



## Lead Tidbit cont. from front page

Yes, there are differences, but there is one glaring common feature to all the splits were suffer from - the two-letter abbreviation, vs. Versus. One against the other. That's the common problem we face regardless of who are on the two sides of the vs. Whether it is Yosef HaTzadik and Shivtei Kah or whether it is a pair of polar-opposite Jewish groups.

Differences of opinion don't hurt us, per se. It is the way the differences are acted upon that is devastating to us and our vital need of Jewish Unity.

The solution is not tossing our brothers into a pit or selling them to a passing caravan. Nor is the solution a weekly violent protest that desecrates the Shabbat more damagingly than does the protestee. Nor is the solution to bury converts on the other side of a cemetery fence. Nor is the solution the perpetuation of SIN'AT CHINAM that destroyed the Beit HaMikdash and keeps us in an obscenely long exile.

Negative, negative, negative. So what's THE solution?

It starts with an important distinction that is sadly too often forgotten. Rabbi Eliezer Melamed in his works called Peninei Halacha said it well when he describes the continuing battles of the Chashnona'im after the Chanuka story, as being against the Yevanim and Hityavnut. Look at his distinction. The enemy on the outside are the Yevanim. But the internal enemy is

Hellenism, not the Hellenists.

Rabbi Zev Leff points to the ending of the bracha in the weekday Amida of V'LAMALSHINIM. We describe G-d as a SHOVEIR O-Y'VIM, the One who breaks the enemy, but UMACHNI'A ZEIDIM, One who humbles the arrogant. Not destroys the arrogant; humbles them.

The ZEIDIM are fellow Jews, whom we would like to teach and inspire towards Torah, its values, its observance. We want to draw them near, by showing them the beauty and pleasantness of the ways of the Torah. This involves their being humbled from their arrogant abandonment or distortion of Torah - not, G-d forbid, their demise or even their forced submission.

Ahavat HaShem, Ahavat Torah, and Ahavat Yisrael are potent and powerful and we must use them well.

### WORD of the MONTH cont. from p.2

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

### צום עשירי - עשרה בטבת

marks the beginning of the siege around Yerushalayim prior to the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash - as such, it marks the beginning of all Churban and Exile.

**Fast begins Sun. Dec. 27, 5:20am**  
**Fast ends at 5:12pm**

This Shabbat is the 99th day (of 355), 15th Shabbat (of 51) of 5770

וַיִּדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי אֱלֹהֵי ה' מִקְדָּשׁ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל... הפטרת ויגש

## Vayigash STATS

11th of 54 sedras; 11th of 12 in B'reishit

Written on 178.07 lines in a Torah, ranks 34

Vayigash is composed of 3 parshiyot, all closed, one VERY closed. Actually, Vayigash has only 2.89 parshiot; it ends after 34 p'sukim of a 38-pasuk parsha; Vayigash is the only sedra that does not end with a parsha break. (This shows up in a Chumash by there not being a PEI-PEI-PEI or SAMACH-SAMACH-SAMACH between Vayigash and Vaychi.)

106 p'sukim - ranks 28; tied with To'l'dot and Bo. Actually it is considerably smaller than Bo, and a bit larger than To'l'dot

1480 words - 30th; 5680 letters - 29th

9th (of 12) in B'reishit in all 3 categories

## MITZVOT

None of the 613 mitzvot are found in Vayigash

## Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[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 13 p'sukim - 44:18-30

[S> 44:18 (52)] The sedra begins with the dramatic confrontation between Yehuda and Yosef. Yehuda risks his life when he approaches the "Egyptian leader" in an attempt to save Binyamin. The first Aliya ends with the emotion-filled description by Yehuda of the feelings between Yaakov and Binyamin - "V'nafsho k'shura v'nafsho", and his soul is bound with his soul.

**SDT** *Yehuda confronted the as-yet-unrevealed Yosef as an equal, It can be said, that whenever one approaches a confrontational situation, it is best to think in terms of facing one's adversary on equal footing. Thinking oneself inferior will often create a self-fulfilling disadvantage. One will tend not to fight with sufficient determination because of the expectation of defeat. Feeling superior to one's adversary will often lead to over-confidence. Remember not to under-estimate your enemy... or yourself.*

The Torah notes on the opening words of the sedra explain what was going on. KADMA V'AZLA R'VI'I, ZARKA MUNACH SEGOL (see top row of the PP p.2). The 4th (son) went forward (to confront Yosef), because he had thrown away his place among the Chosen (Nation) (by guaranteeing the safe return of Binyamin) - attributed to the GR"A

**SDT** *The Alshich asks: At the end of Parshat Mikeitz, Yehuda is completely resigned to his (and his brothers') fate. The Egyptian ruler has accused them of stealing his special chalice. Yehuda offers that the one in whose possession the cup is found shall be put to death and that the others would be slaves. When the cup is "found" in Binyamin's possession, Yehuda meekly submits (to the slavery suggestion). Yosef (as yet unrevealed) nobly refuses Yehuda's offer and announces that he will take only the "culprit" as a slave - the rest are free to return in peace to their father. That is the "cliff-hanger" ending of Mikeitz. At the beginning of Vayigash, Yehuda changes from the lamb awaiting slaughter, to the lion that becomes the hallmark of his tribe, risking his life in his confrontation with the enigmatic Egyptian leader. What caused the change in Yehuda's demeanor?*

*The Alshich answers brilliantly: As long as Yehuda expected all the brothers to be enslaved, he viewed the events as G-d's punishment for the sale of Yosef. This he could and would accept. When it turned out that only Binyamin would be enslaved - the only one not involved in Mechirat Yosef, Yehuda realized that this was not punishment for what they had done. Now his protective instincts and his promise to Yaakov take over. Yehuda boldly faces this "Egyptian" at the beginning of Vayigash and is prepared to risk all to save Binyamin.*

Yosef heard his father referred to as "your servant - my father" ten times (5 from Yehuda and another 5 from the interpreter) and he did not object and/or reveal his identity to prevent the humiliation of his father. For this, commentators say, Yosef lost 10 years of life and died

at 110, a younger age than any of his brothers.

**SDT** *Chassdic masters see a "layer of messages" for us beneath the wording of Yehuda's plea. "...and (if) he leaves his father, he will die." If a person abandons his Father (G-d), forsakes the Torah, then he will die a spiritual death.*

Ever notice that when Yosef intere-gated the Brothers, he asked them if they had a father or brother. Not if they had a mother. Baal HaTurim says it was because he knew that their (and his) mother had already died. Let's call this even a sub-con-scious omission. The Torah tells us of Rachel's passing. According to Tradition, Leah died about six years after Rachel did. By the time of the sale of Yosef, both were long gone.

**Here's a thought...** When they were younger, and when they perceived that Yaakov loved Yosef above all, the brothers were dangerously jealous. Here, Yehuda speaks of the special love bond between Yaakov and Binyamin, and does not seem to be jealous, but rather protective (and fond) of the other son of Rachel - Yehuda's mother's rival. T'shuva? Maturity?

## **Levi - Second Aliya** **11 p'sukim - 44:31-45:7**

Yehuda tells Yosef that Yaakov is likely to die if the brothers return without Binyamin. He adds that he has personally guaranteed Binyamin's return and "how can I return to my father without the lad..." (Remember that Yehuda had previously returned to his father

without the other lad, Yosef. The current situation with Binyamin is Yehuda's opportunity for complete repentance for what he had done to Yosef.)

Yosef cannot contain himself any longer and orders the room cleared of all "outsiders". He bursts with emotion and announces to his dumb-struck brothers that he is Yosef. Immediately, Yosef asks, "Is my father still alive?" Yosef repeats his shocking revelation, with details, so the brothers will believe what they are hearing. He then admonishes them not to be angry with each other, since it was G-d's plan that should be properly positioned to save his family from the famine.

