

TT 899
Rabbeinu Tam
6:52pm (J'm)

<u>Candles</u>	<u>KI TISA - PARA</u>	<u>Havdala</u>	<u>Next week</u>
5:04pm	Yerushalayim	6:17pm	5:09/6:22
5:22pm	S'derot	6:20pm	5:27/6:25
5:19pm	Gush Etzion	6:18pm	5:25/6:22
5:20pm	Raanana	6:19pm	5:26/6:24
5:20pm	Beit Shemesh	6:18pm	5:25/6:23
5:21pm	Rehovot	6:19pm	5:26/6:24
5:20pm	Netanya	6:19pm	5:25/6:24
5:19pm	Be'er Sheva	6:19pm	5:24/6:24
5:20pm	Modi'in	6:18pm	5:25/6:23
5:04pm	Petach Tikva	6:18pm	5:09/6:24
5:04pm	Maale Adumim	6:17pm	5:09/6:22
5:19pm	Ginot Shomron	6:18pm	5:25/6:23
5:19pm	Gush Shiloh	6:17pm	5:24/6:22
5:20pm	K4 & Hevron	6:18pm	5:25/6:23
5:19pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	6:17pm	5:24/6:22
5:21pm	Yad Binyamin	6:19pm	5:26/6:24
5:22pm	Ashkelon	6:20pm	5:27/6:25
5:07pm	Tzfat	6:16pm	5:13/6:21

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
17-26 Adar (March 3-12)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:14-5:04am
Sunrise	6:05-5:54am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	8:57-8:51am
(Magen Avraham: 8:13-8:06am)	
Sof Z'man T'fila	9:55-9:50am
(Magen Avraham: 9:25-9:20am)	
Chatzot	11:51-11:49am
(halachic noon)	
Mincha Gedola	12:22-12:19pm
(earliest Mincha)	
Plag Mincha	4:26-4:30½pm
Sunset	5:42-5:49pm
(based on sea level: 5:38-5:44pm)	

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Lead Tidbit continued from front page...

Here's the problem. If we were talking about korbanot (sacrifices) and the use of bulls for some of them, then we can say - and commentaries do say - that the choice of a bull (among other animals) is analogous to the father cow atoning for his son the Eigel (calf). Korbanot are for atonement. The Mizbei'ach is an atoning item in the Mikdash.

But the Para Aduma is not a korban. It is not offered on the Mizbei'ach. It is not even prepared in the Mikdash area or on Har HaBayit, but across the valley on the Mount of Olives. The potion of the ashes of the Para Aduma are not for atonement from sin - they are for ritual purification of one who is defiled from contact with a dead body. Being TAMEI is not a sin; sometimes, it is even a mitzva.

Is this a flaw in the analogy? Does the Para Aduma clean up the mess of her son, the golden calf? What's the connection between ritual purification and the sin of the calf?

Perhaps we can see the connection this way - between ritual defilement to a dead body and sin. Why is a dead body such a powerful source of TUM'A? It did not have to be that way. A dead body could have been merely like the shell of an egg or the peel of a fruit - it is the receptacle of the soul. It is the house in which the soul lives during a person's lifetime. Take the soul away and you just have an empty shell. No automatic source of defilement. Just the shell.

Ah! But the body is not just the housing of the soul. It is the active partner of the soul. The combination of a body and a soul makes the person what he is. And makes the Jew what he is. The Jew is commanded to keep the Torah and do mitzvot. He is commanded to be holy. The soul of a person is T'HORA - it is pure. It is CHEILEK ELOKUT, part of the essence of G-d. But the soul does not act on its own. It is partnered with a body and together, the resulting person lives his life. If, for the Jew, that life is a life of Torah and mitzvot, then the body has not worked at crossed purposes with its partner, the NESHAMA. But if the person sins, then the body has betrayed its soul, betrayed its sacred trust.

Therefore, the body (of one who has sinned during his lifetime - which is everyone) devoid of the NESHAMA T'HORA, the pure soul, is an object of TUM'A and it is M'TAMEI - it defiles those who come into contact with it. It did not have to be that way; but human behavior made it that way.

A dead body is not inherently TAMEI. Its status as AVI AVOT HATUM'A, the source of the "greatest" form of ritual impurity, is due to the existence of SIN.

