



פרשת כי תבוא
874
 ט"ז אלול תשס"ט • ספ. 4-5, '09



This Shabbat is the 341st day (of 354), 49th Shabbat (of 50) of 5769
 ...ועתה לנו אתה הארץ הזאת ארץ זבת חלב ודבש: דברים כ"ט
PIRKEI AVOT: Finally, this Shabbat and next, we are on the same page

"And we lived happily ever after"

AMEIN, KEIN Y'HI RATZON. So may it be G-d's Will.

Any collection of Divrei Torah on Parshat HaShavua needs to cross-index its entries in order to put things in proper perspective, in order to fill out an idea, in order to have another opportunity to "hear", understand, and reflect. Take Parshat Ki Tavo, for example. (Good choice for this week's TT, no?)

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

Ki Tavo • Rabbeinu Tam (I'm) - 8:22pm

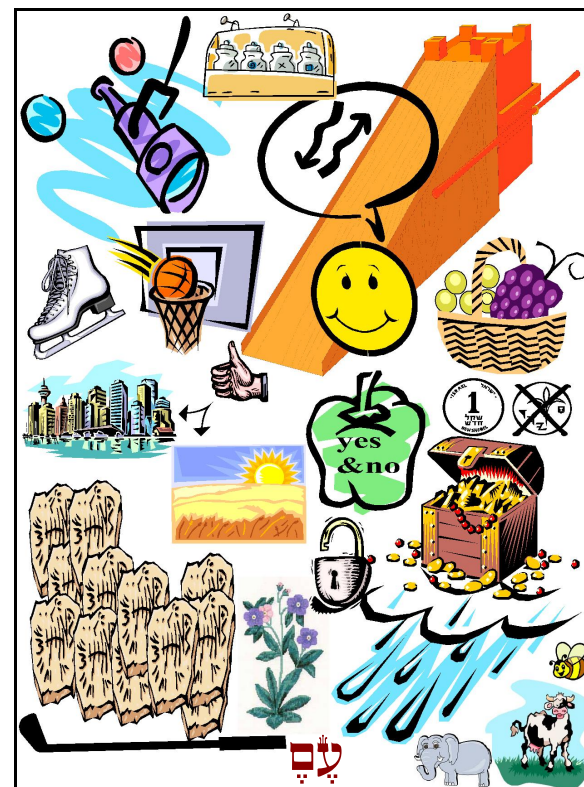
6:32 (5:47)	Yerushalayim	7:44pm
6:49 (5:50)	S'derot	7:46pm
6:48 (5:48)	Gush Etzion	7:45pm
6:49 (5:49)	Raanana	7:46pm
6:48 (5:48)	Beit Shemesh	7:45pm
6:49 (5:49)	Rehovot	7:46pm
6:49 (5:49)	Netanya	7:47pm
6:47 (5:49)	Be'er Sheva	7:45pm
6:48 (5:48)	Modi'in	7:45pm
6:32 (5:49)	Petach Tikva	7:46pm
6:32 (5:47)	Maale Adumim	7:44pm
6:48 (5:48)	Ginot Shomron	7:46pm
6:47 (5:47)	Gush Shiloh	7:44pm
6:48 (5:48)	K4 & Hevron	7:45pm
6:48 (5:48)	Giv'at Ze'ev	7:45pm
6:49 (5:49)	Yad Binyamin	7:46pm
6:50 (5:50)	Ashkelon	7:47pm
6:37 (5:47)	Tzfat	7:45pm

Specifically, to the Bikurim Recitation we find at the beginning of the story. Read those p'sukim to anyone and you can safely bet that if you ask them where the words are from, they'll answer - from the Pesach Hagada, rather than giving the primary source, namely, Parshat Ki Tavo.

These p'sukim are in the Hagada because the Mishna in P'sachim tells us that we are to tell the story of the enslavement in Egypt and the Exodus therefrom by reading and analyzing these p'sukim, from ARAMI OVEID AVI. The "editors" of the Hagada chose a 4-pasuk summary of the story, rather than the

[cont. p. 10](#)

Membership info - p. 23-24
Rosh HaShana greetings announcement - back page



Other Z'MANIM

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
 13-22 Elul (September 2-11)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:19-5:25am
Sunrise	6:12-6:17am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:38-8:41am)	9:25-9:27am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 9:59-10:00am)	10:30-10:30am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	12:41-12:38pm
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	1:14-1:10pm
Plag Mincha	5:49-5:40pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 7:10-6:59pm)	7:15-7:03pm

Word of the Month
 Last opportunity for Kiddush L'vana this month (and this year) is all night Thursday, Sept. 3rd until dawn of Friday the 4th. The last night of KL corresponds pretty [cont. p.3](#)

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Ki Tavo STATS

50th of the 54 sedras; 7th of 11 in D'varim

Written on 233 lines in a Sefer Torah (rank: 13)

21 Parshiyot; 5 open, 16 closed

(ranks 7th, tied with Vayikra and Va'etchanan)

122 p'sukim - ranks 17th (2nd in D'varim)

Same number as Vayakhel & Va'etchanan; Ki Tavo is larger than Vayakhel, smaller than Va'etchanan

1747 words - ranks 16th (2nd in D'varim)

Same as Ekev. Ekev is a bit larger than Ki Tavo

6811 letters - ranks 15th (4th in D'varim)

P'sukim are longer than average for the Torah, but short for D'varim

MITZVOT

6 of the 613; 3 positives and 3 prohibitions

WORD of the MONTH cont. 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...

much to full moon. To be more specific - the last opportunity for KL is the moment of the NIGUD, opposition, i.e. when the Sun and Moon are opposite each other from our perspective on Earth. The side of the Moon facing us is fully lit at opposition - hence, full Moon. After that instant, the Moon begins to wane and it is no longer appropriate to say KL. However, the times we use for the halachic zmanim of KL are based on average duration of a lunation (the time it takes the Moon to go through its cycle of phases) and the actual full Moon can occur several hours earlier or later than the time of NIGUD. On the other hand (the first hand, that is), the Moon appears to us as full for a couple of nights. At this time of the month, the Moon is "out" just about all night long.

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

11 p'sukim - 26:1-11

[P>26:1] When we come to the Land and settle it, we are commanded to take of the First Fruits [the mitzva of Bikurim has already been counted back in Parshat Mishpatim] of the "Seven Species", put them in a basket and go to THE Place (i.e. the Beit HaMikdash). We are to go to the kohen on duty, announce our presence and present him with the basket. He shall take it and place it before the Altar. We are then to recite the Bikurim passage [606,A132 26:5].

MitzvaWatch

It is said of Bikurim: "Do this mitzva, for in its merit you will enter the Land". The ARI HaKadosh singles out Bikurim as the mitzva which is the "tikun" (repair) for the Sin of the Spies. Bikurim has a Torah-ordained, built-in recitation that helps us to focus our thoughts in a particular direction. With this recitation, the

Jew identifies himself with his Jewish Heritage and announces to one and all the centrality of Eretz Yisrael in G-d's plans for the People of Israel. Bikurim makes the statement that we are glad to be here. Being happy about being in Eretz Yisrael grants us the "z'chut" to be here. Joyfully thanking G-d for our being here helps "repair" the opposite attitude as expressed by the 10 spies and echoed by the multitude. The Sin of the Spies was committed by what the Meraglim SAID, and it was while they were displaying fruits that they brought from the Land, no less. Bikurim is the mitzva that is performed by what the Bikurim bringer SAYS (in addition to bringing the fruits), and while he displays fruits that he brought from the Land. "A perfect match!" (in opposites).

Bikurim is a prime example of "Hakarat HaTov", recognition and acknowledgement of the good that was done for us by G-d. This lesson too must be applied to other areas of mitzvot and life in general.

May we soon be privileged to bring Bikurim with all the joy and Jewish pride that says that we are truly pleased to be chosen by G-d as His People and that we are genuinely thankful for this wonderful Land.

