



886
וישילח
ח"י כסלו תש"ע • Dec. 4-5, '09



This Shabbat is the 78th day (of 355), 12th Shabbat (of 51) of 5770
כִּי-קָרֹב יוֹם-ה' עַל-כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם... עוֹבְדֵיהֶם אִטּוֹ

HALACHA B'YADU'A that Eisav...

Just another look at an old and well-known Rashi (we've done it before) with no connection or implications for our own time.

So not!

MAASEI AVOT SIMAN L'BANIM, the deeds of our ancestors set patterns for their descendants. It seems reasonable to suggest that that truism works, not only for our Avot and Imahot, etc. as their deeds, behavior modes, and characteristics impact on us, but it applies to the ancestors of the nations of the world and their descendants.

To think otherwise is folly, self-delusional, and potentially suicidal.

Many years before their reunion, Eisav said in his heart that he would kill Yaakov (after his father passed on). Now, in our sedra, Eisav rushes to his long-lost twin and enthusiastically hugs and *kisses him. The word is written in the Torah scroll with the scribal equivalent of an asterisk (dots above the letters of the word) in order to call our attention to this remarkable display of brotherly affection.

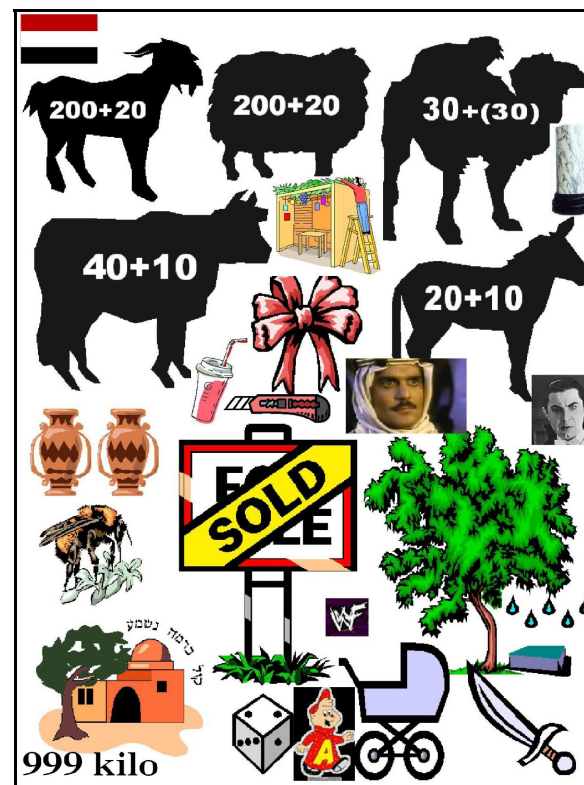
Rashi tells us of a MACHLOKET, a dispute as to what really happened when Eisav approached Yaakov. Some say that Eisav's kiss was not sincere. (Perhaps he did it for the favorable photo op.) This is an anonymous opinion in the B'raita. R' Shimon b. Zakai says, Although it is a well-known fact that Eisav hates Yaakov, at this moment, Eisav was overwhelmed with compassion and he kissed Yaakov with all his heart.

It is important to note that R' Shimon b. Zakai's opinion includes that the

Candle Lighting
and **Havdala** times
Israel Standard Time

TT 886 • Rabbeinu Tam (J'm) - 5:52pm

3:59pm	Yerushalayim	5:15pm
4:17pm	S'derot	5:18pm
4:15pm	Gush Etzion	5:15pm
4:15pm	Raanana	5:16pm
4:15pm	Beit Shemesh	5:16pm
4:16pm	Rehovot	5:16pm
4:14pm	Netanya	5:15pm
4:15pm	Be'er Sheva	5:17pm
4:15pm	Modi'in	5:15pm
3:59pm	Petach Tikva	5:16pm
3:59pm	Maale Adumim	5:14pm
4:14pm	Ginot Shumron	5:15pm
4:13pm	Gush Shiloh	5:14pm
4:15pm	K4 & Hevron	5:16pm
4:14pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:15pm
4:16pm	Yad Binyamin	5:16pm
4:17pm	Ashkelon	5:18pm
4:00pm	Tzfat	5:12pm



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OTHER Z'MANIM
Correct for Jerusalem
Ranges are 10 days, WED-FRI
15-24 Kislev (Dec 2-11)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:28-5:35am
Sunrise	6:23-6:30am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	8:55-9:00am (Magen Avraham: 8:08-8:13am)
Sof Z'man T'fila	9:46-9:51am (Magen Avraham: 9:14-9:19am)
Chatzot (halachic noon)	11:28½-11:32½am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	11:59am-12:03pm
Plag Mincha	3:31-3:32¼pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 4:34-4:35pm)	4:39-4:40pm

Word of the Month
Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur,
Sukkot, Pesach, Shavuot,
Purim... and many other
dates on the calendar, have
4 possible days of the week
(D/W) p.3

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George z"l and Ilse Falk

sincere kiss was for the moment. He states clearly that the general rule is that Eisav hates Yaakov. The implication is that he would continue to hate Yaakov. But at that emotional moment, he kiss was sincere. Or, perhaps, even then it wasn't sincere, as the first opinion says.

Also note that Yaakov does not, did not hate Eisav.

The "relationship" between Yaakov and Eisav, the enmity of Eisav for Yaakov, is perpetual - in this world. We have prophecies about the time of Mashiach that there will be a judgment of the nations that has persecuted and hated the Jewish People and there will then be a recognition of G-d as the One True G-d and of Israel as His chosen nation.

But in the meantime - and that includes today - we continue to be hated by the Eisavs of the world, which range from the subtle to the blatant Anti-Semitic and anti-Israel attitude and behavior. We must never let our guard down.

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...

that they can fall on (their first day, that is, when they are more than a single day), and three D/W they cannot fall on. As we mentioned last week, most of the days of the year follow the LO ADU ROSH "system", as just described.

We are looking now just at the days of Chanuka. The first five days of Chanuka are in Kislev and can each fall on any of six D/W, with only one day that they cannot. The 6th day of Chanuka is sometimes 30 Kislev, as it is this year, and sometimes it is 1 Tevet. (In all cases, the 6th day is always Rosh Chodesh.) 30 Kislev has four possible D/W. It happens to be LO ADU, but NOT linked to all the other dates that follow LO ADU. 1 and 2 Tevet are always Chanuka, days 6 & 7 or 7 & 8. 3 Tevet is sometimes the 8th day. Tevet dates each have 5 possible D/W and only 2 D/W on which they cannot fall.

Vayishlach STATS

8th of 54 sedras; 8th of 12 in B'reishit

Written on 237 lines in a Sefer Torah; ranks 11th

9 Parshi'ot - 6 P'tuchot; 3 S'tumot

153 p'sukim - 4th (1st in B'reishit), same number as No'ach, but more words and letters

1976 words - 6th (4th in B'reishit)

7458 letters - 6th (4th in B'reishit)

The drop in rank for words and letters is because its p'sukim are well below average in number of words and letters (but not as low as No'ach). In other words, Vayishlach has many - but relatively short p'sukim

MITZVOT

The is one mitzva counted in Vayishlach, the only prohibition of the 365 in the Torah in the book of B'reishit

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

10 p'sukim - 32:4-13

[P> 32:4 (47)] Yaakov sends messengers to his brother Eisav with a message of conciliation (and warning?).

SDT: *Onkeles seems to consider the messengers that Yaakov sent to be human (IZGADIN are runners or messengers); Rashi states that the word MAL'ACHIM is to be taken literally, as heavenly angels. Commentaries point to the end of last week's sedra (which tells of Yaakov's encountering the "camps" of angels upon his return to Eretz Yisrael) as support for Rashi's point of view. Bartenura further explains that Biblical references to angels always include something they said or a prophetic message. When Yaakov encountered the angels, nothing is said. It could be argued, that the Torah mentioned the angels in connection with Yaakov's sending them to Eisav. Other commentaries say that Yaakov sent angels because humans might be affected by Eisav and angels would be able to "read" the situation accurately. One Chassidic Master put it this way: When a Jew is facing a threat from an Eisav-type and needs help, he may even bother heavenly angels for their support.*

SDT: *One of Yaakov's statements was that he had been living with Lavan and was delayed until now. Rashi learns, that "he lived with Lavan but did not learn from his evil ways". Some see this as a compliment to Yaakov, that he was able to maintain his complete adherence to the Torah in such an alien atmosphere. Others see an implied criticism: All those years in Lavan's home, and he did not learn from Lavan's evil ways... how to channel the cunning and*

enthusiasm he witnessed towards his own service of G-d. There are lessons to be learned even by negative example.

Yaakov announces to Eisav that he has "oxen, donkeys, sheep, and servants".

