



892
וַתֵּרֶא ר' אֶ
 Jan. 15-16, '10 • א' שבט תש"ע



ParshaPix Can you connect all the elements in this ParshaPix with this week's Torah reading? Can your (grand)children? Can your Shabbat guests?



When you are ready to look at our explanations, go to page 41. We hope that you find the ParshaPix an excellent and enjoyable way to get into a discussion of Parshat HaShavua at your Shabbat table... or where/whenever.

Jerusalem Shabbat in/out times this week: **4:22pm/5:38pm**.

See p. 2 for full chart

Candle Lighting and Havdala times			
Israel Standard Time			
TT 892	Rabbeinu Tam (I'm)	- 6:15pm	Next week
4:22pm	Yerushalayim	5:38pm	4:28/5:44
4:40pm	S'derot	5:41pm	4:46/5:47
4:38pm	Gush Etzion	5:38pm	4:44/5:44
4:38pm	Raanana	5:39pm	4:44/5:45
4:38pm	Beit Shemesh	5:39pm	4:44/5:45
4:38pm	Rehovot	5:39pm	4:45/5:45
4:37pm	Netanya	5:38pm	4:44/5:44
4:38pm	Be'er Sheva	5:40pm	4:44/5:46
4:38pm	Modi'in	5:39pm	4:44/5:44
4:22pm	Petach Tikva	5:39pm	4:28/5:45
4:22pm	Maale Adumim	5:38pm	4:28/5:43
4:37pm	Ginot Shomron	5:38pm	4:43/5:44
4:36pm	Gush Shiloh	5:37pm	4:42/5:43
4:38pm	K4 & Hevron	5:39pm	4:44/5:45
4:37pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:36pm	4:43/5:44
4:38pm	Yad Binyamin	5:39pm	4:45/5:45
4:40m	Ashkelon	5:41pm	4:46/5:47
4:23pm	Tzfat	5:35pm	4:30/5:41
4:33pm	New York	5:39pm	4:41/5:47
8:23pm	Melbourne	9:30pm	8:20/9:25

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OTHER Z'MANIM
 Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
 27 Tevet - 7 Sh'vat (Jan 13-22)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:46-5:45am
Sunrise	6:41-6:38am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	9:14-9:14am
(Magen Avraham: 8:26-8:27am)	
Sof Z'man T'fila	10:05-10:06am
(Magen Avraham: 9:33-9:35am)	
Chatzot (halachic noon)	11:47½-11:50¼am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	12:18-12:21pm
Plag Mincha	3:51½-3:58½pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 4:55-5:03pm)	5:00-5:08pm

Word of the Month
 This Shabbat is R"Ch Sh'vat.
 See p.23 for a Calendar "piece". First op for KL (3-day minhag) is Mon. night, Jan. 18th. &-day minhag: Motza"Sh, Jan. 23rd.

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Hitor'rut, Chizuk, Idud

Jews living in Eretz Yisrael fall into different categories. There are those who were born here and have lived their entire lives (so far - until 120, and beyond) here. There are those who were born elsewhere and came to live in Israel at a young age, or not so young age. There are those who fled their countries of origin and there are those who took the pro-active step of coming on Aliya from "comfortable" situations in their countries of origin. And then there are Jews who have not yet come to live in Israel. These include those who would like to, those who intend to, and those who do not yet have Aliya on their agendas - for a variety of reasons.

The title of this Lead Tidbit is meant to include all Jews in the purview of the following paragraphs.

For some, it will hopefully remind them of the very special quality of living in Eretz Yisrael, even if they tend to take things for granted, and not marvel at the specialness of their living here. That is the intended meaning and target for HITOR'RUT (or HISOR'RUS, if you like).

For others, Olim of various lengths of time, the goal is CHIZUK. You know why you came, but sometimes you need a reminder of how special it is to live in Israel. Sometimes, the experiences of everyday life blunt or obscure the good feelings of your choice to come on Aliya. Hopefully, the following paragraphs will be a vitamin shot for them.

And for those who do not yet live in Israel, we hope that the following paragraphs will serve as IDUD,

encouragement. Maybe they will be the push or nudge you need to activate your plans and actualize your dreams. Maybe, at least, you will think anew about this important subject.

And now for those "following paragraphs" we've referred to.

Living in Israel is a mitzva - the mitzva known as YISHUV ERETZ YISRAEL. In this Lead Tidbit, we are not going to discuss Mitzva Kiyumit vs. Mitzva Chiyuvit. Nor will we address the issue of Rambam's not including this mitzva in his list of Taryag. We're also not going to talk about whether the mitzva is active in this time or not. All of that and more belongs to a presentation of the Mitzva of YISHUV ERETZ YISRAEL. Which this is NOT going to be. It's going to be more.

Living in Eretz Yisrael is the reason for the existence of the Jewish Nation. No less.

The Torah consistently links our nationhood with our being given and taken to Eretz Yisrael. Take a look in last week's sedra of Sh'mot. G-d's first "conversation" with Moshe Rabeinu. Specifically, Sh'mot 3:8 - "And I have come down to save them from the hand of the Egyptians, **and to bring them out of that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey...**" G-d's intended Plan - to take the people out of Egypt to bring them to Eretz Yisrael. This is not even presented as a two-pronged plan. It is not presented in two p'sukim or even in one pasuk with an "and" between the two

elements. It doesn't say, to take them out of Egypt AND to bring them to Eretz Yisrael. It says, to take up out of Egypt to Eretz Yisrael. In order to take us to Eretz Yisrael.

Still, we can view this as two parts of the Plan, without weakening the significance of the component of G-d's Plan that includes living in Eretz Yisrael. Let's go back to Avraham Avinu and G-d's command to him (and all future generations) to circumcise. Immediately before commanding circumcision, that which Brit Mila symbolizes is spelled out. B'reishit 17:7,8 - "And I will establish my covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you, and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land where you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

The Plan can now be seen in a more complete form. G-d will take the people out of Egypt and give us the Torah (and all the commitment that is involved) on the way to taking us to Eretz Yisrael.

This is beautifully expressed in the beginning of Va'eira - which is why this is this week's Lead Tidbit - in what is usually known as the Five Terms of Redemption, but can be seen as Eight Terms of Redemption. Sh'mot 6:6-8 - "Therefore say to the people of Israel, I am HaShem, and I will bring you out... and I will rid you from their slavery, and I will redeem you... (3 terms of Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim itself), And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you God; and you shall know that I am HaShem your God, who brings you out

from under the burdens of the Egyptians (3 terms - combined as one - for Matan Torah). And I will bring you in to the land... and I will give it to you for a heritage (2 terms - combined as one - for possession and living in Eretz Yisrael); I am HaShem."

For those Jews who live in Eretz Yisrael - be aware and be strengthen in this reiteration of the place that living in Israel has in G-d's Plan for the Jewish People. Of the significance of living in Israel as part of the reason we exist as a people and a nation.

For those Jews not yet living in Eretz Yisrael, let this be a stimulus for for discussion within your family and for planning the implementation of those plans.

Finally, we must add that although the main thrust of this Lead Tidbit has been Living in Israel, it must be clear that it is G-d's Plan that the Jewish People live in the Land of Israel according to the Torah. Without Torah, Eretz Yisrael is like a body without a soul.

So why do we keep harping on Aliya and not as much on Torah observance in its entirety? Perhaps it is because we hear some Jews claim that it is possible to be completely Torah observant elsewhere in the world. And that is just not so!

This Shabbat is the 120th day (of 355), 18th Shabbat (of 51) of 5770
וַתִּתֵּן לָנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה, שְׂבֻתוֹת לְמִנוּחָה וְרַאשֵׁי חֳדָשִׁים לְכַפָּרָה.

Va'eira STATS

14th of the 54 sedras; 2nd of 11 in Sh'mot

Written on 221.8 lines in a Sefer Torah; ranks 16

16 parshiot; 8 open, 8 closed

121 p'sukim - ranks 20th (4th in Shmot)

1748 words - ranks 15th (3rd in Shmot)

6701 letters - ranks 17th (3rd in Shmot)

P'sukim are above average in length

PLUS... 7-pasuk Maftir for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh

MITZVOT

None of the 613 mitzvot are in Va'eira

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 12 p'sukim - 6:2-13

LDT: The two most common names of G-d in the Torah are E-LO-HIM and A-DO-NOI (as an act of respect for G-d's sacred names, these two are generally pronounced ELOKIM and HASHEM

respectively, when referred to other than in prayer or Torah reading). ELOKIM is usually considered to be G-d's name of strict judgment, whereas HASHEM carries the connotation of Divine Mercy. Notice that in the accounts of Egyptian oppression, the predominant name of G-d is Elokim (especially in 2:23-25).

Exile is certainly associated with the stricter side of G-d's treatment of His People. If the quality of mercy were dominant, perhaps we would acclimate too well to conditions and lose our yearning for redemption. (See what has happened in modern times when exile is accompanied by G-d's Midat HaRachamim and people are quite comfortable, and therefore, complacent - a regrettable state of affairs. Comfortable is not bad; complacent is - it means "contented to a fault".)

