

This Shabbat is the 306th day (of 354); the 44th Shabbat (of 50) of 5766

We read/learn the FOURTH perek of Avot (in Chu"l: 3rd perek)

אָבִינוּ מִלְּבִנוּ, בְּיַד מַחְשְׁבוֹת שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ.

A Sequence for Today

It is difficult writing the Lead Tidbit for Shabbat Nachamu before Tish'a b'Av. Then again, we read the beginning of Va'etchanan with its encouraging (and comforting) message this past Shabbat at Mincha, and again on Monday morning. And we will read from Va'etchanan on Tish'a b'Av morning. On that occasion, rebuke and warning are mixed with the uplifting messages of T'shuva and G-d's acceptance, of our Chosenness and our commitment to Torah and Mitzvot.

Now take a look at this. We know that most commentaries support the opinion that EIN SEIDER MUKDAM UM'UCHAR BATORAH, that the Torah does not always present occurrences in chronological order. Each time that happens, though, we are entitled to ask why a particular episode is out of order.

In the beginning of D'varim, we have a different manifestation of EIN SEIDER. Moshe Rabeinu is talking to the people, the new generation that is soon to cross the Jordan into Eretz Yisrael. He begins his talk with a summary of events that occurred in the previous 40 years. And he too, does not present them in the order in which they occurred. In last week's sedra, Moshe focused on the Sin of the Spies. In this week's sedra, he reviews the events of Matan Torah, Revelation at Sinai. Why did Moshe present these events out of sequence?

Not second-guessing Moshe, perhaps we can say the following. The story of the Meraglim happened in the past, has lessons for us in every generation, but is best being only an unfortunate piece of history. It should not keep happening (although it sadly does).

Matan Torah is a totally different thing. It is history that MUST keep on repeating itself in every generation, with every Jew, even daily. True, the first Matan Torah happened before the sin of the spies, but not so, the Matan Torah of that generation poised on the threshold of Eretz Yisrael, and not so the Matan Torah for each of us today. Moshe said it (D'varim 5:3): Not with our fathers (alone) did G-d make this covenant, but with us, here and now.

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...

As Av enters, we diminish our joy. Mournful practices of the 3 Weeks increase, and even more so in the week in which 9Av occurs. Then there is Erev Tish'a b'Av, Leil Tish'a b'Av, and Tish'a b'Av day. Heavy, serious, mournful. With almost all the 9Av rule continuing until dark, and some continuing beyond. Yet after Kinot in the morning, after noon, there is a perceptible change in the flavor of the day. Aron and Shulchan decorative covers are back. So is the lighting. We're sitting on regular chairs, wearing Talit & T'filin, being blessed by the Kohanim. And we ask for and begin to feel the comfort of the promised Geula. Haftarat of Calamity transit to those of Nechama. TU b'Av symbolizes the joy of the month of Av. And that's the challenge. Av has the potential of being totally joyous. Let it be



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CANDLE LIGHTING & Havdala times
Israel Summer Time

Correct for TT 726 • Rabbeinu Tam (l'm) - 8:53pm

6:58pm (6:09)	Jerusalem	8:12pm
7:15pm (6:11)	Raanana	8:15pm
7:14pm (6:10)	Beit Shemesh	8:13pm
7:15pm (6:11)	Netanya	8:15pm
7:15pm (6:11)	Rehovot	8:14pm
6:55pm (6:11)	Petach Tikva	8:14pm
7:14pm (6:10)	Modi'in	8:14pm
7:14pm (6:10)	Be'er Sheva	8:13pm
7:13pm (6:09)	Gush Etzion	8:12pm
7:14pm (6:10)	Ginot Shomron	8:14pm
6:58pm (6:09)	Maale Adumim	8:12pm
7:13pm (6:09)	K4 & Hevron	8:12pm
7:04pm (6:10)	Tzfat	8:14pm

Ranges are FRI-FRI • 10-17 Men. Av • (Aug. 4-11)

Earliest Talit & T'filin - 5:02-5:07am
Sunrise - 5:56½-6:01am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma - 9:20-9:22 am (8:30-8:33am)
Sof Z'man T'fila - 10:28-10:29am (9:55-9:56am)
Chatzot (halachic noon) - 12:45-12:44pm
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 1:20-1:18pm
Plag Mincha - 6:09-6:04pm
Sunset - 7:38½-7:32pm (7:33½-7:27pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
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Early Shabbat Minyan
Mincha 5:55pm (before PLAG)
Shabbat Shiur 5:00pm Mincha 6
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Levi - Second Aliya - 36 p'sukim - 4:5-40

Once again, Moshe emphasizes that the mitzvot are meant to be kept in Eretz Yisrael. (This not only apply to Land-related mitzvot, but to the entire range of mitzvot.)

There is repeated reference in the book of D'varim, and especially in Parshat Va'etchanan, to Eretz Yisrael being THE reason for our having been taken out of Egypt, formed into a Nation, and given the Torah and mitzvot.

Prolonged exile has taught us that the Torah can be kept, must be kept, no matter where a Jew finds himself. This was one of the reasons that the Torah was given at Sinai, prior to entry into the Land. On the other hand, one should not lose sight of the fact, repeated often by Moshe Rabeinu in D'varim, that G-d has always intended us to observe His mitzvot IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL. Are there more mitzvot to keep in Israel than outside? YES. But maybe more significantly, every mitzva - even those that are performed all over the world, can reach their full potential ONLY in Israel. This is a message that each of us has to realize, understand, and internalize. Then we must spread this message to family and friends abroad who feel that they "have everything we need to be fully Jewish" in their respective religious communities around the world. AND the vital significance of Torah AND Israel to our lives as Jews must be taught to those less committed Jews here in Israel and abroad.

On the other hand, we must not forget that Israel today is not the realization of The Dream, but rather a step on the road to the Complete Redemption, the restoration of Zion and Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash, and the coming of Mashiach. This idea helps us refocus after the mourning period that ends with the 10th of Av, and is an appropriate theme to usher in the period of consolation and repentance.

Let's put it like this: T'rumat and Maasrot - do not apply outside of Israel. They are observed in real but token fashion in Israel today. They will IY"H be able to be fully observed when Yovel comes back into active observance, when we will have a Sanhedrin, ability to become TAHOR from all forms of defilement, etc.

Shabbat: Observance in Chutz LaAretz required. Potential maximum fulfillment of the mitzva 70%. In Eretz Yisrael today: max. possible fulfillment is 80-85% (percentages are made up for illustrative purposes only. Maybe the real numbers are 40% and 80%. The point is that Eretz Yisrael is where G-d has always wanted us to be. That means something even in our time). IY"H in the time of the Mikdash, etc. Max. potential of fulfillment of Shabbat and all other mitzvot - 100%.

We must be careful to preserve and perform the mitzvot because (among other reasons) it is the mitzvot that project Judaism as an intelligent religion to the nations of the world. This in turn, sanctifies G-d's Name. We must be infinitely careful to remember and transmit to our children, the "Sinai Experience".

Moshe describes for the new generation the details of Matan Torah. He includes a specific warning against the potentially idolatrous thoughts caused by the combination of the magnificent, tangible universe in which we live and the invisible, intangible G-d.

A primary cause of idolatry is the natural human tendency to relate better with something concrete rather than something abstract. The Sun is in the sky. It's hot, full of energy, gives us light, and is responsible for life as we know it. People found Sun-worship easier to accept than the worship of He Who created the Sun and every-thing else, but cannot be seen. True worship of the One G-d was what Avraham and Sara taught many people. And, as OR LAGOYIM, a light unto the nations, it is what we are supposed to teach and show the world.