The first four p'sukim of the Bikurim recitation form the main text for the Pesach Seder; they summarize the Egyptian enslavement and subsequent Exodus. The fifth pasuk speaks of coming to Eretz Yisrael. This corresponds to the fifth term of redemption and is represented by Eliyahu's cup.

We all bring Bikurim (including the

Levi and the convert) with feelings of joy and thanks to G-d for all we have.

SDT: *If Lavan is the Arami referred to in the pasuk (as many commentaries hold), then the pasuk implies that Lavan was responsible for our going down into Egypt. Yet Yaakov returned to his father's house after the time spent with Lavan, and only many years later ended up in Mitzrayim. Commentators point out the following sequence: Lavan deceived Yaakov and gave him Leah as a wife instead of his beloved Rachel. When Yaakov subsequently married Rachel too, there developed a rivalry between the two sisters. This rivalry transferred to the next generation in the form of the "problems" between Yosef and his brothers. Yaakov's giving the Striped Coat led to Yosef being sold into slavery. His descent into Egypt later brought the whole family down there. Therefore, Lavan IS the appropriate beginning of that process that found us in Egypt, hence the pasuk: ARAMI OVED AVI, VAYERED MITZRAIMA.*

The Bikurim recitation is perfectly suited to form the heart of the story of the Exodus, more so than any of the original passages from Sh'mot. The editors of the Hagada found in ARAMI OVEID AVI the "whole" story in only four p'sukim - something we are all capable of handling at the Seder table. The original material is too copious. Furthermore, the Bikurim recitation is in first person singular, rather than narrative form of the original account of the Egyptian experience in the Book of Sh'mot. This fits very well with the maxim: In every generation a person shall portray himself as if he himself came out of Egypt. There are other factors that also favor the

Bikurim parsha for Seder purposes.

Levi - Second Aliya 4 p'sukim - 26:12-15

[S>26:12 (4)] After one has completed proper separation and distribution of T'ruma, Ma'aser, and Ma'aser Ani (during the third and sixth year of a Shmita cycle), one is required to formally declare that none of the "holy produce" remains in his possession and that it was actually given to its intended recipients [607,A131 26:13]. This declaration is made on the last day of Pesach in the 4th and 7th year of a Shmita cycle.

Vidui Maaser implies that there is something wrong in our performance of the mitzvot mentioned. Yet the statement specifically says that we did everything that we were supposed to do. In fact, a person who might have transgressed does not make the statement. Only someone who did not sin at all can make the declaration. Why then, do we get the impression that something was not 100%? Rav Soloveichik zt"l pointed to the word K'CHOL (like all), which is mentioned twice. The implication is that our performance was almost perfect, but not quite. Also, the statement implies that the individual did only that which he was required to do, and did not (often) go beyond the call of duty. Or perhaps we did a mitzva sort of like it is supposed to be done, but maybe without full KAVANA. These implications might be responsible for the title VIDUI.

CANARY'S RIFE

What an important message this is as we approach Rosh HaShana, when we have to answer for what - AND HOW - we do mitzvot.

It is forbidden to eat Maaser Sheni (the second tithes of years 1, 2, 4, 5 of a Shmita cycle, which remain the owner's property but which must be eaten "with sanctity and ritual purity" in Jerusalem - or be redeemed) while one is a mourner (here it refers to the status of the mourner before burial of the dead - ANINUT) [608,L151 26:14] or in a state of ritual impurity [609,L150 26:14] (the person and/or the food). It is also forbidden to use the redemption money of Ma'aser Sheni for purposes other than food and drink in Jerusalem [610,L152 26:14].

The literal meaning of this prohibition is not to use the money for "the dead". This can narrowly apply to shrouds, casket, etc., but is also generalized to include all non-food uses.

We next call upon HaShem to "look down" upon His People from on high and bless us and the Land of Israel. [We have kept our promise, we say to G-d (so to speak), now You keep Yours. - Rashi]

Many a Baal Korei (a.k.a. Baal K'ri'a) raises his voice and emphasizes the word HASHKIFA. This is based on the Talmud Yerushalmi.

Shlishi - Third Aliya 4 p'sukim - 26:16-19

[S>26:16 (4)] This short portion is a summary of our relationship with G-d. We are to keep, preserve, observe, practice all the mitzvot, statutes, laws which Moshe has reiterated for us, with all our hearts and souls. We have pledged allegiance to G-d, promised to follow His ways [611,A8 26:17] and to listen to Him. He pledges to take us as His "Chosen Nation" and to elevate us above the nations of the world - IF we keep His mitzvot.

MitzvaWatch

To follow in G-d's footsteps means to develop and practice various traits that are attributed to G-d. As He is merciful, so too shall we BE merciful. As He is holy, so too must we behave in ways that lead to our becoming holy. From general traits, we can also use specific examples - as G-d clothed the naked, visited the sick, buried the dead, comforted the grieving... so too must we. There are mitzva-counters who define this mitzva as Bikur Cholim, visiting the sick, in addition to generalizing to include all types of acts of kindness.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya 10 p'sukim - 27:1-10

[P>27:1 (8)] Moshe Rabeinu and the Elders command the People concerning the inscribing on 12

Is that anything like the YVAN?

pillars of stone the words of the Torah (parts thereof; the Book of D'varim or parts of it); this to be done upon crossing the Jordan.

Subsequently, another set of pillars is to be erected and inscribed on Har Eval where a Mizbei'ach is to be built (of whole, uncut stones) and sacrifices are to be offered.

[S>27:9-10 (2)] Moshe and the Kohanim next declare to the People that they have grown into complete nationhood at this point, with all the mitzvot of the Torah having been reviewed. Privilege of nationhood goes hand-in-hand with the responsibilities of keeping the mitzvot.

SDT: Moshe, the Kohanim and Leviyim, say to all the people, "on this very day you have become G-d's nation". Rashi says that the Torah emphasized THIS VERY DAY, to teach us that our commitment to Torah and mitzvot should be as if we have entered into a covenant with HaShem on this very day - i.e. everyday. We are challenged to refresh our Judaism continually. This, of course, is not the only place this lesson is learned. But that fact just reinforces the significance of the idea.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya 22 p'sukim - 27:11-28:6

[S>27:11 (4)] Moshe describes what will happen after the People enter the Land. Six tribes will stand on Mt. Grizim and six on Mt. Eval. There they will hear the blessings and curses that will be the fate of those who keep or don't keep Torah and mitzvot.

Twelve curses are enumerated in this portion touching upon many diverse areas of Jewish life including "between Jew and G-d" as well as interpersonal mitzvot. Each K'LALA is a pasuk long and its own parsha stuma (almost). To each curse, the people are to respond AMEN...

[S>27:15 (1)] he who makes idols...

[S>27:16 (1)] he who degrades his father or mother...

[S>27:17 (1)] he who encroaches on his neighbor's boundary...

[S>27:18 (1)] he who misleads a "blind" (figuratively) person...

[S>27:19 (2)] he who perverts the judgment of orphan or widow... he who sleeps with his father's wife... (Note that these two curses share a parsha.)

[S>27:21 (1)] he who engages in sexual behavior with animals...

[S>27:22 (1)] he who sleeps with his sister (or half-sister)...

[S>27:23 (1)] he who sleeps with his mother-in-law...

[S>27:24 (1)] he who secretly strikes his fellow...

[S>27:25 (1)] he who takes a bribe and an innocent person is killed...

[S>27:26 (1)] he who does not uphold the words of the Torah to do them...

[P>28:1 (14)] Once again, Moshe Rabeinu tells us that following

G-d's commandments will earn us superior status among the nations of the world. We will also be showered with blessings for hearkening to G-d's voice. We will flourish economically and agriculturally, and be blessed with a healthy increase in population. Our every coming and going will be blessed.

