

This Shabbat is the 208th day (of 354); the 30th Shabbat (of 50) of 5766 • We read/learn the SECOND perek of Pirkei Avot

וְהָיָה מִיָּדֶי-חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדְשׁוֹ וּמִיָּדֵי שְׁבַע בְּשָׁבָתוֹ יִשְׁעִיהָ:סו:כג

Not what Mercutio had in mind

Don't worry about the title, it was meant to draw the curious to read this Lead Tidbit. When Romeo's friend is dying from a sword wound, he curses the families of Montague (Romeo's family) and Capulet (Juliet's family) with the words "A pox (or plague) on both your houses". In Parshat Metzora we learn of a different kind of pox on one's house - TZORAAT HABAYIT.

Let's review a few facts about the "afflictions of houses". They occur only in Eretz Yisrael, not in Chutz LaAretz. They happen only to Jewish homes, not that of non-Jews. And in our own time, they don't happen at all.

The simple explanation is that the higher spiritual level one is on, the more accountable he is for his wrong-doings. All people are accountable for their own actions, but a Jew has a higher spiritual calling than the average human being and G-d expects a higher degree of commitment and adherence to His mitzvot. And when the Jew lives in Eretz Yisrael, his accountability and G-d's scrutiny increase.

But this is not yet completely so in our time. Yet. We could say, perhaps, that we - Jews who live in Israel, both native born and Olim - have a halfway situation. Eretz Yisrael today is still more sacred than everywhere else in the world. Let one-day Yom Tov and many Land-related mitzvot demonstrate that. So are we "there"? Not yet. We've got a long way to go. But we've come a long way so far, too.

Not that we are looking forward to being afflicted with Nega'im. But it would certainly be nice to be on the spiritual level to be subject to Nega'im and, at the same time, be worthy of never actually being so afflicted - by our own merit. In the meanwhile, we owe G-d a debt of gratitude for helping us come this far - while we pray for the Geula Sh'leima.

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...

Rosh Chodesh is a special day with an elevated sanctity from regular days of the week. When Rosh Chodesh falls on a weekday, it is appropriate to have a seuda (meal) in its honor. What about when it falls on Shabbat? Some say that even on Shabbat, one should honor Rosh Chodesh with a special meal, in addition to the three of Shabbat. Others say that one should add something special to one of the Shabbat meals - a fancy dessert, an unusual extra side dish, perhaps a special bottle of wine. The sanctity of Shabbat combines with that of Rosh Chodesh to emphasize the concept of Kedushat Z'man, sanctity of time, especially since each is a different manifestation of that concept Shabbat's sanctity comes from G-d; He taught us to sanctify Rosh Chodesh.



TORAH Tidbits AUDIO
www.radiou.org and www.israelnationalradio.com
New shows from Thursday

OTHER Z'MANIM
Correct for Jerusalem

The OU Israel Center and Torah Tidbits do not necessarily endorse the political or halachic positions of its editor, columnists, or advertisers, nor do we guarantee the quality of advertised services or products

Regular and (earliest)

CANDLE LIGHTING & Havdala times

Israel Summer Time

Correct for 11 /12 • Kabbeinu Iam (I'm) - 8:36pm

6:41pm (5:54)	Jerusalem	7:57pm
6:58pm (5:56)	Raanana	7:59pm
6:57pm (5:55)	Beit Shemesh	7:57pm
6:59pm (5:56)	Netanya	7:59pm
6:58pm (5:56)	Rehovot	7:58pm
6:38pm (5:56)	Petach Tikva	7:59pm
6:58pm (5:55)	Modi'in	7:58pm
6:57pm (5:55)	Be'er Sheva	7:57pm
6:56pm (5:54)	Gush Etzion	7:56pm
6:57pm (5:55)	Ginot Shomron	7:58pm
6:41pm (5:54)	Maale Adumim	7:56pm
6:57pm (5:54)	K4 & Hevron	7:57pm
6:47pm (5:54)	Tzfat	7:58pm
6:58pm (5:56)	Tel Mond	7:59pm

Ranges are FRI-FRI 24 Adar - 2 Nissan (Mar 24-31)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	- 4:48-4:39am
Sunrise	- 5:38-5:29am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	- 8:42-8:36am (7:56-7:50am)
Sof Z'man T'fila	- 9:43-9:38am (9:13-9:08am)
Chatzot (halachic noon)	- 11:45½-11:43am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	- 12:17-12:15pm
Plag Mincha	- 4:37-4:40pm
Sunset	- 5:58-6:02½ (5:53-5:58pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)

Early Shabbat Minyan
Mincha 5:40pm (before PLAG)

Shabbat Shiur 5:00pm
Phil Chernofsky Mincha 6pm

OU ISRAEL CENTER
Seymour J. Abrams • Orthodox Union
Jerusalem World Center

Yitzchak Fund, President
Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Senior Vice President
Prof. Meni Koslowsky, Vice President
Rabbi Dovid Cohen, Vaad member
Moshe Kempinski, Vaad member
Sandy Kestenbaum, Vaad member
Simcha Rock, Vaad member
Zvi Sand, Vaad member
Harvey Wolinetz, Vaad member
Menachem Persoff, Director of Programs, Israel Center
Phil Chernofsky, Educational Director and TT editor

22 Keren HaYesod • POB 37015 • Jerusalem 91370
phone: (02) 566 7787 • fax: (02) 561-7432
email: tt@ou.org • website: www.ou.org/torah/tt

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



Kohen - First Aliya -

13+12+6=31 p'sukim - 12:1-13:23

[P> 12:1 (8)] Perek 12, the shortest in the Torah with 8 p'sukim, deals with "birth". A woman becomes "ritually unclean" following a (normal) birth - one week for a boy - and on the 8th day the boy is circumcised - and two weeks for a girl. This period of TUM'A is followed by a special "waiting time" of 33 or 66 days for boy or girl respectively, after which the mother is to bring the korbanot of a YOLEDET. The whole issue of the "ritual impurity of a woman having given birth" constitutes a mitzva [166,A100 12:2], as does the bringing of the sacrifices [168,A76 12:6]. This portion of the Torah is also the source of the general prohibition of eating "sacred meat" while in a state of "ritual impurity" [167,L129 12:4].

TAHARA & TUM'A To oversimplify: one aspect of the rules of ritual purity and impurity for a Yoledet (a woman who have given birth) is to show the sharp contrast between life and death. This can be seen in the Tum'a of a dead body, in the laws of Nidah, the rules of pregnancy, as well as the Yoledet. A woman's period signifies that life has not begun within her - there is TUM'A. A pregnant woman has life developing within her - TA'HARA. When that life emerges into the world, she is no longer carrying that extra life - TUM'A.

Another aspect of the procedures for the new mother is geared to help her recoup her physical, psychological and emotional identity and well-being.

[P> 13:1 (8)] After the parsha of BIRTH, the Torah moves on to the topic of NEGA'IM (various skin afflictions). The rest of Tazria and most of Metzora deal with this topic.