CHEIT HA'EIGEL, the sin of the golden calf, is the quintessential example of communal sin. Based on what's been said so far, it represents the reason (so to speak) of the existence of TUM'AT MEIT. It follows then, that asking the mother to clean up the mess of her son is an appropriate analogy.

This Shabbat is the 169th day (of 355), 25th Shabbat (of 51) of 5770

מָשַׁל לְבֵן שֶׁפָּחַח שְׁטֵנָּה פְּלִטִין שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ... כִּי תִצַּח פָּרָה וְתִכְפֹּר עַל הָעֵגֶל

Ki Tisa STATS

21st of 54 sedras; 9th of 11 in Sh'mot

Written on 245.17 lines in a Torah, rank 8th

14 Parshiot; 10 open, 4 closed

139 p'sukim - ranks 10th, 1st in Sh'mot

2002 words - ranks 5th, 1st in Shmot

7424 letters - ranks 8th, 1st in Sh'mot

Large sedra in general plus relatively long p'sukim, which explains the jump in rank from 10th for p'sukim to 5th for words. Only 4 other sedra have more than 2000 words.

Add the 346 words of the Maftir for Para and this week's reading moves into first place in number of words read. (Not counting combined sedras.)

MITZVOT

Contains 9 mitzvot; 4 positive and 5 prohibitions

And as long as we're talking numbers, 9 doesn't seem like very many mitzvot, but only 17 of the remaining 53 sedras (less than a third) have more mitzvot than Ki Tisa.

Summary: 17 sedras have double-digit mitzvot; 17 sedras have no mitzvot. The other 20 sedras have between 1-9 mitzvot.

The fast break of 44

2 Torah match for some of our grandparents

Does this gefilte fish have a Belz hashgacha?

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-counts of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI (positive mitzva); L=LAV (prohibition) - Rambam counts positives (248) and prohibitions (365) separately. X:Y is the perek and pasuk from which the mitzva is counted.

[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 45 p'sukim - 30:11-31:17

There are three sedras that have fewer p'sukim than the first Aliya of Ki Tisa. It's the longest First Aliya in the Torah, by far (but not the longest for Monday, Thursday, and previous Shabbat Mincha reading, since we don't read all of this first Aliya at those times - Eikev's is the longest in that category, or Mas'ei according to the opinion that we should read of the "travelog"). The reason it is so long is so that the episode of the Golden Calf will be in the second Aliya, which is read by/for a Levi - the only one who need not be embarrassed, so to speak, by the story of the Calf.

[P> 30:11 (6)] The first 6 p'sukim of the sedra are the portion of the Mitzva of the Silver Half-Shekel [105,A171 31:13], which we just read three weeks ago as the Maftir for Parshat Sh'kalim.

MitzvaWatch

The half-shekel was used to count the People and to create the fund for the purchase of communal offerings throughout the year, as well as other spiritual needs of the community. The half-shekel was required of males from age 20 and up. It was optional for women. (Since the half-shekels were used to count the standing army, it was necessary to keep separate records of a woman's optional contribution. Nonetheless, women could participate in this mitzva.) Although Kohanim were also required to give a half-shekel, they were not forced by the courts in the way that non-kohanim were, as a courtesy to their standing and function in society. Sh'kalim were NOT accepted from non-Jews. (There were funds in the Beit HaMikdash to which a non-Jew may contribute, but NOT the half-shekel. It is sort of like membership dues in Klal Yisrael - for members only.) Collection took place in Adar, so that the fund would be ready for Nissan, the beginning of the "Beit HaMikdash year".

The mitzva applies during the time of the Beit HaMikdash, at which time even Jews living abroad contributed. Without the Beit HaMikdash, we do not perform the mitzva, but we have commemorative practices, namely the reading of Parshat Sh'kalim (on the Shabbat of or right before Rosh Chodesh Adar, which was when Sh'kalim were "announced") and the giving Zeicher L'Machatzit HaShekel before Megila reading (there is an connection between our mitzva of Sh'kalim and the sh'kalim that Haman

promised the king in return for permission to kill the Jews in the kingdom).

We can say that participation in the mitzva of the Half-Shekel indicated that a person wanted to be part of Klal Yisrael, thereby including the individual in the atonement of the People.