**SDT** *Torah T'mima (the original TT) brings the Gemara in Chagiga in the name of Rabbi Elazar who makes the following powerful observation: If the children of Israel were not able to respond to Yosef's short statement of reproach, imagine how much more so it will be difficult for us to respond to G-d's reproach for the myriad wrong- doings as individuals and as a community.*

The sale of Yosef was a monstrous sin, regardless of how G-d planned things to turn out. The Midrash says: G-d said to the People of Israel - You sold your brother into slavery. I swear by your lives that every year you will say, AVADIM HAYINU L'FAR'O B'MITZRAYIM, we were slaves to Par'o in Egypt.

**SDT** *When Yosef finally reveals himself to his brothers, he makes the following*

*compound statement: "I am Yosef - Is my father still alive?" Many commentaries ask why Yosef would ask that question in this way and at this dramatic moment - especially since he has been hearing about Yaakov from the brothers all along.*

*Some see in it a short but powerful reproach to the brothers, as if to say, "is it possible that my father can still be alive after what you've put him through?" If this is indeed the meaning of his question, then Yosef too must bear some of the burden and shame, since he also caused Yaakov suffering by not having communicated with him that he was alive during his years as prime minister in Egypt. (Although there are various reasons given in the sources as to why Yosef did not inform Yaakov of his well-being, it is difficult not to throw some criticism in Yosef's direction.)*

*Another interpretation suggests that Yosef might have assumed that his brothers had been lying to him about their father. They might have told him that Yaakov was alive to elicit sympathy, but he might have been dead. Therefore, now that he has told his brothers who he really is, Yosef asks the most important question on his mind - Is my father really still alive?*

## **Shlishi - Third Aliya** **20 p'sukim - 45:8-27**

Yosef again tells the brothers that it wasn't they who sent him to Egypt, but rather it was G-d. He then sends them to bring their father down to Egypt (to Goshen) where the family will be well-cared for during the remaining

years of the famine. The brothers embrace and cry. Only then are the brothers able to talk to Yosef.

Meanwhile, Par'o becomes aware of the reunion and offers his generous hospitality to the family. Yosef gives his brothers clothing, but gives Binyamin even more (specifically, 5 sets of clothing and 300 silver pieces).

**Observation...** Notice that once again a son of Rachel is being favored by being given a special garment. The first time, the results were disastrous for Yosef and his brothers. Why would Yosef even consider doing this?

The "solution" to the problem of the brothers is not reached by avoiding difficult situations. If there is true repentance, then the brothers can be given the exact circumstances to show their change of heart. Seeing things in a proper perspective, the extra gifts to Binyamin do not evoke the jealousy of the brothers; they have repented.

This same idea can be seen in Vaychi. Yaakov favors Efrayim over Menashe. This time, Yosef gets very upset. Again we can say that the idea is not to avoid anything that would make one brother jealous, the other arrogant. Menashe and Efrayim showed praiseworthy characteristics in the way they handled their different statuses. This is one of the reasons that we bless our sons, "may G-d make you like Efrayim and like Menashe..."

The pillars of Vayigash & Ruth

A parent has two tasks in this respect. First, he/she should try to avoid situations that create unhealthy jealousy among the children. Second, a parent must educate his/her children to deal with those situations that do arise that can cause bad feelings between siblings.

Yosef sends his brothers back to Yaakov with wagons (which is a personal coded message between son and father based on the topic they were studying at the time of the Sale of Yosef) and gifts. The brothers tell Yaakov all that has happened. He refuses to believe that Yosef is really alive, until he sees the wagons. Yaakov's spirit is revived.

## R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 8 p'sukim - 45:28-46:7

Yaakov tells his sons to hurry with their preparations so that he can get to see Yosef before he (Yaakov) dies. On the way to Egypt, they stop at Be'er Sheva where Yaakov offers sacrifices to G-d. G-d appears to him and assures him that He will protect him and accompany him on his sojourn. The family continues its trip and arrives in Goshen.

Rashi points out that G-d promised that Yaakov would be brought back to Eretz Yisrael for burial. The promise of becoming a great nation was not enough to calm Yaakov.

**SDT** *In explanation of why Yosef never communicated with his father in all the years of separation, one commentary suggests that had Yaakov known about the sale of Yosef, he would have considered his sons in violation of the Torah's prohibition against kidnapping. Therefore, Yosef did not tell his father what had happened. There are other explanations, as well.*

## Chamishi 5th Aliya 20 p'sukim - 46:8-27

[S> 46:8 (20)] The Torah now lists the names of the "70 souls" (including Yosef and his sons) who went down to Egypt with Yaakov. (The seed is planted; the harvest many years hence will be the Nation of Israel.)

## The Seventy Souls...

Note the atypical mention (and counting) of female offspring - Yaakov's daughter Dina (from Leah) and Serach the daughter of Asher. Tradition attributes to Serach great longevity - she was the oldest person to leave Egypt, giving her the unique status as an eyewitness to the entire Egyptian experience. (Perhaps Yocheved also qualifies.)

Notice the label of B'CHOR (first-born) for Reuven, here and in other places in the Torah. Although Levi, Yehuda, and Yosef each ended up with a "feature" that we would identify with the firstborn, these roles being taken away from Reuven because of his shortcomings, he nonetheless is repeatedly identified as Yaakov's B'CHOR.

**Reuven** (1) and his sons **Chanoch** (2), **Palu** (3), **Chetzron** (4), **Carmi** (5);

**Shimon** (6) and his sons **Y'mu'el** (7), **Yamin** (8), **Ohad** (9), **Yachin** (10), **Tzochar** (11), **Shaul** (12); (Rashi says that Shaul was Dina's child from Sh'chem, raised by Shimon as his own);

**Levi** (13) and his sons **Gershon** (14), **K'hat** (15), **M'rari** (16);

**Yehuda** (17) and his sons **Eir** and **Onan** (both of whom who died in Canaan, but are mentioned here, though not counted among the 70), **Sheila** (18), **Peretz** (19), **Zerach** (20), and Peretz's sons **Chetzron** (21), **Chamul** (22);

**Yissachar** (23) and his sons **Tola** (24), **Puva** (25), **Yov** (26), **Shimron** (27);

**Z'vulun** (28) and his sons **Sered** (29), **Eilon** (30), **Yachl'eil** (31);

These are Leah's children plus **Dina** (32).

The Torah says the total from Leah is 33. Rashi says that the 33rd of Leah's "children" is **Yocheved** (33), daughter of Levi, who was born as they entered Egypt (or conceived in Eretz Yisrael and born in Egypt, hence, "brought down" to Egypt). That's 33 souls from Leah.

**Gad** (34) and his sons **Tzifyon** (35), **Chagi** (36), **Shuni** (37), **Etzbon** (38), **Eiri** (39), **Arodi** (40), **Areili** (41);

**Asher** (42) and his children **Yimna** (43), **Yishva** (44), **Yishvi** (45), **B'ri'a** (46), their sister **Serach** (47), and the sons of B'ri'a, **Chever** (48), **Malki'el** (49);

The souls from Zilpa are 16.

**Yosef** (50) and **Binyamin** (51);

Yosef's sons who were born in Egypt

(they are nonetheless included in the 70 Souls) from A-s'nat - **Menashe** (52), **Efrayim** (53);

Binyamin's sons **Bela** (54), **Becher** (55), **Ashbel** (56), **Geira** (57), **Naaman** (58), **Eichi** (59), **Rosh** (60), **Mupim** (61), **Chupim** (62), **Ard** (63)

Souls descendent from Rachel are 14.

**Dan** (64) and his son(s) **Chushim** (65); Dan's one son is called B'NEI, plural. The Gemara explains the use of the plural as a glimpse into the future of a large tribe that descended from Dan.

