

This Shabbat is the 134th day (of 355) and the 20th Shabbat (of 51) of 5767  
 ...כִּכָּה בְּכֹל שְׁשֵׁי יַכְפִּיל מְזוּנֵי. זְמִירוֹת לַשַּׁבָּת "כִּי אֲשַׁמְרָה שַׁבָּת"

## Lesson from a "coincidence"

Coincidence is the noteworthy alignment of two or more events or circumstances without obvious causal connection. Let's get rid of the last part of the definition and learn a lesson from the noteworthy alignment of two occasions that definitely do have a meaningful connection. TU BiShvat falls on Shabbat Shira about 30% of the time - statistically, that's often. In recent years, TU BiShvat was on Shabbat 3, 4, and 7 years ago. When it happens, as it does this year, one's pondering tends to go in the direction of Miracles and Nature, with Parshat B'Shalach presenting the miracle side of the thoughts and TU BiShvat focusing us on nature. Shabbat Shira and TU BiShvat present us with interesting - prepare for a play on words; please don't groan - food for thought.

G-d says to Moshe that He will provide the people with "bread from the heavens"

which the people will gather on a daily basis, "that I may test them, whether they will walk in my Torah, or not". Rashi explains that G-d will see whether the people follow the rules related to the MN (manna) - will they leave over any and will they look for it on Shabbat (both of which they were told not to do).

In Parshat Eikev, Moshe tells the people that the whole Midbar experience was to see if the

[goto p.3](#)

**Candle Lighting and HAVDALA**  
 Standard (Winter) time

Correct for TT 751 • Rabbeinu Tam (J'm) - 6:29pm

<b>4:38pm</b>	Jerusalem	<b>5:53pm</b>
4:54pm	Raanana	5:54pm
4:54pm	Beit Shemesh	5:54pm
4:54pm	Netanya	5:54pm
4:55pm	Rehovot	5:54pm
4:38pm	Petach Tikva	5:54pm
4:54pm	Modi'in	5:53pm
4:56pm	Be'er Sheva	5:55pm
4:54pm	Gush Etzion	5:53pm
4:53pm	Ginot Shomron	5:53pm
4:38pm	Maale Adumim	5:53pm
4:54pm	K4 & Hevron	5:54pm
4:40pm	Tzfat	5:50pm

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 In loving memory of  
**Beatrice Schwartz  
 Rudman Adelstein** ע"ה  
 beloved mother of  
 Simcha Rudman and  
 Phyllis Manesberg (St. Louis)  
 on her 23rd yearzeit

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## OTHER Z'MANIM

Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are FRI-FRI  
14-21 Shvat • (February 2-9)


Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:40-5:36am
Sunrise	6:33-6:28am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	9:12-9:10am (Magen Avraham: 8:26-8:24am)
Sof Z'man T'fila	10:06-10:04am (Magen Avraham: 9:35-9:34am)
Chatzot	11:53-11:53am (halachic noon)
Mincha Gedola	12:23-12:24pm (earliest Mincha)
Plag Mincha	4:07-4:12pm
Sunset	5:18-5:24pm (based on sea level: 5:13-5:19pm)

## Word of the Month

On the fourth day of Creation, "G-d made the two great luminaries, the great one to rule the day (Sun) and the lesser one to rule the night (Moon)..."

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## Lead Tidbit cont.

people would keep G-d's command-ments or not, and in particular, that the experience of the MN would teach people that "man does not live by bread alone", but by the word of G-d.

Okay (actually, we should say OU), until now we've been talking about the Shabbat Shira side of issue. The miracle side of the topic. Let's bring things down to earth. To the TU BiSh- vat side of the day.

We do not receive LECHEM MIN HASHAMAYIM anymore. The MN had an almost 40 year run and ended when Bnei Yisrael entered Eretz Yisrael. A sample of MN was kept as a reminder, but we no longer received MN and we no longer ate MN.

We eat LECHEM MIN HAARETZ. And many other things that come from the ground. And many other things from nature. (And, of course, food and drink that are made from natural - or otherwise - ingredients. Important side note: Even the most artificial food ingredients are made from things that G-d created as part of this natural world - so really it is all from nature.) We too have a challenge similar (and maybe more subtle) than those of the Midbar generation. Because we have many rules and regulations that go with the food we eat. Yes, we can plan on leftovers, but we've got kashrut laws and brachot to make, and many other things that demonstrate our keeping G-d in the picture and not viewing food as a simple necessity of life. We too must always see the Hand of G-d in the food we eat, and become more mindful of His omnipresence and our reliance on and commitment to Him. We too do not live by bread alone.

## Word of the Month cont.

*A weekly Torah Tidbits feature to help clarify practical and conceptual aspects of the Jewish Calendar, thereby enhancing our appreciation of G-d's gift to Am Yisrael of HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem...*

If we take a closer look at this idea, we will concede that the Sun does rule the day, but the Moon, in its current state, varies from night to night in the amount of night it rules, and with what strength. There are nights of a month when there is only a delicate crescent of the Moon that is visible for a short time after sunset, and then the Moon is "off duty", so to speak. There are days when we can see the Moon "moonlighting" (pun definitely intended) during the day, while it had only put in partial duty the night before. And many variations of this. But there is one time of the month - around the 14th or 15th - that the Moon truly rules the night. The consecutive months of Sh'vat, Adar, Nissan, and

Iyar each contain days of note that occur when the Sun rules the day and the Moon rules the night, all night, and at its strongest and fullest. TU BiShvat, Purim, Pesach, and Pesach Sheni. This has been just a casual observation...

## B'shalach STATS

16th of 54 sedras; 4th of 11 in Shmot

Written on 215.33 lines in a Torah, ranks 17

14 parshiot; 9 open, 5 closed

116 p'sukim - ranks 23rd (6th in Sh'mot)

1681 words - ranks 19th (4th in Sh'mot)

6423 letters - ranks 18th (4th in Sh'mot)

## מִצְוֹת

B'SHALACH contains a single mitzva of the 613, the prohibition of leaving one's Shabbat boundary - T'CHUM SHABBAT (T'chum Shabbat's membership in the family of Taryag is disputed - details in MitzvaWatch)

## 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 - 14 p'sukim - 13:17-14:8

[S> 13:17 (6)] "When Par'o sends the People...", G-d leads them along a circuitous route to prevent them from panicking and returning to Egypt. Moshe, in fulfillment of the promise made to Yosef by his brothers, takes Yosef's remains out of Egypt with the People.

**SDT** *The Midrash tells us that Yosef's bones had been hidden by the Egyptians in the Nile in order to prevent the Israelites from leaving the country. Yosef's coffin miraculously surfaced just at the right time, so that the People could take it with them when they left. We are taught that Yosef merited being taken out of Egypt for burial in Eretz Yisrael because he had arranged for his father's burial there. Moshe, in turn, was accorded the highest honor - G-d Himself took care of Moshe's burial, in reward for the attention he paid to Yosef's remains.*

[FYI] The Gemara teaches us that a dead body itself - and certainly one who is defiled to a dead body - is allowed into the "Levite Camp", and is only banned from the Mikdash area. This we learn from the fact that Moshe took Yosef's bones "with him". This halacha has significance today concerning the halachic permissibility to ascend Har HaBayit in those areas that are OUTSIDE the place where the Mikdash and its courtyards MIGHT have been. That part of Har HaBayit has the status of the Levite camp, and one may go there following immersion in a Mikve to rid oneself of "the defilement that comes from the body". (Defilement to a dead body cannot be removed without the Para Aduma potion and so one cannot go into the Mikdash part of Har HaBayit.) - and with other restrictions. A person should consult a Rav with Har HaBayit experience before going there.

G-d provided an escort for the People in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night.

[P> 14:1 (14)] G-d tells Moshe of His plan to lead the People in such a way that Par'o will pursue them in the misguided hope of bringing them back to Egypt.

When Par'o is notified (by spies whom he had sent to accompany the Israelites) of the People's whereabouts, he (with G-d's help in making his heart "heavy"/strong) takes a tremendous force with him and chases after the People of Israel.

**SDT** *"And G-d did not allow them to go DERECH ERETZ P' LISHTIM. Literally, they did not take the straight route to the territory of the Philistines. One commentator suggests an interesting DRASH based on a play on words. G-d did not take the People out of Egypt in DERECH ERETZ, in the normal, natural way of things, but in a miraculous way. Normally, bread comes from the ground; for the People of Israel, G-d sent them bread from above. Normally, water comes from below; for the People of Israel, G-d provided water from below, from the miraculous Well that accompanied them on their journeys, in the merit of Miriam. Not taking us out in a natural manner, leaves us with no doubt that it was indeed G-d Who took us out of Egypt. This is a crucial foundation stone of Judaism. Not only did we get out of Mitzrayim, but it was G-d Who took us out. Not only did He take us out, but the people knew and know it well.*

## Levi - Second Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 14:9-14

The mighty Egyptian army pursues the People. When the People of Israel see them coming, they are greatly frightened because there is no place to flee. They complain to Moshe that it would have been better to have died in Egypt. Moshe reassures the People, encourages them not to fear, promises them that G-d will fight on their behalf, and tells them that Egypt will soon cease to exist.