Remember: Today we don't give Machatzit HaShekel, we just commemorate it. This is an important distinction.

[P> 30:17 (5)] The next portion deals with the Laver and its stand (KIYOR V'KANO), for the Kohanim to wash their hands and feet before their sacred work [106,A204 30:19]. A kohen who does not wash (sanctify) his hands and feet before doing "service" in the Beit HaMikdash is liable to "death from Heaven" and the korban he has brought is invalid.

What might this say to us? Our Sages have commanded us to wash our hands before eating a bread-meal. There are several p'sukim in the Torah that are considered to be the inspiration for the mitzva to wash our hands. This is one of them, based on the famous concept that our (dining) table is like the Altar. We are challenged to elevate the mundane act of eating and invest it with a spirituality which is the hallmark of Judaism and a Torah way of life.

Before we approach our "Altar" to serve G-d, we too wash our hands. Just like the Kohen. Well, not really. We wash hands only. And not with the same penalty for not washing properly

(thank G-d). Could you imagine a Heavenly death penalty for not washing for HaMotzi? No. But the comparison SHOULD prompt some serious reflection on our part, and hopefully, an improvement of the way we relate to this everyday mitzva.

Concerning our Netilat Yadayim, a person should examine his own observance of mitzvot. First, am I careful about washing for HaMotzi? I am? Good. Am I careful to dry my hands BEFORE washing, so that the water has its intended purpose of removing ritual impurity in the best way. It might seem like a small matter, but there are opinions that washing wet hands does not fulfill the mitzva properly (depending upon the amount of water used). And do I properly dry my hands after washing? And do I complete the bracha before my hands are completely dry? Another small detail, but important in its own way. Am I careful not to interrupt between washing and HaMotzi? Of course. Good. I don't talk until after HaMotzi (actually, there should be no talking until after the first swallow of the first bite of the HaMotzi). But silence is also an interruption (less severe) and one should try to minimize the gap between washing and HaMotzi. It's not always practical, but it can be done. The point is, to THINK about what we do and why we do it, and HOW we do it. Washing for HaMotzi is an example of a mitzva that is easy to take for granted, to go on "automatic pilot". But if we do, we'll be missing so much. Let's wash better, bench better, daven better, do mitzvot better, treat each other better. Let's be thinking and feeling Torah Jews

all across the board.

[P> 30:22 (12)] Next follows the command to take specific quantities of various spices, mix them with olive oil, and prepare the special "anointing oil". The Kohen Gadol and kings of Israel are to be anointed with this oil **[107,A35 30:31]**, as were the sacred vessels of the Mikdash. It is forbidden to use this oil for personal use **[108, L84 30:32]**, or even to dare dishonor the Mikdash by copying the spiced oil for personal use **[109,L83 30:32]**.

[S> 30:34 (5)] We are next commanded to compound the K'toret, the incense offered twice daily in the Mikdash. The mitzva of K'toret is presented and counted in T'tzaveh; here we have the prohibition of compounding the same formula for personal use **[110,L85 30:37]**.

[S> 31:1 (11)] G-d tells Moshe that B'tzalel shall be in charge of the actual construction and fashioning of the Mishkan and its contents. His assistant shall be Aholiav of Dan, and a team of skilled artisans shall join in the work. All the objects in and of the Mishkan are enumerated, as the task-list of B'tzalel and his team.

[P> 31:12 (6)] At this point, G-d reminds Moshe that the Shabbat may not be violated, even for the construction of the Mishkan. (We might have thought otherwise, due to the sacredness of the endeavor, hence, this reminder.)

Shabbat is the eternal sign between G-d and the People of Israel.