In the opening pasuk of this week's sedra, we find the unusual combination of both names. It is ELOKIM Who speaks to Moshe, G-d Who has judged and treated the People strictly and harshly. (And G-d Who is also speaking harshly to Moshe for his outburst at the end of Parshat Sh'mot). However, His message to Moshe is "I am HASHEM" (which comes with VAYOMER, the softer "tell", rather than VAIDABEIR, the harsher "speak" that began the pasuk). And His words of hope and promise to the People begin with the same declaration, "I Am HASHEM". In this context, we are told that G-d will take the People out of Egypt, save them, redeem them, take them unto Him, be our G-d and ultimately bring us into the Promised Land. These stages of

redemption are summed up with the reiteration of the statement, "I Am HaShem". It is as if G-d is saying to the down-hearted People: "until now you've experienced Me as ELOKIM, but rest assured that you will now see HASHEM - the G-d of Mercy - in full measure. The Egyptians on the other hand are being punished by the hand of G-d as ELOKIM. (see 5:15).

[S> 6:2 (8)] The sedra begins with G-d speaking to Moshe Rabeinu and telling him of the promises He had made to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. Also, G-d tells Moshe that He has heard and is responding to the cries of the People of Israel.

[In other words, G-d will be taking us out of Egypt not only because of promises He had made to the Avot, but because of His feelings for us.]

Therefore, G-d will take the People out from under Egyptian oppression, will save them from bondage, and will redeem them with His might. He will then take the People to Him as a Nation and be our G-d. He will then bring us into Eretz Yisrael.

Moshe relates this to the People, who are too exhausted to listen.

[P> 6:10 (3)] G-d then tells Moshe to go to Par'o and demand the People's release. Moshe questions how Par'o can be expected to listen, if the People (Moshe's own people) themselves didn't listen to him.

SDT: G-d tells Moshe to go speak to

Par'o (about letting the People go). Moshe "demurs", using the logical argument known as KAL VACHOMER - if the People of Israel (my own People) didn't listen to me, how is Par'o going to listen to me. Seems logical, except that the Torah has told us why the people didn't listen to Moshe - they were utterly exhausted from their unusually difficult labors. If so, it does not follow logically that Par'o would not listen to Moshe. Maybe he would listen, not being exhausted. On the other hand, Moshe's KAL VACHOMER is based on his own statement - "I have a speech impediment". In trying to understand his failure to reach the people, Moshe finds fault in himself, not in the People. This is how a leader should behave. When a rabbi or teacher fails to communicate an idea to his charges, he should not conclude that the fault lies with them - they are dumb; they are not committed enough; they are not paying attention; etc. He should rather be critical of himself - I probably didn't explain things well; I wasn't patient enough; etc. This is one of the signs of humility that is such a desirable characteristic in a leader. This was one of the many qualities that made Moshe Rabeinu The Leader and Teacher par excellence.

[P> 6:13 (1)] (Above Moshe's objections, so to speak,) G-d reiterates to Moshe and Aharon, that they are to tell the People as well as Par'o that the People will be leaving Egypt.

Note that this last pasuk of the first Aliya is one whole parsha. Single-pasuk parshiyot seem to say, LOOK AT ME and understand some point. Perhaps, G-d is saying to Moshe - all your hesitations and protesta-

tions aside, it is time for TACHLIS. You and Aharon are going to tell/command the people and Par'o about leaving Egypt. Period.

Levi - Second Aliya 15 p'sukim - 6:14-28

[S> 6:14 (15)] The Torah begins to enumerate the names of the tribes and family groups. It is obvious that the intention here is not to review the whole of the nation, but rather to focus on Moshe & Aharon. The Torah starts the list with Reuven and Shimon, and when it gets to Levi, there is much more detail. In this brief section, we meet many of the "main personalities" of the rest of the Torah. The Torah is also giving us the ability to continue to draw the timeline of Jewish history, by giving us the ages at death of Levi (we already know the ages of the three previous generation - Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov), his son Kehat, his son Amram. That brings us to Moshe and Aharon. We are also introduced to Korach and his sons and Aharon and his family.

SDT: *Although the purpose of this partial genealogy is to identify Aharon and Moshe, the Torah began with Reuven and Shimon before it gets to Levi. A reason offered for this in one of the sources is that since Yaakov Avinu spoke critically of these three sons, the Torah here lists only them, to teach us that they were important tribes despite their progenitors' "mistakes".*

There is a symbolic "reason" for our name BNEI YISRAEL, rather than using the name of the other Fathers or Mothers? YISRAEL is spelled YUD (initial of Yitzchak & Yaakov), SIN (Sara), REISH (Rivka & Rachel), ALEF (Avraham), LAMED (Leah). The name YISRAEL then encompasses the names of all the Patriarchs and Matriarchs. This is not a real reason, but it's a nice idea.

SDT: *When the Torah tells us that Aharon married, Elisheva, she is identified as bat Aminadav AND as the sister of Nachshon. Rashi tells us that from here we learn that when a man marries a woman, he should check out her brothers (because children often take after their maternal uncles). The same idea was previously presented in reference to Lavan.*

SDT: *On the Torah's statement: HU AHARON UMOSHE, Rashi points out that sometimes (mostly - specifically, 34 times) Moshe is mentioned first, and sometimes Aharon is mentioned first (4 times in Tanach), to teach us that they were equals. (That is, on some levels, but on others, Moshe Rabeinu was obviously on a higher standing.)*

Shlishi - Third Aliya 9 p'sukim - 6:29-7:7

[S> 6:29 (2)] After the "digression" of the previous passage, the Torah now repeats that G-d is sending Moshe to Par'o and that Moshe continues to "object" because of his speech impediment. (But this time, the fact that the people didn't listen is not mentioned.)

Rashi says that G-d did not repeat the command, nor did Moshe repeat his objection. The Torah is putting us back where we left off before the genealogical data were presented.

BTW, ARAL S'FATAYIM has different meanings in commentaries. Literally, it means: I have uncircumcised lips; it is variously interpreted as, "I have a speech defect", "I can hardly speak", and "I have no self-confidence when I speak".

[P> 7:1 (7)] G-d tells Moshe that Aharon will do the talking, that Par'o will refuse the repeated requests to free the People, and that He (G-d) will take His people out, and that it will be clear to Egypt (and everyone else) that it is indeed G-d Who is doing everything. Moshe and Aharon do as G-d instructs them; they are 80 and 83 years old respectively.

Observation When the Torah is specific about ages, it usually is meant to give us an accurate way of constructing a timeline. Perhaps too, in this case, the Torah is pointing out something that we saw very often in the book of B'reishit - namely, the prominence of the younger brother over the older one.

SDT: *How is it that Moshe Rabeinu is able to speak to the People of Israel throughout his "career" as leader, in light of the fact that he complained of being "speech impaired"? When Moshe spoke to the People of Israel, it was the Sh'china that spoke from his mouth. He had no trouble with his speech defect. He was, however, concerned when it came to speaking to Par'o. See 6:30.*

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 28 p'sukim - 7:8-8:6

[P> 7:8 (6)] G-d tells Moshe and Aharon, that when Par'o asks for a sign, Moshe shall instruct Aharon to throw down the Staff before Par'o and it will turn into a TANIN. Moshe and Aharon appear before Par'o and do as G-d has instructed them.

Rashi says that TANIN means NACHASH, i.e. snake or serpent. Not everyone see it that way. When G-d first had Moshe throw his staff down, it changed into a NACHASH, a snake. Now with Par'o, it changed into a TANIN. Strong possibility is that we are talking about a crocodile (a fellow reptile to the snake), venerated and worshiped by Egypt. Many Pharaohs identified with the crocodile as the ruling animal of the Nile.

Adds the Baal HaTurim, that the Tanin's reverting to wood was a message to Par'o that just as the mighty crocodile turns to dry wood, so too will the mighty Par'o turn to dust and food for worms.

SDT: *Baal HaTurim points out that the pasuk says: G-d says to Moshe that when Par'o will ask for a sign, you (Moshe) shall tell to Aharon to take your staff and throw it (on the ground) in front of Par'o, it shall become a TANIN. It didn't say: AND it will become a Tanin. He explains that the staff was thrown down and then he was to command it to become a Tanin. And that's what happened, to show Par'o the power of speech that G-d has given to Moshe. In other words, the staff did not*

change upon being thrown down. It changed by a spoken command. That carries a pointed message to Par'o that his wizards aren't even in the same class with Moshe and Aharon.

Par'o calls his wizards who are able to duplicate (sort of) what Aharon does; however, Aharon's staff (note: not his TANIN, his staff) swallows those of the wizards. Nonetheless, Par'o refuses to listen to Moshe and Aharon, as G-d had said.