**SDT** *It seems that Par'o actually thought that he let the People go - that he expelled the People from Egypt. That's even what it seems to say at the beginning of this week's sedra (When Par'o sent the people out...). G-d arranged to have Par'o run after them. Then the events make it crystal clear to him - and to us - that G-d, and only G-d took us out of Egypt. Without this part of the Exodus procedure, Par'o and his people - and probably some Jews as well, would think that Par'o had a part in letting us leave Egypt. With the opening commandment of the Aseret HaDibrot stating, I am HaShem, your G-d, Who took you out of Mitzrayim... this point is essential.*

## Shlishi - Third Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 14:15-25

[P> 14:15 (11)] G-d "asks" Moshe why the People are screaming; let them just move on.

**SDT** *Our Sages teach us that there are times that prayer is called for, and other times when action is the order of the day. Sometimes we must use long prayers and petitions; sometimes a quick prayer not only suffices, but saying more can be counter-productive. G-d says: MA TITZ'AK EILAI, why call to Me? MA is spelled MEM-HEI. MEM can represent the 40 days and 40 nights that Moshe was to spend in prayer on behalf of the People following the Sin of the Golden Calf. MEM represents long prayer. HEI can stand for the simple but eloquent 5-word prayer for Miriam's recovery from Tzora'at which she contracted in punishment for speaking disrespectfully of Moshe. And sometimes, neither short nor long prayer is appropriate. At this point of the Exodus, the order of the day was decisive action. Move it! There is another example later in the Torah of Moshe and Aharon springing into immediate action to stop a plague from killing the People. We must know when to say T'hilim and when to act, and when to do both.*

G-d tells Moshe to raise his hand over the Sea and split it, so the People will be able to pass through it on dry land. G-d informs Moshe that He will again harden Egypt's heart so that they will continue their pursuit. The Egyptians will finally know G-d's Might. The guardian angel (pillar of cloud) that was leading the People now was repositioned between the Jews and the pursuing Egyptian army, preventing contact.

Moshe raises his hand above the Sea and G-d causes a powerful easterly wind to blow all night, followed by a parting of the waters. The People of Israel enter the Sea on dry land, between walls of water.

Egypt boldly follows, but their arrogant attitude abruptly changes to fear and panic as their chariots lose their wheels and bog down in the seabed. (This is in sharp contrast with the perfectly dry land that Israel found beneath its feet.)

Egypt finally (too late) acknowledges G-d, not only now, but retroactively, as the One Who had fought

for Israel in Egypt.

**SDT** *Why the strong wind blowing all night? Could not G-d have split the Sea with the snap of a finger? The answer is: Of course. But the night's preparation for the miracles of the day serve several purposes. The Egyptians are lulled into a false sense of security when something is happening that they can explain. They don't want to accept that the G-d of Israel is performing miracles for His people. No doubt, their wizards explained the desert winds and the effects it can have. Among the Jews, there are always individuals who would like not to admit to G-d's awesome powers. They too will have their "excuse" in the natural components of the miracle. Perhaps, most importantly, this wind (and the like) allows us to relate to and better appreciate, the miracles themselves. A snap of the finger brings results too quickly for us to think about what is happening. A night to ponder what was going on, further enhanced the appreciation of the Children of Israel for what had happened, was happening, and was to happen.*

## R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 32 p'sukim - 14:26-15:26

**[P> 14:26 (6)]** Moshe is now instructed by G-d to raise his hand once more over the Sea so that the waters may return. He does so and the Egyptians are drowned. The People, however, have succeeded in passing through the Sea and are ecstatic in their salvation. They attain true belief and trust in G-d and in Moshe His servant. (Rambam states that complete, solid, lasting faith in G-d was attained at Sinai. Here we must say that the belief was great, but not yet permanent.)

**[P> 15:1 (19)]** Next comes the Song of the Sea. What makes the Song of the Sea so special is that it is a direct quote of the People of Israel that G-d put into His Torah verbatim. In other words, the rest of the Torah is written by G-d; we composed this part. It is an inspiring passage that has been incorporated into the daily davening.

*It is written in Sefer HaChareidim that "he who says the Song of the Sea aloud and with joy, it is as if he was leaving Egypt at that moment - and his sins will be forgiven." In the merit of the Song of the Sea, G-d split the Sea for the People and forgave their transgressions.*

**SDT** This 19-pasuk parsha is unique in the way it is written in a Sefer Torah. The column that contains the Shira is wider than all the other columns in the Torah. It is a Tradition to start the column with 5 lines belonging to the previous parsha, beginning with the word HABA'IM. (Many Sifrei Torah are written so that each column - of approx. 245 columns - begins with the letter VAV, except for 5 columns - this is one of the five.) Then a line is skipped (this is very rare in the Torah) and then the first line of AZ YASHIR is written all the way across the column. The next line has one word, a blank space, a group of words (from 3-5), another blank space, and then a single word to end the

line. Call this line pattern A. The next line starts with a group of words (2-5), a space, and another group of words (3-5). Call this line pattern B. After the first line, the rest of the Shira parsha consists of another 29 lines, alternating patterns A and B, ending with an A. Then a line is skipped. Five more "regular" lines of Torah text finish off the column. The column with the Shira has the same number of lines as all the other Torah columns, but is wider, as mentioned earlier. And it has a lot of blank space and two blank lines. The Song in Haazinu is also written in a different form from the rest of the Torah, but this column in B'shalach is more eye-catchingly unusual.

**[P> 15:20 (2)]** Following the Shira portion is a 2-pasuk parsha describing Miriam's rallying of the women to join in the Shira in their own way.

**[S> 15:22 (5)]** The People continue their journey and fail to find water for three days. When they do find some, they complain bitterly (pun intended) of the inability to drink it. G-d directs Moshe to perform a miracle by throwing a special piece of wood into the water whereby the water becomes sweet.

*Aside from the literal meaning of the text, this episode is considered an allusion to the primacy of Torah in the life of a Jew. Both Torah and water sustain life - spiritual and physical. In the same vein, "three days without water" resulted in our reading the Torah on Monday and Thursday, so that in our wandering in the spiritual desert of life, we will not go 3 days without spiritual water. This is but one "use" of the well-known analogy between Torah and water. This idea is not just a matter of DRASH. The last pasuk of this parsha tells that if we will harken to G-d's Voice and follow the Torah, keep the mitzvot... then all the ills that befell Egypt will not be put upon us...*

## Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 15:27-16:10

**[S> 15:27 (4)]** The People next travel to Eilim and from there to Midbar Tsin, en route to Sinai. This time, they complain about the lack of food.

**[S> 16:4 (7)]** G-d tells Moshe about the MN (manna, mahn, מן) which He will soon provide for the People. Moshe tells the People that they will soon see how G-d hears and listens to their complaints. MN is not just the food that sustains the people throughout their wandering, it is also a crucial test of the faith that the people should have in G-d. The MN was to fall daily except for Shabbat, and was not allowed to be left over night (except for what fell on Friday). This facilitated a constant strengthening of our faith in G-d - the need to "trust" Him every single day.

## Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 26 p'sukim - 16:11-36

[P> 16:11 (17)] The account of the MN continues...

Quail miraculously appear in the evening, and the people eat "meat". On the next morning, the MN - protected by a layer of dew above and below it - appears. The People are fascinated by it and when they question Moshe, he explains the rules and procedures set down by G-d. Nonetheless, there were people who left over MN from one day to the next, and this angered Moshe. And, despite being told that the MN will NOT fall on Shabbat, there were individuals who went out to search for it.

[S> 16:28 (9)] G-d "takes note" of this display of lack of faith and "asks" how long we will continue to refuse to keep His commands.

The parsha of the MN is our first real introduction to Shabbat. This is the meaning of the line in DAYEINU, had You given us the Shabbat and not brought us near Har Sinai, DAYEINU. Although Shabbat is an integral part of Revelation at Sinai, it actually pre- ceded Matan Torah.

Several customs and practices come from the Parsha of the MN.

Our use of two Challot at each Shabbat meal (ideally, at the third meal, too) is a commemoration of the MN which fell in double quantity on Friday, in honor of Shabbat.

The covering of the challa is partially due to the layer of dew that covered and protected the MN.

We learn the important lesson that Shabbat is honored by being prepared for. It is not just a corollary of the prohibitions of Shabbat that we prepare our food in advance, it is an essential feature of Shabbat and the role of the days of the week.

The requirement of having three meals on Shabbat, Shalosh Seudot, is inspired by the pasuk that describes what Moshe said to the people about their first (and all subsequent) Shabbat. And Moshe said, eat it (the MN) today, for today is Shabbat to G-d, today you will not find it (MN) in the field. The three instances of HAYOM (today) in the pasuk with eating and Shabbat, inspired (shall we say) our Sages to require three meals on Shabbat. (It's more complicated than that, but we'll suffice with this explanation.)

