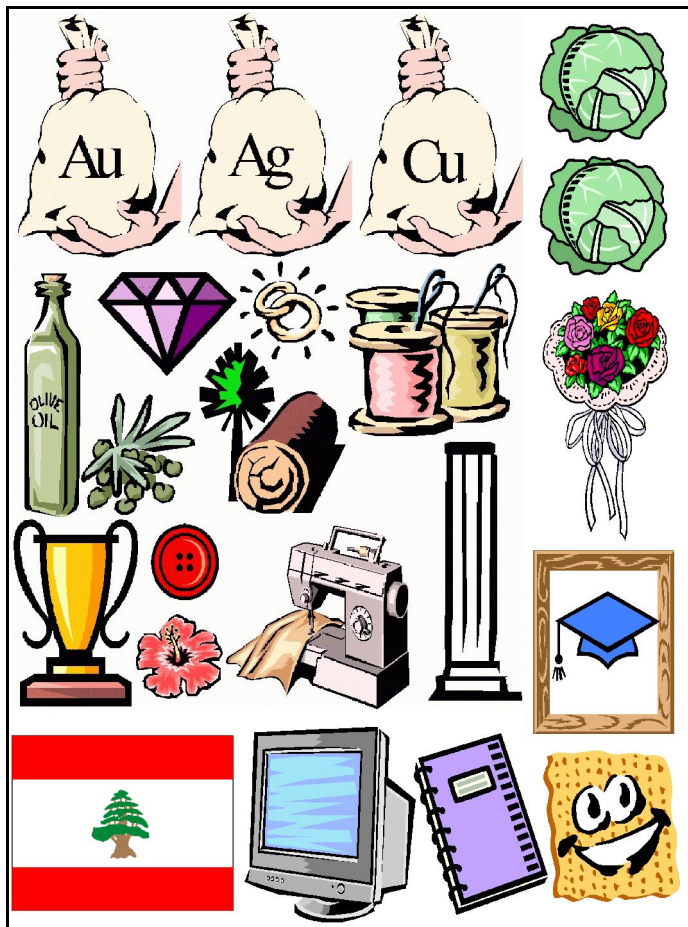




This isn't besides the point. The Torah commands us to build a Mikdash and G-d promises to dwell among us. G-d's promise is hinted at by one word in Truma, but spelled out in T'tzaveh and in Truma's haftara. His presence among us is as needed and desired now as it was when Moshe Rabeinu first assembled the Mishkan.



## Kohen - First Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 25:1-16

[P> 25:1 (9)] G-d tells Moshe to tell the People to donate materials in amounts that "each person sees fit". The donations were to be of gold, silver, copper; dyed wools (blue, purple, red), fine linen; goat-hair fabric, red-dyed sheepskin, Tachash skins; acacia wood; oil for light, spices for the anointing oil and the incense offerings; gemstones for the Eifod and the Choshen.

It seems from our sources that silver was not as "as each person sees fit" as the other materials. Almost of the silver (used for the ADANIM, foundation blocks of the Mishkan) came from the mandatory and specified collection of the silver half-shekel). Some additional silver that was donated was used for Mishkan "decoration" and vessels.

"And they shall make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst" [95,A20 25:8]. This well-known pasuk constitutes the mitzva to build the Mishkan in that generation, and the Beit HaMikdash in later times. Each time the Mishkan was taken apart, transported, and reassembled, the mitzva was fulfilled. It was fulfilled by Shlomo HaMelech and his generation, and by Ezra HaSofer and his generation. It will be fulfilled IY"H when the third Beit HaMikdash will be built, IY"H in our own time.

**SDT** Some commentaries interpret the word B'TOCHAM as "within each person of B'nei Yisrael", not just in the midst of the People, thereby personalizing the relationship between G-d and each person.

*In a different way, this also points to the building of a Mikdash in one's own heart. in a figurative sense.*

**SDT** V'YIKCHU, rather than V'YITNU. "Take" rather than "give". Famous question. The Malbim answers it this way. Really, everything belongs to G-d. So how can we give to Him. Our first step is to take from Him by using worldly goods for sacred purposes. Just as making a bracha enables us to take possession of food which is essentially G-d's, so too did the donations of materials for the Mishkan make those materials ours to give.

## T'RUMA STATS

19th of 54 sedras; 7th of 11 in Sh'mot  
Written on 154.8 lines in a Sefer Torah, rank: 43rd  
9 Parshiot; 4 open, 5 closed  
96 p'sukim - ranks 38th (9th in Sh'mot)  
1145 words - ranks 45th (10th in Sh'mot)  
4692 letters - ranks 41st (9th in Sh'mot)  
T'ruma is a short sedra with very short p'sukim (especially in words per pasuk)

## MITZVOT:

Contains 3 mitzvot; 1 positive and 2 prohibitions

## 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.

## MITZVA WATCH

Rambam gives 14 rules for the counting of the 613 mitzvot. Rule #12 is that it is not "appropriate" to count as separate mitzvot those commands that are part of a more all-encompassing mitzva. Therefore, Rambam does NOT count among the 613 the mitzvot to make the Aron, Menora, Shulchan, Altars, etc. since they are included in Building the Sanctuary. In other words, ALL of the details of the building of the Mikdash are included in this one single Mitzvat Asei.

Other mitzva-counters disagree. E.g. Ramban counts the making of the Aron as a separate mitzva (but not the other sacred vessels).

And, as you will see, there are specific details that are counted as separate mitzvot by Rambam too.

G-d will show the various forms that the work should take as models for the people to follow in M'lechet HaMishkan, the sacred task of building the Mikdash.

**[S> 25:10 (13)]** The first specific command is that of making the Aron (Ark). It is to be made of wood, gold-plated inside and out. Four gold rings are to be fixed to its sides to receive the Carrying Poles (themselves made of gold-plated wood). The Carrying Poles, once inserted into the rings, may never be removed **[96,L86 25:15]**.

## MITZVA WATCH

Note that although all the positive commands related to the details of each of the vessels are included within the "master-mitzva" of building the Mikdash (and everything in it), this prohibition is counted separately. In other words, the commands to make the Aron, to plate it with gold, to attach rings, to make poles, to cover them with gold, to put a decorative border around the top of the Aron, to make the lid, etc. etc. are all part of the mitzva to make the Sanctuary. The prohibition of removing the carrying poles is its own mitzva.

The "Testimony" (the LUCHOT - Tablets) shall be placed in the Aron.

Clarification: Some commentaries describe the ARON as three nested, open-top boxes - an outer box of gold, a middle box of wood, and an inner box of gold which had a rim to cover over the thickness of the wooden box, so that only gold would be visible both from the outside and inside of the ARON. There are different opinions as to how thick the gold plating was.

## Levi - Second Aliya - 24 p'sukim - 25:17-40

A thick, solid gold lid (called the KAPORET) is to be made for the Aron. From the lid are to be formed two Cherubs facing each other with their wings spread out above the lid. Communication from G-d to Moshe will be from "between the two K'ruvim".

Think about this... It seems a bit strange, does it not, that we would be commanded to make the K'ruvim in light of the strong prohibitions against graven images. And more so, if we note the chronology of the events in the months following the Exodus - specifically, that the command to build the Mikdash followed in the wake of the Golden Calf fiasco. The "answer" is that G-d is the Boss. He says no graven images - then we don't. And the Golden Calf is the ultimate affront to G-d. He commands us to make the K'ruvim, then we do. There are many examples of this idea. Lighting fire is forbidden on Shabbat. In the Mikdash it is required. Piku'ach Nefesh situations require it. This is not contradictory. This is recognizing G-d's mastery of the world and our commitment to follow His commands.

**[P> 25:23 (8)]** A special table of gold-plated wood shall be made; a frame and decorative border to the frame are to be made of gold. Four gold rings are to be attached to

the legs of the table as receptacles for the carrying rods. Shelves and supports for the shelves complete the Shulchan.

The Lechem Panim (Showbread) are to be placed on the Shulchan at all times **[97,A27 25:30]**.