A person with an affliction that MIGHT be Tzora'at (in one of its many forms) is to be examined by a kohen (expert in the laws and identification of N'GA'IM, with a degree, perhaps, in dermatology as well). Under certain circumstances, the kohen might declare the afflicted individual a METZORA rendering him immediately ritually unclean. Or, a kohen might order a one week quarantine with an additional examination to determine the status of the individual, to take place on the seventh day of said quarantine. That second inspection can result in the person being declared "clean", or "Tamei", or an additional week of quarantine can be ordered.

[P> 13:9 (9)] A kohen must examine a case of suspected Tzora'at. He looks for changes in coloration of skin and hair, raised or sunken appearance of the blemished area, increase, decrease or no change in size, and other signs. Sometimes he declares immediate Tzora'at. Sometimes "ritual purity" is declared immediately, in which case a trip to the pharmacy for a salve might be the best thing. And sometimes a quarantine period is declared.

The expertise of a kohen in the area of Nega'im is both an art and a science. And more. Dozens of shades of

TAZRI'A-M'TZORA STATS

	Taz	M'tzo	T&M
of 54 sedras in Torah	27th	28th	-
of 10 Sedras in Vayikra	4th	5th	-
lines	128	159	287
rank	48th	40th	-
Parshiyot	9	7	16
P'tuchot	5	4	9
S'tumot	4	3	7
P'sukim	67	90	157
rank (Torah/Vayikra)	48/8	42/5	-
Words	1010	1274	2284
rank (Torah/Vayikra)	48/8	39/4	-
Letters	3667	4697	8364
rank (Torah/Vayikra)	48/8	39/4	-
MITZVOT (pos/prohib)	7+2	11+0	18+2

Tazri'a is very small; only 6 sedras are shorter

Tazri'a & M'tzora are combined in 12-month years; read separately in 13-month years

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.

white and other colors must be distinguish- able to the inspecting kohen. An error in perception of a white like the shell of an egg as opposed to the color of the thin membrane under the shell can make the difference between declaring the examinee Tahor or Tamei. Only certain times of the day are permitted for examining a NEGA, because of the different effects of light and shadow.

The laws of Nega'im are unbelievably difficult and complex. In addition to everything else, the kohen had to know the psychology of the cases and be sensitive to the personal situations of the afflicted. One example is that a new bride or groom is not examined by the kohen, so they cannot be declared TAMEI. That could spoil their moods.

A look at some of the Mishnayot in TAHAROT, even without going in depth, can give one an appreciation of what is involved in this topic. Once again, learning comes to the rescue and allows us to get "involved" in mitzvot even when they aren't active.

[P> 13:18 (6)] The Torah presents further details on what the kohen looks for when inspecting boils and similar afflictions on the skin. The elaborate checking and time delays from inspection to inspection serve to give the afflicted person ample time for introspection. A NEGA on the outside mirrors a character blemish or a religious shortcoming on the inside. While the kohen examines the external, the Metzora does a thorough job of seeing his own inner being.

MITZVA WATCH

Why all the detail? Why are there so many different types of NEGA'IM? Perhaps it is because WE are all different. So many different types of people. So many different tempera- ments. So many different sins. And so many different personal reactions to our individual situations. We need to feel this individuality. It helps us be responsible for our own deeds. One imagines that the kohen-examiner played the role of counselor too. Maybe sensing a disturbed soul that needs TIPUL along with the NEGA.

Levi - Second Aliya - 5+11=16 p'sukim - 13:24-39

[S> 13:24 (5)] This portion discusses burns on the skin and different colorations within the affected area. Keep in mind that a blemish of any sort is NOT Tzora'at unless declared so by a kohen. It could look like Tzora'at, but it isn't unless declared "Tamei" by a kohen. In fact, two people can have identical signs and one can be declared a Metzora, the other not so. And the treatment of each case is completely different as a result.

[P> 13:29 (9)] This next portion deals with yet another type or two of N'GA'IM - sores on the head, neck, or face, and blotches on the skin. As was mentioned before, we are dealing here with a complex issue of a bridge

between the physical and the spiritual. Or, to put it differently, of physical manifestations of spiritual problems.

To help understand this idea better, think of the following analogy: There are physical afflictions and psycho- logical problems that people can suffer. Sometimes, each type is treated independently. But sometimes, a trained professional in the field will see the physical problems as manifesta- tions of the psychological problems. And sometimes, vice versa. In those cases, it is very important for the professional to decide what gets treated and what will improve when the other does, even without special attention.

This was only an analogy, but this is one of the lessons, of Torat HaMetzora, the laws of N'GA'IM. The laws regard- ing the state of ritual impurity result- ing from Tzora'at constitute a positive commandment [169,A101 13:29]. In other words, we would be doing the wrong thing to ignore these laws and details. There is a specific prohibition of cutting the hair of a Tzora'at area on the body [170,L307 13:33]. Among other reasons, this would remove an important indicator for the inspecting kohen (and more importantly, perhaps, for the afflicted individual.)

Let's run with the analogy. If a doctor feels that a rash on a patient who came to him might be the result of stress and tension in the workplace, then it would serve no purpose to merely treat the rash. In fact, the rash might clear up after some stress-reduction measures without treating the rash itself. In the case of N'GA'IM, it would be prohibited to treat the NEGA with physical means. Welts, burns, blemishes, boils, etc. might go away after T'shuva and the Tzara'at procedures. How can a korban heal an affliction? How can T'shuva heal it? Same question as, How can psychological counseling cure asthma. But it can (sometimes) and so can all of the "remedies" in this week's sedra. Mind, body, soul - they are all con- nected and interrelated.

[S> 13:38 (2)] In this small parsha, the Torah gives an example of a rash of white spots erupting on the body. In this case, a rash is a rash. TAHOR.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 13:40-54

[S> 13:40 (7)] Certain cases of baldness are discussed in the first part of this portion. Usually, baldness is just baldness. But occasionally, the skin that is exposed when the hair falls out is blemished in specific ways which might mean Tzora'at. A person who has Tzora'at, tears his clothes, lets his hair hang loose, and must announce in public that he is TAMEI. The proper conduct of the Metzora is a mitzva [171,A112 13:45].

[S> 13:47 (13)] The rest of this Aliya deals with infection of Tzora'at on garments. Wool, linen, and leather are the materials that are subject to Tzora'at HaBegeid. The laws of infected garments also constitute one of the 613 mitzvot [172,A102 13:47].

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 5+12+8=25 p'sukim - 13:55-14:20

The fourth Aliya is always the bridge Aliya between the two combine sedras

The topic of "afflictions of garments" continues into this Aliya, for the duration of the Tazri'a part of the double reading. The fact that there is such a thing as an affliction of a garment tells us something. We are dealing with different ways that G-d communicates his "displeasure" with us, as individuals. Today, we might say, His communication is more subtle - but we must see it... and react appropriately.

[P> 14:1 (20)] The afflictions pre- sented in Tazria are immediately dealt with by the procedures described in M'Tzora.