G-d had taken us out of Egypt in order to make us His Nation. He got angry at me, says Moshe, and forbade me to enter the Land. Again, Moshe warns the People against abandoning the covenant with G-d after his (Moshe's) passing.

[P> 4:25 (16)] The next portion is read on Tish'a b'Av morning... In spite of the many warnings against idolatry, Moshe prophesies (predicts) that there will come a time when the People will turn from G-d and be exiled from their Land. It will then come to pass that the People will seek out G-d and return to Him. Moshe emphasizes the uniqueness of the People of Israel and their special relationship with G-d and beseeches the People to remain faithful to Torah and mitzvot. One can hear a pleading in his voice, as if he is begging the people not to go in the direction of his prophecy.

This theme is oft-repeated in the Torah. Do what G-d asks of you. Don't turn away from Him. If you remain faithful to Him, wonderful things will happen to and for you. If you turn away from Him, terrible things will happen. You will turn away from Him; terrible things will happen; and then you will turn back to Him...

The Torah keeps presenting this to us, many times. And we read through the entire Torah in a year and we read the Torah year after year, and we hear the prophecies and the challenges and the commandments. So...

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 4:41-49

[P> 4:41 (9)] Although the cities of refuge will not function as such until conquest and settlement of Eretz Yisrael, Moshe (with enthusiasm to do G-d's bidding) designates the 3 cities on the East Bank - Betzer in the Mishor Wilderness area for Reuven, Ramot in the Gil'ad area for Gad, and Golan in the Bashan area for Menashe.

These (the mitzvot about to be presented) were taught by Moshe to the People following the Exodus in the lands on the East Bank of the Jordan.

(Note the detail in the description of the location of the people, the repetition of their successes in conquering the "east bank" lands. It seems meant to be encouraging to the people.)

V'zot HaTorah... said when the Torah is lifted, comes from D'varim 4:44. In the Siddur, the words AL PI HASHEM B'YAD MOSHE are added. That phrase appears 4 times in Bamidbar, but 9:23 seems the one from which it is taken.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya - 18 p'sukim - 5:1-18

[P> 5:1 (5)] Moshe begins the review of mitzvot with a restatement of the Aseret HaDibrot. He emphasizes that the Covenant at Sinai was not just between G-d and the previous generation, but between G-d and all generations of Jews to come.

MitzvaWatch

The most well-known difference between the two presentations of the Aseret HaDibrot is "Shamor v'Zachor" of Shabbat. Generally, "Zachor" is interpreted as referring to the positive mitzvot and aspects of Shabbat, whereas "Shamor" is taken as warning against violation of the prohibitions. The traditional minimum of two Shabbat candles (although one candle satisfies the halacha), are said to represent these two facets of Shabbat. It is the intertwined nature of the positive aspects of Shabbat and its prohibitions that is "responsible" for Kiddush on Friday night being obligatory upon women. Rather than treat Kiddush as a pure "time-related positive mitzva" which would (probably) mean that women would be exempt, we view Kiddush as part of the whole Shabbat package, which means full and equal obligation for men and women. The two sides of Shabbat were commanded B'DIBUR ECHAD and are inseparable.

On a hashkafa level, we can see the prohibitions of Shabbat as more than a restrictive list of DON'Ts. Abstention from Melacha can be seen as Dayan Grunfeld puts it in [The Sabbath](#) — as laying G-d's gifts of creative activity at His feet (so to speak) in homage to the Creator and Master of All. This, on a weekly basis, so that we will not take these gifts for granted nor assume that our abilities and talents are self-produced. There is a subtle difference between not doing Melacha and abstaining from Melacha. If we understand and appreciate the distinction, our Shabbat observance and enjoyment can be greatly enhanced.

MitzvaWatch

The Aseret HaDibrot in Yitro contains 14 of the 613 mitzvot. (The 2nd commandment has 4 prohibitions related to idolatry, the 4th has two mitzvot related to Shabbat, and one each from the other 8.) The first 9 commandments in Va'etchanan contain the same 13 mitzvot as their counterparts in Yitro. Those mitzvot are counted from Yitro. The 10th is worded differently here and is counted separately (in addition to "Thou shalt not covet") against "lust and unhealthy desire" [416,L266 5:18]. The mitzva here deals exclusively with thoughts and feelings; its counterpart in Yitro involves acting on those feelings. V'LO TIT'AVEH in a way, completes a set of prohibitions, that starts with obviously sinful acts - murder, stealing, etc. to a feeling in the heart (LO TACHMOD) which can, and often does, lead to acts which are "milder", but nonetheless "problematic". For example, if a person is jealous of a friend's sweater, and comments about it often enough, the friend might just feel uncomfortable enough to give it to the jealous friend. Nothing wrong, per se, in complimenting

someone's sweater, but in this case it is part of the prohibition of LO TACHMOD. And V'LO TIT'AVEH is the feelings even without anything else.

The Aseret HaDibrot lay out in the following manner:

[S>5:6 (5)] Anochi and Lo Yih-yeh L'cha, which we consider the first two "dibrot" are contained within a single parsha s'tuma. [S>5:11 (1)] The prohibition against taking G-d's name in vain (vain oaths) is its own parsha s'tuma. [S> 5:12 (4)] The Shabbat commandment is its own parsha s'tuma. Not only does this command begin with SHAMOR (in contrast to ZACHOR of Yitro), but the "reason" for Shabbat given here is to serve as a reminder of having been slaves and having been freed by G-d (in contrast to Creation as the "reason" in the Yitro version). [S> 5:16 (1)] Honoring parents is a s'tuma. [S> 5:17 (¼)] No murder, [S> 5:17 (¼)] And no adultery, [S> 5:17 (¼)] And no stealing (kidnapping), [S> 5:17 (¼)] And no false witness. These four dibrot are each a separate parsha s'tuma, all in the same pasuk! [S> 5:18 (½)] And not to covet another's wife and [S>5:18 (½)] and not to lust after anything that another person possesses are each a s'tuma, from the same pasuk, and counting as a single (the 10th) dibra (or dibur). In general, we see that Dibrot, Parshiyot, and P'sukim don't match or line up the way one might have expected.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 5:19-6:3

[S> 5:19 (15)] Moshe next reminds the People that those who were present at Matan Torah were afraid to continue hearing G-d's Voice and agreed to listen to the words of a prophet speaking in G-d's Name in lieu of direct communication.

This is a very crucial episode in understanding our Chain of Tradition and the method of transmission of the Oral Law. It made not only Moshe Rabeinu vital to our hearing and understanding of G-d's Word, but so too the Moshe Rabeinus of every generation. This is so for prophets, during the period of prophecy, and also extends to this day in the way Tradition is passed from one generation to the next. We can say that we have a serious obligation to accept Torah from our parents and teachers, precisely because those that stood at Sinai did not want to hear G-d's voice directly beyond the first two commandments.

Moshe emphasizes that G-d agreed to the People's request.

And yet again, Moshe links observance of mitzvot with the only proper environment for Jewish life - Eretz Yisrael. (This idea is actually expressed in THREE different ways in the final p'sukim of this Aliya.)

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 22 p'sukim - 6:4-25

[P> 6:4 (6)] The first portion of this Aliya is the first

parsha of SH'MA. "...HaShem is One." This statement of Jewish faith is also considered the mitzva to believe in the unity and uniqueness of G-d [417,A2 6:4].

Note that G-d's unity is also part of the mitzva to believe in Him [25,A1 Sh'mot 20:2], but warrants its own mitzva to emphasize this essential element of belief, in contrast to many religions.

"Love" G-d with your entire being [418,A3 6:5]. (Many mitzvot, Jewish practices and attitudes are considered manifestations of Love of G-d.) We must study and teach Torah [419,A11 6:7] (for practical purposes AND purely for the sake of learning). We are to recite the Sh'ma twice daily [420,A10 6:7], wear T'filin on the arm [421,A13 6:8] and front-center on the head [422,A12 6:8], and put a mezuzah on our doorposts [423,A15 6:9].