## MITZVA WATCH

This is not considered just a detail of the making of the Shulchan, but as its own mitzva. The mitzva involves baking 12 special loaves (halachically, they were matza) on Friday to replace the previous week's loaves on Shabbat. Tradition records a weekly miracle that the one-week-old Lechem HaPanim was found to be fresh by the kohanim on duty who shared in eating it. This mitzva makes the statement that we should not view food as only the physical necessity that the rest of the world sees it as, but rather we are challenged to add a spiritual dimension to even the most mundane of our human activities. Lechem HaPanim are the symbol; our laws of kashrut, brachot, and more, help us achieve the spiritual levels of this concept.

In the Shabbat Zmira KI ESHM'RA SHABBAT, we sing that G-d gave a Torah-mitzva to the Kohanim to put the Lechem HaPanim on the Shulchan on Shabbat. THEREFORE, we are forbidden to fast on Shabbat (except for Yom Kippur). In other words, G-d did not include a food in the Temple service just to feed the Kohanim. G-d is showing us, so to speak, the potential spirituality of food. Take this lesson, He says, from the Mikdash into your homes. Food is not incidental to Shabbat; it is a significant part of our observance of Shabbat. We can see this from the earlier (in Parshat B'shalach) introduction of Shabbat to the people of Israel. We were first taught Shabbat in the context of the MN (manna). "And Moshe said - Eat it TODAY, for TODAY is Shabbat to HaShem, TODAY you will not find it in the field." As significant to Jewish Life is fasting, so too is eating. It is part of our Judaism, not just a physical need we have to satisfy.

(some Chumashim put Shlishi here)

**[P> 25:31 (10)]** The Menora is to be made of solid gold, one continuous piece, a central branch with six side branches (3 on each side), decorative orbs, flowers, and cups adorned the ends of each branch, with additional ones on the central branch. The Menora's utensils were also made of gold. Additionally, there was a 3-step platform that was used by the Kohen when he tended and lit the Menora.

Commentaries point out that the Menora was not THAT tall to require a step-stool to reach the oil lamps. However, it would usually require the Kohein Gadol to lift his hands above the TZITZ he wore on his forehead, and that was not permitted. Hence the need for the steps.

(The oil cups were separate and either attached or placed at the top of the branches.)

**SDT** *All parts of the Menorah were integral to the whole; none was "merely" attached. Torat Moshe applies this to the People of Israel and, with a play on words, says that even Jews who have strayed from Torah and mitzvot are part of the whole.*

## Shlishi - Third Aliya - 14 p'sukim - 26:1-14

[S> 26:1 (14)] The MISHKAN (the term is used for the whole structure as well as the first fabric covering) was a roofless structure covered by three layers of coverings. The first was called the MISHKAN and was made of 10 panels of woven fabric made from 3 different colors of dyed wool, plus white linen. Five panels were attached to form one section; similarly for the other five panels. The two sections thus formed were linked with buttons of gold through loops of blue wool, the buttons being attached to the edge of one section and the loops woven onto the edge of the other section. The weave of the Mishkan included images known as K'ruvim.

Above the Mishkan was an 11-panel covering (sections of six and five panels joined with copper buttons) made of goats' hair. The Mishkan was decorative; this covering, known as the OHEL, was utilitarian, affording protection from the elements. The OHEL and MISHKAN covered the sides of the structure as well as the top.

The topmost covering (some say it was just on the top, not the sides; others say it too draped down the walls of the Mishkan) was made of red-dyed sheepskin and Tachash skins.

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

The Mishkan, as described in the Torah, functioned for the 40 years of the Wilderness (actually 39 years), and the first 14 years in Eretz Yisrael (in GILGAL), the years of conquest and settlement. After that, a stone structure – with the same dimensions – was made in SHILO to replace the gold-covered wooden wall sections. (The K'rashim of the Mishkan were not used and were buried.) The three coverings were the same, as were the furnishings inside the Mishkan. The Mishkan stood in SHILO for 369 years. After ELI HAKOHEN died, the Mishkan was set up in NOV, where it stood for 13 years, and then (after Shmuel's death) in GIV'ON for 44 years. That's a total of 480 years, from Y'TZI'AT MITZRAYIM until the first Beit HaMikdash was begun. It took 7 years to finish the first Bayit.

## R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 26:15-30

[P> 26:15 (16)] The walls of the Mishkan were gold-plated wooden boards. Each board had two pegs to be inserted into silver foundation blocks. Boards were joined by square gold rings into slits at the top of the boards; connecting rods through rings mounted on the sides, above and below their mid-lines; and a central bolt through the center of the boards, internally. There were to be 20 boards each for the north and south walls, eight on the west. The east was open, covered by a special curtain.

**SDT** *Rashi brings a Midrash that Yaakov Avinu foresaw with Divine Vision that wood would be needed by his descendants upon their departure from Egypt. He brought*

*saplings with him to Egypt which he planted and ordered his children to take the wood with them when they left Egypt.*

## Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 7 p'sukim - 26:31-37

[S> 26:31 (7)] A woven curtain (like the first covering of the Mishkan) was to be hung from four gold-plated wooden pillars to separate between the Holy of Holies and the main hall of the Sanctuary. This curtain is called the PAROCHET, and gives its name to the curtain which we place on the Aron Kodesh in shul. Rashi explains that Parochet means Mechitza, partition, or in the language of our Sages, Pargod, a partition between a king and his subjects. As such, the Parochet in shul also separates the congregation from the Torah scrolls.

**SDT** *MA'ASEI CHOSHEIV, explains Rashi, is highly skilled weaving (could it be embroidery of a sort?) which results in different designs on each of the two sides of the fabric.*

The Aron is to be put into the Holy of Holies. The Shulchan on the north wall (2½ amot from the north wall) opposite the Menora on the south wall (also 2½ amot from the south wall) are placed outside the Parochet in the main section of the Mishkan. (The custom is to place the Chanukiya on the south wall of the shul, to remind us of the Menora in the Mikdash.)

A curtain similar to the Parochet was to be hung across the entrance of the Mishkan. This MASACH is to be hung on five wooden pillars plated with gold, fitted with golden hooks, and inserted into gold foundation sockets. The Masach measured 10 amot by 10 amot, as did the Parochet.

Some commentaries say that each curtain hung from hooks on the supporting pillars. Others say that a rod was inserted at the top of each curtain and the rod was suspended from the hooks on the pillars. This would allow the Parochet and Masach to hang evenly without sagging.

## Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 8 p'sukim - 27:1-8

[S> 27:1 (8)] The Mizbei'ach (Altar) is to be made of wood, plated with copper. It is a square with raised corners. All vessels and utensils for this Altar were to be made of copper, as are the rings for the carrying rods. This Altar was outside the Mishkan, in the courtyard of the Mikdash and was used for most of the sacrifices. (Unlike the internal, golden, incense Altar - not even mentioned in this sedra).

The Torah says that this Altar was 3 amot tall. R. Yehuda says: understand it as it is written. R. Yosi says just as the internal Altar is twice as tall as it is wide and long, so too is this one. It measures 5 amot on each side of the square, therefore, it is 10 amot tall. But the Torah says

three? That is, measured from its SOVEV.

The Aron, Shulchan, Menora are 1,2,3 in Parshat T'ruma. Then the structure of the Mishkan, then the External Altar. Internal Altar doesn't come until T'tzaveh - after the garments of the Kohanim. The Washing Basin and its Stand don't show up until the beginning of Ki Tisa. When the actual construction is described in Vayak-hel and P'kudei, the order is different.

## Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 27:9-19

[S> 27:9 (11)] Linen curtains were to be made, as were wooden columns, decorated (not completely covered) with silver. The courtyard curtains were to be hung from silver hooks on these columns. Each column was supported by a copper foundation socket. An entrance curtain was to be woven in the style of the Mishkan, the Parochet, and the Masach, to be hung across the eastern side of the courtyard. Copper spikes helped anchor the curtains that surrounded the Mishkan.

We have been without a Beit HaMikdash for so long that many of us have developed a "who needs it?" kind of attitude about a physical Mikdash. Without analyzing the following analogy too much, here's a thought. Even if one has been davening by heart for a long time, and knows the prayers well, there is still many benefits to his getting a beautiful Siddur to use. It gives him a focus, enhances his service of G-d, is physically attractive and spiritually inspiring.