SDT: *The blessings begin with the letter BET - BARUCH. The curse begin with the letter ALEF - ARUR. This is how some commentators explain the large BET of the opening word of the Torah - B'reishit. G-d wanted to start the Torah on a note of blessing, not the opposite.*

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 63 p'sukim - 28:7-69

Longest of the 378 Aliyot in the whole Torah (not counting combined Aliyot when a double-sedra is read)

The blessings continue with the promise of victory over our enemies. G-d will "command" His blessings upon us and the Land, and will establish us as a holy nation... on condition that we keep the mitzvot and follow His ways.

[The Torah's expression V'HA-LACHTA BID-RACHAV is repeated here - emulating G-d is defined as being kind, merciful, charitable, etc.]

The nations of the world will see the special relationship we have with G-d, and be appropriately reverent towards us and fearful of us. G-d's heavenly treasure-house will open for us and we will

flourish. G-d's blessings are conditional upon keeping the mitzvot.

[P>28:15 (54)] "But, if we don't listen to G-d..." Thus begins the "Tochacha". The admonition against disobedience of Torah.

There is a custom to read this part in a low voice because of how devastating it is to realize that G-d needs to warn us in such graphic terms, what will happen if the Jewish People do not remain faithful to Him. Unfortunately, we need these harsh words of reproach. Unfortunately, they have turned out to be prophetic more than once. The Tochacha is contained within one Aliya (resulting in the longest Aliya in the Torah) so as not to prolong the discomfort in hearing it. And it is sandwiched (so to speak) between "good" p'sukim, so the Aliya begins and ends on a good note.

The first portion of the Tochacha is the negative mirror image of the blessings previously pronounced in the Torah. The p'sukim then proliferate and describe in shocking and grisly detail that which will occur if we do not remain faithful to G-d. The final pasuk of the Aliya reiterates the "simple" but eloquent covenant with G-d: Keep the Torah and all will be good, if not...

The contrast between the "good times" that Bikurim brings to mind and the terrible times as described in the Tochacha is overpowering and frightening. It is the difference between contentment and respect

Prayer is an essential element of Elul
ועתה אלהינו
מודים אנחנו לך ומהללים לשם תפארתך

on the one hand, and devastation, despair and degradation, on the other. Prosperity in our own Land vs. poverty and exile. The key to the difference is Torah & Mitzvot.

SDT: *One of the famous "sum it all up" p'sukim in the Tochacha is 28:47, which says that many of the terrible things will happen to us because we did not serve G-d with joy and a good heart (even while we still had all good things). The Kotzker Rebbe gives this pasuk an interesting spin. Because, not only did you not serve G-d, but the not serving Him was with simcha to you. When a Jew does mitzvot, there is the extra aspect of doing them "with a smile". And, conversely, when a Jew sins, there is the extra aspect of sinning with a smile. Does one who eats non-kosher cry about his betrayal of G-d (probably not), or does he lick his fingers with relish and joy (sadly, probably yes). And if and when the joy of sinning leaves a person, or is driven out by him, then and only then will the person be on the path to T'shuva.*

In more general terms, this pasuk speaks to Jews who just "go through the motions" of religious observance. They were brought up that way, perhaps, but there is little joy in their religious behavior. How sad! The Baal Shem Tov would say: S'CHAR MITZVA, SIMCHAT MITZVA - the reward for a mitzva is the joy one derives from doing a mitzva.

[S>28:69 (1)] After all those dreadful p'sukim of the Tocheicha, this long aliya is concluded with the statement: These are the words of the covenant that G-d commanded Moshe to make with the people of Israel in the territory of Moav - besides the covenant of Sinai (Chorev).

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya 8 p'sukim - 29:1-8

[P>29:1 (8)] Moshe Rabeinu calls to the People, and tells them that they now have seen (and know) all that has happened from the Exodus through the 40 years of wandering until this very moment. It is incumbent upon us to keep our "deal" with G-d. "And G-d did not give you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear, until this very day." This realization comes after living all the experiences and miracles of 40 years of wandering. The last 3 p'sukim are Maftir.

Haftara - 22 p'sukim Yeshayahu 60:1-22

This is the 6th of the Seven Haftarot of Consolation, all coming from the book of Yeshayahu, from chapter 40 on, where he changes mood from a prophet of tragedies to a prophet of consolation and redemption.

The uplifting message of the haftara is the coming of the Geula, when G-d will restore His People to the Land and the nations and peoples of the world will flock to Jerusalem to pay homage to G-d and His People.

The concluding words of the haftara are enigmatic: "...I Am G-d, in its (the redemption's) time, I will hasten it." Will the Mashiach come in his appointed time, or sooner? That depends upon us. If we enhance the overall conditions of Jewish Life, increase Torah observ-

ance, improve relations between Jew and his fellow - then we might be privileged to an "early" arrival of the Mashiach and the Geula. If we do not lay the proper groundwork for his coming, then he will come in his (pre-ordained) time.

This is a major part of our Elul challenge. Let's put it this way - the first level of our Elul-time task is personal, individual. This adds another level, that of the community, of Klal Yisrael. Rambam in Hilchot T'shuva "suggests" that we each consider ourselves, and our community, and the entire world to be precariously balanced between merits and demerits. One tiny mitzva on our part cannot only tip our personal scale to the good side for us, but that of our community and that of the whole world as well. One person can make a difference. Each of us has the power to hasten the Mashiach. So, let's do it.

Here's the gloomy side of this issue, (as pointed out by YL in an email, a while back). There is also the possibility that Mashiach's deadline will come and we won't be ready - we will not have prepared properly for it, personally or communally. Let alone that we didn't hasten its coming, but we weren't near ready for its arrival. Then, bad things will happen... let's leave it at that and just say that it is really important to Klal Yisrael that we lay the groundwork for the smooth arrival of the Geula. The good news is we don't have to

obsess and focus on the coming of the Geula; we have to become the people and Jews we are supposed to be NOW. In other words, "all" we have to do is live a Torah way of life, influence in a pleasant way our fellow Jews to do the same, and the Geula takes care of itself (as mentioned above).

Parsha Points to Ponder

KI TAVO

- 1) Why does the Torah begin its command regarding the bringing of first fruits with the passive term AND YOU WILL TAKE (V'LAKACHTA) instead of the command AND YOU SHOULD TAKE (TIKACH) which is normally used to begin a new mitzva (26:2)?
- 2) Why does the Torah use the double language of V'ANITA V'AMARTA to introduce the statement made upon bringing the first fruit (26:5) but just V'AMARTA for the statement made upon completing the maaser process (26:13)?
- 3) Why does the Torah use the double language of OBSERVE THE WORDS OF THIS COVENANT AND DO THEM (29:8)? Aren't these the same thing?

Parsha Points to Ponder

is prepared by

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Answers are somewhere else in this issue
Look for them, but only after a good pondering

Lead Tidbit cont. from front page
half of Sh'mot which has the original account of slavery and freedom.

This is what we mean by cross-indexing. This will make a nice DT at the Seder table, but it is also appropriate for this week, with the additional benefit that we are not tired out from Pesach preparation.

The Mishna mentioned earlier tells us to start with the Lavan story and proceed through the p'sukim with the summary of our descent into Egypt, oppression and slavery, our crying out for help, G-d's hearing our cries and taking us out of Egypt. Then the Mishna instructs us to finish the whole parsha. Which we do not do at the Seder table.

But the Bikurim-bringer says the whole thing. After You took us out of Egypt, You brought us to Eretz Yisrael, and You gave us the Land.

The Bikurim-bringer is the Jew who came out of Egypt AND went into Eretz Yisrael. He lives (t)here (fortunate are those who don't need the t to prefix the word here) with the Beit HaMikdash and everything that comes with it. Which basically means the complete infrastructure for a full Jewish life living by the Torah in the place where G-d wants His people to live that life.