The mitzva of learning and teaching Torah can be fulfilled with one's head, one's intellect. Tell someone a Dvar Torah and you both have fulfilled V'SHINANTAM L'VANECHA. But, tell that same Dvar Torah in an animated way that shows love of G-d and that ignites the emotion of the listener, so that he not only adds to his knowledge of Torah, but his excitement and enthusiasm for Torah and Mitzvot has increased, then you have fulfilled an additional mitzva, V'AHAVTA ET HASHEM ELOKECHA, to love G-d with all your heart (Sefer HaChareidim).

We can generalize this aspect of AHAVAT HASHEM to include all mitzvot. Shabbat, for example. Someone can go through all the motions and not violate the Shabbat; but do it with love and that fulfills V'AHAVTA.

[S> 6:10 (6)] Now we are issued another warning. You'll go into Eretz Yisrael, have big homes filled with all good things, that you did not work for... Still remember that G-d took you out of Egypt... don't turn away from Him...

[S> 6:16 (40)] Do not test G-d... Understood as the prohibition of overly challenging a true prophet and demanding signs from him (beyond what is reasonable to determine his claim as a true prophet) [424,L64 6:16]. Keep the mitzvot... be straight with G-d... so that things will be good for you in Eretz Yisrael...

[S> 6:20 (6)] When your child will ask you tomorrow... tell him "we were slaves to Par'o in Egypt and G-d took us out... and He commanded us... and it will do us good to listen..."

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 7:1-11

[S>7:1 (11)] Finally, Moshe tells the People that the nations in Eretz Yisrael whom we will encounter are mightier than Israel. But G-d will give them over into Israel's hands. We are required to destroy the "Seven Nations" [425,A187 7:2], not to show mercy to idolaters in the Land [426,L50 7:2], and certainly not to intermarry with them [427,L52 7:3] or any other non-Jews.

Regardless of how secure one is in one's belief, intermarriage and other close contact with alien cultures

will have an adverse effect upon the individual Jew and on the Jewish People. In addition to the Torah-prohibition against intermarriage, there are many Rabbinic prohibitions geared to restrict social contact.

We must destroy the idolatry in the Land. We must always keep in mind the basis upon which G-d has built His relationship with us.

It is because of G-d's love for us and His promises to our ancestors that He has taken us out of Egypt.

Know that G-d is trustworthy to keep His promises and reward those who properly follow His ways, as well as punish those who do not.

The final 3 p'sukim of the sedra are reread for the Maftir.

Haftara - 26 p'sukim - Yeshayahu 40:1-26

First of the 7 Haftarot of Consolation, (all of which come from Yeshayahu). Yeshayahu as a prophet of destruction and Divine punishment for faithlessness, can be seen in ch.1 which was the haftara last Shabbat and in subsequent chapters through 39. With our haftara this week, ch. 40, we see another side of the prophet. G-d commands the prophets (thru Yeshayahu) to bring the message of comfort and the end of Babylonian captivity. How appropriate a choice as the haftara for the Shabbat following 9'Av.

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

Lesson 342 (part two)

Partition of Real Property

In the last lesson we began our discussion of partition and said that we would include in this lesson a discussion of seats in a synagogue. (This assumes that the shul's authorities say that "You two work it out, we don't want to be involved.") (We shall also begin a discussion of "The Sell or Buy Option".) As was stated in the last lesson, if Reuven and Shimon have each been using a certain area in the land, it could be partitioned and a wall placed between the parts. In a shul, the situation is similar. Each worshiper has his own place that he has been using for some time. Can Reuven, one of the worshipers, place a wooden or other type of separation between his seat and the next seat occupied by Shimon? Shimon protests that if the partition is installed he will not be able to sit comfortably. Reuven may install the partition. Reuven's partition must be low enough not to block out the light coming to Shimon's seat.

Reuven has a seat on a bench that has five seats and Shimon has the seat next to Reuven, the second seat from the aisle. Reuven wishes to add to the bench by placing another seat into the aisle and to add a partition between his new double seat and Shimon's seat. Shimon protests that he will now be the third seat from the aisle instead of the second seat from the aisle. This assumes that the second seat from the aisle is more expensive to purchase or is more prestigious than the third

seat. Shimon will be able to prevent Reuven from adding to the bench and from setting up the partition. Reuven will be so prevented although Shimon cannot prevent Reuven from sharing his seat with another person. Assume that Reuven is wealthy and has purchased many seats in the synagogue. The officers of the synagogue wish to add chairs and benches in some of the vacant spots in the synagogue and thus provide more seats for those who need them. Reuven protests such additional chairs saying it will interfere with his getting around the synagogue by making him take a longer route to reach the reader's platform or making it too narrow for him to proceed around the synagogue. The better view is that Reuven cannot prevent such additional seats and benches if there are no longer any seats available to those who wish to purchase them. If there are seats available but not so well located then Reuven can prevent the additional seats and benches until all of the available seats and benches have been sold or distributed to members. In cases where the custom of the community is that if a member does not occupy his seat for a prolonged period the seat must be rented to one who will use it, then the custom of the synagogue must be followed. If any of the members of the synagogue wish to build another synagogue they may do so and may not be hindered by the members of the old synagogue, unless Beth Din determines that some untoward result will flow from building the new synagogue.

Just a few words about partial partition: If a field owned by Reuven and Shimon is eighty square feet, the halacha will not compel partition since the division will leave them with less than forty-nine square feet each. Shimon cannot require that Reuven will receive by partition fifty square feet and that Shimon will receive an area of thirty square feet and that Reuven pay to Shimon for the additional twenty square feet that Reuven received. Reuven can demand that Shimon will either buy Reuven's interest or sell to Reuven Shimon's interest in the entire eighty square feet. However, if Reuven and Shimon jointly own a yard containing eighty square feet and Reuven owns a sixty-five percent interest in the yard and Shimon owns a thirty-five percent interest in the yard, Shimon may insist on partition since Reuven will then own the requisite amount for a partitioned area (fifty-two square feet). But Reuven may not insist on partition since then Reuven will own but twenty-eight square feet.

Tanach consists of twenty-four books. If they are all written on one scroll as is the Torah, it may not be partitioned by dividing the scroll into parts. (An individual owner may divide such a scroll into its component books. But it is not seeming for joint owners to so treat Holy Writings.) If they were divided into two scrolls, they may be partitioned. As was stated above and in last week's lesson, either Reuven or Shimon, the joint owners of the land, may demand partition if the land is divisible and contains a certain minimum dimensions. In the case of personal property it must be capable of being divided. Reuven and Shimon are given this right since they should not be required to be joint owners against their will. As was stated, this does not apply to a business partnership or even a joint venture in the ownership of land for a specific period that is governed by agreement or partnership law. We shall now discuss the situation where the land or thing jointly owned by Reuven and Shimon does not lend itself to partition or does not contain the requisite minimum dimensions that will enable Reuven as a matter of right to

demand partition. Reuven wants to sever himself from the joint ownership of the land. In such a situation, Reuven has the right to demand Shimon either sell his share in the real estate or personal property, or purchase Reuven's share at a specified price. If Reuven makes the demand, Shimon has the right to exercise the option to sell his share to Reuven or to buy Reuven's share. If Shimon refuses to exercise the option Reuven can obtain a judgment from the Beth Din compelling him to exercise his option, and failing to do so, Beth Din will permit Reuven to exercise the option. The demand that Reuven makes to Shimon is herein designated "the demand" and the option is designated as "the sell or buy option," and when Shimon makes his choice, it is designated as "exercising the option." The right to make the demand is limited to certain situations and certain persons described in next week's lesson IYH.