The final three p'sukim of T'ruma are reread for the Maftir.

## Haftara - 20 p'sukim - Melachim Alef 5:26-6:13

The Haftara describes the preparation for the building of the first Beit HaMikdash, much like the Torah presents the preparation for the building of the Mishkan. One can notice differences between the building of the Mishkan and the building of the Beit HaMikdash, especially on the point of participation of the people. In the case of the Mishkan, there was a high level of enthusiasm and volunteerism that even had Moshe begging the people to stop bringing materials. In the case of the Beit HaMikdash, there were conscriptions of labor forces to do some of the work to supply material for the Beit HaMikdash.

The concluding pasuk of the Haftara goes so beautifully with one of the open p'sukim of the sedra. "And I will dwell (says G-d) in the midst of Bnei Yisrael and I will not abandon My people Israel." If one had any doubt as to the meaning of the sedra's V'SHACHANTI B'TOCHAM, and I will dwell among them - the haftara spells it out beyond any ambiguity.

It is also important to note what G-d told Shlomo HaMelech before the promise to dwell in the midst of Bnei Yisrael. Melachim Alef 6:11-12.

*And this was the word of G-d to Shlomo: This House that you are building, IF you will go in My ways and do what I command, and keep all of My mitzvot, THEN I will fulfill My word with you, as I told your father David.*

V'ASU LI MIKDASH is a command. V'SHACHANTI B'TOCHAM is a promise, but apparently it is a conditional promise. And the condition is NOT just to build a Mikdash. It is to be faithful to G-d and keep His Torah.

May we see the fulfillment of the mitzvot of the sedra and haftara, speedily in our time.

Concepts that are plainly presented in the text (such as the one from the end of the haftara) do not NEED any kind of confirmation from G'matriya. But the following is still a nice "find". These two p'sukim have the same numeric value:

G'MATRIYA  
MATCH

וְשִׁכְנֹתִי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא אֶעֱזֹב  
אֶת-עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל: מַלְכִים א' וַיֵּג  
אֲנִי ה' אֲלֵהֶיכֶם בְּזוֹקוֹתַי לָכֵן וְאֶת-מִשְׁפַּחְתִּי  
שְׁמַרְדּוֹ וַעֲשׂוּ אֹתָם: יחזקאל כ"ט

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

Lesson 322 (damages, part 10; Arson, part 2)

### Damages caused by Arson

We continue with the topic of arson.

If two persons, Reuven and Levi, simultaneously kindle a fire and the fire damages Shimon's property, both Reuven and Levi are jointly and severally liable. That is, Shimon may sue each separately for the full damages or they may be sued together. Shimon of course, cannot collect more than the actual amount of the damages. If either Reuven or Levi pays more than one half of the damages to Shimon, each can seek compensation from the other for the amount that he has paid in excess of his share.

If Reuven first kindles a fire and Levi provides more wood to feed the fire and the fire spreads and damages Shimon's property, then Levi alone is liable to Shimon. A flame without wood cannot continue to burn and would have burned itself out where it was kindled. Conversely, if Levi places wood on the ground and Reuven then kindles a fire next to the wood and the fire spreads to Shimon's property, only Reuven is liable. In these two instances the second person is liable even if the first instructs the second to supply the wood or the flame. If one performs an illegal act, he is liable and cannot blame the other person who instructs him to do the illegal act. After both Reuven and Levi have provided a flame and the wood, the fire would not have spread to Shimon's property. There was no wind to spread the fire. Then Yehuda fans the flame so that it does spread to Shimon's property and causes damage. Only Yehuda is liable; Reuven and Levi are free of liability. The result is the same if Reuven both kindles the flame and supplies the wood but the flame would not have spread to Shimon's

property; then Yehuda fans the flame as a result of which the fire spreads to Shimon's property; only Yehuda is liable and Reuven has no liability. If the flame would have spread to Shimon's property regardless of whether Yehuda fanned the flames, only Reuven is liable and Yehuda is not. When the judges in Beth Din remain doubtful as to who actually caused the fire to spread to Shimon's property, neither Reuven nor Yehuda is deemed liable, since each can plead that he did not cause the spreading of the fire.

The Torah makes special provisions for objects that are concealed before the fire burns them. That is, concealed objects not visible to the naked eye when looking at the item that is burning. Generally, Reuven is not liable for the loss caused by his fire to concealed objects. Reuven, not intending to damage Shimon's property, starts a fire on Shimon's property. The fire consumes a hay stack or the like and something is hidden therein. If the haystack had in it objects that are usually concealed therein such as harnesses or farmer's tools, then Reuven is liable for them. If the haystack had concealed therein objects that are not usually stored in a haystack, such as articles of clothing, glassware or silverware, then Reuven is not liable to pay for them. However, if Reuven intends to cause damage to Shimon's property, then Reuven is liable for all concealed objects, including those not usually concealed in such items. If Reuven starts a fire on his own property, it spreads to Shimon's property, and later it burns a haystack with its contents, Reuven is not liable for the concealed contents, even if they are of a type usually concealed in the haystack. Reuven must pay the amount of hay that would have filled the space where the objects were concealed. Assume that Reuven lends Shimon an area in which to place Shimon's haystack. Shimon makes the haystack and conceals objects in it. Reuven kindles a fire on his own property that burns Shimon's haystack. Reuven is liable only for the haystack and not for the concealed objects therein. However, if Reuven kindles the fire on Shimon's property or on the haystack belonging to Shimon, he must pay for the hidden objects. Reuven kindles a fire on Shimon's property, the fire spreads and destroys a haystack and also burns a goat tied to the haystack or close to it. Reuven is liable for all the damages since it is customary to tie goats to, or close to a haystack. However, if the goat is not tied to the haystack but is near it and was burned, Reuven is not liable.

Assume that wheat is more expensive than barley. Reuven lends Shimon a place to stack wheat and Shimon stacks barley; or he lends him a place in which to stack barley and Shimon stacks wheat; or Shimon stacks wheat and covers it with barley; or stacks barley and covers it with wheat. Reuven then kindles a fire on his own property that then burns the stack. He is only liable to pay for barley in all these cases.

Reuven sets fire to Shimon's building. He must pay for everything that is normally stored in such buildings. This would not include horses or other animals, and the like that people do not ordinarily keep in buildings. All the foregoing situations, if Shimon or Reuven can produce witnesses who can testify what Shimon kept in his house or haystack, Beth Din will rely on their testimony, and Reuven, when liable, must pay damages for those things. Lacking witnesses, Shimon, while holding a sacred object, must take an oath to what he claims was in the house or haystack and is to be paid that amount. Shimon is believed only to the extent that it is considered likely that he would own such objects or would have them in his possession as a bailee. There is an opinion that if Reuven pleads that he knows what was in Shimon's house, and if Reuven takes an oath

to the effect, he will have to pay damages only for what he admits was in the house.

Levi sees the fire that Reuven has kindled on his own property approaching Shimon's grain stack. In trying to be helpful to Shimon, Levi covers the grain stack, which in spite of his efforts, burns. Reuven is not liable for the haystack since it is now a concealed object hidden by the cover. Levi is not liable since he is not the direct cause of the damage to Shimon. There is an opinion that Levi is liable to the judgments of Heaven. If it was Levi's intent to spare Reuven liability for the concealed objects, Levi while not being liable to Shimon in Beth Din, is liable to the judgments of Heaven.

Assume that a fire kindled by Reuven traps Shimon so that he cannot escape the flames and Shimon dies. Reuven is guilty of murder. If Reuven places a burning coal on Shimon's chest and Shimon could have gotten rid of the coal, but fails to do so and Shimon dies, Reuven is not guilty of murder. Assume that the fire kindled by Reuven burns Shimon, who is injured thereby. Reuven is liable for the injury suffered by Shimon and also for his loss of earnings while he is recovering, his medical expenses, his pain and humiliation. There is an opinion that Reuven does not have to pay for the humiliation suffered by Shimon. All this applies if the flame when kindled was such that it could reach Shimon and would be so great a flame that Shimon would not be able to escape it. If, however, the flame was not of such a nature, for example, it was a small flame or there was a fence that should have prevented the fire from spreading but which coincidentally fell and no longer afforded protection, then Reuven is not liable.