The main theme of M'tzora is the "ritual purification" of one afflicted with Tzora'at, and certain other conditions that render a person TAMEI. These procedures constitute a positive mitzva [173,A110 14:2]. Two birds are to be taken, a ceremony is performed with them, one bird is offered as a sacrifice, and the other is set free. The person immerses in a mikve, he cleans his garments, and he shaves all the hair on his body [174,A111 14:9]. The rules of ritual immersion in general, come from this context [175,A109 14:9].

The purification process is completed after bringing various korbanot, follow- ing a seven day period and the other procedures, as mentioned above [176, A77 14:10].

SDT *Notice how the M'tzora is isolated from others during the time he is ritually unclean. That gives him time to examine himself, his deeds, his thoughts. But as part of the process of purification, as part of the process of having a second chance in the world, he is ministered to by a kohen who becomes the first contact in his renewal procedure. There is a significant psychological factor in the topic of N'GA'IM.*

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 12 p'sukim - 14:21-32

[P> 14:21 (12)] A person who cannot afford the animals for the sacrifices, is to bring one sheep and two birds as his offering. The Torah describes the rituals involved in these offerings.

It is not important how much the sacrifice is worth on a dollars and cents basis (shekels and agorot), but what is relative to the means of the atoner.

Thus ends the section of the Torah dealing with afflictions to the individual. ZOT TORAT... this is the body of law of one afflicted who cannot afford the full set of korbanot.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 21+19=40 p'sukim - 14:33-15:15

[P> 14:33 (25)] The Torah next discusses Tzora'at that can afflict a person's house. This can only be in the Land of Israel, in a house made of specific materials, and under specific conditions [177, A103 14:35]. Once again, it is the kohen who makes the determination as to whether Tzora'at does exist, or a professional house painter should be consulted. In the case of a "house plague", there are procedures to be followed and purification processes, including korbanot to be brought.

SDT *Not only does a person's body contain elements of spirituality, but even his home - specifically in Eretz Yisrael. Although we do not "practice" this whole topic today, the lessons of the bridge and connection between the physical world and the spiritual one should not be overlooked. A person whose home is a meeting place for Torah scholars, a launching pad for acts of charity and kindness, a training ground for a new generation of sensitive, feeling, enthusiastic Jews, such a home cannot be infected by spiritual plague. A home devoid of spirituality is a prime target for Nig'ei HaBayit. In this case, it is not the anti-rust and anti-mold paint that makes the difference. It is the values that a Jew lives by and their effect on the next generation.*

This parsha concludes with a summary of the different types of NEGA'IM.

We also find a curiosity among these p'sukim - specifically, two consecutive p'sukim of three words each. There are only about 12 or 13 three-word p'sukim in the Torah altogether. Having two of those in a row is unique.

[P> 15:1 (15)] Next the Torah speaks of the status of a man with an "unnatural discharge" (probably a form of venereal disease). In such cases, the Torah view matters as a combination of physical symptoms with spiritual causes - in the case of "Zav" and "Zava", most probably attributable to sexual misconduct. The one afflicted is himself "Tamei" as well as causing other people and objects to become "ritually impure" through contact, both direct and indirect [178,A104 15:2]. The one afflicted, must bring special korbanot after a purification process [179,A74 15:13].

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 13+5=18 p'sukim - 15:16-33

[S> 15:16 (3)] There is also a "ritual impurity" (of a lesser degrfsee - one-day type) in cases of normal seminal emissions [180,A105 15:17].

A menstruating woman is "ritually unclean". This is counted as a positive mitzva [181,A99 15:19]; the prohibi- tion "other side of the coin" to this mitzva is in the next sedra.

[P> 15:19 (6)] A woman with an unnatural discharge has a specific set of rules. In the case of a Zava, there are

differences in her status depending upon how many sightings of blood there are, and how frequent.

[S> 15:25 (9)] The longer-term Zava is presented in its own parsha, a STUMA that can be seen as a sub-parsha of the previous PTUCHA that introduced the topic of ZAVA. These rules and procedures constitute a mitzva **[182,A106 15:19]**.

The requirement of the korbanot at the conclusion of the period of impurity is a mitzva **[183,A75 15:29]**. The people of Israel have a great potential for attaining spiritual heights. They have an equally great potential for descending to low levels of spiritual impurity.

The last 3 p'sukim of the sedra serve as a summary to the topics of ritual purity and impurity and present the challenge to the Jewish People to rise above mundane physical existence by scrupulously avoiding "impurity".

SDT *Generally, when there is a rich man's korban and a poor man's korban for the same situation, if a rich man brings the less expensive version of the korban, he fulfills his obligation, after the fact. Not proper, but valid, nonetheless.*

Tzora'at is an exception. If a rich man brought a poor man's offering, he has not fulfilled his obligation.

The son of the Nodeh B'Yehuda beautifully explained why. One of the causes of Tzora'at is stinginess. Even the term in our Vidui can be seen as a play on words - TZAROT AYIN. If a rich man brings a poor person's korban, in this case it is an indication that he hasn't healed. The korban cannot bring atonement.

Maftir (2nd Torah) -

7 p'sukim - Bamidbar 28:9-15

Chapters 28 and 29 in Bamidbar (Parshat Pinchas) deal with the daily and Musaf korbanot (sacrifices) in the Mikdash. Since the two Shabbat p'sukim are followed by the five that deal with Rosh Chodesh, both portions are read for the Maftir on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh.

Notice that the Musaf of Shabbat is an expanded version of the weekday sacrifices - i.e. two lambs at a time rather than one (twice a day). Rosh Chodesh's Musaf is like those of the Chagim. Makes sense when you think about it. Six days... and on the 7th - Shabbat is one of the days of the week and the unique one among them. The Chagim belong to the Jewish calendar, which is based on the months and Rosh Chodesh.

Haftara - 24* p'sukim -

Yeshayahu 66:1-24

The special Haftara for Shabbat-Rosh Chodesh, the last chapter of Yeshayahu, preempts the regular Haftara (usually). The obvious reason for the choice is found in the next to the last pasuk, which mentions both Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh. This pasuk is reread after the last pasuk, so that the book of Yeshayahu - and this Haftara - can end on a bright note. This chapter, as all chapters in Yeshayahu from 40 and on, contains a message of

consolation. Specifically, this chapter tells us that G-d cannot be contained in the physical Mikdash, nor is He interested in sacrifices that are not offered with sincerity. This message is appropriate always, and the association with Shabbat - week in & week out - Rosh Chodesh - month in & month out, fits.

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

Lesson 328 (Assaults, part 6)

Specific cases of Assault and Removing Dangerous Conditions

In the last lesson we discussed some specific cases of assault and ended by saying that a few more cases would be discussed in this lesson.

Let's take the case where Reuven injures a married woman. The halacha makes it inadvisable to clash with a married woman. If Reuven injures a married woman - not his wife, he must make the payments for compensation just as he would to any other person whom he injures. However, if a married woman, not Reuven's wife, injures Reuven, she does not have to make payment to him at that time, since all that she possesses belongs to her husband, while they are married. Upon her husband's death, or should he divorce her, when she repossesses her assets, she must make the payments for the injuries to Reuven. Beth Din should assess the compensation due at the time that the injuries occur. The amount is then deemed an unpaid debt of a debtor who does not have the means to pay the debt, but must pay it when assets are acquired.

