

Mishpatim-Shkhalim is the 145th day (of 354); the 21st Shabbat (of 50) of 5766

וְעַבְדְתֶם אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶת-לְוִימָה וְאֶת-מִימִיךָ... שמות כג:כה

Holy and Mundane Holy

This is probably a lesson from many, many different places in the Torah, but let's take it from the combined readings of this Shabbat: Mishpatim and Sh'kalim.

There is a mental image - from real life, reinforced by movies and books - of the tendency of organized crime (the politically incorrect term was mafia) to commit all kinds of crimes to amass great wealth and to be very righteously charitable with some of it. Apparently, their "sancification" of some of their money was supposed to whitewash the rest of it.

It is patently obvious that Judaism teaches us a very different lesson. As far as money is concerned, some of it is holy, so to speak - take the MACHATZIT HASHEKEL of this week's Maftir as an example, and the rest of one's money is inately mundane, but the Torah commands us to make (some of) it holy. Many of the mitzva-topics of Mishpatim show us how. Lending a fellow in need, not taking interest, not demanding repayment when we see that the borrower cannot repay his debt, tzedaka, the variety of fines detailed in the sedra, the laws of damages, guardians, lost objects, honesty in business... and many other topics from Mishpatim and elsewhere in the Torah all teach us that we are not only to take some of our money and use it for a holy purpose, but we are to add sanctity to everything we own. Honesty, high ethical standards, strict adherence to halacha, and going the extra measure of Lifnim MiShurat HaDin all combine to make the mundane holy.

So too with food. Korbanot, Truma, Bikurim... are holy. The rest is mundane. But our way of life does not allow the mundane to stay that way. Kashrut, brachot, chessed, and more all help us elevate the mundane to the heights of kedusha.

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...

This Shabbat, we bench Rosh Chodesh Adar, which is always 2 days in our fixed calendar. This year it will be Tue. and Wednesday.



ראש חודש אדר יהיה
ביום שלישי וביום רביעי
הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל למוצאי:

The molad is on Tuesday 02h 28m 17p

המולד יהיה ביום שלישי עשרים ושמונה דקות ושבעה עשר חלקים אחרי שתיים בפורק.

That's 2:08am Israel Time.

ג' ה:תקכ"א In Rambam notation:

The actual (astronomical) molad is 2:31am (very close to avg, unusually so)

Adar & March match for 29 days

www.radiou.org
and
www.israelnationalradio.com
New shows from Thursday

OTHER Z'MANIM
Correct for Jerusalem

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Candle Lighting and HAVDALA
Standard (Winter) time

Correct for TT 705 • Rabbeinu Tam (I'm) - 6:46pm	
4:57pm	Jerusalem 6:11pm
5:14pm	Raanana 6:12pm
5:13pm	Beit Shemesh 6:12pm
5:13pm	Netanya 6:12pm
5:14pm	Rehovot 6:12pm
4:53pm	Petach Tikva 6:12pm
5:13pm	Modi'in 6:11pm
5:15pm	Be'er Sheva 6:13pm
5:12pm	Gush Etzion 6:11pm
5:13pm	Ginot Shomron 6:11pm
4:57pm	Maale Adumim 6:10pm
5:13pm	K4 & Hevron 6:11pm
5:00pm	Tzfat 6:09pm
5:13pm	Tel Mond 6:12pm

Ranges: FRI-FRI 26 Shvat - 3 Adar (Feb24-Mar3)

Earliest Talit & T'filin - 5:22-5:15am
Sunrise - 6:12-6:04am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma - 9:02-8:57am (8:17-8:13am)
Sof Z'man T'fila - 9:59-9:55am (9:29-9:25am)
Chatzot (halachic noon) - 11:52-11:51am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 12:23-12:22pm
Plag Mincha - 4:22-4:26pm
Sunset - 5:38-5:43pm (5:33-5:38pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)
In-house Shabbaton
Join us for shiurm & davening
see BackPage for details

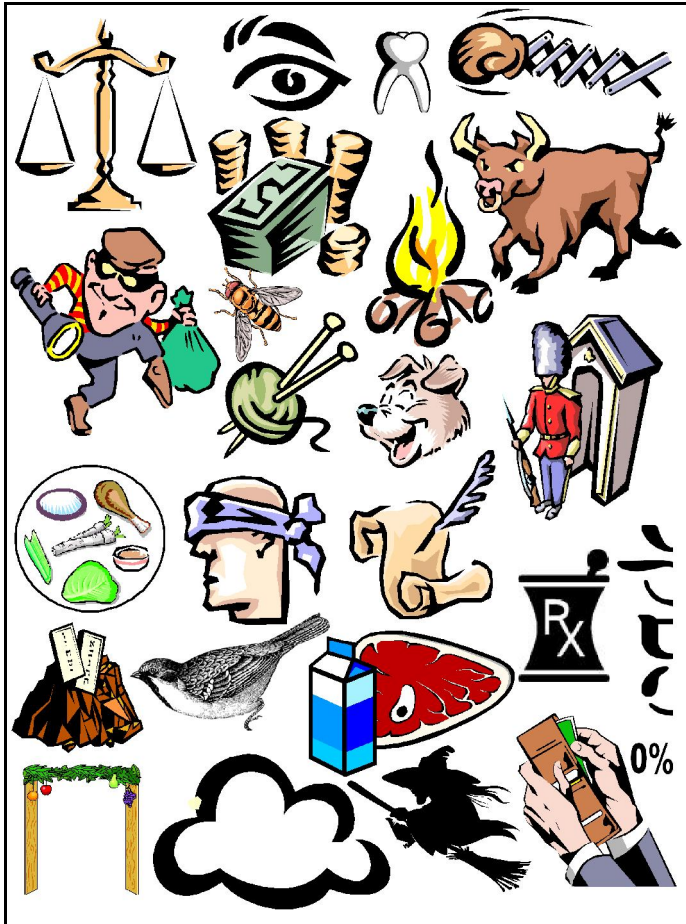
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Everything is included. Even shoe laces. Straps of T'filin are holy. Those of our shoes we make holy by the simple but eloquent minhag of the order in which we tie them. This is a Jew's life.



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.

When a mitzva is mentioned and no numbers are indicated, it means that the mitzva is counted elsewhere, but is still found in Mishpatim. This being the case, it makes Mishpatim even more mitzva-filled than its already high count indicates.

Kohen - First Aliya - 19 p'sukim - 21:1-19

[P> 21:1 (6)] EVED IVRI, a Jewish male indentured servant, works for 6 years and goes free in the 7th year. He leaves as he entered, i.e. if he had a wife and children previously, they, of course, leave with him. If, on the other hand, his master had given him a SHIFCHA CANAANIT as a wife, she and any children he fathered remain the possessions of the master - they are halachically not his wife or children.

[By the way, if the SHIFCHA and/or the children are subsequently freed, they become Jews - unrelated to their "husband" or biological father, the former EVED IVRI. The process is analogous to conversion. It's more complicated than presented, does not apply in our time, but that's the idea.]

If the EVED IVRI wants to remain in his master's service, his ear is pierced (a symbolic rebuke: "The ear that heard at Sinai that we are G-d's servants, should not want to be a servant to a servant.") and now he serves "forever" (until Yovel). The details of EVED IVRI constitute a positive commandment [42,A232 21:1].

SDT *Of all the topics to begin this mitzva-filled sedra, we see a significance in the Torah's choice of SERVITUDE. This is part of the definition of Belief in G-d, the first Commandment. G-d puts Himself in the context of He Who freed us from slavery. We should not be slaves anymore; we probably shouldn't have any. But at a time when it was still practiced, we are duty-bound to treat the EVED in the manner commanded by the Torah, thus reflecting our belief in G-d.*

As you can tell by the large number of parshiyot, the many topics and mitzvot are subdivided well in this sedra. This indicates not only many mitzvot, but many different types and categories of mitzvot. The first parsha deals with EVED IVRI, as just explained, and is introduced by the opening pasuk of this entire mitzva-filled sedra - And these are the laws that you shall place before them...

MISHPATIM STATS

18th of 54 sedras; 6th of 11 in Sh'mot
 Written on 185 lines in a Sefer Torah, ranks 31st
 33 parshiyot; 6 open and 27 closed
 3rd most in the Torah; 2nd most S'tumot
 118 p'sukim - ranks 22nd (5th in Sh'mot)
 1462 words - ranks 31st (7th in Sh'mot)
 5313 letters - ranks 37th (8th in Sh'mot)
 The noticeable drop in ranking from p'sukim to words indicates short p'sukim; in fact, Mishpatim's p'sukim are among the shortest in the Torah.
 The large number of Parshiyot makes the sedra look larger (in number of lines) than it actually is (see rank for letters)

MITZVOT:

MISHPATIM has 53 mitzvot; 23 positive and 30 prohibitions. Only 3 sedras have more mitzvot. Mishpatim has 8.65% of the Torah's mitzvot (1.85% is average); 48% of the mitzvot in Sh'mot

The rule for Parshat Sh'kalim is that we read it on the Shabbat before Rosh Chodesh Adar (if there are two Adars, we are concerned with the second one, the one that precedes Nissan), or on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Adar, in which case, the Shabbat becomes a three Torah/kugel Shabbat. Sh'kalim is before Rosh Chodesh 88.5% of the time. It is on Rosh Chodesh only 11.5% of years, together with Tripple Purim.

[S> 21:7 (5)] A man can arrange for his daughter to be "in service". She, the AMA IVRIYA, does not have the same rules as an EVED IVRI. Either her master, master's son, or someone else, takes her as a wife **[43,A233 21:8]** with the full rights and respect accorded a Jewish wife - NOT LESS **[46,L262 21:10]**, or she is to be redeemed or returned to her family **[44,A234 21:8]**, but she may not be sold to anyone else **[45,L261 21:8]** or belittled or disgraced.

