

This Shabbat is the 334th day (of 354); the 48th Shabbat (of 50) of 5766 We read/learn the SECOND perek of Avot (in Chu"l: 1st & 2nd perek) **מוצא שפתיך תשמור ועשיה... דברים כג:ד**

An Important Subtlety

Parshat Ki Teitzei contains 12% of the Torah's 613 mitzvot, and several others counted elsewhere. It is the quintessential mitzva sedra, and with 44 parshiyot (2 p'tuchot and 42 s'tumot), it is the record holder in that category as well. With so many mitzvot to study, let us focus on just a few that will serve as examples of the subtlety referred to in the title of this Lead Tidbit.

The Torah says... if a person was tried and convicted of a capital offense (let's say, idolatry), executed and his body was then hung on a post briefly (in compliance with D'varim 21:22) - that we are commanded to bury him without undue delay. Our Sages teach us that we must bury all our dead, without undo delay. Is burial of the dead a Rabbinic law that is inspired by the Torah's command concerning the executed felon? Or is it more? The answer is that it is definitely MORE. The Jewish requirement to bury our dead is Torah Law! Our Sages taught us that it is included in the definition of the Biblical law described above. It is D'Oraita.

The Torah says... we may not harness an ox and a donkey together to pull a plow. Our Sages teach us that it is forbidden to pull a circus wagon with an elephant and two giraffes harnessed together (as described in Dr. Seuss' "And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street" - his first children's book, by the way). Is this Rabbinic extension of Torah Law? No, it is not. It is the transmission of the Oral Law that teaches us that ox, donkey, and plowing are all examples, and that the tying together of any two animals for any function is a Torah violation.

The Torah says... that a deputy of the Sanhedrin is forbidden to administer an extra lash above the number determined that the one convicted and sentenced to Makot is to receive. Our Sages teach us that it is forbidden for a Jew to strike his fellow Jew. D'Rab- banan? No, D'Oraita. Torah Law.

The Talmud contains many, many laws and prohibitions that are D'Rabbanan, of Rabbinic authority. But the Talmud also contains the definitions of the Written Word that are to be transmitted from generation to generation as the

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...

The molad was THU morning. Three days later is Sunday morning. That means that the first opportunity for Kiddush L'vana this month (according to Minhag Yerushalayim) was Sunday night, August 27th. For 7-day after the molad opinion followers, first op for KL is THU night, August 31. For anyone who has not yet said KL this month, Motza'ei Shabbat, September 2nd is a great opportunity for this special bracha.



This Shabbat, 9 Elul ...is the traditional date of the yahrzeit of Dan b. Yaakov, who died 3446 years ago at the age of 125. ...is the date the Ramban arrived in Jerusalem, 739 years ago. ...is the 106th yahrzeit of R' Tzadok b. Yaakov HaKohen of Lublin, one of the most prolific authors in the history of the Chassidic movement.

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Regular and (earliest)

CANDLE LIGHTING & Havdala times
Israel Summer Time

Correct for TT 730 • Rabbeinu Tam (l'm) - 8:17pm	
6:28pm (5:44) Jerusalem	7:40pm
6:45pm (5:46) Raanana	7:42pm
6:44pm (5:45) Beit Shemesh	7:41pm
6:45pm (5:46) Netanya	7:42pm
6:45pm (5:46) Rehovot	7:41pm
6:25pm (5:45) Petach Tikva	7:41pm
6:44pm (5:45) Modi'in	7:41pm
6:44pm (5:45) Be'er Sheva	7:41pm
6:43pm (5:44) Gush Etzion	7:39pm
6:44pm (5:45) Ginot Shomron	7:41pm
6:28pm (5:44) Maale Adumim	7:39pm
6:43pm (5:44) K4 & Hevron	7:40pm
6:33pm (5:44) Tzfat	7:40pm

Ranges are FRI-FRI • 8-15 ELUL • (September 1-8)

Earliest Talit & T'filin - 5:23-5:28am
Sunrise - 6:14-6:18½am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma - 9:26-9:27 am (8:40-8:41am)
Sof Z'man T'fila - 10:30-10:30am (9:59-10:00am)
Chatzot (halachic noon) - 12:39-12:37pm
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha) - 1:12-1:09pm
Plag Mincha - 5:44-5:36pm
Sunset - 7:08-6:59pm (7:03½-6:54½pm)

In the Wolinetz Family Shul
OHEL SHMUEL (entrance floor)
Early Shabbat Minyan
Mincha 5:30pm (before PLAG)
Shabbat Shiur 5:00pm Mincha 6
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Oral Law. Part of our Belief System is that the Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish People at Sinai, and that Moshe Rabeinu, the chief of all prophets, was to teach the people of Israel both the content of the Written Torah and the Oral Law that G-d taught him. That we are to dwell in Sukkot for the seven days of the holiday is part of Torah; so are the minimum and maximum heights of a Sukka. That we may not poach baby goat meat in its own mother's milk is part of the Torah; so is the prohibition of cooking chunks of beef in sheep milk.

Belief, trust, confidence in the Oral Tradition and in the Sages throughout the generations who are the links in the Chain of Tradition, is an essential part of our Hashkafa. This applies not only in telling us what to do and what not to do, but in the more subtle area of identifying a Torah Law, Rabbinic Law, Custom, Strict measure, etc.

A Jew who is committed to halacha and will not violate a prohibition, for example, regardless of whether it is Torah or Rabbinic in authority, but who does not accept that a particular halacha is Torah Law (when Chazal teach us that it is), is lacking in that commitment. Compliance in deed must be accompanied by a belief and commitment to the principles and concepts of Judaism, as well. It isn't always easy, but it is always challenging. And Elul is a good time to work on improving ourselves, not only in deed - although that is vital - but in thought and attitude, as well.



KI TEITZEI STATS

49th of the 54 sedras; 6th of 11 in D'varim
 Written on 212.8 lines in a Torah (rank: 21)
 44 Parshiyot; 2 open, 42 closed (rank: 1)
 110 p'sukim - ranks 28th (5th in D'varim)
 1582 words - ranks 23rd (5th in D'varim)
 5856 letters - ranks 26th (6th in D'varim)
 Slightly larger than average p'sukim; below average for D'varim. Overall, an average-sized sedra. But...

MITZVOT

74 of 613 mitzvot 27 positives, 47 prohibitions
 Ki Teitzei has the most mitzvot, most positive mitzvot, most prohibitions, and most parshiyot of any sedra in the Torah.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

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

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma respectively. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Kohen - First Aliya - 12 p'sukim - 21:10-21

[S>21:10 (5)] The "beautiful captive": A Jewish soldier must resist the "normal" temptations of battle, but is permitted to take a captive woman only according to the approved Torah procedures [532,A221 21:11].

Looking at this mitzva from both ends, we first see it as a "concession to the base inclinations of a man", in the heat of battle. On the other hand, it demands more of the Jew than is common of soldiers all over the world, who are notorious for immoral and atrocious behavior of all sorts.

If he decides after the one-month waiting period not to marry her, he must release her without abusing, humiliating, or selling her [533,534; L263,264 21:14]. A Jew's marriage to a YFAT TO'R is also conditional on her conversion to Judaism. If she does not want to, he must release her. If she does convert and they want to marry, then it is a full, regular Jewish marriage, with K'dushin and Ketuba, etc.

[S>21:15 (3)] A man may not favor the son of his beloved wife over his firstborn from a "less-loved" wife. (Implication from the juxtaposition of these two topics is that marrying for the wrong motive is likely to lead to a "hated wife".)

This passage is the source of the firstborn's inheritance. Ramban counts two mitzvot here - the positive command to give the firstborn a double portion and the prohibition of not giving it to him. Rambam and the Chinuch include the rules of the first-born as part of the laws of inheritance from Parshat Pinchas and not separately here. This is just one of many examples of different countings among the Sages who attempted to identify the traditional 613 mitzvot.

רפואה שלמה למשה צבי בן שיינדל



The Vilna Gaon sees a hint to the double portion of the B'chor in the letters of the word B'CHOR: BET-KAF- RESH. Each letter is double the letter before it - BET (2) is double ALEF (1), KAF (20) is double YUD (10), REISH (200) is double KUF (100). (No other consecutive letter-pairs are like that.)

