

Shabbat Shira is the 131st day (of 354); the 19th Shabbat (of 50) of 5766

מִי־כַמְלֶכֶה בְּאֵלֶם ה' מִי כַמְלֶכֶה זָאֵדָר בְּקִדְשׁ... שמוות טויה

As He does, so should we

Let's take a different overview of Parshat B'shalach - one that is not very pleasant, but one that can teach us a very important lesson.

For many months, the children of Israel had heard G-d's promises from the mouth of Moshe Rabeinu, and for many months they witnessed the terrible but awe-inspiring plagues rained down upon the Egyptians. Everything they saw confirmed the power of G-d and the truth in the prophecies and promises of redemption. And then they witnessed the tenth plague, the illogical generosity of the Egyptians. And they witnessed - no, more - they participated in Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim, the great Exodus of millions of Jews from the land of their bondage.

A few days later, Par'o and an elite army pursue them towards the Sea. And the people panicked. Are there insufficient graves in Egypt? We told you we'd rather stay in Egypt than die in the wilderness.

Terrible. How could they say something like that? Leave it; we cannot judge.

But let us focus on G-d's reaction. He stayed with us. He did not reject us as ingrates. We remained His people in spite of our behavior.

Then the people witnessed even greater miracles at the Sea than they had in Egypt. And for a while - an embarrassingly short while - the people seemed to be filled with Belief, faith, and trust. Three days after the Splitting of the Sea, the people complained they were thirsty. Reasonable, on the one hand, but perhaps lacking the faith they professed at the Sea. Another short time later, bitter complaints for food, in a very harsh and insulting way. But G-d stuck with us.

And again, and again, and again. But the point here is not to berate Bnei Yisrael, but rather to marvel at G-d's keeping us unto Him. And we must learn exactly that! Not to despair of and reject our fellow Jews or this Land. Unfortunately, what has been happening lately can cause one to be disenchanted. With some of our fellow Jews. With the State of

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...

Last opportunity for Kiddush L'vana this month is Sunday night, Leil TU BiShvat, 12 Feb



Reminder: There is a custom to provide food for birds on Erev Shabbat Shira. At least two ideas combine to explain this custom. Sources tell us that Datan & Aviram spread manna around the camp on Friday night, intending to make a liar out of Moshe on Shabbat morning by showing the people that manna fell, contrary to Moshe's statement that it would not fall on Shabbat. Birds ate the manna early in the morning, saving the day. Feeding them before the Shabbat we read of the manna, is HAKARAT HATOV, repaying a favor. Also, SHIRA, song, is the bird's special talent. We borrowed it for the Song of the Sea and pay a royalty, so to speak, to our fine feathered friends.

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Candle Lighting and HAVDALA
Standard (Winter) time
Correct for TT 703 • Rabbeinu Tam (l'm) - 6:36pm

4:46pm	Jerusalem	6:00pm
5:02pm	Raanana	6:01pm
5:02pm	Beit Shemesh	6:01pm
5:01pm	Netanya	6:01pm
5:02pm	Rehovot	6:01pm
4:42pm	Petach Tikva	6:01pm
5:01pm	Modi'in	6:01pm
5:03pm	Be'er Sheva	6:02pm
5:01pm	Gush Etzion	6:00pm
5:01pm	Ginot Shomron	6:00pm
4:46pm	Maale Adumim	5:59pm
5:02pm	K4 & Hevron	6:00pm
4:48pm	Tzfat	5:58pm
5:01pm	Tel Mond	6:00pm

Ranges are FRI-FRI 12-19 Shvat (February 10-17)

Earliest Talit & T'filin - 5:35-5:29am
Sunrise - 6:26-6:19½am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma - 9:09-9:06am (8:24-8:21am)
Sof Z'man T'fila - 10:04-10:02am (9:33-9:31am)
Chatzot (halachic noon) - 11:53-11:53am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 12:24-12:24pm
Plag Mincha - 4:13-4:18pm
Sunset - 5:26-5:32pm (5:21-5:27pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)
Shabbat 3:30pm (Mincha 4:30pm)
Yaacov Peterseil & Co.
Motza'ei Shabbat 8:30pm
Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher

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Orthodox Union • National Conference of Synagogue Youth
This publication and many of the programs of the Israel Center and NCSY in Israel are assisted by grants from The Jewish Agency for Israel
Produced and printed "in house" at the Israel Center

Israel. But remember - if anyone had the right to be disenchanted with anyone, it would have been G-d with us. But He wasn't! Maybe that's a lesson from B'shalach. We have to fight hard to improve the State and the people (ourselves included). Not with cinder-blocks and not with police batons. But with the values of Torah and love of G-d, Torah, His People, and His Land.



Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI (positive mitzva); L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek and pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

[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 - 13:17-14:8

[S> 13:17 (6)] "When Par'o sends the People...", G-d leads them along a circuitous route to prevent them from panicking and returning to Egypt. Moshe, in fulfillment of the promise made to Yosef by his brothers, takes Yosef's remains out of Egypt with the People.

SDI *The Midrash tells us that Yosef's bones had been hidden by the Egyptians in the Nile in order to prevent the Israelites from leaving the country. Yosef's coffin miraculously surfaced just at the right time, so that the People could take it with them when they left. We are taught that Yosef merited being taken out of Egypt for burial in Eretz Yisrael because he had arranged for his father's burial there. Moshe, in turn, was accorded the highest honor - G-d Himself took care of Moshe's burial, in reward for the attention he paid to Yosef's remains.*

[FYI] The Gemara teaches us that a dead body itself - and certainly one who is defiled to a dead body - is allowed into the "Levite Camp", and is only banned from the Mikdash area. This we learn from the fact that Moshe took Yosef's bones "with him". This halacha has significance today concerning halachic permissibility of ascending Har HaBayit in those areas that are OUTSIDE the place where the Mikdash and its courtyards MIGHT have been. That part of Har HaBayit has the status of the Levite camp, and one may go there following immersion in a Mikve to rid oneself of "the defilement that comes from the body". (Defilement to a dead body cannot be removed without the Para Aduma potion and so one cannot go into the Mikdash part of Har HaBayit.) - and with other restrictions. A person should consult a Rav with Har HaBayit experience before going there.

G-d provided an escort for the People in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night.

[P> 14:1 (14)] G-d tells Moshe of His plan to lead the People in such a way that Par'o will pursue them in the misguided hope of bringing them back to Egypt.

When Par'o is notified (by spies whom he had sent to accompany the Israelites) of the People's whereabouts, he (with G-d's help in making his heart "heavy"/strong) takes a tremendous force with him and chases after the People of Israel.

SDI *"And G-d did not allow them to go DERECH ERETZ P' LISHTIM. Literally, they did not take the straight route to the territory of the Philistines. One commentator*

B'SHALACH STATS

16th of 54 sedras; 4th of 11 in Shmot
Written on 215.33 lines in a Sefer Torah, ranks 17
14 parshiot; 9 open, 5 closed
116 p'sukim - ranks 23rd (6th in Sh'mot)
1681 words - ranks 19th (4th in Sh'mot)
6423 letters - ranks 18th (4th in Sh'mot)

MITZVOT:

B'SHALACH contains a single mitzva of the 613, the prohibition of leaving one's Shabbat boundary — T'CHUM SHABBAT (see MitzvaWatch)

Important Calendar Memos

Friday, Feb. 10, Erev Shabbat Shira

Take a bird to lunch

Monday, Feb. 13, TU BiShvat

Hug a tree

Appreciate a fruit

suggests an interesting DRASH based on a play on words. G-d did not take the People out of Egypt in DERECH ERETZ, in the normal, natural way of things, but in a miraculous way. Normally, bread comes from the ground; for the People of Israel, G-d sent them bread from above. Normally, water comes from above; for the People of Israel, G-d provided water from below, from the miraculous Well that accompanied them on their journeys, in the merit of Miriam. Not taking us out in a natural manner, leaves us with no doubt that it was indeed G-d Who took us out of Egypt. This is a crucial foundation stone of Judaism. Not only did we get out of Mitzrayim, but it was G-d Who took us out. Not only did He take us out, but the people knew and know it well.