The alternative to the above options is to free her completely. (Apparently, the purpose of AMA IVRIYA is to help the young girl improve her status in society.)

MITZVA WATCH

It is interesting and important to note that mitzva #46 includes giving ALL wives (not just the former maid-servant) their rights under Jewish Law. This is an example (there are others) of a mitzva whose context in the Written Torah is narrow, but whose scope, as taught to us by the Oral Torah, is much broader. Please note that this is NOT a case of Rabbinic extension of Torah Law, nor of Rabbinic legislation. It is a DEFINITION of the Torah's intent, as transmitted to us via the Oral Tradition. Our Sages did both - transmit G-d's law and legislate their laws... and teach us which is which.

[S> 21:12 (2)] Murder is punishable by beheading, known as HEREG or SAYIF. This is an example of the Torah's presenting both a warning - LO TIRTZACH, Thou shalt not murder, and a punishment - He who strikes a man and he dies, he shall be put to death.

There are 4 capital punishments, each fitting particular crimes and sins. Rambam counts four separate mitzvot commanding the courts to carry out executions when someone is thus sentenced. At this point in Mishpatim, Rambam counts the mitzva to execute by strangulation he who is tried, convicted, and sentenced for a sin whose punishment is strangulation **[47,A227 21:12]**. (It seems that this mitzva was meant to link to 21:16 below, because the punishment fits that context.)

Unintentional killers are provided with a place of refuge.

[S> 21:14 (1)] Intentional murderers who flee to a city of refuge are forcibly returned to stand judgment.

[S> 21:15 (1)] Striking one's parent (and drawing blood) is a capital offense **[48,L319 21:15]**.

[S> 21:16 (1)] Kidnapping (which was prohibited by LO TIGNOV, Commandment #8) is a capital offense if the kidnapper sells the victim into slavery. (Rashi explains the seeming anomaly in the text.)

[S> 21:17 (1)] Cursing one's parent (even after death) is a capital offense.

[S> 21:18 (2)] If one inflicts a non-fatal injury upon another, he must pay full compensation based on five factors: damage, pain, insult, expenses, and lost earning potential **[49,A236 21:18]**.

Implied in this concluding portion of the first Aliya is our Jewish and human obligation and challenge to heal the

sick. This derives from the double wording of V'RAPO Y'RAPEI. We do not see G-d as the only healer, so to speak. Of course, everything depends upon G-d, but He expects us, so to speak, to do our share of the task of healing. He supervises that, and takes over when we've done all we can.

Levi - Second Aliya - 21 p'sukim - 21:20-22:3

[S> 21:20 (2)] Next we have the command to the courts to carry out the punishment for murder, namely, execution by beheading **[50,A226 21:20]**. It is significant that the Torah "chose" as the context for this mitzva, the situation of one who beat his EVED CANAANI to death. This is considered an act of murder, the world's attitude and mistreatment of slaves throughout history notwithstanding. In Jewish law, one may not mistreat his slaves. On the other hand, corporal punishment which does not result in death or even the loss of limb, is within the prerogative of the slave's owner. (But even causing a tooth to fall out is considered excessive and results in the slave being freed.)

[S> 21:22 (4)] The Torah next elaborates on the rules of personal injuries requiring the guilty party to pay compensatory damages. The famous "an eye for an eye..." passage has stimulated much slander against the Torah and Judaism by being construed literally. Our Oral Tradition explains the passage as requiring a thorough evaluation by the court to determine the proper amounts to be paid to the injured party.

[S> 21:26 (2)] A few p'sukim back, the Torah was discussing killing a slave or just injuring him mildly. Here the Torah teaches that if striking a slave causes the loss of an eye... or even a tooth, the slave acquires his freedom.

[P> 21:28 (5)] The next passage of the Torah deals with damages caused by one's ox (all animals are included; the Torah uses a practical example) **[51,A237 21:28]**. We distinguish between damages that can, and therefore must be foreseen by the owner (for which he is held completely responsible), as opposed to an unexpected and unusual action by the animal that causes damage, for which the owner is held only partially responsible.

An animal that kills a human, is to be destroyed by stoning and its carcass may not benefit anyone **[52,L188 21:29]**.

[S> 21:33 (2)] The Torah then discusses damages caused by a pit dug in the ground and negligently left uncovered **[53,A238 21:33]**.

The Gemara enumerates various categories of damages. Each case is to be examined on its own merits, so that the fairest treatment of the parties will result. For example...

[S> 21:35 (2)] If an ox owned by one person gores the ox of another person and kills it, then the two owners share the responsibility and each gets 50% of the value of

both the live ox and the dead one. But if the ox that gored had developed a reputation for violent attacks, then its owner is held more accountable. He gives his live ox to the other owner and takes the carcass of the dead ox. It has value, but not as much as a live ox.

[S> 21:37 (4)] Stealing an animal for slaughter or sale is punished by compensation of 4-5 times market value. This reflects the seriousness of stealing another person's livelihood.

If a thief is caught "red-handed" and is killed by the home-owner, there are certain circumstances for which the killing would be justified, and other cases where it would be considered criminal homicide. This is the very sensitive passage that deals with self-defense and preemptive action to protect oneself. The Torah presents both possibilities; it is the Court (of 23) that would have to rule on specific cases and perhaps provide us with rough guidelines to distinguish between cases. This is the Torah source of "He who comes to kill you, beat him to the draw (so to speak) and kill him first." **הבא להרוג, השכם להורגו**

A thief who voluntarily turns himself in repays that which he stole. (In certain cases where a false oath compounded a theft, there can be an added penalty of "one fifth - 25% more than the principal.) If a thief is caught, he pays double **[54,A239 22:2]**, or 4-5 times in the case of livestock, as mentioned above.

A thief (male, not female) who cannot make full restitution can be sold by the court as an Eved Ivri in order to pay off his debts.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 23 p'sukim - 22:4-26

[S> 22:4 (1)] Compensation must be made for damages caused by one's animal's grazing on another's property **[55, A240 22:4]**

[S> 22:5 (1)] So too, if damages result from a fire that one carelessly caused, he must pay damages. **[56,A241 22:5]**.

[S> 22:6 (4)] Next, the Torah presents the responsibilities of guardianship - when one is watching that which belongs to someone else without being paid for the service, then the guardian is responsible if something happens to that which he is watching, only if he was negligent in his guardianship. Properly carrying out the laws of the SHOMEIR CHINAM is counted as a positive mitzva **[57,A242 22:6]**.

[S> 22:9 (4)] There are differences in the rules in the case that the guardian is being paid for his services. E.g. paying someone to house-sit while one is on vacation. Because the guardian is being compensated for his watching, he is held responsible for some situations besides his own negligence. These rules also constitute a mitzva **[59,A243 22:9]**. Included in the rules for SHOMEIR SACHAR are the rules for renting and leasing.

The courts are charged **[58,A246 22:8]** with careful handling all of these types of cases.

[P> 22:13 (2)] The fourth "guardian" is the borrower who is responsible for all losses except the death of a work animal in the normal course of work **[60,A244 22:13]**, (and by extension, the ruin of an object from "normal wear & tear").

[S> 22:15 (2)] A man who seduces an unmarried woman is required to pay punitive damages to her &/or her father. And he must marry her, if she insists **[61,A220 22:15]**.

[S> 22:17 (2)] Sorcery is a capital offense, and it is forbidden for the courts not to judge and execute its practitioners **[62,L310 22:17]**.

Bestiality is a capital offense.

[S> 22:19 (8)] Sacrificing to a god other than HaShem is condemned (to death).

A convert to Judaism must not be embarrassed or taken advantage of with words **[63,L252 22:20]** or in money matters **[64,L253 22:20]**. These rules vis a vis the Ger are in addition to the "regular" prohibitions of embarrassing and taking advantage of any Jew. Thus the Torah sensitizes us to the plight of the more vulnerable members of our society. The Torah also spells this out vis a vis the orphan and widow **[65,L256 22:21]**.

With so many different parshiyot to handle so many different mitzvot, it is instructive to notice which mitzvot find themselves in a single parsha. Here we find the requirements of sensitive behavior towards the convert, widow and orphan sharing a parsha with sacrificing to idolatry. One can imagine G-d saying to us, be very careful, I take this as seriously as that. Mistreat a GER? That to Me is as serious as if you mistreated Me, so to speak.

[P> 22:24 (3)] It is a mitzva to lend money to a poor person **[66,A197 22:24]** and not demand repayment when none is reasonably forthcoming **[67,L234 22:24]**. Included in this passage is the prohibition of charging interest on personal loans or having any part in such a loan **[68,L237 22:20]**.

If one took a poor person's bedding as security for a loan, it must be returned each evening for his use. This is but one of the many lessons in the Torah in G'milut Chasadim.

Note that the Torah requires a behavior of us that is far above the standards of the world, even the civilized world. The rest of the world recognizes that taking advantage of people by charging exorbitant interest is wrong. Usury or loan-sharking is understood to be improper by most societies. Charging a "reasonable" amount of interest is universally accepted as okay. Except within the Jewish community. People might not always live up to G-d's expectations of us, but we are supposed to. This is our raison d'etre.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 22:27-23:5

[S> 22:27 (4)] Do not curse judges [69,L315 22:27] nor The Judge (i.e. blasphemy) [70,L60 22:27], nor may we curse our leaders [71,L316 22:27]. Note that 69 & 70 are counted as two separate mitzvot (prohibitions) although they share the very same words in the verse - ELOHIM LO T'KALEIL. Here, Elokim is taken as referring to G-d, as well as Elohim, meaning judges.

Do not withhold the gifts of the produce - Truma, Maaser, etc. - nor confuse the order in which these gifts should be taken from produce [72, L154 22:28].