*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@gefenpublishing.com](mailto:orders@gefenpublishing.com) and via website: [www.israelbooks.com](http://www.israelbooks.com) and at local Judaica bookstores. Questions to [quint@inter.net.il](mailto: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

## Gehinom on Shabbat

A number of Midrashim indicate that the departed sentenced to Gehinom enjoy a kind of reprieve on Shabbat. This is not brought as a mere curiosity, but on the contrary comes to explain or motivate a number of halakhot.

For example, one of the reasons given for smelling spices as Shabbat leaves is that then the fires of Gehinom are rekindled and the stench ascends to our world; the pleasant smell of the spices helps dispel the odor (Rashi, cited in Machzor Vitry).

In order to understand the concept of rest from torment on Shabbat, we have to understand the concept of the fires of Gehinom. The fires of the abyss suffered by transgressors are not meant to make them suffer per se, but rather to provide atonement for their transgressions. Our tradition states that the presence of the wicked in Gehinom is usually for a limited time only, less than a year.

Furthermore, we find in many places that these fires are in fact

kindled by a person's own sins, not by any vindictive force. Our Sages relate that the waters of the flood in the time of No'ach were boiling hot, to punish people for the sins they carried out in the boiling heat of passion (Sanhedrin 108b). And according to one opinion in the Gemara, the fires of Gehinom were kindled only on Shabbat eve, which was the time of the first sin (Pesachim 54a).

Our world is a world of significant moral ambiguity. Even a person who wants to do the right thing can often be confused into wrongdoing; furthermore, our base impulses are always tempting us into transgression. Very often the fog of uncertainty serves to assuage feelings of guilt. But when a person perceives his acts from the clear perspective of the World of Truth, he feels an intense burning remorse for all his misdeeds. This sense of shame tortures the person for a period of time until his atonement is complete.

But Shabbat is a day when the world is perfected. Since the torments of Gehinom are only transient, when the world is perfected we will be relieved of these; so it is only appropriate that on Shabbat there is rest from them. Furthermore, Shabbat is a day when our bodily desires are elevated, so we needn't be ashamed of them. Finally, Shabbat is a day of limited engagement with the world, including moral engagement. On Shabbat we don't occupy ourselves with large, world-transforming undertakings which force us into painful moral dilemmas.

However, as we confront hard moral choices and troubling moral ambiguity at the start of the new week, we become acutely aware deep inside of us of the presence of rottenness in the world, and even in ourselves. This can be likened to the stench of the fires of Gehinom. We console ourselves with beautiful smells, which are the enjoyment of the soul (Berakhot 43b). We remember the many brave and righteous acts which are also performed, and the immense human capacity for good, which perfumes the world.

*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" [4]

The test that Eliezer used for choosing a wife for Yitschak, as well as the successful conclusion have brought in their wake two important religious questions to the commentators of all the generations, questions that challenge basic tenets of Judaism.

Was Eliezer's test an example of divination, the discovering of omens from certain events, nichush, such as is forbidden by the Torah; "You shall not indulge in divination and you shall not believe in lucky times" (Vayikra 19:26)? The Gemara sees an omen which is after the manner or form used by Eliezer or by Yonatan, son of Shaul HaMelech (Samuel Alef 14:9-10) as examples of such divination and therefore forbidden (Chulin 95b). However, Soforno comments that Chazal were referring to cases where the person uses the same formula but does not include a prayer to Hashem as Eliezer and Yonatan each did.

Rabbi S.R. Hirsch writes that the forbidden Nichush, as explained by the Ran, is making a decision based on beliefs or actions that have no logical or rational connection with the matter concerned; such as undertaking something because a black cat met you, whereas Eliezer had used a sign that would show that the girl was fit to be a wife for Yitschak. "Rather than seeing his test as magic or as arbitrary, we should see it as something to simply determine a character reference about her spiritual and inner qualities, which in the circumstances was quite rational and far from divination" (Abarbanel).

Even if we realize that Eliezer's test was not an act of divination, fortune telling or of a search for an omen, there still is the major spiritual issue of the conflict between the principle of Free Will and the Divine decree that exists in all areas of life: business, health, social, but especially in choosing a mate, finding one's basheret.

At the climax of the whole story, Lot and Betuel answer Eliezer, that they can neither object nor agree to allowing Rivka to go be Yitschak's wife, since his repetition of the test had clearly shown that this was from Hashem. "A woman is assigned to a man. We see from the answer of Lavan and Betuel that Divine decree determines marriage, this is repeated in the Neviim where the parents' doubts about the suitability of Samson's shidduch is dismissed by the verse 'and they did not know that it was from G-d' (Shoftim 14:4) and also in Ketuvim, 'a house and wealth are an inheritance from fathers but an intelligent wife is from Hashem' (Mishlei 19:14)" (Moed Katan, 18b). Even more striking is the teaching that 40 days before the child is formed in the womb, a bat kol announces this one is destined for such and such and this one will marry so and so ((Sotah, 2a). The mystics teach that although G-d created Man and Woman together, their souls were split to be re-joined later in marriage, each person to their basheret. So of what avail was his threat that if they did not agree he would have to turn either to the right and the daughters of Ishmael who lived to the right - south of Eretz Yisrael, or to the left to the daughters of Lot who lived to the left-north? If the wife was the basheret, of what significance were Avraham's measures, like the oath that he made Eliezer swear not to take a wife from Canaan or for that matter his fears of such a marriage? If the results were predestined, what difference did Eliezer's whole careful and well constructed test make?

On the other hand, we have the numerous teachings that in shidduchim like in all else, it is Free Will and the strivings of humans that guide our decisions. "A man should endeavor and strive his utmost to marry the daughter of spiritually fine and good people; Moshe married a daughter of Yitro, Kohen Midian and his son was Yonatan who made the idol (Shoftim 14:4), whereas Aharon married the daughter of Aminadav and his son was Pinchas" (Bava Kama 109b). "A person should always sell everything that he possess in order to marry the daughter of a Torah scholar, failing that a daughter of a gadol hador, failing that the daughter of a communal leader or a gabbai tzedaka, failing that the daughter of a teacher of small children" (Pesachim 49b). "Rabbi Meir said: One who marries a dissolute woman transgresses: You shall not seek revenge, you shall not hate your fellow, you shall love your fellow, and your brother shall live with you, and he abrogates the mitzva of being fruitful and multiplying" (Sota 5).

Our sources actually cover a wide spectrum of opinions regarding this problem of Free Will and Divine decree, ranging from a belief in unlimited Free Will to very limited, and the same disparity exists in regard to the issue of basheret. The

many examples of early betrothals on the basis of parental choice in important Torah families are evidence of basheret while the following words of the Rambam are the banner of the spokesmen of Free Will. "We can not accept at face value the idea that marriage is the result of Divine decree, since a marriage to a kosher woman through chupa and kiddushin is for the mitzva of P'RU URVU and Hashem would not decree against the fulfillment of a mitzva. On the other hand, if there is any issur in the marriage then there is an AVEIRA and Hashem would not decree AVEIROT. Rather all the actions of Mankind are given to them and dependent on their Free Will, therefore it is written everything is in the hands of heaven except the fear of heaven" (Introduction to Pirkei Avot). "The bat kol that announces the destiny of each partner is not a decree but rather merely an announcement. The decision whether to marry or not, and also the decision as to which partner are given to men; and the bat kol is an announcement as to what the decision will be" (Shibolei Haleket).

"We know that Leah wept and prayed that she should not marry Eisav but how could she expect to revoke the decree that he, the oldest son was destined to marry her, the oldest daughter? The ARI taught that the basheret, two souls merging, is dependent on them each living up to their spiritual obligations and fulfilling their proper roles. Since she knew that Eisav was far from living according to his obligations, she correctly felt that through her prayers and tears she could avert the decree of the basheret" (Shem Mi Shmuel).