Included in the instructions about the MN is the command not to "leave our PLACE on the seventh day (to collect the MN)". This was not just a rule for that generation; it is a mitzva among the 613 - the mitzva of T'chum Shabbat [24,L321 16:29]. Briefly, the point of T'CHUM is not about how far we may walk on Shabbat. It is about how far AWAY FROM HOME we may go. This is obvious from the halachic details of T'CHUM. The weekdays are for going. Shabbat is for staying put (as defined by halacha) and being able to "relax" and ponder G-d's Creation and Mastery over all.

A sample of the MN was stored as a remembrance for future generations.

## Mitzva Watch

According to Rambam, the prohibition of T'CHUM SHABBAT has two phases. The Torah prohibits going outside a 12 MIL boundary, that distance being related to the size of the encampment of Bnei Yisrael in the Midbar. This is "logical" because it was in the context of the encampment that the prohibi- tion was first commanded. The Sages drastically reduced the distance one may go outside his "place of dwelling", to a mere 1 MIL or 2000 AMOT (approx. 1 km). This measure was "borrowed" from the Torah's discrip- tion of the Levite cities (the 6 cities of refuge and an additional 42 cities to be given to the Leviyim after conquest and settling of Eretz Yisrael) and their city-limits. This too has a "logic" to it.

Ramban holds that the whole topic of T'CHUM is Rabbinic; that the Torah does not have such a restriction, and that the pasuk in this week's sedra from which Rambam learns T'CHUM, is talking about other Shabbat matters.

It is important to understand that the prohibition of T'CHUM, be it D'Oraita or D'Rabbanan, was not meant to put a limit on physical exertion or the distance a person may walk on Shabbat. A person who lives in a house in the boondocks (yenemsvelt) which is located on a small plot of land with a fence around it, is restricted to a distance of about a kilometr outside his fence. Another person who lives in a big city can walk from one end to the other - from Gilo to Ramot and back again - miles and miles - and not have a problem of T'CHUM at all. And even the first guy with the house near no others can walk around and around his property all Shabbat long. As long as he does not go outside his T'CHUM, he's okay. (Not really, because he has to figure out why he spends all Shabbat walking in circles around his home.) The topics of T'CHUM and EIRUV are complex. This only touched on a few points.

## Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 17:1-16

[P> 17:1 (7)] The People journey to Refidim and again complain about the lack of water. (It is not the complaint itself that "angers" G-d - it is the apparent lack of faith and the doubt in the value of the Exodus that casts a negative light on the People.) In response, G-d tells Moshe to gather the Elders and People and strike a rock in their presence with his miraculous staff. The result is water for the People.

[P> 17:8 (6)] The final 9 p'sukim (it is also the Torah reading of Purim morning, tell of the attack by Amalek on the fledgling nation of Israel. It is the arch-typical fight against those who would seek to destroy us. This battle repeats itself - differently -

throughout Jewish History.

**[P> 17:14 (3)]** G-d tells Moshe to write down and tell Yehoshua that I (G-d) will wipe out the memory of Amalek... This is not just Israel's battle, but G-d's as well.

## **Haftara 52 p'sukim Sho'rtim 4:4-5:31**

In the time of the Judges, Bnei Yisrael found themselves cruelly oppressed. In the sedra it was Par'o; in the haftara it is Yavin and his general, Sisra. Devorah enlists Barak to lead an army against them. With the success of the battle, Devorah sang a song of praise and thanks to G-d, similar in nature to that of Moshe and Bnei Yisrael in the parsha. So too, the People's faith in G-d had similar "ups and downs" to those in the sedra. Devorah was key to restoring a high level of faith in G-d among the People and in leading the People to great victories.

S'faradim read the Song of Devorah as the haftara for B'shalach. Ashkenazim start earlier and include in the reading the story of Sisra's temporary escape from Barak and his army, only to find his demise at the hand (and tent peg) of Yael, wife of Chever HaKeini.

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

Lesson #366

### **Taxing members of the community**

#### **External Taxes**

Much of what is said in this lesson and in some of the coming lessons describes the Jewish community when they lived in ghettos and had restrictive rights, but had the right to more or less govern as they pleased as long as they paid the secular rulers of the country or state exorbitant taxes. Every inhabitant of the community is obligated to pay the external taxes imposed on the inhabitants of the community, whether or not the inhabitant is a permanent resident or has some other exemption from internal taxes. The reason for this is that the ruler, in imposing such taxes, looks to see how many people there are in the Jewish community and does not take into account that many of the persons who are in the community are merely visitors. He deems all of the persons he finds present to be part of the tax base. If the ruler imposes a head tax, everyone must pay such taxes, including Torah scholars. Because of the special role that the Torah scholars play in Jewish life, they are exempt from some taxes, the theory being that it is because of their scholarship that

the city is safe. Rabbi Isserles in his glosses to chapter 163 of Choshen Mishpat writes the following law: A community loaned money to the ruler, who told the community to repay itself from taxes collected for this purpose. Thereafter, the ruler changed his mind and insisted that the loan be cancelled and that taxes paid be sent to him without the offset for the money, which the ruler had in essence expropriated for himself. The community reconciled itself to the fact that the money raised by these taxes was lost and the taxes would have to be paid, and the townspeople did actually pay the taxes. The ruler died and his son ascended the throne and agreed to the arrangement made by his father, that is, that the citizens would not have to pay twice. It was held that under such circumstances, the money recovered by the town council from the ruler be held by them and need not be refunded to compensate the taxpayers. The reason is when the ruler stated that he would not repay the loan there was a universal acceptance that the Jews had given up any hope of recovering the moneys. Once hope has been given up, the moneys are deemed abandoned. This is not similar other situations described in chapter 262 of Choshen Mishpat, where abandonment of hope of recovering a loan is not sufficient to be deemed a legal abandonment. In the latter situation there is still some hope that the loan will be repaid. In the case of the ruler there is actually no hope that the loan will be recovered after the ruler has stated that he will not repay. There is also an opinion that even in the case of a ruler, there is not really a complete abandonment of hope of the community being repaid the loan to the ruler and thus when the king's son repaid the money, it is to be paid to the inhabitants of the community who gave the money for the loan; there is also the opinion that there is never an abandonment of the repayment of the debt. The commentators say that even according to this last opinion there is an abandonment of hope of recovering the repayment because the ruler may say he is repaying the debt and then declare that the repayment is to be paid as an additional tax. The community is collectively liable for impositions made against the community. There is no collective responsibility if the ruler levies a special assessment or fine on an individual of the community.

#### **Internal Matters for which Taxes may be Levied**

The council or government has jurisdiction over those types of matters that any government has. For example, it has jurisdiction to provide police protection to the inhabitants. In the codes this is designated as having the community responsible for the building of a wall around the Jewish area and building a guardhouse and proper doors and bolts to keep marauders out of the community. The constant fear of pogroms resulting in high fatalities, injuries, and plundering of property by the surrounding non-Jewish people is so well known that little has to be said here. Generally the community at its own cost and expense had to provide: fire extinguishing facilities, firemen, sanitary and street

cleaning facilities, water and sewage systems, to provide the members of the community with shuls together with Torah scrolls, prayer books, printed copies of the Bible, house of study. (Many of the Jewish ghettos were constructed of wood and small fires spread into large conflagrations.) Every Jewish community requires as many shuls as are necessary for the number of worshippers in the community, No Jewish community can exist without houses of study of the Torah, well stocked libraries, hospital clinics and a mikveh. And to appoint rabbis, judges of the Beit Din, teachers of Torah, shul functionaries, cantors, charity collectors and charity dispensers, free loan dispensers and such other functionaries and institutions as the community and the council deem necessary. These are besides the schools for the children of the community. The prime responsibility of every Jew is to study the Torah including the commentaries and the Oral Torah, namely the Mishna and Talmud. Throughout all of Jewish history, no Jew thought himself free of the responsibility of studying Torah. No matter how tired and hungry a person might be from his back-breaking labor to eke out a living, he knew that at the end of the day he would go to the house of study to study Torah and to say his prayers. This attitude of the Jew towards the study of the Torah, especially the study of the Talmud, is what has sustained the Jewish people throughout the ages.

### **Who may vote in the election of the council**

In small communities, the matters dealing with community can be decided upon by a vote of all the members of the community. In larger communities and even in some small communities the decision making process is left to a council elected by the community. In the codes, the participation in the making of decisions or in voting for council members is usually limited to male taxpayers. There is usually weighted voting giving greater weight to the votes of those who pay higher taxes. This is done so that the poor with their greater numbers cannot foist all of the obligations of the community upon the rich. On the other hand, the weighing is not so great that a small minority of rich taxpayers would have the complete weighted say in the voting. There should also be view given to the poorer people of the community. The halacha advises the poorer members and the richer member to try to work out their differences in a fair manner. (The continuation of this lesson will appear IYH in the next lesson.)