Levi - Second Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 14:9-14

The mighty Egyptian army pursues the People. When the People of Israel see them coming, they are greatly frightened because there is no place to flee. They complain to Moshe that it would have been better to have died in Egypt. Moshe reassures the People, encourages them not to fear, promises them that G-d will fight on their behalf, and tells them that Egypt will soon cease to exist.

SDI *It seems that Par'o actually thought that he let the People go - that he expelled the People from Egypt. That's even what it seems to say at the beginning of this week's sedra (When Par'o sent the people out...). G-d arranged to have Par'o run after them. Then the events make it crystal clear to him - and to us - that G-d, and only G-d took us out of Egypt. Without this part of the Exodus procedure, Par'o and his people - and probably some Jews as well, would think that Par'o had a part in letting us leave Egypt. With the opening commandment of the Aseret HaDibrot stating, I am HaShem, your G-d, Who took you out of Mitzrayim... this point is essential.*

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 14:15-25

[P> 14:15 (11)] G-d "asks" Moshe why the People are screaming; let them just move on.

SDI *Our Sages teach us that there are times that prayer is called for, and other times when action is the order of the day. Sometimes we must use long prayers and petitions; sometimes a quick prayer not only suffices, but saying more can be counter-productive. G-d says: MA TITZ'AK EILAI, why call to Me? MA is spelled MEM-HEI. MEM can represent the 40 days and 40 nights that Moshe was to spend in prayer on behalf of the People following the Sin of the Golden Calf. MEM represents long prayer. HEI can stand for the simple but eloquent 5-word prayer for Miriam's recovery from Tzora'at which she contracted in punishment for speaking disrespectfully of Moshe. And sometimes, neither short nor long prayer is appropriate. At this point of the Exodus, the order of the day was decisive action. Move it! There is another example later in the Torah of Moshe and Aharon springing into immediate action to stop a plague from killing the People. We must know when to say T'hilim and went to act, and when to do both.*

G-d tells Moshe to raise his hand over the Sea and split it,

so the People will be able to pass through it on dry land. G-d informs Moshe that He will again harden Egypt's heart so that they will continue their pursuit. The Egyptians will finally know G-d's Might. The guardian angel (pillar of cloud) that was leading the People now was repositioned between the Jews and the pursuing Egyptian army, preventing contact.

Moshe raises his hand above the Sea and G-d causes a powerful easterly wind to blow all night, followed by a parting of the waters. The People of Israel enter the Sea on dry land, between walls of water.

Egypt boldly follows, but the arrogant attitude of the Egyptians abruptly changes to fear and panic as their chariots lose their wheels and bog down in the seabed. (This is in sharp contrast with the perfectly dry land that Israel found beneath its feet.)

Egypt finally (too late) acknowledges G-d, not only now, but retroactively, as the One Who had fought for Israel in Egypt.

SDI *Why the strong wind blowing all night? Could not G-d have split the Sea with the snap of a finger? The answer is: Of course. But the night's preparation for the miracles of the day serve several purposes. The Egyptians are lulled into a false sense of security when something is happening that they can explain. They don't want to accept that the G-d of Israel is performing miracles for His people. No doubt, their wizards explained the desert winds and the effects it can have. Among the Jews, there are always individuals who would like not to admit to G-d's awesome powers. They too will have their "excuse" in the natural components of the miracle. Perhaps, most importantly, this wind (and the like) allows us to relate to and better appreciate, the miracles themselves. A snap of the finger brings results too quickly for us to think about what is happening. A night to ponder what was going on, further enhanced the appreciation of the Children of Israel for what had happened, was happening, and was to happen.*

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 32 p'sukim - 14:26-15:26

[P> 14:26 (6)] Moshe is now instructed by G-d to raise his hand once more over the Sea so that the waters may return. He does so and the Egyptians are drowned. The People, however, have succeeded in passing through the Sea and are ecstatic in their salvation. They attain true belief and trust in G-d and in Moshe His servant. (Rambam states that complete, solid, lasting faith in G-d was attained at Sinai. Here we must say that the belief was great, but not yet permanent.)

[P> 15:1 (19)] Next comes the Song of the Sea. What makes the Song of the Sea so special is that it is a direct quote of the People of Israel that G-d put into His Torah verbatim. In other words, the rest of the Torah is written by G-d; we composed this part. It is an inspiring passage that has been incorporated into the daily davening.

SDI *It is written in Sefer HaChareidim that "he who says the Song of the Sea aloud and with joy, it is as if he was leaving Egypt at that moment - and his sins will be forgiven." In*

the merit of the Song of the Sea, G-d split the Sea for the People and forgave their transgressions.

This 19-pasuk parsha is unique in the way it is written in a Sefer Torah. The column that contains the Shira is wider than all the other columns in the Torah. It is a Tradition to start the column with 5 lines belonging to the previous parsha, beginning with the word HABA'IM. (Many Sifrei Torah are written so that each column - of approx. 245 columns - begins with the letter VAV, except for 5 columns - this is one of the five.) Then a line is skipped (this is very rare in the Torah) and then the first line of AZ YASHIR is written all the way across the column. The next line has one word, a blank space, a group of words (from 3-5), another blank space, and then a single word to end the line. Call this line pattern A. The next line starts with a group of words (2-5), a space, and another group of words (3-5). Call this line pattern B. After the first line, the rest of the Shira parsha consists of another 29 lines, alternating patterns A and B, ending with an A. Then a line is skipped. Five more "regular" lines of Torah text finish off the column. The column with the Shira has the same number of lines as all the other Torah columns, but is wider, as mentioned earlier. And it has a lot of blank space and two blank lines. The Song in Haazinu is also written in a different form from the rest of the Torah, but this column in B'shalach is more eye-catchingly unusual.

[P> 15:20 (2)] Following the Shira portion is a 2-pasuk parsha describing Miriam's rallying of the women to join in the Shira in their own way.

[S> 15:22 (5)] The People continue their journey and fail to find water for three days. When they do find some, they complain bitterly (pun intended) of the inability to drink it. G-d directs Moshe to perform a miracle by throw- ing a special piece of wood into the water whereby the water becomes sweet.

SDI *Aside from the literal meaning of the text, this episode is considered an allusion to the primacy of Torah in the life of a Jew. Both Torah and water sustain life - spiritual and physical. In the same vein, "three days without water" resulted in our reading the Torah on Monday and Thursday, so that in our wandering in the spiritual desert of life, we will not go 3 days without spiritual water. This is but one "use" of the well-known analogy between Torah and water. This idea is not just a matter of DRASH. The last pasuk of this parsha tells that if we will harken to G-d's Voice and follow the Torah, keep the mitzvot... then all the ills that befell Egypt will not be put upon us...*

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 15:27-16:10

[S> 15:27 (4)] The People next travel to Eilim and from there to Midbar Tsin, en route to Sinai. This time, they complain about the lack of food.

[S> 16:4 (7)] G-d tells Moshe about the MN (manna, mahn, מַן) which He will soon provide for the People. Moshe tells the People that they will soon see how G-d hears and listens to their complaints. MN is not just the food that sustains the people throughout their wandering, it is also a crucial test of the faith that the

people should have in G-d. The MN was to fall daily except for Shabbat, and was not allowed to be left over night (except for what fell on Friday). This facilitated a constant strengthening of our faith in G-d - the need to "trust" Him every single day.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 26 p'sukim - 16:11-36

[P> 16:11 (17)] The account of the MN continues...