[S> 7:14 (5)] G-d then instructs Moshe to go to the river (Nile) in the morning, where Par'o will be, and to bring the Staff with him. Moshe is to say to Par'o that G-d has sent me (Moshe) to tell you (Par'o) to release the People and you have refused until now. "With this will you know Who G-d is..." Moshe (actually Aharon) will be striking the water of the river, turning it to blood and killing all the fish in it.

[S> 7:19 (7)] Following the official warning to Par'o, G-d tells Moshe to tell Aharon to take the Staff and strike the waters of Egypt. Moshe and Aharon do as instructed and the waters turn to blood, the fish die, and the Egyptians cannot drink the water. Par'o's wizards again duplicate what was done, causing Par'o to remain stubborn. Egyptians are forced to dig for water (and/or buy water from the Jews). This first plague lasts 7 days.

[P> 7:26 (15)] G-d next instructs

Moshe to go to Par'o (at his palace) and warn him that if he does not let the People go, Egypt will be smitten by a plague of frogs. Aharon is to raise the Staff above the river, which he does, and the land is blanketed with frog(s). The wizards are again able to replicate this plague with their magical powers. Par'o calls to Moshe and Aharon to pray to G-d that the frogs be removed, promising that he will let the People go into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to G-d. Moshe asks Par'o when he wants the frogs to leave. (A strange question, to which Par'o gives a stranger answer). Par'o says "tomorrow", to which Moshe responds "so be it. And that will serve as proof of G-d's powers".

SDT: *Why would Par'o ask for the plague to be withdrawn on the following day? He and his people were certainly suffering and would want to rid themselves of the frogs as soon as possible. Par'o (still refusing to see the plagues as Divine, and assuming that there was some natural explanation for them) figured that Moshe came before him when he (Moshe) knew that the frogs would leave. Moshe would give the impression that he (in the name of the G-d of Israel) had power over the frogs. So Par'o tried to trick Moshe by asking the unexpected - do it tomorrow. Moshe's answer was that doing so would demonstrate that it was truly G-d's power that was being observed.*

1 + 2 + (2+1+7 + 1) + 1

Egypt saw itself as great because of the Nile and because of the fertile land created by the waters of the Nile. The first plague smote the water. The second was a plague that came from the river and attacked the land. The third smote the land itself.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 12 p'sukim - 8:7-18

So it happens, and after the frogs are gone, Par'o reneges on his promise, as G-d had said he would (an oft-repeated phrase indicating G-d's active role in the events of the Exodus).

[S> 8:12 (4)] G-d tells Moshe to tell Aharon to strike the dust of the earth (no warning to Par'o this time). The resultant plague of lice was not able to be matched by the wizards, who acknowledge G-d's might. Par'o, however, remains stubborn.

[S> 8:16 (13)] G-d sends Moshe to warn Par'o about the next plague (swarms of insects or wild animals, depending upon which opinion you follow). New element with this fourth plague - the obvious contrast between Egypt and the Jews.

There was always a contrast between the Egyptians and the Jews - Egyptians had no water during the first plague; the Jews had water. The Midrash even says that if a Jew and an Egyptian drank from the same cup, the Jew

would be drinking water and the Egyptian would have blood.

[Would work nicely for Edward and Bella in the early days.]

Similarly, the Jews did not suffer the plagues and the Egyptians did. Yet it seems that G-d had different messages for each of the plagues. (Or each set of 3 plagues.) AROV was the first plague that the distinction between Goshen and the Jews on one hand, and the land of Egypt and the Egyptians on the other, was so sharp and obvious.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 26 p'sukim - 8:19-9:16

And so the AROV descend upon the land. Par'o calls for Moshe and gives permission for the people to sacrifice to G-d in Egypt. Moshe says that it must be in the Midbar.

Par'o agrees on the condition that Moshe pray for the removal of the plague. Afterwards, Par'o reneges.

[P> 9:1 (7)] G-d next sends Moshe back to Par'o to repeat the demand for the People's release and to warn him of the consequence of his refusal this time - DEVER. And so it happens that the Egyptian livestock all die, with not a single loss to the Jews. This Par'o checks, yet he still remains stubborn.

Ranidae stolidus

[P> 9:8 (5)] The sixth plague (boils) is brought upon Egypt without warning. Although his people are being seriously beaten, Par'o continues to resist (from this point on, with G-d's "help").

[S> 9:13 (9)] Moshe is next sent to warn about the seventh (and very powerful) plague.

SDT: *In warning about HAIL, G-d says (through Moshe) that this time, I will send ALL my plagues... The Vilna Ga'on explains that G-d uses 3 main weapons, so to speak, to punish those who violate His commands - Fire, Water, and Wind. For example, to destroy Dor HaMabul, G-d used Water. To disperse Dor HaP'laga, He used Wind, and to destroy S'dom, His main weapon was Fire. The plague of Blood used Water. Plague 6 was the burning Fire of Boils on the skin. The locust came on the Wind. But Hail consisted of the whole arsenal - the Hail itself was Water, it had Fire in it, and the Hail was accompanied by strong Wind.*

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya **19 p'sukim - 9:17-35**

The threat/warning about hail continues. Never has hail like this been seen. There is also a challenge to the Egyptians in that G-d is allowing servants and animals to be saved by taking them indoors.

[P> 9:22 (14)] Moshe raises his hand heavenward and the hail falls. It is extremely destructive, but some plants survive (because they were pliable), as do the

animals of those Egyptians who heeded Moshe's warning to bring them indoors. Par'o admits that he has sinned and grants Moshe's demands, if only the hail will stop. When Par'o sees that the hail and thunder have stopped, he yet again reneges, as G-d has said he would.

Maftir in Second Torah **7 p'sukim / Bamidbar 28:9-15**

Chapters 28 and 29 in Bamidbar (Parshat Pinchas) deal with the daily and Musaf korbanot in the Mikdash. Since the two Shabbat p'sukim are followed by the five that deal with Rosh Chodesh, both portions are read for the Maftir on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh.

Notice that the Musaf of Shabbat is an expanded version of the weekday sacrifices and Rosh Chodesh's Musaf is like those of the Chagim. Makes sense when you think about it. Six days... and on the 7th - Shabbat is one of the days of the week and the unique one among them. The Chagim belong to the Jewish calendar, which is based on the months and Rosh Chodesh.

Haftara 24* p'sukim **Yeshayahu 66:1-24**

The special Haftara for Shabbat-Rosh Chodesh, the last chapter of Yeshayahu, preempts the regular Haftara (usually). The obvious

reason for the choice is found in the next to the last pasuk, which mentions both Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh. This pasuk is reread after the last pasuk, so that the book of Yeshayahu - and this Haftara - can end on a brighter note than its real end provides. This chapter, as all chapters in Yeshayahu from 40 and on, contains a message of consolation. Specifically, this chapter tells us that G-d cannot be contained in the physical Mikdash, nor is He interested in sacrifices that are not offered with sincerity. This message is appropriate always, and the association with Shabbat - week in & week out - Rosh Chodesh - month in & month out, fits.

Va'eira is one of 12 sedras whose name comes from the second pasuk, not the first. How many can you get without checking in a Chumash?

C₁₄H₁₀O₉ or maybe C₇₆H₅₂O₄₆

👉 Let the thinker not be too hasty to dismiss things which merely "appeal" to him. "The heart has its reason" - often far better than any the mind can produce.

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Divrei Menachem

In this week's parsha we learn that Hashem was to harden the Par'o's heart, such that, in addition to his natural resistance to free the slaves and his overall antipathy to Moshe and Aharon, the king was apparently destined, in any event, to refuse the Jewish leaders. This consequence clearly begs the question of free choice upon which Jewish ethics and the relationship between Man and G-d rests. How could Par'o be punished if Hashem hardened his heart?

In response, we must initially note that during the first five plagues Par'o hardened his own heart (Sh'mot 7:3,13,22; 8:11,15) and only later did Hashem follow suit, as it were: "And Hashem hardened Par'o's heart and he didn't send the people" (ibid 9:7). We see that once an individual chooses the iniquitous path, the equidistant choice between good and evil collapses and the gap widens in favor of evil. It is much harder to choose the right way - but the freedom of choice still remains (N. Leibowitz on Rambam Hilchot T'shuva).

Some say that Hashem blocked Par'o's options so that he would now pay the price for his foul schemes and would no longer be able to repent. Others hold that Par'o's heart was now hardened so that he could endure the pain of the remaining plagues and would thus not finally acquiesce on account of the unbearable suffering. And, yes, there would still remain the free choice of recognizing the hand of G-d behind everything that transpired. And so to this day do we have that same choice...

OU WEB REBBE

Question:

I have heard that veal comes from calves that are fed a mixture of milk and meat. Shouldn't that make it forbidden, as an animal whose sustenance comes from non-kosher food (see Rama, Yoreh Deah 60:1)? This case is particularly severe, because the feed is assur b'hana'ah (forbidden in benefit)!

Answer:

We will start with your assumption that the feed is fully forbidden as basar b'chalav, the combination of milk and meat. The halachic ramifications are very complicated, and we will but summarize them.

