



שבת פרשת זקת
865
 ה' תמוז תשס"ט June 26-27, '09



This Shabbat is the 271st day (of 354), 39th Shabbat (of 50) of 5769
אָלאַ, בזמן שישראל... ומשעבדין את לבם לאביהן שבשמים...
Chutz LaAretz - Shabbat Parshat KORACH; fourth perek of Pirkei Avot

The Para Aduma and her son

Rashi quotes Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan's analysis of the mitzva and details of Para Aduma, which is based on Midrash, that the red heifer is the symbolic mother of the golden calf. "This can be compared to the son of a maidservant who soiled the king's palace. They said, 'Let his mother come and clean up the mess.' Similarly, let the cow come and atone for the calf."

[Side point: a potential Para Aduma that is pregnant (similarly, if she gave birth to a calf) is invalid for Para Aduma - yet the analogy stands.]

continued below

Candle Lighting
 (Earliest candle lighting - PLAG)
 and **HAYDALA** times
 Israel Summer Time

Correct for TT 865 • Rabbeinu Tam (I'm) - 9:16pm

7:13 (6:20)	Yerushalayim	8:31pm
7:29 (6:22)	S'derot	8:33pm
7:28 (6:20)	Gush Etzion	8:31pm
7:30 (6:22)	Raanana	8:34pm
7:29 (6:21)	Beit Shemesh	8:32pm
7:30 (6:22)	Rehovot	8:33pm
7:31 (6:22)	Netanya	8:35pm
7:26 (6:20)	Be'er Sheva	8:31pm
7:29 (6:21)	Modi'in	8:33pm
7:13 (6:22)	Petach Tikva	8:34pm
7:13 (6:20)	Maale Adumim	8:31pm
7:29 (6:21)	Ginot Shomron	8:33pm
7:28 (6:20)	Gush Shiloh	8:32pm
7:28 (6:20)	K4 & Hevron	8:31pm
7:28 (6:20)	Giv'at Ze'ev	8:32pm
7:29 (6:22)	Yad Binyamin	8:33pm
7:30 (6:22)	Ashkelon	8:34pm
7:20 (6:21)	Tzfat	8:34pm

ברוכים הבאים בשם ה'
A warm welcome to
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OTHER Z'MANIM
 Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
2-11 Tamuz (June 24 - July 3)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	4:36-4:39am
Sunrise	5:35-5:39am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	9:08-9:10am (Magen Avraham: 8:12-8:15am)
Sof Z'man T'fila	10:19-10:21am (Magen Avraham: 9:42-9:44am)
Chatzot	12:41½-12:43¼pm (halachic noon)
Mincha Gedola	1:18-1:19pm (earliest Mincha)
Plag Mincha	6:19¼-6:20pm
Sunset	7:53-7:53pm (based on sea level: 7:48-7:48pm)

Word of the Month
 Tricky thing about Kiddush
 L'vana this month. The molad
 was Monday at 9:14pm Israel
 Summer time. Three full days
 after that time is

cont. below

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Torah Tidbits and many of the projects of OU Israel are
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Founders and initial benefactors of the Israel Center:
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Lead Tidbit [cont. from front page](#)

As we've pointed out in the past, becoming Tamei is not a sin; some- times it is a great mitzva. Why then is purification from ritual impurity an atonement for sin?

Let's put it like this: The Torah tells us that about 3000 men were killed for their participation in the sin of the calf. That's less than a half of a percent of the adult male population - maybe only a 10th of a percent of the total population. What about all the rest of the people?

Some suggest that their sin was looking on at what was happening and not objecting. Or something like that. But perhaps we can see things from a different angle.

The sinners were executed. The rest of the people displayed their human nature. They defined human nature. Namely, that the individual does not always act the way G-d wants him to. That the human being does not always function in the best interests of his NESHAMA, his soul. That sin is a betrayal of the Divine soul each person has, by the body that is its receptacle. And G-d therefore (so to speak), in His disappointment with us, declared the body to be the major source of Tum'a. Indirectly, the Calf caused a dead body to be Tamei. And the Para Aduma comes as a purifier and atonement.

The following paragraphs are being added to the PDF file and text file which is accessible via email and on the web - there was no additional room available in the hard copy...

An visiting dignitary is assigned a local guide and assistant to help him during his visit. After the visit, the assistant's performance is evaluated. Top rating earns the person reward AND a certain status as "good guide to important people", even when not functioning in that capacity. A poor rating - was disrespectful, not helpful, rude, counterproductive. And that becomes a reputation, even long after the assignment. In between - He was okay - will probably not affect the person's reputation either way.

The visiting dignitary is the NESHAMA, the holy soul, part of the Divine Essence. The guide and assistant is the person into whose body the soul is placed during his lifetime. The analogy fits well on an individual level, as to what kind of judgment a person faces after 120 years, and as to how he will be remembered.

But let's bump this issue up to a national level - the Jewish People. Obviously there are differences among individuals, and these differences range across a wide spectrum of behavior. But how does/did G-d evaluate the Jewish People as a whole. Perhaps we can say that the sin of the golden calf and the reaction of the people (or lack of a reaction), gave a bad reputation to us all, for all time. Decreeing that a dead body is AVI AVOT HATUM'A reflects G-d's dissatisfaction (to say the least, or disappointment, so to speak) with the behavior of the People. The status of impurity says that we generally do not treat our NESHAMA properly. We do not generally act on its behalf, but

rather indulge in typical "human nature". Because of this, purification is an atonement for sin, and the original analogy of R' Moshe HaDarshan remains intact and a poignant reminder of our constant challenge to rise above human nature and become the holy people and holy nation that G-d wants us to be.

WORD of the MONTH [from p.2](#)

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

Thursday, June 25th at 9:14pm. First opportunity for Minhag Yerushalayim would be THU, not before 9:14pm. Problem is, the moon will be setting about an hour later and might be too low in the sky to be seen from most areas. If you do see it after 9:14pm, go for it. Otherwise, we'll be saying KL on Motza'ei Shabbat, eve of the 6th of the month. That's later than usual for 3-day people, but still too early for 7 full days after the molad people. Their first op is Monday, June 29th, but only after 9:14pm. And on that night, the moon will be out until 12:23am (of Tuesday). Plenty of time, but if you are MAKPID on 7 full days, remember to wait for 9:14pm. This means that you won't be able to say KL right after Maariv, making it difficult for the TZIBUR (unless they wait for Tuesday night).

CHUKAT STATS

39th of 54 sedras; 6th of 10 in Bamidbar

Written on 159.2 lines in a Sefer Torah (rank: 39)

10 Parshiyot; 6 open, 4 closed

87 p'sukim; ranks 43rd; smallest in B'midbar

1245 words; ranks 40th; smallest in B'midbar

4670 letters; ranks 41st; smallest in B'midbar

Fewer p'sukim than Sh'mini, more words, same number of letters. Chukat is a bit longer.

Mitzvot

3 mitzvot of 613; all positive

Only 6 sedras have only positive mitzvot: B'reishit and Lech Lecha with 1 each, Metzora with 11, Chukat with 3, Pinchas with 6, and Vayeilech with 2

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 - 17 p'sukim - 19:1-17

[P> 19:1 (22)] This whole Aliya plus the following 5 p'sukim deal with the topic of the PARA ADUMA. (The 22 p'sukim of ch. 19

constitute the Maftir for Shabbat Parshat Para - 2nd longest Maftir of all - what's the longest?)

The mitzva involves taking a cow with reddish hair (even two black or white hairs invalidate it), that is blemish-free (i.e. fit for the Altar - even though the Para Aduma is NOT a korban; it is prepared away from the Mikdash and Har HaBayit, across the valley, on Har HaZeitim) and that has not worn a yoke or carried a burden for people. (If it carried upon its back something for its own benefit - e.g. a blanket to keep flies away - it is still acceptable.) Elazar b. Aharon was in charge of the preparation of this first Para Aduma.