SDT: Why does Yaakov tell this to Eisav? Is he boasting about wealth that he has amassed in Lavan's house? No, just the opposite. Yaakov is telling Eisav that although he has much material wealth and large flocks and herds, he does not have land. He has not (yet) benefited from the blessing (that Eisav felt should have been his) of "from the dew of the heavens and the fertility of the ground..." Therefore, Yaakov hoped that Eisav would not be angry with him.

Side note: Yaakov is, so far, blessed with the "Shehakol" type of wealth. The other 5 of the 6 brachot for food are all related to that which comes from the ground, the blessings of TAL HASHAMAYIM & SH'MANEI HA'ARETZ, which Yaakov has not yet received.

The report of Eisav's pending arrival with 400 men prompts Yaakov into three modes of action. He first divides his camp into two, so that one will be able to escape if the other is attacked. Then he prays to G-d for His help and the fulfillment of promises made. (the third phase is in the next portion.)

SDT: Commentaries point out that Yaakov asks G-d to save him "from my brother - from Eisav". This is not a redundancy. The Jew faces two enemies: The Eisavs of the world who would destroy the Jewish people, and the "friendly brothers" who would gladly permit us to assimilate into their cultures - thereby also

bringing about the destruction of the Jewish People. Yaakov prays for salvation from both threats.

Similarly, in the very first pasuk of the sedra, Yaakov sends the angels (or messengers) to his BROTHER EISAV. Yaakov is always aware that Eisav is both, and he must be weary of both persona.

The Beit HaLevi puts it this way. Danger #1 is war. Danger #2 is a treaty with Eisav that can also be disastrous. Does this say anything to us today? It should!

Levi - Second Aliya 17 p'sukim - 32:14-30

Yaakov next prepares elaborate gifts from his flocks and herds for Eisav to be delivered with a good-will message of appeasement.

SDT: Baal HaTurim points out that there are two p'sukim in the Torah in which every word ends with a "final mem". Here in Vayishlach (32:15): 200 she-goats, 20 he-goats... and in BaMidbar (29:33): And their (referring to sacrifices) flour-oil offerings, their wine of libation, for the oxen... Is there a connection? Baal HaTurim shares an amazing calculation with us. Yaakov sent 550 animals as an appeasement to Eisav, even though G-d had assured him that He would protect him. Yaakov's descendants were destined to offer 550 animals per year as Musaf sacrifices. (Ed. note: The number of Shabbatot in a year vary from 50-55; Rosh Chodeshes can be 12 or 13. Chagim are the same for all years. Animals of Chagim Musaf total 307. Shabbat Musaf will add 100-110; Rosh Chodesh adds 132-143. Totals therefore range from 539 to 560 with an average somewhere in the 550 ballpark, as the Baal HaTurim says.)

He instructs his servants what to say when they meet up with Eisav.

During the night before his encounter with Eisav, Yaakov finds himself alone. (This is one of the sources for the rule that a person should not go out alone at night.)

SDT: Commentaries tell us that Yaakov had returned across the Yabok River to retrieve small flasks of oil that had been left behind. Some say that this was the oil with which he anointed the altar and monuments he built in G-d's honor, and that this flask of oil was the antecedent of the sole flask of oil found by the Chashmona'im many centuries later. This is another of many examples of MAASEI AVOT SIMAN L'BANIM.

Yaakov battles with a "man" (whom we are taught is the guardian angel of Eisav). Yaakov prevails in this struggle but is injured. He receives an unusual blessing from the angel in the form of an additional name - Yisrael.

SDT: Yaakov asks the angel who has wrestled with him to give him a bracha. Rashi says that he was asking that the angel acknowledge the brachot that Yaakov had received from Yitzchak, which Yitzchak had intended to give to Eisav. Perhaps what prompts Rashi to this explanation rather than the situation being simply that Yaakov was asking for a new bracha, is the unusual word BEI-RACH-TANI (which relates to the past) and not BOR'CHEINI (bless me now).

Note that the angel does not declare that Yaakov will no longer be his name, but rather Yisrael. He does say that it will no longer be said that he is a "Yaakov" (one who holds

onto his brother's heel to hold him back) but rather he will be referred to as Yisrael, the one who prevailed before G-d and man.

Unlike Avraham, whose previous name is no longer used after he is renamed Avraham, Yaakov carries both names. In fact, the second word after the angel's declaration of the new name is Yaakov. Similarly, when G-d confirms the name Yisrael upon Yaakov, he (Yaakov) is still called Yaakov, and sometimes Yisrael. This is the flavor of Rashi's commentary on LO YAAKOV, which he explains thus: People will no longer call you "the one who held your brother back", but they will acknowledge you as having justly prevailed.

Shlishi - Third Aliya 8 p'sukim - 32:31-33:5

MitzvaWatch

The perennial battle between Eisav and Yaakov, which this battle typifies, is "commemorated" by the prohibition of "Gid HaNasheh" [3,L183 32:33]. Even though the Torah introduces this mitzva in the context of the story, the mitzva is part of the Revelation at Sinai, as if it would have said: "And G-d spoke to Moshe saying - command the People not to eat the Gid..." The only "negative" mitzva in the book of B'reishit is this prohibition against eating the "Gid HaNasheh". Removal of the "gid" and its innervating branches in the thigh and leg of the animal, as well as the fats and flesh in the area, is required, and difficult.

Further problems result from blood vessels that must be removed from that part of the animal's body. The process of removal of the GID and other vessels is known as "Nikur" (Heb.) or "treibering" (Yiddish). It is, in most cases, not economically feasible to remove the "gid". The whole hind section of the animal is generally sold as non-kosher (thereby removing the GID from the rest of the animal's body). This is the standard practice in the U.S. In Israel, however, where there is not so readily available non-kosher market, nikur is done. This means that some fancy hind cuts of meat are available to the kosher consumer, such as Tenderloin, sirloin, porterhouse, T-bone.

Yaakov sees Eisav and his men coming; he pushes his family behind him and repeatedly bows to his brother. Eisav runs towards him embraces him, k*i*s*s*e*s him, and weeps.

SDT: Mishlei 24:16 says: For a righteous person will fall seven times and rise up... Baal HaTurim relates this pasuk to Yaakov's bowing 7 times before Eisav.

Finally, Yaakov and Eisav - brothers, twins! - are face to face, and Eisav runs towards Yaakov and embraces him, hugs him, and kisses him. Asterisks on the word VAYISHAKEI-HU. The Scribal custom is calling our attention to something important. A message we dare not overlook or ignore. Rashi presents us with two opinions: The dots tell us that the kiss was not sincere because of his hatred... or, even though Eisav hates Yaakov, at this moment he was overcome by genuine feelings of

brotherly love and kissed him with all his heart. Note that both opinions accept the fact of life of the eternal hatred of the Eisavs of the world for the Yaakovs (us) - they just dispute this particular kiss. See more in the Lead Tidbit

Eisav asks about the women and children and Yaakov prepares to introduce his family to Eisav.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya **15 p'sukim - 33:6-20**

Yaakov humbles (humiliates?) himself before Eisav as he presents his family to him, all of whom bow to Eisav. Yaakov presented his wives and 11 children.

SDT: *Why did Yaakov hide Dina from Eisav? Some explain that Yaakov did not want Eisav to take Dina as a wife and thereby subject her to his wickedness. For this, Yaakov was punished, because Dina might have been (probably would have?) a positive influence in Eisav's life. (The very next portion of the Torah tells us of the kidnap and rape of Dina and the subsequent debacle of the revenge exacted by Shimon and Levi.) Commentaries ask whether Yaakov should be praised, rather than punished, for protecting Dina. Bartenura says that Yaakov's reason for hiding Dina was not the fear of anything negative happening to her, but the fear that she would succeed in reforming Eisav, which would make him worthy of the blessing that he would dominate his brother.*

Eisav asks about the groups of animals that he met on his way. Eisav at first refuses to accept the gifts, but eventually takes them.

Then Eisav suggests that he and Yaakov join together. Yaakov adamantly refuses.

NOTE: At first, Yaakov seems to want to avoid antagonizing Eisav, even to the point of humbling himself before his brother. However, when the possibility of subjecting his family to the influences of Eisav is at issue, Yaakov boldly risks confrontation. Lesson to learn.

[S> 33:18 (3)] Yaakov travels to the Sh'chem area where he purchases land and builds a Mizbeich.

The land that Yaakov purchased was later used for the burial of Yosef's remains.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya **42 p'sukim - 34:1-35:11**

The SDT above about a connection between Yaakov's hiding Dina and the episode of her abduction is borne out by the juxtaposition of the two portions, but more so by the fact that VATEITZEI DINA is a S'tuma, a closed parsha, which means more of a connection to the previous parsha than a P'tucha would indicate. And add to this that the parsha after the Dina episode is p'tucha.