[S>21:18 (4)] The "rebellious son" is warned by his parents to mend his ways. If he continues to defy them, violates certain mitzvot, engages in a specific sequence of actions, and if he is of a specific age and at a particular stage of physical development, and his parents are healthy, normal, and deemed to be on equal levels of character, then, and only then, would it be possible to execute him as a "Ben Sorer U'moreh". Although it is (almost) impossible to reach that ultimate point - and sources indicate that there never actually was a case of "the rebellious son" - this portion of the Torah serves as a stern warning to wayward children AND their parents! Some mitzvot seem to be intended primarily as deterrent and Mussar.

Levi - Second Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 21:22-22:7

[S>21:22 (2)] Those executed by stoning were hung after death **[535,A230 21:22]** for a brief period before sunset. They were then buried **[536,L66 21:23]** with the hanging post to avoid extra embarrassment to the Divine image in which we were all created.

The hanging of the body after execution (which is done in some cases, not all) serves as a deterrent for others and is part of the atonement process for the soul of the guilty party.

Using "Kal VaChomer", we are taught that burial, in general, and "as soon as is feasible", in particular, is the proper procedure for the dead **[537,A231 21:23]**. This is part of the Torah law - see Lead Tidbit.

[S>22:1 (3)] One is required to return identifiable lost objects to their rightful owners **[538,A204 22:1]**, even if doing so is difficult. One cannot ignore this responsibility **[539,L269 22:3]** even if it is easier to just leave the object alone.

Technically, the laws of LOST & FOUND apply to possessions of fellow Jews. However, with the potential for Kiddush HaShem and its opposite, depending upon what one does, it is important to go out of one's way to return a lost item to a non-Jew as well. This too is part of halacha, not just a nice thing to do.

[S>22:4 (1)] Nor may one ignore a fellow's beast of burden that has collapsed under its load **[540,L270 22:4]**. One is required to help his fellow load his animals **[541,A203 22:4]**.

Sefer HaChinuch points out that this mitzva-pair applies to other animals, not just donkey, and it applies to people as well, by reasoning a KAL VACHOMER. If you see a fellow human over-loaded with what he/she is carrying (or trying to carry), it is a mitzva to help out. Furthermore, if you are approached by friend or neighbor who offers to help you carry some of your

packages, you should consider letting him/her, rather than the typical, "It's okay, I got it." It allows your burden to be eased while the other person does a mitzva. Every- one benefits.

[S>22:5 (5)] Men and women may not interchange apparel **[542,543; L39, 40 22:5]** nor do certain things that are specific to the opposite sex.

[P>22:6 (2)] When one happens upon a (kosher) bird's nest (in the wild), it is forbidden to take the mother bird alone or with her eggs/chicks **[544,L306 22:6]**, but one may (must? this is the subject of a dispute with a decidedly kabalistic flavor on the side that suggests it is an imperative) take the eggs/chicks if one first sends the mother bird away **[545,A148 22:7]**. This is an enigmatic mitzva that defies logic. It is shrouded in mysticism, more so than most mitzvot.

Although our Sages attribute kindness to animals as the reason (or part of the reason) for some mitzvot - e.g. not muzzling an animal that is working with food, helping to unload a beast of burden, not plowing with an ox and a donkey together - they (our Sages) were more cautious with this mitzva of SHILU'ACH HAKEN. It can be argued that it is far kinder to leave a nest alone than to chase away the mother bird (which is simultaneously kind and cruel - one way of looking at it). This mitzva is more CHOK-like than other mitzvot involving animals.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 29 p'sukim - 22:8-23:7

[S>22:8 (2)] One is required to build a protective fence around one's (habitable) roof **[546,A184 22:8]**. It is forbidden to leave safety hazards on one's property **[547,L298 22:8]**.

Oral law defines these mitzvot as more inclusive than just one's roof. Rabbinic law, "taking the Torah's lead", extends "safety & health" rules further into many areas, e.g. secondary smoking. Rambam says that a person may not tell others: "Don't tell me what to do; if I want to risk my health or life, it's my business". Saying this can make a person liable to the punishment of MAKAT MARDUT. This is something to keep in mind when you decide to "talk to" your favorite smoker. With secondary smoking, it is most definitely your business too. But even when it's not, it is - All Israel are responsible for each other.

One may not plant mixed grains in a vineyard **[548,L216 22:9]**, nor may one eat the resulting products **[549,L193 22:9]**.

"Strangely", these two mitzvot - MAAKEH and Mixed Grain - share a single parsha. What connects them to each other more than other mitzvot?

[S>22:10 (2)] Plowing with ox and donkey together is forbidden, as is the tying together of any non-compatible animals (or humans) for any purpose **[550,L218 22:10]**.

Rambam holds that the Torah prohibits any combination of a kosher and non- kosher animal, based on the fact that the Torah's example is one of each. Rambam says that combinations of two kosher or two non-kosher animals is forbidden by Rabbinic law. Many authorities

challenge Rambam's distinction and say that it is all Torah law.

Do not wear Shaatnez (garments of wool and linen) **[551,L42 22:11]**

[S>22:12 (1)] ...put tzitzit on all four-cornered garments that you wear. [counted elsewhere]

[S>22:13 (7)] It is a mitzva to marry according to Jewish Law and for the husband to write a K'TUBA for his wife with various promises and assurances **[552,A213 22:13]**.

The juxtaposition of tzitzit to marriage seems to be the source of the minhag of many Ashkenazi Jews of starting to wear a Talit when one marries.

If a man had falsely accused his (betrothed) wife of infidelity, he may not divorce her (unless she so desires) **[553,554; A219,L359 22:19]**. Penalties are also paid to the girl's family for the insult.

[S>22:20 (2)] If the betrothed maiden did, in fact, willfully, intentionally have relations with another man, and there are kosher witnesses and properly administered warning, and all the other rules of evidence, then she is an adulteress and can be executed (stoning).

[S>22:22 (1)] If a man and married woman has relations (knowing full-well the married status of the woman), and neither was forced, then they are both subject to the death penalty for adultery. [This prohibition is counted from Commandment #7]

[S>22:23 (2)] The same applies if the woman is "just" betrothed (this is more than engagement in our time). The specific incident of stoning is generalized to the mitzva upon the court to carry out the punishment of "stoning" when required **[555, A220 22:24]**.

[S>22:25 (3)] Both consenting parties to a forbidden relationship are culpable. However, if it is possible to consider the woman an unwilling partner, then she must not be punished. We must not punish anyone who might not be responsible for their actions **[556,L294 22:26]**. This is the source of giving people the benefit of the doubt. This does not mean that the person always deserves the benefit of the doubt. Maybe they actually sinned. The answer, it will have to be left to G-d to punish them; we are obligated to explain the situation as in this example - certainly the girl screamed but there was no one to save her.

[S>22:28 (2)] A man who forces himself on an unmarried maiden must pay a fine to her father. If the girl wants to be married to the man, he must marry her and never initiate divorce (she, of course, may insist that she wants nothing to do with him and then the court will force him to divorce her had they married) **[557,558; A218,L358 22:29]**.

[S>23:1 (1)] A man may not marry his father's former wife (even after his father's death).

[S>23:2 (1)] Castrated men (it depends on how their situation happened) have marriage restrictions

[559,L360 23:2]

[S>23:3 (1)] A "mamzer" has marriage restrictions **[560,L354 23:3]**. Mamzer is the offspring of a union that is prohibited by the Torah, with a death penalty. This includes incestuous and adulterous relationships. A mamzer has marriage restrictions. He may, however, marry a mamzeret or a female convert to Judaism. And vice versa for a mamzeret.

[S>23:4 (4)] Amonite and Moabite males may not marry into the "Congregation of G-d" **[561,L53 23:4]**, because of the cruel, inhospitable behavior of those two nations towards Israel. And also because they hired Bil'am to "bless" us. Nor may we ever offer those two nations peace as an alternative to war, as is required of other enemies **[562,L56 23:7]**.

Note that the Torah is giving a reason for a mitzva, something that it rarely does. However, it is precisely the reason that allowed our Sages to declare Ruth the Moabite able to marry into the Jewish Nation. (It was the Moavite men who displayed that unforgivable behavior, not the women.)

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 23:8-24

[S>23:8 (2)] OTOH, converts from Edom and Egypt are not to be discriminated against, but can fully integrate only from the 3rd generation on **[563,564 L54,55 23:8]**.

[S>23:10 (6)] A military camp must be kept spiritually and physically clean. Sanitary facilities must be provided outside the camp and soldiers must be equipped with appropriate tools for maintaining proper sanitation **[566,567; A192,193 23:13,14]**.