Firstborn sons are to "be given to G-d" (i.e. redeemed, Pidyon HaBen). First-born cows, goats, and sheep are sanctified and require special procedures.

The Torah here briefly mentions the prohibition of taking an animal for a korban from its mother before it is eight days old. Such a korban would be automatically invalid, a M'CHUSAR Z'MAN, lacking in time.

TREIFA, literally an animal torn up by a predator and left to die, is forbidden to eat (even though the animal was actually killed by sh'chita, ritual slaughter), but other benefits may be derived from it. Included in the laws of TREIFA are animals found, upon post-mortem examination, to have specific defects [73,L181 22:30]. Note that the term TREIF is also used for all non-kosher, but its specific meaning is as above.

How's that for an interesting collection of mitzvot to be contained within one parsha!

[S> 23:1 (3)] Courts many not hear one side of a dispute without the other party being present [74,L281 23:1]. Included in this prohibition is not being influenced by rumors. Judges may not accept testimony from unworthy witnesses [75,L286 23:1]. A majority of one is not sufficient to convict in capital or corporal cases [76,L282 23:2]. In their deliberations, judges must be careful not to do anything that might pervert justice or unfairly shift the feelings of the court against the accused [77, L283 23:2]. Generally, rules of law are determined by majority vote of the judges [78, A175 23:2]. Judges may not show favoritism, even towards the less fortunate [79,L277 23:3].

SDT *A judge's heart might go out to a poor person who stands before him in a dispute with a wealthy man. Would it not be an act of kindness, of Chesed, to see to it that the poor person wins the dispute? NO! Not at the expense of justice. A judge wants to give charity? Fine. He wants to convince the rich guy to help the poor guy out? Nice. But justice must be fairly meted out. Every bent case shakes the whole society's confidence in the justice system.*

[S> 23:4 (1)] If one finds a stray animal, he shall return it to its rightful owner (even if it involves personal expense). This command is related to Lost & Found whose "primary" place is Ki Teitzei.

[S> 23:5 (1)] One must help even his enemy unload his beast of burden [80,A202 23:5]. This mitzva is one of several that are considered the sources of the concept of TZAAR BAALEI CHAYIM.

SDT *The Sefer HaChinuch says that if this mitzva applies to a donkey, how much more so does it apply to humans. If one sees a fellow person loaded down with bundles, it is a Torah mitzva to help him with them.*

And what might follow from that idea is that when someone offers to help you with packages, don't immediately say "no thank you". It is a nice thing to be gracious and accept the help - good for you and a merit for the one offering.

By the way, when someone does a mitzva that is also helpful to you, it is proper to say THANK YOU and TIZKEH L'MITZVOT. Thank you addresses the BEIN ADAM L'CHAVEIRO aspect of what was done, and Tizkeh L'Mitzvot relates to the BEIN ADAM LAMAKOM.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 14 p'sukim - 23:6-19

[S> 23:6 (14)] One must not pervert justice even by slanting a case against a wicked person [81,L278 23:6]. Keep far away from falsehood and be careful not to build a case on circumstantial evidence and supposition [82,L290 23:7]. Do not take bribes, even if they won't affect the outcome of a case [83,L274 23:8]. Do not oppress a stranger (convert?); this is a lesson of the Egyptian experience. One's fields are to be worked for six years and rested during the seventh, so that the poor and even the wildlife will be able to enjoy the land [84,A134 23:11]. One must abstain from all manner of creative Melacha on Shabbat [85, A154 23:12]. (This mitzva is the positive counterpart of the prohibition of melacha on Shabbat from Commandment #4. It gives a positive slant to the restrictions of Shabbat. As Dayan Grunfeld z"l puts it, we lay at the feet of G-d in homage to Him the Creator, the various gifts and skills He gave us for our workaday week. This partially explains the significance of the distinction between "abstain from" and "do not do".)

Swearing in the name of (and sometimes even just mentioning) a deity is forbidden [96,L14 23:13]. One should avoid popular interjections whose origins are associated with other religions - Gee!, Holy cow! Etc.

Inciting others to idolatry (even without worshipping) is forbidden [87,L15 23:13]. Chagiga offerings in the Mikdash are to be brought on each of the Three Festivals [88,A52 23:14]. Matzot are to be eaten during the 7 days of Pesach. It marks the Spring season during which we left Egypt. We must not appear empty-handed at the Temple (but rather bring specific Festival sacrifices). Shavuot is the Festival of the First Harvest and Sukkot marks the final harvest at "the turn of the year". We are expected to go to Jerusalem for the Three Festivals. The Korban Pesach may not be brought while we are in possession of Chametz [89,L115 23:18] nor may its fats be left over for the morning [90,L116 23:18]. Bikurim are to be brought to the Mikdash from Shavuot time and

on [91,A125 23:19]; it is forbidden to cook meat with milk [92,L186 23:19].

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 23:20-25

[P> 23:20 (6)] G-d will send an angel (a prophet?) to lead and protect the People upon our entrance into the Promised Land. We must heed his words so that our enemies will fall before us. We may not bow to idols, nor worship them, nor learn from the deeds of pagans; we must destroy their idols. We must serve G-d and He will bless us with wealth and health.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 26 p'sukim - 23:26-24:18

[S> 23:26 (8)] G-d promises that we will live full satisfying lives and that our enemies will panic before us and will be driven out of the Land - not quickly, but slowly, so that the People of Israel may properly populate the Land.

SDT *Wait a minute! Miracles, laws of nature turned upside down. Plagues. Splitting of the Sea. Manna. Water from this and that. MA PITOM that we will only take over the Land of Israel slowly? What about a couple of miracles to handle the problem? The answer is that miracles are nice, but we don't live by them. We get them when we need them. But if the purpose of going (coming) to Eretz Yisrael is to live a Torah life in the place it was made for, then we have to do it naturally. This is the difference between the suspended animation experience of the Midbar and the down to earth, practical life in Eretz Yisrael.*

We may not make treaties with the 7 Nations nor with other idolaters [93, L48 23:32], nor shall we permit idolaters a foothold in the Land [94,L51 23:33], so that we will not be entrapped by them.

[P> 24:1 (11)] The sedra concludes with a description of Matan Torah, including the famous NAASEH V'NISHMA response of the People to the offer of a Torah way of Life. Some of the things described in this portion "confuse" commentaries as to when they exactly happened.

[S> 24:12 (7)] This final parsha of Mishpatim seems to be the immediate aftermath of Matan Torah. G-d tells Moshe that He will be giving him the Luchot And the Torah and the mitzvot. After six days of "cloud-cover", which prevented Moshe from ascending Har Sinai, he is then welcomed on the 7th day. He remains on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights.

Maftir in 2nd Torah 6 p'sukim - Shmot 30:11-16

The six p'sukim of the Maftir deal with the mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel, the half shekel that was collected from every adult Jewish male each year. If a woman

wanted to give, it was accepted from her. Not so with a non-Jew - even one who observes the 7 Noahide laws.

Although the ½-Shekel collection was used for the census, its main purpose was to provide funds (to which all Jews contributed equally) for communal offerings and other specific Mikdash needs throughout the year.

Haftara - 17 p'sukim - Melachim Bet 12:1-17

(Sfaradim start 4 p'sukim earlier)

Silver is a recurring theme in the special Haftara for Shabbat Sh'kalim. It was used for repairs in the Beit HaMikdash and symbolized the people's return to G-d after severe straying.

Rabbi Julian Jacobs in his "A Haftara Companion", suggests the following: "A message of both the sedra and the haftara is that Jews in each generation have duties towards the upkeep of the Synagogue and other communal causes. Apart from the practical financial benefits this brings, the acceptance of this responsibility has contributed to the inner strength of the Jewish people down the ages."

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

Lesson # 321 (damages, part 9; Arson, part 1)

Damages caused by Arson

In a prior lesson we stated that there are four different types of damages. Two are animate - man and animal; two are inanimate - fire and pit. In prior lessons we discussed damages cause by animals and by pit. We are now beginning a discussion by damages caused by "fire" or as it is sometimes called "arson". (In some legal systems the term "arson" denotes a deliberate setting of a fire to someone else's property. I have used the term in both a deliberate and inadvertent burning of someone else's property.

Fire is one of the major classes of torts. The Torah states: "If a fire should go forth and find thorns, and a stack of grain or standing crop or a field is consumed, the one who kindles the fire shall make restitution" (Sh'mot 22:5).

There is no difference in this tort whether Reuven deliberately sets fire to Shimon's premises, or he is just careless and the fire that he kindles on his own premises or elsewhere somehow makes its way over to Shimon's premises. The tort of fire is different from the other torts in that the other torts cause injury to Shimon or his animal or damage to his property where the torts are committed. In the case of pit, the tort is committed by Reuven's pit where he dug it. In the tort of fire the tort is often committed not where the fires was set, but rather where the fire spreads on its own depending on wind direction and or availability of combustible material. Thus in the tort of fire there is another element (or force, in the language of the Rabbis) intermingled with the fire, that of wind. The damage may thus take place a far distance from where Reuven lit the fire. Reuven kindles a fire that spreads to Shimon's property

where it burns wood, stones or earth. (Sometimes the fire scorches the earth to the extent that it cannot be sown.) Reuven must pay for it. Since the tort is different from other torts, it is likened in Rabbinic literature to Reuven shooting his arrow at Shimon's property and the tort is thus committed. Assume that Shimon sees that a fire is approaching his property and has the ability to divert or extinguish the flames. Reuven prevents him from extinguishing the flame. One opinion holds that Reuven is not liable and another holds that he is liable. There may be a difference in result depending upon where the fire was started.