Quail miraculously appear in the evening, and the people eat "meat". On the next morning, the MN - protected by a layer of dew above and below it - appears. The People are fascinated by it and when they question Moshe, he explains the rules and procedures set down by G-d. Nonetheless, there were people who left over MN from one day to the next, and this angered Moshe. And, despite being told that the MN will NOT fall on Shabbat, there were individuals who went out to search for it.

[S> 16:28 (9)] G-d "takes note" of this display of lack of faith and "asks" how long we will continue to refuse to keep His commands.

The parsha of the MN is our first real introduction to Shabbat. This is the meaning of the line in DAYEINU, had You given us the Shabbat and not brought us near Har Sinai, DAYEINU. Although Shabbat is an integral part of Revelation at Sinai, it actually preceded Matan Torah.

Several customs and practices come from the Parsha of the MN. Our use of two Challot at each Shabbat meal (ideally, at Seuda Shlishit, too) is a commemoration of the MN which fell in double quantity on Friday, in honor of Shabbat. The covering of the challa is partially due to the layer of dew that covered and protected the MN. We learn the important lesson that Shabbat is honored by being prepared for. It is not just a corollary of the prohibitions of Shabbat that we prepare our food in advance, it is an essential feature of Shabbat and the role of the days of the week. The requirement of having three meals on Shabbat, Shalosh Seudot, is inspired by the pasuk that describes what Moshe said to the people about their first (and all subsequent) Shabbat. And Moshe said, eat it (the MN) today, for today is Shabbat to G-d, today you will not find it (MN) in the field. The three instances of TODAY in the pasuk with eating and Shabbat, inspired (shall we say) our Sages to require three meals on Shabbat. (It's more complicated than that, but we'll suffice with this explanation.)

Included in the instructions about the MN is the command not to "leave our PLACE on the seventh day (to collect the MN)". This was not just a rule for that generation; it is a mitzva among the 613 - the mitzva of T'chum Shabbat [**24,L321** 16:29]. Briefly, the point of T'CHUM is not about how far we may walk on Shabbat. It is about how far AWAY FROM HOME we may go. This is obvious from the halachic details of T'CHUM. The weekdays are for going. Shabbat is for staying put (as defined by halacha) and being able to "relax" and ponder G-d's Creation and Mastery over all.

A sample of the MN was stored as a remembrance for future generations.

MITZVA WATCH

According to Rambam, the prohibition of T'CHUM SHABBAT has two phases. The Torah prohibits going outside a 12 MIL boundary, that distance being related to the size of the encampment in the Midbar. This is "logical" because it was in the context of the encampment of Bnei Yisrael that the prohibition was first commanded. The Sages drastically reduced the distance one may go outside his "place of dwelling", to a mere 1 MIL or 2000 AMOT (approx. 1 km.). This measure was "borrowed" from the Torah's description of the Levite cities (the 6 cities of refuge and an additional 42 cities to be given to the Leviyim after conquest and settling of Eretz Yisrael) and their city-limits. This too has a "logic" to it.

Ramban holds that the whole topic of T'CHUM is Rabbinic; that the Torah does not have such a restriction, and that the pasuk in this week's sedra from which Rambam learns T'CHUM, is talking about other Shabbat matters.

It is important to understand that the prohibition of T'CHUM, be it D'Oraita or D'Rabbanan, was not meant to put a limit on physical exertion or the distance a person may walk on Shabbat. A person who lives in a house in the boondocks (yenemsvelt) which is located on a small plot of land with a fence around it, is restricted to a distance of about a kilometer outside his fence. Another person who lives in a big city can walk from one end to the other - from Gilo to Ramot and back again - miles and miles - and not have a problem of T'CHUM at all. And even the first guy with the house near no others can walk around and around his property all Shabbat long. As long as he does not go outside his T'CHUM, he's okay. (Not really, because he has to figure out why he spends all Shabbat walking in circles around his home.) The topics of T'CHUM and EIRUV are complex. This only touched on a few points.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 17:1-16

[P> 17:1 (7)] The People journey to Refidim and again complain about the lack of water. (It is not the complaint itself that "angers" G-d - it is the apparent lack of faith and the doubt in the value of the Exodus that casts a negative light on the People.) In response, G-d tells Moshe to gather the Elders and People and strike a rock in their presence with his miraculous staff. The result is water for the People.

[P> 17:8 (6)] The final 9 p'sukim (it is also the Torah reading of Purim morning, tell of the attack by Amalek on the fledgling nation of Israel. It is the arch-typical fight against those who would seek to destroy us. This battle repeats itself - differently - throughout Jewish History.

[P> 17:14 (3)] G-d tells Moshe to write down and tell Yehoshua that I (G-d) will wipe out the memory of Amalek... This is not just Israel's battle, but G-d's as well.

Haftara 52 p'sukim Sho'ftim 4:4-5:31

In the time of the Judges, Bnei Yisrael found themselves cruelly oppressed. In the sedra it was Par'o; in the haftara it is Yavin and his general, Sisra. Devorah enlists Barak to lead an army against them. With the success of the battle, Devorah sang a song of praise and thanks to G-d, similar in nature to that of Moshe and Bnei Yisrael in the parsha. So too, the People's faith in G-d had similar "ups and downs" to those in the sedra. Devorah was key to restoring a high level of faith in G-d among the People and in leading the People to great victories.

S'faradim read the Song of Devorah as the haftara for B'shalach. Ashkenazim start earlier and include in the reading the story of Sisra's temporary escape from Barak and his army, only to find his demise at the hand (and tent peg) of Yael, wife of Chever HaKeini.

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

Lesson # 319 (Damages, part seven; PIT part 5)

Damages caused by placing objects in a street (BOR)

We continue with the popular topic of the tort of "pit". I say popular topic since so much time is spent in yeshivot, both for women and men studying Tractate Baba Kama and so many outstanding Torah lectures on halacha are about this topic. This topic is among the most frequent involving tort relationships among people.

Reuven places a jar in a public street and Shimon walks by, stumbles on it, and breaks it. Shimon is free of liability since he is under no obligation to focus his eyes on the street when he is walking. He can presume that there are no objects placed in the street on which he can trip.

Assume that in tripping over the jar, Shimon is injured. Reuven is liable for the injury. This holds true even if Reuven has renounced his ownership of the jar prior to Shimon tripping over it; Reuven is still liable.

Reuven places his jar in a place where it is permitted to place jars, such as the unfrequented sides of a public street near the entrance to a wine press. Shimon trips over the jar and breaks it. Shimon is liable. If Shimon is injured when tripping over it, Reuven is not liable since Shimon should have looked where he was going in such a place. However, if it is dark or the entire walkway is filled with jars and Shimon breaks one of them by trying to withdraw from where he is, Shimon is not liable. If Shimon is injured by tripping over the jars in such circumstances, Reuven is liable to Shimon.

Reuven is walking in the street carrying a jar full of water. Without any negligence on Reuven's part, he trips, breaks the jar, and the water spills into the street. Shimon slips on the water or on the shards from the jar and is injured. Reuven is not liable for Shimon's injuries, for Reuven was not acting negligently when slipping in the street. However, Reuven is liable to the judgments of Heaven for not removing the shards.

[When one is liable to the judgment of Heaven, he may expiate himself by making an appropriate payment to Shimon.] In this situation Reuven's renouncing of ownership of the shards and water is effective, because the incident occurred accidentally. However, if Reuven intends to retain ownership of the shards, then he is liable if Shimon is injured by them. If as a result of Shimon slipping on the shards or water, Shimon's personal property is damaged, Reuven is not liable. This is because Reuven is not liable for damages to personal property that are caused by pit.

Assume that Reuven pours water into a public street and Shimon slips on the water and is injured, or Shimon's ox slips on the water and is killed or injured. Reuven is liable for the injuries to Shimon and for the injuries or death of Shimon's ox, as he would be in all cases of injury to a person or animal or of death of an animal caused by a pit. This holds true even in the wintertime when people are permitted to have their drains and gutters empty into the public street. If Shimon's personal property, including the clothes that he is wearing, is damaged when he slips on the water that Reuven poured into the street, Reuven is not liable. There is no liability for damage to Shimon's personal property by a pit.