[S> 34:1 (31)] Dina (who had been hidden from Eisav) now goes out to explore the "local attractions". She is kidnapped and raped by Sh'chem who then falls in love with her. His father proposes an alliance with Yaakov's family for the purpose of intermarriage and fusing of their cultures. Shimon and Levi

trick Sh'chem and his people into circumcising themselves. When the people are weakened, Shimon and Levi kill them to avenge what was done to Dina. Yaakov is upset at what they have done (perhaps not - some commentaries say he was upset at not being consulted in the first place), but they defend their actions.

[P> 35:1 (8)] G-d tells Yaakov to move to Beit-El and build an altar there. Yaakov rids his household of idols. G-d prevents the locals from pursuing Yaakov and family to avenge the killing of the people of Sh'chem.

Rivka's nurse Devora dies and is buried. (There is a Tradition that Rivka died at this point too. Some suggest that the Torah was silent about Rivka's death because Yaakov was not around to tend to her burial, only Eisav was.)

Who was D'vora, the nursemaid of Rivka? Why does she rate mention by name? Why is her death mentioned? It has been suggested (by Rabbi Sholom Gold) that she was one of Avraham and Sara's "converts", but that they purposely did not take her when they went to Eretz Yisrael, with "the souls they had made in Charan". Rather, they left her as a tutor for Rivka, someone to teach her and influence her to become worthy and fitting to be Yitzchak's wife and one of the Matriarchs of the Jewish People.

[P> 35:9 (14)] G-d appears once again to Yaakov and blesses him. He confirms the new name Yisrael (which is used alongside the name

Yaakov, each having different connotations).

Shishi - Sixth Aliya **37 p'sukim - 35:12-36:19**

G-d reiterates His promise of the Land to Yaakov and his descendants. Yaakov erects another monument to mark the place at which G-d appeared to him. Rachel gives birth to Binyamin (11th of Cheshvan) and dies in childbirth. She thanks G-d with her dying breath for her having a second son. She is buried on the "road to Efrata" and her burial place is marked "even unto this day".

Reuven **UNTRANSLATED** Bilha...

SDT: *The Gemara states: Anyone who thinks that Reuven actually slept with Bilha, as the literal translation of the pasuk would indicate, is grossly mistaken. Some say that Reuven moved Yaakov's bed from the tent of Bilha - where Yaakov had placed it after Rachel's death - into his mother's (Leah's) tent. The Torah's cryptic description of what he did is considered a sharp rebuke of his actions, which were disrespectful to his father. Nonetheless, he was motivated by protective jealousy for his mother Leah. The Mishna states that when the Torah was translated into Aramaic during public Torah reading, this pasuk was not translated. It was read, but it was left without TIRGUM so as not to mislead and confuse the people. This is a glaring example (of which there are many more, as well as subtle ones) of the inability to understand the Written Word without its inseparable partner, the Oral Torah. This is so for "story" parts of the*

Torah, as well as Halachic texts. This is the tragedy of the nations of the world clutching their bibles and thinking that they hold in their hands the Word of G-d. They hold only part of the Word of G-d which is so easily misunderstood and perverted in the absence of its Oral part.

[P> 35:23 (7)] ...the sons of Yaakov are 12.

SDT: *This statement is part of the same pasuk (although it begins a new parsha) as the statement about Reuven's deed. This is considered proof of the Talmudic statement mentioned above. Had Reuven actually sinned in the literal sense of the pasuk, he would not immediately be acknowledged as one of the sons of Yaakov, he would have been ostracized, or worse. Additionally, he is identified as Yaakov's B'CHOR in the very next pasuk.*

TRiddle: *Aside from this parsha-break in the middle of a pasuk, Vayishlach is full of partial p'sukim.*

Yaakov's sons are enumerated. Yaakov returns to his father's home. Yitzchak dies at 180 and is buried by Yaakov and Eisav.

[P> 36:1 (19)] Eisav's descendants are enumerated.

The fact that this is done at this point in the Torah, before the Torah continues with the accounts of the family of Yaakov seems to say: Let's finish up with Eisav first, before we continue with the important line of descent. Eisav is a force in this world, but he is not the reason for its existence. I, says the Torah (so to speak), am not yet ready to continue telling about Israel; I'll get to it after this business is out of the way.

Another reason offered for the

detailed presentation of Eisav's lineage is a rebuke of sorts for Yaakov's humbling himself before Eisav. Call him your master and you his servant, says G-d (so to speak), then I will establish him and his line of royalty in their own land many years before you and your descendants are ready for nationhood and their own kings.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya **24 p'sukim - 36:20-43**

[S> 36:20 (11)] The Torah continues naming the descendants of Se'ir the Chori. These are the people who lived in the land of Edom before Eisav's clan received it. Eisav married Oholivama of Se'ir and Eisav's eldest son Elifaz married (actually, took as a concubine) Timna from Se'ir. Eisav "had a life" in Canaan, and then when the clan moved to Se'ir, there are other wives and children who become family heads.

[P> 36:31 (13)] Finally, the Torah enumerates the kings that ruled the city-states of Eisav/Edom/Se'ir, "even before there ruled a king in Israel". Israel must still go through many stages of refinement and pass through many trials and tribulations before they are to emerge as The People of Israel.

The last 4 p'sukim are reread for the Maftir.

Haftara - 21 p'sukim **The book(let) of Ovadya**

Some communities read different Haftarot

The ongoing battle between Yaakov and Eisav is the main theme of the prophecy of Ovadya. The prophecy focuses on the ultimate judgment that Eisav's descendants face; G-d will emerge as the true King of all. The Haftara "answers" the question raised in the sedra as to what are the real feelings of Eisav to Yaakov.

CHANUKA

In general, one should prepare his Chanukiya during the afternoon so that there will not be a delay in lighting at the proper time. This is especially so on **Friday, Erev Shabbat-Chanuka** because things get kind of hectic as Shabbat approaches.

Some have the custom of preparing the Chanukiya in the morning for the evening (this goes for every day - except Shabbat, of course). This not only serves the practical purpose of being ready to light on time without delaying to set up later, but it also commemorates the practice in the Beit HaMikdash called Hatavat HaNeirot, whereby the Kohen (Gadol) tended the Menora and prepared it in the morning for kindling in the late, late afternoon. Since our lighting on Chanuka directly commemorates the lighting of the Menora in the Beit HaMikdash, this suggestion provides a nice "added touch" to the mitzva and symbolism of Chanuka lighting.

Opinions differ, but a common practice is to place the first candle (or oil cup) in the right side of the Chanukiya. If one lights at the doorpost, then the first candle should be closest to the doorpost, even if it is the left side of the Chanukiya.

In addition to setting up on Friday for the first candle, it is a good idea to also set up on Friday for the two candles for Motza'ei Shabbat. This will allow lighting on Motza"Sh without any unnecessary delay, especially since the Motza"Sh lighting is already delayed until after Shabbat. One can set up the Motza"Sh candles in the same Chanukiya he will use for the first night, placing the candles in the second and third position or at the other end of the Chanukiya in the 7th and 8th position.

Also, have your Motza"Sh Shamash and matches ready nearby.

We cannot follow the standard weekday timing (sunset or stars-out) on Erev Shabbat, because of the prohibition of kindling and handling fire on Shabbat. So we will have to light early. And this will require longer (or fatter) candles or more oil than usual. Furthermore, the rule is that Chanuka candles are lit before Shabbat candles. Shabbat candle lighting in most places is 18-22 minutes before sunset. This time should not be tampered with. Chanuka candles should be lit shortly before Shabbat candles (even when different people are lighting).

Preferably, they should not be lit a lot before Shabbat candles, but in all cases, never before PLAG. For this year, considering PLAG to be 3:40pm will work for all nights of Chanuka, all over Israel. If you have to light a little before this time, check for the exact times of PLAG.

Jerusalem custom for every Shabbat is to light candles 40 minutes before sunset. (Petach Tikva follows Jerusalem time as does Maale Adumim, which is only 35 minutes before sunset.) There is an acceptable practice to delay Shabbat candles 15 to 20 minutes after the posted time (remember - Only in Jerusalem, Petach Tikva, Maale Adumim and other places where regular candle lighting is 40 minutes before sunset), so that one's Chanuka candles do not have to be lit so early. This matter should be explained well to the family so that misunderstandings do not arise. Not everyone in Jerusalem follows this practice; many keep the posted time for Shabbat candle lighting and light Chanuka candles shortly before. TO BE SPECIFIC: Shabbat candle lighting time for Jerusalem this year on the first Erev Shabbat-Chanuka is 4:00pm. Either

light Chanuka candles shortly before 4:00pm and then Shabbat candles, or wait until 4:15-4:20, and light Chanuka candles followed by Shabbat candles.