In other words, completing the whole parsha means finally reaching, "and we lived happily ever after". At Pesach, we are not ready to do that. Today - living in Chutz LaAretz or even in Eretz Yisrael - we are still not ready for the whole Bikurim scenario, including "and you shall rejoice in all the good". May we soon be so.

**Divrei Menachem
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Parshat Ki Tavo, as its name suggests, brings the people as close as could be imagined to that momentous day when they would finally leave the barren wilderness - with all its incumbent miracles - and cross the River Jordan to set foot in Eretz Yisrael. What could be a more profound way of expressing the meaning of that occasion than Moshe's succinct exclamation that, "This day you have become a people to Hashem, your G-d" (D'varim 27:9).

What does it mean to become a people of Hashem? Earlier in the parsha we are given some clues: By walking in His ways we, "distinguish Hashem to be our G-d" (v.17); and then, in the next verse: "Hashem has distinguished you today to be for Him a treasured people." Clearly, described here is a strong mutual bond that is contingent on our following in the footsteps of our Creator.

How different is this concept of nationality from current, popular definitions of nationalism! How much richer is this notion of peoplehood than the pure geographical ties that link nations to their Land and the self-righteous relative moralities propounded by nation states according to personal whims and geopolitical exigencies.

Surely, if our leaders and communities would internalize this message, we would be but a stone's throw away from achieving our national purpose as defined in the consequent narrative, namely, "to make you supreme over all the nations... so that you will be a holy people to Hashem, your G-d, as He spoke."

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WISDOM & WIT

by Shmuel Himelstein

The Taz would always make Kiddush from a siddur rather than by heart. His reason, as he explained it, was that sometimes he might have a guest who did not know the Kiddush by heart, and he did not want that guest to feel embarrassed to have to recite it from a siddur.

R' Eliyahu Dushnitzer was invited to someone's home for kiddush. When the Kiddush was over, as he was ready to leave, he asked to see the lady of the house. After thanking her for her hospitality, he told her: "When I made kiddush, I am afraid that I inadvertently might have spilled some wine on your tablecloth. It is possible that others who were present might have done the same. I would like to beg you to forgive me and anyone else that might have spilled anything."

The housewife reassured him that it was all right. Only then was he able to smile and he left the house cheerfully.

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).

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FROM THE VIRTUAL DESK OF THE OU VERBE 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.

Q *I saw a situation on Shabbat in which, unexpectedly, a digital camera fell out of the carriage my friend was pushing, onto the sidewalk. The question arose whether she was allowed to move it or whether she had to leave it, with the likelihood it would be taken. If it is muktzeh machamat chisaron kis (MMCh"K) an object that is so precious that its owner will use it only for its main purpose, one which is forbidden on Shabbat, then I assume there is no way to move it. However, if it is cheap enough that the owner would use it for other things, then as a kli shemelachto l'issur (KS"L - a utensil whose main use is for forbidden activity), would it be permitted to make up a use for the camera at home (e.g. as a paperweight) that would enable it to be moved?*

A The categorization of an object as MMCh"K depends on the specific owner, object, and circumstances. All we can say is that usually digital cameras fall under that strict category. Yet, according to most poskim, it is still possible to protect the object.

The gemara (Shabbat 43b) discusses whether TILTUL MIN HATZAD (moving something muktzeh by pushing it with a non-muktzeh item he is holding) is forbidden. We rule that it is permitted

when one does the moving for the purpose of using an adjacent non-muktzeh object or to make the place of the muktzeh item available; it is forbidden when the muktzeh object is indirectly moved for its protection (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 311:8).

Rishonim are bothered by the Mishna (Shabbat 141a) that says that if one wants to sleep on a bed where pieces of straw are laid out uncomfortably, he may not straighten them out with his hands but may do so with his body. Why isn't the latter TILTUL MIN HATZAD, which should be forbidden in order to use the rearranged straw? The Rosh (Shabbat 3:19), as understood by most poskim (see Shulchan Aruch ibid.; Mishna Berura 308:13), says that moving something with a part of the body one does not usually use for moving things is not forbidden TILTUL and is permitted even to use or protect the muktzeh object. Ostensibly, then, one can kick the camera to a place where it will not be as vulnerable.

Two minority opinions will reject this leniency. The Pri Megadim (introduction to Mishbetzot Zahav 308) says that the leniencies regarding indirect TILTUL do not apply to MMCh"K. This opinion is not widely followed by the poskim (see Sh'mirat Shabbat K'hil-

chata 20:(80)). A second problem is that the Chazon Ish (OC, 47:12) says that the Rosh is too widely applied, as he only explains why the Mishna allows one to inadvertently move the straw while lying down on it but did not permit using unusual parts of the body to purposely move muktzeh for its protection. While some poskim adopt this opinion (Igrot Moshe, OC V, 22.6), most permit this type of moving (Mishna B'rura 308:13, Sh'mirat Shabbat K'hilchata 22:34). One may certainly be lenient in a case of possible

significant loss (Igrot Moshe, ibid.) like that of the camera.

Regarding your idea of employing the leniency of moving a KS"L for a permissible function (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 308:3), this can be entertained if you can determine that the camera is not MMCh"K. Even when the main purpose is to protect the KS"L, the Magen Avraham (308:8) allows moving it when it will be used for a permitted use. The Mishna B'rura (308:16) accepts the premise of a secondary intention, but perhaps only for an existing need. The Machatzit HaShekel (to Magen Avraham ibid.) and Yalkut Yosef (Orach Chayim 308:3.7), though, allow contriving a need. However, your friend would have had to have a real plan to use the camera on Shabbat after bringing it home. Realize also that some poskim require that the situation is where there is no non-muktzeh object readily available for that use (Mishna Berura 308:12; Sh'mirat Shabbat K'hilchata 20:8 is equivocal on the matter). In any case, if you can be creative enough, your idea could also solve the problem.

Ask the Rabbi Q&A is part of Hemdat Yamim, the weekly parsha sheet by Eretz Hemdah. You can read the entire Hemdat Yamim at www.ou.org or www.erezhemdah.org - and/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by sending an email to info@erezhemdah.org with the message: Subscribe/English or Subscribe/Hebrew - leave subject blank. Ask the Vebbe Rebbe is partially funded by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

You can't have everything; Where would you put it?

This or This

This title doesn't really work in English, but in Hebrew "this" is both ZEH and ZOT.

The following phrase is from Ki Tavo:

בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת

And these are from Nitzavim & Vayeilech

בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת

בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת

Which is correct? ZEH or ZOT. The answer is both or it depends. Look at the Taamei HaMikra (TROP). In the Ki Tavo case, there is a TIPCHA under B'SEFER, indicating a pause and that it is HATORA that is being modified - hence, HAZOT, the feminine form, matching TORA. In the other two cases, the TROP is a MERCHA which links the words B'SEFER and HATORA, so that SEFER TORA is being modified with HAZEH, masculine, like the word SEFER.

Sometimes, pausing in the wrong place or not pausing when there should be a pause, doesn't change anything. Here it does. And in many other cases, as well. We need to pay better attention, read more carefully and daven more carefully.

Motherhood and Ovarian Transplants

In our review of treating ovarian failure, we most recently reviewed ovarian transplantation. In this form of transplant, a section of ovary is grafted onto the failing ovary of the recipient. The transplant continues to produce eggs and the recipient can become pregnant and have children naturally.

The invention of this procedure raises a serious halachic question. Who is considered the mother of a child conceived and borne by the transplant recipient? The donor, from whom the eggs originated, or the recipient, who conceived and bore the child?

This case differs from egg donation (which is a matter of significant debate among Rabbinic authorities). Egg donation entails the extraction of a viable, mature egg (or eggs) from a donor. These eggs are fertilized in a laboratory and implanted in the recipient's womb for pregnancy and eventual childbirth. In this case the egg matures in one woman, it is fertilized outside the body and the process of pregnancy and birth occurs in another woman's body. Ovarian transplants generate eggs inside the body of the recipient who then becomes pregnant. Thus, the entire reproductive process happens naturally, within one woman.