**Naftali** (66) and his sons **Yachtz'eil** (67), **Guni** (68), **Yeitzer** (69), **Shileim** (70);

Those descendant from Bilha are 7.

The Torah's total is 66 who went down to Egypt (actually 67 counting Yocheved) and Yosef and his sons who were already in Egypt, bring the total - not counting daughters-in-law - to 70.

Remember that the "whole world" that came from No'ach was 70 (nations). We now find the same number in Yaakov's descendants. Their 70 became the Nations of the World. Our 70 became the Jewish People.

Another possibility for the "missing" person: Count Yaakov among the 70 souls and not Yocheved? Total is still 70 with all the names actually mentioned in the text. (But then Yaakov would be part of the Leah sub-total.)

## **Shishi** - Sixth Aliya 17 p'sukim - 46:28-47:10

**[S> 46:28 (34)]** Yaakov sends Yehuda ahead, to complete preparations for the family's descent into Egypt. Yosef sends a royal chariot for his father.

When Yaakov and Yosef meet, Yosef embraces Yaakov and cries.

Yosef then prepares (some of) his brothers to meet Par'o. It is a sensitive issue because Yaakov and family are shepherds (sheep being the deity of Egypt). Yosef presents his father and five of his brothers to Par'o. Par'o again offers the best of the land to Yosef's family. Par'o asks Yaakov how old he is. Yaakov replies that he has lived 130 bitter years and that he does not expect to live as long as his father or grandfather. Yaakov blesses Par'o (having done so when first presented to Par'o - Rashi says that these were courtesy greetings to royalty) and Yaakov takes his leave.

Rashi brings a Midrash that says that Yaakov's bracha to Par'o was that the Nile should rise above its banks when he approaches it. And so it was, from then on.

## **Sh'VII** - Seventh Aliya 17 p'sukim - 47:11-27

Yosef sets up his family with the best the land has to offer. Meanwhile, the famine intensifies in Egypt. Yosef carefully controls the food supplies and before long has amassed for Par'o all the wealth, possessions and land (except for that of the clergy) of the people. Finally, the peoples of Egypt become slaves to Par'o in exchange for sustenance.

Yaakov's family flourishes greatly.

As mentioned earlier, this is the only sedra that does not end with a parsha break. The significance of this is explained by the commentaries of the opening pasuk of next week's sedra.

3 p'sukim are reread for Maftir.

## **Haftara** 14 p'sukim **Yechezkeil 37:15-28**

The antagonism in the beginning of Parshat Vayigash between Yehuda and Yosef is the forerunner of the split of the Jewish People into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel (represented by Efrayim, Yosef's son). In this portion from the Prophets, G-d tells Yechezkeil to take two sticks - one marked for Yehuda and one for Yosef/Efrayim - and hold them together until they merge into one. When the people ask the

meaning of this, the prophet is to tell them about the reunification of the tribes. This reconciliation, which is also the theme of the sedra, will produce the One Nation that will once again be the "dwelling place" of G-d. We will know that, as will the nations of the world. As happy as is the reconciliation of the brothers in the sedra, both the sedra and haftara remind us of rough times to come, throughout Jewish History. The "pot of gold" is at the end of the proverbial rainbow, the time of the Complete Geula, when the people will be united, the people will all keep Torah and mitzvot, the people will return to Eretz Yisrael from the far-flung places of their dispersion, and the Beit HaMikdash will stand in Jerusalem forever, **בב"א**.

## Vayigash

I identify with Yehuda. He took upon himself the responsibility to watch over his younger brother, Binyamin. When everything seemed to be going wrong, and Pharaoh's right-hand man was going to detain Binyamin in jail, Yehuda had to stand up for him.

The Midrash Kohelet Rabba (7:19) states: "At the time that the Holy One of Blessing created Adam, God showed him all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him: See my works! How beautiful and praiseworthy they are? And everything that I created, I created for you. Take care that you should not destroy my world, for if you spoil it there is no one to repair it after you."


Our planet is our little brother. Yehuda understood that they needed to bring Binyamin to Egypt in order to get food for the family. But he also knew that Yosef was trying to detain him unjustly, when they discovered the goblet in Binyamin's bag. He stood up for his brother and offered himself instead.

We were given something precious to safeguard as well and we cannot let it be unjustly destroyed. Stand up, as Yehuda did, when you see people wasting. There are many community projects that you can run for raising awareness of what the issues are that we are dealing with. Be a leader like

So different! The other things that are tied

our great-great-grandfather Yehuda and take the initiative to organize such events.

When Yehuda did stand up for his little brother, the results he got far surpassed what he had imagined. He discovered his long-lost brother. Remember the words of the Midrash and let us take care of our world as Yehuda did Binyamin: "Take care that you should not destroy my world, for if you spoil it there is no one to repair it after you." When we all work together the results will far surpass our greatest expectations.

 A man can greatly profit from a new culture by consciously selecting from it what is good, to engraft onto the good aspects of his native culture, and by allowing the hold of those negative elements of his old culture which are not present in his new one to weaken and, hopefully, to disappear through lack of reinforcement.

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## Divrei Menachem

We cannot but react emotionally when we read how Yosef revealed his true identity to his bewildered siblings. The Torah relates that he, "gave [forth] his voice in weeping" and that, "Egypt heard and Par'o's household heard" (B'reishit 45:2). Here the Hebrew usage is active (KAL) as if to say that Yosef made a supreme effort to cry out and that Yosef's attendants were eavesdropping.

No wonder then that the Torah later repeats the phrase in the passive (NIFAL) form (ibid 45:16) signifying that Yosef's cry was now heard in Par'o's palace. For, initially, the servants told a prattler's tale about the pain of their prince. Now, however, it was told that, "Yosef's brothers had come. And it was especially pleasing in the eyes of Par'o."

This second instance of the sound of Yosef's cry - KOL - is written without the letter VAV, indicating something diminutive. Indeed, the Zohar indicates that it was his intimate, muffled weeping that eventually caused Yosef to find favor in Par'o's eyes. It was akin to the silent appeal of the distraught Chana who taught us the everlasting lesson that true prayer is that which emanates from the heart.

Reminder: Yosef's wife is A-S'NAT, not AS-NOT. SH'VA under SAMACH is NA

## Parsha Points to Ponder

### Suggested answers

1) The Ohr HaChayim suggests that the Torah is providing some merit for their sins which led to their deaths. We must remember that they lived in Canaan where people acted immorally and this influenced them.

2) The Kli Yakar answers that the Egyptians despised shepherds since they worshiped sheep and shepherds tended to hit and abuse their flocks. Yosef had to tell Par'o that they were shepherds to insure that they could live on their own in Goshen. However, Yosef did not want Par'o to be upset that they chose a trade of people who hit and abuse their god, so he quickly explained that they chose this profession out of need since it happened to be that they owned many sheep and it was not with any intent to disgrace the Egyptian god.

3) The S'forno teaches that the Torah wants to clarify that Yosef did not abuse his power and take more for his family. Rather, he provided his family with the precise amount of food they needed to insure that others would also be fed.

*I saw in a recent Ask the Rabbi column of yours a discussion of the issue of leaning while receiving an aliya. I think you overlooked a very important problem, as there is a definite prohibition to receive*

## 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** *benefit from the shulchan (the table the Sefer Torah sits on), which is a tashmish kedusha (an object used to serve something holy).*

You raise a good point (at least in regard to a serious type of leaning), albeit one we did not overlook but chose not to address. If the matter was as clear cut as you perceive, it would

**A** present problems in most shuls not just for a person getting an aliya. Gabbaim often lean on the shulchan, and other objects, including tzedaka boxes and other things are often placed on it. Let us see if all of these practices are really forbidden.