Generally, when a forbidden food undergoes a major change so that it reappears in a totally different form, the new food is permitted. Thus, for one of many examples, a bird born from the egg of a bird that is a t'reifa (unfit for kosher slaughter because of defects) is permitted (Temura 31a). Nevertheless, we must contend with the following source. The mishna brings an opinion that if a kosher animal drank the non-kosher animal's milk, it should not be used for a korban. The gemara (ibid.) says that it refers to a case where it drank milk in a manner that would sustain it all day. Tosafot surmises that similarly if an animal was sustained consistently on grains of avoda zara, it would be forbidden, apparently even for regular

eating (not only as a korban).

Despite an apparent abundance of sources permitting such a case (see Pri Chadash, Yoreh Deah 60:5; Igrot Moshe, YD I, 147), the Rama (YD 60:1) rules like Tosafot's stringency regarding animals that have consistently been fed non-kosher feed. The Shach (ad loc.:5) and others argue on two major grounds. First, Tosafot was explaining an opinion that is not even accepted as halacha. Secondly, Tosafot's suggestion is regarding feed of avoda zara, which is assur b'hana'ah (forbidden in benefit), whereas the Rama forbade it even due to simple eating prohibition.

The second point suggests a distinction whereby more opinions can accept the stringency regarding issurei hana'ah. This raised a lot of discussion regarding milk on Pesach from animals that were fed chametz on Pesach. We can address this matter only superficially in this forum. A major principle indicating leniency is the acceptance of the opinion (Avoda Zara 49a) that zeh v'zeh goreim, mutar (=zvzgm). In other words, when something is the product of two or more physical factors, some of which are permitted and some forbidden, the resulting object is permitted. Here, the milk is a result of the chametz but also other feed and/or the animal's body, and thus it should be permitted. One question, though, is whether the major dependency on chametz, especially over time, makes the animal and its milk some type of continuation of the chametz (along the lines of the Rama).

There is also an issue that regarding chametz, where the rules of bitul (nullification) do not apply, zvzgm might not either (see Magen Avraham 445:5). Oversimplifying the matter, the Mishna B'rura (448:33) is equivocal and Rav Moshe Feinstein ruled leniently (Igrot Moshe, ibid.).

Important to us in Rav Feinstein's thesis is that he rejects not only the Rama but also the Shach's distinction. He says that the use of a by-product of an issur hana'ah that is now gone (i.e. the animal feed) is far too indirect to be considered benefiting from the original item. The prohibition could only be based on seeing the milk as an extension of the original object, which is a fringe opinion we do not accept.

Instead of citing all the various opinions and applying them to the similar but slightly more lenient case of basar b'chalav, we will obviate the issue by sharing our assumption, corroborated by an OU web page. Even regarding the calf feed that is a mixture of milk and meat (not all are), the milk and meat are not cooked together. That feed thus is forbidden only rabbinically and it is permitted to benefit from (Shulchan Aruch, YD 87:1). It is hard to imagine that even according to the Rama, a rabbinic prohibition (whose nature is procedural to require a person to refrain from eating, rather than saying the object is intrinsically forbidden- see Chelkat Yoav II, 20) would extend on to a transformed by-product.

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*

We are all familiar with the ARBA' LESHONOS SHE'LE GEULA, the four expressions of redemption mentioned in the beginning of the Sedra. Firstly, VIHOTSAYSI, "I will take you out" - the first phase of redemption is the extraction of the Jewish people from a foreign culture. Secondly, V'HITZALTI eschem mei'avodosom, "I will save you from their servitude." The second phase is being able to be productive and work for our own needs and purposes and not foreign interests. Thirdly, V'GO'ALTI eschem, "I will redeem you" - The third phase is that we will not be subservient to a foreign power but be free to plot our own future and destiny. And lastly, V'LAKACHTI eschem li l'am, "I will take you to be my nation, the fourth phase is that we will receive the Torah that will guide us in charting our mission and destiny in our own unique and holy manner, dictated by Hashem. Corresponding to these four expressions, the Rabbis instituted the four cups of wine at the Seder. The positioning of the cups hint to the phase of redemption to which they correspond. The first cup is Kiddush - hinting to our sanctification and separation from the nations. The second cup is drunk at the culmination of Magid over the matza and before we eat the meal, hinting to our ability to attend to our own needs. The third cup is bentching, a thank you to Hashem for our ability to be

free and able to use our energy for Torah bris, the Davidic dynasty and the Temple. The fourth cup is over the Hallel - which is our link to Hashem through Torah.

However, there is a fifth phrase that is not incorporated as a fifth cup and that is V'HEIVEISI eschem el ha'aretz, "I will bring you into the land". This is the culmination of the redemption. Why is it not commemorated with a cup of wine? Perhaps the answer lies in the words of the S'forno. The S'forno points out that in fact there is yet a sixth phrase in these verses, following "and I will take you as my people" and preceding "I will bring you into the land", the Torah says, "VIDATEM ki ani Hashem" - "And you will know that I am Hashem who took you out of Mitzrayim". The S'forno says that this means that you must contemplate and ponder these phases of redemption and integrate and internalize their meaning so that they will become ingrained within you and become part of your very essence. This is the meaning of "yedia", a deep intimate bond with that which one perceives, established through deep contemplation. When this will happen, then I will bring you into the Land, for then the Land of Israel will serve its purpose to provide the environment needed to enhance a nation that is uniquely similar to the qualities of the land. As the Rabbis tell us, Hakadosh Boruch Hu measured all lands and found no land more fitting to the Jewish people than Eretz Yisroel and no people more fitting to the Land of Israel than the Jewish people. We are a holy nation with special Divine Providence and this is a holy land with special Divine

Providence. Hence, the land will provide and enhance all of the qualities that the Jewish people are supposed to internalize through their redemption. The land will provide the insulation and distance from foreign cultures; it will provide a fertile foundation to build a holy society through our own labor, it will provide the opportunity to create our own kingdom and independence from foreign powers and lastly, it will be the place where the Torah can be fully observed.

But since we did not ponder these points and didn't internalize their message, that generation did not enter Eretz Yisroel and the entrance of the land was not a natural result and continuation of the redemption. Subsequently, even after entering the land, we were eventually exiled from it twice until this very day. Hence, the phrase "V'HEIVEISI eschem el ha'aretz", "I will bring you into the land" is not a continuation directly of the first four phases and therefore the fifth cup was not instituted.

Now that Hashem has in His great kindness enabled us to once again begin to settle the land of Israel, it behooves us to ponder and contemplate what our essence is as a free people and the true purpose the Land of Israel plays in enhancing that essence, so that we can merit our final redemption and settle in the land forever and finally drink the fifth cup.

Rabbi Zev Leff, Moshav Matityahu

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

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

Parshat Va'eira On the Shoulders of Giants

"They don't make them the way they used to."

We have all heard this comment with reference to all sorts of things, usually tools and utensils. Despite all the technological advances from which we benefit, we often are convinced that certain things were of superior quality in the old days. We believe that the old hammer Grandpa once used was stronger, and the snow shovel he wielded more effective, than the newfangled "throwaway" junk that they produce nowadays.

We even extend this belief of things being better back in the old days to human beings. Today's leaders cannot be compared to those of old, and today's athletes are cheap imitations of the Babe Ruths and Ty Cobbs of yesteryear.

In the Jewish tradition, there is a concept of "nitkatnu hadorot", the generations get progressively smaller. Talmudic sages are no match for Biblical heroes, and the great rabbis of recent times cannot compare to the rabbinical leaders of centuries ago.

Like any other belief, this one requires a healthy dose of skepticism. Surely technological progress has provided us with tools that are

superior to those we once used. And, whereas every generation has its outstanding heroes, not everyone in the past was a perfect person. Furthermore, there are plenty of people today who can stand up to the best of previous generations in their courage, in their erudition, or in their piety.

In this week's Torah portion, Va'eira, we encounter what might be the first example in history of the comparison of a current personage with previous ones in which the former comes off poorly.

Rashi shares with us, and ultimately rejects, the Talmud's version of what the opening verses in our Parsha tell us. The Talmud understands these verses in the context of the concluding episodes of last week's Torah portion, where Moshe challenged the Almighty and asked Him why He has "mistreated this people", thereby questioning his very mission. Indeed, somewhat earlier in last week's portion, he asked God, "What will I tell the people if they ask me for Your name?"

With this background, the rabbis understand the opening verses of this week's Torah portion as follows: G-d compared Moshe to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. From this perspective, the patriarchs were much more trusting in G-d and demonstrated greater faith than Moshe. They did not question G-d in spite of their frustrations. Moshe did.

"A pity that they are gone and no longer to be found." This statement,

which the rabbis attribute to G-d, closely resembles the opening statement of this essay, "They don't make them like they used to."

Personally, I have come to appreciate the opinion of those other commentators who defend Moshe and who point out that Moshe challenged G-d, not out of faithlessness, but out of a profound and powerful empathy for the suffering of His people.

Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov were individuals. At best, they were heads of families, whereas Moshe held the role of a leader of a large nation. In his circumstances, blind faith would have been irresponsible.

When comparing later generations with earlier ones, we must take into account the changed circumstances of those later generations. We must judge them, not by the standards of those who came before them, but in their own contexts.

In the reading that I do about the Holocaust victims and survivors, I often ask myself whether I could possibly have struggled to remain alive in the conditions of torture and horror that they experienced, retaining their will to live. And I am certain that had I personally suffered the Holocaust experience, I would not have been able to emerge from it with the faith commitment of so many of the survivors who came to these shores with recreated families, practicing their faith punctiliously, and reconstructing vibrant religious institutions.

I believe that it is not that we are innately inferior to them. Rather, our circumstances have softened us, whereas their circumstances strengthened them.

There is indeed a theme in our tradition that sees a generation as diminished in comparison with the previous one; the later generation in fact becoming "smaller".

But our tradition also encourages us to realize that later generations have one great advantage over previous ones: We stand on their shoulders. We benefit from their precedent.

Moshe had this advantage: He could learn from Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov and could model his faith and leadership capacities upon them.

From this view, Moshe's confronting the Almighty in defense of his people was simply something he learned from Avraham, who similarly confronted G-d in defense of the people of S'dom.

It might be true of us that "they don't make them the way they used to", but that need not stop us from asking ourselves, as our Sages did, "When will my deeds approach the deeds of my fathers?" For we have the deeds of our fathers to learn from as we build our own spiritual lives.

We stand on the shoulders of long generations of giants. Perhaps future generations will similarly look up to us.

Parsha Points to Ponder **VA'EIRA**

1) How can G-D state regarding the Jews who were going to leave Egypt that I WILL BRING THEM TO THE LAND (6:8), if these people did not merit to go Israel in the end because of the sin of the spies?

2) Why does the Torah use the language AND PAR'O SAW THAT THERE WAS A RESPITE AND HARDENED HIS HEART AND DID NOT LISTEN TO THEM (8:11) specifically regarding the frogs and no other plague?

3) Why does Par'o use the language G-D IS THE RIGHTEOUS ONE specifically when experiencing the plague of hail (9:27)?

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" (Devora)

His Hagada commentary, "SEDER SAVVY" will be IY"H published by Targum before Pesach ppp@ouisrael.org

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

The Missing Text (?)

On Shabbat Rosh Chodesh the middle (main) bracha of the Amida is special for the occasion. Instead of TIKANTA SHABBAT, we say, below the line, ATA YATZARTA. The final passage of this bracha seems to have unexpectedly dropped a sentence that is in the bracha of a "plain" Shabbat, the part that begins with KAD'SHEINU B'MITZVOTECHA... Aruch HaShulchan expresses the opinion that there is no reason that section should not be said on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh; Rinat Yisrael and other siddurim have accordingly put the sentences back. Here is the "corrected" text of that final passage of the middle bracha for Musaf of Shabbat R"Ch. You might want to consult with your Rav before changing what you have been saying.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, רַצְּהָ בְּמִנוּחָתְנוּ, וְחַדֵּשׁ
עֲלֵינוּ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיטָה הַזֶּה אֶת הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, לְטוֹבָה
וְלְבִרְכָה, לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וְלִשְׂמֵחָה, לְיִשׁוּעָה וְלִנְחִמָה,
לְפָרְנֶסָה וְלְכִלְכָּלָה, לְחַיִּים וְלְשָׁלוֹם, לְמַחֲלֵילַת חַטָּא
וְלְסִלְיַחַת עוֹן (וְלְכַפֶּרֶת פֶּשַׁע). קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
וְתֵן חֻלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, שְׂבַעֲנוּ מִטוֹבְךָ, וְשִׂמְחָנוּ
בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ, וְטַהַר לִבָּנוּ לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאַמֶּת, וְהִנְחֵלְנוּ
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרַצוֹן שֶׁבֶת קִדְּשֶׁךָ, וְיִגְוַחוּ
בוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִקִּדְּשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ. כִּי בַעֲמֹד יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחַרְתָּ
מִכָּל הָאֲמוֹת, וְשֶׁבֶת קִדְּשֶׁךָ לָהֶם הוֹדַעְתָּ, וְחָקִי
רָאִשֵׁי חֲדָשִׁים לָהֶם קִבַּעְתָּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', מִקִּדְּשֵׁי
הַשְּׁבִיטָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְרָאִשֵׁי חֲדָשִׁים.

L'sheim Mitzvat HACHODESH HAZEH LACHEM*

There are 385 different Jewish Calendar dates - 353 of them occur every year, the 30th of Kislev occurs 74.5% of the time, the 30th of Marcheshvan occurs 44.9% of the time, and the 30 dates of Adar Alef occur 37% of the time.

Of the 385 dates, 295 of them are solidly linked together and follow the LO ADU ROSH pattern (or one of its 6 variations). These are the days from the first of Adar (either the first of two or the only one) all the way through and around the year until the 29th of Marcheshvan. These 295 dates are not affected by the variables in our calendar (namely, 30 Marcheshvan, 30 Kislev, and Adar Alef).

The 30th of Marcheshvan is the most "restricted" of dates and can fall only on SUN, TUE, or THU.

1-29 Kislev have only one day of the week (D/W) each on which they cannot fall.

The 30th of Kislev is also LO ADU, but it isn't linked to the main set of dates.

59 dates (1-29 Tevet and 1-30 Shvat) each have two D/W on which they cannot fall. Rosh Chodesh Shvat, for example, cannot fall on a Sunday or Friday. The same is so for 2,9,16,23 Tevet and 8,15,22,29 Shvat. The other dates within this group of 59 form 6 other sub-groups (of 8 or 9 members each), each sub-group with its own 2 days on which they cannot fall.

*** Knowing the details of the Jewish Calendar is part of the spirit of the very first mitzva given to Bnei Yisrael while we were still in Mitzrayim.**

Even more so, **USING the Jewish Calendar** is part of this mitzva - why not start dating your checks with the Jewish date (in Israel, it is perfectly acceptable; don't try this in Chutz LaAretz - come on Aliya instead!). One should know his or her Hebrew birthday and celebrate it (in addition to the "general calendar" date.)

Praying with Passion

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Modeh Ani "It's great to be alive!" cont. from last week...

מוֹדֵה/מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם, שֶׁחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחַמְלָה, רַבָּה אֲמוּנָתְךָ.

Simple translation: I gratefully thank You, O living and eternal King, for You have returned my soul within me with compassion -- abundant is your faithfulness.

Personal connection: Your life today is not just a continuation of your life yesterday. It is a new gift, a new chance. "Modeh": We acknowledge a priceless gift. When a person sleeps at night, the greater portion of his soul leaves his body and ascends to heaven; it returns when he awakens, even though his sins might be such that he doesn't deserve another day. No matter where we might have gone wrong yesterday, Hashem grants us today - time to correct our flaws and fulfill our purpose. "Modeh": We are grateful for another chance. Each new day of life is a precious gift of grace that G-d grants us, with the hope that we will use it wisely. [Ed. note: This is one of the ways to understand the word B'CHEMLA, with compassion. G-d restores our soul even if we don't deserve it; even if our soul "objects", so to speak, being returned to a sinning body. This is a display of His compassion for us.]

Try this: Upon waking up each day, focus briefly but closely on some aspect of your body's healthy functioning - make note of the images that greet your eye or

the sounds that greet your ears, or the movement of your limbs, and imagine how it would be if it were not so. Then say Modeh. We have a lot to thank G-d for.

Word to the Wise: Meaning within the meaning... Rav Hutner points out that the Hebrew word for "admitting" and the Hebrew word for "giving thanks" are the same -- Hoda'ah. Rav Hutner explains that the reason these two words are identical in Hebrew is because a person's ability to give thanks is based on his ability to admit that he is incomplete. When a person gives thanks to someone, he is admitting that he needed that person's favors and kindness. A person who has difficulty admitting that he can't succeed on his own has difficulty saying "thank you." On the other hand, someone who is keenly aware of how others help him is naturally appreciative, and therefore feels more positive toward others and toward Hashem, the greatest Giver of all.

TTreader feedback: I wanted to thank Torah Tidbits for the great new column, "Praying with Passion".

Please tell the author that I read another meaning into the words "rabah emunatecha" in the Modah Ani prayer. I understand it as our saying to G-d, "how

great is Your faith that I will fulfill the destiny that You put me on Earth to achieve."