An offshoot of this mitzva: entry to Har HaBayit (referring to the area where the Beit HaMikdash and its courtyard DID NOT stand) by people with certain types of ritual impurity is forbidden **[565,L78 23:11]**. (The area where the Mikdash stood - or might have stood - is off-limits to all TMEI'IM.)

Conceptually, we must realize that G-d's presence among us is affected by our moral behavior. Thus, these mitzvot have ramifications to Jewish society as a whole, and not merely in a military setting.

[S>23:16 (2)] A slave who runs from his master to us for protection, may not be returned. Nor may we abuse a slave who seeks haven in Eretz Yisrael **[568,569;L254,255 23:16,17]**.

[S>23:18 (2)] Prostitution is forbidden **[570,L355 23:18]** and its revenues may not be used for sacred matters **[571,L100 23:19]**. (Some sources consider sex between unmarried partners part of mitzva #570.)

[S>23:20 (2)] Although interest on personal loans may not be taken from a Jew, it is acceptable (and correct) to lend to non-Jews with interest **[572,573;L236,A198 23:20,21]**. This is so because society in general accepts the reasonableness of moderate interest on loans. Since

a non-Jew can charge a Jew interest, the Torah gives us permission to take interest from them. Usury, loan sharking, would be recognized as a "universal" wrongdoing; the ban against any interest at all is a special spiritual requirement of the Jew.

[S>23:22 (3)] Pledges to the Mikdash must be fulfilled within the cycle of the three festivals [574,L155 23:22].

It is advisable to refrain from making promises, but once made, a person must keep them [575,A94 23:24]. (Hatarat N'darim provides an "out" for certain ill-advised promises, within limits. Consult a Rav for specific cases.)

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 23:25-24:4

[S>23:25 (1)] Workers are entitled to eat of the food they are working with [576,A201 23:25], but may not take extra (home) without permission [577, L268 23:25].

[S>23:26 (1)] Workers mustn't eat while they are working [578, L267 23:26]. In other words, their right to eat [576] is restricted to their breaks.

We see a beautiful balance in the area of Torah Law as it relates to boss- worker relations. On the one hand, the worker is allowed to eat from that which he picks. On the other hand, he cannot do this while he is actually working, as this would reduce his efficiency, thereby short-changing his boss. On the other hand, the boss must provide breaks during the day, when the worker is allowed to eat. On the other hand, the worker may not take any of the fruits home with him, without permission. Talmudic law adds to this list for both sides. Boss may not take advantage of worker, and worker may not take advantage of their boss.

[S>24:1 (4)] If a married couple wants to end their marriage, it must be done with a proper "get" [579,A222 24:1]. If a divorcee has remarried, and is subsequently widowed or divorced, she cannot remarry her first husband [580, L356 24:4].

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 24:5-13

[S>24:5 (2)] A man is exempt from military service during the first year of his marriage [581,L311 24:5], during which time he is to see to it that his wife is happy [582,A214 24:5].

One may not take vessels used for preparing food as a security against a loan [583,L242 24:6]. We must be sensitive to the needs of the borrower.

Another example of two different mitzvot that share a parsha. This is noteworthy because Ki Teitzei has so many parshiyot as it is, one wonders why these were not each in their own parsha. Is there an extra connection?

[S>24:7 (1)] Kidnapping and selling the victim is a capital offense. Kidnapping was already prohibited by

Commandment #8, LO TIGNOV (i.e. stealing a person). That was the "warning"; this is the "punishment". Both are needed.

[S>24:8 (2)] We must not remove signs of "Tzora'at" [584,L308 24:8].

A blemish is TZORAAT iff (if and only if) declared so by a kohen. If this happens, then using medicines or surgery to remove the affliction is forbidden and counter-productive. A person's spiritual and religious growth is triggered by the NEGA. It needs not surgery or medication, but rather introspection and repentance.

Always remember what happened to Miriam. [Although Rambam and Chinuch do not count this "remember" among the 613, other mitzva-counters do.] What happened to Miriam is that she was punished for speaking ill of her brother Moshe and she was afflicted with Tzoraat; hence, the connection between these two p'sukim that share a parsha.

[S>24:10 (4)] We must not be overly forceful in the taking of a security from a poor person who has borrowed from us [585,L239 24:10]. We must not withhold that which has already been taken from him; if he needs it, we must return it to him [586,587; L240, A199 24:12,13]. Another positive-pro- hibition pair of mitzvot.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 28 p'sukim - 24:14-25:19

[S>24:14 (2)] We may not take unfair advantage of our less-fortunate workers. A day-laborer must be paid on time [588,A200 24:15]. The prohibition of delaying his wages is counted elsewhere. (Another 2-sided mitzva.)

[S>24:16 (1)] Close relatives may not testify against (or for) one another in criminal cases [589,L287 24:16]. There is also the implication here that a person will not be punished for deeds of his parents or children. This is an example (one of many) of a pasuk teaching us two or more quite different things. In this case, one is a mitzva among Taryag, the other is a teaching (for lack of a better word).

[S>24:17 (2)] One must not pervert justice even on behalf of an orphan [590,L280 24:17]. Securities for a loan must not be taken from a widow [591, L241 24:17]. Our experience in Egypt is to be remembered as the motive for many of these "sensitizing" mitzvot.

[S>24:19 (1)] That which is forgotten in the fields after harvesting must be left for the poor; one should not return for it himself [592,593;A122,L214 24:19].

[S>24:20 (3)] The previous parsha set down the rules of SHICH'CHA; this parsha adds rules for proper kind behavior when picking olives and grapes. Again we are reminded of our Egyptian experience. Even though Egypt was unspeakably cruel to us, our experience there is supposed to make us kinder and more sensitive.

[S>25:1 (4)] The punishment of makot (whipping) is to

be administered by the courts to those found guilty of sins punishable thusly, but care must be exercised not to exceed the required number of lashes [594,595; A224, L300 25:2,3].

As mentioned in the Lead Tidbit, the prohibition of not exceeding the approved number of lashes, also includes the more general prohibition of striking a fellow Jew.

Do not muzzle an animal when it is working with food [596,L219 25:4].

[S>25:5 (6)] The widow of a man without children is forbidden to marry anyone else [597,L357 25:5] until... She either "marries" her brother-in-law (Yibum) [598,A216 25:5] or the relationship is severed by chalitzta [599,A217 25:9], in which case she may marry anyone else. (Not a kohen.)

The Torah speaks of a man dying with- out having had a BEN. Does that mean "son" or "child"? Is the word BEN in this context, exclusive or inclusive? This is a very important question. Sometimes BEN means male child and sometimes it includes sons and daughters. In the case of a man dying, the word BEN includes any offspring. If a man has no sons, only a daughter, and he dies, his widow is free to marry anyone except a Kohein Gadol. And she may not marry her late husband's brother. That is a high level prohibition. If the man had no offspring, his widow must* marry his brother (*or receive Chalitzta). Total opposites, depending upon exactly what BEN means. How do we know? Torah She'b'al Peh, the Oral Law.

[S>25:11 (2)] If person "A" is pursuing "B" to kill him, we must save B's life even if it means killing A [600,A247 25:12]. We cannot show mercy to the pursuer (A) [601,L293 25:12]. If it is possible to stop "A" without killing him, we must do so - to kill him in this case would be an act of murder.

[S>25:13 (4)] (Not only may one not use false measures, but) mere possession of false dry or liquid measures or weights is forbidden [602,L272 25:13]. Honest weights and measures is one of the pillars of society; G-d despises those who cheat in business.

[P>25:17 (3)] The final portion of the sedra is "Zachor". We are commanded to remember what Amalek did to us on our way out of Egypt [603,A189 25:17]. The Jewish People as a whole are commanded to destroy the remnant of Amalek from this world [604,A188 25:18]. We must never forget what Amalek did [605,L59 25:19].

Technically, these mitzvot apply to the specific Amalek nation. The idea, however, must be extended to the Amalek-types that have plagued us throughout Jewish history.

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

Haftara - 10 p'sukim - Yeshayahu 54:1-10

This is the 5th of the 7 haftarot of consolation. It prophesies an end to the Exile, a reconciliation between

the People of Israel and G-d. G-d is likened to the husband of His estranged wife, Israel. The couple will reconcile, so to speak. G-d says that the Exile is to Israel as the Flood was to No'ach. He promises no more exile. No more anger. The Exile was temporary. His Love is everlasting.

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

Lesson 346 (part three)

Right of First Refusal

At the end of the last lesson there were listed some of the exceptions to the exercise of the right of first refusal.

We continue with other exceptions.