It is not clear that the shulchan has a status of tashmish kedusha. The gemara (Megila 26b) cites Rava as saying that he did not think that a shulchan has a status of tashmish kedusha. Since it is covered with a mitpachat (cloth or decorative covering), which is what comes in contact with the Sefer Torah, the shulchan is only a tashmish d'tashmish, i.e., it supports the mitpachat upon which the sefer Torah sits. Such an object has only the kedusha on the level of the shul as a whole. Rava concludes that if the mitpachat is sometimes removed and the Torah then sits directly on the

shulchan it is a tashmish kedusha. The status thus depends on whether or not the shulchan is consistently covered. However, this does not really answer your question, as it should still be forbidden to lean or place other things on the mitpachat.

The Beit Yosef (Orach Chayim 154) cites the Mordechai who says that it is worthwhile to make a condition that the mitpachat not receive the type of kedusha that would make it forbidden to lean on. He proves that if this is not done, it would even be forbidden to put sefarim on top of it since they have a lower level of kedusha than the Sefer Torah. The ability to do so is confirmed clearly by the Yerushalmi, cited by the Rosh (Megila 4:11). The Rama (OC 154:8, based on the Terumat HaDeshen 273) goes a step further, saying that (at least in shul - see Mishna Berura 154:8) it is not necessary to make a condition. Because the situation is so clear that people will have trouble from refraining from leaning or putting things on the shulchan and/or its mitpachat, there is an assumed public condition (lev beit din matneh) to save people from possible sin. Lev beit din matneh is found in the gemara (including Shevuot 11b) regarding things that were given for the Beit

HaMikdash and has been applied to many cases of holy objects (see for example Yabia Omer, VII, OC 26, regarding the minhag to use the parochet of the aron kodesh for a wedding canopy). This condition does not allow people to use these objects in an unseemly manner (Mishna Berura 154:34), but that does not seem to be a common occurrence.

Admittedly, the Bi'ur Halacha (ad loc.) raises the possibility that only regarding those things that are hard to avoid do we say that lev beit din matneh applies. However, given people's habits, it is hard to imagine that you could expect everyone in shul, whether having an aliya or not, to make sure not to lean on the shulchan when standing near it during a variety of different activities. However, if one can easily avoid the issues, it is proper for him to do so. It is apparently for this reason, that several Acharonim (see Sha'arei Ephrayim 3:11; Mishna Berura 141:4) suggest that if one is so fat or weak that he needs to lean seriously on the shulchan, he should pull back the mitpachat and lean on the wood of the shulchan. Since it is rare for someone to actively decide to lean on the shulchan and it is often not feasible to pull back the mitpachat, we purposely left out this added information, which is apparently not fully required (as above) and is rarely practiced in our experience.

## Parsha Points to Ponder VAYIGASH

1) Why does the Torah have to mention that Er and Onan died IN THE LAND OF CANAAN (46:12), something which we already know from reading about their death in Vayeishev?

2) Why does Yosef inform his family that he will tell Par'o that they were both SHEPHERDS and also PEOPLE WITH SHEEP (46:32)? Even if they did not own a lot of sheep they would want to live in the more sheep-friendly Goshen since shepherding was their trade.

3) Why does the Torah say that Yosef provided his family with BREAD ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN (47:12)? Would anyone have thought that Yosef did not provide enough food for all his family members?

### Parsha Points to Ponder

is prepared by

**Rabbi Dov Lipman**

who teaches at Reishit Yerushalayim and Machon Maayan in Beit Shemesh and is the author of "DISCOVER: Answers for Teenagers (and adults) to Questions about the Jewish Faith" (Feldheim) and "TIMEOUT: Sports Stories as a Game Plan for Spiritual Success" a recent release by Devora Publishing

ppp@ouisrael.org

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

## PORTION OF THE PORTION

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berenbau@gmail.com

# GASH

In two verses in this week's portion the Torah uses the root word GASH. The first location is in B'reishit 44:22, for which the portion gets its name. It starts VAYIGASH YEHUDA - Yehuda walked up to Joseph and said let me say something to you personally - in your ear. This is Yehuda's way of being responsible for his brother and getting his message across to Yosef.

The second place is later on - 45:4, when Yosef reveals his true identity to his brothers. The brothers are embarrassed. First Yosef makes everyone leave the room and he tells his brothers who he is and asks about his father. The brothers are shocked to hear who he is and can't respond. Then Yosef says to his brothers, G'SHU NA ELAI - Please come closer to me". Why did he need them to come close to him? They were alone in the room - why did they need to be so close?

Rashi says that he saw that they moved away from him out of fear of what he might do to them so he tried to calm them down by talking calmly to them and telling them that it was okay to come close to him.

Rashi also brings a Midrash that says he needed them to come close so he could show them that he was

circumcised. But doesn't this seem a strange thing to do when you meet your brothers after so many years? Why did he want to show them that he had been circumcised?

Radak says it was so that they would believe that it was really Yosef. But one can ask - the Arabs also do circumcision, and Rashi tells us in 41:55 that Yosef had instructed everyone in Egypt to circumcise themselves if they wanted to get food from him. So Yosef's being circumcised wasn't such a big deal - there were lots of other people in Egypt like him. What did he want to show his brothers?

Chizkuni answers this question by saying that the poor Egyptians circumcised themselves because they had no choice - they had to if they wanted to get food from Yosef. But the rich Egyptians didn't bother to because they had enough to eat. It wasn't convenient or necessary for them. Yosef, as the viceroy could have gotten away without circumcising himself. He wanted to show his brothers that even though he had been living in the palace in Egypt for so many years he was still a G-d fearing Jew who followed the ways of the children of Israel.

This past week my daughter had a baby boy, so I will be zocheh to be at the Brit Mila of my first grandson. Although parents normally would never dream of inflicting pain on and drawing blood from their child, we all celebrate the MILA with a festive air. It is because we have a unique opportunity - a moment of TIKUN OLAM when man becomes partner with G-d in perfecting the world. BRIT

MILA is a physical sign attesting to a covenant of the heart. It is a symbol of Jewish distinctiveness and a testimony to inclusion of this child within the Jewish people - a seal of Jewish eternity as G-d's chosen people. This is definitely a cause for celebration.

We should not take this mitzva lightly. There have always been Jews who have given their lives throughout the generations to guard this act. Unfortunately there have been those who have neglected this commandment as well - We just celebrated Chanuka - when the Greeks decreed against circumcision. At that time there were Jews who tried to reverse the circumcision that had been done to them as children. And there are people nowadays who want to do away with BRIT MILA all together. Also in the time of Eliyahu HaNavi there were people who neglected circumcision. Eliyahu defended G-d's honor against this neglect and (Melachim Alef 19:10) therefore Hashem told him that Jews would perform circumcision only when he sees it with his own eyes. That is why there is a KISEI SHEL ELIYAHU - a special chair at the BRIT for Eliyahu. Eliyahu, who never died, is also the MALACH HABRIT - the angel or messenger of the BRIT (Malachi 3:1) who will come to herald the redemption - may it come speedily in our days.

The Rabbis have compared a BRIT to a Korban and eating at a SEUDAT BRIT to eating a Temple sacrifice. For that reason some people will serve only meaty at a BRIT.

**HERE IS A MEAT RECIPE** that uses

up the leftover chickpeas from the Shalom Zachar.

## MEAT & CHICK PEAS STEW

1/3 cup flour

1¼ tsp. salt

½ tsp. pepper

2 lb. (1 kilo) boneless stew meat, cut into 1-inch squares

2 Tbsp. oil

1 (28 oz.) can tomatoes, cut up

1 cup water

2 (3") cinnamon sticks

2 (4") strips orange peel

1 Tbsp. instant minced garlic

1 tsp. ground cumin

¼ tsp. sugar

4 carrots, cut into 1½" x ½" sticks

2 (15 oz.) cans chick peas, drained

In a large plastic bag combine flour, salt and pepper. Add 1/3 of the meat cubes; shake to coat with flour mixture. Remove meat. Repeat twice with remaining meat. Cook meat in hot oil about 10 minutes or until browned. Remove from heat. Stir in undrained tomatoes, water, cinnamon sticks, orange peel, garlic, cumin and sugar. Simmer, covered, about 1 1/4 hours or until meat is almost tender. Add carrots; cook, covered, until tender, about 20 minutes. Stir in chick peas; cook 5 minutes more or until heated through. Serve over couscous or rice.