Understanding it thusly gives me a lot of strength and affirmation. - CFC

Ponder this: [Ed. note] Have you ever noticed that when we say brachot, we start with the second person familiar in addressing G-d - BARUCH ATA... (either, Blessed are You or You are the source of all blessing), and by the end of the bracha we have changed to the more respectful and remote third person - SHEHAKOL NIH-YA BIDVARO, that everything that exists came into existence by His Word, not BIDVARECHA, Your word. ASHER KID'SHANU B'MITZVOTAV, (G-d) Who has sanctified us with His mitzvot, not B'MITZVOTECHA, Your mitzvot. Why the change? Because after the first ATA, we say HASHEM ELOKEINU MELECH HA-OLAM, G-d, our G-d, King of the Universe. That humbles us, scares us, and we think - how can I address G-d as You. So we change to third person. Okay, then how come we say in second person throughout MODEH ANI? LIFANECHA, SHEHECHEZARTA, EMU-NATECHA. A possible answer is that we say MODEH when we are in our most pristine state of the day. Our soul has just been recharged and restored. We are a new entity with a fresh soul. We can then still be on a more intimate level with G-d and address Him in the second person familiar.

This idea is echoed in a humorous way by the following piece that has made the rounds on email over the last several years:

"Dear God, so far today, I've done OK. I haven't gossiped, or lost my temper. I haven't been greedy, mean, nasty, selfish, kvetchy or overindulgent. And I'm very grateful for that. But dear God, in a few minutes I'm gonna get out of bed, and then I'm probably gonna need a lot more help. Amen."

Ed. note: Praying with Passion is the work of Rabbi Heshy Kleinman and his V'Ani Tefillah Foundation. The Torah Tidbits version of Praying with Passion is taken from the archives of the website (see address below) except for the TTreader feedback and that which is introduced as Ed. note.

Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Bamidbar Stories

Pinchas (Bamidbar 25:11){5a}

by **Dr. Meir Tamari**

"Pinchas is Eliyahu Hanavi; of the former it is written, 'by zealously making My Rights valid', and Eliyahu says, 'I have been zealous'" (Bava Metzia 114a). In the stories of both of them, are presented the Jewish balanced view between the legitimate place of zealotry and the demands of Ahavah and Chesed. "The prayer 'For the slanderers let there be no hope', Birkat HaMinim, in the Amida, is so full of hate and condemnation that it is bound to arouse feelings of animosity against the traitors and internal enemies of Israel. Such a prayer must therefore originate with one who is noted for a lack of the passion of hatred. So Shmuel HaKatan was chosen by the Sages to author Birkat HaMinim. It he who taught, 'rejoice not in the downfall of your enemy and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles' (Mishlei 24:17). Lest G-d see and it displeases Him (Avotr 4:24)," (HaRav Kook zt"l).

It is fitting therefore that the haftara of Parshat Pinchas when it is read before Shiva Asar b'Tamuz, is the revelation to Eliyahu in the Cave at Sinai (Melachim Alef 18:46-19:21).

When Eliyahu killed the prophets

of Baal, Jezebel sought to kill him and he fled to Har Sinai. In that chapter the whole story parallels, yet is in contrast to, that of the revelation there to Moshe after the sin of the Eigel. Rabbag, Rashi, Abarbanel and others claim that he did not flee out of fear of Jezebel's threat but rather because prophecy was withheld from him. When, despite the miracle at Har HaCarmel, nothing changed in the behavior of the people, Eliyahu set out to find prophecy at Har Sinai, at the place of Matan Torah, the most awesome of all revelations. He traveled there by foot for 40 days and nights without eating or drinking, sustained only by the miraculous food given to him by an angel, till he reached the Cave at Sinai. Throughout, it should be remembered that in this same Cave, the Shelosh Esrei Midot of G-d's Mercy had been revealed in answer to Moshe's prayers for forgiveness for Israel's sin (Shmot 33:21-34-6).

Twice G-d appeared to Eliyahu there asking, "What are you doing here Eliyahu"? G-d was actually asking by what right did Eliyahu who had brought drought on Israel and killed the 200 prophets of Baal come for prophecy to this Cave. Here Moshe, after grinding the Eigel into dust, making Israel drink the "god" that they had made and then having those who worshiped it killed, pleaded for forgiveness for his people; something that Eliyahu had not done nor was conscious that it was required of a leader. *to be continued*

Machon Puah

Establishing Constant Supervision

In the past several weeks we have demonstrated the moral and ethical, if not halachic need for maintaining a clear and certified "chain of possession" for genetic materials being processed outside the body until they are reintroduced to the body as part of a fertility treatment. We have also shown that constant supervision is required, in order to be absolutely certain that a child is the genetic product of his parents without the possibility of human error. As such, fertility supervision is necessarily distinct from other types of supervision.

In order to absolutely certify the "chain of possession", the supervisor needs to have constant and direct access to the genetic material being processed. From the time the genetic material is presented to the lab, she (Puah supervisors are all religious women) must be present in the laboratory at any time the embryologist works with the sperm, eggs, or embryos. She must even maintain direct eye contact with the materials at all times.

She cannot leave the laboratory. She cannot take telephone calls or even go to the bathroom, but must remain in the laboratory continuously. Her sole role is to constantly monitor the work of the embryologists and ensure that there was no mix up.

Of course, it is physically impossible to

maintain eye contact with materials being spun in a centrifuge. Nor is it reasonable to expect supervisors to sleep in the lab overnight while a fertilized egg grows in the incubator.

In order to maintain the integrity of "constant supervision", Puah has invented unique containers and seals to be used at such times. These containers are affixed around the individual vials containing the materials being processed and are then sealed by the supervisor using Puah's special seals. Once the container is sealed, it is physically impossible to access the genetic materials without completely destroying the seal. The supervisor is permitted to suspend monitoring activities only when the seal is in place.

When the embryologist wishes to resume handling the genetic materials, the supervisor first checks the seal, verifying that it has not been broken. Once that determination has been made, the seal is broken and the supervisor resumes constant monitoring of the materials. This process continues up to the moment that the materials are reintroduced to the womb as part of the fertility treatment.

A single supervisor is generally assigned to each case, so the couples are familiar with their personal supervisor. In fact, the sight of the supervisor accompanying the genetic materials is a welcome sign to Puah couples that the processing was completely error free.

It is very important that the standard of supervision is accepted by all authorities and segments of Jewish society, without question. As such, Puah supervisors are ultra-orthodox women, whose testimony

is acceptable to all. Supervisors do not need to have a medical background; such a background may even be a disadvantage since a medically oriented person may be tempted to interfere with laboratory procedures, which is definitely not something within the purview of a supervisor.

Since the overwhelming majority of procedures involve female patients and the large majority of embryologists are women, Puah supervisors are all women.

Supervisors undergo an intensive training program. They are taught the basics of fertility, halacha, and the standards and practices of their job. They are tested and undergo supervised practical training in the laboratories where they will eventually work, all in an effort to ensure that they are familiar with their responsibilities and serve as true guardians for the genetic materials.

We try as much as possible to work with physicians to schedule procedures at convenient times for all involved. However, fertility treatments are precisely timed to coincide with specific things happening within a woman's body. As such, supervisors are sometimes on call 24 hours a day, even on Shabbat and Chagim.

It is not an easy task, and requires personal sacrifice and a significant investment of time and effort. Their ultimate reward is learning that their couple had a child. Yet, they often have no connection with the couple after the procedure and their reward is the knowledge that they played a significant role in ensuring the sanctity and

continuation of the Jewish people.

They are the unsung heroes of the Puah Institute.

PORTION OF THE PORTION

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Hail and Prayer

We have discussed the plague of BARAD - hail before, but this year we will look at some new insights from the Shem MiShmuel.

After experiencing the plague throughout the land of Egypt, Par'o again tells Moshe that he will allow the Jews to leave Egypt and he requests that Moshe remove the plague. Moshe tells him that when he goes out of the city he will stretch out his hands to Hashem and the thunder and hail will stop (Sh'mot 9:29). Why does Moshe say "when I go out of the city I will pray"? Couldn't he pray in the city? Rashi says that he couldn't pray in the city because it was filled with idols. It seems that Moshe was saying that he couldn't "talk to Hashem" properly because of all the idols around. But didn't Moshe pray to Hashem to remove the plagues of frogs (8:8) and locusts (10:18-19)? There he prayed in the city. What had changed? What was different in the plague of hail?

We see something different already in G-d's speech to Moshe to bring the hail. He says to him, "Stretch out your hand upon the heavens, and there will be hail in all the land of Egypt (9:22). The word upon is a bit unusual and that is why Rashi brings a Midrash that Hashem lifted Moshe

above the heavens. But the word upon is also used at the plague of CHOSHECH - darkness (10:21) and Rashi there doesn't say that Moshe was lifted above the heavens. Why does he say it by hail? What was so special about the hail?

The verse tells us that there was "hail and fire flaming within the hailstones" (9:24). Rashi explains that this was a double miracle - that in order to do Hashem's will water (hail) and fire worked together. They made peace. They reverted to a relationship from an earlier stage in history when fire and water were mixed together - as it says in B'reshit Rabba about the SHAMAYIM - the heavens - that G-d made them by mixing fire (EISH) and water (MAYIM) - EISH+MAYIM = SHAMAYIM = the heavens. Moshe did have to go to a higher realm - to above the heavens - to bring the hail, which was a combination of fire and water. That's why Rashi makes that comment at the plague of hail and not at the plague of darkness.