Reuven and his wife injure each other

If Reuven injures his wife he must pay the compensation payments for injury, pain, and humiliation to her immediately. The payments belong solely to her and he has no right to invest them for his benefit. She may keep the money or give it away. Reuven is also responsible for her healing. Every husband is responsible for his wife's medical treatments. If Reuven supports his wife, he does not have to pay for her lost earnings. If he does not support her he must pay for her loss of income.

If Reuven injures his wife during marital relations he is liable for the injury done to her. If Reuven and his wife injure each other, the payments to be made to one another are paid separately.

Just as a Jew must protect his spouse, he is under an obligation to save a fellow Jew. One of the verses that forms the basis for the law is the famous verse "...You shall love your neighbor as yourself..." (Vayikra 19:18). If a Jew is in a position to save a fellow Jew and fails to do so he transgresses the Torah commandment "not to stand aside while your fellow's blood is shed". If Reuven sees Shimon drowning in the sea and Reuven is a good swimmer and does not save Shimon, Reuven has transgressed the same negative commandment not to stand idly by when his brother's blood is being shed. The same holds true if bandits threaten Shimon's life or if Shimon is threatened by wild animals and Reuven can save him but fails to do so. Likewise, if Reuven hears people plotting to do evil against Shimon, planning to inform the government against Shimon, or laying a trap against him, and in all of these and similar instances, Reuven fails to help Shimon, Reuven has

transgressed the commandment. The same holds true if Reuven sees Sarah about to be raped or Shimon about to be killed and he fails to save them, Reuven has transgressed the commandment. Helping a fellow Jew includes lending him money when he is in dire need. Failing to lend him money may be similar to shedding his blood.

A visitor must be escorted a safe distance from the host's house so that he will find his way home safely. Some of the later commentators hold that with the advent of modern means of transportation this law may entail taking someone to his car, train or bus station. There is no flogging for transgressing this commandment since it does not involve an action and flogging is reserved for those transgressions that entail action on their part. Nevertheless, this is a most serious offense. If one destroys the life of any Jew he is regarded as if he has destroyed the whole world and if one preserves the life of a single Jew it is as if he had preserved the entire world. One can only speculate what the reality would have been like if Jews cried out more loudly to save Jews in the Holocaust.

There are certain other actions that a person should take to help preserve the life of others, such as removing dangerous conditions. This is based on the Torah command to have a parapet on the roof of one's dwelling. The codes list many other things that are hazardous and dangerous if left on someone's property. Maimonides in Laws of Murder and Preservation of Life list many. For example: (1) Shimon may not put his mouth to a flowing pipe and drink from it; (2) Shimon may not drink at night from rivers or lakes because he may be swallowing insects, etc; (3) the following liquids are not to be drunk if left uncovered: water, wine, honey and fish brine; (4) garlic that has been crushed and left uncovered should not be eaten; (5) melon that has been cut and left uncovered should not be eaten; (6) Shimon should not drink from an uncovered bottle of water left in certain places; (7) medicine should be bought in stores in which the seller is known to be reliable; (8) one should not place coins in one's mouth; (9) water in which certain fruits that he enumerates have been cooked should not be drunk; (10) the barber from whom Shimon takes a haircut should be known to him; (11) dangerous weapons may not be sold to a heathen; (12) certain domestic animals or birds that have been bitten by a snake and certain fruits and vegetables from which bits have been pecked away by animals or birds should not be eaten.

One may not say that he wishes to be left alone and do these things that endanger him. If he insists upon putting himself in danger he may be flogged. Every reader can think of things that a person should not do so as not to put himself in danger. These can include having a swimming pool without a fence around it, those things that are known in the law as attractive nuisances, and not having adequate circuit breakers in one's home. The list is never ending. The determining guideline is that if there is a possibility of something causing harm it should be safeguarded.

Rabbi Yosef Karo, in the last chapter of Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat, writes "Whoever is careful regarding these laws will receive good blessings.

Similarly I would like to quote from the end of volume X of my Restatement of Rabbinic Civil Law with the following blessing:

"May the judge of all judges and King of kings give blessings to those who not only protect themselves from danger, but also those who seek to protect others from danger."

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume X chapter 427 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

TANACH

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

"These are the Generations of Yitschak" [5]

"In the whole of creation, there is a distinction between that which is marginal and that which is paramount and primary. The World to Come is paramount and this world is marginal; "Prepare yourself in the corridor [Olam Haze]h], so that you can enter the palace" (Avot 4:21). Shabbat is primary whereas the six days of the week are marginal. Fruit is the purpose of the tree, while the skin or the shell only serves to protect it (Berachot 36b). So too, every person who does that which is their primary purpose without being distracted by that which is secondary and marginal, is able to achieve SHLEIMUT. In all the cases where the marginal is really held to be TAFEL, then that which is primary and IKAR is able to transform and elevate it. If one prepares oneself properly in the Corridor then the material and mundane Olam Haze]h becomes thereby elevated, spiritual and holy. When the weekdays are really made to be subsidiary to Shabbat, then through it all the weekday actions too become perfected and spiritual; "Everyday he ate for Shabbat" (Beitza 15a).

The skin protects the fruit and therefore it too is important and can become TAMEI (Chulin 118a). Indeed the whole purpose behind the creation of Eisav and Yaakov was that Eisav was to be subservient and marginal to Yaakov and thereby he, through his brother, would also achieve SHLEIMUT. This is why Yitschak wanted to bless Eisav even though he knew that Yaakov was more pious and deserving. Yitschak thought that through his subservience to Yaakov, Eisav would be elevated and sanctified so that they could jointly continue the Abrahamic tradition. However he did not realize the extent of the arrogance and GASUT RU'ACH of Eisav. "Even though a person of GASUT RU'ACH may fulfill a mitzva or achieve a spiritual level, since their arrogance is thereby only increased, their positive action makes them truly evil" (Admor of Kotsk). Eisav, being unable to differentiate between TAFEL and IKAR, could never see himself as being subservient to Yaakov. This is like the discussion in the Midrash between the straw and the chaff as to who was superior, without recognizing that they both were marginal to the wheat. So Eisav genuinely asked how one tithes straw and salt, both of which are marginal.

Not only are Eisav and Yaakov born to one mother and father, but they are twins. Although they pursue different goals, they possess the same powerful spiritual urges, the same single-mindedness or T'SHUKA, and it is this spiritual power that makes them eternal enemies locked in an ideological struggle. They both wished to link Heaven and Earth. Yaakov wished to raise everything that is earthly and material up to the heavenly, the holy and the spiritual and to merge body and the divinity that is the soul. Eisav, however, wished to degrade that which is heavenly, to subject it to that which is base and earthy in mankind.