The concept of the sell or buy option is based on a person doing "that which is right and correct in the eyes of the Lord." (D'varim 6:16)

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume V chapter 171 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 Sons of Yaakov [3]

"The months of the year are in the merit of the 12 Tribes, just as Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot are in the merit of Avraham, Yitschak and Yaakov respectively. When the Tribes sinned with the golden calf, the festivity of Rosh Chodesh was taken from the men and granted to the women as their reward for not participating in that sin" (Tur Orech Chayim 417). Each month of the year has its own special characteristic and nature yet together they constitute a whole year, so too, while the 12 Tribes constitute the unity that is the Jewish People, nevertheless each have their separate spiritual identities. "The individual's spirituality is strength in that it enables the individual to withstand doubts, persecution and religious assimilation, but it can be a weakness in that it can prevent the emergence of the kedusha of Klal Yisrael, unless all the individuals are able to subject their individual spirituality to the leader" (Shem Mi Shmuel). "See the greatness of the Divine Wisdom that gave humans the ability to appoint one of their own to rule them even though this is contrary to human nature. Rabbi Chanina taught: "Pray for the welfare of the government, for were it not for fear of it people would eat each other alive" (Avot 3:2)" (Chovot HaLevavot). The Admor Simcha Bunem of Pyschischa was asked why Hashem gave us so many mitzvot; surely it would have been better to give just a few that we could keep fully? His answer was that there are many mitzvot so that what one Jew cannot observe another one does and so ultimately all the mitzvot are kept. When we see the Tribes together in their differences they are called the House of Jacob, when

they are a unit, they are Am Yisrael and when that unit has a king they are Yeshurun: "A king in Yeshurun inasmuch as the heads of the people gathered together, all the tribes of Israel together became one union" (D'varim 33:5).

Each son of Yaakov has his own name, each tribe has an individual flag and marched and camped around the Mishkan in a certain order during the travels in the desert, each tribe has his separate stone in the Eifod of the Kohein Gadol and each tribe has his month in the cycle of the year, a month that reflects his spiritual character and history.

According to the order of the flags (Bamidbar 10:13), Yehuda's camp leads. Yehuda, whose name has all 4 letters of Hashem's Name and who like his mother knows how to praise Him, is the lion from whom the scepter shall never depart. With him are the flags of Yissachar and Zevulun, the last son of Leah. "Before their birth, the Torah tells us that G-d hearkened to Leah and she gave birth. This specifically dispels any notion regarding the efficacy of *duda'im* [mandrakes, that Reuven had brought to his mother since he knew her desire to have more of the Tribes] in promoting fertility. Rather, it teaches that children are the gift of G-d" (Radak; Rabbenu Chananel). "Yissachar was 9th in order of birth but the second to bring the offering at the dedication of the Mishkan [after Yehuda]. This was because they were Torah scholars; 200 heads of Sanhedrin came from them and the whole of Israel accepted their halakhot. Where did all this come from? It was possible because Zevulun engaged in trade and commerce and thereby fed Yissachar" (B'reishit Rabba 72:5). This should not be construed as creating a special class of Torah students as Zevulun always retains the obligation to also study Torah. Abarbanel understands their relationship as referring to a commercial partnership that flowed from the fact that Zevulun's portion was on the coast [between Haifa and Akko], with Yissachar's inland portion adjoining. Zevulun traveled the seas for commerce and then Yissachar distributed the goods that he brought.

This order is fitting for the first 3 months of the year; Yehuda, Nissan, the first of months, month of our freedom, the beginning of spring. Zevulun, Iyar, the midst of the work of the harvesting and economic activity. Yissachar, Sivan the month of first fruits and the giving of the Torah.

Next in order of the flags comes the camp of Reuven with Shimon and Naftali; their months are Tammuz, Av, and Elul.

"The first three months of the year saw spiritual revelation and strength come from Heaven down to the Children of Israel; the miraculous redemption from Egypt, the Manna which came in Iyar and then Revelation at Sinai in Sivan. These were holiness from Above sent down so that Israel would thereby be able to send their holy thoughts and actions up to Heaven, during the next 3 months. However, that was not to be the case. Tammuz means lighting and burning and its sign is that of the scorpion, both of them a symbol of the passion and heat that lead to sin. The name Reuven comes from 'to see'; what one sees depends on the purity of the heart of the beholder. If that is pure then that influences the whole being of a person to goodness, the contrary leads to mistaken thoughts and inadvertent sins. Reuven sinned [inadvertently when he moved the bed of his father from the tent of Bilha where Yaakov had moved after

the death of Rachel, as he saw that as an insult to his mother (Rashi; see Shabbat 55b)]. He then did *t'shuva* (Bamidbar Rabba 13, based on the open space in the verse telling of the incident (B'reishit 35:22)). Shimon also sinned inadvertently when Zimri took Cozbi thinking erroneously that she had renounced idolatry, however he did not repent [Leah had foreseen this when she said at his birth: G-d has given me this one also, but Pinchas who was born of her son Levi, would correct that error (B'reishit Rabba 71:4)]. Indeed because of the sins of Israel these months became months of destruction and suffering; the breaching of the walls of Yerushalayim started on the 9th during Bayit Rishon and on the 17th of Tammuz during Bayit Sheini and the siege until Tish'a b'Av. Because of *t'shuva*, these days will turn into a period of rejoicing; Shiva Asar be Tammuz and Tisha B'Av will be turned into festivals and the days between them into Chol HaMoed (Ta'anit 4a) " (Shem Mi Shmuel).

This is installment #139 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...



I rent out an apartment, primarily for tourists for short stays. Often when I straighten up after they have left, I find articles of varying values left behind. I have spent numerous hours tracking down people and figuring out how to return items, many of which I know they do not care about. Do I have to continue expending funds (including mailing, writing checks instead of sending cash) and an excessive amount of time?



First we commend you for doing the mitzva of hashavat aveida (returning lost objects) so diligently. It is possible that some of the returning was unnecessary (for reasons beyond our scope), but one of the major applications of acting beyond the letter-of-the-law is in this area (see Bava Metzia 30b). The letter of the law is open-ended, applying even to an object worth a p'ruta (a few cents) and not clearly limiting the amount of toil one needs to expend (see Pitchei Choshen, Aveida 8:1). You may demand compensation for related expenses and lost revenues (Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 265:1), but we doubt you feel comfortable doing so. However, the essence of the mitzva is to help others, and at times the amount of effort is disproportionate to the recipient's benefit, to the extent that he would not have wanted you to bother. It seems that in such cases, the spirit-of-the-law is that you should not have to bother. The only reason we bring up the spirit-of-the-law is that in cases it does not apply one need not feel bad about devising a valid halachic device to exempt himself from the mitzva, as we will discuss.

Often shuls are inundated with unclaimed objects left behind, many of which will never be returned to their owners. Many deal with the problem by posting a sign stating that items that remain unclaimed for x days will be deemed hefker (ownerless). In fact, several prominent poskim have given this advice (Igrot Moshe, Choshen Mishpat II, 45; Minchat Yitzchak VIII, 146; Shevet Halevi IX, 308). In your case, where it is relatively easy to track down some owners, it seems wrong to make the matter a function of time alone. Rather, we suggest writing in a lease or stating clearly before the renter's occupy the apartment the following: "Anything that is worth less than \$20 and is apparently not of sentimental value will be held for two weeks. The renter exempts the landlord from making efforts to report finding such items, and the renter hereby relinquishes ownership to them as of two weeks after the end of the rental." For more valuable items, you should continue "going the extra mile."