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:  
**Parshat Vayigash**

## **The Empty Chair**

The happiest picture that I can imagine portrays an entire family sitting around the dinner table. One of the saddest pictures is of that same family with one empty seat, with one family member missing. And the most tragic picture of all is when that absent member is dead, ill, or imprisoned.

A good family does not forget its absent members.

The Jewish people are a family. This is the obvious lesson of all of the narratives which we have been reading from the book of B'reishit these past several weeks. We began our history as a family and have persisted throughout the generations to appreciate the connectedness which exists between us all.

If we are to be a good family, we must not forget our absent members.

There are two kinds of absence. In the first instance, the absent member wants very much to be present, but he is prevented by circumstances beyond his control from joining the family.

A painfully relevant example of such an absent member is the Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit. He is one of several soldiers missing in action, but unlike the others, he is known to

be alive, his captors admit that they have him in their possession, and even his whereabouts are known.

How are we, his family, to react to his empty chair?

This week's sedra, Vayigash, provides us with a model of how one brother behaves when the other is missing. That model is Yosef's brother, Binyamin.

Yaakov's entire family is aware of Yosef's empty chair. But Binyamin feels Yosef's absence more profoundly than the others, so much so that as Benjamin matures, marries, and has children of his own, he names each one of them after some aspect of Yosef's character and fate.

The Torah lists the names of the ten sons of Binyamin. The Talmud demonstrates that each of their names in some way represent Binyamin's missing brother, Yosef. One child, for example, was named Bela, the Hebrew word for "swallowed up", for Yosef was swallowed up by another people. Another son was called Chupim, because, as Binyamin says, "I did not see his chupa (marital canopy), and he did not see my chupa."

Imagine Binyamin's life, raising these ten children. Not a day could go by, not even a moment, when he was not vividly reminded of his lost brother Yosef. Every time he addressed any of his children, some aspect of his imprisoned brother would confront him in the very name of the child he addressed.

In the case of a missing brother like Gilad Shalit, we may feel impotent, convinced that there is nothing we can do. But Binyamin teaches us that the least we can do is to keep him in mind, to be aware of the empty chair around our family table, and to never forget our missing brother.

There is a second kind of absent family member. This one can easily choose to join the family but is unwilling to do so. This one has rejected his family, for all kinds of reasons. This is not the imprisoned brother; this is the alienated one.

To this kind of missing brother we all also have a responsibility. We must keep a door open, a light in the window, and an outstretched, welcoming hand. We cannot tolerate an empty chair around the table, be it for a brother who cannot join us, or be it for a brother who will not join us.

I recently read of a rather well-known rabbi who, thinking that he was addressing a traditional congregation, and speaking to them of Jewish peoplehood, discovered that the congregation was quite liberal. He assumed that such an audience would not appreciate the notion that we Jews are a people. He assumed that his audience would find such a concept chauvinistic and outdated.

How surprised this rabbi was to discover that his audience was intrigued by this notion! They were accustomed to think of all Jews as sharing a common religion, but not

necessarily as comprising one people.

After reading this account, I found myself contemplating the fact that although we are a people, there is an even more powerful bond than our nationality which holds us together. We are a family, a mishpacha. And as a family, we must emulate Binyamin's lesson and perceive the emptiness of the empty chair, the lacuna of the missing family member.

I often wondered why the Holy Temple was placed in the territory of the tribe of Binyamin, and not in the territory of the neighboring royal tribe of Yehuda. I have come to the conclusion that this was Binyamin's reward for being a good brother, for assuring that the missing Yosef not only couldn't be forgotten, but his memory was imprinted in the very names of each of his children.

I call upon you, dear reader, to consider the missing brothers of whom you are aware, if not in the names of your children, then in your prayers, in your conversation, and in every practical way that you can creatively imagine.

A comune (township) with 1234 inhabitants in the province of Verona.

**round pre-heifer wagons**

## MACHON PUAH Supervision...

Two decades ago, when our founder Rav Menachem Burstein developed the supervision process, he consulted many poskim of the time. They raised many concerns regarding the processing of genetic materials that each needed to be dealt with in the supervision process.

Imagine that there was a dispute as to the lineage of a child born from IVF. For example, there was a claim that a specific child was not the product of its parents. Who would be able to stand in the Beit Din and bear witness that he is in fact their child? The parents, not having been present in the lab during the processing of the genetic materials could not provide such testimony. Nor could the doctor, since he or she has a vested interest in maintaining their business and reputation which casts a halachic invalidation of their testimony. The supervisor is the only non-biased witness who could provide the testimony.

In such a case, the supervisor must be a halachically valid witness. As such, it would stand to reason that a woman could not serve as a supervisor, and that it may even be necessary to have two supervisors that they could be called on later to function as witnesses, since most cases require two valid witnesses.

However, the Mishna teaches that a single female witness is in fact halachically reliable in certification of lineage. In the Mishana's case, two women give birth to sons at the same time and place. One is the wife of a Kohen, while the other is not. In this

case, the midwife is relied upon to identify which child is the Kohen and which is not. From this case we learn that one female witness is acceptable for cases regarding lineage and Puah indeed uses religious women as supervisors.

Since the supervisor is in fact providing "testimony" as to the lineage of the child being formed in the lab, the major requirement is an ironclad certification without any doubt that no mistakes had been made in the laboratory. As noted last week, it is clear that anything short of a full-time supervisory presence is inadequate, as mistakes could be made at times that the supervisor is not physically present. These mistakes, the result of human error, occur without anyone's knowledge and will rarely, if ever, be discovered.

Additionally, as explained above, supervisors can not be affiliated with the processing facility in any way, lest there be a conflict of interest. Even religious and God-fearing embryologists were deemed insufficient for supervisory services due to this inherent conflict of interest. In discussing this point, Rav Elyashiv told the Rabbis of the Puah Institute that even if he himself was working as an embryologist in the laboratory, he would still need to be independently supervised.

Utilizing this framework, Rav Burstein devised a method of supervision that allows religious women, operating independently of the processing facilities, to certify, without doubt, that the genetic materials being returned to the couples at the end of the processing, is indeed the same material that was given by the couple to the lab.

## CHIZUK AND IDUD

*Divrei Torah from the weekly sedra with a focus on living in Eretz Yisrael - Chizuk for Olim & Idud for not-yet-Olim*

**IN HASHEM'S** final revelation to Yaakov, He promises "I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you back up." We know that Yaakov dies in Egypt, so how is this promise fulfilled?

According to Rashi, the promise is that Yaakov will be buried in Eretz Yisrael. Yaakov, like some Jews in later generations, is able to return to Eretz Yisrael in death though he was not able to in life.

Another possible explanation, proposed by the Midrash, is that the promise of returning to Eretz Yisrael refers not to Yaakov himself but to all of Am Yisrael. Hashem is reassuring Yaakov that although he and his descendants are going down to Egypt, the nation will ultimately return.

These two explanations represent two aspects of aliya. One is the personal fulfillment achieved by making aliyah; just as Yaakov was just glad to know that his body would reach Eretz Yisrael, so for many of us just physically being in Eretz Yisrael is exciting and gratifying. The other aspect is national fulfillment; every Jew who makes aliya is also completing the lives of those who came before him and could not get here. Yaakov Avinu returns to Eretz Yisrael not only through the burial of his body here, but through the continued return of his living children.