It is this strange unity-diversity that explains Rifka's

exclamation when she felt the turmoil in her womb," And she said: 'If [it be] so, wherefore am I thus? And she went to inquire of HaShem" (Bereishit 25:22). She knew that the ETZ HADA'AT TOV VARA (good and evil intertwined) and the ETZ HACHAYIM grew from the same root, so that when knowledge is subservient to the source of life then the separation between good and evil becomes clear. However, the struggle within her womb made her fear that the child that would be born would be a divided soul, struggling to subject knowledge to the source of life; this would be more severe than the struggle between two separate persons as with Yitzchak and Yishmael. So HaShem comforted her when He told her that this would not be a struggle within one son but rather there would be two nations involved and that the older one would eventually be subservient to the younger.

Yet it is still not clear as to why the two should have been born as twins through this powerful unity of ETZ HADA'AT and ETZ HACHAYIM. We see that the whole of Yitschak's TOLDOT flows from this power of unity. Yitschak is the personification of fear and awe - PACHAD YITSCHAK - that is the opposite of TOLDOT - birth and generations; as we see when Rachav says that, "there is no strength of spirit in anybody in Jericho because of the fear of Israel" (Yehoshua 2:11). Because his MIDA is fear and awe, Toldot Yitschak needed for the perfection of his generations, the chesed of Avraham. That is expressed in the verse which reads, "These are the Toldot of Yitschak; Avraham gave birth to Yitschak". Thus, the unity of the two MIDOT, fear and chesed, can merge the contradictory powers of left and right. Thus, potentially there is a part of this unity of the two MIDOT in Yitschak that exists in both of his sons, but it is only the GASUT RU'ACH of Eisav that prevents the spiritual greatness of this unity from being realized. With the same parents and the joint powers that flow from their twin relationship, Yaakov and Eisav are like grapes harvested from the same vine. Yet in reality the GASUT RU'ACH of Eisav fermented and perverted the grapes so that he is the vinegar of the wine that is Yaakov". (Shem MiShmuel).

This is installment #124 in Dr. Tamari's series on "Tanach and its messages for our times"

MISC section - contents:

[1] Vebbe Rebbe

[2] Candle by Day

[3] From Aloh Naaleh

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

[5] Parsha Points to Ponder

[6] Portion from the Portion

[7] MicroUlpan

[8] Torah from Nature

[9] From the desk of the director

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

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



May I move a potted plant on Shabbat, or is it muktzeh?



There is another issue to discuss before we get to the matter of muktzeh. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 336:8) states: "A plant-pot (atzitz), even if it has no hole (eino nakuv), one should be careful not to take it from on the ground and hang it from pegs or vice versa whether it is made of wood or pottery." This halacha is based on the fact that we consider an atzitz to be nourished from the ground. (Bi'ur Halacha, ad loc., discusses the degree to which and why this is so for an atzitz she'eino nakuv). Distancing the atzitz from the ground and bringing it closer are forbidden on Shabbat under the categories of uprooting and planting, respectively.

Intuitively, one would assume that within one's home, considering the space and materials between the plant and the ground, the plant's nourishment is only from the dirt in the pot. On the other hand, poskim say that one may not pull things off even those plants that are inside the house (see Mishna Berura ad loc.:41). There are various opinions as to what type of separation under the atzitz serves as a sufficient separation. Metal or glass certainly break the connection between the plants and the ground (Ketzer Hashulchan 142:(5)). There is much discussion regarding a case where the plant (not its roots) extends beyond the separation (see Orchot Shabbat 18:24). There is further discussion whether the floors in most homes form a separation (see Piskei Teshuvot 336:7). The Tehilla L'David (OC 336:6) infers from the Shulchan Aruch's ruling that the problem of moving an atzitz is only when one moves it from the ground to a place above it or vice versa. It is permitted to move the atzitz between two similar places, even if it passes through a different type of area in the process. This is a strong but certainly not simple or unanimous contention (see Ketzer Hashulchan, ibid.; Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 26:(5)).

If we can satisfy the aforementioned issue, we still must deal with the matter of muktzeh. Earth (soil) is a classic muktzeh item, as it is not a utensil, a food, or similar item that is slated for a Shabbat appropriate activity. Yet, if one sets aside soil for a specific appropriate purpose, it is not muktzeh (Beitza 8a). How do we consider the soil in an atzitz? The Tehilla L'David (ibid.) infers from the discussion above, focused on planting issues, that muktzeh is not a problem. The rationale is that the soil serves to preserve the plants, which adorn the house. Some say that even if the soil is considered having a function, it is like a kli shemelachto l'isur (utensil usually used for a forbidden purpose). It helps plants live and grow, something one may not do on Shabbat. Such a utensil is permitted to be moved only to be used for its purpose or because the location it occupies is needed (see Shevitat Hashabbat, Zoreiah (4)). Others say that it is not muktzeh at all; still others say that it cannot be moved for any purpose. In

general, there is a machloket whether vegetation, where there is no fear that one will uproot improperly, is muktzeh. The Taz 336:4 and Magen Avraham 312:6 say it is muktzeh; the Machatzit Hashekel ad loc. brings those who are lenient. The author of the Mishna Berura leaves the matter undecided (Sha'ar Hatziyun 336:38).

Two of our generation's major authorities rule that one should not move an atzitz on Shabbat (Rav Moshe Feinstein, cited in Tiltulei Shabbat pg. 86; Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 26:2). (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 26:25 sees no problem with moving a vase of flowers in water.) It is unclear to us what the exact basis of their ruling. The simplest advice is to arrange matters before Shabbat so that there is no need to move the potted plant and avoid the significant problems. On the other hand, we cannot fault one, who as a matter of course or, at least in a case of need, relies on the opinions that one can move an atzitz, specifically she'einonakuv, from place to place.

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**

Knowing one's mind should not act as a deterrent to changing it.

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

The great teacher of our time, Rav Adin Steinsaltz wrote: "The holiness of place is manifested in a series of concentric circles, at the center of which is the holy of holies in Jerusalem... From the Temple site the circles of holiness extend ever farther into space, becoming fainter as they recede from the Holy of Holies to the Temple Court, from the Temple Court to the Holy City of Jerusalem, from the Holy City of Jerusalem to all of the Holy Land, and then beyond"

[The Thirteen Petalled Rose pp.70-73]

Our Parashiyot, Tazri'a and Metzora, deal with the spirit of defilement: "Thus shall you separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness... when they defile... [Vayikra 15:31]. Defilement, in the words of the Holy Zohar, result from stern judgment, i.e. one-sided stringency. What is demanded is the complement of chesed - mercy, grace, and love.

Esau represents stern justice as the heir of Isaac. The Zohar, on Parshat Metzora [Sulam 59] states: "Esau will be punished and the Temple will be rebuilt. This Temple is called 'first,' as stated in Yirmiya 17:12: "A glorious throne exalted from the first." When we offer good tidings about Zion and Jerusalem and merge their qualities, then "the walls of Jerusalem will reach on

high to the Throne of the King... Then the light of the moon [Jerusalem] shall be as the light of the sun [Zion], and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold" [Yeshaya 30:26].

The defilement by word as disparagement of the Holy City limits the Holy from entering our world. As Rav Steinsaltz has taught: "The holiness of the Holy Land has nothing to do with who the inhabitants are or what they do; it is a choice from on high, beyond human comprehension" [ibid p72]. Why then shall we be guilty of words that disparage the Holy City and its inhabitants? To be 'motzi shem ra'- a Metzora - is thus a calumny against the Holy and prevents that sanctity from infusing all of life.