Remember, if you are not in Jerusalem (or...), stick to the posted Shabbat candle lighting time - do not delay it.

In all cases, do not light either Chanuka or Shabbat candles before PLAG Mincha, 3:40pm (as above).

Also - and this is very important - whenever you light Chanuka candles, they must have enough fuel (oil or wax) to last until at least a half-hour after stars-out. Recommended are the #16 or #20 Shabbat candles, which will fit most Chanukiyas and will last long enough. Tea lights are good too, even though they won't fit your Chanukiya. Fold a piece of aluminum foil and place 8 tea candles on it in a row. Light only one (plus your Shamash) but there should be a line of 8 even though you are lighting fewer candles, so that it is noticeable that you are lighting one of 8, rather than just one candle.

For oil users, experience will teach you how much oil you need. If you do not have the experience, it doesn't hurt to experiment a couple of days before Chanuka so you will be ready.

Suggestion for Erev Shabbat lighting: Hold MA'OZ TZUR for the Shabbat table as one of the Z'mirot, rather than sing it with the lighting, so you can get to shul ASAP.

For lighting on Fridays, be very careful not to get too close to sunset. Let 4:30pm be a "redline" for lighting candles (Chanuka or Shabbat) - otherwise, one runs the risk of encroaching on Shabbat. After that time, be absolutely sure the sun is still in the sky - otherwise it is better not to light

Chanuka or Shabbat candles, sad as that seems.

The issue of Motza'ei Shabbat lighting (this year, the second candle - meaning, two candles) will be reviewed IY"H in next week's Torah Tidbits - as will many other points and pointers.

REMEMBER: Mincha Gedola at the Israel Center on the two Fridays - December 11th and 18th, at 12:05pm.

CHANUKA

Next week's issue of Torah Tidbits will contain a review of many of the halachot and practices of Chanuka.

However, since many people will not be getting TT 887 until Shabbat day, they will miss the review for the procedures of Erev Shabbat Chanuka.

Therefore, we have included in this issue the Chanuka Candle Lighting texts (see color center pages) and the review for Erev Shabbat Chanuka (we have two this year)

which you will find on the next pages, pages 13 and 14, that is.

A reminder, which will be repeated elsewhere in this issue:

In order to allow people to daven Mincha before they light Chanuka candles, we will have **MINCHA GEDOLA at 12:05pm Fridays, December 11th & 18th**

Divrei Menachem

In last week's parsha, Ya'akov declared that if Hashem would look after him during his sojourn in Chutz La'aretz, and he would come back to Eretz Yisrael in peace ("Shalom"), then Hashem would be his G-d.

And in this week's Vayishlach, we learn that, after close to 22 years of trials and tribulations - especially during his encounter with his nemesis Eisav - Ya'akov returned to Eretz Yisrael unimpaired ("Shalem"). Rashi [Shabbat 33b] explains that Ya'akov returned intact financially and intact in his learning.

On a superficial level we understand that Ya'akov also survived physically (having recovered from the injury to his thigh), and could now anticipate a life of tranquility. The word "Shalem", however, also means complete or perfect.

So now we might see Ya'akov's restored physical stature matched by a condition of pure spirituality. For Ya'akov's state of being "Shalem" incorporates an essence of Godliness represented by Hashem's name "Shalom". Ya'akov's return to Eretz Yisrael thus generates the rekindling of the transcendental I-Thou relationship. And now Ya'akov purchases a plot in the Land; and now he is moved to build an altar and proclaim, "G-d - the G-d of Israel". Clearly in Eretz Yisrael there is a true bonding of the physical and the metaphysical.

NA - NA

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
אֶל-יְהוָה
אִם-נָא מָצְאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ...

B'reishit 33:10 - And Yaakov said, No, please, if now I have found favor in your eyes...

There are two things at issue in this quote - the meanings of the word NA (NUN-ALEF) and the different TROP-mark on the two NAs in the above partial pasuk.

NA sometimes means PLEASE and sometimes it means NOW. At least this seems to be the way Targum Onkeles handles it. (It also can mean INCOMPLETELY COOKED as related to the Korabn Pesach, but leave that definition aside for this pasuk.) AL NA = Please not or No! please. IM NA in this context means IF NOW...

Unrelated (we think) are the TROP-marks on the two words NA. Notice the the note on the first NA (of AL-NA) - it is printed above the extreme left of the word. That note is a PASHTA and is a minor MAFSEIK, meaning that it calls for a brief pause after its word before continuing. Contrast that one with the note above the second NA. It appears over the syllable accented (or in this case of a one syllable word, over the middle of the word) and is a KADMA, which is a M'SHAREIT, meaning that it is followed by the next word immediately, without any pause.

Notice that CHEIN has a PASHTA and therefore is followed by a brief pause.

Same symbol but different TROP-notes.

more

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.

Q *How can it be that whether or not you wash on pizza depends on how much you eat? I would think that either it is bread or it is not bread.*

A The gemara (B'rachot 42a) discusses a category of food called pat haba'ah b'kisnin (phbbk), which is a baked grain-based food that shares qualities with bread but also is distinguished from normal bread. The gemara says that whether one recites Hamotzi or Mezonot on it depends on whether one is kovei'a seuda (bases a meal) on it. The Shulchan Aruch says that the other special halachot of bread apply to phbbk when one is kovei'a seuda, namely, that one recites Birkat Hamazon on it (Orach Chayim 168:6) and has to wash before eating it (ibid. 158:1). Let us now discuss pizza.

For something to be a candidate for bread status, it must be made from the five main grains and be baked or look like bread (corn bread and spaghetti are not treated like bread no matter how much one eats of them - see Shulchan Aruch, OC 168:10).

[Ed. note: ... because corn flour is not from one of the five grains and spaghetti does not have the form of bread. However, if the corn bread recipe calls for a significant amount of wheat flour, its bracha might be HaMotzi or Mezonot - depending on the ingredients. When in doubt ask a Rav.]

Of foods that pass those tests, there are still characteristics that can make a food phbbk instead of bread. The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.:7) cites three opinions: it has a pocket of sweet filling; its dough contains significant amounts of ingredients such as sugar and oil, besides flour and water; it is thin and crisp. It is unclear whether these opinions are mutually exclusive or whether any significant non-bread characteristic makes it phbbk (see Bi'ur Halacha to 168:8).

Pizza might be phbbk for one of the following reasons: 1) its dough may contain a lot of liquid other than water (e.g., oil, apple juice, milk); 2) it is baked together with pizza sauce and cheese, which make it similar to the pocket of filling above. However, it might not be phbbk. #1 requires that there to be a lot of other liquids (for Sephardim, enough to taste; for Ashkenazim, a majority of the non-flour element - Shulchan Aruch and Rama, OC 168). This is often not the case. Regarding #2, it is not clear that all fillings remove the bread status. The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.:16) says that a pashtida (knish-type food) filled with meat, fish, or cheese receives the beracha of Hamotzi on any amount. The Mishna Berura (ad loc.:94) explains that

classic phbbk is made from sweet fillings that make it dessert-like (e.g., cake), as opposed to these that are more meal-like. The Taz (168:20) says that all fillings are the same, and the matter is usually treated like a doubt.

Furthermore, the Beit Yosef (OC 168; see also the Aruch Hashulchan, OC 168:25) says that phbbk is something that, because of its characteristics, one does not usually center a meal around. One can argue that people eat regular pizza as the main food for a meal, rather than as a minor part of the meal or as a snack between main meals. So, indeed, this respondent treats pizza like bread, for any amount (see Am Mordechai, Berachot 25). Many distinguish between water vs. fruit juice based dough or treat the matter as a doubt to be avoided (see V'zot HaBeracha, p. 217).

In any case, according to the prevalent custom that pizza is phbbk, how much does one have to eat to require the halachot of bread? The Shulchan Aruch (OC 168:6) says that one has to eat the amount that most people consider having a meal. In another halachic context, the size of 3 or 4 eggs suffices. It is a question whether that suffices here or a full meal's worth is needed (the Mishna Berura 168:24 leaves the matter open). There is also a question whether in the meal discussed the phbbk by itself is filling, or whether it is sufficient for it to be a filling meal that is centered around the phbbk (Mishna Berura ibid.) Rav M. Feinstein (Igrot Moshe, OC III, 32) goes a step further, saying that nowadays, when bread's role in meals is less than it once was, even a small amount of phbbk in the

midst of a meal would require washing, Hamotzi, and Birkat Hamazon. Nevertheless, the most famous practice is that only two or perhaps three slices of average sized pizza are treated like bread.