Let us briefly explain the mechanism of this provision, something that the aforementioned poskim did not spell out. The gemara (Bava Kama 69a) discusses one who did not want the poor to be guilty of thievery if they took more produce than the laws of matnot anyim allowed. He, therefore, wanted to declare in the morning that whatever extra they would take was hefker retroactively to the moment of the declaration. The complication is that it is not clear which pieces of produce would be the extra ones slated for hefker. Therefore, bereira (retroactive determination) is needed for the hefker to take effect, and this depends on the machloket among Tana'im whether bereira works (ibid.). We rule that bereira does not work in regard to Torah laws (Beitza 38a). How then can one be mafkir an undetermined object that will be lost to exempt from the Torah law of hashavat aveida? The answer is that bereira applies only when the matter must take effect retroactively. If the hefker can take effect on delay at the time the matter is determined, it works (Tosafot Bava Kama 69a; see Shut Harashba II, 82).

We also included an exemption from hashavat aveida prior to the hefker so that you should not be required to make efforts on insignificant matters during the two weeks. This works based on the rule that the intended recipient of mizvot between man and man can exempt another from performing the mitzva on his behalf (see Tosafot, Shavuot 30b; Shut Harashba I, 18).

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.eretzemdah.org. And/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by email weekly, by sending an email to info@eretzemdah.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 often make the mistake of regarding as most important that which is most pressing.

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 Gemara in Sota explains that Moshe Rabeinu wanted to go into Eretz Yisrael in order to do the mizvot which can only be done there. In other words Moshe was not willing to accept the fact that since he had not yet arrived in the Promised Land, he was excused from doing those mizvot and begged for a way to obligate himself by entering the Land. He did not think that the transfer of leadership from himself to Yehoshua was problematic, or that he needed more honor than he had received in his life, but that the lack of mizvot was an essential lack in his life that he wanted to fix before he died. In other words, even the mizvot connected to the Land are not optional or conditional in the view of Moshe Rabeinu, but present a challenge that should be attained if at all possible. For Moshe, who knew the Torah better than any other Jew, it was not sufficient to be able to learn the laws of Eretz Yisrael, but he also had to participate in doing the mizvot as directed by the Torah. In fact, one might argue that going to Eretz Yisrael (i.e. making Aliya), is entirely connected to fulfilling the various mizvot connected to the Land.

Closer to our own time, R' Avraham Borenstein of Sochachov (1830-1910) dealt with the question of Aliya, and came to the following conclusions (Avnei Nezer 2:454). Dwelling in the Land enables the execution of the mizvot connected to the Land. Further, if people live in the Land and do the mizvot, this will enhance the sanctity of the Land. This will ensure that the Land becomes a source of blessing, which in the case of Eretz Yisrael is always the result of Divine Will.

For the Sochachover, living in the Land was as great an imperative for him and those in his time as it was for Moshe Rabeinu. Perhaps Moshe's cry to be allowed to enter the Land was the ultimate rationale for the Sochachover in modern times.

Rav Chaim Brovender

Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshivat HaMivtar Orot Lev

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

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

The Baal Shem Tov was once in Alik for a Shabbat. The local community leader was gracious enough to lodge him for the day. A certain maggid, an itinerant preacher, spoke before Mincha on Erev Shabbat. Everyone, including the Ba'al Shem Tov was in attendance.

In his talk, he castigated the people for their sins, for not studying Torah, for not praying with the proper intention, and the like, as was the custom of maggidim at the time.

While he was yet speaking, the Baal Shem Tov rose, called the community leader, and both left the shul. With them gone, everyone else followed suit, one by one. The maggid was forced to cut his speech short.

The next day, the maggid came to greet the Baal Shem Tov and asked, "Why were you so angry at what I said?"

"How dare you speak evil of the Jewish people?" said the Baal Shem Tov, with tears in his voice. "A Jew is forced to work the whole day to try to eke out a living, and then, just before sunset, he realizes he hasn't prayed. He runs into the shul and prays mincha in a rush. He doesn't concentrate on the words, yet his prayer makes a mighty impact in Heaven."

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

[5] **Parsha Points to Ponder - Va'etchanan**

1) The Torah commands that we should not add or detract from mitzvot both in this week's parsha (4:2) and in Parshat Re'ei. (13:4) Why does this week's parsha teach this idea in the plural while in Re'ei it is taught in singular?

2) Why does Moshe suddenly insert seemingly unrelated information regarding the reason for his not entering Eretz Yisrael in the midst of teaching about the stringency of idolatry? (See 4:21 and psukim before and after it)

3) Why does the Torah states AS G-D HAS COMMANDED YOU regarding specifically two of the Aseret HaDibrot - observing Shabbat and honoring parents? (see 5:12 and 5:16)

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

Ponder the questions first, then read here

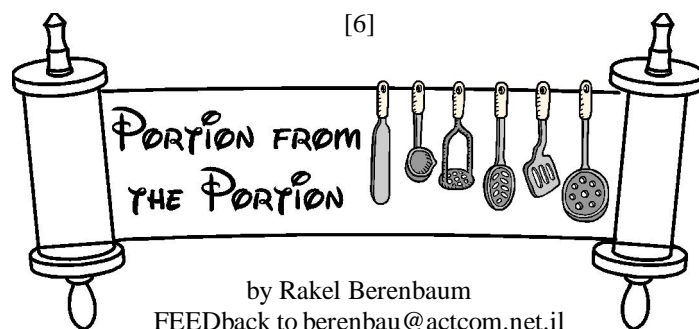
1) The Vilna Ga'on explains that these are actually two separate commands. This week's Parsha deals with adding to the 613 mitzvot. Thus, it is taught in plural since we are dealing with adding to all of the mitzvot. The command in Re'ei refers to adding components to individual mitzvot. Therefore, the Torah teaches that nothing should be added to each individual mitzva, in singular.

2) The Meshech Chochma answers that part of the reason why Moshe was punished with not entering Eretz Yisrael as opposed to some other punishment related to idolatry. There was a fear that the next generation who would be settling Eretz Yisrael and did not experience Moshe in the contentious desert experience could begin to worship Moshe as a divine being. Idolatry is so horrific that this led to G-D denying Moshe the

right to enter Israel. Thus, the insertion regarding Moshe's punishment which demonstrates the stringency of idolatry works in perfect consonance with the verses preceding and following this one.

3) The Chatam Sofer teaches that these are the two of the dibrot which people could think apply only in given situations. If one does not need rest, then he does not have to observe Shabbat. If one's parents did not treat him properly, one could rationalize that no honor is required. Therefore, the Torah specifies that we must adhere to these commands in all situations because G-D HAS COMMANDED YOU to do regardless of the circumstances.

Parsha Points to Ponder is prepared by Rabbi Dov Lipman, who teaches at Reishit Yerushalayim, Tiferet, and Machon Maayan in Beit Shemesh and RBS and is the author of "DISCOVER: Answers for Teenagers (and adults) to Questions about the Jewish Faith", soon to be re-published by Feldheim ppp@israelcenter.co.il



SEE WITH YOUR EYES

In this portion Moshe pleads with Hashem to let him enter the Land of Israel. He asks to "see the good Land" (3:25). Hashem informs him that he will not be able to enter the Holy Land. Thereafter, Moshe is instructed to climb to the mountaintop and to "look with his eyes" (3:27) to the west, north, south and east. Rashion this verse says that Hashem said to Moshe "You asked to see the good land, but I will show you the whole land". The Kotsker Rebbe explains that Moshe wanted to be able to see the goodness in the Land of Israel and not see any of the bad things as the spies had seen. So why does Hashem want to show him all the land? Why doesn't he just let him see the good parts as Moshe requested?