Sale to a minor:

The law of the right of first refusal does not apply if Reuven sells his land to minor orphans. The reason for the right of first refusal is that Levi, the purchaser, can just as easily purchase a piece of land somewhere else and Shimon the contiguous neighbor, will gain if he purchases the land and develops it as part of the land that he already owns. In the case of a minor orphan purchaser this reason does not prevail since minor orphans are not required to search for land in another place. Orphans who are not minors or minors who have a father are also not exempt from the law of right of first refusal, and Shimon may take the land from them upon paying to them the purchase price.

There is an opinion that holds that if the seller (the role of Reuven) is a minor or a woman, the law of the right of first refusal does not apply. For example, Sarah (or Reuven, an orphaned minor) sells land to Levi, then Shimon cannot exercise a right of first refusal.

Sale to a Woman

The law of the right of first refusal does not apply if Reuven sells the land to a woman who is a widow of a divorcee, or even a married woman purchasing the real estate with her own funds over which her husband does not exercise control. [The reason for the right of first refusal is that Levi, the purchaser, can just as easily purchase a piece of land somewhere else and Shimon, the contiguous neighbor, will gain if he can purchase the land and develop it as part of the land that he already owns. In the case of a woman this reason does not prevail, since women are not required to search for land in another place.] That the right of first refusal cannot be exercised by the neighbor if the purchaser is a woman applies even if the neighbor is a woman or minor orphan. However, Beth Din must be convinced that the purchase by the woman is with her own independent funds, and is not really a purchase by her husband to circumvent Shimon's right of first refusal.

Tenants

For many purposes in halacha, a tenant is treated as a purchaser of the land of the owner for the period of the lease. Assume that the landlord is Reuven and the tenant on the land is Aaron, and Shimon is the owner of a contiguous piece of land. Various questions arise in the following fact situations:

(1) If Reuven sells the land to Levi, a person who does not own land contiguous to Reuven's land, does Aaron have the right of first refusal against such sale?

(2) If Reuven sells the land to Aaron, does Shimon have the right of first refusal?

(3) If Shimon sells his land, does Aaron have the right of first refusal regarding Shimon's land?

(4) May Shimon exercise a right of first refusal regarding the lease and insist that Reuven lease the land to him upon the same terms as the lease to Aaron?

There are those who hold that the law of the right of first refusal does not apply in any event to Aaron, the tenant of the land, and the answer to the first three questions will be that (1) Reuven may sell his land to Levi or Shimon and Aaron cannot exercise a right of first refusal; (2) if Reuven sells his land to Aaron, Shimon may exercise a right of first refusal; and (3) if Shimon sells his land, Aaron may not exercise a right of first refusal.

There is an opinion that Aaron does have the right of first refusal. Thus if Reuven sells his land to anyone including Shimon, Aaron may exercise the right of first refusal, and if Reuven sells the land to Aaron, Shimon may not exercise his right of first refusal. If Shimon sells his land to Aaron, Reuven may exercise his right of first refusal, even against Aaron.

Regarding question (4), here too there are various views, the most prominent being that Shimon may exercise a right of first refusal and Reuven must lease the land to Shimon, if the contemplated use by Shimon will not be more burdensome to the land than the use contemplated by Aaron. For example, Aaron has a family of five persons who will be living as tenants in Reuven's house, while Shimon has a family of seven who will be living in Reuven's house. The ages of the children may be a determining factor if there is more wear and tear on the house in the case of Shimon. Beth Din must decide in each case to make the determination of which family will cause more damage to Reuven's house.

Gentiles

Levi purchases or leases land from a Gentile. Shimon the contiguous owner may not exercise a right of first refusal. Assume that Reuven sells his land to a Gentile. Shimon, the contiguous owner, may not exercise a right of first refusal. Or assume that Reuven has land between Shimon and a Gentile. Reuven sells his land to Levi. There is an opinion that Shimon may not exercise a right of first refusal.

Heirs of Purchaser

Reuven sells his land to Levi. Before Shimon has the opportunity to exercise his right of first refusal, Levi dies, and his land is left to his heir Yehuda. There are authorities who hold that Shimon may exercise his right of first refusal against Yehuda and some authorities hold he may not, since it was not Yehuda who acted against the interests of Shimon. Even according to the latter opinion, if Yehuda sells this land to Yissacher, Shimon may exercise his right of first refusal against Yissacher.

Charities

Reuven donates his land to charity. Shimon may not exercise his right of first refusal, even if he offers to substitute other land in another place that is appraised to be worth more than

the land donated by Reuven. The reason is that Reuven wants people to know that he donated this land. If the land is exchanged by Shimon for land in another place, Reuven's friends may not remember that he donated the land to charity.

IYH, in the next lesson, how and by whom may the right of first refusal be exercised.

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume V chapter 175 of A Restatement of Rabbinic Civil Law by E. Quint. Copies of all volumes can be purchased via email: orders@gefenpublishing.com and via website: www.israelbooks.com and at local Judaica bookstores. Questions to quint@inter.net.il

TANACH

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

These are the Sons of Yaakov [7]

The propriety of the actions of the sons of Yaakov in reaction to the degradation of their sister has been the focus of almost all of our commentators, throughout the ages. They have discussed the morality, both of their reply to Shechem regarding his marriage to Dina and the killing of the people of Shechem. Irrespective of their answers to these issues, the very fact that they saw fit to discuss what would seem to us to be fitting reactions to a terrible and immoral crime, shows a major spiritual and ethical awareness. Neither the negotiations nor the killing of a whole city were seen either as acts of revenge for family dishonor nor as mob retribution nor primitive reactions, but as raising ethical and moral problems requiring serious answers. This is similar to the discussion among our Sages, of how Moshe could kill, without due process of law, the Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave.

Throughout most of the commentaries one can see either openly or by implication, the undercurrent of their own experience of galut. Rabbi S. R. Hirsch sees the actions of Shechem and Hamor and the reaction of Yaakov as paralleling the galut experience. "The sons of Yaakov saw through prophecy, that rape and degradation of women was not part of Galut Mitzrayim, and so saw themselves free to act as they did in the case of Shechem" (Rabbi Yonatan Eybeschutz).

"Yaakov's sons answered Shechem and Chamor, b'mirmah"; translated either as cleverly (Onkelos, Midrash) or as deceitfully (Radak); Cleverly, in that their answer was calculated to extradite Dina since they were certain that, even if Shechem agreed then, the people of the city would surely never agree to circumcision and they would be free to leave. In deceit, since they had no intention of intermarriage but the prerequisite of Mila would afford them an opportunity to take Dina while the city was recuperating from the Mila.

The moral dilemma of the sons of Yaakov recurs throughout the years of our galut when the nations have persecuted us, often threatening our very physical existence. The protective mechanism, under the unnatural conditions of exile and homelessness, against the constant threats of hostile host

nations and government enmity was always some measure of cunning, shrewdness or deceit. This is one of the primary ways in which 2000 years of Galut has deformed and corrupted us spiritually, leading to a Chillul Hashem (Ezekiel 36:16-32). For our generation the spiritual and moral challenge is to eradicate the pernicious effects of what was an understandable and justified protective mechanism, but which seems to have continued long after the cause has been removed. To a nation living independently under its own flag and government there are other perfectly moral ways to protect itself from persecution and danger. Today, in the golah, Jews have to liberate themselves from immoral and unethical practices forced on us over the generations by constant discrimination and persecution. Rabbi M. Feinstein, makes it clear that in the U.S.A. it is forbidden to cheat the government because there, in contrast to the generations of Eastern Europe, the Jews live under a government of chesed that has no desire to harm them (Iggrot Moshe, Choshen Mishpat, part 2, teshuvah 29).

We have still to consider the moral justification for the collective punishment by Bnei Yaakov of the people of Shechem for the action of their ruler. Broadly speaking, our commentators follow the arguments either of the Rambam or of the Ramban in formulating their answers. They both seek therein the collective legal responsibility and liability of the people of Shechem and therefore the justification for their death. There is great significance for us in these discussions beyond the specific case of Shechem, as these laws are still incumbent on all the nations to this day.

"Although the Rambam's nor the Ramban's explanation may suffice in other respects, neither of them can justify the looting and pillage of Shechem in which all of the brothers took part: They plundered their flocks, their herds, their donkeys, whatever was in the town and in the field" (Or HaChaim).