Camels

2 species of camels - the one-hump camels are called Dromedary (remember which one has one hump by picturing the letter D lying on its back - one hump)... common to Africa and the Middle East... exported all over the world... much more common than two hump camels, which are called Bactrian (picture the letter B on its back - two humps)... native to the Gobi Desert in Mongolia. Aside from the obvious difference, Bactrian camels differ in a few other key ways... For example, the Bactrian camel grows a thick coat of hair each winter, which falls off every spring... to deal with the extreme variation of temperature in the Gobi desert... Bactrian camels are much more mild-mannered... It is possible to cross breed the two types, resulting in a camel with one really large hump. Humps store fat - not water. Can drink 100L in 10 minutes...

Chanuka: Spiritual Insurance Policy?

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

There is an interesting Talmudic passage in Tractate Shabbat (23:), "One who is careful about the Chanuka lights will have children who are talmidei chachamim (scholars)." Rashi explains this enigmatic passage by referring to the verse in Proverbs 6 which says: "a candle is a mitzva and the Torah is light." On the basis of the mitzva of the candles of Shabbat and Chanuka, the light of Torah will come. This explanation still leaves the passage unclear. We will come back to it.

Some of the laws of Chanuka also seem somewhat strange - e.g., even a poor person is required to light the Chanukiya, even if this entails begging from door to door to get enough money to purchase the oil. A question is asked: if a person can only afford to purchase either wine for Shabbat Kiddush or oil for his Chanukiya, which should he buy? The answer is that he should purchase the oil for Chanuka.

Why is there such a tremendous stress on the lighting of the Chanuka lights? How can it be that this simple mitzva should take precedence to buying wine for kiddush? And how can it be that by observing this mitzva, we can, in some way, guarantee that we will have worthy and learned children?

To answer these questions, we must face one very simple reality: lights burn out. It was a miracle that the oil

lasted for a week longer than expected. The Menora of the Temple had to be tended and refueled daily. When the little oil lasted for eight days, it was considered miraculous. This seems like such an obvious fact, but it often passes us by. The mitzva of Chanuka is so important because it reminds us of this elementary fact of life: We must constantly provide fuel if we expect lights to burn. And this fact is also true regarding the Light of Torah. Because whatever is true in the physical world is certainly true in the spiritual world. Chanuka teaches that in matters of spirituality there is no status quo. If we are not progressing spiritually, we are automatically regressing. This is what Shlomo HaMelech means in Mishlei: "the candle of G-d is the soul of the human being.) That just like a candle needs constant refueling in order to give light, so too the G-dly soul needs the constant light of Torah.

Chanuka is related to the word, chinuch - education, teaching, and dedication through understanding. Our existence as a people depends on chinuch - on education, on communicating our beliefs, observances, and feelings on a constant and continual basis.

Chanuka reminds us to light the candles; it reminds us that we must be involved daily in matters of spirit. Therefore the Talmud tells us that if we are careful in the mitzva of Chanuka, our children will be

scholars, will be worthy Jewish people. And perhaps the reason now becomes clear - because our children will understand what the meaning of total constant commitment to Torah is. For a candle is a mitzva, and the Torah is light. And as Rashi explains, on the basis of the mitzva of the candles of Shabbat and Chanuka, the light of Torah comes continuously into our homes. From these very elementary mitzvot, lighting candles, we come to the realization that we need a constant refueling of spirituality and mitzvot. Chanuka is related to chinuch – it is never too late to learn.

Parsha Points to Ponder

VAYISHLACH

1) Why does the Torah record that Yaakov was both AFRAID and DISTRESSED about Esav approaching (32:8)? What is added by that second word?

2) Why does Yaakov only mention G-D's promise to make the Jews like the sand when praying to G-D for salvation from Eisav and not the promise to make the Jews like the stars as well (32:13)?

3) Why does the Torah say AND YAAKOV'S SONS WERE TWELVE (35:22) and that Reuven was the first born (35:23), both points which are readily obvious from the list of twelve sons and from Reuven being listed first?

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

👉 Along with learning to appreciate value, we must learn to value appreciation.

From "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

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Rabbi Weinreb 's Weekly Column:

Parshat Vayishlach

Unheralded Heroes

You don't hear much about them, and sometimes you don't even know their names. But they are the true heroes and heroines in our lives and in our times.

As I hope to demonstrate, it was also true in biblical times that very important characters in the narrative are hardly mentioned, perhaps only hinted at.

I first became interested in this phenomenon shortly after the events of September 11, 2001. I was listening to one of my favorite radio talk shows while driving. The guest was a professor of sociology who was insisting, much to the chagrin of the talk show host, that the firemen who lost their lives saving others at the World Trade Center were not true heroes.

He maintained that a true hero does something very unusual, something neither he nor anyone else typically does. These firemen, he argued, were simply doing their duty. They showed up to work in the morning, went through their usual routine, and responded to this assignment as part of their job.

The announcer was horrified by this professor's opinion and pronounced it a typical example of "academic snobbery". My gut reaction was identical to the announcer's horror. Of course, those firemen were heroes,

great heroes. And they were heroes by virtue of the very fact that they carried out their life-saving duties with such astounding courage.

Continuing to drive, I began to reflect upon the question of the definition of "hero" in the Jewish tradition. From the Jewish perspective, is a hero some kind of Superman who behaves in some extraordinarily dramatic fashion? Or is the true hero the person who, day in and day out, does what is expected of him in a faithful and diligent manner, humbly and anonymously, never making the headlines?

My research soon convinced me that the latter definition was the accurate one from a Jewish point of view. He or she, who dutifully and loyally does his or her job, be it in the mundane or the sacred sphere, is the true hero or heroine.

As an example, let me introduce you to a personage who is mentioned in this week's Torah portion, Vayishlach, although even if you read the portion carefully, you may not have noticed her name. Her name was Devorah.

Open your Chumash with me and turn to B'reishit 35:8. Yaakov, his wives, and their many children have returned to the Land of Israel. They have reached Beit-El, Jacob's original starting point. Jacob erected an altar there.

And then we read: "And Devorah, Rivka's nurse, died and she was buried... under the oak, and it was called the 'Oak of Tears'".

Who was this woman, never mentioned by name before? Why did

her demise evoke such grief? Why is she important enough to "make it" into the biblical narrative?

Now turn back a few pages with me to B'reishit 24:59. Here we read that when Rivka left her birthplace to journey to the Land of Israel and marry Yitzchak, she took her nurse with her. A nurse with no name, whom we know nothing about until we learn of her death in this week's Torah portion.

Our rabbis speculate that nurse Devorah was a major part of the entire epic drama of Rivka's life with Yitzchak and Yaakov. They suggest that she was the one sent by Rivka to retrieve Yaakov from his long exile.

Our rabbis tell us, too, that she was nurse to Rivka's many grandchildren who shed those many tears under the old oak tree.

Jewish mystical sources even aver that nurse Devorah was reincarnated into the much later Devorah, who was a Judge and Prophet in Israel!

Devorah is an excellent example of someone who "just did her job", regularly and consistently, and who had an impact upon three generations of major biblical personalities, including a matriarch, two patriarchs, and the forbearers of the 12 tribes.

She exemplifies the type of person that the Talmud refers to when it asks: "Who deserves a place in the world to come", and answers: "He who slips in silently and slips out silently."

Rabbi Akiva, one of the great Jewish heroes and sages, taught us a similar

lesson. At a critical juncture in his life, he was inspired by the fact that a stone is impenetrable by ordinary means. But when a gentle waterfall drips upon stone for hundreds of years, it succeeds in boring a hole in stone. Quiet consistency and persistence are the true ingredients of heroism and strength.

In the Bible, as in all of life, there are major figures who work behind the scenes but who are indispensable to the important events of history. They are unheralded and often anonymous. They are real heroes too.

In the words of the poet John Keats, they are the children "of silence and slow time". They help us see the truth in that poet's exquisite words:

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard

Are sweeter."

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WISDOM & WIT
by Shmuel Himmelstein

With great help from Hashem, most of the students of the Mir Yeshiva managed to flee Eastern Europe during World War II and arrive in Shanghai. They remained there throughout the war years. While in Shanghai, their Torah learning was extraordinary, as they concentrated totally on it.

Some students, who found the Beis Midrash with its hundreds of students learning at the same time, to be a disturbing place, and opted to learn in the ladies' section (where women came to daven on Shabbos and Yom Tov).

When R' Chaim Shmulevitz, the Rosh Yeshiva, heard of this, he told the students involved: "When you learn with everyone else, you are part of the tzibur - the community - and a tzibur is judged as a whole by Hashem, with the weaker elements pulled up by the stronger ones. However, if you learn by yourselves you are judged individually, on your own merits, and then you need many more merits."