Those of us who have been privileged to live in the Holy City must serve as an example of speaking "good" of Jerusalem and seeking its good. Holiness is not that which is great, good, noble or beautiful. It is the merging of all in the Oneness that will re-create our worlds.

Go out and spread the word of holiness from Jerusalem, for it is here and now. It has a ripple effect and will make the world fit for redemption.

Rav Eliyahu Shalem, Bein HaChomot

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**

Once R' Chaim Leib, Rosh Yeshiva of Mir, was at a festive gathering with his yeshiva students. As they discussed various matters, he said to them: "Do you know, my children, that the masmid in our yeshiva who learns day and night prevents Rothschild in Vienna from converting?"

The yeshiva students all looked up in amazement, and one of them finally blurted out: "Rebbe, what has one got to do with the other?"

"The masmid in the yeshiva learns 20 hours a day", said R' Chaim Leib. "The average yeshiva student learns only 14 hours a day. Former yeshiva students, who work for a living, learn 3 hours a day. Merchants in Minsk learn an hour a day. Merchants in Warsaw pray 3 times a day. Merchants in Moscow keep Shabbat according to halacha. Merchants of London eat kosher food. Finally, at the lowest rung, is Rothschild in Vienna, who has not converted. If the yeshiva masmid learns less than 20 hours a day, other students will learn less than before; former yeshiva students will stop learning Torah regularly; Minsk merchants will stop learning an hour a day; Warsaw merchants will no longer pray; Moscow merchants will not keep Shabbat; London merchants will eat unkosher food; and Rothschild will convert."

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 - TAZRI'A-M'TZORA

1) A first born son is redeemed after thirty days because at that point it is established that the child is a viable being. Why, then, are we able to wait just eight days before circumcising a child?

2) Why does the Torah first call the children that are born "male" and "female" (12:2,5) and then switch to the terms "son" and "daughter?" (12:8)

3) Why do we no longer experience the skin afflictions like tzaraas which the Torah describes?

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

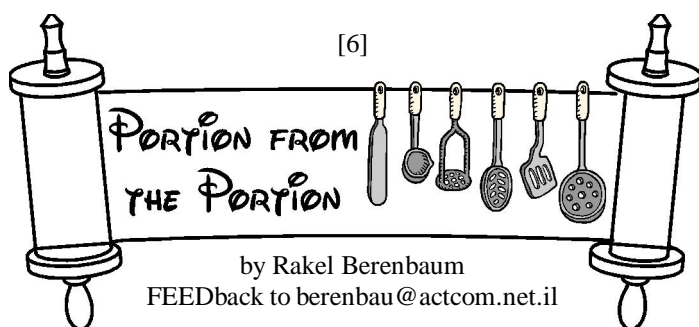
Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) The Tosefes Beracha answers that it is assumed that most children are viable beings and for a mitzva like circumcision we follow the majority. However, redeeming the first born entails a financial obligation for the father and the halacha teaches that for monetary cases we do not follow the majority. Thus, we must wait thirty days.

2) The Meshech Chochma explains that the child has not been established as a viable being prior to the 30th day and cannot be called a "son" or a "daughter" until then. Thus, it is simply labeled as "male" or "female." However, once 30 days pass, the term "son" or "daughter" is used.

3) The Alshich teaches that these afflictions occurred because the holiness in their bodies could not tolerate the sins and pushed them out. This manifested itself via growths on the skin. Nowadays, we lack this high level of holiness and our bodies do not have the same adverse reaction.

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



Eating Our Words

In this double portion of Tazri'a-M'tzora we are brought into the world of TZARA'AT. This affliction was a physical symptom of a spiritual defect, occurring primarily in people on a high spiritual level (Rambam). This could come as a result of seven sins (Me'am Lo'ez), the best-known being slander (motzei shem ra = met-zo-ra) or haughtiness. As a means to have the person correct his ways, Hashem brings these afflictions on a person's home, clothes, or his own skin.

It is interesting to note that the Torah spends a whole section (14:1-20, 20 whole verses) describing the instruments and procedure necessary to purify the metzora. Rav Simcha Zissel

of Kelm says this is another hint at the seriousness of the sin of lashon hara and how hard we must try to purify ourselves of this sin.

The person undergoing purification must take a couple of live kosher birds (tzipor - swallow, jay, sparrow - Kaplan), a piece of cedar, some crimson wool, and a hyssop branch. One of the birds is slaughtered over fresh water in a clay bowl. Then the live bird together with the cedar and hyssop which are tied together with the crimson wool are dipped in the spring water and blood mixture. This mixture is sprinkled on the person seven times. The living bird is then sent away. The Torah continues describing how the person is shaved and how he immerses himself and his clothing.

Commentators find many symbolisms in this whole purification process. For example, Rashi points out that the person brings birds: since these afflictions come because of idle chatter the person is required to bring birds who continually chirp and chatter. The Alshich says two birds are brought - the one that is killed which symbolizes the lashon hara which the person will eradicate from his speech process and replace instead with the live bird - the speaking of divrei Torah.

Also the cedar tree is one of the tallest trees and the hyssop is one of the lowest plants. The largest and smallest representatives of the vegetable world tied together with wool dyed with the blood of a worm come to teach the man who has been haughty and suffered from overbearing pride (like the cedar tree) to become humble like the hyssop and the worm (which are both lowly).

Since the power of speech is what distinguishes mankind from the animals, enabling us to express ourselves, we must constantly guard against abuse of this gift. We ask Hashem for help with this difficult task each day and end the Amida with "Guard my tongue from evil, my lips from speaking guile".

Ezov is translated as hyssop. According to most experts it is the wild Middle Eastern marjoram. It is a low plant, little over a foot high with blue blossoms. Although it grew wild, it was also cultivated as a spice.

Some identify it with the caper plant or with wild thyme or oregano (Kaplan).

Pasta with Tuna - Caper Oregano & Thyme Sauce

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 (1 lb.) can crushed tomatoes with the sauce
- 1 (6½ oz.) can water-packed light tuna, drained and flaked
- 6 oz. pasta
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. dried oregano, crushed
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 2 tbsp. capers, chopped
- 1½-2 Tbsp. minced parsley

Heat the olive oil over a moderate heat for 30 seconds; add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the tomatoes, oregano, thyme and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat until the mixture barely bubbles; simmer uncovered for 7-8 minutes or until slightly thickened.

Stir in the tuna, capers and parsley and simmer 5 minutes longer. (If you are in a rush, you can just mix the ingredients without cooking them).

Meanwhile, cook the pasta, drain well and transfer to a heated bowl. Pour the tuna sauce over the pasta and toss well. Serves 4.

[7] **MicroUlpan**

Hot and dry weather conditions in Israel are called SHARAV. The term CHAMSIN refers to a hot southerly wind from Egypt. Whereas in "the hilly regions" we can have a SHARAV, it is often hot and humid on the coast. In English, muggy. In Hebrew, the adjective is HAVIL.