Many poskim would claim that the

recipient is the mother in such a case. There is an interesting source to "prove" this. A Mishna in Orla discusses issues regarding a young shoot that is grafted to an older tree. Normally, the fruit of a tree less than three years old is considered ORLA and cannot be eaten. The Mishna discusses a case where an orla tree (or section of one) is grafted to a tree that is more than three years old.

The Mishna clearly states that the fruit is not liable to the laws of orla in this case. It explains that once the shoot is attached to the old tree it loses its own halachic identity. Essentially, the shoot becomes part of the host tree for halachic purposes.

By extension, any item that is transplanted becomes part of the host or the recipient. Accordingly, a transplanted heart, lung or even a transplanted section of ovary is considered to be part of the recipient's body. Since the ovary is considered to be part of the recipient's body, she would be the halachic mother.

There is a dissenting opinion in this matter. One posek wrote an opinion that the orla analogy is flawed. In the orla case, the fruit that grows is developed as part of the growth process of the host tree. The buds and fruit are developed using nutrients provided by the host. Since the fruit in question was created only after the grafting, the shoot is clearly considered part of the old tree, as are

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 Jerusalem, New York, Los Angeles and Paris. To contact the Puah Institute please call (02) 651-5050 in Israel or in the US 718-336-0603. website: www.puahonline.org

its fruit.

However, an ovary contains all of the cells that will eventually grow to be eggs when it is formed. Some of these cells develop and mature each month as part of the female reproductive cycle. In essence there is no oogenesis, creation of eggs, but rather a maturation of existing egg cells, or potential egg cells.

The transplanted ovary is not producing new eggs (of the recipient). It is instead developing and maturing the pre existing eggs of the donor. These eggs were formed as part of the donor's body and are still considered to be so even after transplant. The posek argues that the donor, whose body formed the eggs is the mother, not the recipient.

Interestingly, continuing research in this area may soon clarify this issue. There has been some evidence recorded demonstrating that the transplanted section of ovary may be "creating" egg cells. If this is proven to be accurate, this would seem to nullify the dissenting opinion. Thus all authorities would agree that the transplant recipient is considered the mother.

As always, one should consult their local Rav or the Puah Institute in each specific case.

☞ Some, in pushing things off, fail to notice the cliff.

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Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:
The Person in the Parsha
for Parshat KI TAVO

Walls Have Ears

We all have our secret lives.

I don't mean to say that each of us has a sinister side, which we wickedly act out in some deep, dark, private world. What I do mean is that we all act differently when we are alone, or with a few close intimates, than we act when we are out in public, among others.

There is no one who is so behaviorally consistent that he is the same person in the privacy of his own home as he is in the workplace or marketplace.

Nor do I suggest that there is anything wrong with the fact that we each are two persons, and perhaps even multiple persons, depending upon the social context in which we find ourselves.

It is problematic, however, when we act hypocritically, presenting a pious and altruistic face to the world, while acting cruelly and crudely in our own homes and with our families.

In this week's Torah reading, there appears a particularly piercing and perceptive verse: "Cursed be he who strikes his fellow in secret - and all the people shall say, Amen."

In no way does the Torah imply that he who strikes his fellow in public is to be blessed. Rather, the Torah recognizes the tendency humans have to reserve the worst side of themselves

for their secret social settings, even when they behave meritoriously in their public social worlds. It is the façade, the contrast, between public demonstrations of righteousness and private acts of fiendishness that is cursed.

Sinning in secret is particularly offensive in the religious personality. He or she who believes in a God who is omniscient, and who yet sins in private, is guilty, not merely of hypocrisy, but of heresy. If God knows all, how can you delude yourself into thinking that your secret misdeeds can go undetected?

The Shulchan Aruch opens with a statement recognizing that a person's behavior, when he is alone at home, is very different from his behavior when he appears before a great king. And it urges the religious person to be aware that he is always in the presence of the great King of Kings, the all-knowing God.

But it is not only from a spiritual perspective that it is wrong to act demeaningly in private. There is a practical aspect as well to the importance of behaving properly even in secret. There always is the very real possibility that our secrets will be "leaked" and that things we were sure would never be known will become embarrassingly exposed.

I know of no place where this is conveyed more cogently than in these words of caution, to be found in Kohelet (10:20):

Don't revile a king, even in your intimate thoughts.

Don't revile a rich man, even in

your bedchamber;

For a bird of the air may carry the utterance,

And a winged creature may report the word.

Indeed, as our sages say (B'rachot 8b), the walls have ears.

The passage in this week's Torah portion which condemns secret violence also gives quite a comprehensive catalog of other sins which tend to be performed behind closed doors. They include elder abuse, criminal business practices, deceiving blind persons, subverting the rights of the helpless, incest and bestiality, and the acceptance of bribery. Quite a list, and one that has certainly not lost its relevance over the centuries.

I am not so naïve as to think that we are required to act in an absolutely identical fashion in our "secret chambers" as we do out in the "real world". To a certain extent, it is necessary and right that we maintain a façade of sorts when we interact in public. We all have, and need, our masks and personas.

But many times, we go too far and indeed split our personalities between the Dr. Jekylls of our external visible behavior and the Mr. Hydes of our inner sancta. How well advised we would be to set as an objective for ourselves the words of the daily davening:

"A person should always be God-fearing, privately and publicly, acknowledging the truth and speaking it in his heart."

Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Bamidbar Stories

by **Dr. Meir Tamari: Korach & Co. {5}**

G-d instructed Moshe to command Aharon and the 250 first-born to bring pans and to offer incense (ketoret), the acceptance of which would determine the question of the selection of Aharon to the kehuna over the rights of the 250 first-born. The incense offering, the pans which were vessels of the Mishkan and fire thereon were the prerogative of the kohanim and this command to ordinary Israelites to perform this Avoda has been seen both as a punishment of the arrogance of the first-born and a recognition of their spiritual desires. "'Morning will determine who is chosen' (Bamidbar 16:5); the Manna came every morning but each person received a portion commensurate with their spiritual and moral status so that the righteous received more while the wicked were punished. Here too, morning would distinguish between Aharon and the rebels" (Maharam Schiff).

"If they are really convinced of the truth of their assertions, then let Korach and his whole congregation dare to put them to the test; let them, in accordance with their assertions approach G-d with a high-priestly function. The highest spiritual point of the Kohen Gadol's office is the offering of the Ketoret that symbolizes the ultimate degree of giving oneself completely, without any reservations whatsoever, to giving satisfaction to G-d. The incense offering is completely sublimated, leaving no residue whatsoever, and so is the most spiritual of all the korbanot. [Its offering by the Kohen Hagadol in the Kodosh HaKodashim

during the Avoda, is the key point of Yom Kippur.] Since they claim that they are all worthy of being priests, let them offer the ketoret and stand ready for G-d to decide. But let them be warned, not only for all the rest of the tribes but even for the Leviyim who stood quite near to the Mishkan, that it was a fateful arrogant assumption" (S. R. Hirsch).

"The men who offered the fire-pans were not sinners but saintly persons for whom the deprivation of priestly office spelt the forfeiting of a coveted opportunity for a closer connection with the Creator. They harbored no illusionary worldly ambitions nor hankered after the sweets of office but longed to sanctify themselves with and achieve greater spiritual heights through the sacred service. They were well aware of the authenticity of of the Divine message given through Moshe and Aharon and none of them denied it .In spite of that, they longed to do the will of G-d and gave their lives for the love of G-d for love is stronger than death" (Ha'amek Davar).

The test of the ketoret was a radically different one from the test of the staves of the tribes that were placed before the Mishkan. In that case, G-d determined which tribe was to be chosen for His special service through the flowering of the stave of Aharon-Levi. In order to make the test impartial and non-suspect, the people of each tribe and not Moshe, chose the representative of the tribe. The ketoret came to show and to punish the

arrogance those seeking to usurp the priestly functions with the cry, "all the people are holy".