A few more examples from the Talmud and Rabbinic literature. Reuven and Shimon, both potters carrying pots, are walking along the public street, Shimon behind Reuven. [The same applies to any two people, I have retained the Talmudic example.] Reuven stumbles and falls, and Shimon falls over Reuven. If Reuven could have risen prior to Shimon falling over him but failed to do so, he is liable for the injuries sustained by Shimon. If he could not have risen and Shimon falls over him, Reuven is not liable for the injuries; this in spite of the fact that Reuven should have warned Shimon to be careful. Reuven is so preoccupied with his own problem of how to get up that he does not concentrate on warning Shimon. There is an opinion that if Reuven could have warned Shimon, Reuven is liable.

Reuven is not liable for damages done to Shimon's jars when Shimon stumbles over Reuven, since a person is not liable for damages to personal property caused by his pit. Reuven himself is the pit in this action, since he represents an obstacle lying in the street.

Reuven, who is followed by Shimon, who is followed by Levi, are all walking in the street, each carrying a package. Reuven stumbles and falls, then Shimon falls over Reuven and Levi falls over Shimon. Each one could have risen and picked up his fallen package, but failed to do so. Reuven is liable for the injuries to Shimon, but not for damages to Shimon's package. It is irrelevant whether the injuries to Shimon result from Shimon falling over Reuven as he lay on the ground, or over Reuven's package. Shimon is liable for injuries to Levi only if Shimon's body causes the injuries as Shimon lay in the street; but he is not liable for damage to Levi's package. Shimon is not liable if Levi is injured by the package that Shimon dropped. In that situation, Shimon can plead that it was Reuven's fault that Shimon's package fell to the ground. If Reuven warns Shimon and Shimon warns Levi, then neither is liable. All this applies if the person who falls does not abandon ownership of his bundle; if he does, he is not liable if the person who comes after him falls on the bundle he has abandoned. Assume that Reuven falls down and is lying across the road. Shimon stumbles over Reuven's head. Levi stumbles over Reuven's legs and Yehuda stumbles over Reuven's torso. Reuven is liable to all of them for injuries if he could have arisen before they tripped over him.

There is an opinion that he is liable only to Shimon if Levi and Yehuda saw Shimon falling over Reuven and still did not avoid tripping over him.

Reuven may not place his straw and stubble in the public street so that it should be trodden upon and turned into fertilizer. If he does place it there he is penalized by an ancient Rabbinic decree declaring the straw and stubble to be ownerless so that Shimon can acquire it. There is an opinion that if Shimon acquires it, he must compensate Reuven for the value of the straw and only the increase of the value to the straw belongs to Shimon. (The trodden straw is worth more than straw that has not been trodden.) Although the straw and stubble are declared to be ownerless regarding ownership thereof, if Levi or his animal is hurt by slipping on the straw or stubble, Reuven must compensate Levi for his injuries and for the injuries to the animal. Reuven may place his straw and stubble in the street if he intends to remove them immediately.

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume X chapter 413 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

Mitzva of Dwelling in Eretz Yisrael

The previous two columns were devoted to the special laws relating to the seven species which the Torah recounts as the special praise of the Land of Israel. Rav Natan of Breslav explains how the laws of blessings in general, and the special characteristics of these seven species in particular, connect us to the land of Israel. In particular, he explains how the land of Israel is the place which exemplifies God's sovereignty, since through His status as Creator and master of creation He granted it to the Jewish people. In addition, the land of Israel exemplifies God's Providence; His supervision of the world is particularly exercised in this land, and particularly evident here.

From here Rav Natan goes on to emphasize the enormous importance of dwelling in the land of Israel. He speaks of "the magnitude of the travails which must be suffered before one can come to the land of Israel, and the innumerable multitude of obstacles which need to be smashed before coming to the Land of Israel." Yet he explains that ultimately these travails and obstacles are illusory, merely psychological obstacles: "For if a person believed in the sanctity of the land of Israel as it truly is, there would certainly be no obstacle in the world which could keep him away".

While the Land of Israel is often used in Chasidic thought as a kind of metaphor for a state of higher perception of God's presence, Rav Natan leaves no doubt that he is talking about the actual land of Israel. He compares the amount of effort and time needed for business trips to Marseille, London or America with those needed for a trip to Istanbul and from there to Acco, and the expense of a modest dowry with that needed to reach the land of Israel. He continues, "if a person would believe in the

sanctity of the land of Israel [even] one thousandth of what it truly is, he would certainly run and [even] fly to the land of Israel. (Flying was considerably more difficult in Rav Natan's day, before the invention of the airplane.)

Rav Natan goes on to liken the obstacles that prevent a person from coming to Israel with the hostile nations which the people of Israel fought when they first entered the land. "All of the obstacles to the Land of Israel which need to be shattered, all are included in the aspect of the seven nations, the Canaanite, the Hittite, etc. For the land was in their hands, and they cover the holiness of the Land of Israel, and occlude and hide the taste of the holiness of the Land of Israel."

He then continues the identity he has drawn all along between the land of Israel and the seven species: "Thus there are seven nations corresponding to the seven species which are the praise of the Land of Israel... And this is what is written, "And to elevate them from that land to a good and broad land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Emorite and the Perizzite and the Hivvite and the Yebusite" (Sh'mot 3:8). For one is dependent on the other, for in order to conquer and subdue the seven nations considered in the verse... this is by believing in the praise of the land, that it is a land flowing with milk and honey, meaning that it is overflowing the supernal pleasant joy, from which comes the sweetness of the seven species, which enable us to subdue and conquer all the seven nations, which represent all of the obstacles. For the primary obstacle is that they confuse our perception and keep us from perceiving the holiness of the Land of Israel.

But one who overcomes them and believes in Moshe Rabbenu and all the true saints who exceeded in their praise of the land of Israel, will certainly overcome all the obstacles included in the seven nations, which are drawn from the destructive spiritual forces, and will come to the Land of Israel. To the land flowing with milk and honey, where are found the seven species which are the essence of pleasant joy."

(Likutei Halakot Blessings on Fruit 4. Usually I cite briefly from Rav Natan and interpret at length, but this chapter is so explicit, articulate and timely that I am left with nothing to add.)

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 find a wife for my son, for Yitzchak" [1]

B'reishit 24:1-67 • Our Sages teach that the actions of the fathers are signs for the sons. To understand this as referring only to the actions is a marginalizing and minimizing of this teaching. Rather, we should see how the moral and spiritual ideas that underlie these actions have shaped and become integrated in the very character and behavior of the Jewish People throughout the centuries. So the actions of the Avot, their spiritual challenges, experiences and achievements are the foundations on which each and every generation and individual

Jew has built their national and personal history. The story of finding a bride for Yitzchak is no different in this respect from the other stories of the Patriarchs. This is no ordinary shidduch, but rather the archetype for all future Jewish marriages, as befits the one that is the second stage in the spiritual and religious formation of the Abrahamic Family-Nation.

We refer to the G-d of the Avot but also to the G-d of Avraham, of Yitzchak and of Yaakov, demonstrating that while they share many characteristics, they also have their individual strengths and contributions. Avraham is Midat HaChesed, Yitzchak is Midat HaDin and Yaakov is Midat HaEmet; Chesed may be exaggerated and lead to injustice, while justice by itself may lead to cruelty. However, in Emet, the positive of both merge, without any negative potential. So Yaakov alone of the Patriarchs has no P'solet (chaff) and merits the 12 Tribes that are Israel. This shidduch between Rivka and Yitzchak is the one that will lead to Yaakov. We may see the importance of this shidduch in the fact that the Torah devotes more verses to it [67] than those of the first Shabbat, the creation of Adam and Chava, Gan Eiden, the sin of Adam and Chava, their punishments and the expulsion from Gan Eiden combined [49].