[8] **Torah from Nature • Seahorse**

What do South American Spider Monkeys, Ringtail Opossums and seahorses have in common? They all have prehensile tails. Seahorses are bony fish... usually live in the tropics or along temperate coasts... 2-20cm tall depending on species... vary in color, including orange, red, yellows, grey, and greens... some come in patterns like zebra stripes and spots. Change color to blend in with their surroundings... like to swim in pairs linked by their tails... small dorsal fins propel it through the water in an upright position, while it beats them back and forth, almost as fast as a humming bird flapping its wings... usually mate under a full moon... when resting, the seahorse curls its tail around seaweed, to keep it from floating away... mate for life... during mating, they utter musical sounds... The female deposits eggs into the male's small pouch (where they are fertilized), and then leaves. Out of the entire animal kingdom, these are the only animals in which the male has babies! (which is why it was chosen for the TT of Shabbat ISHA KI TAZRI' A...)



The walrus is also called sea horse. In Hebrew, walrus is SUS-YAM.

The seahorse pictured here is called SUSON-YAM.

[9] **Divrei Menachem**

Parshat Tazria opens with reference to one of the most profound phenomena of our existence in this world: the birth of a baby. Consideration of this event for even a fleeting moment causes us to wonder at the miracle of creation. Indeed, we proclaim daily in our prayers that, "He in His goodness renews the Creation daily." The birth of a child, however, inspires us with the realization that we are partners with G-d in the formation of our progeny and the continuation of the human race.

So we are perhaps all the more perplexed that the Torah tells us that after the birth of a child the mother is spiritually unclean. The rabbis explain that technically the loss of blood that accompanies the birth contributes to this state, in common with a woman's regular monthly cycle. However, after the birth, the woman is to bring both a sin offering (Chatat) and an elevation offering (Olah), over and above various forms of abstention, implying that there is a deeper level of purification called for.

Truly, as the Ibn Ezra implies, the new mother may need to repent for resentful thoughts towards her husband or G-d for the pain endured during the birth. However, the Chatam Sofer - referring to the fact that the laws of Purity emanating from human beings follows on from those that emerge from animals - reminds us that while we (human beings) can reach even the highest spiritual levels (even greater than angels), we have the propensity to fall to depths even lower than animals. The Olah, therefore, reminds us all, and especially the mother, of the challenges of raising a child in the highest spirit of our Jewish tradition.

**Shabbat Shalom and Chodesh Toy,
Menachem Persoff**

SHEYIBANEH BEIT HAMIKDASH...

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

From the Mikdash Mailbag - "How Many Olei Regel Actually Came to Jerusalem on Pesach?"

The Gemara reads, "Our rabbis taught: King Agrippa once wanted to cast his eyes on the populations of Israel (i.e. take a census). He said to the Kohein Gadol, 'Cast your eyes on the Korbanot Pesach (brought by the Olei Regel). He (the Kohein Gadol) thereupon took a kidney from each KP and 600,000 pairs of kidneys (ZugeiKelayot) were found there, twice as many as those who departed from Egypt excluding those who were ritually impure, and those who were on a distant journey. There was not a single Korban Pesach for which more than ten people had not registered (600,000 X 2 = 1,200,000 X 10 = 12,000,000!); and they called it, 'The Passover of the dense crowds'" (Pesachim 64b). Josephus has a different version. "So these high priests, upon the coming of that feast which is called the Passover... when they slay their sacrifices (i.e. the Korban Pesach)... a company (a Chavura) of not less than ten belong to every sacrifice... and many of us are twenty in a company. (The high priests) found the number of sacrifices 256,500; which, upon the allowance of no more than ten that feast together, amounts to (at the very least) 2,700,200 that were pure and holy." This enormous number did not count "those that have leprosy or gonorrhoea or women that have their monthly courses, or such as are otherwise polluted... nor foreigners who come here to worship" (Wars Bk 6 Ch.9:6).

IMHO, neither of these accounts can be taken literally. The Aggadata, the non-Halachic component of Torah She'be'al Peh (the Oral Tradition), to which the Gemara's account belongs, does not consist of simple-minded fairy tales that are meant to be taken literally; they represent ideas written down in "coded form: the obscure form of parable and hint." The Aggadata must be understood on many levels. Even the most cursory glance at the celebrated introduction of the Rambam to the tenth Perek of Mishnat Sanhedrin will reveal his negative opinion of those "fools" who do take the Aggadata literally. "As the Lord lives, this group ruins the glory of the Torah, darkens its splendor, and turns G-d's Torah into exactly the opposite of what it means... This group expounds the words of the Sages in such a way that if the nations could hear them (and today they do!),

they would say, '...this foolish, vile and insignificant people!' Aggadata, "primarily deals with the principles of faith, the philosophy, and the ethical ideas of Judaism ...it includes all those interpretations of Biblical verses and stories which are unrelated to Halacha; expositions of the importance of the mitzvot and the rewards and punishments which they entail..." (The Juggler and the King, Rav Aaron Feldman, pg xxi, xxii). The somewhat more modest numbers that Josephus provides are still vastly exaggerated. Were there really, "2,700,200 who were pure and holy"? Classics scholar, and author of many books on the period, Professor Paul Maire, comments, "Like most ancient historians, Josephus had trouble with numbers, uncritically accepting and transmitting augmented statistics as to population and distance sizes, the number of battle casualties, and even mountain heights. Mt. Tabor, for example, tops 'thirty stadia' or 18,200 feet in Josephus, when in fact, it is only 1,920 [feet tall!]" (The New Complete Works of Josephus, pg. 14). That the real number of Olei Regel was considerably smaller may be surmised from the very realistic descriptions of the Olei Regel in the Mikdash in the fifth Perek of Mishnat Pesachim. All the Zovchim - those offering the Korban Pesach in any given year in the Mikdash - could be fitted into the limited space of the Azara in three Kitot (groups) and the people in the third Kat "were but few." Professor D. Chwolson (Das letzte Passamahl Christi, 1892, as noted by Professor Shmuel Safrai in his HaAliyah LeRegel Be'mei HaBayit HaSheini pg. 73) measured the area of the Azara as noted in the sources. (Excluding the area of the Bayit and the Mizbei'ach as well as the space needed to slaughter the multitude of Korbanot Pesach, he also had to take into account the space required to dismember and flay the sacrificial animals, not to mention the long lines of Kohanim that stretched from the areas of slaughter to the Mizbei'ach. After slaughter, Kohanim received the blood in Mikdash vessels and passed them from hand to hand in the direction of the Mizbei'ach. The last Kohein in line poured the blood on the wall of the Mizbei'ach.) Chwolson then calculated how many people could fit into the available space and multiplied the number of Zovchim by ten because both in the rabbinical literature, and in Josephus, it is reported that at least ten people "were registered" in every Chavura. He calculated that 100,000 people ate Korbanot Pesach. Another scholar, by calculating that two Olei Regel with their sacrificial animals could fit into a square meter, concluded that the first and second Kitot consisted of 6400 Olei Regel and the third "being but few" had less. He then multiplied the Zovchim by ten reaching a figure of approximately 180,000.