If Reuven kindles a fire on his own premises he must do so at a distance far enough away from Shimon's premises that would prevent the fire from spreading there. If Reuven does so, he is not liable if the fire spreads to Shimon's premises and causes damage. In such case the spreading of the fire is considered an act of God and Reuven is free of liability. Very often, the distance will depend upon the intensity and the height of the fire. Beth Din will have to determine if the distance was adequate also taking into account whether there was combustible material and/or shrubbery on the ground surrounding the area where the fire was started, the height of the fire, and other matters that would retard or spread the flames. If the fire that Reuven kindles is not an adequate distance from Shimon's property and it causes damage to Shimon's property, Reuven is liable for the full damages caused by the fire. If the distance as determined by Beth Din was adequate, and yet it spread to Shimon's property and caused damage, then Reuven is not liable and the loss is attributed to an act of God. The spreading of a fire is also attributed to an act of God if it leaps across a river or other watercourse that is eight or more cubits wide (about 12 feet). In such an instance Reuven is exempt from liability. There is an opinion that the eight cubit test is applicable to a riverbed even if there is no water in it at the time. According to this latter opinion, if there is a river on the path of the fire it is considered a retardant of the fire no matter how small the river is.

Assume that Reuven has a wall on the boundary between his property and Shimon's property. The wall is capable of preventing a fire from crossing from Reuven's property to Shimon's property. If a fire kindled by Reuven leaps over the wall, Beth Din will take into account the height of the wall and type of terrain. Beth Din will consider if there is normally wood, vegetation, thorns or other matter that is flammable in the vicinity. If it finds that under the circumstances the fire would not have spread, Reuven is not liable to Shimon. However, if the fire was likely to spread, Reuven is liable even if the fire spreads great distances.

Reuven's courtyard catches on fire. The fence separating Reuven's premises from Shimon's premises could have prevented the fire from spreading to Shimon's premises. However, the fence fell down independent of the fire. If Reuven could have reinstalled the fence before the fire spread but failed to do so, he is liable to Shimon. If Reuven did not know that the fence had fallen down, or if he did know but did not have sufficient time to reinstall the fence, he is not liable to Shimon for damages. In all of these situations in which Reuven is liable, if he sees the fire approaching Shimon's property and he can stop the fire from spreading there, but Shimon prevents Reuven from saving Shimon's property, Reuven is not liable.

If Reuven kindles a fire on Shimon's property, even if there is no likelihood of the fire spreading, Reuven is liable if the fire does spread, no matter how far. Reuven is liable if the fire spreads from Shimon's property to Levi's property, no matter

how far away it is.

The general rule is that if Reuven asks Dan to perform an illegal act and Dan does it, Dan is liable and not Reuven. The rationale for this is that if the Torah tells Dan not to do the illegal act he should have heeded the Torah and not Reuven. Reuven gives a flame to Dan, a normal person, and because of Dan's conduct the flame catches on combustible material. It spreads to Shimon's property. Dan is liable. If Dan does not have the assets to pay Shimon, Reuven is liable to the judgments of Heaven. (When a person is liable to the judgments of Heaven, he is not forgiven by Heaven until he makes restitution to the victim of his acts. The law is the same if Reuven asks Dan to act as a bailee and take care of the fire. The fire then spreads to Shimon's property; Dan is liable and not Reuven.

Reuven instructs a deaf-mute, or a mentally deficient person or a minor to set fire to Shimon's property. If the person does so, Reuven is liable. Very often in Jewish law these three categories of persons have been linked together as individuals not legally liable for their acts.

The topic of arson shall IYH continue in the next lesson.

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume X chapters 418 of A Restatement of Rabbinic Civil Law by E. Quint. Copies of all volumes can be purchased via email: orders@gefepublishing.com and via website: www.israelbooks.com and at local Judaica bookstores. Questions to quint@inter.net.il

Meaning in Mitzvot

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

Not to Dun a Destitute Borrower

Our parsha admonishes the lender, "When you lend money to My people, to the poor among you, don't be to him as a collector; don't impose interest on him" (Sh'mot 22:24). The expression "don't be to him as a collector" commands the lender not to hound a borrower who is unable to pay the loan. The Sages were very strict about this prohibition, and warned that it is forbidden not only to openly demand payment but even to show himself before the borrower in a way which would cause him embarrassment (SA CM 97:2).

In a number of previous columns we have suggested that the Torah's laws regarding loans are not intended only to relieve the economic distress of the borrower, but also or even primarily to avoid a situation where the lender's economic advantage is exploited to give him some kind of social superiority or mastery. We cited some commentators who mention the verse "For the borrower is the servant of the lender" (Mishlei) in the context of the laws of interest (Rav Natan Steinhartz) or the laws of release of loans (Rav Avraham Kook). The ideal is where the loan is not an expression of superiority or mastery, but rather a simple commercial transaction or even better, an expression of equality - the lender's desire to help the borrower through temporary adversity.

In his commentary to this verse, Rav Shimshon R' Hirsch explains that this approach is implicit in the very Hebrew expression used for loan: "halva'a". The root of this word is

"lavah", which means "to accompany". Rav Hirsch points out further that in general the accompaniment is meant to benefit the other person. For example, this is the word used by Leah when she hopes that as a result of the birth of Levi, "my husband will accompany (yilaveh) me."

Rav Hirsch writes: "The object [of the verb] is the borrower himself; thus it writes 'et' My people and the poor [the word et precedes a direct object]. The money is the means."

Thus the literal meaning of the verse is: "If through money you bring My people, the poor among you, to accompany you, don't be to him as a collector."

This linguistic insight also fits in with an important aspect of the laws of charity. In many cases, we find that a loan is considered even a higher level of charity than a donation (See SA YD 249:6). One reason is that while a donation involves a one-time interaction with the poor person, a loan by its nature creates an ongoing relationship which is severed only after a period of time when the loan is paid.

A similar message is found in the passage in Bava Batra (9b) which states that one who gives money to a poor person merits six blessings, but one who appeases him with words merits eleven; as well as in the commentary of the Rambam on tractate Avot where he explains that the admonition "All is according to the magnitude of the act" teaches that it is better to give a small amount of charity many times than to give the same amount in a one-time gift.

The common message of all these laws is that when it comes to giving charity, the human dimension of the aid is at least as important as the economic one.

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" [3]

As Eliezer stood at the spring which fed the well to which the daughters of Charan came to draw water in the late afternoon, he laid down the criteria whereby the future bride of Yitschak be chosen. Everything was planned almost like a scientific experiment, with attention being given to the appearance of Eliezer, his positioning at the time of his request and the request itself.

Eliezer took 10 camels and set out with all the bounty of his master to Aram Naharaim. Ramban explains the bounty as the fruits and delicacies of Eretz Yisrael, just as the brothers took 10 donkeys with all the good of the country (Sh'mot 45:23). Radak and Or HaChayim see it as gold, precious stones and gems, to show Avraham's wealth. Rashbam suggests that all the bounty refers to all the important personages from Avraham's house that accompanied Eliezer. Rashi, quoting Shmot Rabba, writes that Eliezer took with him the contract attesting that Avraham ceded all his property to Yitschak except for the presents that he gave prior to his death to the sons of the concubine(s) (B'reishit 25:5-6). The explanation of Rabbi S. R.

Hirsch, in contrast to these commentaries, seems more compatible with the test that was to select the wife for Yitschak. "Taking the verse literally we see that Eliezer walked to Haran and took the camels for the bride and her attendants, an old servant on foot without obvious wealth, who had to take riding camels somewhere. The presents that he gave Rivka could easily be carried in a jewel box on his person. Only so would the test which he had in mind to make of the character of the girl be real one".

One verse speaks of Eliezer at the well (10) while a second (13) of a spring. In the archeological digs of many Canaanite and Israelite town and villages, we find the natural spring funneled or channeled to a well that collected the water, making access and use easier. Irrespective, the well outside the city was the place that a stranger would go in search of information. As refugees, both Moshe and Yaakov had gone there. Now Eliezer proposed asking one of the young girls who came to draw water and give him to drink. He felt that was a good place to observe the behavior of the young girls: to see the degree of chesed they possessed. There, away from their parents and family they would behave naturally and carefree, thus expressing their true characters, which they may not do when in their home environment. "He was not interested in a wealthy girl, rather one who would have to go herself to fetch water, not having servants to do so for her. Further- more, standing at the spring would be a further test of character. For someone not of a generous character, it would be easy to say: "You are strong and by the water, you can simply help yourself" (Malbim).

Even if, however, the girl gave him to drink that alone would not be proof of her degree of chesed. Perhaps she did so either indulgently for an old traveler or in expectation of a reward. So, after drinking the water that Rivka had drawn for him, Eliezer waited to see if she would fulfill his condition, that if she followed her action by watering the 10 camels, then indeed she was suitable to be Yitschak's wife. To his astonishment, that is exactly what Rivka did. "Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachman in the name of Rabbi Yonatan taught: "There were three (people) that made irresponsible and improper requests, two were fortunate in the reply they received and one was not. The latter was Yiftach (Shoftim 11:30-31) and the others were King Saul (Samuel Alef 17:25) and Eliezer, servant of Avraham. When he said that the girl who would volunteer to give the camels to drink in addition to himself would be the bride, perhaps she would have been blind or lame?" (Ta'anit 4a). "Eliezer would not have asked a girl who was blind or lame, but she may have turned out to be servant or not from Avraham's family. That is why in addition to the test he asked for Hashem's blessing" (Radak). However, Chizkuni points out that before giving her the presents, he asked her whose daughter she was (Ed. note: That is what happened in the account that Eliezer gave to Lavan and Betuel; the account in verses 23-24 is otherwise), so if she would not have been from the family he simply would not have given them to her.