SDT: *Shabbat and Mikdash "rub elbows" several times in the Torah. They complement each other, in that Mikdash represents the Sanctity of Place, and Shabbat represents the Sanctity of Time. One may not build the Mikdash on Shabbat, but the functioning in the Mikdash "pushes aside" Shabbat. And we learn many rules and details for Shabbat from the construction of the Mishkan. There is an equation of sorts, certainly a link established, with the pasuk - My Shabbats you shall preserve, and my Mikdash you shall revere.*

SDT: *We know that Shabbat steps aside for Piku'ach Nefesh (life-threatening situations) and for Communal Offerings in the Beit HaMikdash (and for testifying for Kidush HaChodesh). That these things are able to be done on Shabbat, we learn from specific sources in the text of the Torah. That Shabbat steps aside for ANYTHING is learned from the passage here - ACH ET SHABTOTAI TISHMORU. The word ACH - but, however - is generally considered to be limiting. My Shabbats you shall keep, would mean, with no exceptions. ACH - indicates that there are situations when that which is usually forbidden on Shabbat is to be done. Again, what the specific things are, are learned from other p'sukim. The ACH here teaches us the general state of affairs - Shabbat can be "violated", under specific circumstances. [Note It is not the word ACH that teaches us its meaning; it is our Oral Law that teaches us the meaning of the ACH, when it applies and when it doesn't.]*

Levi - Second Aliya 47 p'sukim - 31:18-33:11

The longest Second Aliya in the Torah, tied with that of Parshat Pinchas in number of p'sukim, but longer in words and letters.

[S> 31:18 (7)] The Torah now returns to telling us of Matan Torah, which was "interrupted" (so to speak) by the parshiyot of the Mishkan, i.e. all of T'ruma and T'tzaveh and the first part of Ki Tisa. G-d gives Moshe the Tablets of stone... (meanwhile, back in the camp...) When the People saw (or thought) that Moshe was delayed in returning from Sinai, they feared that they would be leaderless, and they appealed to Aharon to do something. Exactly what he did is the subject of different opinions, but his delaying tactic resulted in the emergence of the Golden Calf. Most of the people were confused and did nothing (that was part of the problem), but 3000 men arose and reveled in the Calf, declaring it the god of Israel.

[P> 32:7 (8)] G-d told Moshe to look at what the People were doing in his absence. G-d indicates to Moshe that the People are deserving of destruction.

The first part of Moshe's reaction is PRAYER. (This isn't always first on his list, but it is here. Part of the greatness of Moshe Rabeinu is his knowing when to pray long, when short, and when to take action immediately and leave

prayer for later. This is something that we should try to learn from him). His petition before G-d starts with the practical argument, "What will Egypt say?". Then Moshe mentions the Avot and asks G-d to forgive the people because of them, and the promises G-d had made to them. The combination of these two points seem to succeed, because Moshe is "rewarded" with G-d's expression of regret (so to speak) for what He had said He would do to the people.

These arguments of Moshe on our behalf do not include our own merit - just the Chilul HaShem factor and promises to the Avot. This idea finds itself expressed very clearly in the haftara. Note, however, that this is the haftara for Parshat Para - not for Ki Tisa. Nonetheless, the haftara echoes the sedra. Specifically, it is the former argument, what we called the Chilul HaShem factor that is stressed in the haftara. "Therefore, tell the house of Israel, thus says HaShem: Not for you do I do... but for the sake of My holiness which you have defiled... This is repeated further on in the same portion. There is also a slight reference to the promises to the Avot.

[P> 32:15 (21)] Next, Moshe turns and descends the mountain with the Luchot in his hands. When he sees the Calf, the Tablets either slip from his hands and break or he intentionally smashes them (opinions differ). He seizes the Calf, destroys it, spreads its ashes over the water, and prepares a potion for the people to drink. He asks Aharon what happened.

He calls to those "who are on G-d's side"; the Leviyim rally to his call and kill those who dared "worship" the Calf.

On the following day (the exact sequence of events is debated by commentators), Moshe castigates the people, tells them of the enormity of their sin. Then he tells them that he is returning to G-d (so to speak) up the mountain, to continue pleading Israel's case before G-d. G-d promises to punish those at fault.

[S> 33:1 (11)] As a result of the Golden Calf, G-d distances Himself from the People. He does, however, reiterate His promise to give them (us) the Land. And, He tells Moshe to have the people continue towards Eretz Yisrael, but without G-d in their midst. The People are distraught by G-d's words. Moshe too removes himself and his tent from the midst of the camp. Moshe remains in direct contact with G-d... and Yehoshua was constantly in the Tent.