SDT: *"And G-d spoke to Moshe and Aharon saying... DABEIR (you Moshe, not both of you, DAB'RU) to the children of Israel... Only Moshe could tell the people about the PARA ADUMA, which is an atonement for the Sin of the Golden Calf. Aharon was too involved in the Golden Calf episode. He didn't tell this mitzva to the people and he didn't prepare the PARA ADUMA; his son did. Yet the pasuk tells us that G-d spoke to both Moshe and Aharon. Perhaps this contains a private rebuke by G-d to Aharon... And perhaps a bit of the opposite as well, since Aharon IS included in the command to prepare the Para Aduma.*

SDT: *Rashi says that the mitzva is for the assistant Kohen Gadol to tend to the Para Aduma, although any kohen qualifies. Commentaries see a symbolism in the son of Aharon doing the work: just as the cow atones (so to speak) for her calf, so too the son atones for his father who was somewhat involved in the Golden Calf.*

"Take a PARA ADUMA T'MIMA..." T'MIMA usually means blemish-free, fit for the Altar. However, here the word T'MIMA is followed by the phrase "that has no MUM (blemish)", making the adjective T'MIMA superfluous. Therefore, we are taught that T'MIMA in this context is describing ADUMA, indicating that COMPLETE reddish hair is required. Without T'MIMA, a cow that was a "jinji" would be acceptable even if it had some non-red hairs. Not so, because of the phrase ADUMA T'MIMA.

As opposed to all korbanot in the Mikdash which had to be brought "inside" (the Beit HaMikdash area), the Red Cow is slaughtered and prepared "outside" (not even on Har HaBayit - across the valley on Har HaZeitim). It is not a korban, but it does have korban-like features (atonement, among others).

After the cow is slaughtered, it is burnt whole (some of its blood having been sprinkled towards the Mikdash first).

The complete process of the Para Aduma (including what is thrown into the fire, how the ashes are collected and how the potion is made) is a positive mitzva **[397, A113 19:2]** that has been fulfilled nine times, so far. The next (tenth) time will be in the time of the Moshiach.

A person who comes in contact with a dead body is rendered ritually impure for a seven-day period **[398, A107 19:4]**. The "Para Aduma Potion" is to be sprinkled on the defiled person on the third and seventh day. Without this pro-

cedure, the state of ritual impurity remains forever. It is most important to avoid entering the Mikdash (and eating of sacred foods) while one is defiled. Intentional violation is a (Divinely imposed) capital offense.

MitzvaWatch

Today, (temporarily) without a Beit HaMikdash, the are (at least) three ramifications of the rules of ritual impurity to the dead.

[1] A kohen must still avoid contact with a dead body (except those of his close relatives for whom he sits shiva), even though he is already "tamei". This is both for "practice" as well as not to "add" to his state of TUM'A.

(2) We are not permitted to go onto Har HaBayit in those areas where the Beit HaMikdash and its courtyard stood (or might have stood).

(3) Some gifts of the Kohen (such as t'ruma, t'rumat maaser, challa) are not given to a kohen, but are "disposed of" according to alternate halachic procedures, because of TUM'A of both the Kohen potential recipient, as well as the giver, and therefore, the gift itself. Note that there are gifts to the kohen that pose no TAMEI problems; these are given today (e.g. Pidyon HaBen).

SDT: *The Chidushei HaRim made a mussar comment about T'MIMA that deserves our attention. For the Para Aduma, the standard of ADUMA T'MIMA is not met if there are two hairs of another color. For the Jew, who must strive to fulfill the mitzva of TAMIM TIH-YEH (im HaShem Elokecha), even a single "black hair" prevents a complete fulfillment.*

Levi - Second Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 19:18-20:6

The Torah summarizes the Para Aduma procedures.

Note that the cedar branch and hyssop are added to the potion as well as to the burning of the Para Aduma. Commentaries see special significance in the fact that the cedar is a lofty tree and the hyssop is a lowly shrub.

The dual nature of the Para Aduma potion (that it purifies the defiled and defiles the ritually pure) is counted as a mitzva of its own **[399, A108 19:19]**. And, it is this feature of the Para Aduma that is considered most mystifying and enigmatic.

[P> 20:1 (6)] The next topic the Torah deals with is the death of Miriam in the Tzin Wilderness in Nissan (on the 10th of the month). The Torah immediately tells us that the People had no water (Midrashim speak of Miriam's Well that miraculously accompanied the People during their wanderings. This well disappeared upon her death, since it was in her merit - because she had watched over Moshe at the river - that we had the Well.) The People complain bitterly to Moshe and Aharon.

The custom of emptying out water containers in the room in which someone has died, comes from the sequence: "...and Miriam died ...and there was no water..."

Commentaries point out a connection between Para Aduma and the

death of the righteous Miriam. Both are "instruments" of atonement.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 7 p'sukim - 20:7-13

[P> 20:7 (5)] In response, G-d tells Moshe to take the Staff, gather the People, and that he (Moshe) and Aharon should SPEAK to the rock in the presence of the People, so that the rock shall give forth its water for the People and their flocks. Moshe gathers the People and admonishes them to witness another of G-d's miracles. He lifts the Staff and strikes the rock twice; water flows from it in abundance.

[S> 20:12 (2)] G-d is "angry" at Moshe and Aharon for missing a chance to sanctify His Name by having the People see water come from the rock by speaking to it. (The People had previously seen water come from a struck rock.) G-d decrees that neither Moshe nor Aharon shall lead the People into the Land of Israel.

Because of the inclusion of Aharon in this decree, there is an implication that he was not punished for any involvement in the Golden Calf - a point that needed clarification. Rashi says that the Torah is telling us that Moshe and Aharon would have gone into Eretz Yisrael, except for this, and only this sin. Interesting that Moshe himself tells the people (in D'varim) that he carries some of the blame for the Sin of the Spies. With Aharon's involvement in the Calf incident and Moshe's in the Spies episode, there is an interesting balance. On the other hand, Aharon

IS held accountable in this case, even though it was Moshe who "acted".

G-d's decree seems excessively harsh on Moshe and Aharon. Commentators point to this as an example of how strictly G-d judges the greatest of our people.

Observation...

Note that the rock gives forth water even though Moshe did not speak to it, as G-d had told him to. There are two possibilities (maybe) as to why.

(1) It avoids a Chilul HaShem that would result if water did not come forth.

(2) Moshe Rabeinu was on the high level that he was able to control and divert nature (within limits). He had previously stricken a rock to get water; this now is something he can do.

(3) A twist on the Chilul HaShem possibility of (1) is that G-d wanted to avoid Moshe's losing face. G-d and Moshe are very much partners, so to speak, in the perception of the People. At the Sea, the people believed in "HaShem and in Moshe His servant, BASHEM UVMOSHE AVDO. In contrast, their lack of faith is expressed as their talking against G-d and against Moshe, BEILOKIM UVMOSHE. These are the only two times the word UVMOSHE (and in Moshe) appears in all of Tanach.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 8 p'sukim - 20:14-21

[S> 20:14 (8)] Moshe sends messengers to the Edomites, to recount Israel's brief history and request

right of way through Edomite land. The request is denied. A second attempt is made to obtain permission; this too is strongly rejected. The People of Israel change their route in order to avoid confrontation with Edom (according to G-d's command).