"The sign that Eliezer chose for finding the suitable wife was one that remains the most characteristic of the descendants of Avraham and Sara, gemilut chesed. This love of fellow man regardless of class distinction - which only slowly broke its way into the non-Jewish world through the direct and indirect influence of the teaching of the Avrahamides, Eliezer learnt in the tent of Avraham. It must have been rare, otherwise he would not have used it as a sign and test. Throughout, Rivka shows herself worthy with her Avrahamic feelings to take the place of Sara. Eliezer 'the servant', behaving as a slave, begs for just a

little water to gulp down, to which she answered, 'drink my lord'. At first not a word about the camels, that came only after he had quenched his thirst. Had she said that at once, a trait that characterizes the true doer of chesed and the true Jewish woman, would have been missing; she would have been a conceited gossip bragging about her charitable deeds. Not only does she offer to give the camels a drink, that would have involved 10 journeys down to the well and 10 drawings up of water, rather she will fill the trough again and again until all 10 camels have drunk their fill. With all that, she hurried and ran to draw the water for them; she was not slow or dilatory in doing that humane work. At the same time she does not waste her energy or even the tiniest drop of water; she carefully empties the pitcher of the water remaining there after Eliezer finishes drinking back into the trough. Jewish nature is as economical with its possessions and resources as it is extravagant in using them for fulfilling a mitzva" (Rabbi S.R. Hirsch).'

This is the 117th 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...



Does one make a b'racha on ice cream served as dessert at a meal with bread?



The gemara (B'rachot 41b) presents the basic rules of b'rachot during a meal. Foods that "come due to the meal" do not require a b'racha (i.e. its own b'racha). Those not due to the meal require only a b'racha before them. The Rosh (ad loc.) describes foods that come due to the meal as

those that connected to the main part of the meal and (/or?) are eaten with the bread. Fruit are prime examples of foods that are not due to the meal (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 177:1). These are normally eaten to give a sweet taste rather than to fill one up. Although poskim assume that anything eaten before Birkat HaMazon is during the meal, foods that are eaten specifically for dessert are generally not due to the meal (see Mishna B'rura 177:4).

The gemara (ibid.) asks: why, according to these rules, does one require a b'racha on wine drunk during the meal. It answers: "Wine is different, as it causes a b'racha for itself." The most accepted explanation is that wine is unique in that we make a b'racha on it in various mitzva contexts (e.g. Kiddush and Sheva B'rachot) even when one is not interested in drinking it (Rashi, ad loc.). We see that, if not for this unique characteristic, wine would not have required a b'racha during a meal. Therefore, most Rishonim and the Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 174:7) posit that drinks consumed during the meal, even toward its end, do not require a b'racha. Many explain that eating contributes to one's thirst; thus quenching thirst is an integral part of the meal. Let us note that some Rishonim learn the gemara differently and say that one makes a b'racha on all drinks during the meal. The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) even cites them as a minority opinion and suggests removing doubts by making a Shehakol before the meal to cover drinks. However, the practice is certainly not that way.

One might wonder what ice cream, a classic dessert, meant to finish the meal with a sweet taste in one's mouth, has to do with drinks. It is not part of the main meal and is not intended to quench one's thirst. Yet, a few poskim make the following claim. Ice cream is a liquid that is served as a solid because people enjoy it at an artificially cold temperature. Since accepted practice is not to make a b'racha on liquids during a meal, including during dessert, one should not make a b'racha on ice cream. Yalkut Yosef (on OC167, 10) rules this way in the name of his father (Rav Ovadya). There are reports that Rav Moshe Feinstein ruled this way as well (see Vezot HaB'racha, pg. 74). One could say that it is logical to call ice cream a liquid only when it is based heavily on milk and/or water, not when it is a mixture of eggs, soy products, and sugar (i.e., pareve ice cream) (see opinions in Piskei Teshuvot 177:(24)). Perhaps Rav Moshe was speaking about classic ice cream; however, Rav Ovadya does not accept this distinction.

It is difficult to accept the above ruling (despite the rule of safek b'rachot l'hakel) for fundamental reasons. The great majority of poskim understand that the matter does not depend on halachic definitions of liquid vs. solid but on the function of the food; is it a drink or a dessert? (The reason we do not make a b'racha on most cakes for dessert is that they may be considered like bread (Bi'ur Halacha on 168:8.)) Even among drinks, the Mishna B'rura (177:39) brings machlokot about a b'racha for whiskey or coffee at the end of a meal, with the question being its function. Indeed, the gemara did not state a formal rule about liquids during a meal. So why should we lump all liquids together when their functions are so different?

Most leading poskim rule to make a b'racha on ice cream, certainly the pareve type; some suggest dodging the issue by making a b'racha on a food it is agreed requires Shehakol (e.g., chocolate) (see opinions in Piskei Teshuvot and Vezot HaB'racha, ibid.). We recommend making a b'racha on ice cream served as dessert unless one always follows Rav Ovadya's or possibly Rav Moshe's rulings.

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

To really see what a person is doing, we must know what his motives are. One man may be slapping another in anger or attempting to revive him. What we actually see in such instances will depend upon what we think we are seeing.

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)

As one who lives in Israel, daily living sometimes gets in the way of appreciating the miraculous nature of life in this country. Just like any other place, we wake up in the morning, send the kids to school, go to work and in general engage in the same mundane activities as do millions all around the world. Parshat Mishpatim affords an opportunity to appreciate the uniqueness of Eretz Israel.

The key to life in the Land of Israel is following the directions that come with the package. Sh'mot 23:22 read: "But if you shall indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and an adversary to your adversaries." If we follow His commandments, the land will be ours and God will tend to all of our needs (food, water, protection from illness, secure borders, etc. - see the subsequent verses).

A similar theme can be found in Sh'mot 34:24: "Neither shall any man desire your land, when you shall go up to appear before the Lord your God three times a year." It seems irresponsible to abandon one's home and belongings to perform the commandment of pilgrim- age to the Beit HaMikdash. God assures us that He will defend our property during our absence.

In summary, nothing in Eretz Israel is as it seems, at least not if we adhere to God's commandments. As it states in D'varim 11:12: "A land which the Lord thy God cares for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." God's eyes are always upon the Land of Israel, miraculously providing for those who seek Him.

Rav Joshua Schreier, Efrat

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

When R' Shalom of Belz was a young man, he smoked a pipe.

Once he saw another young man preparing to smoke his pipe. First he cleaned the pipe thoroughly, then he filled it with tobacco, and finally he managed to light it. During the time it took the young man to get his pipe ready, R' Shalom learned an entire page of gemara.

Immediately R' Shalom put away his pipe, and never smoked one again. "If this thing can cause a person to waste the time of an entire page of Torah learning," he thought, "then I want to have nothing to do with it."

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 - MISHPATIM

1) This week's Parsha essentially teaches the laws between man and his fellow man including the very practical halachot of damages, honesty in business, laws of lending and borrowing and more. Why does G-D choose to begin the laws between man and man with the uncommon case of an EVED IVRI, an indentured servant?

2) The Torah teaches two laws regarding a pit. The first involves one who OPENS a pit and the second one who DIGS a pit and does not cover it (21:33). Why is the word BOR, meaning pit, written with a VAV regarding the first law and without a VAV regarding the second law?

3) Why are the verbs describing one who causes pain and anguish to a widow and orphan described in double language - ANEH TA'ANEH (you afflict pain), TZA'OK YITZHAK (he will cry), and SHAMO'A ESHMA (I will hear)? (22:21-22)

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

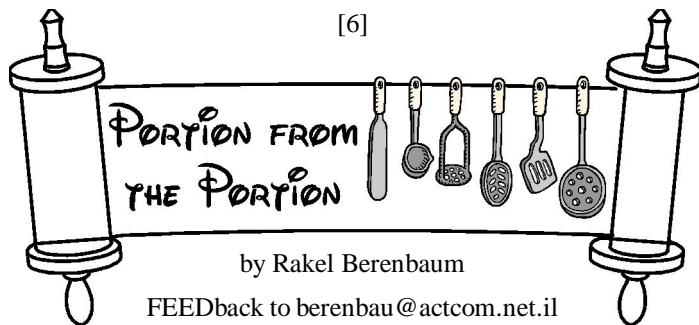
Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) Rav Hirsch explains that EVED IVRI is a very appropriate choice to begin these laws. The principle behind these halachot is the respect which we owe to other human beings. The law of EVED IVRI describes a thief. He is a despicable character in the eyes of most people. Yet, he is a human being and even he must be treated with dignity and respect. This sets the tone for the rest of the laws between man and man. We learn from EVED IVRI that the guiding theme of these laws is the respect to which all people are entitled. This understanding will impact on our performance in business dealings, damages, and all common issues between man and man.

2) The Vilna Gaon answers based on established halachot of pits. One who opens a pit is only liable for damages if the pit is ten t'fachim deep. This is hinted to by the word for pit being written in full with a VAV connoting that it must be a full/deep pit. If a person dug a pit of nine t'fachim and then a second person comes and digs the last tefach, the second person is liable for damages. Thus, one can be liable for digging less than ten t'fachim as hinted in the word BOR being written with fewer letters.

3) The Kotzker Rebbe teaches that when an orphan and widow experience pain from others, the pain goes beyond dealing with what was said or done to them. They often imagine that if the loved one who passed away was still alive, they would somehow be spared from this current experience. That brings back the feelings of pain and loss related to the death. Thus, there is a double pain involved as captured by the Torah using a double language to describe their pain, their crying and what G-D hears.

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



Slight change in column title for this week only:

POTION from the Portion

One of the many laws found in this week's Torah portion is not to allow a sorceress (M'CHASHEIFA) live (22:17). We see a similar prohibition in D'varim (18:10-11) before we enter the land of Israel we are warned not to learn from the revolting practices of the nations who had been living in the land. It is because of these practices (i.e. divination, incantations, omens, communicating with the dead, witchcraft) that Hashem drives out the other nations from the land of Israel. Witchcraft is so bad that in the book of Yirmiyahu the false prophets are referred to as witches. What exactly is the problem with witchcraft? Why are we prohibited from practicing it? Is there anything to witchcraft? As my six year old daughter asked "are there really such things as witches"?