Our story begins with a verse that seems to be irrelevant, and yet is actually the basis for any marriage and for that matter for all Jewish living. "And Hashem had blessed Avraham in everything, 'bakol'" (B'reishit 24:1). This theme recurs in the other Avot: "[Yitzchak] did eat of everything, mikol" (27:33); [Yaakov said to Eisav] "I have everything, Kol" (33:11). These verses that are part of our Birkat HaMazon, not only sum up the essence of the lives of all three Patriarchs but are essential for the moral and ethical living of all Mankind. "Avraham's happiness was due to the fact that Hashem blessed him in and with everything. A person can be blessed with everything and still be within himself unhappy; they have prospered but have not grown through all the blessings. To those who look on life from the point of doing their duty - a mitzva, everything is good; from the greatest trouble they extract the duty that it entails, and fulfilling that duty is their happiness. This is Yitzchak, who drew sustenance from everything - did eat from Mikol. The greatest blessing is Yaakov's Kol; he has everything because he wants nothing more than what he has - to do, not to have" (Rabbi S.R. Hirsch).

These three verses all express the concept of enough. The major cause of immorality in all aspects of life is always wanting more and never knowing the restraints of having enough. While it is difficult to define what is enough in regard to money, unless each individual is able to define it for himself there will be constant pressure to make more whether by legal and ethical means or illegally and unethically. This may be expressed by greed - "He who has 100 dinarim wants 200". Furthermore, there is a constant human fear of uncertainty in the future, so we use every means available to safeguard ourselves and our children no matter how much wealth we possess. We do exactly what our forefathers did in the desert and for the same reason; "Israel collected Manna (on Shabbat) in disregard of the Divine commandment, since they needed to provide for themselves and their children in case Moshe erred and tomorrow there would not be anything" (S. R. Hirsch, Ex.). Irrespective, never having enough must lead to theft, robbery, fraud, tax evasion, exploitation and sometimes even bloodshed. In the case of nations, it has caused corruption, colonialism, war and conquest. Never having enough money makes difficult or sometimes impossible, even the observance of Torah restrictions on economic activity like Shabbat, the Chagim,

Shmita and Yovel, Tzedaka, and not taking interest from a fellow Jew, which presupposes a loss of the profit that could be earned from our alternative use of the loan-money. It may even be a cause of inter-generational conflict and divorce. Similarly, always needing more also leads to gluttony and sexual immorality.

However, the Avot were not only expressing their acceptance of enough, they were bearing witness to the fact that all their blessings came from Hashem, that He was the source of Kol. The attainment of that knowledge and acknowledging that source are the purpose of many mitzvot - Bikurim, Birchot HaNehenin, Pe'ah, Omer, etc. Furthermore; "All our commerce has to be b'Emuna, in faith; this means in the faith that Hashem provides all our needs" (Orech HaShulchan, Orech Chaim 266).

There is an additional way in which "Hashem blessed Avraham Bakol" has been a sign for his descendants all through the generations, one that highlights two perspectives on the mission of the Abrahamic Nation to the rest of the world. "Bakol, the blessing was that he had no daughter [R. Meir]; he had a daughter named Bakol [R. Yehuda and others]" (Bava Batra 16b). Now surely nobody could wish to see the greatest blessing as having no daughter. Rather, Rabbi Meir sees G-d's blessing in saving him from the grief of finding a husband from the pagan Canaanite or Aramaic men, for a daughter who would thereby be lost to the Abrahamic spirit in the house of her in-laws. However, Rabbi Yehuda sees a daughter as being a blessing, since she would form a bridge that would plant the Abrahamic spirit in the non-Abrahamic world of her husband" (Rabbi S. R. Hirsch). Accordingly, the mission was to be realized either through separation from the nations [R. Meir] or through the building of bridges with them [R. Yehuda].

This is the 115th 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...



I did T'VILAT KEILIM for a metal pot with plastic handles. I later noticed a sticker on a handle. Do I have to tovel the pot again?



The relevant rule of CHATZITZA (an obstruction between the object or person being immersed and the mikveh's water) is as follows. If the CHATZITZA is something that people normally remove, it disqualifies the T'VILA rabbinically even if it covers only a minority of the object (Nida 67b). In all likelihood, the sticker in question fits into that category. However, your question is complicated as we will partially explain.

There are two reasons to suggest that the handle does not need to be tovelled. First, a plastic K'LI (utensil) does not require T'VILA. Additionally, the handle does not come in contact with the food, and only a K'LI SE'UDA (a utensil used in connection with a meal - see Avoda Zara 75b) requires T'VILA. On the latter point, the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 120:12) rules that handles need to be immersed. However, there are different ways to explain this halacha, which can cause different conclusions regarding your question.

One possible explanation is that a K'LI's handle is a distinct, albeit connected K'LI, which needs T'VILA. Although it does not come in contact with food, it is attached to and complements a K'LI that touches food and thus is considered a K'LI SE'UDA. If this is the reason, then the plastic handle does not need T'VILA, and the CHATZITZA is not a problem.

A second possibility is that a handle is a secondary part of the K'LI. Just as one must tovel a K'LI that is part metal and part plastic in its entirety, so must he tovel the K'LI's handle. Therefore, a CHATZITZA would be a problem on the handle as anywhere else.

A third possibility assumes that the handle itself does not require T'VILA. However, if one let it stick out of the mikveh, we would say that the K'LI was not totally surrounded by water. However, if the handle is immersed, even with a CHATZITZA, it is encompassed by water. Regarding the CHATZITZA, realize that the main part of the K'LI is unaffected by the CHATZITZA. After all, the water touches the entire surface except the place where the handle is connected to it. (The fact that the handle itself is not a CHATZITZA even if it is made out of a material that requires T'VILA is almost unanimously agreed upon; its rationale is beyond our present scope.) According to this approach, the sticker would not raise a problem.

On this third point, there may be a MACHLOKET among recent POSKIM. There are appliances that hold and heat up a food or liquid, where the heating element is housed separately from the part that holds the food but is connected to it. Rav Feinstein (Igrot Moshe, YD I, 57-8) rules that one need immerse the appliance only up to the point that the receptacle reaches and can leave the electrical section protruding from the water. Minchat Yitzchak II, 72 argues, saying that this is not considered immersing the K'LI. Rav Feinstein apparently cannot accept the third possibility, for if the handle were considered a separate appendage, the Shulchan Aruch would not have required T'VILA. The Minchat Yitzchak can accept the third approach (whether he does is beyond our scope).

Darkei Teshuva (120:96) addresses your case explicitly and requires removing the CHATZITZA before T'VILA. Several present-day works accept that opinion (Chelkat Binyamin 120:109; Hechsher Kelim (Edre'i) 7:2; T'vilat Keilim (Cohen

5:5), and we found no one who argues. This is apparently in line with the second approach that the handle is like any other part of the K'LI. In truth, the Beit Yosef's (YD 120) explanation for the need to tovel handles seems to concur. Although he does not discuss the case of a plastic handle, it is likely that he would agree with the Darkei Teshuva. Thus, although one could make the argument that a CHATZITZA on a plastic handle is not a problem, the consensus is that another T'VILA after removing the sticker is needed. [Ed. note: It is debatable whether a bracha is required for the reimmersion.]

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**

Our aim is not to be superhuman, but super humans.