SdT: *In asking for passage through Edom territory, Moshe's messengers state that the people "will not drink water of a well". Rashi says that we would have expected the Torah to say "the water of cisterns". Rashi explains that Edom had the cisterns; we had a miraculous well (as well as Manna for food). What we were offering Edom was the profits from selling us food and water. We had no need for their food and drink, but it was a proper offer to make. Rashi says that when staying at an inn, one should partake of the inn's meals rather than "taking out from Moshiko's (which is Mehadrin OU-Israel, by the way)". This increases the benefit to the innkeeper and is a proper thing for a patron to do.*

SdT: *Moshe sends a message to Edom saying, "...you know all the trouble we had in Egypt." Imrei Shefer asks, how was Edom expected to know what happened to us in Egypt? The answer, he says, comes from Parshat To'l'dot, when Rivka sought out G-d to explain what was happening inside her. She was told that she would have twins and that they would grow to head great nations, and when one fell, the other would rise proportionally. Edom's life must have made a significant turn upward, says Imrei Shefer, during the dark years we spent in Egyptian servitude. That is how Edom would know what was happening to his brother Israel.*

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 20:22-21:9

[P> 20:22 (8)] The People travel from Kadesh to Hor HaHar. There Aharon is to die. Moshe takes Aharon and Elazar up the mountain, where the garments of the Kohen Gadol are transferred from Aharon to his son and successor. ALL the people mourn Aharon's death for 30 days. Commentaries point out that Aharon's death had elements that were missing in Moshe's. Seeing his son continue in his footsteps and being loved by all the people as Aharon was, adds a special dimension to Aharon's full life.

The Midrash says that the Heavenly Clouds that protected the People, left upon Aharon's death.

We can see now that the miracles of the Midbar were each associated with one of our leaders: Moshe, the Manna; Aharon, the Clouds; Miriam, the Well.

[S> 21:1 (3)] That made them vulnerable to attack from Emori. The People of Israel made a pledge to G-d and the Emori attack was successfully countered by Israel.

[P> 21:4 (13)] The People then tired of their extended travels and complained once again to G-d and Moshe. Their tirade included gross disrespect to G-d's miracle of the Manna. For this they were punished by an attack of "fiery" (poisonous) snakes that bit many people, causing many deaths. The People repented and pleaded with

Moshe to pray to G-d to spare them. G-d told Moshe to fashion a copper (the choice of copper was Moshe's and it was a play on words - NECHOSHET/NACHASH) snake and mount it atop a staff, so that anyone who would see it * would live.

*The Mishna in Rosh HaShana (3:8) asks, "What? (The copper image of) a snake can kill or restore life?" Not so, says the Mishna. "Rather, when the People of Israel look towards the Heavens and subjugate their hearts to G-d, then they were cured; and if not, they would decay."

The Mishna in P'sachim (4:9) records different things that Chizkiyahu HaMelech did, and was either praised for them, or criticized by the Sages. He destroyed the Copper Serpent and the Sages approved of his actions. People were misusing it, and misunderstanding it (despite the concept presented in the Mishna cited above). This same kind of problem exists with the use of Korbanot in the time of the Beit HaMikdash, and - in our time - amulets, Tashlich on Rosh HaShana, Kaparot before Yom Kippur, visiting holy places, notes in the cracks of the Kotel, red threads around one's wrist, and even saying T'hilim - meaning that there are people who do certain things in lieu of heartfelt prayer and sincere kavanot, somehow expecting miraculous salvation. All of the above, to some extent or another, are meant to be incentive and inspiration to sincere repentance and prayer, not substitutes for them. This is why Chizkiyahu HaMelech got rid of the N'CHASH NECHOSHET. This is why some rabbis banned Kaparot in their communities, etc.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 21:10-20

The People continue their travels. They went to OVOT (identified as being due south of the Dead Sea). From there they went to "desolate passes" or "the ruins of AVARIM" (different understandings of the phrase IYEI HA'ARAVIM), along Moav's eastern border. They then continued on to NACHAL ZERED. Then to a part of the desert that was outside Moav territory (this because they were forbidden by G-d to encounter Moav.) These travels were recorded in the "Book of the Wars of G-d" (Some say that this was an ancient record of events that occurred since the days of Avraham Avinu. Some say that this refers to the Torah. Others say that it wasn't actually a book but an oral transmission of stories through the generations.) Finally, the people arrive at a place known as "the Well".

[S> 21:17 (4)] This was another significant event related to water. From a physical point of view, water is by far the most valuable "commodity" of the wandering Nation. On a spiritual level, water represents Torah and Life itself. The "Song of the Well", a short but beautiful song is recorded, highlighting the preciousness of water. The words are filled with symbolism and allusions.

It was then that Israel sang this song:

Rise, O well, respond to [this song].

A well was dug by princes

Sunk by the people's leaders

Carved out with their staffs.

From the desert, [the Israelites went to] Matanah...

The next piece of travelog is either part of the song at the well... or not. From the desert, the people went to Matana, from Matana to Nachliel, and from Nachliel to Bamot. From Bamot to Hagai in the field of Moav, on a cliff top that overlooks the Wastelands.

Notice that we have, shortly out of Egypt, before the wandering period in the Midbar, an AZ YASHIR... Shirat HaYam. Water. At the end of the period of wandering, shortly before leaving the Midbar and entering Eretz Yisrael, we have another AZ YASHIR... B'eir. Water.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 21:21-22:1

[P> 21:21 (16)] As Israel approaches the lands of Emori, requests are made for rights of passage. Not only are these requests denied, but Emori sends an army to confront Israel. Israel is completely victorious against King Sichon, and conquers the lands of Emori and Cheshbon. Further battles result in more Emori lands. Og, king of Bashan, also falls, as G-d promised.

SDT: *It is important to note that Israel's military might is not absolute, nor are their military options equal. Israel fights against whom G-d tells us to, and we do not engage in battle anyone that G-d forbids us to. It is irrelevant whether Edom was stronger or weaker than Emori. We didn't fight the latter and avoid the former for military reasons. G-d is our Commander-in-Chief. We have to always keep this in mind; and it would help if our enemies knew this as well. Ironically, it is our enemies who sometimes seem to believe in G-d's role in these kind of matters, whereas we sometimes seem to stubbornly deny His role. And this point is applicable in modern times as it ever was.*

SDT: *Rashi explains why G-d had to tell Moshe not to fear fighting Og. Og was the sole survivor of the Flood (except for Noach and company), and he was the one who told Avraham that nephew Lot had been taken into captivity. Perhaps he had earned enough merit to resist the Israelites. G-d told Moshe not to worry.*

Israel's military victories in the Midbar, towards the end of the period of wandering, were very important for the morale of the people as they faced long years of many battles upon crossing the Jordan River into Eretz Yisrael. In the Midbar, they get a taste of G-d's promises and might.

Moshe sends Meraglim to Ya'zer. Rashi says that the spies who were sent said, "we will not do as our predecessors did; we have complete confidence in the power of Moshe's prayer." In a way, the sending of these Meraglim is a TIKUN (repair) of the Sin of the Spies. Spies were always sent to facilitate the nation's next step.

They were not meant to decide on what G-d already had decreed. The final pasuk tells us that Israel traveled and arrived at Arvot Moav - this is their final stop before entry into Eretz Yisrael.

Note the significance of the above statement. The four remaining sedras of Bamidbar and all 11 of D'varim are still in front of us, and we are already at Arvot Moav. Mas'ei will give a summary of the wandering, but with the conclusion of Chukat, we have arrived at the threshold of Eretz Yisrael. Remember that back in Mikeitz we left the Land and went down into Egypt. Now we are readying ourselves to return.

Last 3 p'sukim are reread for Maftir.

Haftara - 33 p'sukim - Sho-f'tim 11:1-33

The haftara consists of most of the story of Yiftach, the at-first scorned, later sought after, son of Gil'ad. He was shunned by his "half-brothers"

and fled to the Land of Tov where he lived a rogue's life. The people of the Gil'ad region are attacked by the Ammonites and they pursue Yiftach to be their leader. In the description of the wars with Amon, reference is made to the historical background of the area - specifically, the episode recorded in the sedra about Israel requesting permission from Emori for passage through their territory. This is a major connection to the sedra. The story of Yiftach seems to be peripheral to the reason that Chaza"l chose this reading for Chukat. And yet... the haftara ends with the first part of the story of Yiftach's vow and the resultant fiasco with his daughter. Chaza"l generally consider Yiftach to have erred; such a vow as his would be halachically invalid under the circumstances. The significance (if it does, in fact, connect to the sedra) of the story of Yiftach's daughter vis-a-vis the sedra is elusive.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson #481

Was there a kosher marriage?