The Admor from Kozmir sees an answer to this question from a verse in the portion of Balak. Bil'am was looking to find faults in the children of Israel so that he would be able to curse them. Balak gave him a suggestion to go to a place where Bil'am would only be able to see " a small section of the Israelite camp, and you will not have to see them all. From there you may be able to curse them for me" (Bamidbar 23:13). Balak explained to Bil'am that if he looked at the group as a whole he would not be able to find faults, but if he looked only at certain parts then he would find problems.

Hashem was teaching Moshe the same lesson. If he truly wanted to see the good in Israel he couldn't just look at the good. By asking to see just the good it sounds like there is something bad as well. But if you look at the whole, any small badness that is around gets enveloped by the goodness and it is as if there is no bad because

the majority is good.

This is similar to how Hashem judges all of Israel - we are all in it together - HATOV UMEITIV LARA'IM V'LATOVIM - V'KOL'LAM YACHAD. "He does good to the bad ones and good ones, and judges them all together". May we all see the good within Klal Yisrael and may Hashem judge us all positively.

Pickled Black-Eyed Peas

4 cups cooked black eyed peas, drained

1 cup salad oil

¼ cup vinegar

1 cup garlic buds

1 medium onion, sliced thinly

¼ cup wine vinegar

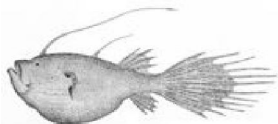
½ tsp. salt

Fresh ground pepper

Mix ingredients. Store in covered container in refrigerator. Remove garlic after 1 day. May be kept as long as two weeks in the refrigerator.

[7] Torah from Nature

The Angler Fish



Amazingly ugly (the drawing above does not do its ugliness justice)... lives deep in the Atlantic and Antarctic oceans. The (sometimes luminous) spine of their dorsal fin acts as a fishing rod with a fleshy 'bait' at the end to attract other fish for it to eat. The female of the species can grow over a meter long, but the males never grow longer than 6cm. Males live almost as parasites on females - attaching themselves to the female's body by biting. His mouth fuses with her skin and the bloodstreams of both become connected. The female feeds him enough nourishment to keep him alive long enough for reproduction. He slowly begins to degenerate - his eyes wither and then he loses them entirely, his internal organs disappear and eventually he becomes nothing more than a source of sperm. Body of angler fish suitable for great pressure of the ocean, over a mile deep... There are more than 200 species...

[8] G'matriya Match

The G'matriya of the word VA'ETCHANAN is 515. So is that of T'FILA and SHIRA.

[9] MicroUlpan

Clove Hitch



ENED MOT

[10] Tu B'Av

In the final Mishna of Taanit, Rabban Shimon B. Gamliel tells us that there were no more joyous festivals in Israel than TU b'Av and Yom Kippur. In the middle of this "tragic" month, the month whose entrance was accompanied by the diminishing of our joy, we find the most joyous of festivals.

If you will ponder the various reasons for Tu B'Av, you can see in each a message of consolation and promise... and joy.

- In the aftermath of the "Sin of the Spies", G-d decreed that the entire adult male population of that generation should die out during 40 years of wandering. Not only was this decree handed down on Tish'a B'Av, but the "sentence" was carried out on Tish'a B'av each year. Tradition tells us that each year on the 9th of Av, the men of Israel would dig graves and sleep in them. In the morning, Moshe would announce "let the living live separate from the dead". Each year, approximately 15,000 men were thus buried, the others living on for at least another year. In the final year of wandering, none of the remaining 15,000 dies. Not on Tish'a B'Av eve, nor the next night, nor the next. The people thought they had erred in the calculation of the days of the month, but when the full moon of Av took its place in the sky, all joyously realized that the decree against the remaining men had been rescinded through G-d's mercy. The 15th of Av was thus marked as a day of joy. It marks the existence of forgiveness, even from very serious sins.

- Tu B'Av was the end of the season for wood-gathering for the Mizabei'ach. After this date, the power of the sun begins to diminish due to the shortening of the day. Since it is essential that the wood for the fires of the Mizbei'ach be free of worms and insects, it was feared that after Tu B'Av the wood might not sufficiently dry out to avoid infestation. The end of the wood-gathering season was an occasion for special korbanot in the Mikdash, and Tu B'Av was celebrated as a family festival by those involved in this mitzva.

Note that just as Tish'a b'Av and TU b'Av were opposite sides of the same coin vis-a-vis the Sin of the Spies, so too are they here in that Tish'a b'Av marks destruction of the Temple; TU b'Av celebrates wood gathering for the Beit HaMikdash.

- Following the terrible episode of the "pilegish from Giv'a", there was a ban on marrying into the tribe of Binyamin. This ban was lifted on a Tu B'Av.

- For a long period of time, due to a misunderstanding in the rulings concerning who the daughters of Zelofchad should marry, there was little or no inter-tribal marriage. After a later Sanhedrin clarified the issue, inter-tribal marriages became commonplace. This reuniting of all of Israel, was associated with Tu B'Av, and the cause of great joy.

- The mishna referred to above, tells us that the young maidens of Jerusalem would wear borrowed white dresses, so as not to embarrass one who had no dresses... and they would dance in the vineyards.. (so that eligible young men might choose their brides).

The two items mentioned above, and the fact that there have not been weddings during the Three Weeks (or at least the Nine Days), combine to make Tu B'Av a special day for Shidduchim and marriages, and a truly joyous day.

- Following the fall of Beitar about 65 years after the destruction of the second Beit HaMikdash (on a Tish'a B'Av, non-coincidentally), the Romans did not permit the bodies of the dead Jews to be buried, as a punishment for rebelling against and resisting Rome. A few years later, a new emperor allowed burial of the bodies. Tradition records that this was on the 15th of Av. The bodies were found not to have decayed in the years that they lay unburied. The Sanhedrin at Yavne declared this a miracle and composed the fourth bracha of Birkat HaMazon - HaTov V'ha'Meitiv, to thank G-d for His kindnesses, even in darkest of times.

[11] **Divrei Menachem**

Parshat Va'etchanan opens with Moshe's reporting to Bnei Yisrael of his continuing quest to enter Eretz Yisrael, despite the decree that he would die in the barren wasteland. Having conquered Sihon and Og, whose lands were among those given to Israel, Moshe felt that here, perhaps, was a new opportunity to overturn the decree.

The language that Moshe chooses to express this overwhelming desire to enter the Land seems to have special import for us today, as our eyes turn northward beyond our current borders. For Moshe, invoking G-d's greatness, strong hand and mighty acts (D'varim 3:24), implores Hashem to let him, "Cross the good Land... to the good mountain and the Levanon."

From where Moshe stood, the mountain would refer to the hilly range in the center of the country and the Levanon to the northern mountains (R' Meyuchas). From a deeper perspective, however, the "good mountain" invokes the Temple Mount, also called Levanon from the root Lavan (white), because the Bet HaMikdash whitens sin (Sifri).

Implicit for us is a strong message. For even while our eyes are turned to Lebanon and we pray that our army will prevail, we concurrently turn our thoughts towards the metaphysical Lebanon. We remind ourselves of the higher spiritual purpose for which, like Moshe, our people sometimes make the ultimate sacrifice.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

SHEYIBANEH BEIT HAMIKDASH...

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

From the Mikdash Mailbag - Alexander

Dear Catriel, While sorting through old copies of your weekly columns (I save them), I see you write quite a bit about the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, Hellenists, the Chashmona'im, but not too much about Alexander who started the ball rolling. What is our attitude and the attitude of Chazal towards Alexander? Didn't he start the ball rolling by surprising everybody and defeating the Persians? A.C. of Beit Shemesh.