*The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in volume 5, chapter 163 of A Restatement of Rabbinic Civil Law by Emanuel Quint. Copies of all volumes can be purchased at local Judaica bookstores. Questions to [quint@inter.net.il](mailto:quint@inter.net.il)*

## **Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the B'reishit Stories**

### **YAAKOV BLESSES HIS SONS [1] by Dr. Meir Tamari**

The blessings that Yaakov gives to his sons are both the end of a period and the beginning of another one that is fundamentally different, one that is unique, intrinsic and basic to Judaism. The first, marking the purpose and content of the whole book of B'reishit, is a period of individuals [Adam, Chava and their sons, Noach and his descendants, Shem, Ever, and the Patriarchs and Matriarchs and their sons]; the second book is that of Am Yisrael. The purpose of the first, according to Ramban, is to demonstrate that this nation is descended from pure and holy seed. According to Abarbanel, Shem MiShmuel, Rabbi S. R. Hirsch, Rav A. I. Kook and others, while the purpose of the stories in Bereishit is to teach that individuals can be pious and achieve a relationship with Hashem, that of the second period is to show how a whole nation is holy and serves Him.

Before looking at the two blessings that Yaakov gives his sons, the first one to Yosef and the second to all 12 tribes, it is pertinent to note that the nature of what the Tanach calls a blessing, a bracha, is far removed from our concepts. Usually, when we ask for a bracha we want to receive something that we need, to ask for financial success, for suitable marriages, for children, for success in Torah studies, for health. It is instructive in this regard to note that in the weekday Sh'moneh Esrei, such requests, following from that of R'ei-prayer for redemption, are preceded by asking for T'shuva and forgiveness; perhaps our needs are caused by our own spiritual or moral shortcomings and that should be our first concern.

In contrast to our concept, the pattern of the brachot in the Tanach is more in the nature of a will or testament. It is perfectly normal and common for people to bequeath their material good to their heirs before their death; indeed Rambam codifies that from the Torah, people have the halakhic right to bequeath their wealth to their children, and this does not only apply to Jews but also to non-Jews. However, the Tanachic pattern differs in that it gives an added dimension to wealth and inheritance. It understands and insists that people have, in addition to material assets, spiritual and moral values to bequeath to those same heirs. "Nachala, inheritance, has the same root as nachal, river, and in effect all wills, are a flowing of wealth, both material and spiritual, from one generation to another generation" (Rabbi S. R. Hirsch).

So we find that throughout the Tanach that the wills-b'rachot are both material and spiritual. G-d blesses Avraham not only; "I will make of you a great nation, and bless you and make your name great [the founder of a new nation, the right to G-d given prosperity and a new name that is to grow to great renown (S. R. Hirsch)], but also be a blessing [he and his descendants are to dedicate themselves to the Divine purpose of bringing happiness to the to world and to mankind so that they re-establish themselves as in the original pure calling of Adam (S. R. Hirsch)]" (B'reishit 12:2). Yitschak gives one b'racha of

material goods to Yaakov mistaking him for Eisav (B'reishit 27:28-29), and then later gives the Abrahamic blessing of Land-People- Torah to Yaakov knowingly (28:4). Similarly, at the end of Bamidbar, Moshe first divides the material assets of Eretz Yisrael between the tribes and then at the end of D'varim he tells them of their spiritual futures. David HaMelech first demonstrates on whom the mantle of kingship devolves (Melachim Alef 1:1-31) and then tells Shlomo what is required of a Jewish king, both personal piety and in statecraft (Melachim Alef 2:1-12); it is fitting that the first is the haftara of Chayei Sara, marking the succession of Yitschak to Avraham, and the second is the haftara of Vaychi, marking the succession of the tribes to the Patriarchs.

Yaakov in his blessings follows the same Tanachic pattern; first the property right accruing to a first-born of a double share is given to Yosef for his two sons and then the spiritual guidance and future development is given to a bracha to his 12 sons, including Yosef. However, before doing so, Yaakov, bearing in mind the special case of the exile in Egypt, first has a request to make of Yosef: "bury me not in Egypt". "Since Yosef had brought his father down to Egypt, it was only right that he should be responsible for seeing that he is taken from there and buried in Eretz Yisrael. As Yaakov says, "do for me chesed and emet" (B'reishit 47:29), chesed as the all powerful ruler and emet as a son's halakhic obligation" (B'reishit Rabba). "Yaakov noticed what a powerful influence the being gripped by the land of Egypt was having on his family, how they began to see the Jordan in the Nile and to find their stay in Egypt no galut" (S. R. Hirsch). By establishing his sepulchre in Hevron, he not only showed his disagreement with this philosophy but gave them a concrete site to regard as a memorial of their real home. Indeed, Divrei Hayamim tells that throughout the years of the Egyptian exile, the tribes of Israel regularly visited Eretz Yisrael, tended flocks there and continued to demonstrate their eternal possession of the Land.

This Tanachic pattern of ethical wills is one that was followed throughout Jewish history by great scholars, by famous pious leaders, and by ordinary people. There exists a whole literature of such ethical wills, of which the following is only one example.

"On the day that I bequeath to you the material heritage granted to me by Hashem, I shall transmit to you primarily the quality of trustworthiness by virtue of which I acquired these possessions. It was my truthfulness that bestowed on me a wealth greater than that of my parents. I prospered and became useful to myself and to others. Be zealous for the welfare of others, even LIFNIM MISHURAT HADIN, keep your word and do not evade your public or private promises made either verbally or in writing, before witnesses or in private. Reject and avoid fraudulent, underhand and illegal practices. Do not partake of anything large or small that is not yours. Be proud of your moral values and content in your truthfulness for there is no greater nobility and no more glorious inheritance" (Will of Rambam).

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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 have a monetary dispute with someone, which I have tried to settle through compromise. Last week, I received a hazmana (summons) from a beit din to appear as a defendant on the matter on a certain date. I do not know that I want to use that beit din, and I also do not know the extent of the claim. If it is reasonable, I may pay to avoid machloket and headache. Do I have to come to the beit din who summoned me unconditionally, as their letter implies?



Your attitude is healthy in several ways. You are willing to compromise to avoid machloket, and you seem aware that any adjudication should be before a beit din, regardless of your chances to win (see Choshen Mishpat 26). We wish more people had your approach and are happy to share the clear halachot regarding your situation.

Regarding the choice of a beit din, when the problem is that the litigants live far from each other, the defendant has precedence (see Shulchan Aruch, CM 14:1). When the lack of agreement has to do with the sides' feelings towards the different batei din, neither side can force the other to accept a specific beit din. Rather, the system of ZABLA, in which each party picks a dayan and the two dayanim select a third, is employed (ibid. 3:1).

There are two primary limitations on ZABLA. One exception is that if the plaintiff's beit din is a "set beit din," to the exclusion of others in the area, the set beit din has jurisdiction (Rama ad loc.). This situation is generally uncommon in major, contemporary Jewish communities. Additionally, if the beit din that summoned feels that one party's "ZABLA dayan" is unfit to serve that role, they can disallow him (ibid. 13:1). In any case, the staff of the first beit din comprises the "point men" until a valid panel is chosen for the purpose of binding adjudication. You should respond to them promptly and respectfully and follow their procedural instructions unless there is a reason to suspect their credentials. Although you need not accept them to hear the case, it is not necessarily fair to discount them just because the other side chose them.

In theory, it is sufficient that a hazmana contain the identity of the plaintiff and the beit din and the time and place of the summons (see Halacha Psuka, Choshen Mishpat 11:(7)). In practice, many batei din expect the sides to present their respective claim and counterclaim in significant detail prior to the hearing in order to make matters run more smoothly. The question arises when the defendant demands information that the plaintiff is unwilling to divulge before the hearing. The B'er Sheva (cited by the Shach, CM 13:1) learns from the concept that one does not divulge all of his claims outside court (Bava Batra 31a), that one is not required to divulge any details of his claim. This is to not allow the defendant time to fabricate a defense. The Shach deflects the B'er Sheva's proof and explains that a defendant has the right to know something about the case, so that he can consider complying with the plaintiff's demands rather than go to court. Most poskim (including the Netivot, ad loc.; see Pitchei Teshuva, ad loc.:4) accept the Shach's opinion.

How much detail must the plaintiff divulge in order to satisfy the defendant's demands for information? Does it apply to the amount of money, as you inquire? The Shach's reasoning certainly applies to the amount of money, which is crucial to determine whether he will bother to adjudicate. In fact, the Urim (13:1) says that even those who do not accept the Shach's opinion agree that one has to at least divulge the amount of the claim. The Pitchei Teshuva (ibid.) adds that one has to tell what type of claim it is (loan, damages, etc.). The plaintiff certainly does not have to divulge his evidence (Shach, ibid.).

In summary, while the beit din's hazamana appears

legitimate, you can demand a different beit din (at least a ZABLA) and you can make your response dependent on knowing the extent of the plaintiff's demands.

*Ask the Rabbi Q&A is part of Hemdat Yamim, the weekly parsha sheet published by Eretz Hemdah. You can read this section or the entire Hemdat Yamim at [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org) or [www.eretzhemdah.org](http://www.eretzhemdah.org). And/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by email weekly, by sending an email to [info@eretzhemdah.org](mailto:info@eretzhemdah.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

**One of the best ways to apprise a man of the foolishness of his argument is to allow him to keep on building upon it by emphasizing and expanding its several points until, in the very process of magnification his blown up absurdities strike him in the face.**

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, Sota 36b, offers two seemingly contradictory portrayals of the events leading up to the Splitting of the Sea. Rabbi Meir, a fourth generation Tanna, portrays the Jewish People in a fairly positive light. In his opinion, the twelve tribes were eager to follow God's will, each fighting for the honor of being the first to jump into the water. In stark contrast, Rabbi Yehuda, a contemporary of Rabbi Meir's, envisions the twelve tribes as paralyzed by fear, each fighting to stay on dry land.