There are quite a few cases dealing with the marriage itself. Was there a valid marriage? If there was, the wife will need a Get (divorce) to be free to marry again. [Or the death of the husband.] If the marriage was not valid according to halacha, she may be able to get married now to another man without a Get from

her former partner, that she is not able to obtain now. The response literature has many such cases. I begin with one of many cases that were presented to one of the great decisors of the last century, Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l.

A man and woman got married civilly, that is before a judge of the court who was authorized to perform marriages. After their civil marriage, they lived together for two months in a place where

there were no Jews and then she lived alone for three and a half years - he just left. He then returned and they lived together for five years in a community where Jews resided. They, however had no dealings with any of the observant Jews of the community or any Jews who had any knowledge of things Jewish. But they may have had some dealings with a few non-observant Jews of the community. He then left her and she lived by herself for half a year. He returned and they moved to Los Angeles to a community that included Jews who were religious, for a period of eight years in four different locations; one year in one location, two years in a second location, two years in a third location, and three years in a fourth location. Every year he would leave her alone for prolonged periods of time and it has been a year from the last time he left and he has not been heard from. During this last period that he was away, she came into contact with a group of people who influenced her to become religiously observant. She cannot obtain a Get from her husband. The question that was asked of Rabbi Feinstein is, can she get married to another man since she had never had a religious marriage to that man?

Since she had resided five years with her husband in a place where there were Jews and the neighbors knew that she and her husband were Jewish, even though they had no contact with those Jews who were observant of the laws of the Torah... But some of the Jewish observant neighbors must have thought that they were husband and wife living in their house. Also this couple had children who were accepted in the community as being children of this couple, that is, she was the mother and the husband was the father since the children had the same last

name as he had. And although the neighbors were aware of the times that he left, they also were probably aware of the times that he returned. Especially since her last name is the name of her husband. Since it is not usual for a husband to leave his wife for long periods of time and to return, the neighbors were probably well aware of their relationship. See T. Chulin 75b that everything that is extraordinary, people remember very well. Things that are unusual, people get to know about them. And as explained by Rashi, rumors abound in situations such as these. So in our case too where the husband abandoned his wife on numerous occasions and returned, this too is an event that is not usual and the neighbors were aware of this. We are compelled to so conclude that they were aware from the outset. Therefore since the neighbors included Jews who were observant who were aware of this relationship, she requires a Get to dissolve their relationship for there is a presumption that people do not live together in sin, therefore when they lived together it must be for the sake of marriage. Where possible, we should require a Get also from people who are not Torah observant and it is now the custom to require a Get in such situations.

But if it is not possible for her to obtain the Get and she will be chained down without being able to remarry, we can in these circumstances rely on a response if Ribash (R. Isaac b. Sheshet 1326-1408; Spain, North Africa), whom the Rama says we follow in the halacha in these circumstances, as seen in 26:1 of Even haEzer and the Author [of the Shulhan Aruch R. Yosef Karo] 149:6, we see that the aforementioned presumption that a couple does not live together in an immoral relationship does not apply and

it may be that in this case they were not considered to be married. When people live together in an immoral relationship they do not require a Get to terminate their relationship. Rabbi Feinstein refers the respondent to other responses of his to similar situations. Rabbi Feinstein continues that the halachic statement of Ribash is the statement of the halacha since there does not seem to be any other decisor who disagrees with him on this point of halacha. He goes into a discussion of why we treat these not knowledgeable persons as having acted in a sinful manner since they did not know the correct halachot of Nida and Mikva, and not having acted in a halachic manner and that they considered living together as being part of a halachic marriage. Even if they had considered living together as being part of a Jewish marriage, there were many things lacking to make their living together take the

place of formal kiddushin, acquisition of the woman by the man for a Jewish marriage. There was lacking the presence of two witnesses to testify that they were living together for the sake of a Jewish marriage. He concludes that people who are not observant and violate so many of the laws of the Torah and act like non-Jews are also not concerned with the fact that they are living together in a non-halachic manner. Therefore there is nothing in this relationship that will require a Get for her to be able to get married. Especially in a case where she cannot obtain a Get. However, Rabbi Feinstein advises the rabbi who sent the question to him to try to obtain a Get from the man she had been living with. If this is not possible, she is free to get married without the Get. But the rabbi should try to persuade her to observe the laws of nida.

that Challah is obligatory even outside of Eretz Yisrael" (Abarbanel).

The next obligation concerns bringing sacrifices to atone for theoretical ignorance or careless errors in judgment, either by the leaders of the nation or by individuals. This ignorance or carelessness saw as legitimate, acts that were in reality contradictions of the whole Torah (Bamidbar 15:22-31). "The nature of the sin of the meraglim was to cast doubts whether G-d's special and exclusive care for Israel were sufficient to ensure our earthly existence. Then, by wishing to appoint a leader and return to Egypt, they completely rebelled against G-d" (S. R. Hirsch). First, there was the error in judgment of the Nesi'im, the leaders, who authored the false report and lashon hara against the Land. This was then compounded by the ignorance of a whole people that led to their wishing to go back to Egypt, thus defecting against G-d rather than inheriting the Land that He had promised them. "The first error required the offering of a ox signifying leadership and a position of authority, while that of the people is merely a sheep in atonement for the ignorance of the followers led astray by their leaders" (S. R. Hirsch). "This law is repeated here, between parshat hameraglim and that of Korach, after having been taught in Vayikra together with the other korbanot. In both these cases, Israel doubted the truth of Moshe's prophecy and of Torah from Heaven, and also made errors in judgment and through careless ignorance, so they came to rebel against G-d" (Abarbanel).

The third mitzva commanded after the episode of the meraglim was the death penalty by stoning of the mekoshesh eitzim, the one who publicly desecrated

Shabbat after being warned of the consequences of his act; not mistaken judgment nor an act of ignorance but the deliberate public desertion of G-d's wishes, 'beyad rama' (Bamidbar 16:32-36). "The meraglim damaged Israel's simple faith, a faith that is free of questioning, philosophy or intellectualism, in G-d's benevolence and wisdom. This made their T'shuva incomplete" (Shem MiShmuel). Through going up and attacking the nations of the Land they hoped to show repentance for their original rejection, even though Moshe warned that this was contrary to G-d's decree, but they only compounded their sin of erroneous judgment into one of open rebellion, that is 'beyad rama'. "'Beyad rama', this means that the mekoshesh wished to demonstrate to all that he did not fear G-d and that he did not intend to keep His commandments; there is an allusion here to the meraglim who also acted beyad rama. In common language, such conduct is termed to curse G-d" (Ibn Ezra). "Megadef, one who curses G-d has no atonement until he dies, not even if he does T'shuva out of fear of punishment. That is why here the T'shuva of Israel did not obtain atonement for them and the whole generation had to die out; 'and you repented and wept but G-d did not listen to your voices' (Devarim 1:45)" (S'forno).

In the cheit hameraglim there was rebellion against G-d's commandments, there were errors of judgment, there were doubts about His Benevolence and Power, and there was an act "beyad rama". Tzitzit, with which the whole story concludes educates and sensitizes us against the root causes of their sins and the causes of all forms of sinning in our

Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Bamidbar Stories

by **Dr. Meir Tamari**

To Spy Out the Land {6}

To meet the spiritual challenge of the rejection of the Land, Israel was first given the nesachim to accompany even korbanot yachid and so to strengthen the individual's religious connection with G-d. Then Israel was commanded four additional actions - Challah, sacrifices for making errors in judgment, death penalty for public desecration of Shabbat, and Tzitzit - that at first glance seem to be unrelated but that actually are closely connected to the roots of the false report of the Spies; indeed to our own spiritual and moral lives.