Shlishi - Third Aliya 5 p'sukim - 33:12-16

[P> 33:12 (5)] Moshe argues that G-d must remain in the midst of the People in order to demonstrate that He truly chose us. One senses the unique relationship between G-d and Moshe that permits Moshe to speak to Him the way he does. At the same

time that our relationship with G-d was changing because of the Golden Calf, Moshe was asking G-d for a more intimate understanding of the Divine Essence.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 7 p'sukim - 33:17-23

[P> 33:17 (7)] G-d agrees to Moshe's request, because of His special feelings towards Moshe. Then Moshe asks that G-d reveal more of Himself to him (Moshe). G-d tells Moshe that such a revelation is impossible, but that Moshe will be able to experience more of G-d's essence. This, with the understanding that it won't be everything. The p'sukim in this portion of very enigmatic.

Here's a thought... Is it not strange that specifically when Bnei Yisrael is/are in the midst of a very rough time that Moshe asks G-d to reveal Himself to Moshe more than He already has? Perhaps Moshe had a bit of a "spiritual panic" in that G-d, Who had been so close to the people at Sinai was about to distance Himself from us. And Moshe feared that he too would lose out. Mixed with his efforts on behalf of the people, Moshe wants to safeguard and enhance the relationship that he has with HaShem. This will also help in his pleading for and leading the people.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 9 p'sukim - 34:1-9

[P> 34:1 (26)] This portion (read on Fast Days) contains the 13 Divine Attributes. One can say that not only did G-d forgive the People for the Golden Calf, but He also gave them (us) the method of approaching Him in prayer. Not only are we to recite these 13 Attributes, but we must emulate as many of them as possible. "Just as He is merciful, so too must we be merciful..." In this way we will KNOW His Attributes, live by them, and not just mechanically recite them. G-d next tells Moshe to cut new stones to replace the ones he had broken. Moshe again ascends Sinai to receive the Luchot, the Attributes, and Divine Forgiveness. This 40 day period - Elul through Yom Kippur, become days of special closeness between G-d and us.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 17 p'sukim - 34:10-26

Our position relative to other nations is conditional upon our keeping of the mitzvot. We are forbidden to make covenants with the nations in Eretz Yisrael. Specifically, we are forbidden to eat or drink of idolatrous offerings **[111]**, this is the only mitzva counted by the Chinuch that is not on Rambam's list; there is one Rambam mitzva that the Chinuch doesn't count. 34:15]. All this to avoid falling to their temptations

and to avoid intermarriage. We must destroy their idols.

We are commanded to keep Pesach in the Spring. (This is one of the p'sukim responsible for our two Adars.) In a direct link to the Exodus, we have three types of B'CHOR mitzvot - human (which must be redeemed), kosher farm animals (which are given as a gift to a kohen and may not be redeemed, but are holy and to be brought as a korban - this mitzva exists today, even without a Mikdash, rendering this mitzva highly problematic. Hence, our Sages commanded us to avoid this mitzva by taking a non-Jew as partner in the ownership of the pregnant animal.), and donkey (which should be redeemed - PIDYON PETER CHAMOR) - a mitzva which also applies in our time and does not have the problematic side since there is no sanctity involved, just a prohibition of benefiting from the baby donkey until it is redeemed. Hence, the Shulchan Aruch forbids one to use their suggestion for the kosher animals in order to get out of this mitzva. In fact, every so often one hears of a Pidyon Peter Chamor here in Israel.

Shavuot and Sukkot complete the cycle of the Pilgrimage Festivals; males are required to appear at the Beit HaMikdash (and not empty-handed). This mitzva (and others) guarantees our hold of the Land. Shabbat and the Land's

Shabbat, Shmita [112,A135 34:21], are mentioned.

Korban Pesach may not be offered while its owner has Chametz, nor may we leave K.P. over to the morning.

Bikurim are to be brought to the Mikdash and meat-milk mixtures (that are cooked together) may not be eaten [113,L187 34:26]. Rabbinic law forbids eating mixtures of milk and meat even if they have not been cooked.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya 9 p'sukim - 34:27-35

[P> 34:27 (9)] G-d commands Moshe to write the Torah (and not the Oral Law and explanations, which must be transmitted orally). Moshe spent 40 days and nights on Har Sinai, not eating or drinking, during which time, the second set of Luchot were written.