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)

Jewish history exists of many epoch-making events. However, these events have not all made an inroad into the consciousness of the Jewish people. For this to happen, the event must become, as the Jewish philosopher Emile Fackenheim calls it, a root-experience, a moment in which the hand of God becomes most apparent through His active participation in Jewish history. Still this alone is not sufficient to transform an event into a root experience of enduring value. It is also necessary that the experience takes place in front of the multitude, as in the case of the splitting of the Red Sea, when "even the maidservants saw what the prophet Yechezkel ben Buzi could not see." Not the opening of the heaven but the transformation of the earth is decisive in affecting all future Jewish generations. However, above and beyond all, a third element is necessary. It must be possible for later generations to have access to this vision. Only then can one speak of an actual root-experience. If a vision cannot be shared with later generations, it will turn into a claim of the past and lose much of its religious value within Judaism.

In this context it is most important to realize that it is not the conventional understanding of a miracle which is of importance here. While nobody will deny that the splitting of the Red Sea was a violation of the laws of nature, this is not the source of its religious power or message. The most important quality of a miracle is not that it is supernatural, or super-historical, but that it is a moment which, even when it can be argued away in terms of science and brought into the nexus of nature and normal history, remains miraculous in the eyes of the person to whom it occurred. The real power of a miracle is that it is an astonishing experience of an event in which the current system of cause and effect becomes, as it were, transparent, permitting a glimpse of

the sphere in which another unrestricted Power is at work. As such it destroys the security of all knowledge and undoes the normalcy of all that is ordinary. It is the abiding astonishment which is crucial. The religious person stands in wonder; no knowledge or cognition can weaken his astonishment. Any natural explanation will only deepen his wonder. It is in this sense that a historical miracle becomes a root experience and allows later generations to have access to it through its own experience. (If) it is possible for later generations to relive the experience, not because of what happened, but through the way it was perceived.

The establishment of the State of Israel was no doubt an epoch-making event. It is again the completely astonishing nature of this event which stands out - the transformation of the earthliness of the Jewish people into a radically different situation. While miracles no doubt took place to enable it to happen, the most important religious dimension is again the abiding astonishment with this event in terms that could be expected especially after the events of the Holocaust. Only when the establishment of the State of Israel is seen in the light of the miracle at the Red Sea will its fascination continue. And this is exactly where the greatest danger towards Israel's continued existence lies. Just as we are informed that the miracle at the Red Sea lost its religious impact on the Israelites and normalcy became the call of the day, whereby the Israelites complained that God had left them, so we see a similar component at work in today's Israeli society and leadership. Just as the complaints concerning food and water took on a new impetus after the great miracle at the Sea, so we see a mentality of psychological denial and existential dullness in the State of Israel in which many people, but most of all its leadership, no longer understand the wonder of the State's very existence. And just as the Israelites in the desert paid a heavy price, so will Israeli society if it does not force itself once again to look through the clouds, see the miracle and rejuvenate itself through it.

Rabbi Dr. Nathan Lopes Cardozo, Jerusalem

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

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

During the anti-Jewish disturbances in Russia, a young man from Brisk was arrested. The young man's mother came crying to R' Chaim and begged him to try to appeal to the authorities to release her son. R' Chaim agreed to do so.

His relatives, though, tried to dissuade him from becoming involved, because he might himself get into trouble if he went to the authorities.

"Listen," said R' Chaim. "That it is a mitzva to ransom captives is a definite fact - a vadai. It is a fact, too - a vadai, that the woman is in great distress. As far as my getting into trouble, that is a matter of doubt - a safek. And are we not told that a safek has no status when it stands against a vadai?"

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

[5] Parsha Points to Ponder - B'SHALACH

- 1) Why does the Torah relate that the Jews took the bones of Yosef with them in this sedra and not when the Torah first described the Jews leaving Ramses in 12:37?
- 2) Why does G-d say BEHOLD I SHALL RAIN DOWN FOR YOU BREAD FROM HEAVEN, in second person, and then switch to third person stating AND THE NATION SHALL GO OUT AND GATHER? (16:4)
- 3) What prompted Moshe to send Yehoshua, specifically, to be the one to lead the soldiers into battle with Amalek? (see 17:9)

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

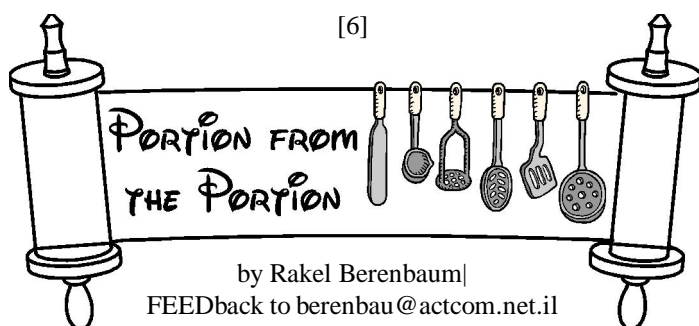
Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) Rav Hirsch suggests that perhaps it is written in this Parsha to emphasize the contrast between the people leaving Egypt and Yosef. This Parsha describes how the current generation had to be led in a round-about way because they might not have full faith in G-D and might choose to return to Egypt when they were faced with battle. Yosef, on the other hand, had full confidence that G-D's promise of salvation would be fulfilled and, accordingly, asked for his bones to be taken with them to the Promised Land. Yosef's body at the front of the Jewish camp served as a constant reminder of the fact that they need to strengthen their trust in G-D.

2) The Beit Yosef answers that G-D is teaching us that the entire world may be maintained for the sake of one or two righteous people like Moshe and Aharon as indicated by the use of second person. As a result, the rest of the world - in third person - will benefit and receive food as well.

3) The Chofetz Chayim explains that the Torah describes Yehoshua as a person who learned Torah all the time. Our Sages teach that Amalek attacked the Jewish people because they loosened, they were lax to some degree in their Torah study. Thus, it was fitting that Yehoshua, armed with the merit of his devotion to Torah study, be the one to lead the fight against Amalek.

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



The Tree of the Parsha and the Trees of TU BiShvat

This coming week is TU BiShvat, "the birthday of the trees" and in this week's sedra we also see an interesting episode with a tree. (Sh'mot 15:22-25)

The Jewish nation arrived in Mara, a place where the water was

bitter, after they had traveled for three days in the desert without any water. The people were very thirsty and complained "to Moshe". They felt he was a bad leader who didn't know the ways of the desert and didn't know how to find water there. When Hashem answered Moshe's prayer for water, He didn't just give the nation drinkable water, instead He gave Moshe a tool, the tree, (or part of it) which he threw in the water and which made the water sweet. In this way the nation would maintain some respect for Moshe and treat him as their leader for the continuation of their journey.

What type of tree was this that Moshe threw in the water? In the Mekhilta various Rabbis give their opinion regarding the type of tree; a willow, olive, fig, pomegranate, or oleander. Some say the particular tree was used, because it was sweet and throwing something sweet into the bitter water would sweeten it. The Tanchuma, on the other hand, says no, the tree was actually very bitter and this was a miracle within a miracle. A bitter thing (the tree) was used to get the bitterness out of the water.

There is also disagreement about if the tree always had this quality to sweeten bitter water, as even today you can see some desert tribes that sweeten bitter wells by throwing in plants to neutralize the salts. Or did Hashem make a special miracle for this particular place. Ramban learned that this tree always had this quality because the verse says, VA'YO'REIHU - "He taught him" and not VA'YAEI'HU - "he showed him". Hashem taught Moshe the special qualities of this tree so that he would be able to manage in the desert in other places as well.

From this episode we can learn to appreciate Hashem's wisdom in the plants that He created - that they have in their nature to give life or death, to heal or to make someone sick or to make something bitter or sweet. This is one of the lessons of TU BiShvat in our times to appreciate and celebrate the blossoming of Eretz Yisrael, its growth, the uniqueness of the fruits, and nature itself.