Channa Lockshin Bob, Modiin

## Say Sh'Sh

No, we are not suggesting that you shush people in shul who talk at improper places in the davening and Torah reading. That can be counterproductive. We're talking about a different Sh'Sh, the one that means SHABBAT SHALOM.

And we're not talking about saying it to your friends; you don't need us to tell you that. In fact, no one should have to be reminded to say Shabbat Shalom to any fellow Jew - but...

A recent olah told of going to a shul for the first time and found it upsetting that only one or two people said Sh'Sh to her after davening. When she expressed her disappointment to one of the two who did greet her, she was told, "Oh, they probably thought you were a visitor."

Imagine that as a reason not to greet someone!

Shabbat Shalom, are you visiting or are you new to the neighborhood? That's not a bad way to greet any unfamiliar face in your shul.

And when walking in the street on Shabbat, it's not a bad thing to greet people you pass. You might even get a smile back. Or at least a Shabbat Shalom Umvorach.

In fact, the element of good interpersonal behavior is particularly important in the context of davening, specifically because davening is so "Bein Adam LaMakom" (between the Jew and G-d) and it is easy to forget the interpersonal side of our human and Jewish behavior.

## WISDOM & WIT

by Shmuel Himelstein

R' Akiva Eiger never referred to the students in his yeshiva as his students. As he wrote to his son, "You know of the many people who studied in our yeshiva ... Do not refer to them as my students, because never have I ever called anyone a student of mine. Who knows who learned more from whom? ... Indeed, if you find in any printed works of mine that someone is referred to there as my student, know that that was added by those who wrote down the text, and was certainly not put there by me. In fact, I would like you to remove such references from all of my books."



The Chasam Sofer had an attendant who was extremely haughty, of two reasons. First, he was the attendant of the Chasam Sofer, the greatest Torah scholar of his day. Second, his uncle was the owner of a large bank, and was very wealthy. When the Chasam Sofer heard of the man's excessive pride, he called him over and told him: 'Had you the Torah learning of your Rebbe and the wealth of your uncle, I would have understood your pride. However, you have the Torah learning of your uncle and the wealth of your Rebbe. What reason, then, do you have to be so proud?'



R' Yaakov Emden noted that when his father, the Chacham Tzvi, received letters which described him in all types of glowing terms - Rav, Gaon, Light of the

Nation, etc. - he would make a point of reading these salutations in detail. As he himself said, he knew that these appellations were wild exaggerations, but if this was what people thought of him, he had to do everything possible to strive to attain these qualities.



R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld was the head of the Old Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael, and was a very great Torah authority. Yet, he never considered himself to be anything special. In a *haskama* (endorsement) which he wrote to a *sefer*, he wrote: "It pains me that I am referred to with titles of which I am undeserving, even in the slightest way. I am a simple, old, frail man ... while in reality I have neither Torah nor wisdom. I do not know of any virtue that I have, except that, through the mercy of HaShem, I was able to settle in the Holy City."

## Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Bamidbar Stories "He Zealously Made My [G-D's] Rights Valid" (Bamidbar 25:11){3} by Dr. Meir Tamari

Zealots, fanatics and vigilantes are usually considered negative since they are connected with taking the law into their own hands and dispensing summary justice. Indeed, we read (Sanhedrin Yerushalmi 9:7), "The Sages were unhappy with Pinchas's act. Rabbi bar Pazi taught that the tribes wished to excommunicate Pinchas, saying, 'see the grandfather of this one fattened calves for idolatry [referring to his grandfather Yitro, priest of Midyan], and he kills a prince in Israel'". Yet here (Bamidbar 25:11-12) we find G-d saying that Pinchas had turned away His wrath from Israel and rewarding him with His covenant of priesthood. What appears to be contradictory or ambivalent teachings are actually the exquisite balance that Torah presents between conflicting spiritual and religious concepts. So, zealotry has an honored function, yet because it may lead to repulsive and illegal acts, it is ringed about, like all else in life, with halakhic restrictions and moral teachings, so that it becomes a *davar sheb'kedusha*, like that of Pinchas who was granted G-d's covenant of Kehuna.

"When a man has sexual relations with a gentile woman whether in marriage or of a licentious nature, in public, that is in the presence of ten or more Jews, if a zealot kills him, he is considered praiseworthy

and ardent. This is halakha L'Moshe miSinai, a halakha conveyed to Moshe at Sinai. However, the zealot may slay them only at the time of actual relations as in the case of Zimri and Cozbi: 'he pierced them both [through Zimri's back] and through Cozbi's stomach' (25:7). If however, the fornicator withdraws [even if he has already sinned] he may not be killed; indeed then the zealot may be executed as a murderer, provided warning was given and the act witnessed. Should the transgressor withdraw and kill the zealot in order to save himself, he is not killed for the death of the zealot, who in that case has the status of a *rodef*" (Hilkhos Isurei Bi'a 12:4-5).

Furthermore, this halakha revealed to Moshe at Sinai is not to be conveyed as an answer to a questioner incensed at public sinning. "The halakha of zealotry is only permissible to one consumed by righteous indignation and a passion for morality and justice. It is not permitted in those cases where one either has the time or mental leisure to consult with the Sages. We may not tell the zealot to kill cohabiters for it is halakhically preferable not to, nor may one risk one's life where this is not required. Only one who places himself in danger because of passion for G-d and His Torah, not even taking time to seek a ruling, is classed as a

zealot; only to such as he, is such an act permitted" (Chidushei Harim of Gur).

"If Pinchas fulfilled the halakha, why was it in opposition to the will of the chachamim" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 9:7)? There are various explanations for this opposition but all of them are further fences erected around the zealot that prevent him from descending into a mere thug and murderer, enabling him to rise to become a priest to G-d. "Chazal use the word kana'im, the plural form, implying that this halakha may only be carried out by a group. By acting alone, Pinchas exposed himself to a great risk of death at the hands of Zimri's supporters, therefore no matter how outraged he was at the sin, his zealotry was frowned upon" (Kli Chemda). "Pinchas was a Kohen even before the granting of G-d's covenant, therefore he was forbidden to come into contact with the dead. Although he was miraculously untouched by his victim's blood, nevertheless he risked excommunication had not Heaven declared, 'he has saved Israel from destruction'" (Sifri).

In addition to all these legal restraints, perhaps morally and spiritually even more importantly, the Torah insists that the zealot must be clearly without any egoistical interest and that there can be no suggestion or suspicion in his act, of any personal gain involved. "And they [Moshe and the Elders] were weeping at the entrance to Ohel Moed" (Bamidbar 25:6). Moshe who had successfully stood up to the power of Par'o, who

had wrought miracles against the forces of nature and who had called on Israel to take up arms against those who worshiped the Eigel, now stood powerless before the challenge of Zimri. Our sages taught that he had forgotten the halakha of the zealot, or did not know what sort of death penalty applied to one who has public relationship with a non-Jewish woman or simply that his weeping was due to the enormity of the sin and the plague that raged against Israel.

The rebellion of Korach accused Moshe of profiting from his function as a leader and of personal exploitation of his power. There Moshe, in the passionate denial of any such abuse and asserting the transparency of his leadership, could call on G-d to create a special creation to punish the rebels but here Zimri seemingly had grounds to question him. "'Moshe, this woman is permitted to me or not', asked Zimri? 'She is forbidden', came back Moshe's answer. 'You, whom G-d has praised as being His true servant above everybody else, interpret Torah to your own benefit. Tell us why then is Tzipora permitted to you? She is a Midianite just like Cozbi; furthermore while Cozbi is a princess, she is the daughter of Yitro who was only a priest of Midyan'. Hearing Zimri's taunt to him rendered Moshe powerless. Any action by him could be explained as motivated by simple self-interest rather than pure halakha. Tzipora was converted and the marriage occurred before Matan Torah when everybody had the status of Bnei No'ach. Cozbi, however, had never

been converted and now after Sinai, non-Jewish women were forbidden to Israel" (Tanchuma; Midrash Hagadol).