So hail was special and Moshe had to go to a different domain to bring it, but why couldn't he stay in the city to remove it? Why did he have to leave the city to pray? Jews have had to pray amongst non-Jews for any centuries. Are we implying that this is not allowed?

The SHEM MISHMUEL explains that just like a special spiritual force was needed to bring the hail - a similar special spiritual force was needed to remove it. Moshe's prayer needed to stretch the limits of human ability - demanding a perfect environment and the utmost concentration. This could not be achieved around idols so

Moshe left the city.

We may not want hail now, but we sure could use some rain - and some special praying could only help.

The verses dealing with the plague of hail end by saying that the flax and barley plants were destroyed by the hail but the wheat and buckwheat were not. Here is a recipe for flax and buckwheat muffins. If you don't have buckwheat flour just use regular flour instead.

BUCKWHEAT FLAX BRAN MUFFINS

- 3 cups bran
- 2 cup buckwheat flour
- 4 eggs
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 cup soy milk
- 1 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup raisins or Craisins®
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1-3 Tbsp flax seeds

Mix ingredients together in large bowl. Make sure the batter is smooth; let sit for 10 minutes.

Spoon into muffin tins. Bake for about 30 minutes at 350°F.



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

Last issue's (SH'MOT) TTriddles:

[1] Who had an extra grandfather?

Gershom and Eliezer, sons of Moshe and Tzipora. Their paternal grandfather is Amram. Their maternal grandfather is Yitro, who has several names, including YETER. That means extra.

[2] Mount Sinai and a bush on it

There is a phrase that occurs five times in the Torah (also, in all of Tanach). BO'EIR BA-EISH, burning with fire. Four times in D'varim, when Moshe Rabeinu describes Matan Torah and the Sinai Experience, he uses the phrase BO'EIR BA-EISH. (One time, it is BO'EIR BA-EISH AD LEIV HASHAMAYIM, burning with fire until the heart of the heavens.) Once in Parshat Sh'mot, we find the phrase applied to the S'NEH, the Burning Bush. Our Tradition is that the S'NEH was on Har Sinai.

[3] Pre-Exodus and when, did they do this?

In looking at this TTriddle, we see that the wording is much too vague and can include many different things. That which was intended was women borrowing clothes from their neighbors. This is mentioned in Parshat Sh'mot (3:22) as part of that which G-d tells Moshe at the S'NEH. It is to be one of the things that immediately precedes the Exodus. In a totally different context, it is what the last mishna of Masechet Taanit tells us

about TU b'Av - the daughters of Jerusalem would go out in borrowed white garmants - (borrowed) so as not to embarrass those who have none...

[4] The one missing from the Seven

The end of the pasuk quoted in the Lead Tidbit (Sh'mot 3:8), refers to Eretz Yisrael as a good and expansive land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and "the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites." These are 6 of the Seven Nations in the future Eretz Yisrael. Who is missing? The GIRGUSHI. Rashi (elsewhere) quotes the Midrash in saying that the Girgashi fled on its own rather than encounter Bnei Yisrael, therefore they are not mentioned in some of the listings of the Seven Nations. GIRGASHI is mentioned at the end of Va'etchanan in the definitive list of the Seven Nations. (In the Brit Bein HaB'tarim, they are mentioned as one of ten nations in the land that G-d promises to Avraham and his descendants.)

[5] Basket, milk node, the earth

VATIFTACH - And she opened... Bat Par'o opened the basket with Moshe in it. The earth opened her mouth (itself) and swallowed Datan and Aviram and Korach... Yael opened the flask (NOD) of milk and gave Sisra some, which made him drowsy. He then received a holey temple, as the old riddle's punchline goes.

[6] LDI, LD2, YLI, YL2, YB2, YL5, YR2, AY3, Peresh

Bat Par'o names Moshe. VATIKRA SH'MO MOSHE... Others that named sons (we can call Bat Par'o a mother of

sorts to Moshe, since the Tanach - in Divrei HaYamim basically does the same) with the exact phrase - VATIKRA SH'MO - are each of Lot's daughters - in the "code" of the TTriddle, the sons are LD1 (that's a one, not the letter i) and LD2, for Lot and daughter one and Lot and daughter 2. YL-one is Yaakov's and Leah's first son, Reuven, YL2 is Shimon, YL5 is Yissachar. For each of these sons, Leah named them and the Torah uses the words VATIKRA SH'MO. So too for YB2, that would be Naftali, second son of Yaakov and Bilha (named by Rachel), and Rachel's naming Binyamin (YR2), although her name did not stick; his father called him Binyamin - and so do we. AY3 is the third son of Amram and Yocheved - named, as mentioned above, by Bitya (a.k.a. Bat Par'o). These 8 occurrences of VATIKRA SH'MO are all from the Chumash (7 in B'reishit and one in Sh'mot). There is one more occurrence in Divrei HaYamim. And MAACHA, wife of MACHIR gives birth to a son, VATIKRA SH'MO, and she names him, PERESH...

[7] Unexplained in the ParshaPix

In the lower right-hand corner is a picture of a cross-section of a corn dog, which is "A frankfurter that is encased in corn bread batter before being baked or fried, usually served on a stick." The closest we have to that in Israel is a hot dog encased in phyllo dough, which is called, in Israeli slang, MOSHE BATEIVA, Moshe in the basket, as in Parshat Sh'mot.

[8] The MazalPic for Sh'vat (we change to the new month's MazalPic on Shabbat M'vorchim) is the meteorological symbol for Cumulonimbus clouds, which is "a type of cloud that is tall, dense, and

involved in thunderstorms and other intense weather. Cumulonimbus means "column rain" in Latin." As a rain cloud it carries water, making it a water carrier, as in Aquarius the water carrier - Zodiac sign of the month of Sh'vat. May our Sh'vat be filled with beneficial, blessed rain. The name of the mazal of Sh'vat in Hebrew is D'LI, bucket or pail, which carry water.


ParshaPix explanations


The ParshaPix started its career way back when, on page 3 of Torah Tidbits. When we went to a color outer pages, we made it a bit larger and put it in color on page 2. This week - as a one-time thing (which might be repeated), we decided to highlight it by putting it on the front page. We have always found it to be a fun way to get into a discussion on Parshat HaShavua with children and guests at the Shabbat table or whenever it works out. One of its features is that it can be used with children and adults of different levels and backgrounds. For example, you can show a young child the picture of frogs and ask him/her to tell you about the Makot. You can show an older child or adult the picture of the oven and see who remembers about the frogs unnaturally going into the ovens of the Egyptians. This can lead to a discussion of the supernatural aspects of the Makot and why that is important. Occasionally (all right, more than occasionally) there are plays-on-words, puns, etc. to contend with - but that's part of the fun.


Usually, most of the elements in a ParshaPix are explained in the same issue - with only a few Unexplaineds left as additional challenges, with their solutions appearing in the following week's issue. This week, we will explain all of the ParshaPix for the benefit of people who


might be new to it and its potential uses.


One last point: Peter Pan and the Pink Panther are the "hosts" of ParshaPix because they share its initials.


 7 of the 10 images from the Davka Judaica graphic of the 10 plagues. The final three are in next week's sedra. (BO = BET+ALEF = 2+1 = 3 final plagues that are found in Parshat BO.)


 Prominent in the middle of the ParshaPix is the MATEH, Moshe's Staff. It is burping because it (not the TANIN it had changed into) eat the staffs of the Egyptian wizards.

 The sword represents Z'RO'A N'TUYA, the "outstretched arm" with which we were to be taken out of Egypt. (Where is the connection made between an outstretched arm and the sword? In the Hagada.)

 The shovel used by the Egyptians to dig for water - only way for an Egyptian to get a drink during the plague of Blood.

 The oven is what some frogs went into, producing a Kiddush HaShem and a lesson to us that G-d is still in charge of nature - He renews, every day, the acts of Creation. (Each element of nature that was used by G-d in the process of the Plagues and Exodus sanctifies G-d's name because we see His control and involvement in this world.)

 Four cups of wine for the Four Terms of Redemption (or other 4s, as posited by different sources - ask your children and guests for other reasons for 4 cups) which we find at the beginning of the sedra.

 Triple-S J, Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, slogan: Let My People Go.