The Chafetz Chaim was once asked by his son, R' Aryeh Leib, why he was so utterly opposed to any honor of any time, when in the prayer for Rosh Chodesh we pray for "a life filled with happiness and honor."

The Chafetz Chaim answered: "My son, that is not the meaning of the words in that prayer. That prayer is a request from Hashem to grant honor to the Jewish people as a whole, and not to any individual. This is along the same lines as the prayer we say on Rosh HaShana, 'Hashem, grant honor to Your people,' and there we obviously don't understand it to mean honor to each individual."

CHIZUK AND IDUD

(for Olim & not-yet-Olim)

In this Parsha, Ya'akov returns to the land of Israel after a long stay outside the land. The Torah says in B'reishit 33:18, "And Ya'akov came complete (intact) to the city of Shechem... and he encamped opposite the city." The Talmud (Shabbat 33) teaches that Ya'akov's encampment opposite the city was productive in that he instituted coins, marketplaces and bathhouses. The next verses in the parsha teach that Ya'akov bought a portion of land and then built an altar to offer sacrifices to G-d. It is interesting to note that the first activities of Ya'akov in the land are seemingly physical mundane activities. Only after involvement in the mundane does he proceed to build an altar.

Ya'akov was not the first to enter the land of Israel via the city of Shechem. Avraham also first came into the land to Shechem (12:6), and so all of B'nei Yisrael in the times of Yehoshua came to Shechem shortly after entering the land.

Over the past 150 years, the land of Israel has received its children with open arms. Following in the footsteps of Ya'akov, his descendants first focused on building the physical aspects of the land of Israel. More recently, the land has seen a growth in the spiritual realm as well. May we continue to be involved in the development of the land, both in physical and in spiritual terms.

Avraham Hermon, Har Bracha

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

Machon Puah

The Rationale for Supervision

In the past few weeks we have reviewed halachic issues that arise as a result of an error made in the processing of genetic materials. This review was prompted by the heavily publicized tragic story of Sean and Carolyn Savage who were mistakenly impregnated with an embryo from another couple.

At the conclusion of the review we highlighted a case from Israel. That case bore remarkable similarities to the Savage case, with one exception: the error was caught by Puah's independent supervisor before the embryos could be implanted. Puah supervision has prevented dozens of other errors since its inception.

Twenty years ago, at the dawn of the invention of these types of fertility processes, Rav Menachem Burstein, the founder of the Puah Institute undertook the task of providing such supervision. He devised and refined a process to eliminate the risk of error to levels near zero, which we will review in greater detail in the coming weeks.

Halachic supervision is viewed as a means of verifying the "chain of possession" of genetic materials being processed for fertility purposes. Genetic materials are processed in fertility clinics and labs. The processes differ based on the nature of the treatment. Yet, ultimately, the

materials are reintroduced to the body for the purposes of conception of a child.

The initial need for supervision arose from the need to ensure that the materials being presented for processing were indeed the materials being returned, for halachic purposes. Verifying parentage has tremendous practical impacts upon a family. There is therefore a great need to protect the system from error.

Several years ago, a Dutch couple underwent a successful course IVF and were delighted to discover that they were having twins. However, everyone in the delivery room was shocked when one newborn had white skin while the other was black. An investigation discovered this couple had been implanted with embryos on the same day as another couple. The other couple was black. The investigation revealed that one of the twins was the genetic child of the second couple.

We do not know exactly when the mixup occurred. What we do know is that on that day, with all the safeguards that were present, at least one of the second couples' embryos were implanted in the wrong mother.

While the mistake was certainly inadvertent and clearly not done with any intent, the results of the mistake were clear for all to see. And it was only skin color that led to the revelation of this mistake.

It was precisely because of cases like this that many poskim initially forbade the use of any fertility treatments requiring the processing of genetic

materials. They felt that the potential for error was too great and that taking such a risk was not permissible without appropriate halachic supervision.

It should be understood at the outset that fertility clinics and laboratories strive to be extremely meticulous in their work. They take extraordinary care to prevent mistakes. We work with fertility medical professionals on a daily basis and can attest to their stringent protocols and sincere desire to ensure the integrity of the entire process. In fact, since their livelihood is dependent on their integrity, they extremely motivated to ensure that no errors occur.

However, even in an environment with the most strict guidelines and work protocols, human errors can and do occur. The vast majority of these cases go undetected and will never be discovered. Only in rare cases, ones in which either the baby is clearly not a product of its birth parents or there is a need for medical testing (perhaps for an illness), is the error uncovered. Those are the cases for which Puah supervision is perhaps the only effective measure of prevention.

Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Bamidbar Stories

I pray you, curse this people for me"

(Bamidbar 22:6){5} by Dr. Meir Tamari

"The people began to commit sexual immorality with the daughters of Moav. Then Israel attached itself closely to Baal Peor (Bamidbar 25:1-3).

Balak took Bil'am to 3 different places whose names each represented a different aspect of idolatry, and at each of them he built 7 altars to enable Bil'am to discover some weakness in Israel that would enable him to curse them. "In this, Balak showed himself to be like a doctor who fully understands the illness but lacks the skill or the instruments to operate. So he showed Bil'am, who had that skill, the place where to make the incision of his words" (Bamidbar Rabba). First, at Bamot-baal, worshiped as the source of fertility and material success, then at the Field of Tzofim, the pagan deity of spiritual power to cope with the future, and finally at the top of Peor, the god of sexual license whose role was to awaken man to the animal instincts that lie within him. When all failed, Bil'am departed from Balak, but first gave him advice on how to cause harm to Israel.

"Bil'am, the evil-one, said to Balak, 'The G-d of Israel abhors sexual license and immorality, yet know you that they hunger for food and drink but have known only the Manna and the water of the miraculous Well of Miriam. Go now and erect booths and tents, fill them with the daughters of Moav - even the daughters of your princes and nobles, and supply plenty of food and drinks. In that way they will adhere to

Baal Peor and G-d will punish them" (Avot d'Rabbi Natan).

"When Israel was satiated with the food and drink, the men went out to wander in the streets and markets. Balak had placed harlots in front of the stalls offering fine quality flaxen garments like those Israel had become accustomed to in Egypt. The older harlots purposely demanded full market prices while younger ones quoted lower prices for the same garments as an enticement. The Israelite men were happy with their bargains and so visited more regularly. This was repeated a number of times till the women said, 'after all, now you like one of us, come inside, choose whichever garment or jewelry you prefer, or perhaps partake of the good wine we have'. When their lusts were aroused by all this, the women refused them unless they worshiped Peor, whose worship was through defecation. When the men protested that they could not worship idols, the women argued successfully that after all defecation was merely the performance of the natural bodily functions, and so the men were convinced to enter idolatry" (Sanhedrin 106a).

"And Israel settled in Shittim': Filled with all the blessings they had received - the Manna that fed them, the waters that rose up to quench their thirst, the clouds of Glory that encompassed them, and all their enemies destroyed before them, even Bil'am's curses turned into brachot -- they become

proud and arrogant. Their minds turned to immorality and licentiousness. 'And the people became attached to Baal Peor'" (Midrash Aggada). Jewish history is replete with examples of how when physical persecution, material oppression, and religious intolerance failed to uproot us, the advice of Bil'am to harm Israel through licentiousness and assimilation, has succeeded. Regarding Israel in Egypt, the archetype of Jewish exile and persecution, the Torah tells us that, the more they oppressed them, the more they flourished (Sh'mot 1:12); Babylon and Rome destroyed our temples and drove us into exile, yet we continue to exist as a people and to achieve great things, both material and spiritual; generations of pogroms, forced wanderings and inquisitions have failed to destroy the House of Israel. Yet whenever, the ghetto walls have been removed, wherever we have enjoyed toleration and equality, and whenever we have mixed freely with the nations, assimilation and intermarriage have followed.

There are two halachic ways that have been introduced to combat the dangers of Shitim in our daily modern lives. One of them forbids the food and drink of non-Jews to us, over and above the questions of kashrut. "Their food is forbidden because of their wine and both are forbidden because of their daughters. Food and drink are conducive to friendship and social intercourse but lead finally to intermarriage" (Aruch HaShulchan 112). The second set of halachot cautions us against adopting gentile customs and patterns of behavior. "One may not adopt the traditions and edicts of idolaters, nor be similar to them in dress and hair style

etc. Israel should be separate from them in these things just as they differ from them in their thoughts and their convictions" (Hilchot Avodat Kochavim 11:1). The modern Jew, even in the Jewish State of Israel, is constantly faced with these challenges of preserving a specific independent Jewish value system and patterns of thought, while being involved in and a part of the open societies in which we live.