"The sixth of the Noachide laws is the obligation to appoint judges to enforce observation of the other six. A Ben Noach who transgresses any of the laws is liable to the death penalty. Anyone who witnesses any such transgression and does not act to bring the perpetrator to justice does not fulfill his personal obligation and is therefore liable to the same penalty. Since the people of Shechem saw and knew of the act of GEZEL of Dina by their prince but did nothing to bring him to trial, they became liable to the death penalty" (Hilkhot Melakhim 9:14). " However, it was not the responsibility of Yaakov and his sons to bring them to justice The obligation to appoint judges to enforce the other six is a positive mitzva and the Noachide is not punishable by death for not fulfilling a positive mitzva. However, the commercial, social and monetary laws incumbent on the Jew are likewise incumbent on Bnei Noach and they are liable for the death penalty for the infringement of any of them. The people of Shechem, like all the people of Canaan, disobeyed these laws and it was for that, that they deserved to die. So Shimon and Levi wanted to kill the king and all the men of his city. In this they maintained that their circumcision was not genuine. Yaakov held that they might of chosen to believe in G-d and thus Simon and Levi had killed them without cause." (Ramban, Bereishit 34:25).

This is installment #143 in Dr. Tamari's series

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- [11] **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...



What do we do if we find a mistake in the sefer Torah during the laining (reading)?



Many problematic mistakes that once existed in Sifrei Torah have been caught by computer checks, which every shul should try to arrange. The halachot of when fading or cracking letters ruin a Sefer Torah even B'DI- AVAD are well beyond our scope (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 143).

There are four main approaches to deal with the case where a sefer Torah is discovered to be pasul during laining. The simplest opinion, held by most Rishonim, is that all the laining to that point was worthless (Beit Yosef, OC 143 in the name of the Rashba, Rosh, and others). Thus, we would return to the beginning of the parasha with all of its aliyot. However, this opinion is rarely followed these days, and the reason begins with the Rambam.

The Rambam (Shut 294) says that the b'racha recited during an aliya read from a Sefer Torah pasul is valid because the main mitzva is to read the Torah's content, not to read from a kosher Sefer Torah. The Rambam even allowed a place with only a Sefer Torah pasul to read from it with b'rachot. We do not accept this ruling (Shulchan Aruch ibid.:3), and there are even indications that Rambam retracted it (see Rambam, Sefer Torah 10:1). However, all the accepted opinions rely on his approach to a certain degree regarding situations of B'DI-AVAD.

The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.:4, based on the Mahari Bei Rav) rules that whatever was read before the mistake was discovered is valid, B'DI-AVAD. However, if this occurs in the middle of an aliya, we finish the aliya (including at least three p'sukim - Mishna Berura 143:18) from a kosher Sefer Torah before the oleh makes the concluding b'racha. Otherwise, we would be relying on the Sefer Torah, L'CHATCHILA. S'fardim and a few Ashkenazic communities follow this ruling.

The Mordechai (Megila 793) objects to taking out a new Sefer Torah in the middle of an aliya. He proves from the Gemara (Yoma 70a) that when switching Sifrei Torah in the middle, a new b'racha is needed, but this is unnecessary according to the approach that the reading from a Sefer Torah pasul is valid. Therefore, he instructs to finish the aliya, if possible, at the point of discovery and recite the concluding b'racha on that which was read. If we cannot end the aliya there (e.g., we did not read three p'sukim or it is too close to a break in the Torah text), we continue reading from the Sefer Torah pasul until we can stop. Some important Ashkenazic poskim say that this is the correct and prevalent minhag (see the Magen Avraham (143:4), Sha'arei Ephrayim (5:2), and Aruch Hashulchan (143:5)).

The third major minhag is based on the Rama's (143:4) compromise between the Mahari Bei Rav and the Mordechai. It is best to stop where the mistake is revealed, like the Mordechai says. However, if we did not yet read three p'sukim and thus cannot end the aliya, we take out a kosher Sefer Torah and read from it without making a b'racha before continuing (Mishna Berura 143:22). If three p'sukim were read, making a concluding b'racha appropriate, but we cannot stop for another reason, there is a further machloket. The Pri Megadim says that here the Rama agrees with the Mordechai that it is better to read from the Sefer Torah pasul until we can stop. However, the Mishna Berura (ibid.) says that here too the Rama instructs to continue reading from a kosher Sefer Torah. Unless the minhag is different, one should follow the Rama (ibid.:23) and Mishna Berura.

We conclude with a few notes. Regarding a mistake uncovered in the last aliya or beyond, Ashkenazic minhag is complicated (see ibid.). Also, validation B'DI-AVAD applies to counting the previous aliyot toward the necessary seven as well, although having seven aliyot from a kosher sefer Torah may be preferable (ibid.:13). Finally, Ashkenazim return the Sefer Torah pasul to the Aron right away, whereas S'fardim leave it out until after Kri'at HaTorah.

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**

We swell with pride as with any other infection.

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

When speaking about aliya, Diaspora Jews sometimes say, "Certainly we are planning to live in Israel. But with all the fighting there, we can't go now. We will go as soon as the situation becomes more peaceful."

The message of this week's sedra is different. The opening verse, "When you go forth to war against your enemies", teaches that war is an integral part of our Divine national mission. Seven out of the 613 mitzvot of the Torah deal with war. God Himself is called "The Master of War".

Ramban explains that the commandment to wage war, milchemet mitzva, is part of the mitzva of dwelling in the Land of Israel and keeping it under Jewish sovereignty. Establishing national Jewish life in Eretz Yisrael is the way that we perform this mitzva, to be actively pursued by the Jewish People at all times. We do this with the Israel Defense Forces and with the aliya of every Jew to the Land of Israel. Not only with tanks and airplanes, but with every new Jewish house, stroller and washing machine.

The Torah's commandments dealing with war teach us that even when enemy nations dispute our right to the Land, we must call up our inner fortitude and courage, and summon our readiness to sacrifice for the sake of our Land, our nation, and our God. We must take active steps to enter the Land of Israel, dwell in it, and establish God's Kingdom on earth, even at the price of personal hardship and war. The precept of defending the Jewish nation in the Land of Israel and developing Jewish settlement in all of its borders is the Divine command which beckons to all of world Jewry today, just as it did in the time of Joshua. As the Haftara says, "And your seed shall possess nations, and make desolate cities to be inhabited. Don't be afraid."

Rabbi David Samson , Jerusalem

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**

A certain Chasid came to R' Dovid-Moshe of Chernobyl. The man was dressed in modern dress, and not the traditional Chasidic garb. When R' Dovid-Moshe saw this, he asked him: "What made you change your clothing?"

"Rebbe", the man apologized, "I live among non-Jews, who do not like Jews, and I was forced to change my clothes for the sake of peace."

"And now," R' Dovid-Moshe asked him, "that you dress like they do, have they begun to like you?"

#####

A young man who was a tremendous Torah scholar, did not derive his living from his Torah knowledge, but owned a factory which produced soda water.

This man and a number of others were sitting with R' Chaim of Brisk and discussing Torah. In the course of their discussion, this young man came up with a number of brilliant insights. "What a pity," said one of the others present, "that this young man isn't the Rav of a large city."

"I disagree," said R' Chaim. "I too, would leave the rabbinate if I had a factory."

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 - Ki Teitzei

1) Why does the Torah relate that the loved wife and the hated wife have children with the loved wife mentioned first and then relate that the first child was actually born to the hated wife? (See 21:15)

2) Why does the Torah spell the word MOREH from BEN SORER U'MOREH with a VAV (21:18) and then without a VAV just two verses later? (21:20)

3) The Torah commands that one must help when someone else's donkey is falling (See 22:4). Why does this week's parsha refer to that someone else as YOUR BROTHER while in Parshat Mishpatim (Sh'mot 23:4) it calls the other person YOUR ENEMY?

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

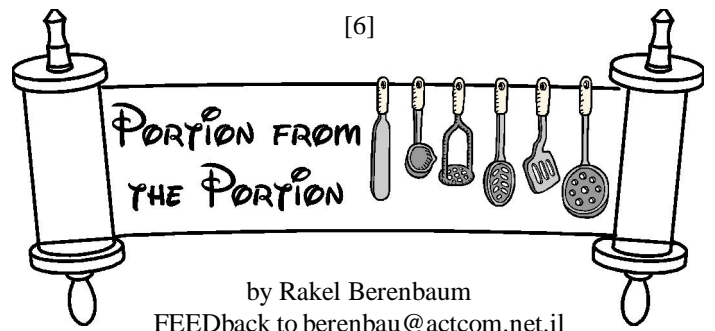
Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) The Vilna Gaon teaches that we see from here that there is a scenario where even though the loved wife gave birth first as the Torah relates, the child of the hated wife is the first born according to halacha. How can this be? It must be that the child of the hated wife was clearly conceived first and the child of the loved wife was born first. We learn from here that where one child was clearly conceived first, the birthright goes to that child even if another child is actually born first.

