When the city of Jerusalem was taken by force (and destroyed), Titus Caesar persuaded me frequently to take what I would of the ruins of my country." Following his master Titus to Rome he received his reward; Roman citizenship, a spacious apartment in Vespasian's former residence in Rome, and a yearly pension for his literary endeavors. In fact, though it has not been discovered, it is said that a statue of Josephus was erected in the Roman forum "for services rendered". Josephus was exceedingly conceited, over-dramatic, credulous, and like most ancient historians, totally unreliable when it came to numbers. However, when Josephus describes what he saw, or information that he was able to gather from primary sources or from reports of eyewitnesses, though his accounts are not free of

discrepancies, he is surprisingly accurate. Scholars have compared his descriptions of Caesarea, Gamla and in particular the topography of Masada with the most recent archeological findings and have found him to be generally reliable. Despite his many faults, when one takes into allowances for his obvious biases, Josephus is still by far the most authoritative source of information of the history of Eretz Yisrael and Am Yisrael in that tragic era.

2. Shelamim: When you discuss Shelamim, ("Peace-offerings") you should strengthen and complete your thought process by explaining that this Korban was called Shelamim simply by quoting Rashi (the second opinion based on Torat Kohanim in Vayikra 3:1). Rashi writes, "Shalom La-mizbei'ach, Shalom La-kohanim Ve'shalom La-b'alim. (Shelamim were divided into three parts. The Emurim [the innards of the sacrificial animal] were burnt on the altar; the Kohanim received some of the sacrificial meat for their use; and the rest of the sacrificial animal was given to those who brought the Korban.) According to this Rashi, your emphasis should have been different: e.g. "There was one Korban that was unique in that part was burnt on the Mizbei'ach, part given to the Kohanim to eat and part was eaten by the Ba'alei HaKorban. Because of this uniqueness, this Korban was called Shelamim - from Shalom and Shaleim - peace and "completion". The Yisra'el who offered Shelamim the Mikdash brought peace and completion into the world. Will do.

3. I have a challenge for you. Write about the Ta'im ("cells") of the Bayit. They were built in a unique way and they enveloped the whole Heichal. It seems that it would not have been too easy to get from one level to the other and yet in size and volume, they comprised a large percentage of the Heichal building and yet whose full use is not so clear. How much could there have been to store? - KT - JE - Onondaga County

Okay, I will. Our main source for information about the Ta'im, the "cells" that surrounded the outer walls of the Heichal and Kodesh HaKodashim is Mishnat Midot 4:3,4. The Mishna reads, "And there were 38 Ta'im there (in the Bayit), 15 to the north (of the Heichal and Kodesh HaKodashim), 15 to the south and 8 to the west. Those to the north and to the south were built five over five, and five over them (i.e. three levels of five cells each); and those to the west, three over three and two over them." The two lower levels in the west had three Ta'im each and the top level only two. The Mishna goes on to note that the Ta'im had passages in their ceilings, floors and sides. The Kohanim ascended and descended between the floors by means of ladders. Tiferet Yisrael (26) comments that when the Mishna writes that 'each Ta had three entrances', that did not mean that they had them in the identical place or direction. "The Ta'im in the upper level ...did not have openings (in their ceilings) because there were no Ta'im above them." Unlike the upper Ta'im, the lower Ta'im in the northeast corner and the southeast corner had opening on the east side. These lower wickets connected the Ulam (the entrance hall) to the Heichal. When it was time for the Kohanim to open the Heichal, "The Great Gate (which led from the Ulam to the Heichal) had two wickets, one to the north and one to the south. No one ever entered the southern wicket, because Ezekiel expressly said, "And the Lord said to me, "This gate shall be shut, it shall be not be opened, neither shall any man enter by it, for the Lord, the G-d of Israel, has entered through it ..." (44:2). He (the ministering Kohein) took the key and opened the (northern) door. He entered into (the lower northeast) Ta (and by turning left) entered the Heichal and approaching the Great Gate (from the inside)"

(Tamid 3:7). When he reached the Great Gate, he drew back the bolt and opened the locks... (Tamid 3:7). The width of the three levels of Ta'im varied. "The lower level of Ta'im was 5 Amot wide, and the floor above it, 6; and the upper (floor) was 7..." (Midot 4:4). The outer walls of the lower levels were thinner than that of the lower levels which made excellent architectural sense. The Mishna does not specify their length, and this over the years has led to serious disagreements. Our Mekorot do not specify the precise use of the Ta'im but it is likely that they were used to store Mikdash treasures. We can picture the Ta'im in the dim light, lined with rows and rows of shelves right up to the ceiling stacked with gold vessels and chests of silver half Shekels contributed by all Am Yisrael. The Kohanim used them for the Avoda as needed.