*This is the 118th installment in Dr. Tamari's series*

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[1] From the virtual desk of the OU **VEBBE REBBE**

*The Orthodox Union – via its website – fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and the Israel Center. The following is a Q&A from Eretz Hemdah...*



What does one do if he uncovers a mistake in a ketuba as it is read under the chupah?

Different situations may have different appropriate responses. However, I will discuss a case in which I was involved. Hopefully, some general lessons can be learned from it.

I was at a wedding where the mesader kiddushin was a respected scholar, and the families and guests were also relatively knowledgeable. As the ketuba was read under the chupah, I believed I had heard that the date was of the previous year. When no one reacted, I reasoned that I might have heard wrong; it was also possible that the person reading the ketuba might have read it wrong. The important thing is what is written, not read. What was I to do? Let us consider a little background.

Documents that are predated are invalid (Shvi'it 10:5). This is because documents may be used to seize real estate from one who bought it from the obligated person, but only if they bought it after the obligation took place. One could misuse a pre-dated document to seize real estate from people who actually bought it before the obligation. A pre-dated ketuba cannot serve as a ketuba (Tashbetz (Bar Tzadok) 457), at least until it is fixed. A couple is not allowed to live together without a valid ketuba (Shulchan Aruch, Even Ha'ezer 66:1). Thus, it had to be determined whether the ketuba was in fact dated a year early. On the other hand, stopping the chupah would have been embarrassing and disconcerting to the mesader kiddushin and the families. (It was highly unlikely that an inconspicuous quick fix could have been made.) Could the inquiry wait?

The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) rules that a couple should not have yichud (be together in a secluded place) without a valid ketuba; Ashkenazi couples have yichud right after the chupah. However, the Rama (whose rulings Ashkenazim normally accept) seems to accept the opinion that yichud alone is permitted. Secondly, the Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) says that a valid ketuba document is not absolutely necessary if there are witnesses that the chatan obligated himself in the terms of a ketuba with a KINYAN SUDAR; this is regularly done at a wedding. Although the Rama (ad loc.) argues, he agrees that one can rely upon those witnesses in a case of need until there is an opportunity to write a proper ketuba.

Therefore, I decided that it was halachically possible to wait until after the chupah crowd dispersed and I could inquire discretely. I felt that there was a serious issue of KAVOD HABERI'OT (human dignity), as people are under the impression that distinguished rabbis should not be making mistakes of this sort. (In fact, everyone is human, and high intelligence does not preclude careless mistakes). Unlike corrections during Torah reading, which are expected, an invalid ketuba uncovered under the chupah by a mere guest is a good story (i.e., lashon hara). In fact, the ketuba was invalid. Despite my efforts to avoid it, several people (but a small minority) found out about the mistake. This included the chatan and kallah, who were (unnecessarily, in my view) interrupted in the yichud room by a young "watchman."

Days after the wedding, I had second thoughts on my halachic reasoning. Some (including in this wedding) have the minhag to sign the ketuba only under the chupah after it is read. Thus, I could have prevented the witnesses from unknowingly signing a partially fallacious document (i.e. "do not bear false testimony"). MaybeI should not have let them sin unknowingly?

I thought of four reasons that might justify my silence. As each one could be the topic of a full article, I will just hint at one. The Rambam and Rosh argue about a case where one finds a friend unknowingly wearing sha'atnez in public. Rambam (accepted by the Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 304:2) says to pull it off him. The Rosh (accepted by the Rama, ad loc.) says that since the sin is unintentional and removing the cloak would be embarrassing, one waits until the friend is in a private place to tell him.

*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](http://www.ou.org) or [www.erezhemdah.org](http://www.erezhemdah.org). And/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by email weekly, by sending an email to [info@erezhemdah.org](mailto: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**

We must will G-d's "Do!"

**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)

Why would God wish to confine Himself in a Mikdash? Is it so that we should know where to find Him when we seek atonement or wish to express our joy in His wonders? Or perhaps it is to teach us something about how we should behave in our Mikdash, our Home, the Land of Israel.

I once heard someone say, "That guy has rubber elbows." When I asked what that meant I was told, "He always makes room for others and makes sure to include everyone in his life."

Could it be that God condenses Himself in the Mikdash to show us the importance of rubber elbows? Chazal tell us that despite the throngs that crowded into the Mikdash, there was always room for everyone to bow down to the ground. Rubber elbows seemed to have been the rule, not the exception.

That is why the Mikdash had to be built in Israel, in Jerusalem. To teach us that just as God makes it possible for us to stand next to Him in the Mikdash, so too must we make room for everyone in Israel. We can't push anyone away or tell him that he's "not our kind of people." After all, God is Unique and still makes room for us. We, whose ancestors left Egypt together, shouldn't we make room for every Jew living in Israel and the Galut?

**Yaacov Peterseil, 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**

R' Levi-Yitzchak of Berdichev would say:

"Lord of the Universe! Why don't You act with Your children the way the simplest Jew acts? I once saw a Jew, the simplest of the simple, who accidentally dropped his tefillin on the ground. He immediately picked them up and kissed them. Yet we, Your nation, are Your tefillin (see Gemara B'rachot 6). You threw us down, and for close to two thousand years we have been rolling about in the lowliness of exile. The time has come, our Father in Heaven, to raise us up from the ground and to send us the Mashiach."

*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 - T'RUMA**

1) There were many items needed for the functioning of the Mishkan such as flour for the showbread and wood for the altar which were not listed amongst the donations in this Parsha since they were not needed for the construction of the Mishkan building, itself. Why, then, does the Torah list oil for light and spices for the anointing oil and incense (see 25:6)? items unrelated to the building's construction?

2) Why does the Torah say V'ASU (and you should make), in plural, regarding the making of the Aron, while for every other vessel it states V'ASITA, in singular? (See 25:10)

3) Why does the Torah require the poles of the Aron to remain connected to the Aron at all times? (See 25:15)

## **THESE ARE THE ANSWERS**

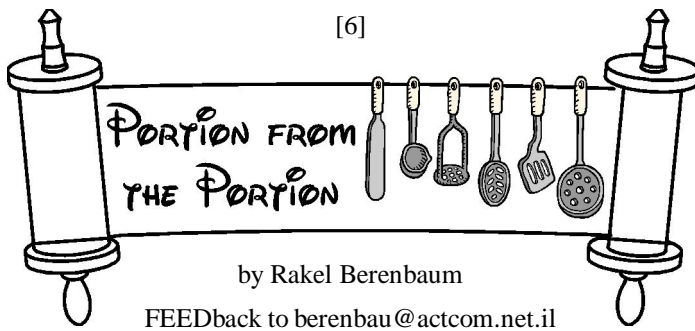
Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) The Da'at Z'kainim teaches that each of these seemingly misplaced items did relate to the building, itself. All of the newly constructed vessels of the Mishkan had to be consecrated with the anointing oil. Incense and oil for light were needed since it was the way of kings to create beautiful smells and have significant light in their palaces before entering to dwell in them. The Jews, therefore, saw to it that these were in place before the King of Kings' presence would enter the Mishkan.

2) The Alshich answers that the Aron represents Torah and the plural language comes to teach us that Torah is something which is not given to any individual group in the Jewish people. Any Jew who wants to become great in Torah can do so.

3) The Chofetz Chayim explains that the Aron represents those who learn Torah and the poles used to carry the Aron symbolize those who support Torah. Supporters of Torah should not think that they fulfill their requirement of Torah study simply through supporting Torah. They, too, must study Torah with Torah scholars as symbolized by the requirement that the poles remain connected to the Aron at all times.

*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](mailto:ppp@israelcenter.co.il)*



## The Ark and Its Poles

The ARON (ark) seems to be one of the most important pieces in the MISHKAN. It is the first article of "furniture" to be described, and that by 13 verses, the most amount of verses dedicated to one specific object. Also, while G-d delivered all the other commands to form objects of the MISHKAN in second person singular " (V'ASITA), the command to form the ark was related in third person plural V'ASU.

The LUCHOT (tablets of the law) are kept in the ARON, therefore it represents Torah. The Midrash tells us that G-d wanted all the Jews to participate in the making of the ARON, so they could merit the Torah. The Ramban explains that they could help by donating gold specifically for the ARON, by helping Betzalel a little in the construction, or just by directing their minds to the project.