"When you come into the Land

[immediately, before conquest and before the tribal allocation (Sifri)], you shall bring the first portion of your dough to G-d' (Bamidbar 16:17-21). The shares that every home and every individual have in the general prosperity of the nation, are special acts of G-d's blessings and this demands recognition and committing to heart through the taking of Challah" (S. R. Hirsch). "After the sin of the meraglim, Israel required the din of Challah in order to bring down these Divine blessings into their homes" (Sforno). "The need for such Divine blessings exists in the galut as well, so

national and personal lives.

"In tzitzit there is also testament to the Exodus, acceptance of the yoke of mitzvot, an antidote to spiritual misconceptions, the purification of immoral thoughts and the avoidance of even hints of idolatry" (B'rachot 12b).

"And you shall see it and remember all the commandments of G-d and fulfill them (Bamidbar 16:39): Seeing brings to remembering and remembering brings to doing (Menachot 43); like we make signs for those things we wish to remember and do not rely only on the power of our memory" (Torah T'mima). "Through seeing the tzitzit one comes to remember G-d's commandments, till the resultant multiplicity of good deeds and actions bring us to living like His servants, who bear in their clothes the badge and insignia of their Master and King" (Abarbanel).

"That you seek not after your own hearts, and your own eyes: if the heart does not desire, the eyes do not see" (Sifri). "That we should not follow the dictates of our hearts to achieve wealth and power even if through theft and fraud, nor follow the lusting of our eyes that leads to immorality, nor the errors of our minds that lead to spiritual death" (Sforno).

"G-d left nothing in this world free of mitzvot: you shall not plough with an ox and a donkey; you shall not sow kilayim; you shall not reap the corners of your fields; you shall give challah from your dough; send away the mother bird; cover the blood of shechita; orlah of trees and brit of sons; you shall make a ma'akeh to your roofs, write mezuzot on your doorposts, and wear tzitzit in your garments" (Tanchuma 15).

"And become holy to your G-d" (Bamidbar 15:40): By you remembering the teachings of the Torah and doing His mitzvot you shall become as G-d foretold a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (S'forno). Such a nation settled on its Land is truly the atonement for the Meraglim.

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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...



May I eat on Shabbat in the house of someone whose business (in Europe) stays open on Shabbat?



If the owner works in the store on Shabbat, one has to assume that he has the status of a M'chaleil Shabbat B'farhesia (one who desecrates Shabbat publicly), who loses all halachic NE'EMANUT (credibility, trustworthiness) (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 119:6; see Shut Chatam Sofer, Choshen Mishpat 175 regarding operating a store on Shabbat). If, though, a wife who does not violate prohibitions vouches for all the food's purchase and preparation it would be permitted to eat there. Your question implies that the owner only keeps the store open, and let's assume with non-Jews selling and working. You also imply that the person seems to generally follow the laws of the Torah.

Since you give no details, we cannot say whether your acquaintance's store is allowed to be open on Shabbat with non-Jews working in it. Some relevant factors include whether there is a non-Jewish partner and the nature of the partnership; whether it is known publicly that it is a Jewish-owned business; how the workers are paid and whether they are required to open on Shabbat. We will work with your apparent assumption that the owner violates a rabbinic prohibition by keeping it open. There is considerable debate, without a clear consensus, regarding whether the sweeping disqualification for Chilul Shabbat B'farhesia applies to the violation of rabbinic prohibitions of Shabbat (see Baer Heitev, Yoreh Deah 2:15; Pitchei Teshuva, YD 2:8; Rabbi Akiva Eiger, ad loc.; Aruch Hashulchan, YD 2:16).

Besides the special disqualification of a M'chaleil Shabbat, there is the general matter that one who does not follow a halacha loses credibility. The Gemara (B'chorot 30a) cites a machloket Tanna'im whether one who is not trustworthy in one

area of halacha is not trusted for anything or whether he is trusted in areas that are more severe and thus it is less likely that he would violate them. We accept the opinion that one is still believed regarding matters that are more severe (Shulchan Aruch, ibid.:5). On one hand, one who violated rabbinic prohibitions should not be suspected of violating ones of Torah origin (B'chorot 30a). On the other hand, when one eats by someone, he has to be sure that not only are there are not Torah violations but that there are also not rabbinic violations. Regarding questions of general kashrut, this should not be a problem because the transfer of distrust from a severe violation to a lighter one applies only when the violations are of the same general type (i.e., from forbidden food to forbidden food) and would not apply from Shabbat to kashrut (see Shach 119:12). Yet, if one wants to eat in this person's house on Shabbat, don't we have to be concerned that he will violate a rabbinic prohibition of Shabbat as he did regarding the store?

The solution to these problems is found in the Rama (YD 119:7). One does not lose his reliability if he violated a prohibition that people don't think is a real prohibition. Since there are cases where one can have his store operated on Shabbat and since, for a long time in many places, there has been an atmosphere where many believed that doing so in general is not forbidden, the storeowner is not categorized as a M'chaleil Shabbat nor is he considered one who is suspect of sinning. Of course, it may be questionable if someone of this level knows enough to keep a sufficiently kosher home, but the matter of the store per se should not make it forbidden to eat in his house even on Shabbat.

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

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[2] Candle by Day

Sometimes we cannot concentrate because our mind is too preoccupied with certain thoughts for us to do so. At such times, instead of throwing up our hands in despair at our inability to pursue a desired path of thought, we should realize that we are fertile for no thought to a greater degree than the very kind which is preoccupying us at the moment. And in this realization, we should fix our attention upon that thought which has taken such strong hold of our consciousness and exploit its insistence for all its worth. In general, we must abandon the attitude of assuming the best thing for us to do, and the thing we can do best, is that which we wish to do at a particular moment. We must admit that we are not our own masters, and become more our masters than we are by directing to our purposes the forces that we are mastered by.

From "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein
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[3] Wisdom & Wit

R' Eliyahu Lopian would tell his students: "If you enter your room at night and your roommate is sleeping, you must take every precaution not to do anything which might wake him, such as making a noise or turning on a light. Waking a person is considered to be stealing that person's sleep, and it is a theft that cannot be repaid. Furthermore, that person violates the halacha which states that

one must love his fellow as himself, because no person would want another person to disturb his sleep."

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R' Yitzchak Kalish, the Rebbe of Vorka, was very much against the way people would push and shove against one another when coming to hear him talk. He told his followers: "Each one of you is like a Sefer Torah - a Torah scroll - and you must treat one another with the appropriate respect."

One of his more brazen Chassidim asked him: "Rebbe, if we are indeed like holy works, doesn't the halacha permit a person to place one holy work on top of another?"

"That is true," said the Rebbe, "but whereas we must treat every other person as if he is a Sefer Torah, each person has to be modest enough to regard himself as no more than a secular book, and one cannot place a secular book on top of a holy book."

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

[4] CHIZUK and IDUD

for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively

"And the children of Israel, the entire congregation came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month...(Bamidbar 20:1)

After reading further, one learns that "the first month" refers to the 40th year of the wandering since they left Egypt. This then makes the 20th chapter of the Book of Bamidbar the great dividing-line in the Torah's narration of our people's history. For up until the 20th chapter we have been given the events that occurred during the first two years in the wilderness. In this week's parsha, chapter 20 picks up the story at the beginning of the 40th year as

they head in the direction of Eretz Yisrael. (The Torah is silent as to what happened during the intervening 38 years.)

Thus the Netziv (on Bamidbar 32:1) points out that the journeying of Israel after the Exodus can be divided into three segments.

1) After coming out of Egypt and receiving the Torah, Israel headed towards Eretz Yisrael.

2) After the sin of the meraglim, there was no clear overall direction.

3) Now at the beginning of the 40th year, Hashem had ordered that the compass be reset in the direction of the Promised Land.