2) The Steipler Rav explains that the Torah is hinting to one of the problems which led to this rebellious child. In actuality, this child was completely and fully rebellious as connoted by the full spelling of the word MOREH with the VAV. However, the parents who are speaking in verse 20, only see him as somewhat rebellious as indicated by the incomplete spelling of the word MOREH. The Torah is teaching that this more positive perspective of the parents played a major role in his rebelliousness reaching this grave stage.

3) The Meshech Chachma points to the Gemara (Pesachim 113b) which explains that YOUR ENEMY refers to someone who has sinned and there is an allowance for a Jew to hate someone who has sinned. That, says the Meshech Chachma, only applied before the sin of the golden calf when Jews were on a much higher level and could feel sincere hate because of another person's sins. Now, however, we are on a much lower level and there is no situation where hate is allowed. Therefore, the Torah speaks simply of YOUR BROTHER.

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



by Rakel Berenbaum
FEEDback to berenbau@actcom.net.il

A MOON OF DAYS

The first part of this portion discusses the laws about women taken captive during wartime. If a soldier sees a beautiful woman among the captives that he is interested in, he may marry her. If she agrees to convert to Judaism he can marry her immediately (Rambam). Otherwise she must do certain things. First she must shave her head and let her fingernails grow. According to Ibn Ezra, this is to make her less attractive and according to the Chizkuni these are signs of her purification and new status in her conversion process. Then she must "take off her captives garb" which is again to make her look less attractive (Rashi) or as the Midrash Aggadah says, it is so she can remove any taint of idolatry. And then she must mourn the loss of her father and mother for a "moon of days" = a month.

Ramban explains that it can take her a month to empty her mind and heart from all her idols. Rabbi Chayim Zaitchik points out that we can all learn an important lesson from these verses. We should always keep in mind that to really change a character trait it takes a thirty day period of intensive work. This is what Elul is for. It is a time for us to focus on our behavior and traits in order to make major improvements on ourselves.

Sometimes people try to work on a trait for a couple of days and when they don't see any improvement, they become discouraged and give up. From these verses describing the 30-day period of weeping and change of the Y'FAT TO'AR, we can learn how we must act. The non-Jewish female captive who is contemplating converting to Judaism, must weep for 30 whole days. When we want to improve any trait we must give ourselves time. Some people may be able to make changes very quickly, but even they need a significant amount of time in order to ensure that the new habits become second nature. Even if we don't see any positive changes after a week or two, if we continue to persevere for an entire 30 days, then we will be able to see the fruits of our labor. Let us all not waste this Elul.

#####

Here's a great recipe to try during Elul. It takes thirty days to prepare the fruit for the cake if you are lucky enough to have a friend give you two cups of starter, otherwise it will take you an extra 20 days to make the starter. It sounds like a long time to make a cake but it's to bring home the point that worthwhile things, like T'shuva, take effort. This is a recipe for three cakes so you will really be ready for Rosh Hashana.

Thirty Day Friendship Cake

2½ cups sugar

1½ cups starter mixture

1 (28oz. / 800ml.) can sliced peaches and juice

Stir together and cover. Stir everyday.

10th day:

2 cups sugar

1 (28oz.) can chunk pineapple and juice

Add to mixture. Continue to stir everyday.

20th day:

2 cups sugar

1 (10oz. / 284ml.) jar maraschino cherries and juice

1 (28oz.) can fruit cocktail and juice

Add to mixture. Continue to stir everyday.

30th Day:

You are now ready to make three cakes. Make one cake at a time. Drain juice from fruit mixture. Divide fruit into 3 equal parts and use in 3 different cakes.

Divide juice into 1½ cup portions. Place in 5 tight containers and give to friends with a copy of the recipe as soon as possible. This is starter mixture and should be used within 5 days.

During 30 days, none of the recipe should be refrigerated. Keep in covered container at room temperature. If you can not make cake on 30th day, drain and pour out starter juice. YOU MUST GIVE STARTER THAT DAY. You may wait up to a week to bake cake but do NOT stir or refrigerate fruit.

Cake can be frozen but fruit juice can not. Cake freezes well for a year.

FOR EACH CAKE:

1 yellow cake mix

1 cup oil

4 eggs

1 sm. box instant vanilla pudding

3 of fruit, previously mixed together

½ to 1 cup chopped nuts

Mix first 4 ingredients before adding fruit and nuts. Best if mixed by hand. Bake in a greased and floured bundt pan at 180°C for 50 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean.

If you do not have the starter mixture, you can start the fruit cake with sugar peaches and juice. The taste will just be less strong. If you do want to make your own starter here is the recipe.

Starter ingredients:

1 (15oz / 426ml) can pineapple chunks, drained

1 (15oz) can apricot halves, drained

1 (15oz) can sliced peaches, drained

1 (10oz / 284ml) jar maraschino cherries, drained

1¼ cup brandy

1¼ cup white sugar

Directions:

In a large glass jar, combine drained pineapple chunks, drained apricot slices, drained sliced peaches, drained maraschino cherries, brandy and sugar. Stir gently with wooden spoon. Cover and let stand at room temperature for 3 weeks, stirring at least twice a week. Drain and reserve the liquid - This liquid is your starter for the Thirty Day Friendship Cake. The brandied fruit should be kept refrigerated and can be served with ice cream or pound cake or add 2 cups to any cake you make.

[7] Torah from Nature

Strange animal facts (culled from the web)

- A crocodile always grows new teeth to replace the old teeth! A crocodile cannot stick its tongue out.
- A hedgehog's heart beats 300 times a minute on average!
- A hippo can open its mouth wide enough to fit a 4 foot tall child inside!
- A hummingbird weighs less than a penny!
- A mole can dig a tunnel 300 feet long in just one night!
- A snail can sleep for three years.
- All polar bears are left handed.
- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
- Bulls are colour blind, therefore will usually charge at a matador's waving cape no matter what color it is
- Butterflies taste with their feet.
- Camels have three eyelids to protect themselves from blowing sand!
- Cats have over one hundred vocal sounds, but dogs only have about ten.
- Elephants are the only animals that can't jump.
- Porcupines float in water!
- The poison-arrow frog has enough poison to kill about 2200 people!
- The sloth (a mammal) moves so slowly that green algae can grow undisturbed on its fur!
- The world's termites outweigh the world's humans 10 to 1!

[8] MicroUlpan שפוד ♦ שפודית

SHAPUD (or SH'FOD) is a skewer.

SHAPUDIT is a little skewer, like a toothpick used when serving herring, olives, cheese cubes, etc.

[9] SDTs

It "feels right" that we begin Elul with the sedra that has the most mitzvot. It sort of gives us our agenda for the month - MITZVOT of all kinds.

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Some say that even though we officially observe the mitzva of ZACHOR on the Shabbat before Purim, there is also a fulfillment of the mitzva of sorts when we hear it on Shabbat Parshat Ki Teitzei. One should ask the Baal K'r'i'a to have Kavana when he reads ZACHOR this Shabbat.



Acknowledging a recently produced refrigerator magnet from Personal Connections (Israel) which we adapted and adopted as the title of this newly revived column, we present anecdotes which are meant to give you that warm feeling about living in the most special place on Earth. Or to feed your longing to do so... as the case may be.

Loaded down with Friday shopping bundles, including a large plastic Keter storage container, I attempted to board a bus, just as the doors were closing. The container got trapped between the closing doors and broke. The driver, adding insult to injury, said: "Is that any way to get on a bus?!" We exchanged words, none too pleasant, and that was that. When the bus got to my stop, I decided to leave via the front door, so that I could wish the driver a Shabbat Shalom, with perhaps an unspoken "no hard feelings". He beat me to it. Saw me coming, turned, extended his hand, and asked for forgiveness. We then wished each other a Shabbat Shalom and I exited the bus with a broken box but a warm feeling in my heart for my fellow Jew.

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Towards evening, on the beach in Netanya, the lifeguard announces over the loud-speaker that his station was closing down and that parents should make sure their children were safely out of the water, etc. Routine. His parting words, however, brought on that warm feeling that has not dulled in almost 25 years of living in Israel. He signed off with, AM YISRAEL CHAI!