The erudite Professor S. Angus wrote, "The appearance of Alexander forms a turning point in the history of the race... Alexander made all things new: the results of his work have affected all the religious history of the Mediterranean world and the civilizations descended therefrom." Like everyone else, the Jews were fascinated by the meteoritic rise of this extraordinary man from Lilliputian Macedon who succeeded in toppling the fifty-times larger Persian Empire with the greatest of ease. Not initially understanding the extent of Alexander's victories over the Persians, "each city and each tribe had to make a choice between the present anger of Alexander and the (possible) future retaliation of Darius" (Elias Bickerman). Alexander's ruthless destruction of Gaza and Tyre, who made the wrong choice, soon showed "each tribe and city" which "way the wind was blowing".

After first "choosing" Persia, the Jewish leaders realized their mistake. Rectifying his error, the Kohein Gadol "went out in

procession with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. The procession was venerable... Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothes in fine linen, and the High Priest in purple and scarlet clothing... having the gold plate wherein the name of G-d was engraved, approached by himself and adored that name... and saluted the High Priest" Josephus goes on to describe how Alexander offered a sacrifice "according to the High Priest's direction and how pleased Alexander was when shown a copy of Sefer Daniel which prophesied that "one of the Greeks should destroy the Empire of the Persians." (How a non-Jew could possibly offer a sacrifice in the Mikdash under the "direction" of this saintly Kohein Gadol is another question but this strange inclusion does show that Alexander treated the Temple with respect.) The Kohein Gadol requested of Alexander permission to live "by the laws of their forefathers" not forgetting to include the "Jews of Babylonia and Media". The tale of Josephus ends with Alexander inviting Jews to join his army; the Jewish recruits would be permitted to observe the "laws of their forefathers". Josephus concluded, "Many were willing to accompany him in his wars" (Antiquities, Bk 11:8). Whatever the historic basis of this dramatic encounter so lovingly painted by Josephus in such vivid color may have been, it would have been the height of folly if the High Priest, the titular leader of the Jewish people, had not immediately arranged a meeting with Alexander to make obeisance and assure the all-conquering Macedonian of his people's loyalty. Be it as it may, while hostile to the Samaritans who tried to incite the Macedonian against the Jews, Alexander did not disturb Am Yisrael's Torah way of life nor was the Kohein Gadol's authority or the Beit Hamikdash disturbed.

Alexander the Great, who after his death "evolved" into a symbol of the wealthy and powerful yet capricious and unpredictable pagan world, became the hero of many later Jewish legends. One legend describes how the "Elders of the South" showed Alexander how to cross the "Mountains of Darkness". Having done so, he found a land inhabited only by women. He wanted to make war on them but they said, "If you fight with us, people will [disparage you and] say that you make war on women, and if we kill you, people will say that Alexander was the king killed by women." Then he asked for bread and they gave him a loaf of gold on a table of gold. He asked, "Do people [in your city] eat gold?" They responded, "You wanted [ordinary] bread? Have you no bread in your own country that you had to come here?" "When he left the place, he wrote on the gate of the city, 'I, Alexander of Macedon, was a fool until I came to the city of women... and learned wisdom'" (Tamid 32a). Another legend pictures Alexander knocking on the door of the Garden of Eden. He was refused admittance but was given an eyeball as a memento of his visit. "He went and weighed all his silver and gold against it" The single eyeball outweighed all of Alexander's riches! "How could this be?" he asked the Sages. They replied, "It is the eyeball of a human being which is never satisfied. It is written, 'The nether-world and Destruction are never satisfied; so the eyes of man too are never satiated'" (Mishlei 27:20). When the Sages covered the eyeball with dust, it ceased to outweigh Alexander's treasures. Only in the grave does man cease to lust for gold (Tamid 32b). In the same vein, we are told that King Katzia, a ruler of a country beyond the "Mountains of Darkness", invited the peripatetic Alexander to hear a lawsuit. The plaintiff claimed that he had bought a piece of land and while plowing found a treasure: he wanted to return the treasure to the original owner. He said, "I bought a field, not a treasure." The defendant

retorted, "When I sold this man the field, I sold him everything in it." Then the King inquired of the plaintiff, "Have you a son?" "Yes", was the reply. Then the king inquired of the defendant, "Do you have a daughter?" "I do." The King said, "Let the son and daughter marry and let the treasure be theirs." Alexander laughed when he heard the ruling. The King inquired, "Did I judge incorrectly? Is my judgment wrong? How would have you decided the issue in your country?" Alexander replied, "I would have chopped off both of their heads and taken the money for the royal treasury. "Sadly, the king asked the great Alexander. "Does it rain in your country?" "Yes." "Do you have animals in your country?" "Yes." The King said, "Know for a surety that the rain falls and the sun shines in your country only for the sake of your animals and not for yours."

Amazingly enough, thousands of years later, the spectacular career of Napoleon Bonaparte inspired a whole genre of similar Jewish "folk legends". Perhaps the most poignant tale of all (pertinent for this time of year) tells how the French conqueror passed through an Eastern European "shetle" on Tish'a B'av and found the Jews sitting on the ground and wailing. Curious, Napoleon sent over an aid to ask why. The aid soon returned and explained to the Emperor that the Jews were mourning over their destroyed temple. Shocked and angered that such a thing could happen in lands that he controlled, Napoleon himself went over to them and asked if they knew who the perpetrators were. "These evil-doers must be arrested and punished at once!" "You misunderstand, Your Excellency", the Jews replied, "Our Temple, the Temple of Jerusalem, was destroyed 1700 years ago." Taken aback, the resplendent Emperor thoughtfully gazed at the bearded disheveled Jews for a longtime. Finally, he said, "If you still feel the loss of your Temple so acutely after 1700 years, I have no doubt that sooner or later you will be privileged to rebuild it." Kein Yehi Ratzon

Catriel's book in progress: The Temple of Jerusalem, A Pilgrim's Perspective; A Guided Tour through the Temple and the Divine Service

from page 3 PARSHA PIX

- Upper left is a plus and minus in a negation circle. The Torah forbids (a few times) adding to the Torah or detracting from it.
- Once again, the Torah tells us of the mitzva to designate cities of refuge - 3 on the east side of the Jordan (and 3 on the west side).
- The LUCHOT in the TORAH on the mountain stands for the repetition of the Aseret HaDibrot (with changes) and reminds us that the whole Torah was given by G-d at Sinai, not just the Big Ten.
- The Shabbat candlesticks represent SHAMOR and ZACHOR. They are contained B'DIBUR ECHAD, in one speech- bubble.
- The hearing ear represents SH'MA, not just the famous one, but the many times the Torah commands us to listen (and understand).
- The warning lights represent Moshe's warnings to us to remain faithful to HaShem and not to be confused by what we witnessed but cannot completely comprehend.
- The big number 1 is for HaShem Echad, as well as the other

pasuk that emphasizes G-d's Unity, 4:35, ...there is none besides Him.

- The reminder-finger is for the command to never forget the Sinai experience and to pass on the memory to future generations.
- The Seder plate is for the Chacham's question and the answer of We were slaves to Par'o in Egypt... both of which are found in Va'etchanan.
- The Simchat Torah scene is for the pasuk ATA HOR-EITA LADA'AT... which is associated with Simchat Torah (for Nusach Ashkenaz daveners).
- The speaker and an Xed out video monitor: On that great day of Revelation at Sinai, we HEARD what was said, but we did NOT SEE any image. This is mentioned more than once, and is a reason for Moshe's deep concern and warnings to the people.
- The (clock) face in the face is for the term PANIM BIFANIM, the description of the direct, intimate communication of G-d to the people of Israel.
- The space telescope is for Yeshayahu's words at the end of the Haftara: Lift your eyes heavenward and see Who created these.
- The pen is for the 5 PENs in the sedra and another two U'FENs. Not so remarkable, but they are associated with the remember - don't forget things that Moshe talks about. Hence, the PEN near the reminder string on the finger image in the ParshaPix.
- Then there is the grasshopper. The word K'CHA- GAVIM, like grasshoppers, appears only twice in Tanach. Back in Parshat Shlach, the Meraglim told the people about the giants in the land, "we felt like grasshoppers (compared with them) and so were we in their eyes". Commentaries point critically to this statement. The other place the word appears is Yeshayahu 40 - the haftara of Va'etchanan- Nachamu. In that context, the inhabitants of Earth are called grasshoppers in perspective of the "One Who sits above the circle of the earth".
- There are also two items from last week's ParshaPix that were unexplained. Anchor is OGEN - en = OG.
- The kazoo is for the ZAMZUMIM.