That is why, comments the Netziv, in the first two verses of Chapter 33 (Parshat Mas'ei) the word mas'ei or mas'eihem occurs three times to indicate that each segment of the journey, having a different goal or destination assumed a different character with different priorities. This explains why the people now seem to come forward with a fresh slate of complaints and demands in spite of the fact that they now realize they are finally headed in the direction of the original destination - Eretz Yisrael. They argued that what may have been adequate for our artificial existence in the wilderness may no longer be sufficient to cope with a real responsible life of national sovereignty in our own land.

So too with us today. During that period of Israel's historical journey when we were driven from our land with no practical possibility of returning in the foreseeable future, we had one set of values and priorities. When we realized that unlike the Babylonian Exile, this one was to be for a long time, we knew we had to unpack our bags and strike roots wherever they would let us.

However, ever since the beginning of the 19th century when Rabbis Zvi Hirsh

Kalisher and Yehudah Alkalai announced the dawn of the redemption and that the road back to Eretz Yisrael was open, it should have been clear that we were now into segment three of our journey, when Eretz Yisrael is clearly on the practical horizon and that our entire orientation priorities and values should have changed! Strange that some of our brothers and sisters still don't see it that way.

Rabbi Shubert Spero, Jerusalem

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

[5] Parsha Points to Ponder

CHUKAT

1) Why does the Torah add the seemingly extra words HIS IMPURITY IS STILL UPON HIM after describing that a person who was impure and has not immersed in the mikva cannot enter the Mishkan (19:13)?

2) Why was Moshe not allowed to enter the Land of Israel as a result of his sin (20:12)? What is the connection between his action and his punishment?

3) Why does the Torah stress that Moshe sent messengers FROM KADEISH to the King of S'dom (20:14)? We already know that this is where they were located!

POSSIBLE ANSWERS...

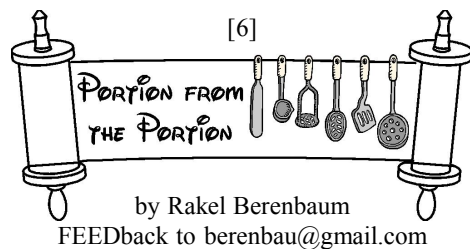
Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) The Chizkuni explains that a person might have thought that while he cannot enter the holy place despite the fact that seven days have passed, perhaps he no longer channels impurity to other objects. These last words teach that this is not the case.

2) Rav Hirsch teaches that Moshe's losing his temper demonstrated that he no longer had faith in the people fulfilling their mission as the nation of God. The leader must be a person who believes that the people can accomplish and, therefore, a new leader had to lead the Jews into Israel.

3) The Netziv answers that the Torah is teaching that Moshe did not send Jewish messengers to ask permission from the king to pass through his land. Rather, they were MESSENGERS FROM KADESH - gentiles who lived in Kadesh. Moshe did so because he did not want the Jews to have to spend time among the non-Jews or because he did not want Jews to see that Edom feared the Jews which could have led them to try to fearlessly attack Edom.

Parsha Points to Ponder is prepared by Rabbi Dov Lipman, who teaches at Reishit Yerushalayim and Machon Maayan in Beit Shemesh and is the author of "DISCOVER: Answers for Teenagers (and adults) to Questions about the Jewish Faith" (Feldheim) and "TIMEOUT: Sports Stories as a Game Plan for Spiritual Success" recently released by Devora Publishing. ppp@ouisrael.org



THE SNAKES

After the death of Aaron, the nation continued on their journey, but skirted the territory of Edom. The people became discouraged along the way and spoke out against Hashem and Moshe complaining about the lack of bread and water (21:4-9). They said "We are getting disgusted with this

insubstantial food." They are complaining again. They are tired of leading a supernatural life, getting sustenance from the manna - they want to eat real natural food.

The verse (6) says VAYSHALACH HASHEM BA'AM ET HANECHASHIM - G-d sent poisonous snakes against the people, they bit them and some people died.

Nechama Leibowitz points out a grammatical usage of the verb SH'LACH that gives us deeper insight into this whole episode. Here the verb comes in the grammatical P'EL form - VAYSHALACH and not in the KAL form which would have been VAYISHLACH. In the KAL form the verb always means "sent" such as sending on a mission like in B'reishit 32:4, "And Yaakov sent messengers".

In the P'EL form it implies "setting free", "letting go", and the opposite of forcible restraint as in the famous SHALACH ET AMI (Sh'mot 5:1), or "When Par'o had let the people go" (Sh'mot 13:17) or when talking about freeing Jewish slaves, "In the seventh year you shall let him go free...." (D'varim 15:12).

The Torah here doesn't say that G-d sent snakes, but rather He let the snakes free. What is the significance of this slight difference?

G-d wanted to teach the people about His HASHGACHA over them throughout the years of the desert. They had been walking in the snake-ridden desert all these years, as the verse in EIKEV states - HAMOLICHACHA BAMIDBAR MAKOM NACHASH SARAF V'AKRAV - but the snakes had never bothered them before. This was because of G-d's interventions on their

behalf. He had been holding the snakes back day after day. He had been protecting the nation every minute from all kinds of hardships of the desert. In order to remind them this G-d uses the word VAYASHALACH - set free. G-d let all those snakes, that He had been holding back all those years - free. When the children of Israel got bitten by the snakes and started dying, they started to understand what G-d had been doing for them till now.

Even though we may not be living the supernatural life of the desert with manna, protective clouds, a traveling well, and divine snake repellent, we must remember that it is G-d who is helping us at every minute.

SINCE THE PORTION talks about snakes, here's a Chinese Sechuan recipe for snake beans. These beans should be very tender because of the dry frying. Dry frying is similar to stir frying, using very little oil, until it appears almost dried out.

SNAKE BEANS

- 1 lb snake beans (use green beans if you can't find the extra long Chinese bean)
- 1 Tbsp. garlic, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. ginger, chopped
- 2 scallions, white parts only, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. chili paste
- 1 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- salt, pepper to taste
- 2 Tbsp. oil for stir-frying

Wash the snake beans, drain (so they won't splatter), and trim the tops and bottoms. Cut the beans on the diagonal into slices approximately 2 inches long. Chop the garlic, ginger and scallions. Heat 1 Tbsp oil over medium heat. Add the green beans and "dry-fry" - stir-fry until they start to shrivel or "pucker" and turn brown (6-7 min). Remove green beans from the wok and drain in a colander or on paper towels. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in the wok on high heat. Add the garlic, ginger and scallions. Stir-fry for a few seconds, then add the chili paste and stir-fry for a few more seconds until aromatic. Add the green beans and the dark soy sauce, sugar, salt, and pepper if using. Stir everything together, and taste and adjust the seasoning if desired. Serve hot.

[7] From Machon PUAH How Many to Reduce?

Preventing Fetal Reduction

In the past few weeks we have looked at the complex issue of fetal reduction. While we did find halachic sources that allow it, still everyone would prefer not to have to undergo fetal reduction.

Since it is a delicate question in the halacha, the Rabbis would prefer situations where there would be no need for fetal reduction. It is emotionally and often physically trying for the couple, and therefore they would prefer not to do it. And the doctors as well would prefer to do as few fetal reductions as possible, since whenever we enter the uterus during pregnancy we are concerned that we will cause a miscarriage. When dealing with a multi-fetal pregnancy this concern is even

greater, and, while attempting to save the lives of some of the fetus, a chain reaction can in fact be initiated that will end up with losing the entire pregnancy.

All the involved parties have a vested interest not to reach a situation that will require fetal reduction. Since many of the multi-fetal pregnancy are as a result of fertility treatment, it would seem that is the best place to start to reduce the incidence of multi- fetal pregnancy.

It should be stated that many of these pregnancies are as a result of even very low tech treatments, such as taking fertility drugs. However, in most cases, this is the first treatment suggested to couples, many of whom do not have multiple pregnancies. This is due to careful monitoring of the amount of hormones and their timing to prevent over stimulation.