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

Across the top of the ParshaPix, from right to left, are the TRUP marks for the first six words of Vayigash. See the comment in the Sedra Summary

The basketball player is labeled CHI for Chicago, as in the Bulls. The football player is labeled DET, for the Detroit Lions. Together they represent the clash between Yehuda(Lion) and Yosef (Shor).

The square knot stands for V'NAFSHO K'SHURA V'NAF-SHO, and his soul was tied up with his soul (Yaakov and Binyamin).

To the right of the knot are five shirts, standing for the five changes of clothes that Yosef gave to Binyamin. He also gave him 300 silver pieces, represented by the money sacks marked with the Egyptian hieroglyphics symbol for 100. 3 sacks, 300 silver pieces.

There are two of the wagons that Yosef sent to Yaakov, to bring the family down to Egypt... and to remind him of the Torah topic they last studied together.

The noble steed, a.k.a. Donkey with 10+10 above him stands for the donkeys (10 CHAMORIM and 10 ATONOT) that Yosef sent to Yaakov with provisions for their trip to Mitzrayim. The dreidel, purposely a Chutz LaAretz one, with SHIN. The letters of the dreidel rearrange to spell GOSHNA, to Goshen. This, from Vayigash, which is almost always the post-Chanuka Shabbat.

Next we have the number 70, marked with an asterisk, and an arrow pointing downward. This represents the 70 souls who went down to Egypt. The asterisk reminds us that one had gone down much earlier (Yosef) and two others were born in Egypt (Efrayim and Menashe), but are still counted among the 70.

In the lower-left corner is a picture of Orde Wingate, British general, ardent Zionist, trained Jewish youth military tactics. Was removed from Palestine when the British decided he was potentially acting against British interests. Anyway, his first name was Orde, very similar (especially in the Ashkenazic pronunciation of a KAMATZ) to the name of Binyamin's youngest son.

Next to Wingate is an albatross, a.k.a. gooney bird. Sounds like

GUNI, one of Naftali's sons.

The two sticks are from the haftara.

This leaves a TTriddle, 25.6 fl. oz.

Have fun with this ParshaPix... and every week.

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 (MIKEITZ-CHANUKA) TTriddles:

- [1] The match, sort of, to Par'o's cows
- [2] How many and what are homographs?
- [3] They achieved strength and (different) royalty at the same age
- [4] 3 for 2 and 2 for 3 and it's the sky chair (T-shirt TTriddle)
- [5] Two olive trees, not two women
- [6] Besides Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel, there are two other opinions - Beit Fibonacci and Beit Lucas. How many more candles does Beit Lucas require than Beit Fibonacci? Why do Fibonacci candles tilt?
- [7] If the first two nights were the same but the progression were geometric, how many candles would there be in a box?
- [8] So have another 34/49 of a latke - (Get this one and win a separate prize)

Nachman K's Jewish Trivia Question:

24 words in a row in one of our T'filot ending with the same letter

And the envelope, please...

[1] The words SHEVA PAROT, 7 cows, occur four times in the Tanach - all in Parshat Mikeitz. Turns out that there are four occurrences of SHIV'A PARIM, 7 bulls, a match - as in SHIDDUCH - for the 7 cows. Would you not agree? Of course, half of the cows are thin, emaciated ones, but we can match them to the bulls of Bil'am and Balak. That is two occurrences; the other two are in Iyov and Divrei HaYamim. Note that the TTriddle said "sort of". Because the 14 cows of Parshat Mikeitz are from a dream. They aren't real. So there is no real potential for a match. And the PARIM, for that matter, are sacrifices - also not suitable for a match.

[2] Homographs (at least by one definition) are words that are spelled the same but pronounced differently - like WIND (air that flows) and WIND (as in to wind a watch - remember when we used to do that regularly?) Borrowing the term for Hebrew (which really doesn't work the same, because spelling doesn't include vowels- but this is a TTriddle), we find SHEVA SH'NEI HASAVA. There were seven years of plenty. How many (SHEVA) and what (SAVA) are spelled the same - homographs.