Another unique aspect about the ARON has to do with the laws related to handling it (25:13-15). The ark had two carrying poles made out of accacia wood, overlaid with gold. The poles were placed in rings which were on the side of the ARON. Three other utensils from the MISHKAN had carrying poles - the SHULCHAN (Table), and the two altars. What was different about the ARON was that there was a special command not to remove the poles from their rings. The carrying poles had to remain attached to the ARON, even when it was at rest. This command is even included in the list of 613 Divine precepts ,TARYAG MITZVOT,. What can we learn from this mitzva?

When the ARON is moved from place to place it must be carried by people on their shoulders (Bamidbar 7:9) - it cannot be carried by an animal or a wagon. According to Sefer HaChinuch, since we might have to travel with the ARON in a hurry, and in the rush of the moment we might forget to check whether the poles were properly secured, the ARON might slip from our hold. If the poles are always secured in their place such a thing could never happen. This command is a way of giving reverence and respect to the ARON and its contents.

Chizkuni says a similar idea. G-d wanted to minimize the handling of the ARON because of its holiness. If the poles were always in place, people wouldn't have to touch the ARON to put them in and out. He also suggests that from the verses we learn that the poles fitted very tightly into the rings. This way the ark couldn't slip out, no matter how difficult the way (e.g. going up a steep hill). He also teaches us a moral lesson in relation to the poles. The poles of the ark didn't need to be taken out of the rings because they weren't in anyone's way. The ark was stationed in the holy of holies and no one went there except the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur. The Altars and Table were in places where there was a lot of action and people moving around. the poles would have been in the way, Therefore they could be removed when they weren't needed. We can learn from

here to be careful not to leave our things in a place where they might be bothering other people such as our own family members, our neighbors or our colleagues.

R' Shimshon Raphael Hirsch sees in this command an understanding of Jewish history. The ARON, and the Torah inside it, was always ready to travel since the carrying poles were always attached. This symbolizes the fact that the Torah is not restricted to the particular country where the Mikdash is situated. Whereas the Table and the Altars are tied to the place of the Sanctuary, the ARON has independence of place. The Torah has always accompanied the Jewish people to every exile and has kept us going throughout.

## Golden Skewers (poles)

900g (2 lbs) veal or chicken cut in 4cm (1½") cubes

### Marinade:

- 1 cup soy sauce
- ½ cup water
- 3 Tbsp. dry wine
- 3 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. grated onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp. pepper sauce (pepper & vinegar)
- ¼ tsp. dry mustard

### Optionals:

- onions
- mushrooms
- water chestnuts
- thinly sliced potatoes

Combine marinade ingredients. Add meat and marinate 5-6 hours in the refrigerator.

Brush with marinade. Broil 10-15 minutes in oven. Turn frequently and brush with marinade.

The skewers should be covered and kept in a warm (not hot) oven before serving so they won't dry out.

This grilled dish is meant to represent the Golden Ark with its golden carrying poles represented by the skewers themselves. Make these skewers using two sticks for each skewer (or serve 2 skewers per person). The ark was made out of acacia wood, with a layer of gold on the inside and on the outside. Alternate meat with choices of vegetables on the skewers to represent this aspect of the ark - the wood and gold.

## [7] Torah from Nature • TACHASH

R' Aryeh Kaplan's first definition of TACHASH, which was used in the uppermost covering of the Mishkan, is blue processed skins. (See the Living Torah for his sources.) others (he says) say it is 'black leather', i.e. leather worked to come out dark and waterproof. Other sources identify it as a species of

animal... ermine, of the weasel family, or a member of the badger family. Or a colorful one-horned animal known as a keresh. Some say that this is a species of wild ram, possibly an antelope, okape or giraffe. Some see the one-horned creature as the narwhal which has its left tooth developed into a single long horn-like appendage... others, the sea cow or dugong, an aquatic mammal... a type of seal...

## [8] Consider This...

I'm not talking about people who ALWAYS wait for the green before they cross the street. The following comments are for those who will, on occasion, look both ways and carefully cross on the red when they feel it's safe to do so.

When waiting to cross at an inter- section, it is more than a ticket that you risk, if you cross on red; you possibly endanger yourself and others.

"I'm very careful", you say. "I only cross when it is obvious that I can make it across with plenty of room to spare. In fact, any car coming is far enough away, that the driver doesn't even get nervous, honk, or slow down - that's how safe it is to cross."

Again, I say, I'm not discussing the fact that it is against the law to cross on red. Maybe I should. But I'm not.

What I want to share with you is something that actually happened. Crossing Keren HaYesod has become a major challenge and time-consumer. I was waiting at the corner to cross from the Center's side towards the Dan Panorama. Not the two-way fast bus lanes, just the first one-way road. I looked to the left and saw that the only approaching car was far enough away for me to cross without problem.

So I did. And so did a lady standing at the same corner, a few seconds later. During those few seconds, the car came much closer and the lady was almost hit. She mumbled under her breath that she wasn't paying attention, she just crossed because I did. Careless of her, for sure. But she played follow the leader, and that makes it my responsibility too. It's not enough to keep yourself safe - you have to think of others. —Phil

## [10] Divrei Menachem

Parshat T'ruma opens with the request to Bnei Yisrael that anyone who so desires could contribute voluntarily towards the furnishing of the Mishkan. Coming so soon after the people committed themselves to "do and listen" to every- thing that Hashem commanded them, it was certainly a timely step towards the actualization of that feeling of total acquiescence to G-d's will.

The Torah describes the process by which the people made their donations as, "taking for Me a portion of... gold, silver and copper..." (Sh'mot 25:1-2). The rabbis explain that the expression "to take," rather than "to give," indicates homiletically that when contributing to holy causes, a Jew really takes for himself spiritual satisfaction (and the accompanying reward).

The rabbis also taught that a person is measured by what he does with his wealth. What better way to use one's resources than for the glory of Hashem? And for Chassidim, the contribution to the Mishkan of silver and gold was yet another example of how material objects can be elevated to new heights.

For the Baal HaTanya, such giving of one's material resources brings the individual and Hashem closer to each other. For giving emulates Hashem's characteristic of "Chessed". And insofar as Chessed is the "right hand of G-d" (Tikunei Zohar, Introd. 17a), so does the human attribute of generosity constitute an abode for this Divine quality of Kindness. May we be blessed to contribute to that end.

**Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff**

## Towards Better Davening and Torah Reading

### Correction/clarification/comment

Let's look at the "heart" words of the SH'MA again. One of them was SH'VA-classified incorrectly. Don't bother looking at past columns; here's the story. And we'll try to look at the forest too, not just the trees and the fine detail of bark and leaf.

In the first passage of SH'MA, we are commanded to love G-d with all our heart.

The command is in second person singular - B'CHOL L'VA-V'CHA (SH'VA NA under the VET). Still in the first passage, we are told that the words of Torah should be on our hearts. Because the word is at the end of a pasuk, the SH'VA under the VET changes to a SEGOL. AL L'VA-VE-CHA.

Beginning of the second passage, we are commanded to love G-d and to serve Him with all our hearts. This time the command is in second person plural - B'CHOL L'VAV-CHEM. The SH'VA under the VET is NACH. The first VET has a PATACH under it, which is a short vowel that "prefers" to share its syllable with the followed letter that has a SH'VA NACH. Here the first syllable is L'VAV. In contrast to the first passage's L'VA, with a KAMATZ (long vowel) under the VET, followed by V'CHA. The word L'VA-V'CHEM is found three more times in the SH'MA, warning against our hearts straying, commanding us to place G-d's words on our hearts (or as we might say in English, "to take to heart"), and in the third passage, commanding us not to follow the negative temptations of our hearts (and eyes). Our commitment to G-d and His Torah is very much a matter of the heart.

### On another matter...

TET-BET-AYIN-TAV, meaning RING, appears 38 times in Sh'mot (concerning the Mishkan or Kohen Gadol's garments. The only other place in Tanach that has a lot of rings is Megilat Esther (6 times). (Only two other occurrences - B'reishit and Bamidbar.) In singular, the word is TABA-'AT. In plural (most common) it is TABA-OT in its free-standing form - rings, and TA-B'OT (SH'VA under the BET rather than KAMATZ) in its S'michut form: rings of gold, rings of the Aron, rings of copper...