The Torah excuses those "on a distant journey" from the Mitzva of bringing and eating the Korban Pesach (Bamidbar 9:10). An undeservedly little known Mishna reads, "What counts as a 'distant journey'? Beyond Modi'im or a like distance in any direction. So says R. Akiva. R. Eliezer says, 'Beyond the threshold of the Temple Court (Iskupa Ha'azara).' R. Yosi said: Therefore there is a dot over the (Hebrew letter) HEI (in the Hebrew word Rechokah, distant), as if to say, not because it is indeed far off, (but only far off as) the threshold of the Temple Court and beyond" (Pesachim 9:2). Though their rulings were not accepted as normative Halacha, it is interesting to note how prominent these two dissenting sages actually were. R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, the only Tanna in the Mishna to have Hagadol (the "Great") added to his name, was a favorite student of R. Yochanan ben Zakkai, the leader of the Jewish people in the turbulent period before the Destruction of Jerusalem and the period immediately afterward. The founder of the great Yeshiva of Yavne, R. Yochanan ben Zakkai compared R. Eliezer to a

"sealed cistern which does not lose a drop." He added, "If all the Sages of Israel were in one scale of the balance and Eliezer ben Hyrcanus in the second scale, he would outweigh them all" (Avot 2:12) and, in fact, he was one of the two students who carried R. Yochanan's "coffin" out of besieged Jerusalem (Gittin 56b). R. Yochanan called his other student R. Yosi (Hakohein), a Chasid, a saint (Avot 2:12). Avot D'Rabbi Natan, a homiletical exposition of Perkei Avot, crowned R. Yosi the "Chasid of the generation". Both of these sages saw the Mikdash in its glory and certainly were thoroughly familiar with "Mikdash logistics". Nevertheless, the later Halacha is based on the contrary ruling of R. Akiva, the disciple of R. Yochanan and the spiritual leader of the next (i.e. the post - Mikdash) generation. Rambam summarizes, "Someone who was at a distance of 15 mil or more from Jerusalem at sun rise on the 14th of Nisan is considered 'on a distant journey' (and is exempt from bringing the Korban Pesach). If he was at a distance of less (than 15 mil from Jerusalem), he is not considered on a distant journey because he is able to arrive in Jerusalem by Chatzot, midday" (Hil. Korban Pesach 1:1).

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

- Baby boy, 7+33 days for the mother
- Knife for Brit Mila
- Baby girl with 14+60 days
- Dove and lamb, which are two parts of the Korban Yoledet, the offerings of the woman who has given birth
- Hand afflicted by a NEGA
- Shirt, representing those garments and materials that are able to be afflicted with NIG'EIHA BEGED
- CHAMELION, noted for changing colors - a significant factor in the determination of NEGA'IM
- Razor, used by a M'TZORA on the day of his purification
- Pair of eyes is missing one of its eyebrows, mentioned in the parsha
- Two birds, the hyssop and the cedar tree are all part of the purification process of the M'TZORA
- House afflicted by a NEGA
- 3 parts of the body dabbed with the blood of the korban
- 2+1 lambs are part of the korbanot of NEGA'IM
- Rav Kook with glasses stands for V'RA'A HAKOHEIN, an oft-repeated phrase in T&M
- Traffic light displays some of the colors involved in the topic of N'GA'IM.

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 (Tzav-Pesach-Shmini) TTriddles:

[1] Instructed to do this in Tzav, Chukat, and Vayeilech (where it is one of the 613)

The word HAK-HEIL (the command to gather the people) is a distinctive word that's a little tricky to pronounce properly, because the second HEI is easy to swallow. HAKEIL is the wrong way to say HAK HEIL. Besides that, HAK-HEIL is the 612th mitzva among the Torah's 613 mitzvot and is one of only two mitzvot in Parshat Vayeilech. Of TTriddle interest is the fact that the word appears only in two other places in Tanach - in Tzav and in Chukat (where it is V'HAK-HEIL. There is also one HAK-HEL (with a SEGOL rather than a TZEIREI) - LI (gather to Me).

[2] Shmuel, Yechezkel, and Malachi all push him aside. Shmuel more so in Jerusalem.

The regular haftara for Parshat Tzav is from the book of Yirmiyahu. He (Yirmiyahu) is pushed aside by Malachi when Tzav is Shabbat HaGadol (which it is in all regular, 12-month, one-Adar years. Sometimes Tzav is Parshat Para. Then it is Yechezkeil who pushes Yirmiyahu aside. (There is nothing personal in this business among the prophets themselves; it's just their books that occasionally pre-empt each other.) Tzav can also be Parshat Zachor, in which case, Shmuel preempts Yirmiyahu. And there is also one year-type when Tzav is Shabbat Purim in Yerushalayim, when Shmuel is read for the haftara. Shmuel then, pushes Yirmiyahu aside, more so in Jerusalem.

[3] Lux et Veritas

The breastplate (CHOSHEN) of the Kohein Gadol contained the URIM V'TUMIM, thought to be a parchment with a special form of the Explicit Name of G-d written on it. The URIM V'TUMIM gave the CHOSEN its prophetic powers. By the way, the more common phrase in the Torah is ET HA'URIM V'ET HATUMIM. (L')URIM V'TUMIM appears only once in Nechemya. Among English translations for URIM V'TUMIM are "lights and perfections" and "revelation and truth". Quoting Wikipedia, "The Biblical Hebrew "Urim and Thummim" is emblazoned across the open book pictured on the Yale shield, a legacy of Yale College president Ezra Stiles. It is translated in Latin on a banner below as "Lux et Veritas" ("Light and Truth").

[4] first/fourth; second/stop' third/triple

The word VAYISHCHAT (and he did Sh'chita, ritual slaughter) appears seven times in Tanach (6 in the book of Vayikra and once in Yirmiyahu). The three times in Parshat Tzav are distinctive because they have a KAMATZ under the CHET rather than a PATACH. Tzav's three VAYISHCHATs are verbs in their intransitive form, i.e. without objects. With the PATACH there is always an object. The TROP marks for

the three occurrences in Tzav are R'VI'I (fourth), ETNACHTA (a major stop-note), and the SHALSHELET, the most distinctive of all TROP marks, which sounds like a triple PAZEIR and which is made of three connected Vs rotated 90° clockwise.

[5] We preview it; they celebrate it - when?

When? On Thursday, Isru Chag Pesach in Israel, which is the 8th day of Pesach in Chutz LaAretz. While they (Jews who live outside Israel) celebrate SH'MINI shel Pesach, we (in Israel) preview Sh'mini by reading the first portion of the coming Shabbat's Torah reading.

This week's TTriddles:

[1] Enterprise's speed & Britain's dogfish

[2] They're in the sedras, but on vacation after that

[3] 2 in 1x and 1 in 2y. What are x & y?

[4] The big camel had a narrow escape - Prize for this TTriddle on its own

[5] All 14 occurrences are in this week's reading; 8 different TROP pairs!

[6] The Mazal TTriddle

[7] A 3-letter hidden TTriddle

NachKwestion of the Week

What is forbidden on Yom Tov and permitted on Shabbat.