Generations later, Rabbi Yehoshua of Kutne read this talmudic passage and concluded that, rather than presenting two different portrayals of the Splitting of the Sea, R' Meir and R' Yehuda offered one unified vision. The twelve tribes were neither absolute heroes nor complete cowards, but rather average human beings torn between the desire to assume responsibility and the inability or unwillingness to act upon this desire. Preferring to occupy the moral high ground between the world of good intentions and that of concrete action, the Jewish People were caught at a standstill until the bravery of one person, Nachshon ben Aminadav, propelled them to their destiny.

The events of the past two summers in Israel, coupled with scandal after scandal in the upper echelons of the Israeli government, have forced normal Israeli citizens to ask the question: Where are our leaders? Far too many of us, however, are satisfied to live with this question, following in the footsteps of our desert ancestors who preferred to talk about "diving in" rather than actually

getting wet. It is only when we ourselves assume responsibility, rather than merely talking about how things should be better, that we can brave the stormy waters and march confidently ahead to the Promised Land.

**Dyonna Ginsburg, 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] **Wisdom & Wit**

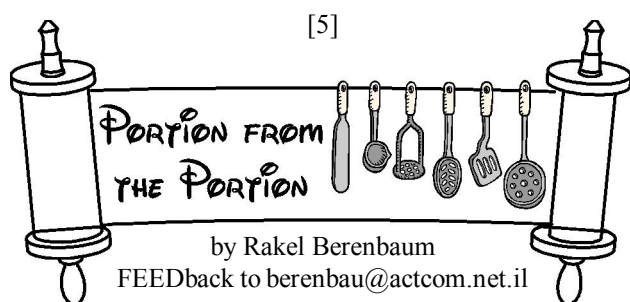
The Chafetz Chaim would carry a picture of R' Nachum of Horodn with him, for he considered R' Nachum to be the epitome of chessed.

R' Nachum barely eked out a living as the shamash of the local shul, and spent all of his free time helping others. For example, he collected tzedaka money which he paid to the local baker, shoemaker, and tailor. With that money, the baker gave the poor free bread, the shoemaker fixed their shoes, and the tailor mended their clothes.

R' Nachum would give five daily shiurim in the shul, without receiving pay for any of them.

Each Friday evening, all the Jewish soldiers who had been posted to the area would line up after davening, and R' Nachum would find a place for each one to eat. He would bring to his own home all those for whom he could not find a place.

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



### **On Potential & Trees**

The Jews have left Egypt and reach the Sea. The Egyptians, who wake up and realize that they have actually freed all their slave laborers, have second thoughts and chase after the fleeing slaves. They meet at the Sea.

Here we are confronted with the following verse "Moshe said to the people, 'Do not be afraid, stand and you will see the salvation of Hashem, that He will do for you'" (14:13).

In a long Ibn Ezra, he asks a question on this verse. How is it that the Jews didn't even think to fight their Egyptian pursuers? The 600,000 Jews surely outnumbered the Egyptians that followed them. And

the Jews left Egypt armed. Why didn't they fight to save themselves from the Egyptians?

The Ibn Ezra answers his own question. The Jews had been slaves to the Egyptians for many years, they had the yoke of servitude on their shoulders. They felt inferior to the people who had been their masters for many years and therefore they didn't have the courage to fight. They didn't realize the potential power that was available to them if they all worked together and mustered up strength, ambition and combined effort.

Rav Chayim Shmuelevitz says we should keep this in mind in all of our daily battles with the world around us. If people views themselves as inferior they will not believe in themselves and their abilities they will become totally discouraged and they will not even try to fight. On the other hand if we realize that we have great potential and are aware of our strengths then if we set our mind to something we should be able to succeed.

TU BiShvat is also a celebration of the potential. TU BiShvat was chosen as the Rosh Hashana, the new year, for trees. The determining date for calculating the tithes (taxes) on fruit, due that year. It was the beginning of a new fiscal year since the verse says "You shall tithe all the yield of your seed, which comes forth from the field year by year (D'varim 14:22).

Most fruit trees in Israel are dormant during the first half of the cold rainy season and due to low temperatures are unable to absorb water and nutrients from the soil. The Rabbis wanted to establish the new year for the trees on the average date on which the fruit trees begin to awaken from their dormant season and start to make use of the water already available in the ground. This happens in SHVAT. The establishment of this date was used to mark the start of the fruits formation. The new year of the tree celebrates the beginning of the trees use of its potential and not the completion of the fruit.

Let us learn from the verse in the Parsha and from the trees to not fear to use our potential. Almonds are one of the first trees to blossom in Israel - so here are two almond recipe for TU BiShvat.

#### **10 Minute Strawberry Almond Pie**

- 2 pkg. large strawberries
- 3 Tbsp. cornstarch
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 2 cups. whipping cream, whipped
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- 9 inch pastry pie crust

Bake crust. Combine 1 cup diced berries with cornstarch, sugar, water, and lemon juice. Cook over medium heat until thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove caps from remaining berries. Place berries

in pie crust, tips up. Pour thickened mixture over berries. Top with whipped cream and almonds just before serving. Serves 8.

### Almond Apple Chicken Salad

- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 4-5 c. cut up cooked chicken breast
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup peeled and chopped red delicious apples
- 1 cup slivered almonds

Combine chicken, celery and apples. Toss well with mayonnaise and add almonds. For creamier chicken salad, add more mayonnaise. Cover and refrigerate

### [6] Parsha Points to Ponder

#### B'SHALACH

- 1) G-D instructed Moshe to tell the Jewish people to walk back towards Egypt to fool Par'o into thinking that the Jews were lost in the desert. The Egyptians would then be motivated to chase the Jews (see 14:1-4). Why did the Jews have to put forth that effort? Why didn't G-D simply put it in the minds of the Egyptians to give chase to the Jews?
- 2) Why does Moshe, when speaking to the Jews on Friday, tell the Jews that Shabbat is going to be TOMORROW (15:23)? Shouldn't he say TONIGHT?
- 3) Why did Moshe specifically choose Yehoshua to go select soldiers to fight against Amalek (see 17:9)?

### THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

Ponder the questions first, then read here

- 1) The Ohr HaChayim answers that G-D wanted the Jews to actively perform this trap to strengthen them when the Egyptians actually attacked. We see that the Jews complained to G-D even despite the fact that they took part in this ruse (14:10-11). Their panic would have been far worse and devastating had they not been a part of drawing the Egyptians to attack.
- 2) Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky uses this verse to further support his contention that prior to the giving of the Torah halachic days began in the morning and not in the evening as they do after the giving of the Torah. (Rav Yaakov uses this idea to explain numerous other verses.)
- 3) The Chafetz Chayim points to the fact that the Torah describes Yehoshua as someone WHO DID NOT MOVE FROM THE TENT (Sh'mot 33:11). This means that he did not cease from studying Torah. The Jews were attacked by Amalek because they were lax in their connection to Torah (Bechorot 5b). Thus, Moshe chose Yehoshua who displayed the opposite to lead the Jewish people to victory over Amalek.

*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", just re-published by Feldheim ppp@israelcenter.co.il*



*A new Torah Tidbits column with a Parshat HaShavua insight geared towards the young reader... or their parents and grandparents to read to them.*

The Shabbat we read Parshat B'shalach is called Shabbat Shira - the Shabbat of Song. After Bnei Yisrael left Egypt, Par'o decided he wanted them back. He took his entire army and set out to chase the Jews. But the Jews had reached Yam Suf - the Sea of Reeds and couldn't go forward. In a tremendous miracle, Hashem split the sea in two so the Jews could pass through on dry land! When the Egyptians reached the shore and tried to cross, the walls of water came crashing down. The entire Egyptian army drowned. Moshe and all the people sang Az Yashir - one of the most beautiful songs in the Torah - to thank Hashem for this amazing miracle.

There were more miracles after that. The people needed food. They had no fields to plant and no place to buy. Instead, their food came down from heaven. It fell to the ground every morning, fresh, nutritious and covered with dew. Mahn hu? they asked. What is it? And so they called it "mahn".

Moshe told them to gather enough mahn for each day, one day at a time. The next morning Hashem would send more. On Friday mornings, however, they were to take two portions of mahn - one for Friday and one for Shabbat, because no mahn would fall on Shabbat. For forty years G-d fed the Jews in the desert with this miraculous food. They could cook it or bake it or roast it. It tasted like any food they desired. When they entered Eretz Yisrael, the mahn no longer appeared. Now they had to plant and reap crops in their fields.

But Eretz Yisrael was a blessed land, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of wheat, barley, grapes, figs and pomegranates; of olives and dates; a Land where they would eat their full in safety and joy, just as they did when they found the mahn in the desert. There was just one condition: The Land would only produce its crops if they followed G-d's Torah.