- 📖 Pictorial representation of Par'o's heart strengthening, as is mentioned in several places in Va'eira (and Bo).
- 📖 Emblem of the Hogwarts School. Par'o's wizards might have been dropouts from Hogwarts since they were not able to cope with the plague of KINIM (lice).
- 📖 Below Davka's Hail are the standing wheat and the broken barley in the aftermath of that plague.
- 📖 Crocs, comfortable shoes whose logo is a crocodile, as in the staff-turned-to-TANIN. (Not to be confused with alligator shoes.)
- 📖 The compass needle points north, EL TZAFON, as in ELTZAFAN b. Uziel, bro of Misha'el and Sitri.
- 📖 C (atomic number 6, atomic weight 12.01) is the symbol for carbon, the main (only?) ingredient in the furnace soot that Moshe and Aharon used to bring about the plague of SH'CHIN (boils).
- 📖 Flag of Vietnam. The key makes it KINAM, a.k.a. KINIM, plague #3.
- 📖 Elazar b. Aharon HaKohein married one of the daughters of PUTI'EL; they had Pinchas. Elazar's wife was BAT-POOH-T-L.
- 📖 There are sports teams' symbols for AROV. Detroit Tigers (baseball), Cincinnati Bengals (football), Memphis Grizzlies (basketball) Most appropriate - Why? (Memphis was also the name of an ancient Egyptian city (and capital)
- 📖 Top right are the tops of the word CHODESH, making this element ROSH CHODESH.

- 📖 Under that is a picture of snow cones, shaved ice with flavoring (and color). In Hebrew, BARAD, as in plague #7. Next to the BARAD is fire, which was contained within the hailstones of that plague. (The BARAD snow cones do not have fire unless you find one flavored with cinnamon and hot chili.)
- 📖 Below the fire is a RAMZOR, traffic light, with green for GO followed by a tooth, in Hebrew, SHEN, combining to GOSHEN, the area of the Jews which stood in sharp contrast to the rest of Egypt that was smitten by the plagues. This contrast is an issue with Par'o, as presented in the sedra.
- 📖 The chair with a footrest is from the opening pasuk of the Haftara for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh: "Thus says HaShem, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool..."
- 📖 Under that is an uzi and a bottle and glass of ale, combining to UZIEL, uncle of Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam. (The hard challenge in this is to get UZIEL. Once gotten, ask who he was? If they don't know, send them to a Chumash)
- 📖 The frog who thinks that 2+2=5 is a DUMB TZ'FARDEI'A.
- 📖 The letter E formed with a date palm and 3 dates is an ITAMAR.

That's the way the ParshaPix works. Great starting point for Parshat HaShavua review (without the kids thinking it's school time). Use it well, and have fun along the way.

Redemption, Kehuna, Yechezkeil x 8

More than 50% animals constitutes this

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WISDOM & WIT

by **Shmuel Himmelstein**

R' Eliyahu David Rabinowitz-Teomim (the Aderes) was the Rav in Ponevezh, a wealthy town. Unfortunately, the residents of the town paid him a very low wage, and he was constantly struggling to make ends meet.

Realizing that the Aderes could not live on the salary he was paid in Ponevezh, the townsfolk of Mir approached him and offered him a much higher salary. The Aderes was happy to accept this new offer.

When the people of Ponevezh heard that their Rav was about to leave them, they got together and decided to offer the Aderes a wage that was far above that which he had accepted from the people of Mir.

The Aderes refused to even consider this offer, even though it would save him the tremendous bother of moving and would pay him much more.

"I have given my word to the people of Mir," he said, "and one does not go back on his word."



"When a wise man looks in a mirror," said the Baal Shem Tov, "he says all the imperfections in himself. However, when a fool looks in a mirror, all that he sees is how handsome he looks."

SEgol vs. kaMATZ 16-1

Yaaleh V'Yavo (YVY)

If one omits YVY in Maariv of R"Ch, he does not repeat the Amida.

For Shacharit and Mincha, one must repeat the entire Amida.

If one realizes his omission and has not yet said G-d's name in the end of the R'TZEI bracha, just go back to YVY and say from there.

After saying G-d's name - finish the bracha and say YVY before continuing with MODIM.

Once MODIM was begun, go back to R'TZEI and say from there.

If you realize your omission after finishing the Amida (saying YIHU L'RATZON...), repeat the whole Amida. Remember: Shacharit and Mincha, but not Maariv.

Omission of YVY in Birkat HaMazon does NOT invalidate the benching. If you forget YVY, do not repeat. If you realize your omission before beginning the next bracha, there is a special bracha to say in lieu of YVY.

RAHAV a.k.a. Neptune

Neptune's new Hebrew name is **Rahav**. According to JewishEncyclopedia.com - Originally a mythical name designating the abyss or the sea... mentioned in Iyov and T'hilim... the sea-monster, the dragon... Talmud, "Rahav" is the name of the demon, the ruler of the sea ("Sar shel Yam"; B. B. 74b)... alludes to Egypt... some see it as meaning "arrogance," "noise," or "tumult" - applied to the roaring of the sea and to the Egyptians

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Days on which a Beit Din does not meet

Several weeks ago, Rena and I were invited to a friend's home for the Friday night meal. The host's son who is a rabbi in a community near New York asked me the following question. He and three other rabbis in their community had set up a Beit Din to adjudicate monetary disputes among the members of several congregations. Most of the members of the congregations were businessmen and it was generally difficult for them to take time from their business should they ever have to go to the Beit Din. Since their business were closed on Shabbat could the Beit Din hold sessions on Shabbat should the need arise.

I explained that there was a chapter in Shulhan Aruch Choshen Mishpat that dealt with the days when Beit Din could not hold sessions. Is Shabbat one of those days?

The Talmud records that during the 5th century BCE, Ezra HaSofer enacted ten major decrees (see Bava Kama 82a). One of these enactments provided that a Beit Din should hold its sessions on Mondays and Thursdays. This enactment was clearly intended to strengthen the judicial process. However, there is another Talmudic passage which states that prior to Ezra's enactment, the courts held sessions every day of the week. Ezra's enactment would thus seem to have reduced accessibility to the court and apparently to have weakened the judicial process. I set forth an outline of the views of a few great scholars over the centuries

as to what the enactment accomplished. Commencing some 1500 years after Ezra's enactment, the Tosafists and successor commentaries offered several suggestions to reconcile these apparently disparate sources. Rabbainu Tam suggests that prior to the enactment a court would meet every day when required to judge cases; if there were no cases pending, however, then it would not hold sessions. This arrangement rendered the process of convening a court extremely cumbersome. The enactment therefore provided that a court must actually sit in session on Mondays and Thursdays whether or not trials were scheduled. Another suggestion by Ri HaZaken is that prior to the enactment of Ezra a court met every day in one major city. According to this view, the enactment required courts to sit in every city on Mondays and Thursdays. Rashba explains that before the enactment, courts would meet on unspecified days and now the courts would meet in each city on these designated days. Ritva says that prior to the enactment there was no specific time in the day when the courts would sit and now they had to remain in continuous session during these days. Meiri suggest that these days were selected since people assembled to hear the reading of the Torah on those days. It was stated above that prior to Ezra's enactment the courts met every day. This Talmudic statement appears in a discussion of the days on which a marriage ceremony should take place. An integral part of every Jewish marriage is the Ketuba. It was therefore decided that marriage ceremonies should take place on

a day preceding a day that is designated as a court session so that in the event of a claim of fraud based on the bride's alleged status, a husband could go to court on the day after the consummation of the marriage. Accordingly, The Mishna (T. Ketubo 1:1) in discussing the days on which a marriage should take place, states that in the case of a virgin it should take place on Wednesday, which is the day before the court meets. The Talmud explains that Sunday which also precedes a day designated for a court session is inappropriate since there is not enough time after Shabbat to prepare the wedding feast. The Talmud further states that the teaching that virgins should be married on Wednesday applies only after Ezra's enactment, but before Ezra's enactment, when court sessions were held every day, marriages were held on any day. The Talmud in turn asks why there is a discussion of the law before Ezra's enactment. The answer given is that even after the enactment, if there is a place where court sessions are held every day then a marriage ceremony may take place every day. Indeed Alfasi states that in those places where after the enactment court sessions are held every day, marriage ceremonies may be held every day provided there was adequate preparation. We thus see from Alfasi that there are places where court sessions are held every day. Rambam also in his statement of the halacha indicates that there are places where the court meets every day. From the foregoing we see that the days when a court may hold sessions plays a prominent role.

to be continued IYH

Kermit thinks that July the 4th is a British king

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) The Ohr HaChayim explains that the previous verse attaches a condition to G-D's words. It says **AND YOU WILL KNOW THAT I AM YOUR G-D... AND I WILL BRING THEM.** G-D is saying that He will bring them to Israel only if they maintain their relationship with Him which they failed to do when they sinned with the spies.

2) The Kli Yakar teaches that when every other plague ended, it was removed completely with no remnant and, therefore, it was natural for Par'o to revert back to his old ways. However, after the plague of frogs, the frogs were still there in piles and causing a terrible smell so one would wonder how Par'o could remain stubborn with the reminder of the plague right in front of him. Therefore, the Torah explains that Par'o saw **REVACHA** which can mean **RESPIRE** but also **OPEN SPACE**. He saw the many open spaces in Egypt where the bad smell was not noticeable and that empowered him to remain stubborn.

3) The Daat Zekeinim MiBaalei HaTosfot answers that before the hail, G-D warned the people to bring in their animals, so Par'o was declaring that G-D was righteous for warning them and they were wrong for ignoring G-D's warning and leaving their animals out and their being killed during hail.