Editor's note: For this column, I started things going with two recent personal experiences. They, together with the refrigerator magnet, inspired this column. Your turn. TTreaders are invited to submit personal stories for this column, which will appear as often as is warranted by reader participation.

[11] Divrei Menachem

In parshat Ki Tetze an interesting distinction is made between the various peoples who were (and maybe still are) our traditional adversaries. These are the Ammonites, the

Moabites, the Edomites and the Egyptians.

As the descendants of Lot - a beneficiary of his uncle, Avraham - Ammon and Mo'av should have demonstrated gratitude towards Avraham's offspring as they trudged through the desert. However, they did not even offer Bnei Yisrael bread and water. Moreover, Mo'av conspired to curse the Jewish people. Consequently, Ammon and Mo'av may never enter (i.e. marry) into the congregation of Hashem nor may we even seek their peace or welfare (D'varim 23:4-7).

Although Edom ("your brother") and Egypt both treated the Jewish people badly, we are enjoined not to treat them in kind (Artscroll). In contrast to Ammon and Mo'av, Egypt is singled out as having provided for Ya'akov and his family. As a sign of gratitude, the Torah admits their third generation to enter into the congregation of Hashem; we may not reject them (ibid 23:8-9).

Today, we understand the significance of gratitude as a universal value. But it seems that it is still necessary to entreat Hashem to give us the wisdom to correspondingly distinguish between the various foes with whom we contend.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

Towards Better Torah reading and Davening

Another look at an old topic,

with examples from Ki Teitzei.

When a VAV is prefixed to a verb in order to change its tense from past to future (or TZIVUI, the command tense - included in future), the accent most often changes from the next to the last syllable to the last syllable. The word goes from a MIL'EIL accent to MILRA.

Examples from Ki Teitzei:

bi-AR-ta (past), uvi-ar-TA (future)

SHAV-ta (past), v'shav-TA (future)

za-CHAR-ta (past), v'za-char-TA (future)

sha-CHACH-ta (past), v'sha-chach-TA (future)

And many others.

Notable exception is a LAMED-HEI verb. That is, when the root of the verb ends with a HEI.

ta-LI-ta (you hung, past tense),v'ta-LI-ta (and you shall hang). No switch in the accent this time, even though the tense flips.

Another situation in which the accent does not move even though the verb's tense is switching from past to future is when the word in question is the last word in a pasuk or it is TROP-ed with an ETNACHTA. Both these full stops keep the accent in place. When an accent does move we should be careful to accent the word correctly.

Don't believe that humans are the most intelligent species. Look at dolphins - it only takes them about a week to train someone to stand at the side of the pool and throw fish at them.

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 - Ketoret

Dear Catriel, You keep emphasizing that offering the Ketoret was the most beloved Avoda of the Kohanim. Do you have authentic sources to back you up? --A.R. from Ir Hakodesh, Monsey. Oh yeah, why Melach Sedomis and not regular salt? ("Melach Sedomis" or "Salt of Sodom" was one of the ingredients of Ketoret. CS)

Dear A.R., With all due respect, Yerushalayim - Paletin Shel Ma'ala - has been for a very long time and remains the Holy City, or more correctly, the city of the Holy One - the city that He has chosen.

I did indeed write that, "no act of Divine Service was more beloved by the Kohanim than Hakarat Ketoret, the incense offering, and it was believed that the incense offering was most beloved by Heaven as well. Kohanim were permitted to offer Ketoret only once in their lifetime." Before the third Payis - "Mikdash lottery"- when they determined who would offer the Ketoret that day, they proclaimed in the Azara, "New kohanim (i.e. those who have not yet offered incense), come and draw lots for the Ketoret" (Yoma 2:4). Bartenura comments, "That is the proclamation that they used to make in the Azara. That is to say, [any Kohein] who as of yet has not been privileged to offer Ketoret, let him come and participate in the Payis. They (the Kohanim) would not permit anyone who had already offered Ketoret to do so a second time because the Ketoret enriches those who offer it. It is written, 'They shall place incense before Your presence... (and immediately afterward) Bless O Lord his resources and favor the work of his hands... (D'varim 33:10,11)'" Bartenura continues, "Every Kohein who offered Ketoret was enriched and blessed for doing so. For this reason, they would not permit a Kohein to offer Ketoret a second time so all the Kohanim (or at least as many as possible CS) could be enriched and blessed."

Sincere prayer is compared to the offering of Ketoret. "Let my prayer be set forth as incense before Thee (T'hilim 141:2). Sincere prayer, like the aromatic fumes of incense, is wafted on High. 'R' Yitzchak ben Eliezer said, 'Know that they constructed the Mishkan and all its vessels, slaughtered and sacrificed the Korbanot on the Mizbei'ach, placed the Lechem Ha- Panim on the Shulchan and lit the Menora. They did everything - but the Shechina - the Divine Presence - did not descend until they offered Ketoret. How do we know this? It is written, 'Awake thou north, come thou south, blow upon my garden that the perfumes flow out. Let my Beloved come into His garden and eat His precious fruits' (Shir HaShirim 4:16). 'Awake thou north' - these are the burnt offerings that were slaughtered north of the Mizbei'ach. 'Come thou south' - these are the Sh'lamim that were slaughtered south of the Mizbei'ach. 'Blow upon my garden that the perfumes flow out.' This refers to the perfumed incense. 'Let my Beloved come ...this is the Shechinah... and eat His precious fruit... these are the now accepted Korbanot" (Midrash Tanchuma, Parshat Tetzaveh with commentary of the Eitz Yosef.)

"Said the Holy One Blessed be He, 'By means of the incense you attained atonement in this world; so shall it be in the Future

World..." (ibid. 15, end). "On the sacrificial altar [animal] sacrifices were offered. Similarly, the body of man is nourished by [material] food; but on the Mizbach HaZahav, only sweet Ketoret was offered, for the soul takes delight in perfumes only..."

The Torah says, "You shall salt your every meal-offering with salt; you may not discontinue the salt of your G-d's Covenant (Brit Elokecha) from upon your meal-offering; on your every offering (Korbancha) you shall offer salt (Vayikra 2:13). The Torah says further, "...it is an eternal salt-like covenant (Brit) before G-d..." (Bamidbar 18:19). Yechezkel Ha- Navi describes how the Kohanim one day will offer Korbanot - "a young bullock without blemish, a ram out of the flock without blemish" and "cast salt upon them, and offer them as a burnt-offering before G-d" (43:24). The Mishna repeatedly emphasizes that all Korbanot were salted. Josephus also describes how the Kohanim offered an Olah. "When they (the sacrificial animals) are killed, the kohanim sprinkle the blood around the Altar; they then cleanse the bodies, and divide them in parts, and salt them with salt..." (Antiquities 9:3; 1). The Sages concluded that no sacrifice could be offered in the Mikdash without being salted and that an unsalted Korban was invalid. The Kohanim also used salt in the preparation of the Lechem HaPanim and the Ketoret. Salt was used in the Mikdash in huge quantities and there was a special chamber called the Lishkat HaMelach that abutted the Ezrat Yisrael to store it. Adjacent to Lishkat HaMelach was Lishkat HaParva. "Here they salted the hides of the animal offerings" and gave them to the Kohanim of the Mishmeret. However, salt was not only used in the Avoda, in that "unrefrigerated" age, it was primarily used as a meat preservative. "Shake the salt off the meat. Cast [the flesh] to the dogs" (Nida 31a)! Because of its preservative qualities, salt became the symbol of the everlasting Brit between G-d and Am Yisrael.

There was a particular type of salt obtained from the Yam HaMelach (the Dead Sea) called Melach Sedomit - "Salt of Sodom" - that was used as an ingredient in the Ketoret (Keritot 6a). The sage Abayei claimed that Melach Sedomit could be found in minute quantities even in ordinary salt - "one grain in a Kor". (A Kor is equivalent to 30 Se'ah: the minimum amount of "natural" water required for a Kosher Mikveh is 40 Se'ah.) Melach Sedomit was thought to be so acrid that if one touched his eyes with the finger that had contact with it, it might cause blindness. For this reason, the Sages instituted Mayim Acharonim, rinsing the hands after the meal (Hullin 105b). Beit Avtinas, the priestly perfumers who compounded the Ketoret, "used Melach Sedomit and not regular salt because even though there are different varieties of salt - some come from the mountains, some from rivers - nevertheless the highest quality salt is Melach Sedomit which comes from the Yam HaMelach. Melach Sedomit is not mixed with water and it is the saltiest (Malu'ach B'yoteir) of all salts because it is like sulfur or brimstone. It was with this that G-d burnt Sodom as it is written, 'And G-d caused sulfur and fire to rain upon Sodom and Gomorrah...' (Bereishit 19:24). ...It is also the very best salt that can be used for Ketoret because it causes the smoke to rise quickly since Melach Sedomit itself is a kind of brimstone (which gives off fumes). The [Melach Sedomit in the Ketoret] causes the smoke to rise straight up and it also does not make noise as it burns [on the coals]. ... For this reason, the [silent] Ketoret can be compared to a prayer from the heart - a supplication that rises [to Heaven] silently, secretly, and soundlessly" (Sheltei HaGiborim 76).

from page 3 PARSHA PIX

Soldier in a tank, represents the many times "army" issues are mentioned in the sedra - The Beautiful Captive, the cleanliness of an army camp, exemption from service for a groom for the first year of marriage...