Yes, there were people who practiced witchcraft - as we see from the story in the Gemara where Shimon ben Shetach trapped and hung 80 sorceresses who had been practicing witchcraft in a cave. We see from this story as well that witchcraft was primarily practiced by women. That's why the verse refers to the feminine sorceress (M'CHASHEIFA) and not the masculine form. The prohibition applies to both men and women; sorceresses are just more common.

Witchcraft was one of the many things that the members of the Sanhedrin were supposed to know everything about. According to Rashi this was so that they would be able to fight against a witch if need be, or according to Maimonides so they would know who was practicing witchcraft so they would know who to punish.

This follows Rambam's idea that there is no real power to witchcraft. He feels that the reason for the prohibition is because the idol worshippers believed that there was a power to it. According to Nachmanides (D'varim 18:9) the prohibition against witchcraft is because there is really something to it.

Rabbeinu Bechaye says that sorcery is similar to the prohibition of kil'ayim. Witches try to control nature and put two things together that shouldn't be put together. They MACHISHIN PAMALYA SHEL MAALE. They don't believe that all the powers of the world are controlled by Hashem or they believe that they have the ability to overcome these powers. Sorcery is very much related to idol worship and trying to undermine the recognition of Hashem's power in the world.

One thing is for sure, witchcraft is never used for a good purpose. That is what the Rabbis teach (Shabbat 67a) that "any practice that is related to healing is not from the practices of the Emori". The Sefer Hachinuch explains that any practice that we might have thought is forbidden because it seems to be related to witchcraft is not considered witchcraft if it is meant to heal someone since witchcraft's goal is destructive - not beneficial in any way. (See the Encyclopedia of Halacha and Medicine edited by Prof. Abraham Steinberg for an article on magic and medicine www.medethics.org.il)

[Ed. note: Also see Harry Potter books 1,2,3,4,5,6 (so far) - They have good witchcraft, and bad stuff too.]

MAGIC POTIONS DESSERT

Several flavors of ice cream or sorbet

Several flavors of carbonated beverages

Place one or two scoops of ice cream in a glass or bowl. Then pour some carbonated beverage over the ice cream.

The mixture will foam and bubble up like a witches brew.

For a really nice effect, let each person choose their own flavor of ice cream and flavor of carbonated beverage and mix it themselves at the table. You will end up with many different colored and flavored potions. At one meal you can try it with parve ice cream and at another meal with milky ice cream. This is a very easy recipe but it's a lot of fun for the kids as well as the adults. It will sure make a lot of "witches" disappear.

[7] Micro Ulpan

You know those magnifying mirrors? The mirror is not flat but... remember the word? CONCAVE. In Hebrew: MAR'A K'URA

מִרְאָה קְעוּרָה

[8] Torah from Nature

NEWT

Since eye of newt is a favorite ingredient in a witch's brew (reference here to witches of fiction), let's take a look at the NEWT.

amphibians... members of a large salamander family... lizard like in shape, usually under 15cm long including the slender tail. Some are brightly colored and secrete irritating substances... aquatic, gilled larval stage... in some species the adults remain aquatic, although they lose their gills and breathe air; in others the adults are terrestrial... and some newts go through two adult phases: called efts on land, then permanent aquatic life...

[9] G'matriya Match

קוֹם הַתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶרֶץ לְאֶרְצָהּ וּלְרִזְזוּבָהּ כִּי
לְךָ אֶתְנֶנָּה: בְּרֵאשִׁית יָגִיד
וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תִּשִּׂים לְפָנֵיהֶם:
שְׁמוֹת כֹּאֵן

Might we suggest that the 2nd pasuk is sort of a condition for the fulfillment of the first.

The Torah reminds us several times, that our hold of the Land depends upon our commitment to Torah and Mitzvot.

The two p'suklim have the same numeric value.

[10] Torah Tidbits this 'n that

(including an editorial)

You are welcome to a glimpse into how an issue of Torah Tidbits is produced. It might (emphasis on MIGHT) help you understand some Torah Tidbits quirks.

Lately, we use a layout that is made for 11 sheets of paper, 44 pages. That is made up of 35 or 36 pages numbered from the front of the booklet and another H or I pages numbered - that is, lettered - from the back of the booklet.

In addition, we anticipate at least one, and sometimes two (this week - three) sheets of unnumbered pages, which usually are the innermost pages. So why don't we number for 48 pages, if not 52? Because we have more flexibility with numbering for 44 pages.

How so? Take our word for it. It usually works out, although we get into trouble sometimes.

As pages are produced, we are better able to predict how many sheets we will need. The problem is when we are on the border. Do we squeeze, compress, edit out things, to fit the smaller number. Or do we go for the extra sheet. This week, for example, we could not hold things to 13 sheets (52 pages), so we decided on a 14th. We definitely could not have fit things into only 13 and put everything in that we wanted. But, as you might have guessed, the existence of a column like TTTT (the one you are reading now), means that we didn't NEED the whole 14th sheet. But that's okay, because we do want to take you on this "behind the scenes" view.

Here's another issue. We get asked this often enough. What's the business with a Lead Tidbit being continued MAYBE on page 10, maybe somewhere else, maybe not at all?

Good question. It's like this. We try for the Lead Tidbit to take up its allotted space on pages 1 and 2. If it needs more space to do the idea justice, then page 10 is usually a safe place to predict its continuation, since the Sedra Summary is usually done by then. Page 11 and on is taken by several of our feature columns, which are done before the Sedra Summary and the first two pages.

Now, sometimes, the Lead Tidbit comes to a decent enough stopping point at the end of page 2. It would be nice to be able to say a little more, but not crucial. The

point has been made, even if the ending is a little rough and/or abrupt. That's what happened last week. It would have been nice to continue the Lead Tidbit, but we ended up not being able to afford the space.

The worst situation is the Lead Tidbit not finishing on page 2 and not continuing anywhere either. It would be nice to say that that's never happened. But MI-D'VAR SHEKER TIRCHAK is in this week's sedra, so we won't say that it never happened.

Once in a while, we are able to add to the Lead Tidbit or another column that needs more said, in the electronic versions (email and website) of Torah Tidbits. These are prepared after the hard copy issue goes to bed (that's what you say in the publishing business). In the electronic versions there is no fixed limit. Want to add more - do it.

Speaking of electronic versions... most people who receive TT by email or who go to the website to read and/or download all of parts of Torah Tidbits, do not have access to the hard copy. But there definitely are people who get the hard copy and also subscribe to the email list or go to the website. Each person has his reason(s). Just as an example, the ParshaPix is in color and can be resized the way you want. In the hard copy, it's in black and white and 6.3 cm wide x approx. 8.5 cm tall. Or, some people prefer not to wait for Shabbat to get their TT and will have access to it on Thursday and Friday via email and the website. Torah Tidbits is on the OU's website, which has many, many other pages to browse and enjoy. You can either get onto www.ou.org and click on buttons from there, or you can go straight to TT via www.ou.org/torah/tt

You can subscribe to the email version by writing to tt@ou.org and asking.

Now for some serious talk. If you look on BackPage H, you will notice that the Root & Branch lecture this coming week is on What Really Happened in Amona? Under the title of the talk by Mr. Shlomo Wollins is a note from me (Phil) saying that I refused to use the title of the talk as submitted. Allow me to explain. I'm switching to first person singular because my explanation will be a personal editorial of sorts. I am not speaking for the Israel Center, nor for the OU. When I've done this in the past, I usually get flak. If so, so be it. The submitted title was, "Little Ehud's Amona Pogrom". On the one hand, it was tempting to leave the title as is, because when police and or soldiers charge groups of Jews, and use horses, and swing batons freely, cracking heads open, it is hard not to have the words pogrom and Cossacks come to mind.

I believe that what happened at Amona was a planned, vicious attack against Religious Zionist protesters, most of whom were teens. I hold acting PM Olmert responsible for what happened. And I also believe it was totally avoidable. I believe that Olmert did not want to "settle" the issue peacefully. He wanted to show how tough he can be in putting down those who dare protest against the governments policies and actions. I believe he wanted to improve his position in the eyes of a segment of the electorate he is wooing.

On the other hand, I vehemently oppose the use of the terms Nazi, Hitler, pogrom, etc. for anything that happens in Israel between Jews and Jews. You want to call someone a dictator, you feel that the state has become totalitarian, that this politician or the other is wicked, despicable, criminal, that laws are unjust...

whatever. Just say it. And protest. But stay away from certain words and symbols, etc. I believe they demean the memories of K'doshim who died in the Holocaust, and various pogroms and persecutions throughout Jewish History. I remain profoundly disappointed in what Ariel Sharon had turned into, and equally so am I disappointed in the former mayor of Jerusalem whom I once admired. Dismantling of Jewish homes in Eretz Yisrael is obscene. And I don't subscribe to the much touted, "Israel will have to make painful concessions." I don't see anyone else making painful concessions. I don't even hear them paying lip-service to it. We don't have to be FRAI'ERIM. And as long as I'm a roll - pre-Zionism, Zionism, post-Zionism - whatever they are supposed to mean, a Torah Jew needs to believe in ERETZ YISRAEL L'AM YISRAEL, AL PI TORAT YISRAEL. And I'm not referring to a party's slogan; I'm referring to the real thing. G-d wants us to keep the Torah and live it... in Eretz Yisrael.

[11] Divrei Menachem

Parshat Mishpatim contains a plethora of laws dealing with Jewish jurisprudence in all facets of life. Rashi teaches that coming on the heels of the Ten Commandments given at Mt. Sinai, these laws carry the same import to the Jew as those ten seminal statements.