When Moshe came down from the Mountain, he was unaware of the spiritual radiance that glowed on his face. Aharon and the People were afraid to approach. Moshe called to Aharon and the Leaders of the People, and spoke to them words of Torah and their explanation. Then all the people came to Moshe to be taught what G-d had spoken to him at Sinai.

When Moshe finished speaking to the people, he covered his face with a hood (mask/veil), which he

removed whenever he spoke to G-d. He would then transmit G-d's words to the people.

This would be repeated over and over again. Moshe would cover his face until the time he communicated with G-d.

Maftir - 2nd Torah 22 p'sukim; Bamidbar 19

Parshat Para is read on the Shabbat before Parshat HaChodesh which presents us with the mitzvot of Korban Pesach, because the most common and important time for ritual purification on the part of most of the people was around the beginning of Nissan, as part of one's preparation to be in Jerusalem for Pesach and to bring and eat K.P. Parshat Para from Parshat Chukat, contains the mitzvot of Para Aduma - that is, the preparing of the potion from the ashes of the Red Heifer, the general mitzva of the concept of ritual impurity from contact with a corpse, and the mitzvas of purifying oneself with the Para Aduma potion.

Parshat PARA is considered by some to be a Torah requirement, similar to Parshat Zachor.

Haftara - 23 p'sukim Yechezkeil 36:16-38

S'faradim end 2 p'sukim earlier

The Haftara takes the concept

(from the Maftir) of an individual becoming TAMEI and requiring purification with special water as an analogy for the people of Israel who defiled themselves with the sin of idolatry and other sins, and their (our) need for a purification process with "G-d's spiritual waters of the Torah".

[In Va'eira, we find G-d's promise to take us unto Him and then He will bring us to Eretz Yisrael, in the haftara, the order is switched.]

The last p'sukim refer to a multitude of sheep - for sacrifices... This is a reminder of the large number of sheep brought to Yerushalayim for Korban Pesach.

S'fas Emes explains the fact that Para follows Zachor: Amalek is the source of the deepest impurity. We therefore, need the purification of the Para Aduma to cleanse our souls from the defilement that stems from Amalek.

Taking away a day adds 12 hours

The letter YUD

👉 Some shiver through the whole night because they cannot bring themselves to leave their beds for the one minute that getting the extra blanket requires.

👉 It's not really a small world -- think of all the people we DON'T meet.

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Divrei Menachem

Parshat Ki Tisa is well known for its initial discussion of the census of Bnei Yisrael and, even more so, for the account of the notorious Sin of the Golden Calf. Consequently, one is likely to skip over other seemingly less important items such as the command to fashion a laver (KIYOR), a large copper water-filled vessel from which the Kohanim were required to wash their hands and feet before performing the service (Sh'mot 30:17-21).

This basin was not included among the other furnishings of the Mishkan mentioned in previous parshiyot because its function was clearly differentiated from the other vessels. Whereas the other vessels and parts that made up the Mishkan caused the Shechina to rest on the Mishkan, the Kiyor was designed specifically to prepare the Kohanim to carry out their mission (Sforno).

Essentially, the purpose of the washing was not for reasons of cleanliness and hygiene, but rather for sanctification (after Onkelos who renders the literal Hebrew expression, "for washing" as, "for sanctification"). The consecrated hands that can reach higher than the head, and the feet at the lower bodily extremity, symbolize the notion that the Kohanim invest their total being to the service of Hashem.

No wonder, then, that we continue to this day to wash our hands before our daily prayers in common with this ancient practice, almost forgotten.

VEBDE REBDE

QUESTION

I found an apparently suitable cello to buy and received permission from the seller to take it "on approval" (trial period during which one can return it without explanation). During this time, one of the strings broke while I was tuning the cello. When I returned the instrument to her, having decided not to buy it, she demanded payment for the broken string, and I paid. What does halacha say? Am I a "sho'el" (borrower)? (I used it only for testing and not after I made the decision to return it.) Would breaking the string obligate me to pay, as it seems to be meita machamat melacha [see below]?

ANSWER:

It appears that you are asking from halachic curiosity and do not have plans of demanding your money back. Thus we do not have to be as rigorous in factoring into the answer all issues, some of which may be unknown to us after hearing from only one side. We think your excellent question has an interesting provisional answer.