This same is true when the woman undergoes an insemination. The way to prevent multiple pregnancies, which may require fetal reduction, is through carefully monitoring the woman before the procedure to ensure that she does not over stimulate.

The real challenge regarding multiple pregnancies is in-vitro fertilization where embryos are developed outside of the body for several days and then implanted in the uterus.

In the past it was thought that the more embryos implanted the better the chance of achieving a healthy pregnancy. At one point it was normal to implant six or seven embryos and sometimes even more. However, over time we have learned that this is not true and pregnancy rates are not significantly improved even when more embryos are introduced. Therefore in recent years the norm is to implant fewer embryos, a fact that has greatly contributed to less fetal reductions. - **More on this next week**

The Puah Institute for Fertility and Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha is based in Jerusalem and helps couples from all over the world who are experiencing fertility problems. Puah offers free counseling in five languages, halachic supervision, and educational programs. Puah has offices in New York, Los Angeles and Paris. To contact the Puah Institute please call 1-800-071111 in Israel or in the US 718-336-0603. website: www.puahonline.org

[8] Pirkei Avot - perek 5

With ten trials did our fathers try the Holy One, blessed be He, in the wilderness; as it is said, "And they have put Me to the proof these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice."

Perek 5 starts out with 10 different TENs, most of which are positive and upbeat. This one is singularly embarrassing, in the "report" of the generation of the wilderness, and depressing in the implied rebuke to us.

G-d made the statement quoted in the mishna after the Sin of the Spies (Cheit HaMeraglim). So that was the tenth time. The first nine included the Sin of the Golden Calf, various complaints for water and food - mostly in attitude and choice of words...

This, though is only half bad. Right after the Meraglim fiasco, we started a fresh count, so to speak, with Korach's rebellion. In Chukat we find more disrespectful complaints, by the new generation, that are upsettingly similar to earlier complaints. The saddest part is that we haven't seemed to learn from all this. And we must. If our predecessors' trust in G-d was lacking, ours must not be.

[9] MicroUlpan

From Grandfather clocks to modern watches...

Grandfather clock = ORLOGIN

Pendulum = METUTELELT

LCD = liquid-crystal display
= MATZAG GVISHI NOZLI

What do you call the little knob used to wind up and set a watch?

In Hebrew, KAFTOR DRICHA V'KIVUN

In English, the crown.

###

And here's a bilingual MicroUlpan lesson

What do you call the half-moon whitish area at the base of a fingernail right next to the cuticle?

Lunula = SAHARIT

[10] Torah from Nature

Poisonous snakes

They are mentioned in the sedra and featured in the Portion of the Portion column, so let's "meet" some of the world's most deadly snakes.

Thought to be the deadliest by far is Belcher's Sea Snake - only .5-1 meter long. The good news is that it rarely bites and often when it does, it does not inject venom.

Most venomous land snakes are the Taipan Snake family.

1.8-3.7 meters. Extremely fast strike. No chance without immediate medical attention. Krait - blue-black with white bands. 2nd most deadly land snake, 15 more poisonous than the common cobra. India, Sri Lanka...

[11] Gimatriya...

Here's a gimatriya with no "vort" attached. You make it up: PARA ADUMA T'MIMA = YISSACHAR

[12] Divrei Menachem

When Miriam passed from this world so did the well of water that accompanied the people in the desert. For it was in the merit of Miriam that Bnei Yisrael benefited from this well (Rashi). Indeed, we are taught that the merits of Miriam, Aharon and Moshe were, respectively, the source of three miraculous instruments of survival in the wilderness: the well, the cloud of glory, and the manna from heaven (Ta'anit 9).

The Talmud tells us that when the well returned it was through Aharon's merit. And after Aharon's death the clouds of glory reappeared through the merit of Moshe. We might then ask, "Why did the people not receive all three phenomena directly in the merit of Moshe?"

In the name of the Chatam Sofer we learn that Miriam's strength lay in inspiring the women, while Aharon was virtuous in bringing peace among brothers. Moshe could thus devote himself entirely to fulfilling his mission of teaching Torah.

Now, with his siblings gone, Moshe undertook all three roles and the miracles did indeed occur solely in his merit. Having established this point, however, we hopefully still draw from this narrative a reinvigorated ability to appreciate the significance of each person's potential. And we might also find ourselves yearning to achieve no less than did Miriam and Aharon.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

Towards better Davening and Torah Learning

The pause that...

refreshes? No, that was an old Coca Cola slogan. Here it's the proper pause that helps put the meaning of a pasuk right. Look at this partial pasuk:

V'CHIBES HA'OSEIF ET-EIFER HAPARA ET B'GADAV

To make sense of these words, there has to be a pause after the first word: V'CHIBES (and he laundered). Then to answer "who's he?" the phrase HA'OSEIF ET-EIFER HAPARA has to be without any pauses. And that's the way it is, if one realizes the difference between the KADMA above HA'OSEIF and the PASHTA above HAPARA.

The KADMA and the PASHTA are the same mark, but the KADMA is printed above the accented syllable in the word. The PASHTA is above the extreme left of the word. (In many Chumashim when a PASHTA is on a word not accented on the last syllable, then a second mark is placed above the accented syllable. But placement isn't the main thing. It just tells us which mark is which. KADMA is a M'SHARIET, it links its word to the following word(s) without a pause. PASHTA is a MAFSIK, a level three stopper that gets a shortish pause before the next word or phrase. In this case, that's ET-B'GADAV, his clothes. V'CHIBES (pause briefly) HA'OSEIF ET EIFER HAPARA (short pause, maybe even exaggerated here) ET-B'GADAV.



☰ The cow is a possible PARA ADUMA (subject to careful examination, and then if it is found pure red, has to stay that way, remain unblemished, and never be worked).

☰ Following Miriam's death, the Well dried up and there was no water for the people (the faucet with the spider's web at the spout).

☰ Although Moshe was commanded to speak to the Rock (the rock's ear indicates that it was ready to listen), he struck it with the MATEH twice and water gushed forth from the rock(s).

☰ Kohen Gadol with the garments that were transferred from Aharon to Elazar.

☰ The people panicked and a plague of serpents attacked the people. G-d told Moshe to put the form of a snake on a rod (which he did, making the snake from copper) and anyone bitten by a poisonous snake who looks at the snake-on-the-stick would live. The symbol of the medical corps is a serpent (or two) wound around a staff. Known as a caduceus, dictionaries and encyclopedias give it an origin in Greek mythology. One wonders if the Torah is its original source...

☰ The wide-short box under the Parsha-number-dates on the front page of Torah Tidbits contains the count of day and Shabbat within the current year, the Chutz LaAretz details and a quotation relevant to the current issue. This week's

quote is from a mishna in Rosh HaShana that asks the rhetorical question about the form of the snake on the staff: Does looking at a snake's image determine who lives and who dies? The mishna's answer is that the determining factor is if the Jewish People look heavenward (so to speak) towards G-d and subjugate their hearts to Him, then we will survive...

☰ The sedra mentions SEFER MILCHAMOT HASHEM, perhaps some kind of written record of the battles. It is represented by the open book with a tank on one page and the HEI-apostrophe on the other.

☰ DO NOT ENTER sign has a double-double meaning. Edom and Emori both responded to Israel's request for safe passage through their territory with DO NOT ENTER. Moshe and Aharon, as a result of the "hitting the rock rather than talking to it episode", were given DO NOT ENTER orders for Eretz Yisrael.

☰ The bottle of water marked 2NIS represents the offer Bnei Yisrael made to pay for the water they would use while passing through Edom's land.

☰ The well with the musical clef stands for the Song of the Well.

☰ Mathematical expression equals $256+44+1$, which is 301, the g'matriya of fire. That is what the expression is equal to in the ParshaPix, and altogether represents the phrase, "For a fire has come out of CHESHBON..."