The point is that many of the seemingly mundane laws that regulate society appear to be based on common sense. What we are asked to do, however, is to realize that the foundation of our laws is based on the Divine will of G-d. The impact of this realization is surely reinforced when we reflect on the seemingly obvious laws pertaining to murder and theft. Equally obvious, however, from the experience of the Second World War, is how man-made laws can be distorted to suit personal and political whims.

The Torah's approach to the first of the laws in our parsha - slavery - clues us in to what makes Judaism unique in its approach to law. First, we say to our detractors that Judaism does not a priori sanction slavery, "For they [the Children of Israel] are my servants", states Hashem (Vayikra 25:42).

The Jewish servant in our case is a thief who cannot return his debt. Rather than incarcerating him with crooks in jail he is put into the care of a reputable family for a maximum of six years. Thus, through rehabilitation, both the offender and the courts contribute towards the restoration of the social equilibrium. As Rabbi Julius Baker has noted, the Torah is a blueprint for the development of our social and moral conscience.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

Towards Better Davening and Torah Reading

A number of weeks ago, we had two consecutive columns on the SH'VA NAs in the SH'MA. Let's review the SH'VA NACH and flag a few tough ones. SH'VA NACH does not add any vowel sound the the letter it is under. YISRA'EL. The SH'VA under the SIN is NACH. The first syllable is YIS (rhymes with kiss). There is a technical, virtual SH'VA NACH under the LAMED as well, even though you cannot see it. Third syllable is EIL. Simple. The only "hard" SH'VA NACHs are the ones people tend to NA and especially when it is easier or more natural to pronounce the SH'VA as a NA, with a little vowel

sound for the letter under which the SH'VA is. These hard NACHs fall into a few different categories. [1] SH'VA NA at the beginning of a word and a VAV is prefixed to the word. The conjunctive VAV is usually vowel with a SH'VA NA. But if the word it is prefixing starts with a SH'VA, since you cannot have two consecutive SH'VAs at the beginning of a word, the VAV becomes a SHURUK - AND - it takes the word's first letter unto itself to become the first syllable of the word, and it changes a SH'VA NA to a NACH. B'CHOL L'VA-V'CHA UVCHOL NAFSH'CHA UVCHOL M'ODECHA. Once, the word B'CHOL remains intact. Twice, the word is prefixed by a VAV. The VAV becomes a SHURUK, the DAGESH KAL in the BET of B'CHOL drops out. The SH'VA under the VET becomes NACH as the VET/SH'VA "break away" (so to speak) from the CHOL syllable to which they were linked in B'CHOL. First syllable is UV (rhymes with GROOVE) and the second syllable is CHOL. B'LECH-T'CHA becomes UV LECH T'CHA. K'SHARTAM becomes UK SHAR TAM. It is very tempting (proof of which is that so many people do it) to say U




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K' SHAR TAM, retaining the little vowel sound for the KUF that the SH'VA NA had given it. But the SH'VA is NACHED by the prefixed VAV.

If the SHURUKed VA has a METEG under it (little vertical mark), then there is dispute. Some say that in this case, the U does stand alone and does not change the SH'VA under the following letter, nor does it take the letter into its opening syllable. So whereas it is UV LECH T'CHA VADERECH, the next word is U V'SHOCH B'CHA, followed by UV KU ME CHA.

Others say that even with a METEG, the prefixed- VAV situation is the same as originally described above. UV SHOCH B'CHA UV KU ME CHA - no difference between the U at the beginning of each of these words.

[2] Another hard type of SH'VA NACH are the ones under a letter that is simply hard to say without a little vowel sound. It takes effort. In SH'MA we have L'VAV-CHA, V'SHINAN-TAM, V'DIBAR-TA, MITZ-VOTAI - the SH'VA NACH under the VET, NUN, REISH, TZADI, respectively, are easy to say without adding any vowel sound to the letter. But VA-A'VAD-TEM is hard to say with a SH'VA NACH under the DALET. Even when the DALET is the end of the word, it is hard to withhold a little vowel sound from it. Say KAVOD. Pay attention to the way you say the DALET. DALET was not really meant to stop abruptly without a vowel sound. The Yemenite pronunciation of the DALET without a DAGESH is sounded like the TH in BREATHE. That does lend itself to a SH'VA NACH VA A'VAD TEM. Try not to end the word with D'TEM. VA AVAD and then TEM. So too with the other VA-AVAD-TEM (the one with the ALEF). In addition to the two words mentioned so far, there is also V'LI MAD TEM. More than enough for now. To be continued...

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.

Blood Applications on the Mizbei'ach

Known as Z'rikat HaDam, the blood applications varied from sacrifice to sacrifice and they were an integral and even crucial part of the "Korbanic" rite in the Beit HaMikdash. Valid only if performed by a Kohein, the officiating priest could invalidate the entire atonement process simply by omission or having improper intent. The Torah states, "For the soul of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you on the altar to effect atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that atones for the soul" (Vayikra 17:11). Rashi explains, "Because life is dependent on the blood, it was chosen to be the instrument of atonement." For this reason, ingesting blood was forbidden.

There were four ways of applying blood to the altar: (1) Z'RIKA (tossing the blood from a Mizrak, a Mikdash vessel), (2) N'TINA (physically placing the blood), (3) HAZAYA (sprinkling) and (4) SH'FICHA (pouring). Z'rikat HaDam is the "generic" term for blood applications. The Malbim writes (Torah V'haMitzvot, Vayikra 40); "And they (the Kohanim) shall throw the blood around the altar" (Vayikra 1:5). Know that there is a difference between Z'rika (tossing), and Sh'ficha (pouring), and N'tina (placing) and Hazaya (sprinkling). "Z'rika

is from a distance or from lower down to higher up. Sh'ficha is from above to below in the same place...Hazaya refers to the application of drops from the hand (or finger). The physical placing of the blood on the horns of the Mizbei'ach is done gently... Z'rika implies that (the blood was thrown with the aid of) a Mizrak - a Mikdash vessel..."

Where exactly the blood was applied depended on the type of Korban offered. The blood could be applied inside the Kodesh HaKodashim, on the outer of the two curtains separating the Kodesh HaKodashim from the Heichal (Sanctuary), on the Mizbach HaZahav (golden incense altar) in the Heichal, or on the sacrificial altar in the Azara. Though there were only four ways of applying blood to the Mizbei'ach, some of the Korbanot required blood applications in two places.

(1) The Avoda of the Par (bullock) and the Sa'ir (goat) performed on Yom Kippur could only be carried out by the Kohein Gadol himself. Carrying the Mizrak containing blood from the Par and the Sa'ir into Kodesh HaKodashim, the Kohein Gadol sprinkled the blood between the staves of the Aron HaBrit (Ark of the Covenant) eight times (one up and seven down). In Bayit Sheini when the Aron was absent, he sprinkled the blood on the Even Sh'tiya - the 'foundation stone' in Kodesh HaKodashim between where the staves of the Aron would have been had the Aron been there. Before each Hazaya, the Kohein Gadol dipped his index finger in the blood contained in the Mizrak. After the 'sprinkling' in Kodesh Hakodashim, the Kohein Gadol would re-enter the Heichal to the east of Kodesh Hakodashim and face the outer of the two veils which separated the Kodesh Hakodashim from the Heichal. He then would then 'sprinkle' eight more times (again one up and seven down) towards the veil, taking care to dip his finger anew in the blood before each Hazaya. He then approached the Mizbach HaZahav, located in the Heichal, and placed blood on the four 'horns' which protruded from the corners. Having previously cleared any ash from the southern side of the top of the Golden Altar, thereby exposing the gold surface, the Kohein Gadol then sprinkled seven more drops of blood on the newly uncovered surface. He was careful to dip his finger anew in the Mizrak each time. A mistake or omission invalidated the entire rite of atonement. The remnant of the blood was poured out into the western of the two holes located in the southwest corner of the Yesod (the 'foundation') of the sacrificial altar in the Azara, the Temple Court.

(2) The Par He'elam Davar Shel Tzibur (bullock for a matter that was hidden from the community, Vayikra 4:13, 14), the Par Kohein Mashiach (bullock of the anointed Kohein Gadol, Vayikra 4:3), and the Se'rei Avoda Zara (he-goat of idol worship, Bamidbar 15:24) required the Kohein Gadol to 'sprinkle' the blood towards the veil in the Heichal seven times. Before each Hazaya, he dipped his finger into the blood in the Mizrak and then proceeded to place blood on the four 'horns' of the Mizbach HaZahav in the Heichal. A mistake or omission invalidated the entire rite of atonement. The blood that remained in the Mizrak was poured into the western of the two holes located in the southwest corner of the Yesod of the sacrificial altar. The five sacrifices noted above are called Chata'ot Penimiyot (inner sin offerings) because their blood applications were performed inside the Bayit and not on the outer Mizbei'ach in the Azara.

(3) The "Outer Sin Offerings" were so called because the blood applications were applied on the sacrificial altar "outside" the Bayit. The Kohein dipped his finger into the Mizrak and placed blood on the 'horns' on the corners of the Mizbei'ach while he

stood on the circuit ledge, which circumambulated the altar. Upon completing the blood applications, he poured the remainder of the blood into the southern of the two holes located in the southwest corner of the Yesod.

(4) The Olah, Asham, Shalmei Tzibur (public Shelamim offered on Shavu'ot) and private Shelamim required "two applications which in reality were four". The Kohein would approach the Mizbei'ach and, while standing on the stone floor of the Azara, tossed the blood from the Mizrak at the northeast corner in such a way that blood splattered partially on the north side and partially on the east side. Then he proceeded to the southwest corner of the Mizbei'ach and tossed blood in the same manner, making sure that he splattered blood on both sides - south and west. The Kohein poured the remainder of the blood into the southern of the two holes located in the southwest corner of the Yesod of the Mizbei'ach.