"As they came to Baal-Peor, they became devoted to the shameful thing [idolatry] and became detestable like that which they loved" (Hoshea 9:10); the objection to idolatry is not theological but to the immorality and low ethical standards that flow from it. The worship of Peor enshrined the animal functioning of human beings, making them merely part of the natural cycle. This deprived them ultimately of the special role devolving on them as that which is created "in G-d's Image, and thereby of the possibility of ethical and moral greatness inherent therein. There is more than just an element of such thinking in the despair, hopelessness and anarchism of modernism. "A nation can be blessed with all the physical and material wealth it desires [Bamot Baal], as well as with all the spiritual-religious gifts needed [S'de Tzofim] and yet be hastening to its ruin through the cancer of immorality, the shameless giving oneself to the dissolute debauchery of Peor. This is the cult which turns the most animal side of mankind into gods, saying to Man, Why do you dream of decency, idealism and a higher calling when your own alimentary system shows you that you are no better than an animal and no more designed for higher ideals" (S. R. Hirsch).

TTTRIDDLES

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

Last issue's (VAYEITZEI) TTriddles:

[1] Paris street named for Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was many things - printer, writer, inventor, scientist, and diplomat. "In 1776 he went to France to seek aid for the American Revolution. Lionized by the French, he negotiated a treaty that provided loans and military support for the U.S." (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia). A street that might have been named for him could conceivably be called RUE BEN, as a sound alike (okay, sound similar) to REUVEN, Yaakov's b'chor.

[2] Apparently, she didn't show

Kind of straightforward as TTriddles go. VATAHAR LE'AH VATEILED BEN... And Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son... Rashi points out that the verb VATAHAR is used for all of the births of Leah, Bilha, and Rachel - but not for Zilpa's two sons. The Torah only says, VATEILED, and she gave birth. Rashi basically says the equivalent of "apparently, she didn't show." He says that she was the youngest of the mothers and her pregnancy was not noticed. Rashi further tells us that Lavan purposely gave the younger handmaiden to Leah to not make Yaakov suspicious about Lavan having switched Leah for Rachel.

[3] what, angels, G-d, and I?

This TTriddle is a reaction to the preponderance of the word V'HINEI in the description of Yaakov's dream. V'HINEI, and behold! -- a ladder... V'HINEI angels were ascending and descending... V'HINEI HaShem was standing over him... V'HINEI ANOCHI, I (HaShem) will guard you wherever you go.

[4] Came true sort of, 86 p'sukim later

B'reishit 28:14 says, "...and you shall spread out

powerfully to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." UFARATZTA (with the accent on the TA, not on RATZ as the song would have us believe) - and you shall spread out. 86 p'sukim later brings us to B'reishit 30:43 - VAYIFROTZ HA'ISH M'OD M'OD... The man became exceedingly wealthy (his wealth spread out). Semantically, VAYIFROTZ is a fulfillment of UFARATZTA. Not really, but TTriddly.

[5] to... Chava, Avra(ha)m, Yitzchak, Lavan, each other. What and who?

WHAT DID YOU DO!?! MA ZOT ASIT(A)? G-d asked Chava after she ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Par'o (an earlier one than the one we know from our sojourn in Egypt) challenged Avraham (then still called Avram), when Avraham and Sarah presented themselves as siblings. Similarly, Avimelech confronted Yitzchak with the same tone of righteous indignation. And Yaakov confronted Lavan when he discovered that he had married Leah rather than his beloved Rachel.

[6] Mothers 1 & 3; mother of other twins

Mothers - as in our IMAHOT - are Sara, Rivka, Rachel, and Leah. Who knows four? We know four... Mothers 1 and 3 are Sara Imeinu and Rivka Imeinu. The mother of the other twins - Yaakov and Eisav being "the twins" and Peretz and Zerach being "the other twins" - was Tamar. These three women are described in the Torah as being Y'FAT MAR'EH. There are other phrases that are used to describe a person's beauty, but Y'FAT MAR'EH is used only with these three. OOPS! This TTriddle is invalid since we mixed up the two Tamars. The one called Y'FAT MAR'EH is from Sh'muel Bet, daughter of Avshalom. She is named for Avshalom's sister Tamar, a daughter of David HaMelech.

[7] flocks is to the mother as what is to what?

The key to this TTriddle is the verb ROVEITZ, meaning "to stretch oneself out, to lie down (said of an animal)". In Vayeitzei, we find three flocks

"hanging out" near a well waiting for the shepherds to gather and remove the stone covering the well. In Parshat Ki Teitzei we find the mitzva of SHILU'ACH HAKEN, which involves a mother bird staying close by her nest - under such circumstances, it is forbidden to take the eggs or fledglings with or without the mother bird.

KOL HAKAVOD to master TTriddle HC for his almost perfect set of solutions to this week's TTriddles.

Note to Treaders: Even if you solve one TTriddle, you might still be eligible to win a CD. Send your solution(s) to tt@ou.org

One more comment on **HAT-TRICK** (see box on previous page):

It seems that in the 1940s, there was a hat company that offered a free hat to an ice hockey player who scored three goals in one game. Hence, a hat-trick. Fans liked the idea so much that they would throw their hats on the ice when a player scored a third goal of a game. The use of the term in cricket is probably older, with a similar story behind it.

Clarification: People have been asking what a hat trick is. It is three goals scored by one player in one game, as in ice hockey. Also three wickets taken in cricket by a bowler in three consecutive balls or three consecutive wins or outstanding accomplishments by the same individual, such as a jockey in horse racing.

In the case of last week's triple mazal tovs, a hat trick referred to the births of 3 sons to 3 daughters of 3 brothers. (It took four days rather than 3, but it's still worthy of the name hat trick.) The three neonates are Moshe, Nadav, and Elad Zamir. Welcome to the world, guys. Be kind to your parents.

RAKEL BERENBAUM'S PORTION OF THE PORTION

FEEDback to
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THE PRESENT

The story is told that when the Vilna Gaon was only four years old he was asked where there is a verse with eight words in a row where the words end with a MEM SOFIT, the final letter MEM. He thought a moment and then recited verse 32:15 from our portion: IZIM MATAYIM UTYASHIM ESRIM, R'CHEILIM MATAYIM V'EILIM ESRIM.

We may not be as well versed in the Torah as the Vilna Gaon, but we can notice some interesting things about the verses related to the gifts of appeasement that Yaakov prepares, on his return from Lavan's house, to give to his brother Eisav. "200 female goats (nanny goats), 20 male goats (billy goats), 200 ewes (female sheep), 20 rams (male sheep), 30 nursing camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys (jennies) and 10 male donkeys (jacks)" (32:15-16).

Is this a random group of animals that Yaakov collected in haste - HABA B'YADO - or is there a thought out reason for each detail of the gift? Why does the Torah elaborate the number of animals that Yaakov sends, and the type of animals he sends? Wouldn't it have been enough to say that he sent a present to his brother? Also is there any significance in the types of animals that he sent and in the order that they are listed? For example in all other places the K'VASIM are listed before

IZIM, but here it is the opposite - why? Why aren't there the same number of male animals as female ones? Why are the camels listed with their young and not with the males? Why are the animals listed in this order?

Many things can be learned from this seemingly mundane list of animals. For example, OZNAYIM LATORAH says that Yaakov sent the camels with their children to awaken in Eisav a bit of RACHAMIM, mercy. Seeing a baby animal nursing from his mother awakens a feeling of mercy in most people. Yaakov hoped it would work on Eisav as well.

But the nicest thing I found was in the writings of Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburg. Rashi on verse 15 brings the Midrash that states that the Rabbis learned from here specific laws relating to the conjugal obligations of husbands towards their wives. Rabbi Ginsburg, in his unique fashion of connecting words and citing gematriyot he finds a connection with a verse in D'varim (1:13), HAVU LACHEM ANASHIM CHACHOMIM UNVONIM VIDUIM L'SHIVTEICHEM VAASIMEIM B'RO-SHEICHEM - Designate for yourselves men who are wise, understanding, and known to your tribes and I will appoint them as leaders." This verse also has eight words in a row that end with the final letter MEM. Rabbi Ginsburg learn from here that if a man is careful with regards to his wife's conjugal rights and Shalom Bayit permeates the home, then the couple will be blessed with children who are "wise, understanding and known to your tribes - and appointed as leaders."

If you too would like to become "men (or women) who are wise, under-

standing, etc. follow these links:

www.melabev.org/posts/109
www.melabev.org/posts/170
www.melabev.org/posts/59 .

Since one of the animals in the present was lamb – here is a recipe for lamb using mangos that are still in season.

LAMB AND MANGO KABOBS

450g lamb, cubed
¼ cup (60 ml) hoisin sauce
2 Tbsp soy sauce
2 Tbsp wine vinegar
2 Tbsp oil
2 tsp. grated fresh ginger
1-2 large mangos
skewers soaked in water

Make a marinade by combining sauces, vinegar, oil and ginger. Add lamb cubes and marinate overnight in the fridge or at least four hours.