Warning lights are to prevent someone getting injured from a hazard in one's property. This is the flip side of the mitzva of MAAKEH.

Boot is for CHALITZA and the whole subject of YIBUM.

Nest with eggs is the scene immediately after someone has fulfilled the mitzva to send away the mother bird.

Couple under the CHUPA stands for several topics related to marriage.

Hands holding the wallet, taking out money is for the different monetary mitzvot in the sedra - not to borrow with interest. To pay a laborer on time. To fulfill one's pledges...

Cluster of grapes on top of a stalk of wheat to represent K'LAI KEREM.

Toilet is for requirement of having sanitary facilities outside an army base.

The string around the finger is for the various mitzvot to remember - what happened to Miriam, being in Mitzrayim, Amalek.

The grave-marker is for the mitzva to bury our dead, and reasonably quickly.

The donkey is for the many references to either donkey or other animal. The donkey gets lost, he is overburdened, he cannot pull a plow together with an ox...

The barbells with different weights on each end represents false weights and measures. Forbidden to use to defraud someone, and even forbidden to possess.

The aardvark and giraffe are tied together. That is a Torah violation.

There is a time clock representing paying the worker on time, and also the mitzvot related to workers' rights and employers' rights, as well.

There's a Purim grogger in the lower right corner. Stands for ZACHOR and especially wiping out Amalek. This is the origin of making noise when Haman's name is read.

KEY = KI, the word that starts the sedra off and appears 48 times in the sedra. That's a lot.

The apple tree can be for the rules of SHICH'CHA or the location of a nest, or for the rules to allow apple pickers to eat during their breaks.

Tzitzit is mentioned in the sedra, even though we count the mitzva back in Sh'lach.

That leaves one unexplained item

and something else...

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 (SHO-F'TIM) TTriddles:

[1] One of 6 ending on a high

Of the 54 sedras in the Torah, six of them end "on a high", i.e. end with G-d's name. They are: B'reishit, T'tzaveh, Acharei, B'har, Sh'lach, and Sho-f'tim. There are four sedras, by the way, that end in Moshe: Va'eira, Tzav, Emor, and Pinchas.

[2] No'ach, Avraham, korbanot, we, and?

TAMIM tih-yeh im HaShem Elokecha. A significant pasuk in Shoftim that catches our attention. TAMIM. With whom is the word TAMIM associated. No'ach was a TZADIK TAMIM... G-d asked Avraham (before his name change) to become TAMIM (the symbols of which were Brit Mila and his name-change). The word TAMIM occurs 19 times in the Chumash. 15 of them are in the description of Korbanot, in which context, the word means free of invalidating blemishes. the "We" in the TTriddle is for the Jewish People, who are commanded TAMIM tih-yeh... That leaves one other, from Haazinu, which refers to G-d, as in HATZUR TAMIM P'AALO.

[3] Yitzchak, the potential soldier, seeks life and wisdom

MI HA-ISH, who is the person... Rivka asked Eliezer who the man she saw in the field was. In Parshat Shoftim, the SHO-T'RIM asked the potential soldiers (with the words MI HA-ISH) who recently betrothed a woman, build a house, planted a vineyard... and who was afraid to go into battle (because of insufficient merit of Mitzvot, perhaps)... David HaMelech, in T'hilim, asks MI HA-ISH HECHAFEITZ CHAYIM... who is the man who seeks Life... In Yirmiyahu, the words are MI HA-ISH HECHACHAM V'YAVEIN ET ZOT... Who is a wise person who understands this...

Before ELUL gets to much further... This is the third issue of Torah Tidbits with the "Torah Tidbits style Mazal (Zodiac) Symbol" for the month of ELUL. The Mazal of Elul is the B'TULA, Virgo, the Virgin. Our symbol is the flag of the U.S. Virgin Islands (not to be confused with the British Virgin Islands).

NachKwestion of the Week

Alef-Bets in Tanach and near Alef-Bets

We'll use EB's submission as our starting point. If anyone happens to know of any others, please let us know.

T'hilim 34 - which is part of the P'sukei D'zimra of Shabbat and Yom Tov, begins L'DAVID, B'SHANOTO ET TA'MO LIFNEI AVIMELECH... After the first pasuk, there are 21 p'sukim whose initial letters are in the order of the ALEF-BET, but there is no pasuk for the letter VAV. The 23rd and last pasuk in this chapter is PODEH HASHEMNEFESH AVADAV... Rate Ps. 34 as a near ALEF-BET.

T'hilim 25 is a less near ALEF-BET chapter. The first verse is an intro. Then you find p'sukim in ALEF-BET order, but no pasuk for BET or VAV, none for KUF but two for REISH. Then after TAV is a final pasuk, P'DEI ELOKIM...

T'hilim 111 starts with HALLELUYA, and then has phrases that follow the ALEF-BET all the way through. It's two letters to a pasuk until PEI, TZADI, and KUF in one pasuk, and REISH, SHIN, and TAV in the last pasuk. Since the NachKwestion never said anything about the letters being represented by a whole pasuk, we will count 111 as a complete ALEF-BET in Tanach.

T'hilim 112 is exactly the same as 111: HALLELUYA ALEF-BET. GIMMEL-DALET. HEI-VAV. ZAYIN-CHET. TET-YUD. KAF-LAMED. MEM-NUN. SAMACH-AYIN. PEI-TZADI-KUF. REISH-SHIN-TAV.

Then we come to T'hilim 119: The famous ALEF-BET chapter of 176 p'sukim, composed of eight each for each of the 22 letters of the ALEF-BET.

T'hilim 145, which makes up most of ASHREI from our davening, has 21 p'sukim, with the ALEF word following T'HILA L'DAVID in the first pasuk, followed by p'sukim whose first letters follow the ALEF-BET, with only NUN not represented.

Leaving T'hilim, we find that Mishlei (Proverbs) 31, p'sukim 10-31 are in perfect ALEF-BET order. We are familiar with these p'sukim from the well-known Leil Shabbat EISHET CHAYIL.

The first chapter of EICHA has 22 p'sukim in perfect ALEF-BET order. The 2nd and 4th chapters also have 22 p'sukim each, one for each letter of the ALEF-BET, but the PEI pasuk comes before the AYIN pasuk. Call them, "near ALEF-BET". So too, the 3rd perek of EICHA, with 66 p'sukim, three for each letter, but, again, with PEI before AYIN.

Different from all of the above, but of ALEF-BET interest, is TZEFANIYA 3:8 which you can see below (or in the Tanach of your choice). It is the only pasuk in Tanach that contains all the letters of the ALEF-BET including the five letters with different forms at the end of words - the Final-CHAF, MEM, NUN, FEI, and TZADI. (There are a few p'sukim in Tanach with all 22 letters, but only this one with all 27 letter forms, we shall say.

לְכֹן חֲפוּ-לִי נְאֻם-ה' לַיּוֹם קוּמִי לְעֵד כִּי מִשְׁפָּטִי
לְאַסֹּף גּוֹיִם לְקַבְּצֵי מַמְלָכוֹת לְשַׁפֵּן עַל־יָהִם זַעֲמִי
כֹּל חֲרוֹן אַפִּי כִּי בְאַשׁ קִנְאַתִּי תֹאכַל כָּל-הָאָרֶץ:

This week's TTriddles:

- [1] Caveat in Sedra for Bob Merrill 1 '52 song
- [2] R, A, E, non-Jew, non-human
- [3] Ammon, Moav, Amalek and [L] Miriam
- [4] All of Israel, an ox, a donkey
- [5] plus 1 element from the ParshaPix
- [6] plus something else