[Originally Tu B'Shvat, (the time of the year where most of the trees in Israel have blossomed and one can see the beginnings of the fruit), was only the "new year" of the trees. It is the cut off date to count the years of a tree to know to which year a fruit belongs in order to perform certain "mitzvot tied to the land of Israel". The verse in D'varim 14:22 talking about t'rumat umaasrot (tithes) says :ASER T'ASER....SHANA SHANA. The Rabbis learned from this verse that in a certain year you are obligated to give tithes from fruits that were grown that year. How do you count the years of a fruit? Sometimes, TU BiShvat is the cutoff date.

But throughout the generations, TU BiShvat has gained other significances as well. It has become a day to celebrate the blossoming of Eretz Yisrael, its growth, the uniqueness of the fruits in the land and nature itself. The ARI HaKadosh decreed that people should eat fruit on TU BiShvat as a symbol that man is participating in the "celebration of the trees." (That's why we don't say Tachanun.) This eating has even become a Seder, with a Hagada (Pri Etz Hadar) where some people even drink 4 cups of wine, eat 50 fruits including one new one for Shehecheyanu.]

When celebrating with the trees on TU BiShvat, we should remember the ultimate tree - the Torah, our tree of life. EITZ CHAIM HI LA'MA'CHAZIKIM BAH.

This Shabbat most people will be serving fruit for TU BiShvat - include olives, figs, pomegranate as a remembrance of the tree in the desert.

People in the Diaspora would try hard to get a fruit especially

from Israel for TU BiShvat. Nowadays people in Israel end up eating dried fruits that come from the Diaspora. Here is a recipe to make fruit leather from fresh fruits from Israel so you don't have to buy dried fruits from Chu"l. It takes about 1-2 days so it might not be ready for Shabbat, but might be for TU BiShvat.

Fruit leather

Half kilo (or more) of ripe fruit

1 Tbsp. to 1/4 cup water

Optional:

1 Tbsp. to 1/2 cup honey

Spices (cinnamon, allspice, cloves, ginger)

Flavorings (vanilla, grated orange/lemon rind)

Puree fruit in blender to applesauce-like consistency. Firmer fruit (e.g. apples) should be steamed or boiled first.

Spread cooled puree on non-stick baking sheets, about 1/8 inch thick. Dry outside in sunshine on warm days (bring inside at night). Or dry in oven with pilot light, or in an electric oven occasionally heated to 120-140°C. Open oven door periodically to let out moisture. (Try rear view window of a car parked in the sun.)

The puree should be totally dry with no wet or sticky spots. Remove from baking sheets and roll. Store airtight in a cool, dry place. Refrigerate, or freeze for long term storage.

[7] Micro Ulpan

We used to call it a LOOSELEAF. Lots of people here call it a KLASEIR, which is really French. In Hebrew OK'DAN

עוקדן

[8] Divrei Menachem

We cannot read Parshat B'shalach without being mesmerized by the events leading up to and incorporating the Crossing of the Red Sea by Bnei Yisrael. The splitting sea, the drowning of the Egyptians and the delivery of the Jewish people were cataclysmic occurrences for Am Yisrael and the world at large.

It seems that at the point where the bodies of the Egyptian soldiers laid sprawled at their feet, the Jewish people's faith in G-d was stamped for all time. At that moment, the Mechilta teaches us, even a simple maidservant perceived a higher degree of revelation than that of the prophet Yechezkiel in his heavenly vision.

No wonder then that the people sang Shirat HaYam, the "Song of the Sea". The Artscroll commentators depict the Song as harmoniously bringing together the notes, instruments and participants in Hashem's symphony of Creation. The surrealistic and momentous events that preceded Yetzi'at Mitzrayim now merged with the extant miracles associated with the demise of Egypt. The resultant song melded all the apparently unrelated and contradictory phenomena into a coherent and comprehensible whole.

Accordingly, the use of the future tense ("Yashir") to describe the singing preempts the time when we, with comparative perception, will play out the last incisive drum beats of the unfinished divine drama. **Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff**

SHEYIBANEH BEIT HAMIKDASH...

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

Lishkat Osei Chavitin

(Chamber of the "Griddle-Cake Makers")

Located on either side of the Nicanor Gate, there were two chambers in the Ezrat Yisrael built into the eastern wall. The chamber to the north of the Nicanor Gate was called the Lishkat Pinchas HaMalbish - the "Chamber of Pinchas - the Keeper of the Priestly Garments", where the priestly garments were stored here. The chamber to the south of the Nicanor Gate was called the Lishkat Osei Chavitin - the "Chamber of the Griddle-Cake Makers". The Chavitin, 12 unleavened loaves offered daily by the Kohein Gadol, were prepared in this chamber (Midot 1:4).

Twelve Chavitin were offered with the morning Tamid - the obligatory morning sacrifice and twelve more were offered with the afternoon Tamid. (This is according to the ruling of Rambam. He posits that twelve loaves were completed and then each loaf was divided into two making 24. Half of the 24 loaves (12) accompanied the morning Tamid and the other half accompanied the afternoon Tamid [Hil. Ma'asei Korbanot 13:4]. Tiferet Yisrael in his Chomer BaKodesh (2:48) follows in wake of the Rambam. However, in his Hasagot - critical commentaries on the Rambam - the Ra'avad [R. Abraham ben David of Posquieres (1125-1198)] maintains that half of the divided flour (Menachot 4:5) was used to prepare six Chavitin which accompanied the morning Tamid and the other half of the flour was reserved for the six Chavitin which would accompany the afternoon Tamid. He asserts that the Rambam "had no root (in the sources) anywhere" for his ruling that each of the completed 12 loaves was divided in two.)

The Biblical source for the Chavitin is: And G-d said to Moses... 'This is the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they shall offer to G-d on the day that he (Aaron) is inaugurated: a tenth of an Eifa of fine flour as a continual meal offering; half of it in the morning and half of it in the afternoon. It should be made on a pan with oil; it shall be scalding, you shall offer it in broken pieces as a sweet savor to G-d. And the priest who is anointed -i.e. the Kohen Gadol - that shall be in his stead among his sons shall offer it - it is an eternal law before G-d. It shall be wholly burnt (on the Mizbei'ach). And every meal offering of the priest shall be burnt (on the Mizbei'ach): it shall not be eaten" (Vayikra 6:12-16). The Sages interpreted these P'sukim to mean that a novice Kohein Hedyot (a common priest) brought the offering described on the first day that he served in the Mikdash. Called Minchat Chinuch, the Kohein Hedyot brought this offering only once in his lifetime. However, the Kohein Gadol offered his Chavitin on the Mizbei'ach daily. Another difference was that the Chavitin of the Kohein Gadol's offerings were offered in two stages, half in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. The Kohein Hedyot offered the Chavitin of the Minchat Chinuch at one time. The Gemara records the oral tradition elucidating the 12-loaf Chavitin offering. "All meal offerings consist of ten cakes each except for the Lechem HaPanim (showbread) and the Chavitin of the Kohein Gadol which consist of twelve loaves each. The number of loaves for the Lechem HaPanim is expressly stated (12, Vayikra 24:5-8). With regard to the Chavitin of the Kohein

Gadol, it is not written, but we can infer it by the Scriptural utilization of the word "statue" - CHOK - both here and with the Lechem HaPanim" (Menachot 76a. This inference is done by means of the verbal analogy, Gezeira Shava (lit. equal cut"). The Gezeira Shava is utilized only when there is a tradition, which asserts that two legal expressions compliment each other. The Gezeira Shava is the second of the thirteen hermeneutic principles promulgated by the Tana R. Ishmael. Rav Dr. Eli Munk in his The World of Prayer summarizes the traditional point of view. "These principles revealed simultaneously with the Torah itself, makes it possible to deduce the whole depth and breadth of meaning hidden in the epigrammatic brevity of the written word.") The Gemara asks, "How was the dough of the Chavitin divided into the (twelve) loaves? Was it done by hand or by using a utensil? Surely, it is obvious that it was done by hand. Because if you maintain that it was done by use of a utensil - would you bring a scale to weigh bread into the Mikdash? But why not (bring a scale in)? (It is not proper to do so) because weighing bread is connected with curses" (Menachot 87b). Vayikra 26: 14-43 records the frightful punishments that Am Yisrael would experience if they refused to live up to their Divine calling. One of the curses is that "ten women will bake your bread in one oven and they will bring back your bread by weight; you will eat and not be satisfied (ibid. 14: 26). Eating bread by weight is considered a curse.)