David HaMelech was faced with a similar problem when Yoav, his general and cousin killed Avner and Amasa, the commanders of Shaul's army. Yoav's acts called for the death penalty but this would be construed as hiding David's complicity since their murders were to David's political benefit. So he delayed Yoav's punishment, instructing Shlomo in his will to carry it out (Melakhim Alef 2).

Pinchas, however, acted in pure zealotry without any hint of personal hatred of Zimri, or any self-interest on his part or any ulterior motivation.

## ParshaPix explanations

- Top row of the ParshaPix, from right to left, are the TRUP marks for the first six words of Vayigash. See the comment in the Sedra Summary.
- The basketball player is labeled CHI for Chicago, as in the Bulls. The football player is labeled DET, for the Detroit Lions. Together they represent the clash between Yehuda (Lion) and Yosef (Shor).
- The square knot stands for V'NAFSHO K'SHURA V'NAFSHO, and his soul was tied up with his soul (Yaakov and Binyamin).
- To the right of the knot are five shirts, standing for the five changes of clothes that Yosef gave to Binyamin.

He also gave him 300 silver pieces, represented by the money sacks marked with the Egyptian hieroglyphics symbol for 100. 3 sacks, 300 silver pieces.

There are two of the wagons that Yosef sent to Yaakov, to bring the family down to Egypt... and to remind him of the Torah topic they last studied together. So too are the bullets for this column covered wagons.

The noble steed, a.k.a. Donkey with 10+10 above him stands for the donkeys (10 CHAMORIM and 10 ATONOT) that Yosef sent to Yaakov with provisions for their trip to Mitzrayim.

The dreidel, purposely a Chutz LaAretz one, with SHIN. The letters of the dreidel rearrange to spell GOSHNA, to Goshen. This, from Vayigash, which is almost always (90%) the post-Chanuka Shabbat.

The number 70, marked with an asterisk, and an arrow pointing downward. This represents the 70 souls who went down to Egypt. The asterisk reminds us that one had gone down much earlier (Yosef) and two others were born in Egypt (Efrayim and Menashe), but are still counted among the 70.

Lower-left corner is a picture of Orde Wingate, British general, ardent Zionist, trained Jewish youth military tactics. Was removed from Palestine when the British decided he was potentially acting against their interests. Anyway, his first

name was Orde, very similar (especially in the Ashkenazic pronunciation of a KAMATZ) to the name of Binyamin's youngest son.

- ✚ Next to Wingate is an albatross, a.k.a. gooney bird. Sounds like GUNI, one of Naftali's sons.
- ✚ The two sticks are from the haftara.
- ✚ 25.6 fl. oz. is the quantity of liquor in a bottle known as a "fifth". It is a fifth of a gallon. Here it represents the tax Yosef imposed on the Egyptians.
- ✚ Half a butterfly (PARPAR) is PAR attached to an O = PAR'O.

## TRIDDLES

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

Last issue's (Mikeitz-Chanuka) TTriddles:

### [1] He's #1; his father is 176

Parshat Naso, parts of which we read on each of the days of Chanuka, has 176 p'sukim. Specifically, we read 89 p'sukim - all of perek 7 in Bamidbar. Some congregations started the first day's reading (Maftir of Shabbat one of Chanuka, this year) with 6 more p'sukim from the end of Bamidbar 6 - Birkat Kohanim. Among the p'sukim that we read during Chanuka, many were read twice.- This is done on regular weekdays of Chanuka. This year, there were four such days - Sunday through Wednesday - the days that were not Shabbat or Rosh Chodesh. This year, 24 p'sukim were duplicated. What all this means is that

Chanuka has a claim to Parshat Naso (and to B'haalot'cha as well). Over the 8 days of Chanuka, we read part or all of Vayeishev, Mikeitz, Vayigash, Naso, B'haalot'cha, and Pinchas. But we digress. The SIMANIM, codes for the number of p'sukim, of Naso are AMOS and AMINADAV. (These SIMANIM are found in many Chumashim, right after each sedra - a number of p'sukim and one or two words or names with the same gimatriya as the number of p'sukim.) Let's leave Amos out of this TTriddle, since he is unrelated to the sedra. But AMINADAV (numeric value: 176) is mentioned as the father of NACHSHON, the tribal leader of Yehuda, who was #1 to offer his gifts to the dedication of the Mishkan (Chanukat HaMizbei'ach), as well as being #1 into Yam Suf, triggering its splitting.

### [2] Par'o, Achashveirosh, Haman, HaShem, Bnei Yisrael

VAYITAV HADAR B'EINEI... And the thing found favor in the eyes of... This phrase occurs 5 times in Tanach - once in Mikeitz with Par'o who approved of Yosef's dream interpretation and practical suggestions for dealing with the upcoming situation. Achashveirosh follows the phrase twice - once for the suggestion of getting rid of Vashti and replacing her with someone more worthy. And once at the suggestion of gathering the local beauties to the palace for queen-selection. Interesting, that for each of these kings - Par'o and Achashveirosh, the suggestion that they favored includes the expression V'YAFKEID... P'KIDIM... appoint people in charge... and V'YIKB'TZU... gather (food, maidens respectively). Haman was thrown into this TTriddle, even though for him we find VAYITAV HADAVAR

LIFNEI HAMAN, not in his eyes, but before him. He was included because the initial search for this TTriddle was for VAYITAV HADAVAR. G-d approved of Shlomo's request for wisdom, of all the choices he was offered. And in Yehoshua22, B'nei Yisrael approves of the actions of the Pinchas and the leaders of Reuven and Gad, whom they now accept as having done their share in conquest on the west side of the Jordan. Had we included in the search VAYITAV B'EINAI HADAVAR, Moshe Rabeinu would have been included for admitting that he (originally) liked the idea of sending Meraglim.

### [3] No'ach, Yaakov, Par'o, Par'o, and who?

The word VAYIKATZ (or VAYIKETZ in No'ach's case) - and he awoke - occurs four times in the book of B'reishit and once more in the book of Shoftim. No'ach awoke from a drunken stupor, Yaakov awoke from his dream of the Ladder, Par'o awoke twice from the two parts of his dream. And who? Shimshon who awoke from a sleep during which Dalila had woven his hair in such a way that he said would weaken him - but it didn't...

### [4] Chukat, Chakarnuha, Chat'u, Chigru, and WHAT?

The word ZOT is followed by a word beginning with a CHET occurs 8 times in Tanach (not counting HAZOT). The phrase ZOT CHUKAT... occurs 3 times. The other occurrences are from Iyov, T'hilim, and Yirmiyahu respectively. And WHAT? Of course, ZOT CHANUKAT HAMIZBEI'ACH, which occurs twice in the reading of the last day of Chanuka (Maftir of Shabbat Chanuka two, this year) and gives that day its name: ZOT

CHANUKA.

### [5] when we read I through 12

On the second Shabbat Chanuka (when there are two, that is) we read Parshat Mikeitz - Aliyot one through seven (as usual for Parshat HaShavua) and then we read for maftir, the gifts of the tribal leaders of days 8 through 12 of the dedication of the Mishkan. Other than then (which is the answer to this TTriddle), we also read I through 12 on Shabbat Parshat Naso.

### [6] And you thought he was a harmless, friendly alien!

ET, the extraterrestrial, made it into the PashaPix - see further - and into this TTriddle, as well. When Yosef instructs his people that the brothers will eat with him, the words are KI ITI YOCHLU HAANASHIM, which translates in TTriddlese as, for ET will eat the people (using the plural for ET).

### [7] First 3 nights: 1,10,11 - how many on the 8th night?

On the first night of Chanuka, we light 1 candle. On the second night, we light 2, which in binary notation is 10. The three of the third night is 11 in binary, and eight is 1000 - which is the answer to this TTriddle. That's not one thousand, but rather a group of two groups of two groups of two units - which is 8.