The spiritual and religious striving and the fire of G-d that consumed the 250 first-born, parallels the story of Nadav and Avihu, the two sons of Aharon, who offered strange fire on the ketoret and were consumed by the fire of G-d (Vayikra 10). These are both examples of the yearning for ecstasy and spirituality unfettered by the permitted or forbidden halakhic requirements. As such, ideologically and conceptually, they represent movements within the Jewish People but also many religious and spiritual trends and movements amongst the nations of the world, who seek and have sought a non-halakhic or a non-normative or a non-action related religious experiences and living. All of these, it seems, fail to recognize the exquisite balance that the Divine Wisdom of Torah MiShamayim presents between spirituality and deeds, between din and chesed, between G-d's love as a father and His being the sole source of reward and punishment, between the requirements of formality and ritual and the individual's need for personal spiritual expressions, between disciplined religious acts and ecstasy, between the needs and abilities of the individual and those of a nation-community devoted to the service of G-d.

There is an important difference between the wrongdoing of the sons of Aharon and that of the first-born of the congregation of Korach. In the case of Nadav and Avihu, as at the normal Avoda of Yom Kippur, the ketoret was placed on the fire, whereas the 250 men placed the incense on the pans but not on the fire. As the sons of

Aharon were entitled to officiate, the actual offering itself was unlawful since they were not commanded to offer it. The 250 men had been commanded to bring the offering so that it was a legal act, however, the unlawfulness lay in the people who were presenting themselves as priests and justified to perform priestly functions. Irrespective, both cases were a distortion or a rebellion against the commands of G-d and so all were burnt by the Divine Fire.

Yet strangely enough, the fire pans had to be beaten and then used to cover the Mizbe'ach. This was to be a memorial, warning Israel not to repeat the sins of rebellion of Korach and his congregation; alternatively other commentators have seen this as a promise that the punishment of that congregation will not be repeated. To R' Menachem of Kotsk, the use of these pans which symbolized spiritual arrogance to cover the altar of G-d seemed inappropriate, rather they should have been buried out of sight. However, he taught that this shows us that the striving for honor, normally a detestable characteristic, when attached to the Mizbe'ach and so devoted to G-d, becomes a desirable and positive one.

Brushes have bristles.
How do you say bristle in Hebrew?

זֵיפִים זֵיף

Yaakov, Moshe, and the YM declarer

Does the Coming of Mashiach Depend on Our Teshuva?

Guest article by **Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher** Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

The coming of Mashiach and the subsequent redemption of Israel is a basic belief of Judaism.

G-d will bring the redemption in His own time. If all Israel were to return to G-d through T'shuva, the Mashiach would appear and the final redemption would be ushered in immediately. Otherwise, the redemption will not occur until the final time decreed by G-d. This is the meaning of the verse, "I, G-d, will accelerate it in its due time" (Yishayahu 60:22). That is, if Israel is worthy, G-d will hasten the redemption; if they are not, it will still come, but only in its due time.

Thus, we find two contradictory concepts regarding the advent of the Messianic Era in the Bible. There are many passages which indicate that the Messianic Era will be ushered in with miracles, such as, "In visions of the night, I beheld the likes of a human being who came with the clouds of heaven... and he was given... an everlasting dominion which will never pass away" (Daniel 7:13-14).

On the other hand, numerous passages in the Prophets indicate that the Mashiach will come in a more natural manner, such as "Behold, your king comes to you... humble and riding upon a donkey" (Zecharya 9:9). Here again, we are taught that there are two basic ways in which the Messianic Era can commence. If Israel is worthy, it will indeed be accompanied by heavenly miracles. If not, the Messianic Era will arrive through a natural unfolding of historical events. In either case, G-d Himself will guide the forces of history to eventually bring about the Messianic Era.

The Mashiach will be a direct descendant of King David, from the tribe of Yehuda. He is therefore known as Mashiach ben David or "The anointed son of David". Kabbalah teaches that there will be another Mashiach, from the tribe of Efrayim, the son of Yosef, who will precede Mashiach ben David. He is therefore known as Mashiach ben Yosef or Mashiach ben Efrayim.

The Zohar tells us that Israel's enemies will only succumb to a descendant of Yosef. Thus, Mashiach ben Yosef will be the one who will lead Israel to a victory in the war of Gog and Magog. This is the meaning of the verse, "The house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esav stubble. They will set them ablaze, and consume them; there will be no survivor of the house of Esav, for God has spoken" (Ovadya 1:18)

Concerning the relationship between the two Mashiachs – the initial one, Mashiach ben Yosef, and the final one, Mashiach ben David -- the prophet declared, "Efrayim's envy will depart and Yehuda's adversaries will be cut off. Efrayim will not envy Yehuda and Yehuda will not harass Efrayim" (Yish. 11:13). That is, each Mashiach will perform his appointed task, without jealousy. It is likewise written, "Son of man, take a stick and write upon it, 'For Yehuda, and the

children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick, and write upon it, "For Yosef, the stick of Efrayim, and all the house of Israel, his companions." Join them together into one stick, so that they are one in your hand." (Yechezkeil 37:16-17). According to Kabala, the initial Mashiach will fight and be killed in the war of Gog and Magog. He will be mourned by all Israel, as it is written, "They shall look to Me because they have thrust him through, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns his first born son" (Zecharya 12:10).

Before the appearance of the final Mashiach, a prophet will arise to announce his coming and to draw the Jewish people back to G-d. This prophet will be Eliyahu. It is thus written, "Behold, I will send you Eliyah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of G-d" (Malachi 3:23). His primary task will be to bring peace to the world by leading all people back to G-d. The prophecy thus concludes, "He will turn the heart of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers so that I (G-d) should not strike the world with destruction" (ibid 3:24)

May Mashiach come speedily in our time.



Prizes for best solution sets (when awarded) are furnished by Noam Productions and/or Big Deal.

Last issue's (KI TEITZEI) TTtriddles:

[1] The other Purim connection

We should have said "connections" since YI found one that we missed. KiTeitzei-Purim connections include Parshat Zachor (the last three p'sukim of the sedra) about Amalek, Haman's nationality and character. Then there is the command of V'TALITA OTO AL EITZ, hanging the body of some who were executed for a capital offense. This is, of course, reminiscent of Haman's being hanged, his sons, and Bigtan and Teresh. Remember though, that hanging is NOT a method of execution in Judaism; it is what is done to the body already executed, for a brief time before burial. In the parsha of YIBUM, the Torah describes the Chlitza process and states: KACHA YE'ASEH LA'ISH ASHER... Thus shall be done to a man who... The exact words we find in Achashveirosh's instructions to Haman when he (Haman) paraded Mordechai through the streets of Shushan.

[2] Is this fruit required?

The Torah gives permission to a worker with raw produce, to eat of the yield. (Not while doing the work - just during his breaks, and not to take home without special permission.) When you work in your fellow's vineyard and you eat grapes... V'ACHALTA ANAVIM is permission to eat, but it sounds like a command: And you shall eat grapes. Making grapes the required fruit.

[3] IGERET HAGRA

Some of the writings of the Vilna Gaon are collected under the name EVEN SH'LEIMA (according to Rabbi Hershel Schachter, the name of the work is possibly based on the GRA's name: Eliyahu Ben Shlomo. IGERET HAGRA is either part of EVEN SH'LEIMA or another name for it. The phrase EVEN SH'LEIMA is in Parshat Ki Teitzei (and in Melachim Alef and Mishlei).

[4] chute-roleum / bola-rify

This is a word play for MAAKEH, known in English as a PARAPET, the protective barrier (wall, fence, etc.) that one must build to prevent someone's being injured by falling from a roof, falling into a pit, etc. PARACHUTE and PARABOLA each supplied the first syllable PARA. And PETROLEUM and PETRIFY supplied the second syllable.