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 (D'VARIM) TTriddles:

[1] give under 800

With the Hebrew alef-bet of 22 letters, there are 484 possible two-letter words. In Tanach, 223 of those possible words exist. (There are other 2-letter words in Hebrew, but they are not

found in the Tanach, at least not as 2-letter words.) This TTriddle is about one of the 2-letter words in Tanach, specifically TEIT, spelled TAV-TAV. It appears 14 times in Tanach, three of those in the Torah, two of which are in Parshat D'varim. The word means "give", as in the TTriddle. The word TAT, same spelling is not found in Tanach. It means "under", as in TAT-KARKA, under-ground, TAT ALUF, the Brigadier General (whose rank is right under that of ALUF). The g'matriya of the word is 800. There's your TTriddle. Sometime in the future, IY"H, we'll have the count of each of the 2-letter words in Tanach. Suffice it now to say that several occur only once, and others occur thousands of times each. The winner is most definitely ALEF-TAV which occurs 7369 times in Tanach.

[2] Very high scoring in the bottom of the first or top of the second

Bottom of the first and top of the second are baseball terms, but they have nothing to do with baseball for this TTriddle; it just added color. What the phrases do refer to is the pasuk that is the last of the first Aliya for Shabbat Mincha, Monday and Thursday mornings, when that first Aliya is subdivided to three people. That same pasuk becomes the first (top) pasuk of the second Aliya on Shabbat morning, so that the Aliya does not begin with the EICHA pasuk. The pasuk in question produces a very high score: "May Hashem, the G-d of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as you are, and bless you, as He has promised you!"

[3] Wise people, advice, 3 people per

HAVU LACHEM... Choose for yourselves... In D'varim, ANASHIM CHACHAMIM, wise people. In Sh'muel Bet (and one place in Shoftim), it is advice that is to be sought. In Shoftim, it is three people per (tribe).

[4] Yitro, Vayakhel, post-B'reishit

EILEH HAD'VARIM... these are the things. The opening words of the Book of D'varim occur four other times in Tanach. In Parshat Yitro, reference is to the preparations for Matan Torah at Har Sinai. In Vayakhel, it is the requirement to keep the Shabbat, even when building the Mikdash. In Yeshayahu, it occurs in the portion that is the haftara of Parshat B'reishit, hence, post-B'reishit. The other occurrence is not part of this TTriddle.

[5] The familiar one dot father-son team and only once for someone else

Most (almost all) father-son teams are of the three-dot kind, i.e. PLONI BEN PLONI, with the vowel under the BET of BEN being the three-dot SEGOL. We are all familiar with the one-dot father-son team, namely, YEHOSHUA BIN NUN, with a CHIRIK under the BET. They appear 29 times in Tanach, with slight variations in YEHOSHUA's name, on occasion. There is only one other father-son team to carry the one-dot designation. They are mentioned only once in Tanach, at the beginning of chapter 30 of Mishlei, to be specific. AGUR BIN YAKEH spoke some of the proverbs in this chapter. He seems not to have had to high an opinion of himself. Take a look.

[6] Sort of like PagoPago, just more awake

This is visual rather than auditory, but the answer is the name of a place mentioned in D'varim (and earlier at the end of Bamidbar). The place is by the bank of the Arnon River, ARO-EIR. The name is spelled AYIN-REISH-AYIN-REISH and seemed to call to mind PagoPago (pronounced Pango

Pango), which is the capital of American Samoa, in the South Pacific.

NachKwestion of the Week

Common factor in each pair:

Gid'on/Micha
Zerach/Yaakov
Shimshon/Aholiav
Dan/Bet El
Z'vul/Amon

Gid'on made an EIFOD (Shoftim 8:27) and so did Micha (Shoftim 17:5).

Zerach and Yaakov are each a twin, a younger twin at that.

Shimshon and Aholiav were both from the Tribe of Dan.

Dan and Beit El are the two cities in which Yeravam ben Nevat placed golden calves, in order to dissuade the people from traveling to Yerushalayim.

Z'vul and Amon both had the title of SAR HA'IR.

This week's TTriddles:

[1] Same spelling, different pronunciations, opposite meanings

[2] sing separate fume eat approach

[3] Va'etchanan, always; Ki Tisa, sometimes; Pinchas, never

[4] P George Frederick Ernest Albert

[5] actually, this one is memorable too

OU TZAFONA

Sunday, July 30, '06

Shalom Aleichem,

As I am sure you are all aware of what's happening here, I wanted to emphasize how extremely proud I am to be part of the OU organization.

7 OU employees and I will be going up north tomorrow morning with INN TV and Radio Kol Hatzafon to visit Haifa, Naharia and Tzfat.

70 of our volunteers, dressed in their new OU T-shirts, spent the entire Sunday morning in the OU Israel Center's "back yard" packing up another 150 boxes for the north. These are the boxes that our other volunteers are giving out and using in the different bomb shelters that they are going to. (The cost before transportation is \$150 per box)

75 graduates of our OU Course Martzim (Kiruv Training course) were asked by the directors of Mr. Gaydimak's tent cities (10,000 people in total) to come to the tent city and run their Shabbat programs, lead davening, teach classes, etc... It was a major hit and we were asked to come back for next Shabbat as well.

80 of our Kehilot Yisrael Tiberias branch participants joined Rabbi Meir Schwartz for a Shabbaton this past Shabbat. A main focus of the Shabbat was learning how to deal with the situation, Rabbi Schwartz came back extremely satisfied with the Shabbaton .

700 of our OU volunteers have been working with Rabbi Eliyahu Fargun (Director of Kehilot Yisrael in Ariel) on a daily basis going from bomb shelter to bomb shelter helping families and bringing them some happiness in these terrible times.

I was given the privilege of speaking with JOLT 1 and TJJ this past Shabbat about what the OU in N.Y. and in Israel are doing to help the situation.

It has been a true honor.

May Hashem continue giving us all the vision and the strength to continue.

B'virvat HaTorah,

Avi Berman, Director-General, OU in Israel

The following is part of a letter written by a Haifa resident (temporarily living elsewhere) to the former residents of Gush Katif.

Friends and family members are being injured and killed. Some of us are without roofs over our heads. I closed my business since the beginning of the battle and I don't know what will happen. We are wandering between family and good people. Our family life has been impaired. I never thought that I, a Haifa resident for 30 years, would be a refugee in my own land.

Everything that is happening now sounds so familiar from the recent past.

For five years, you coped with bombs - and I didn't care.

You buried family and friends - and I was indifferent.

You found yourselves without a home, just like that... and you never had someone that listened to you.

Even when you came to visit me in my house, to explain, to convince, to share your feelings with me - I refused to listen to you...

...I am out of my house, without my regular routine. It is very hard, but the empathy, support, and people identifying with our plight helps me go on.

People from Gush Katif and the Shomron: FORGIVE ME. Forgive us for leaving you on your own. Forgive us for not understanding you.

I am not a religious man or a mystic person. But we cannot ignore the deep relationship between my attitude towards you and the price that I am paying now for my late understanding.