(5) The B'chor (firstborn animals) and the Ma'aser B'heima (animal tithes) only required one blood application. The Kohein conveyed the Mizrak containing the blood to the Mizbei'ach and tossed the blood from a distance at the sides where the Yesod protruded. This 'tossing' could be performed along the entire north and west sides of the Mizbei'ach and also on two additional Amot protrusions of the Yesod on the northeast corner and the southwest corner.

(6) The Korban Pesach (the Passover Offering) also required only one blood application. The Kohein would take the Mizrak containing the blood, and pour it out on the wall of the Mizbei'ach being careful that that the blood would flow onto the Yesod. Contrary to when the Kohein tossed the blood as in (4) and (5) above, when it was not necessary that the blood flow onto the Yesod.

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**



Busy ParshaPix for a busy sedra.

Upper-left is really the starting point, the scales representing JUSTICE. In this case, MISHPATIM. In addition to the broad idea of justice, see what else can be found in the sedra, for which the scales of justice would be an appropriate representation. This is a good challenge to your children and Shabbat guests that can lead to long and involved discussions on Parshat HaShavua.

Upper-right is the "fist" referred to as one of the weapons that can injure or kill.

An eye for an eye, literally, an eye UNDER (TACHAT) an eye, is depicted here as money under an eye, based on Rashi and all other commentaries. The Vilna Gaon pointed out that the letters of the word AYIN are each followed in the ALEF-BET by the letters of the word KESEF. AYIN-PEI, YUD-KAF, NUN-SAMACH. A very nice graphical representation of the fact that monetary compensation on several levels is the correct understanding of an Eye for an Eye.

The bull and the fire are two potential causes of damages - one

of the many key topics of the sedra. See Rabbi Quint's column of the last many weeks. The pit is missing from this ParshaPix. But we have the bull with horns, the tooth, the feet of the bull, the fire.

The sneaking thief was caught in the cellar. Under what circumstances is one held blameless for killing him? Under what circumstances would one be held accountable? And how much does the caught thief pay to the victim?

The guard at his post represents the whole topic of the FOUR SHOMRIM.

The hands pulling the money out of the wallet are about to lend money at 0% interest.

Or, perhaps, they are about to offer a bribe. Which will blind the judge receiving it, as in the image of the blindfolded head.

The witch on the broomstick stands for the 3-word pasuk which requires Sanhedrin to rid society of witches.

Down the lower-left side are images of the Three Regalim, Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

The Har Sinai pix for Shavuot also corresponds to the end of Mishpatim where the events of Matan Torah are presented with other details not presented in Yitro.

The quill and scroll is for Moshe writing down "all of G-d's words" (Shmot 24:4).

There is milk & meat for the first of the three occurrences of LO T'VASHEIL G'DI...

Below the piles of bills and coins and to the right of the thief is the TZIR'A (wasp) that G-d will send into the Land to help slowly drive out some of the nations there.

The cloud is covering Har Sinai (end of the sedra).

The tooth is referred to in the mitzvot related to injuring an EVED K'NAANI and being required to free him. It is also one of the forms of damages. Also, there is a tooth for a tooth.

The knitting reminds us of the prohibitions of Shabbat, as commanded with a positive mitzva in Mishpatim. In other words, not just "DO NOT KNIT", but forgo your knitting in honor of the Shabbat and G-d's commands.

There is a happy dog, happy to receive our TREIF meat, as expressly stated in Sh'mot 22:30.

See the sparrow? Now ignore it. It's a hold-over from last year's ParshaPix and it referred to the haftara of Mishpatim which was read because 5765 was a 2-Adar year and Mishpatim was not one of the Special Parshiyot.

That leaves two unexplained elements in the Parsha- Pix which become visual TTriddles.

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 (YITRO) TTriddles:

[1] All of ours in general, hers in particular

KABEID ET AVICHA V'ET IMECHA... Honor your father and mother. This command, of course, refers to the father and mother of each of us. All of ours in general. A search in Tanach for ET AVICHA V'ET IMECHA returned one other find - a pasuk in Yehoshua (2:18) that tells us of the promise Yehoshua's two spies (Kalev and Pinchas) made to Rachav, that her father and mother (and sister and her father's house) would be saved when Bnei Yisrael came back to capture Yericho.

[2] In the year that who what?

This one is from the haftara. BISHNAT MOT HAMELECH... In the year that the king died - that's the what. The who in the haftara is UZIYAHU. Later in Yeshayahu (14:8) it is ACHAZ. The phrase BISHNAT MOT HAMELECH appears in Tanach only these two times in Yeshayahu.

[3] G-d, Yitro, Micha, David HaMelech

ATA YADATI - Now I know! This phrase appears four times in Tanach. G-d said it through an angel to Avraham Avinu at the Akeida. Yitro said it when he heard all that Moshe told him. In Shoftim, there is a story of a man named Micha from Har Efrayim who hired a Levi from Beit Lechem Yehuda... it's a complicated story. Checkout perek 7. David HaMelech said it in T'hilim 20, which we say between Ashrei and Uva L'tzion on most weekdays.

[4] The others are Naomi, Machlon and Kilyon

USH'NEI VANEHA, and her two sons. Yitro tells Moshe that he brought with him, "Your wife and her two sons (Gershon and Eliezer). The only other place the term USH'NEI VANEHA appears is in Megilat Ruth, referring to Naomi, and her two sons, Machlon and Kilyon.

[5] There are two visual TTriddles from ParshaPix

We'll take the easier one first. The picture in the lower right corner of the ParshaPix is Max Baer Jr. He was the son of Max Baer, a famous boxer from the 1930s, onetime heavyweight champion of the world. Not Jewish, but considered himself close enough because of his paternal grandfather, to wear a Magen David on his trunks. He has nothing to do with the TTriddle. His son, Max Baer Jr. was an actor whose main successful role was 9 years on the Beverly Hillbillies, on which he played the part of Jethro Bodine. That's Jethro, as in Yitro. He later wrote and produced several feature films. Only Baby Boomers were expected to recognize Jed's nephew.

[6] And this is the other one

This visual TTriddle was made up of three pieces. 1-18, we'll get back to that part in a moment. A tea bag. and a saw. The TEA and the SAW combine to TISA (works better in Ashkenazish), as in the third commandment which forbids taking G-d's name in vain. The word that precedes TISA is LO (low), which is what 1-18 is on a roulette wheel, 19-36 being high.

[7] There is a hidden TTriddle hiding in plain sight at the end of one of the TT features

The TTriddle that was hiding in plain sight was at the end (or sde) of the Towards better Davening and Torah Reading column. The column focused on a phrase from a pasuk that allowed us to review three different topics in correct pronunciation of Hebrew. The pasuk that helps us see these things clearly is SH'MOT 20:20 (Get it? 20-20 vision.)

NachKwestion of the Week Find 3 consecutive different words in our davening all with the same root

Most solvers found MELECH MALCHEI HAM'LACHIM from ALEINU (and Shalom Aleichem, if we consider it part of davening).

Then there is L'ALEM U'L'OLMEI AL'MAYA from Kaddish (and elsewhere).

And what about V'TALMIDEIHEM V'TALMIDEI TALMIDEIHEM from the Y'HI RATZONs after Torah reading on Monday and Thursday?

HAYA, HOVEH, V'YIHYEH - not from the 13 principles of the Rambam, since we won't call that davening either, but rather from KAH KELI before Musaf of Chag. That is davening, even if many shuls don't say it. The phrase in that prayer is HAYA V'YI-HEH. HAYA V'HOVEH, and the words are not all different. But if you look at it without the first HAYA, it qualifies.

And in AHAVA RABA, Shacharit bracha before the Sh'ma, we find the request to G-d, AVINA, HA'AV HARACHAMAN, HA'MEREACHEM, RACHEM ALEINU which has three consecutive different words with the same root.

Look in Ashrei - this one is a little tricky because it is part of two p'sukim, but the words are different and they are consecutive. MALCHUTO, MALCHUTCHA, MALCHUT

And we have one more for you - it's a tetra-word phrase, FOUR words in a row, all different, all from the same root. In NISHMAT. MEI'ELEF ELEF ALFEI ALAFIM - We think that's it. Any more, let us know.

At this point, prizes are hereby awarded to Hadar Crown and Rosalie Kuptsow. We might yet give out some more CDs from Noam, if we get more solid answers by tomorrow.

Several solutions included VE'TZE'ETZAEINU V'TZE'ETZAEI TZE'ETZAEINU from some versions of Birchot HaTorah, as well as some prayers for Yom Kippur. (BTW, if TZE'ETZAEIM are offspring, what are TZE'ETZAEI TZE'ETZAEINU?) Someone found GAD G'DUD YIGODNU in a version of K'ri'at Sh'ma al HaMita. And Shmaya (the Kwestion poser) called with another answer in the Ashrei-style split sentences, but consecutive words, nonetheless. Hallel: End of bracha, and continue - ...HA'HALEL. HALELU-YAH HALELU...

This week's TTriddles:

[1] This one can be taken literally

[2] Change your plans for the Seder BBA

[3] Warning: Groaner TTriddle (we don't often warn you): Perhaps the Torah's generic name for the Galway, Blackface Mountain, Wicklow Cheviot, and specific other breeds of sheep

[4] That's twice he partnered with his uncle; what are his mother's three names?

[5] and [6] Visual TTriddles from the ParshaPix

NachKwestion of the Week:

We say these words daily, weekly, and monthly (one varies slightly from the others). Daily, we quote the Torah. Weekly we quote Navi. Monthly we quote K'tuvim.