B'shalach and the story of the mahn is always read during the week of Tu BiShvat - the day

Hashem blesses the fruits of the Land of Israel. This year, Shabbat Shira falls on the 15th of Sh'vat - the exact date of Tu BiShvat. Today we don't eat mahn from heaven, but we can eat our fill of "mahn" which comes from the ground - the blessed fruits of Eretz Yisrael.

## [8] **MicroUlpan**

Car: How do you say Bumper, bumper guard?

PAGOSH AND ZIZEI PAGOSH

## [9] **Torah from Nature**

### **Komodo Dragon**

Largest living lizard, sometimes reaching a length of 3 meters. Native to Indonesia (the isle of Komodo and a few other islands). They are versatile predators, eating everything from insects to birds to lizards and snakes to rodents to larger mammals, such as wild boars, deer, and even water buffalo. They are mildly poisonous, in addition to having bacteria in their saliva that can infest and kill their prey slowly.

They can eat as much as 80% of their weight in one meal! That could mean over 100 kilo of meat for a 130 kilo dragon. And you thought dragons were fictional animals.

Now get this - "Blood plasma of Komodo dragons contains powerful antibacterial substances that could be developed as new useful antibiotics in the ongoing worldwide battle against the evolution of antibiotic-resistant microbes." This kind of fact goes beyond MRMH to show us how G-d's creatures can benefit us.

Not only does the KD reproduce sexually - as most animals do, but it is capable of parthenogenesis. A female KD can produce viable eggs without a partner! (It involves chromosomes that duplicate themselves rather than combine with those from the partner.) The offspring in this case will all be male. When they mature, they can mate with their mother and produce both male and female offspring. A single female KD is thus capable of populating a new habitat on her own.

## [10] **Shabbat Shira**

### **Erev Shabbat Shira - Take a bird to lunch**

There are two reasons (at least) for the custom of feeding birds on Erev Shabbat Shira. (Although the minhag is associated with Shabbat Shira, there is a halachic problem in feeding birds - other than one's own birds on Shabbat. Therefore, the "transfer" of the custom to Erev Shabbat.)

The Torah (in Parshat B'shalach) tells us that some people went out looking for MN on Shabbat, even though G-d (through Moshe) had told them that no MN

would fall on Shabbat and that they were to stay put. We have a Tradition that the people were Datan and Aviram, and that they had scattered MN around the camp late Friday night and were planning to "make a liar" out of Moshe by "finding" the MN on Shabbat morning. Their plan was thwarted by birds that had eaten up the MN. This preserved the integrity of G-d's word and Moshe's. In grateful acknowledgment, the custom came about to feed birds (who food supply during the winter is skimpy, at best) on (Erev) Shabbat Shira (and all winter long).

A different reason - but one that also is based on HAKARAT HATOV, is that we "borrowed" Song from the birds in order to thank G-d and acknowledge Him for the miraculous events of the Exodus, which culminated with the Splitting of the Sea. Song is the bird's method (so to speak) of praising the Creator. Since we used that medium at the Sea, we feed birds on (Erev) Shabbat Shira.

One way or the other (or another), we need to be sensitive to the needs of other creatures, and to teach our children about HAKARAT HATOV.

## [11] **A favorite Bracha-Dilemma in honor of TU BiShvat**

Dried fruit: Raisins, apricots, pineapple.

Apricots are your favorite. Then pineapple. Last, raisins.

Three fruit, two different brachot. What goes first?

Raisins, you say, because they are of the 7 Species. Good guess, but pineapple would have priority because you like it better (CHAVIV) and the brachot are different. (Shiv'at HaMinim takes priority within the same bracha - see later.)

Okay, pineapple then. Problem. Apricots have priority for the first bracha because you like them best.

So start with the apricot. No can do. Raisins have priority as Shiv'at HaMinim (with the same bracha).

Raisins beats apricots. Apricots beat pineapple. Pineapple beats raisins.

A Rock-Paper-Scissors type Bracha-Dilemma.

This question has some different possible solutions. But before the answers, let's look carefully at the question and some of the premises that it is built on.

Shulchan Aruch states that if you have more than one fruit, all with the same bracha, then the honor of the bracha goes to fruit among the 7 Species (D'varim 8:8). The 5 fruits among the 7 Species are also prioritized, with top honor going to Olives, because they are mentioned in the pasuk first after the word ERETZ (that is, the second ARETZ that appears in the pasuk). Dates are second to be named after ARETZ. Grapes, figs and pomegranates are third, fourth, and fifth after the word ARETZ (albeit, after the first ARETZ in the pasuk). Although they precede olives and dates in the

pasuk, they "dropped" to third, fourth, and fifth position because wheat and barley are mentioned before them. This "pushed" olives and dates into the first two slots. So if all you had to choose from in the Bracha Question above were raisins and apricots, you'd make the Borei Pri HaEitz on the raisins, because they are from Shiv'at HaMinim, even though you like apricots better.

Then Shulchan Aruch deals with more than one "fruit" with different brachot involved (meaning both HaEitz and HaAdama). One of the opinions brought in this case is that CHAVIV (which you generally like better) determines what gets the first bracha. If you just had apricots and pineapple to choose from, HaEitz on apricots would be said first, and then HaAdama on the pineapple. Raisins and pineapple, HaAdama on pineapple would go first and then HaEitz on the raisins.

With just this information from Shulchan Aruch (and not other opinions that are mentioned), the question stands. Raisins beats apricot because of Shiv'at HaMinim AND the same bracha. Apricots beat pineapple and pineapple beats raisins because of CHAVIV AND two brachot. The opinions upon which the question is based seem to be the majority opinions among Rishonim and poskim.

Two different "minority" opinions that are mentioned in Shulchan Aruch and in the Mishna B'rura (actually, in the Bi'ur Halacha) would obviate the question. Shulchan Aruch's first-presented opinion where two brachot are involved is that you can choose whatever you want to make the bracha on first. Neither CHAVIV nor Shiv'at HaMinim would dictate what goes first. In our situation, according to this opinion (although it is mentioned first, the Bi'ur Halacha says that it is a minority opinion that we don't accept), you can start with the raisins or the pineapple. (Not the apricot, because raisins have Shiv'at HaMinim priority.)

Bi'ur Halacha also mentions some minority opinions that HaEitz always goes before HaAdama (which is not how we poskin, but it is what many people probably thought was the obvious ruling). According to these opinions, there is also no question here. Raisins would go first and then the bracha on pineapple.

There is a third possibility. Shulchan Aruch tells us the Rambam's opinion, namely that regardless of whether we are dealing with one or two brachot, Shivat HaMinim or not - CHAVIV always goes first. (And, Rambam's definition of CHAVIV is what you want most NOW. Not what is CHAVIV to you in general.) Accordingly, if apricot is not only your favorite, but that's what you want most now, then it gets first bracha.

There is an implied (but not stated) conclusion by the Shulchan Aruch, that the majority of Poskim hold Shiv'at HaMinim within the same bracha, and CHAVIV between two brachot. And on this basis, our question still stands. So what's to be done?

Rabbi Reuven Aberman suggested an interesting solution. He said that when the Halacha P'suka (the

authoritative opinions that we follow) sends us in circles (as in this case), we can call upon another opinion mentioned and see if it will help. And, sure enough, Rambam is available (so to speak) to help us out of the loop. You like the apricots best? And that's what you want most now? Go for it, says the Rambam. No problem. No dilemma. Rambam to the rescue. (It is probably fair to say that some of the other "opinions that we don't usually follow" will also get us out of our problem situation.)

Besides being an interesting question, the foregoing was presented as a reminder of the complexity of the laws of brachot, and of the value in learning more of the details in order to improve our performance of the mitzva of making brachot. On the other hand, in your quest for details, don't forget the broad concept of brachot - we acknowledge and thank G-d for this amazingly diverse world He created and placed us in. Happy TU BiShvat.

## [12] **G'matriya**

Interesting G'matriya find: Sh'mot 15:18

HASHEM YIMLOCH L'OLAM VA'ED:

Oft said in davening, has a G'matriya of 376, as does the word SHALOM.

Significance? Don't know. Do you?

## [13] **Torah from a Talmid (a)**

### **Let My People Stay?**

*by Oren Benzaquen, Yeshivat Sha'arei Mevaseret Zion*

In Parshat B'shalach, we see a recurring theme of the Jewish people struggling to sever their connection to Egypt. We see this through Hashem's actions towards them and various complaints that seemingly show a lack of Emunah.

The Parsha first starts out with Hashem taking the Jews out of Egypt through a circuitous route because He is afraid that the people may want to return to Egypt if they are attacked. At this point we must ask ourselves, why would Bnei Yisrael possibly want to go back to Egypt? The Jews, including the women and children, suffered torturous slavery there. They yearned to leave Egypt for so long, and now that the opportunity is finally here, could they possibly want to go back?

Then when Am Yisrael was waiting by the Yam Suf, while the Egyptian army was advancing on them, they turned to Moshe and asked, "Is it because there was a shortage of graves in Egypt that you took us to die in the desert? What have you done to us in taking us out of Egypt? (14:11) Could it be that after the spectacular miracles and strength Hashem showed in taking Bnei Yisrael out of Egypt that they could possibly have such a lack of Emunah? Do they really think that Hashem was able to take them this far, but now He will be defeated by the Egyptian army and not be able to protect the Jews?"