[5] The violinist on and what around?

The violinist - or, shall we call him, the FIDDLER - is on the ROOF. And the MAAKEH is to be built around the roof. That's it. Simple.

[6] Remember Scotland's first Jewish doctor

Asher Asher (1837–89), born in Glasgow, was the first Scottish Jew to enter the medical profession. The only book he published was The Jewish Rite of Circumcision... prominent member of the local Jewish congregation... studying medicine at the University of Edinburgh, graduating as Doctor of Medicine in 1856, as the first Jewish doctor of Scotland... was appointed secretary of the Great Synagogue... first secretary of the United Synagogue... medical attendant and personal friend of the Rothschilds... Looking for better conditions for Jewish immigrants, Asher undertook journeys to Palestine, America, and Russia... And the connection to Ki Teitzei? We are commanded to ZACHOR ET ASHER. To remember Asher. Had the Torah commanded that only once, we could have used any person with a first name or family name of Asher. But we find that phrase twice - hence the "command" to remember Scotland's first Jewish doctor. The biographical material was abridged from Wikipedia and included here as a salute to a Jew who made a significant mark in his time.

[7] Its gimatriya is really 590, not 600 - but this time it's only 87

The answer is TZITZIT. There is a famous gimatriya which is meant to illustrate the connection between the mitzva of Tzitzit and the Torah's statement that one should see them and remember ALL the mitzvot of G-d and do them. TZITZIT = TZADI (90) + YUD (10) + TZADI (90) + YUD (10) + TAV (400) = 600. Add the 5 double knots of the Tzitzit and the 8 strings and the total is 613, the number of all the mitzvot in the Torah. The "problem" is that Tzitzit is spelled in the Torah without the second YUD, so its gimatriya is only 590. But in Ki Teitzei, Tzitzit are called G'DILIM, which has a gimatriya of only 87. (Shouldn't say "only", since 87 is PAZ, meaning fine gold.)

[8] Come, Carry, Go

Come = BO; Carry = NASO; and GO = KI TEITZEI. These are the three sedras that each has a false start, so to speak. Before the BO EL PAR'O that begins Parshat Bo, there is an earlier, close by, parsha that starts the same way. A BK (Baal Korei or Baal K'ri'a) has to pay extra attention when pointing out the sedra's starting point to the Kohen who receives the first Aliya. The same is so for NASO and KI TEITZEI. And don't think this is an unnecessary warning. This past Shabbat in the main shul in one of Jerusalem's neighborhoods (we won't mention which), the BK pointed to the wrong KI TEITZEI, the Kohen made his bracha and when the BK was about to start reading, he realized his error. If the correct starting place is also on the open, visible columns of the Torah when the Aliya-bracha is said, then you can read from the correct point without any problem. But, if the correct starting point is not visible to the Oleh, then he has to repeat the bracha - but not the BA-R'CHU intro. Fortunately, the shul in question has a knowledgeable gabbai on the spot.

[9] totally on Shabbat, partially on weekdays

One of the 39 categories of MELACHOT forbidden on Shabbat is CHARISHA (HACHOREISH), plowing. On Shabbat, it is totally forbidden. But, as we learn in Ki Teitzei, even during the week it is partially forbidden - specifically, to plow with an ox and a donkey together.

[10] What the teacher repeatedly said to the misbehaving student

When going to a poor person's house, one to whom you lent money, you may not enter to take something of value as a security, but rather, you must remain outside... (this, for the dignity of the borrower). BACHUTZ TAAMOD. "Stand outside the classroom door" is something said to a misbehaving student whose offense does not yet warrant his being sent to the principal's office.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 490

Torah Matrimonial Law

In another case decided by Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, the following were the facts:

A woman was divorced in a civil court from her first husband, but he refused to give her a Get. She married her second husband in a civil court and a daughter was born to them in this second marriage. The first husband then decided to give her a Get according to halacha which he sent by messenger as provided for in halacha and then a second daughter was born to the woman and her second husband. The woman and her second husband then had a religious marriage ceremony. The question asked of Rabbi Feinstein by the rabbi who was now counseling the couple is what is the status of the daughters of this couple. Rabbi Feinstein answered that regarding the second daughter there is no doubt as to her legitimacy in halacha, since she was born after the first husband gave the wife a Get. The question as to the status of the first daughter was different. There was no way to make her halachically legitimate since she was born before the woman received the Get from the first husband. This daughter was a true mamzeres according to Torah law. The rabbi wrote to Rabbi Feinstein that the woman told him that immediately after they were married they had constant fights and quarrels. This is of no avail to undo the first marriage. The claim by her that had she known of his bad character she would not have married him is of no avail. For if

that were so, then many marriages would be null and void. The fact that the husband was not told that his wife-to-be was quarrelsome is no reason to dissolve the marriage. And even if he was told when getting married he would probably think that he would be able to cope with this and avoid quarrels. Now that they are married the thoughts that he had before marriage are not always present and he sees that he cannot cope with her quarrelsome personality. But the marriage cannot be annulled on that account. I cited two recent cases as I hope to IYH do, to show how the laws that I am describing are applied to real live cases.

Continuing on with the Torah/Rabbinic Matrimonial laws:

In a previous lesson it was stated that a man betroths a woman in one of three ways, with money or money equivalent, with a written document or with cohabitation. We have been discussing betrothal by money or a thing of value which is the equivalent of money. We shall now discuss how a woman is betrothed with a writing. (This is not to be confused with the Ketuba which is an agreement by the husband that in the event of a divorce he will pay to the wife a certain sum of money or if he dies his estate will pay to her that sum of money.)

[Ed. note: We are not familiar with marriages by document because the norm in our time is something of monetary value - i.e. a gold ring. Nonetheless, it is one of the three ways that "a man acquires a woman", i.e. one of the three ways of Kiddushin.]

The husband or his agent writes on a piece of paper or on a piece of pottery although neither is worth a p'ruta) "You are betrothed unto me" and he hands it to her in the presence of witnesses. The writing must be written with proper intent for this particular woman. (In this way it is similar to a Bill of Divorce (a Get) that must be written for this particular woman to be divorced. Like a Get, the marriage document must contain the name of her city and his city. If the writing was written without being specifically for this woman it is of no value in establishing betrothal. Also it must be written with her consent. If it was written without her specific consent and was given to her and she accepted it, the betrothal is in doubt. The doubt arises since the value of the paper may be worth a p'ruta and she is betrothed with its value. Also if there were witnesses who signed the writing the betrothal is in doubt.

If the writing failed to comply with the requirements of a document of betrothal, since the paper is not worth a p'ruta the betrothal is not valid. If it is doubtful if the paper is worth a p'ruta, the betrothal is in doubt. Whenever there is betrothal in doubt, there must be a second betrothal or a Get given to her to free her to marry someone else.

If the girl to be betrothed is a minor and the betrothal is accepted on her behalf by her father, the writing will state "Your daughter is betrothed to me". There is an opinion that the writing must contain the names of the man and the woman as is required in a Get.

If the writing was written on a thing attached to the ground, such as on leaf of a tree, there is an opinion that the betrothal is not valid. Similarly, if the writing was on a paper from which it is

prohibited to derive any benefit from, there is an opinion in halacha that the betrothal is not valid, and an equally strong opinion that the betrothal

is valid. There is no necessity for the writing to contain a time of writing.

If, when he gave her the writing, he stated that the paper belongs to me, there is no valid betrothal.

As was stated several times in the previous lessons, the third way to betroth a woman, besides with money or a writing is through cohabitation. In another chapter of the Shulhan Aruch Eben haEzer (chapter 25) the author of the Shulhan Aruch writes, that the Sages prohibit to so betroth a woman on account of "looseness". If he did so betroth her, he is flogged, but the betrothal is valid. It does not mean that they cohabited in the presence of witnesses, but rather he made a statement that he and she are going to cohabit for the sake of betrothal. If this is the method employed, there is only betrothal but this does not constitute their being married.