## 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.

## "Order and Method" in the Mikdash - A Story

Sefer in hand, Meir HaKohen was relaxing at home when the telephone rang. His wife Yehudit picked up the receiver, listened for a minute. Putting her hand over the mouth-piece, she whispered, "It's the Rosh Mishmeret". Meir was surprised. Why would he call me now? Our Mishmeret served in the Mikdash just last month! (Yehudit and Meir knew very well that the Kehuna was originally divided into sixteen Mishmarot, 'companies'; eight were of the descendants of Eleazar and eight of Itamar, sons of Aaron. Hundreds of years later, as noted in Divrei Hayamim Alef 24:3, David divided each of the 'companies' of Eleazar into two, thereby raising the total to 24. Every week another Mishmeret served in the Mikdash under the supervision of its Rosh Mishmeret.) Over the years, Meir, a senior Kohein with decades of service in the Mikdash, put his obvious administrative abilities at the disposal of the Mishmeret. An expert in the details of Mikdash procedure, Meir was a frequent visitor to the Rosh Mishmeret's austere office on Har HaBayit where they discussed the intricacies of the Avoda. Chuckling, Meir picked up the telephone only to hear, "Meir, we have a real emergency! I just got a call from R. Chanina (the Segan (deputy) Kohein Gadol). You know that the Kohanim perform the Avoda much more efficiently since the Sanhedrin's new regulations went into effect last year. By instituting strict rules governing which Korbanot have precedence over others (Zevachim 10), there are many fewer mistakes and the Ba'alei Korban (the people bringing the Korbanot) do not have to wait as long. You know that your contribution was essential in helping our own Kohanim adapt!" Of course, Meir knew. After initial hesitation, once the Kohanim of the Mishmeret realized the advantages of the new system, they willingly implemented it. But why was the Rosh Mishmeret calling him? He did not have long to wait. "Meir, I'll be blunt. Mishmeret Bilga is serving this week in the Mikdash and they're messing everything up! We need help!"

Mishmeret Bilga was the "problem-child" of all the Mishmarot. Like many Kohanim, Meir wished that Mishmeret Bilga could be abolished altogether, but he knew that the organization of the priesthood into 24 Mishmarot was sacrosanct and therefore immutable. According to Divrei Hayamim Alef 24:14, Bilga was the 15th of the 24 listed Mishmarot. Ergo, problematic Bilga would remain. Shaking his head, Meir recalled with indignation that the apostate High Priest Menelaus who so eagerly served Antiochus IV - the polluter of the Mikdash - also stemmed from Bilga. Though the Greek version of II Maccabees (4:23) referred to him as a Benjaminite, not even of the seed of Aaron, none of the numerous allegations made in the literature against Menelaus ever implied that he was not of Kohanic stock. And the more accurate Latin translation of II Maccabees specifically cited Menelaus and his equally culpable family as being members of Beit Bilga. After Yehuda HaMaccabi liberated Jerusalem and restored the Avoda, Beit Bilga was in disgrace for a long time. However, all Kohanim knew that even today there were still "issues" with Beit Bilga. They did not report to the Mikdash on time and, contrary to the enthusiasm and agility displayed by the Kohanim of the other Mishmarot, the Kohanim of Bilga were downright sluggish when they performed the Avoda (Sukka 56b). Complaints were legion. Meir was roused from his reverie by the sharp voice of the Rosh Mishmeret. "Meir, the Segan is beside himself. He asked me if I had anyone capable of coming down here and straightening things out. He even sent Bilga's Rosh Mishmeret home on 'sick-leave'." Meir, seeing where this conversation was

leading, started to protest, but the Rosh Mishmeret cut him off. "Meir, I took the liberty of making an appointment for you with the Segan. You wouldn't want to disappoint him, would you? Besides, the Kohein Gadol himself has taken a personal interest in this matter! The Mikdash NEEDS you!"

The next morning, Meir found himself in the Beit HaMokeid (Chamber of the hearth) north of the Azara addressing the assembled Kohanim of Beit Bilga. With the Segan standing at his right, Meir did not beat around the bush. The Segan had authorized him to implement the new regulations and he intended to do so. Gimlet eyes flashing, Meir told them in no uncertain terms that the present "confusion-engendering situation" would not be tolerated any longer and that he personally would punish any malingering or stonewalling. The Kohein Gadol was taking a personal interest. "Are there any questions?" There were none, but Meir thought he detected a few smiles. Meir began, "Whatever is offered more frequently than another precedes that other. The Tamid (the daily burnt offering) precedes the Musafim, additional sacrifices offered on Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, Shalosh Regalim, Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. If Shabbat falls on Rosh Chodesh, the Musafim of Shabbat are offered before the Musafim of Rosh Chodesh which in turn precede the special Musafim of Rosh HaShana." (Note the 10th Perek of Zevachim.) So far so good. Meir continued, "What is more holy than that other precedes that other. The blood of a Chatat (a sin offering) is applied to the Mizbei'ach before that of an Olah because it effects atonement for a sin, which, if performed purposely, would entail the punishment of Kareit. The Olah precedes the Asham (the guilt-offering)." The "Bilga-ites" nodded. Even they knew that. Seizing the initiative Meir continued. "Therefore to prevent mix-ups and potential violations of Halacha, we are going to implement the Sanhedrin's new rulings. From now on, all private Chataot will be offered first, then the Olot, followed by the Ashamot and the Shelamim. Korbanot will no longer be offered haphazardly. The Avoda will be organized. And it will make your lives a lot easier too!" Meir detected a couple more smiles. "Every morning, when we open the Azara gates, we'll divide the Ba'alei HaKorban into groups depending on what kind of Korban they are bringing. Everything will be much more efficient. We'll post a schedule noting when each kind of Korban is offered so people will know when to come. Why should the Ba'alei Korban wait needlessly in the sun?" Even the Bilga-ites were beginning to understand. As Meir continued talking, he noticed that he had the attention of most of Kohanei Bilga. He explained that even though Sh'chita (slaughtering the sacrificial animal) was not considered an Avoda and was valid when carried out by a non-Kohein, the Shocheit (slaughterer) had to have Kavana "proper intent" (Menachot 110a). If he did not have Kavana, he disqualified the Korban. The officiating Kohein also had to concentrate on the nature of the Korban and the identity of the Ba'al Hakorban. The officiating Kohein also had to be mindful of the regulations that governed each sacrifice. Newly animated, for the first time the Kohanim started asking serious questions, actually participating. Meir, with his encyclopedic knowledge, had no difficulty answering them. He had "connected" with Mishmeret Beit Bilga!

<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

Across the top of the ParshaPix are sacks of gold (Au is the symbol for the element gold - it is based on the Latin name for gold, Aurum), silver (similarly, silver's symbol comes from its Latin name Argentum), and copper (Cuprum), that were donated to the building of the Mishkan and its accouterments.

The two things in the upper-right of the ParshaPix are cabbages. In Hebrew - KRUV, as in the K'RUVIM on the KAPORET of the ARON.

Many of the other items in this ParshaPix represent the materials that were collected, and mentioned, in the beginning of the sedra.

The gemstone represents the stones for the CHOSHEN and the shoulder straps of the EIFOD.

The gold rings stand for the rings through which were inserted the carrying poles of some of the furnishings of the Mishkan. (And also, the rings that connected adjacent wallboards - even though those rings were rectangular rather than round.)

The spools of thread represent the different colored wool and linen that were used to weave the coverings in the Mishkan. Also, to sew together the panels of the Mishkan and the Ohel.

Under the cabbages is a bouquet of flowers, in Hebrew - ZEIR. That is the term used in the Torah for the decorative border of gold that was made for the ARON and SHULCHAN (at least).

The olive oil represents the olive oil, which had several purposes in the service of the Mikdash. Remember that not only was olive oil used in the day-to-day service of the Mikdash, it was also used to consecrate each vessel.

Next to the olives is a tree and a log, standing for the ATZEI SHITIM, the acacia wood used extensively in the construction of the Mishkan.