When Bnei Yisrael reached Mara and found that the water there was bitter they again complained to Moshe saying, “What shall we drink? (15:24) “After just witnessing Kri’at Yam Suf, just three days earlier, and singing a glorious praise to Hashem, how could Bnei Yisrael possibly think that He is now going to forsake them and not give them water?

When the Jews came to the desert of Sin, they once again started to complain.

This time, they went to Moshe and Aaron saying, “If only we had died by the hand of God in the land of Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat, when we ate bread to our fill! For you have brought us out into this desert, to starve the entire congregation to death! (16:3) “Could Bnei Yisrael really be so small-minded as to prefer to die satiated by meat and bread in Egypt, rather than patiently wait and show faith that Hashem will take care of them?

Bnei Yisrael’s third and final complaint in the Parsha happens in Refidim. Again, when they first arrive there is no water, so in the words of the Torah, Bnei Yisrael “quarrel” with Moshe. Once again we are compelled to ask, especially after Hashem has already proven that he will provide them water in Mara, where is Bnei Yisrael’s Emunah in Hashem?

With miracle after miracle, Hashem has proven that he provides for and protects Am Yisrael. It is just mind boggling that Bnei Yisrael show such a lack of Emunah in Hashem. Do they really believe that Hashem did all He did for them, taking them so far in every instance only to abandon them along the way?

The Lubavitcher Rebber in his Sichat Shabbat for Parshat Beshalach suggests the following, which seems to answer our questions. The Parasha starts off, “When Par’o sent the people away.” We are told that Bnei Yisrael didn’t simply leave Egypt on their own, but had to be sent away by Par’o. This implies that there were some Jews who did not want to leave Egypt, and only did so because Par’o sent them out. It could be possible that after the Ten Plagues and the magnificent miracles that Hashem performed in Egypt, these Jews believed that Par’o would no longer oppress and enslave the Jewish people. Instead they would be allowed to live in peace and comfort. The question for these Jews would now be, why leave all this comfort and tranquility, as part of the world’s most powerful nation, to go wander in the desert? This explains very well why Hashem had to take Bnei Yisrael in a circuitous route away from Egypt so that they will not be close by and want to return. This also explains why Bnei Yisrael always complained to Moshe that things were better in Egypt, why were they taken out from there?

The message from this is obvious for all of us today. We often find ourselves sitting in positions of comfort, unprepared to push forward into the “desert” leaving all of our luxuries behind and following in the ways of Hashem. All though we look at Bnei Yisrael in this

week’s Parsha and are fast to judge, would we have done much better ourselves? Do we do much better in our situations today? We should take this as a lesson and learn from their mistakes. We must not get caught up in the comforts and luxuries that modern life often provides, rather push forward with Emunah in our Avodat Hashem.

*YSMZ is a learning program for graduates of Yeshiva high schools throughout North America, Canada and various European countries including the UK. It offers serious students the ideal experience of learning Torah in Israel, through a unique blend of Torah learning on the highest level and the warmth and friendliness of a small Yeshiva.*

## [14] **Divrei Menachem**

Parshat B'shalach reminds us of the power of denial and rationalization when we consider both Par'o's behavior and that of Bnei Yisrael prior to and during the Crossing of the Red Sea.

Let us first recall the teaching that Hashem hardened the heart of the mighty Par'o and took the Israelites on a twisty and extended journey through the wilderness in order to give rise to extended and continuous miracles (R' Chananel, Rashi). Thus would the lessons of Hashem's omnipotence and control of destiny be better engraved in the minds of doubting individuals.

Now, when Par'o realized that the slaves were not returning, he should have been terrified to consider bringing them back, following all the horrendous plagues that befell his people. However, as Bnei Yisrael retraced their steps and halted before Baal Tzefon, Par'o clearly rationalized that his god had forced them to return. Later he denied Hashem's role in the splitting of the sea and relied on the east wind to protect his chariots.

As for the Jews, the organized Egyptian army was enough to cause many to panic, to ignore the recent miracles, and to prefer to die in Egypt rather than contend with their pursuers. As for us, where does our collective memory lead us today?

**Shana Tova to your favorite tree,**

**Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff**

## **Towards better Davening and Torah Reading**

**וַיִּירְאוּ הָעָם • יִרְאוּ**

Both words have the root of FEAR (reverence). Each has its pronunciation issue. The first is a davening and Torah reading issue; the second is from Birkat HaMazon (last paragraph)

The first means: And they (the Nation) feared G-d... The word is properly pronounced in three syllables: VA YI R'U - if one says VA YIR U, he changes the meaning of the

word to "and they saw". Different root; different meaning. VA (open syllable), YI (another open syllable), and then R'U (SH'VA NA under the REISH).

In benching, last part, the meaning is "Fear HaShem, you His holy ones... Notice that there is no vowel under the REISH. The vowel of the ALEF (a SHURUK) is co-opted by the REISH (so to speak) and the ALEF is NACHA - totally silent and non-contributing to the pronunciation of the word. Technically, the word is a single syllable - Y'RU. Not YIR-U, which means, they will see. Y'RU is the future third person plural form.

## **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.*

### **More on Kedusha and "Radiation"**

In response to TT reader Daniel Gwertzman's letter, we compared the "behavior patterns" of Kedusha to radiation. Mr. Gwertzman noted that "the tourists he deals with compare the Beit Hamikdash to a nuclear reactor with the core being the Holy of Holies and if one approaches too closely to holiness, it can result in death.

I said that unquestionably there are certain parallels between the Holy and radiation in that both are active and potentially very dangerous. (Vayikra 15:31). "A fire came forth and consumed" the sons of Aharon, Nadav and Avihu, because "they brought a strange fire before G-d, that He had not commanded (Vayikra 10:1). "A Divine fire consumed the 250 Incense-offerers of Korach's coterie because they presumptuously made their offering, thereby challenging the ordained Divine order. Uziyahu Hamelech was struck with Tzara'at when he brazenly marched into the Mikdash to offer incense (II Divrei Hayamim 26:19). Like the core of a nuclear reactor, death threatens all who approach the holy by unauthorized people or without the proper preparation. The well-meaning Uzza was struck down for touching the Aron Habrit (II Shmuel 6:6). In his case, it was not presumption at all! With the best intentions, he only wanted to save the Aron from toppling over when the oxen pulling the wagon stumbled! On the other hand, Tum'a - impurity - is not in itself a source of danger. The elaborate purification rites ordained by the Torah, the purification of the Zav, the Metzora, etc. convey a moral message to Am Yisrael; they were not enacted to guard Am Yisrael from antagonistic demons or inimical magic. R. Yochanan ben Zakkai said, "No matter how it appears, the corpse does not defile, nor does the mixture of ash (from the Para Aduma) purify. The truth is that the rite of the Para Aduma is a decree of G-d. The Holy One, blessed be He, said, 'I have set down a statue, I have issued a decree. You are not permitted to transgress My decree' (Pesikta Rabbati 14:14). (Strictly speaking, the corpse itself is not impure; it merely "radiates" impurity or causes impurity to those who come into contact with it, "overshadow" it, etc. As the Yalkut Shimoni quoting the Sifri Zuta puts it, "The person who touches the corpse is impure; the corpse itself is not impure." What does this

mean Halacha Lema'aseh, practically speaking? The Zayit Ra'anan remarks that at the time of Techit'at Hameitim, the resurrection of the dead, the newly revived will not have to undergo a purification process because when they were dead, they were not impure. Admittedly, the Gemara is somewhat more ambiguous. See Nida 70b.)

Tum'ah may be defined as a spiritually negative condition that is "contagious" and that has the power to "infect" people, food, or "vessels" depending on its "Halachic virulence". However, nowhere in the Tanach is there an allusion to danger or indeed any conscious activity emanating from the realm of impurity. Indeed the realm of impurity is seen as nothing else except the source of defilement. In his daily life, with the exception of the prohibition of "approaching" a Nida (or Yoledet or Zava), it is never sinful for a non-Kohein to be in a state of impurity. Only bringing impurity into contact with the holy, e.g. entering the Mikdash or eating Kodashim in a state of impurity, is dangerous. "The purpose of the laws is to avert such confusion of the impure and the sacred, to keep the unclean away from contact with the holy, and to guard the holy from defilement by the unclean. To defile the Tabernacle of the Lord is to incur death." Note Vayikra 15: 31, 22: 9. Contact with a corpse, the source of the most virulent form of impurity is not dangerous. Sickness, like all physical harm, comes, not from the realm of impurity, but from G-d. Similarly, the "evil spirit" that troubles Saul "is from G-d". Even Tzara'at - which is defined as a primary source of impurity - is not demonic in origin, but rather a disease sent by G-d. Unlike Zoroastrianism, which does postulate a cosmic dualism and a cosmic conflict between two antagonistic realms, the Torah postulates the essential unity of the universe. Impurity is not considered an independent primary force.