☰ The epaulet is of the rank of lieutenant-general in the IDF, the rank of the chief of staff. Sword crossing an olive branch and two leaves (known as falafels). This

represents Yiftach (from the haftara) who was asked to be ROSH and KATZIN, head and officer.

☰ MELECH CHESHBON, i.e. the math king. Emori's king Sichon is also referred to as MELECH CHESHBON, as in the haftara of Chukat. (In Chukat, there is reference to Sichon Melech HaEmori, who sits in (the city of) Cheshbon). For the title of Math King, we've selected Leonhard Euler (pronounced oiler) - that's his picture in the ParshaPix. He is considered by many to be the most significant mathematician of all time so we have dubbed him MELECH CHESHBON.

☰ Top middle is the emblem of Chevrolet. As we read in Bamidbar 21:1, "And when king Arad the Canaanite, who lived in the Negev, heard tell that Israel came by the way of Atarim; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners." What did they hear?, asks Rashi. That Aharon had died and the Clouds of Glory were no longer protecting the people of Israel, they attack. As to the "prisoners", the Midrash says it was only one single person, a servant woman. The term in the pasuk for prisoner or captive is SHEVI, i.e. CHEVY as in CHEVROLET.

☰ Below the Chevy emblem is a picture of one of the most famous clowns of the past in America, Emmett Kelly. We originally hoped to find that his birth name was Emmett Louis Kelly, or some other middle name beginning with an L, so he would be the best choice for the concluding words of ...MAYIM CHAYIM EL KELI (E.L. Kelly). But, alas, he doesn't seem to have had a middle name. Be that as it may, we went with Weary Willie rather

than Princess Grace because of the E of EL. And we can also suggest that his first name makes him the most appropriate of Kellys for this ParshaPix because of the different examples of CHESED SHEL EMET in the burials of Miriam and Aharon.

XX is 20, representing the 20 cities referred to in the haftara. At the end of the haftara, the Navi (Shoftim) tells us that Yiftach successfully attacked ESRIM IR, 20 EAR (as on the rock in the ParshaPix), 20 cities.

Then there was a little, inconspicuous shape, the curved side of which is known as an OGEE, a double curve with the shape of an elongated S. From Ogee we get OG and from there we get OG MELECH HABASHAN.

Then there was a little, inconspicuous shape, the curved side of which is known as an OGEE, a double curve with the shape of an elongated S. From Ogee we get OG and from there we get OG MELECH HABASHAN.

Now comes the four graphic elements that were connected by arrows. Towards the top-right is a gift-wrapped box representing the place - whose identity is disputed by various scholars - called MATANA. From MATANA, the Torah tells us, the people traveled to NACHLI'EL. Follow the arrow down from the giftbox and you come to a wagtail, known in Hebrew as a Nachli'eili. From there, via another arrow, the people traveled to BAMOT, either a place name or just the high places. In modern Hebrew, BAMOT are stages. In TTriddle form, the connection is to stages as in stagecoach. From there, via yet another arrow, to HAGAI, which we are taking as HA

(the) GAI (maybe a valley of sorts). The picture is one of Guy Smiley, a Muppets character.

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.

TTriddles are scattered through the hard copy of Torah Tidbits and are listed in the email and web versions. They are in the order in which they are found in the hard copy, but not necessarily in the order in which they were originally conceived. In the wild, they are sometimes overlooked. If you are interested, go page by page and keep your eyes peeled.

Last issue's (KORACH) TTriddles:

[1] 10 names: 6/3, 1/4, 3/5

This TTriddle refers to the first pasuk of Parshat Korach. It contains 10 names! That's a lot for one pasuk. (Add to those 10 - which we didn't, even though all's fair in TTriddles and war - 4 times BEN and twice BENNY, and it would bring the total up to 16.) We don't know if 10 names in a pasuk is a record or near-record, but it's a lot. (Divrei HaYamim has many "many names" p'sukim - we'll have to look for 10 or more names per pasuk.) Meanwhile, back to Korach's initial pasuk. The 10 names subdivide into 6 three-letter names (Korach, K'hat, Levi, Datan, On, and Pelet), 1 four-letter name (Yitzhar), and 3 five-letter names (Aviram, Eliav, and Reuven).

[2] yes, no, preferably yes - but...

B'CHOR - firstborns - is one of the themes of Parshat Korach. Each of three categories of B'chor have a different REDEMPTION factor. Firstborn humans must be redeemed - that's a YES - even

though the text of the exchange between Kohein and father of the firstborn includes an offer of a choice. There is no choice. Redemption - YES. When it comes to the firstborns of kosher domesticated animals - cow, goat, sheep - attempted redemption or exchange is forbidden. If one has a firstborn calf, for example, and he takes a sheep and says: This sheep shall be sacred in exchange (T'MURA) for this calf, then (a) it doesn't work (that's why we used the phrase attempted exchange), (b) the sheep is sacred too, and (c) the person is subject to whipping be Beit Din (machloket as to whether it requires a small Sanhedrin of 23 or a Beit Din of 3 is sufficient). Redemption - NO! That brings us to a firstborn donkey, PETER (rhymes with letter) CHAMOR. It is fairly obvious that redemption is preferred. In Parshat Korach, there is no alternative even mentioned. But in Parshat Bo, where we first meet the topic of B'CHOR, there is another mitzva for a donkey owner who refuses to redeem a PETER CHAMOR. ARIFA, destroying it.

[3] salt brothers holy peace forever

In Parshat Korach, we find the term BRIT MELACH, a covenant of salt, meaning a covenant that shall be preserved forever. Checking through Tanach for other phrases that begin with BRIT, we find BRIT ACHIM (covenant of brothers), BRIT KODESH (a sacred covenant), BRIT SHALOM (covenant of peace), and BRIT OLAM (an eternal covenant).

[4] Influenced by his wife, yet his own person

This was thrown in as a TTriddle to honor MP who is one of the alltime greatest punsters. ON ben PELET, according to our sources, was originally part of Korach's rebellion, from the Reuvenite side of Datan and Aviram. Definitely bad company to keep. His wife convinced him to drop out of the fight - for not even a good reason, but it was effective nonetheless - because he was not a Levi and had nothing to gain regardless of the outcome of the dispute. So he was influenced by his wife. But he was his OWN person, because that was his name. (If you must groan, do it with a smile, at least.)

[5] His or her father can save them money

When a couple has their first child and it's a boy, they have to redeem him from a kohein for 5 silver coins. At today's silver prices and shekel-dollar exchange rate, we're talking of an expense of close to 200NIS. But, if either the father's father or the mother's father (of the baby) is a kohein or a Levi, then there is no Pidyon HaBen. So his or her father can save them money.

[6] MazalPic

The hard copy of TT had no MazalPic, an inadvertant omission. The electronic versions had the Pic. It is a horseshoe, as in horseshoe crab, crab being the Mazal of Tammuz, Cancer the Crab.

[7] A left-over graphic from last week's ParshaPix

We seem to have left out an explanation for the "bearded fellow" (and we are not referring to Rabbi Wein). The fellow pictured in the ParshaPix with a full beard is a Harry Potter character named Rubeus Hagrid, but best known as Hagrid. He is Groundskeeper and Teacher of Care of Magical Creatures at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Hagrid is half giant - which is why he is particularly suited to represent the Y'LIDEI ANAK, descendants of giants, mentioned by the Meraglim.

He has an affinity for all walks of life, and is known for taking in baby dragons and the like. He is a close friend to Harry Potter, and is a member of the Order of the Phoenix.

This week's TTriddles:

[1] What GERMS used to do in Mr. C's class

[2] Yes in one sense, no in the other

[3] One of his daughters is named for one of his five (flipped syllables)

[4] septennial water dedication

[5] the two "geography" sedra-pairs

[6] Red and red hot