[3] As it says in Pirkei Avot - BEN SH'LOSHIM LAKO'ACH, at the age of 30, one attains strength. In all of Tanach, the phrase BEN SH'LOSHIM SHANA, 30 years old, is found only twice. In Mikeitz, telling us that Yosef was 30 when he stood before Par'o and achieved royalty - 2nd to Par'o. David HaMelech began 40 years of reigning as king at the age of 30 (Shmuel Bet). Different royalty, at the same age of strength. Yosef and David.

[4] 3 for 2 and 2 for 3 refers to mixing up the readings in the second and third Torah, this past Shabbat. There is a general rule that the haftara follows the last piece of Torah that was read. The normal order of the three Torahs was Mikeitz, Rosh Chodesh, Chanuka. Therefore, the haftara is the one for Shabbat Chanuka. If Rosh Chodesh is read last, the haftara is switched to the one for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh, which is known as HASHAMAYIM KIS'I, the heavens are My chair (throne). However, there is another opinion that we would stay with the CHanuka haftara anyway, because of Pirsumei Nisa, publicizing the miracle, which would supersede that general rule mentioned above.

[5] Two olive trees refers to the special haftara of Shabbat Chanuka. The two babies of the story with Shlomo HaMelech is in the "regular" haftara of Mikeitz. Last Shabbat, we read of the two olive trees - not of the two women and their babies. Mikeitz's haftara is RANI V'SIMCHI (with the Menora and two olive trees) 71.5% of the time. We read of the two babies only 10.1% of the time. The other 18.4% of the time, Mikeitz goes along with the haftara of the second Shabbat Chanuka, VAYAAS CHIROM.

[6] Chanuka math. The basic Fibonacci series is 1,1, 2,3,5,8,13,21... After starting with 1 and 1, each successive term in the series is the sum of the two previous terms. $1+1=2$. $1+2=3$. $2+3=5$. And so on. The 9th term (which we are not concerned with for the Chanuka question) would be $13+21=34$. The sum of the first 8 terms of the Fibonacci series is 54, to which we add 8 more candles for the SHAMASH each night for a total of 62 candles. The Lucas series works the same (since it is a Fibonacci sequence too), but begins specifically with 1 and 3 as the first two terms. The first 8 terms of the Lucas series are 1,3,4,7,11,18,29,47. The sum of these 8 terms is 120, plus 8 gives 128 candles, which is 66 more than the 62 for Beit Fibonacci. Why do the candles of Beit Fibonacci tilt? Because Fibonacci's real name (Fibonacci was his nickname) was Leonardo of Pisa. (As in the Leaning Tower of.) Several correct answers were submitted for this one.

[7] The arithmetic sequence beginning with 1,2, is 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 for the nights of Chanuka. The geometric sequence beginning with 1,2 is 1,2,4,8, 16,32,64,128, which add up to 255 candles, plus 8 gives 263 candles all together.

[8] Based on an old g'matriya joke. We eat kugel on Shabbat because the g'matriya of KUGEL equals that of SHABBAT. No it doesn't, objects anyone who takes the time to calculate the g'matriyas. Okay, so eat more kugel, is the wise-guy answer. Similarly, we eat LATKES on CHANUKA because L'VIVA has the same g'matriya as Chanuka. No it doesn't. So eat more LATKES. How much more? L'VIVA is 49. Eating another 34/49 of a latke will bring the total to 83, the g'matriya of Chanuka.

This week's TTriddles:

[1] Name of more different people in the Chumash than any other name

[2] Sad contrast of first and last of Sedra-trio

[3] number/word play mammal-bird link (A11-D3)

[4] Useful, strong, reliable, square (in Vayigash);fool's variation (in Mishlei)

[5] What's the haftara's choice for a snack?

[6] first cousins • king and successor's father

[7] plus one element from the ParshaPix

Nachman K's Jewish Trivia Question

Last week's NKJTQ was: 24 words in a row in one of our T'filot ending with the same letter

No one sent in a correct answer to this question. Rather than give you the answer and ask another question, we are giving a hint and the question stands for this week. First correct answer wins a CD from Noam Productions. The hint: We say it monthly

See also the Israel Center webpages at

www.ou.org/israel/ic

Some of the material on those pages is "fixed" (same each week, occasionally modified) and some is new and fresh each week