These laws lend themselves to sever outcomes sometimes. They may not have intended it as such but when two people cohabit, it could somehow be construed to be valid betrothal since in most instances people are not promiscuous and therefore intended their cohabitation to be for the sake of betrothal.

There are differences of opinion where the cohabitation had to take place to be considered as a valid betrothal. There is an opinion that it is only if it was in her father's house. In his house, the cohabitation may result in their being married rather than only betrothed.

In future lessons, we shall IYH begin to go through the beginnings of the betrothal/marriage ceremony.

ParshaPix explanations

BIKURIM - basket of first fruits placed at the side of the Mizbei'ach. The bringer is smiling the ultimate smile, as the Torah commands us to rejoice in all that G-d has given us. And smile is reciting (speech bubble) about going down to Egypt and about being brought out of Egypt and taken to Eretz Yisrael.

HASHKIFA - G-d, look down upon us from on high (telescope)...

One of the blessings mentioned in the sedra is that if we keep the Torah, then we will be "heads" not "tails". See the two shekel coin images. Just for your information, heads and tails is American coin terminology. The formal numismatic terms are obverse and reverse. The colloquial terms for Israeli coins are PALI and EITZ. PALI is short for Palestine, the name of the country in pre-state days and the word that appeared in three languages on the obverse of coins. EITZ is for the palm tree that was common on the reverse side of the coins.

12 stones upon which were engraved the Torah (or parts of it).

Opened treasure, as we ask of G-d. That treasure is in the form of beneficial and timely rains, and the bumper crops that result from good and plentiful rain.

The skate is for the word HASKEIT. It is a unique word in Torah and Na"Ch. Words that appear only once are often difficult to translate, since they provide only one context with nothing to compare it with. HASKEIT is rendered as "pay attention" or "be silent" or "form groups". It is followed by USHMA, and listen (or understand), hence the different possibilities for HASKEIT.

The successful basketball shot is for

BARUCH TANACHA, blessed is your basket (i.e. fruit, Rashi), or V'SAMTA VATENE - and put it in the basket.

Thumbs up pointing to a cityscape and a field is BARUCH ATA BA'IR UVARUCH ATA BASADEH.

The green pepper with yes and no on it represents the term in the Torah PRI ADAMA, fruit of the ground. YES, that's the bracha it gets (double meaning - we say BOREI PRI ADAMA and G-d sends His BRACHA (if we follow Him) to our PRI ADAMA. On the other hand - NO, pepper is not one of the PRI ADAMA referred to in the context of BIKURIM, since we are taught that for the mitzva of BIKURIM, PRI HADAMA means only the Seven Species, which do not include pepper.

The golf club under the stones is an iron. The haftara says: "For bronze I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood bronze, and for stones iron..." (Yeshaya 60:17) In Hebrew: V'TACHAT HA'AVANIM BARZEL - and under the stones, iron.

At the top of the ParshaPix is a (spice) rack, representing another promise for our faithful behavior, that will will be RACK L'MAALA, just at the top. (Hebrew-English groaner.)

The opened lock is for the prophecy in the haftara, that your gates will be open always, day and night they will not be closed...

The flower next to the 12 stones is a "forget-me-not", as in "... I did not violate any mitzvot, nor did I forget." Part of Vidui Maasrot.

The cow and the bee in the lower-right represent CHALAV and D'VASH, as in ERETZ ZAVAT... A phrase that occurs more in Ki Tavo than anywhere else.

The little elephant at the bottom of the ParshaPiz represents the mitzva that an elephant - assuming his reputation is deserved - cannot fulfill, the mitzva of SHICH'CHA, forgetting the bundles of produce (one or two of them) in the field. As elephants (supposedly) never forget, they would never do this mitzva. But they would be very good at the mitzvot that require us to remember Shabbat, Maamad Har Sinai, Amalek, what happened to Miriam, and others. This, assuming that an elephant is either born to a Jewish mother or converts.

And then there is AYIN with a SEGOL under it and a MEM (sofit) with a SEGOL under it. AYIN-MEM spells AM, nation. This then is an AM SEGULA, as in Chosen Nation, a phrase that occurs twice in Parshat R'ei and once in Ki Tavo.

**This week and 4 weeks ago
- and that's all**

3/5 of D'varim; 3/10 of Torah; 3/13 of Tanach

knee dur Caesar

Pavorati in Brooklynese

What the Gileadites smoked

**1's first & last, 3's
two and 4's two**

We double up chapters of Pirkei Avot in order to complete the fourth cycle before Rosh HaShana. This adds an appropriate sense of urgency to its lessons

...כִּי אֶסְכַּח לְעֵינַי וְלִבִּי מִפְּשָׁעֵי לֹא אֶזְכֶּר עוֹד: ירמיהו לא:ג

This pasuk is from a prophecy of the time of the Complete Geula, when our commitment to G-d will be permanent and our knowledge of Him as complete as possible, and He promises that He will forgive all our sins and He will not remember our iniquities anymore. The boxed words - initials: ELUL

Parsha Points to Ponder SUGGESTED ANSWERS

1) The Ohr HaChayim answers that this is not the beginning of the command as it might seem at first glance. In fact, it is the third command in this general mitzva. The first is to recognize that G-D is responsible for our settling of Israel and not our own strength (WHEN YOU COME TO THE LAND WHICH HASHEM YOUR G-D GIVES TO YOU AS AN INHERITANCE). The second mitzva is to actual settle the land and push enemies out of the land (AND INHERIT AND DWELL IN IT). Then the third mitzva of bringing the first fruits comes and since it is not the first command, it does not use the language used to begin a new mitzva.

2) Rashi explains that V'ANITA means the raising of the voice. Daat Zekainim MiBaalei HaTosfot explain that for the declaration of the good which G-D has done to us upon bringing the first fruit, we raise our voices and say it aloud, as captured by V'ANITA. The statement regarding the maaser is viewed as a confession and for confessions we lower our voices, hence the omission of the word V'ANITA.

3) The Kli Yakar understands that this alludes to the idea of one mitzva leads to another mitzva. If we observe the covenant, this will lead to us doing more mitzvot.

CHIZUK AND IDUD (for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively)

In his comment on the first verse of our parsha, Rashi quotes the Gemara in Kiddushin (37b) which states that the mitzva of Bikurim became obligatory only after the Jewish people conquered all of the land of Canaan and divided it among the twelve tribes of Israel .

It is well known that the conquest took 14 years to complete. The question that presents itself is why the mitzva of Bikurim did not go into effect after each section of Eretz Israel was conquered and as soon as each part was cultivated and bore fruit. After all, the mitzva of Bikurim is primarily a demonstration of HAKARAT HATOV, appreciation and thanks to God for having granted us the privilege of living in Eretz Yisrael and enjoying its fruits. Why then was it necessary to wait until all of Eretz Yisrael was conquered and apportioned?

The Gemara in Pesachim (36b) emphasizes that the mitzva of Bikurim is fulfilled between Shavuot and Sukkot because that is the time of the ingathering of the fruit, when the joy is greatest. Why, then, were the Jewish people not required to give thanks for the land and its fruit during their first 14 years in the land?

The Torah seems to be teaching us that our personal happiness cannot be complete until all of Eretz Yisrael is conquered and settled. While mitzvot pertaining to the land of Israel must be fulfilled on every inch of the holy land, the mitzva of Bikurim, thankfulness and appreciation to God for having given us the fruit of the land, cannot be fulfilled until all of the land is ours and until all Jews dwell therein. To be complete, our personal happiness must be coupled with the happiness of Klal Yisrael .

While the conquest of all of Eretz Yisrael may appear to be something in the distant future, Jews settling in the land which is already ours can be achieved right now.

We hope and pray that all Jews will settle in the land and that God will grant us the privilege of possessing all of Eretz Israel in our own time.

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