### [8] The 5th of the 2nd and the 3rd of the 10th

The fifth day of the second month, Iyar, is Yom HaAtzma'ut. The observance of Yom Haatzma'ut is often preponed a day or two, and occasionally postponed a day, in order to avoid Shabbat desecration in preparations for its national observances. The result is that

Hallel is sometimes said on HEI IYAR and sometimes not. The third of the tenth month is GIMEL TEVET, which can be the last day of Chanuka (when there is only one day of Rosh Chodesh Tevet, meaning that Kislev only has 29 days, which occurs about 25% of the time, in years designated as CHASEIR), or it can be the day after Chanuka, as it was this year - and about 75% of all years, the K'SEDER ones and the SHALEIM years. Therefore, 3 Tevet has Hallel sometimes, but sometimes not.

**[8] ParshaPix Unexplaineds**

- We'll start with the key with a picture of ET, to which we've already referred in TTiddle [6] above. The pasuk says: KI ITI or KEY E.T.
- There is the Davka graphic of the Golden Menora as the numerator of a fraction, the denominator of which is .1 - dividing by .1 is the same as multiplying by 10, so the graphic element is a reference to the 10 Menoras built by Shlomo HaMelech, as mentioned in the haftara of the second Shabbat Chanuka. By the way, Shlomo is also the main subject of the regular haftara of Mikeitz (the story of the two babies) which is only read about 10% of the time. Mikeitz has three possible haftarot, the one we didn't mention yet is the 72% of the time Shabbat Chanuka haftara from Zecharia.

- The pomegranate over the letter TAV, whose numeric value is 400, represents the 400 decorative pomegranates mentioned in the haftara for Shabbat Chanuka two. They were made by CHIRAM, along with many other furnishings for the first Beit HaMikdash.

**Here's a riddle** that should have been in last week's TT, but wasn't...

Specific to this year:

Yossi got married on Sunday night of Chanuka. On Friday at 2:00pm he was Sandak for a close friend's son. Another friend lost his father during Chanuka and Yossi went to daven Mincha in the shiva house at 12:15pm on Friday.

**What is special about that mincha?**

Had we actually asked this question last week, we would not have included the answer. That would have been in this week's TT - and here it is:

There are 6 reasons not to say Tachanun at this Mincha: Chanuka, Rosh Chodesh, Erev Shabbat, Chatan, Sandak, and in a mourner's house.

**THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW**

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 504

**The Couple's Property**

The property which a wife brings into the marriage is known as dowry. It may consist of real estate and/or personal property. There are times when there is a listing of all of these items in the ketuba but it is nevertheless known as dowry and not called ketuba property. The husband, with the wife's consent may undertake to become fully responsible for this property. In such event he may use the property, but if it depreciates in value he must bear the loss. If it goes up in value, the increment belongs to him. In halacha, this type of property is known as "iron sheep property" (NICHSEI TZON BARZEL). If, however, he does not become a guarantor of the dowry and the wife still has control of the property, if the property depreciates in value she bears the loss and any increment belongs to her. This is known as "melog property" (NICHSEI M'LUG). Melog property also includes all property belonging to the wife that was not brought into the marriage. This type of property is not listed in the ketuba but remains in her own possession. The property may have come to her by way of inheritance, after her marriage, or was then gifted to her.

The Sages instituted the ketuba for the wife so that she would have some support when it is paid upon the death of the husband or in the event of divorce. All of the husband's property is liened

for the payment of the ketuba. If when the ketuba has to be paid he had no assets to pay the ketuba except real estate and he owned three different grades of real estate, a superior grade, a medium grade and an inferior grade, the ketuba is payable out of the medium grade. The Sages have also decreed that when the wife comes to collect the ketuba after her husband's death she must take an oath while holding a sacred object that she has not sold her ketuba to her husband, and that he has not deposited any objects with her to insure payment of the ketuba, nor did she ever waive her right to collect the ketuba. If the husband of his own will divorces her she may collect the amount of the ketuba without any oath.

The Geonim have enacted that the wife may collect her ketuba after the death of the husband even out of movable property and her right to collection is not limited to real estate that he may not possess at the time of divorce or his death. Therefore the Sages have enacted that the ketuba contains language that she may collect the ketuba out of land or movables. When the ketuba is read aloud, listen to its reading and hear the phrase: "And thus said so-and-so, the groom "the responsibility of this ketuba of this wedding outfit and of this additional sum I take upon myself and my heirs after me so that they shall be paid from the best part of my property and possession which I now possess or may hereafter acquire. All my property, real and personal even the coat on my

Moshe Rabeinu laments his difficulty in carrying the burden of the people alone. **אִיכָה אֲשֶׁר לִבִּדִי טָרְוִיכֶם וּמִשְׁאָכֶם וְרֵיבֵכֶם:** There is a pasuk in this week's sedra that gives us a hint as to how leaders - or any of us - can cope with the burdens of leadership. The "trick" is not to be alone. To be able to confide in a brother, good friend... Yosef must have felt terribly alone, alienated from his brothers - all adding to an already awesome burden of rule in Egypt. And then - **וַיִּפְּלֵ עַל-צִוְיָאֵרִי בְּגִזְמוֹתַי אֲחֵי וַיִּבְרַךְ יְהוָה וַיִּבְרָא אֶת-צִוְיָאֵרִי:** - these p'sukim are Gimatriya Twins.

shoulders shall be mortgaged to secure the payment of this ketuba of the wedding outfit and the addition made thereto during my lifetime and after my death from the present day and forever,”

Whatever of his assets that he may sell after the wedding is liened to her ketuba and if he has no assets to pay the ketuba, the wife may go to collect the same from the purchasers of his property. “The purpose of this enactment is that the ketuba should not be light in his eyes.” That is, that he has a responsibility to her when thinking of divorcing her.

A widow is entitled to her maintenance out of the property of the heirs throughout the time of her widowhood until she collects her ketuba. Just as the widow is entitled to maintenance out of her husband’s estate after his death, so is she entitled to garments, utensils and living quarters or she may continue to reside in the living quarters occupied during her husband’s lifetime, and the services of help the husband employed during his lifetime.

If a widow falls ill, if she requires unlimited treatment it is deemed the same as maintenance and the heirs are liable for it. If, however, she needs only treatment of limited duration she must defray the cost out of her ketuba.

If a widow dies, her husband’s heirs are obligated to take care of her burial.

Anything that a widow may find and the income from property brought by her to her husband belongs to her, and the heirs to the husband have no claim to them whatsoever. As for her dowry which she brought into the marriage, the heirs of the husband have no claim to

them whatsoever. If it has increased in value during the husband’s lifetime and constitutes iron sheep property, the appreciation accrues to the husband’s heirs.

If a widow comes to court to claim her maintenance she must first take an oath and then property of the estate may be sold without public announcement and the proceeds given her for her maintenance. How much property may be sold to provide for the maintenance? Enough to maintain her for six months.

One of the stipulations of the ketuba is that male children are to inherit the ketuba of their mother and her dowry that she had brought in as iron sheep property. After that, they share the rest of the estate equally with their brothers.

If a man dies leaving both sons and daughters, the sons inherit all the property and must maintain their sisters until they come of age or become betrothed. This applies when he leaves an estate sufficient to maintain both the sons and daughters. However, if the estate is less than that, the maintenance of the daughters comes first and the residue is given to the sons. If the estate suffices only for the maintenance of her daughters, the daughters are maintained out of it until they come of age or are betrothed and the sons get nothing.

If a man dies leaving only daughters both adult and minor, and no sons, they divide the estate right now.

Much of what has been said here is for informational purposes so that the reader should be aware of what the issues are. In practice one should consult with her or his rabbi who is knowledgeable in these areas.