Below the olive oil are representations of the three decorations of the Menorah. The trophy cup is called a GAVI'A. The button is KAFTOR and the flower is the PERACH. The actual Menora shapes did not necessarily resemble these, but the names do.

Then there is a sewing machine to facilitate various sewing jobs that were needed in the Mishkan.

To the right of the sewing machine is a column or pillar, of which there were many in the Mishkan - to support the PAROCHET, the covering of the entrance of the Mishkan, the curtains of the courtyard, and the entrance to the courtyard. Many AMUDIM.

To the column's right and under the bouquet is a frame, MISGERET in Hebrew. The word is used in the description of the SHULCHAN.

In the frame is a mortarboard, graduation cap. It stands for the wisdom that G-d endowed Shlomo with (mentioned in the beginning of the haftara). This does not mean to say that graduation is a guarantee of wisdom. It's just a symbol for ParshaPix.

Bottom row, right to left: Matza with a face is LECHEM HAPANIM, which reminds us that those special loaves were halachic matza - no Chametz.

Notebook is MACHBERET, a term used in the sedra.

The computer screen is called a MASACH in Hebrew. The Biblical use of the word applied to the curtains that covered the entrance to the Mishkan and to the courtyard of the Mishkan.

Which brings us to the lower-left and the flag of Lebanon, reminding us of the Cedars of Lebanon mentioned in the Haftara.

## TTRIDDLES

are Torah Tidbits-style riddles on Parshat HaShavua (sometimes on the calendar). They are found in the hard-copy of TT scattered throughout, usually at the bottom of different columns. In the electronic versions of TT, they are found all together at the end of the ParshaPix-TTriddles section. The best solution set submitted each week (there isn't always a best) wins a double prize a CD from Noam Productions and/or a gift (game, puzzle, book, etc.) from Big Deal

### Last issue's (MISHPATIM) TTriddles:

[1] This one can be taken literally

In Mishpatim, among the laws of damages and injuries, the Torah says NEFESH TACHAT NEFESH, a life for a life, eye for an eye, etc. In addition to a life and an eye, the list includes tooth, arm, leg, burn, injury, bruise. In all cases, the statement is NOT to be taken literally. If someone causes another person to lose an arm, we are NOT to do anything to his arm. Etc. In all cases, we understand that what is given for each kind of injury is monetary compensation based on five different factors. So the word TACHAT is not to be taken literally. The one occurrence of TACHAT in Mishpatim that can be taken literally is SHOR TACHAT SHOR, an ox for an ox. If one's ox gores another's ox and kills it, and the offending ox was known to be wild and dangerous, then its owner compensates the dead ox's owner for his ox (and he keeps the carcass of the dead ox). This too can be monetary value rather than an actual ox, but the TTriddle point is that this time, the word TACHAT can be taken literally.

[2] Change your plans for the Seder BBA

Staying with the same phrases as [1], this TTriddle is a play on the last of the TACHAT list: CHABURA TACHAT CHABURA. CHABURA, in addition to being a type of injury, can also refer to the group that will bring and share Korban Pesach. BBA means BIMHEIRA B'YAMEINU, AMEN, referring to the Geula and the building of the third Beit HaMikdash. At that time, changing one's Seder Pesach plans can be entitled: CHABURA TACHAT CHABURA.

[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

If you look up these breeds of sheep, you will find that they are types of Irish sheep. Referring to Sh'mot 21:37, we find that if a person steals SHOR O SEH, an ox or sheep... he pays 4 or 5 times its value (under certain circumstances). And, there it is. The Torah's generic name for Irish sheep - O'SEH.

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

AHARON and CHUR, uncle and nephew (CHUR was son of Aharon's sister Miriam), were Moshe's two "assistants" on the hilltop overlooking the first battle against Amalek (end of Parshat B'shalach). At the end of Mishpatim, they again team up. Moshe tells the elders who went back down to the foot of the mountain that Aharon and Chur would be with them and if any problems arose, they were to be consulted. MIRIAM was Chur's mother. She was identified as PU'AH, one of the courageous midwives who defied Par'o (beginning of Parshat Sh'mot). Rashi at the end of Mishpatim tells us that she was also known as EFRAT in Divrei HaYamim (according to the Gemara in Sota). The correct answer to this TTriddle is MIRIAM, PU'AH, EFRAT.

[5] There are two visual TTriddles from ParshaPix

The first is the easy one, the mortar and pestle with the Rx symbol for "A prescription for medicine or a medical appliance" or "A remedy, cure, or solution for a disorder or problem". Either way, it stands for V'RAPO Y'RAPEI, the words that teach us that humans have not only the Torah's permission, but the obligation to heal the sick and cure the injured.

[6] And the other one...

Let's first quote a regular TTriddles solver, H(S)M, who wrote:

The picture to the right of that appears to be cut in the electronic version so that it is not readable. It appears to be the bottom half of some Hebrew letters.

Well H(S)M is exactly correct. It is the bottom half of some Hebrew letters. But it was not accidentally cut off. Rather it was intentional. It is half, MACHATZIT, that is, of the word (in Rashi print - just for the fun of it) HASHEKEL, thereby representing the Maftir of Shabbat Parshat Sh'kalim. After cutting the word in half, what remained was rotated 90° to the right, just to make it a little less recognizable. Okay, that's why Rashi print was used too.

## NachKwestion of the Week

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

Generally, we prefer using questions for the NachKwestion of the Week that have multiple answers. It then becomes more than "you either know it or you don't". It becomes a nice challenge. Like the previous question of three different words in a row with the same root. Many people thought for a moment and came up with MELECHMALCHEI HA-M'LACHIM. Good. But how many more could they find? That makes it a real challenge. This NachKwestion was not like that, but it was too good a question to ignore. Those who get it, fine. But if you are reading these words, and don't know the answer yet, you should be amazed by the answer. It's neat. Cool. It's just nice. And if you like it, you now can enjoy asking other people to see if they know. We believe it is something nice to know. Enjoy sharing it with others.

Daily in P'sukei D'zimra, specifically in AZ YASHIR, we say the pasuk from Torah (Sh'mot 15:2):

עָזְרָא וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה וַיְהִי־לִי לְשׁוּעָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְזַמְרַת  
אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאַרְמְיָהוּ:

It is the first 6 words of this pasuk that is of interest to us at this moment.

Weekly, specifically in Havdala, we quote a pasuk from NAVI (Yeshayahu 12:2):

הִנֵּה אֵל יְשׁוּעָתִי אֲבָטֹחַ וְלֹא אֶפְוֹד כִּי עָזְרָא וְזַמְרַת  
יְהוָה הוּא וַיְהִי־לִי לְשׁוּעָה:

Here we call your attention to the last 7 words of the pasuk. Very similar to the 6-word phrase of the daily quote.

And here is a pasuk from Hallel, which we say monthly (okay, sometimes more often, but who's counting). T'hilim 118:14.

עָזְרָא וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה וַיְהִי־לִי לְשׁוּעָה:

Calling your attention to the full 6-word pasuk this time.

Several correct responses; drawing for CD-winner.

Then there is the Mazal Pic, the Zodiac TTriddle, the picture of the month in the Word of the Month box on page 2. Lately, the pictures have been TTriddle-like challenges. Not always, and not this time. Representing DAGIM, Pisces, the Fish - mazal of the month of Adar, are none other than the stars of Finding Nemo - Marlin (Nemo's father) and his friend and partner in the search for Nemo, Dory, who had the best line in the movie (in some people's opinion): "What is it with men and asking for directions?"

## This week's TTriddles:

- [1] Bigger or further apart
- [2] they got along, but no fishing for them
- [3] Yehu in the Shomron lengthwise
- [4] In Anatot of the third millennium
- [5] Yosef's brothers, hungry Israelites, anti Aliya rallyists, and what in our sedra?
- [6] kids will have mixed feelings
- [7] carpet capital of the world # V'CHAFTOR # Tuesday # 1DH429 # Avrech # Mano'ach's wife's description of Peli

## NachKwestion of the Week:

**What is the most often-paraphrased passage from the Talmud in davening?**

**Approximately how many times is it said in the course of 5766?**