Like most other Menachot - meal offerings - the Chavitin of the Kohein Gadol were prepared from the finest wheat flour (Menachot 4:5) and oil and accompanied by frankincense. (Menachot is the generic term for all meal offerings. With two exceptions - the Korban Omer (Vayikra 23: 9-13) brought on Shavu'ot and the offering of the Sotah (Bamidbar 5:15), the suspected adulteress - all Menachot consisted of fine (wheat) flour. The Korban Omer and the offering of the Sotah consisted of barley flour.) Early every morning, several Kohanim were assigned to heat up the water necessary for the preparation of the Chavitin (Tamid 1:3 and Tamid 28b). The Kohein Gadol either paid for the flour himself or brought it from home since the offering of the Chavitin was his personal offering. The Chavitin offering was not considered a communal offering (Menachot 5:4, Torat Kohanim, Parshat Tzav 3).

<to be continued>

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

- Upper-left are the Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night.
- Below them is the Davka Judaica Clipart scene of the splitting of the sea.
- The tambourine in the middle is TOF MIRIAM.
- The tire with a blowout represents the wheels of the Egyptian chariots that fell off and caused the chariots to become bogged down in the sea bed. Part of the destruction of Egypt took place when their supreme arrogance turned to shock and panic at that moment. Soon thereafter, the waters of the Sea drowned them, but the demoralizing effect of the wheel-losing

was part of their punishment.

- Upper-right is the water coming from a rock that Moshe struck with the Staff.
- The bird under the stream of water is a quail, as in quail - S'LAV, that preceded the MN (i.e. manna).
- The two challot to the left of the quail is LECHEM MISHNEH, which commemorates the double portion of MN that fell on Friday in order to provide for Shabbat. We not only use double challot on Shabbat to remember the MN, but we cover them top and bottom to remind us of the two layers of dew that protected the MN. The MN was our introduction to Shabbat. See the candle sticks top-center.
- The worm ate the leftover MN - there should not have been any.
- Three facets of the battle against Amalek (bottom-left & center): Moshe's upraised hands, Yehoshua's sword, and the pen with which the account of the battle was written down.
- Lower right is the representations of the Haftara. The singing bee is Dvora. Thunderbolt = BARAK, Devorah's associate. Milk that Yael gave to Sisra, and the tent peg with which she killed him when he fell asleep.
- The piece of a brick wall represents the brick pattern of words in the Torah for AZ YASHIR.
- The upside-down heart refers to the phrase VAYEIHAFEICH L'VAV... Par'o had a change of heart... again.
- The stop sign with the word Shabbat is found at the limit of one's T'chum Shabbat, Shabbat boundary.

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

New format for TTriddles. Let us know if you like it this way or the "And the envelope please" old way

Last issue's (BO) TTriddles:

[1] 1956 jazz album by Miles Davis

This is an example of a type of TTriddle common among TTriddles - the work back from the answer TTriddle. This one started with KACHATZOT HALAILA, Moshe says that G-d will "visit" Egypt "Round About Midnight", which is the title of the 1956 Jazz album by Miles Davis. Simple when you start with the answer. A little bit harder to solve. One would search through the Miles Davis sites and MAYBE this particular album title would jump out and give the searcher the solution.

[2] Brother [sic], want a festive omelet?

A festive omelet is one made on Yom Tov day itself. You can't really make an omelet on Erev Yom Tov and enjoy it on the following day. That making an omelet (or cooking other foods)

is permitted on Yom Tov is learned from a pasuk in Parshat Bo, Sh'mot 12:16 to be specific. And on the first day... no Melacha may be done on them ACH = except that which is for food, only that may be done. (Weak, incomplete translation - don't rely on it except for TTriddle solution.) ACH in a different spelling means BROTHER. [sic] is what you put after a word in a quote when the word is spelled wrong and you want to leave the misspelling as is.

[3] 2nd question, answered 8 times after the 4th

The second question (of the Four Children of the Hagada) is MA HAAVODA HAZOT LACHEM? What is this work for you? The Torah's response in Parshat Bo is in Sh'mot 12:27 - VAAMARTEM ZEVACH PESACH... These words are the refrain of one of the poems recited at the Seder table as part of the last piece of the Seder - NIRTZEH. The phrase appears 8 times, and being in NIRTZEH, they are said after the fourth cup of wine is consumed.

[4] E&M/M&E, everyone/adults, prophets/Moshe, wizards/prophet

E&M are Efrayim and Menashe. When Yaakov put his right hand on Efrayim and his left hand on Menashe for Yosef's bracha, Yosef objected with the words LO CHEIN, not so (my father). When Moshe (in Parshat Bo) said that everyone was intending to go into the Midbar, Par'o said LO CHEIN, not so, take the adults only. When G-d was talking to Aharon and Miriam about Moshe, He distinguished between the way all other prophets receive their prophecy and the way He (G-d) speaks to Moshe. G-d said, LO CHEIN... The Torah tells us that other nations have wizards, astrologers, and other practitioners of the occult arts. LO CHEIN the people of Israel, we have prophets.

[5] Par'o's question in my bread and water

My bread and my water is LACHMI UMEIMAI, which is a phrase that appears in Hoshea (2:7). The context there is totally irrelevant to the TTriddle. What counts is the fact that contained within the words LACHMI UMEIMAI is the words MI VAMI, which was Par'o's question, as in MI VAMI HAHOL'CHIM, who did you, Moshe, have in mind would be going on this junket in the Midbar.

[6] part of envy

This was not a "regular" TTriddle (are any TTriddles regular?) but rather one referring to the issue number of the particular Torah Tidbits. You can tell that is so by its appearance in the footer on a page or pages. To solve, let's respell envy as NV, which is the official postal service 2-letter abbreviation for the state of Nevada. Part of Nevada (including Las Vegas) has an area code of 702.

The NachKay Jewish Trivia Question (NKJTQ) was:

Find a pasuk in the Torah which contains a five-word phrase repeated three times verbatim

Truth is, if you heard this one before, it was easy. If you haven't, it probably wouldn't be feasible to do. Many people submitted the correct p'sukim (there are two) and the winner will be selected from among them and be notified of his/her prize.

Both Sh'mot 25:35 and Sh'mot 37:21 are correct answers to the question. The p'sukim are almost identical, both in the description of the Menora (one from T'ruma and the other from Vayaqhel).

V'KAFTOR TACHAT SHNEI HAKANIM MIMENA
V'KAFTOR TACHAT SHNEI HAKANIM MIMENA
V'KAFTOR TACHAT SHNEI HAKANIM MIMENA
LASHESHET HAKANIM HAYOTZIM MIN HAMENORA:

The only difference between the p'sukim is in the last part, which is not the repeated phrase. In Vayaqhel, this is how the pasuk ends:

LASHESHET HAKANIM HAYOTZIM MIMENA:

See below for this week's **NachKwestion**.

Be creative in your answers.

Speaking of NachKay Jewish Trivia Questions... readers are invited to submit questions. If we use them, the submitter wins a CD too.

This week's TTriddles:

- [1] XLXXLXXLXXLXXLV
- [2] Lavan, Nevayot, Nachshon, Aharon What and who else in NACH?
- [3] G-d/Chava, kings/Avraham, Yaakov/Lavan, people/Moshe
- [4] Torah is not the only thing it precedes [l'havdil]

NachKay Jewish Trivia Question:

Prizes for the best lists of Brachot that are said only once a year




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