Mr. Gwertzman's tourists are not wrong when they say that, like a nuclear reactor, the Mikdash has "restricted areas, special clothing and if one approaches too closely to holiness it can result in death. Not only that, but there were special procedures to follow and only certain times when one could conduct rituals or enter the Holy of Holies." The various Midrashim claim that Nadav and Avihu independently entered the Kodesh Hakodashim and offered Ketoret. Had they consulted with their father (Aharon) or their uncle Moshe, they never would have undertaken such an inappropriate and rash act. The Sages accuse Nadav and Avihu of the following sins: they partook of wine before entering the Sanctuary; they did not wear the four prescribed priestly garments; they did not wash their hands and feet with water from the Kiyor; they used "strange fire"; and, not commanded by G-d, they dared offer incense in the Kodesh Hakodashim. These acts defied the "special procedures" laid down by G-d. II Divrei Hayamim 26 describes the sad fate that befell the powerful Uziyahu Hamelech who presumptuously attempted to follow in the footsteps of the 250 "incense offerers". "When he (Uziyahu Hamelech) was strong, his heart was lifted up so he did corruptly, and he trespassed against the Lord his G-d; for he went into the Temple of the Lord to burn incense..." The Midrashim explain the rationale behind the king's rash act. "G-d is King and so am I. It behooves the terrestrial king to do the service in the Temple of the Celestial King." Forewarned of the seriousness of his act by the Kohein Gadol, Uziyahu could not plead ignorance, "It pertaineth

not to thee Uziyahu, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense..." II Divrei Hayamim 26:18). Refusing to back down, the headstrong king was instantly punished - "the Tzara'at broke forth on his forehead..." - even though he had not even offered the Ketoret yet. Josephus adds (Antiquities 10:4), "In the meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground and a rent was made in the Temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, insomuch that leprosy seized him immediately." (The comment of Josephus that a ray of sunlight caused Uziyahu's Tzara'at is probably based on a no-longer extant Midrash that interprets Vehatzra'at Zarcha in II Divrei Hayamim 26:19 as the "Tzara'at - the 'leprosy' - was caused by the sun's rays." The usual meaning of Zarach is "shine" as in Hashemesh Zarachat - the "sun shines".)

The analogy is not wrong. Similar to an exposed core of a nuclear reactor, contact, unlawful approach or even seeing the Holy is lethal! G-d said to Moses, "You will not be able to see My face, for no human can see My face and live" (Sh'mot 33:20).

*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 are the Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night.
- 🔔 Below them is the Davka Judaica Clipart scene of the splitting of the sea.
- 🔔 The tambourine in the middle is TOF MIRIAM.
- 🔔 The tire with a blowout represents the wheels of the Egyptian chariots that fell off and caused the chariots to become bogged down in the sea bed. Part of the destruction of Egypt took place when their supreme arrogance turned to shock and panic at that moment. Soon thereafter, the waters of the Sea drowned them, but the demoralizing effect of the wheel-losing was part of their punishment.
- 🔔 Upper-right is the water coming from a rock that Moshe struck with the Staff.
- 🔔 The bird under the stream of water is a quail, as in quail - S'LAV, that preceded the MN (i.e. manna).
- 🔔 The two challot to the left of the quail is LECHEM MISHNEH, which commemorates the double portion of MN that fell on Friday in order to provide for Shabbat. We not only use double challot on Shabbat to remember the MN, but we cover them top and bottom to remind us of the two layers of dew that protected the MN. The MN was our introduction to Shabbat. See the candle sticks top-center.
- 🔔 The worm ate the leftover MN - there should not have been any.
- 🔔 Three facets of the battle against Amalek

(bottom-left & center): Moshe's upraised hands, Yehoshua's sword, and the pen with which the account of the battle was written down.

- 🔔 Lower right is the representations of the Haftara. The singing bee is Dvora. Thunderbolt = BARAK, Devorah's associate. Milk that Yael gave to Sisra, and the tent peg with which she killed him when he fell asleep.
- 🔔 The piece of a brick wall represents the brick pattern of words in the Torah for AZ YASHIR.
- 🔔 The upside-down heart refers to the phrase VAYEIHAFEICH L'VAV... Par'o had a change of heart... again.
- 🔔 The stop sign with the word Shabbat is found at the limit of one's T'chum Shabbat, Shabbat boundary.

## 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 (BO) TTriddles:

#### [1] How old is Moshav Eiver-Peleg?

The Torah tells us that the MOSHAV of Bnei Yisrael in Egypt was 430 years. (Actually, the people were in Egypt for 210 years; the 430 is counted from the prophecy of enslavement at the Brit Bein HaB'tarim.) The other occurrence in the Torah of 430 years is the number of years after PELEG was born, that his father EIVER lives. Hence, Moshav Eiver-Peleg is 430 years old.

#### [2] With a LAMED it definitely doesn't move with a PEI

Let's start with an uncommon word in the Torah - CHIPAZON. It is an important word for Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim, in particular, and GEULA, in general. The word occurs in Tanach only three times, each time as B'CHIPAZON - with haste. In Parshat Bo, the people in Mitzrayim were commanded to eat their Korban Pesach B'CHIPAZON, because they were to leave Egypt at a moment's notice. At the end of R'EI, the word is applied to the speed (haste) with which we left Egypt, and is associated with the quick baking matza (in contrast to the slow process of making bread). Also, in contrast to the speed of the Exodus from Egypt, Yeshayahu tells us that the ultimate Geula will not come hastily. If you replace the PEI in CHIPAZON with a LAMED, you get CHILAZON, snail, which definitely does not move B'CHIPAZON.

**[3] 2 words - same letters, different vowels - one involves vertical motion, the other involves horizontal motion**

There is a more elegant way this TTriddle could have been posed: Take a word from the sedra which represents vertical motion. Move one dot from one place to the other and change the motion into horizontal. Either way, here's the answer. Moshe was told to raise his hand (other times, his staff), the command word is N'TEI, NUN-TET-HEI, with a SH'VA under the NUN and a TZEIREI under the TET. Move one dot of the SH'VA and put it under the two dots of the TZEIREI and you get NITEH, NUN/CHIRIK and TET/SEGOL. That word appears in Bamidbar when Bnei Yisrael say they will pass through the territory of Edom and Emori and stay on the main road - veering neither to the right nor the left.

**[4] all the daveners at 565 Broadway 07055**

This time it was people from Pasaic New Jersey - or people who know people in Pasaic - that had the advantage in solving this TTriddle. Located at 565 Broadway in Pasaic is one of several shuls named ADATH ISRAEL (or ADAS YISRAEL, ADAT YISRAEL). The daveners of that shul are K'HAL ADAT YISRAEL. All of them make up KOL K'HAL ADAT YISRAEL, a phrase that occurs only twice in Tanach - in Parshat Bo, concerning who is commanded to participate in Korban Pesach, and in Bamidbar, in the description of the Sin of the Spies.

**[5] HIS BROTHERS ATE A LOT OF MATZA - WHATWHAT?**

WHATWHAT is the main clue. In Hebrew, MAH-MAH. Which is the root of the words L'HITMAHMEI'AH from Parshat Bo, referring to the fact that the Exodus was so fast that the Jews could not linger to prepare bread and other provision... In B'reishit, it is Yosef's brothers who say they cannot linger, but must return to Egypt with Binyamin... Ironic, no? And also in B'reishit, Lot did linger, even though he was told to flee S'dom quickly. So these three occurrences of the MAHMAH (whatwhat) words are HIS BROTHERS, LOT (which is why the whole TTriddle is in uppercase, to allow the word LOT to sneak by unnoticed, and MATZA.

**[6] The guy from Maon and Moshe - that's it people-wise**

Here's what a full-credit solution to a TTriddle looks like. It is from Ace TTriddler HC: There are only two people in Tanach who are called ISH GADOL M'OD (a very great man). One of them is MOSHE RABEINU, who is referred to this week as being great in Egypt in the eyes of Par'o's servants and the people. The second man is the "guy from Maon", a.k.a. NAVAL, the husband of AVIGAYIL. The phrase GADOL M'OD is mentioned four more times in Tanach, but only the above two are regarding people.

**[7] AB=Him; BA=us**

A and B represent two words, specifically, HASHEM and TZ'VA-OT respectively. In that order, AB, they refer to Him. But TZIVOT HASHEM, that is, BA, refers to us, Bnei Yisrael. By the way, in the AB arrangement, the words appear 246 times in Tanach (none in Torah), and are two of the "Names of G-d that are not to be erased". The BA arrangement occurs only once, in Parshat Bo, in describing Bnei Yisrael who are leaving Mitzrayim after 430 years. The term is also found in Chabad literature.

**This week's TTriddles:**

**[1] aside from 5 2s, there are 4 5s, a 3, and another 2**

**[2] only twice in Tanach - this week's sedra and haftara**

**[3] Had he been Jewish, where might Sisra's funeral have been?**

**[4] They are in the coccyx position**

**[5] baked bean curd - when?**

**[6] Bob Dylan's featured number from Bringing it All Back Home (f)**

**[7] The Ramon Jose Trilogy**

**[8] twice in the AM, once in the PM**

**[9] Yosef was Yocheved's alter ego?**