Put wooden skewers in water to soak. Cube mangoes to same size as lamb cubes. Alternate lamb and mango cubes on skewers.

Grill until lamb is tender and golden brown, basting with marinade as needed to keep moist.

Served with pita bread, couscous or rice, salad and white wine.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 501

Promises regarding the marriage

Very often there are agreements between the two sides to the wedding regarding moneys.

The bride's father promised a sum of money to the future son-in-law and the father went overseas before delivering the money. Or the father does not have the money. The bride can say to her husband, "I was not the one who made the commitment to give you the money. Either divorce me from the betrothal without the money or forget about the money."

However, if it was the bride who made the promise that she would give him a sum of money and she does not have such money to give to him, she remains betrothed to him until she obtains such a sum of money or until either she or her husband dies -- unless her husband forgives the promises. This last law applies if she was an adult when she made the promise. But if she was a minor when she made the promise, the husband must divorce her if he insists on the money or waive the right to claim the money from her. These laws apply if the wife does not have the means to fulfill her father's promise. But if she has the means to fulfill her father's promise she must make good the amount to her husband. She does not have the option to tell her husband release me from the promise or marry me without the sum.

All this holds true if they are not yet married. But once they are married he must fulfill all of the obligations of husband to a wife.

If a man promised money to the husband he cannot claim that he gave the promised money to his daughter without the knowledge of his son-in-law.

If a father promised money to his daughter who is about to get married, the obligation is not there until she gets married. The same holds true if the father promised money to his son if he gets married, the sum is not payable until the son gets married. These promises are all made in anticipation of the marriage of the child. Therefore if man promises a sum of money to his future son-in-law and the son-in-law dies before he gave it to him and the daughter is now bound to the dead husband's brother through yibum, the father does not have to give the promised money to the brother.

A man instructed his family to give a sum of money to his daughter for her sustenance such as to purchase real estate with the money, and the man died and the money had been deposited with a third party and the daughter instructed the third party to give the money to her husband, if she was an adult when she made the statement and married, her words are to be followed. But if she was a minor, the father of the bride will be listened to as to the disposal of the money.

The halacha provides certain minimum payments that a father must provide to his daughter who is getting married. If he is

poor, this includes garments necessary for a girl who is provided for by the community. If he is wealthy he must give to her what a wealthy man gives to a daughter who is about to get married.

If a man makes a wedding for his grown son in a house belonging to the father, the house is considered to be given to the son as a gift. This is only if this is the son's first marriage. Also provided that the father did not marry off a son prior to this marriage. Also provided that the father took out of the house every item belonging to him; but if he left some items belonging to him, the son does not get the house as a gift. There is also a holding that this holds true if the son marries a girl never married before and the father has a place to live. If the father told his son he is giving to him the house and all of its belongings, and the father has in the house any item that still belongs to him, there is not a gift of the house to the son, but the belongings in the house belong to the son.

If the father set aside the house and the attic, the house belongs to the son but the attic still belongs to the father. The same holds true if the father told the son he is to have the house and the porch, the house belongs to the son but the porch belongs to the father.


If there were several houses that the father owned and he told the son the house belongs to you, if one is the house where the wedding took place, that is the house that belongs to the son.


In all of these situations I have cited the halacha as it appears in the Shulhan Aruch which takes the halacha as it appears in the Talmud. The times and circumstances have changed and nowadays many of these laws will not apply. The community practice will be followed


if there is no better agreement between the father and his son regarding the property. Nowadays ownership of real estate is often determined by the person named in the deed to the real estate. I have set forth these laws so that the reader will have an idea what they were in prior times when the practice was to follow the laws as pronounced in Talmudic times. Nowadays, a lawyer should always be consulted when dealing with real estate transfers since every community has its own laws and practices regarding transfers of property. A mistake in following the law of the land can prohibit or complicate the chain of title to the real estate so that future owners will not be able to transfer or perhaps build upon the property if these matters are not cleared up. Very often these things are expensive to clear up.


I have attempted to show what the topics of gifts to the persons about to be married were in times past. In my personal life both as an attorney and rabbi I have sat in on many conferences dealing with these problems of gifts to a lady and man who are about to get married. Also after a few years of marriage, if it does not work out one of the spouses may end up with a sizeable piece of real estate that he or she got from the parents of the spouse who is now being divorced. These are areas that one should consult with a lawyer and the rabbi of the parents and agreements should be drawn up setting forth the intentions of the parties. Very often a pre-nuptial agreement can incorporate the terms of the parties and their intentions. Since real estate is generally expensive and future recollections of what was said or intended is very hard to reconstruct, agreements, if properly drawn can save much heartache and expense at a future date.


ParshaPix explanations


 Silhouettes of the animals Yaakov sent as gifts to Eisav. Each animal has the number of males and females sent. The second 30 on the camel is not mentioned in the text, but is based on Rashi, that there were an equal number of males that accompanied the "nursing camels".


 The ribbon bow among the silhouettes represents the fact that the animals were a gift to Eisav.


 The two ancient-looking jugs are the small vessels that Yaakov went back for after he brought his family across the YABOK river.


 Between the SOLD sign and the tree is the emblem of the WWF (World Wrestling Federation). We do not know if Yaakov and/or the Guardian Angel of Eisav were members, but...

 The SOLD sign over the FOR SALE sign is for the purchase of the land in the Sh'chem area by Yaakov Avinu for 100 K'sita.


 D'vora (the bee)... Rivka's nurse was buried under the "crying tree".


 The baby carriage is for Binyamin, the "sabara" among Yaakov's children.


 The sword was used by Shimon and Levi to avenge what happened to Dina.


 The die with six dots, for the six dots over VAYISHAKEINU. This was a former visual TTriddle. Now that you know the answer, show it to your children and guests and


see if they can figure it out. Give hints as necessary.


 A soda can with a straw and a knife with a blade. Forget the can. It's the STRAW we're after. And the BLADE of the knife. KASH and LEHAVA. As in the pasuk from the haftara that compares Beit Eisav to straw and Beit Yosef to the flame of the fire that is Beit Yaakov.

 Concerning the dots above the letters of VAYISHAKEIHU, the Midrash says that Eisav wanted to kill Yaakov, not with arrow or sword but with his mouth and teeth (and to drink his blood). He attempted to bite Yaakov's neck during the hug and "kiss" and Yaakov's neck changed to resemble a pillar of marble. There is the pillar of marble in front of the camel.

 The horned animal grazing in the ParshaPix is an addax, known in Hebrew as DISHON, also the name of one of the ALUFIM of SEI'IR.


 Of course, the building of the Sukka in the PP represents Yaakov building sukkot for his flocks and naming the place where he did it Sukkot (B'reishit 33:17).


 On the right in front of the donkey is a picture of BELA LUGOSI (who played Dracula), a namesake of BELA, a king of Edom. BELA was also the name of a king of S'dom.


 The flag in the upper-left corner is that of Yemen, known as TEIMAN in Hebrew, first named son of ELIFAZ, son of Eisav.

 And in the lower-left is an image

of Kever Rachel - but you know that.

 The kaffiya-clad, mustached actor towards the middle of the ParshaPix is Omar Sharif. Omar in the sedra is a grandson of Eisav's, a son of Elifaz, a brother of Amalek.

 At the bottom of the PP, between the die and the carriage is ALVIN the mischievous, singing chipmunk. His counterpart in the sedra is ALVAN (close), grandson of SEI'IR, a CHORI whose land was taken over by Eisav and whose people were assimilated into Eisav's people, to the point that SEI'IR becomes synonymous with EDOM.

 Bottom-left is 999 kilo, which is almost a metric ton, but not quite. We can say that it is LO-TON or LOTAN, a son of SEI'IR the CHORI.

Its final letters are delicious

Her half-brother infused with G-d

Don, Zevulun, and Naftali are doubly a part of this

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) Da'at Zekainim MiBaalei HaTosfot explain that the second word actually describes Yaakov's reaction to the fact that he was afraid. He was distressed over the fact that he feared Eisav despite G-D's promises that he would be fine.

2) The Kli Yakar answers that the Jews as the stars connotes their truly shining and ruling over others. The sand represents the ability to stop the crashing waves from ruining the land. In this instance, Yaakov simply wanted G-D to protect him from Eisav and nothing more so he focused on the symbolism of that aspect of G-D's protection which is sand.

3) The Ohr HaChayim teaches that G-D put these words immediately after the description of Reuven's sin to make it absolutely clear that he did not actually have an immoral encounter with Bilha and that it means something else. Had he had such an encounter he certainly would have been banished from being part of Yaakov's family thus leaving eleven sons and he certainly would not have been called the prestigious first born.