The gemara (Nedarim 31a; Bava Batra 87b) tells of one who took a vessel from its producer so he could check it and keep it if he liked it. Shmuel says that if something happened to the vessel B'ONESS (by no fault of his) he is still obligated to pay, and this is how the Shulchan Aruch (Choshen Mishpat 200:11) rules, in a case where the price was set.

This case would seem to be the same. However, the point of meita machamat melacha (=MMM) is a good one. Even a sho'el who is obligated even when something went awry B'ONESS is exempt if the object died, broke, etc. as a result of being used in a normal manner (Shulchan Aruch, CM 340:1), and tuning the cello seems to be a classic exemption. However, we must understand the halachic mechanism that normally obligates the provisional buyer. The Rash in Tosafot (Bava Batra 87b) explains that since the buyer is in the enviable position of being able to buy or return the object as he likes, we demand of him the broad responsibilities of a sho'el, who also has the most benefit from his arrangement. Rashi (Bava Metzia 81a) says that the logic of the obligation is that the presumed sale makes the "taker" considered a buyer (lokei'ach) and so when something happened to it, it is naturally his loss. The Netivot Hamishpat (186:1) says that actually both possibilities exist, and it depends on the case.

Where would there be a difference between the approaches? Among ideas given by various Acharonim, the Machane Efrayim (Shomrim 24) says that a case is when the seller was working for the buyer at the time of the sale. If the obligation is because of sho'el, it will not apply because of a sho'el's special exemption of b'alav imo (his boss is with him). If the obligation is based on lokei'ach, it would make no difference as once he bought it, the loss is the buyer's

problem. Similarly, our case should likely be another difference between the approaches, as MMM is a special exemption of a sho'el but should not impact if one who is considered a lokei'ach. Since the majority opinion is of lokei'ach (Pitchei Choshen, Kinyanim 13:(43), and according to the Netivot Hamishpat, both types of obligation apply), you seem to have been obligated.

However, one might be able to distinguish as follows. How can one be a lokei'ach if he acted on his right to back out? The Tur (CM 200) implies that the condition was that he could back out if he returns the object intact. Regarding a classic damage, like a theft or an animal dying, which is a total loss, there is no way to back out of the deal; consequently, the buyer loses. It is possible, though, since the cello was returned, the seller's attempt to obligate you must follow the regular rules of sho'el, for which MMM exempts you.

In theory, to exempt yourself, you might need to prove that it is MMM in a manner that you are without fault, or swear on the matter (CM 334:1). Because of that and the halachic uncertainty presented above, a compromise would be a reasonable solution. It would be difficult to legally force a return of the payment.

Towards Better Davening and Torah Reading

These comments apply to both davening and Torah reading, since they deal with the portion of the 13 Divine Attributes (YUD-GIMEL MIDOT), which is in this week's sedra (and which we just read on Taanit Esther, too) and is said by many in davening right before Tachanun.

VAYIKRA V'SHEIM (pause) HASHEM! Hashem descended in a cloud and stood there with him (Moshe), and He (Hashem) called out the Name "HASHEM". That VAYIKRA and V'SHEIM go together is indicated by the dropped DAGESH from B'SHEIM. The pause is indicated by the Torah note (TIPCHA) which calls for a brief pause. This contrasts to a phrase we find with Avraham Avinu, that he called (proclaimed) in G-d's name - VAYIKRA (pause) B'SHEIM HASHEM. And again, we find the phrase with Yitzchak Avinu, after he too had built an altar (as Avraham had). The pause in the intro to the 13 Midot is important to convey the correct meaning of the verse.

Another point from the 13 Midot is the PASEIK (vertical line) between the two words HASHEM. The first two of the 13 Divine attributes are HASHEM and HASHEM. Tradition assigns different meanings to each use of the four-letter Name of HaShem, some of the explanations belonging to the realm of "Torah Secrets". What various sources to insist on, is that the two names be separated by a pause. This needs to be done in the Torah reading and should also be done when we recite the 13 Midot in prayer. One

of the popular ways of singing "HaShem, HaShem" does not really pause well between the two Names. We should make sure that the pause is there. The BEN ISH CHAI is quoted as saying that one who does not use the PASEIK will be liable to a serious punishment. What- ever that means, let's "do the pause" in Torah reading and when we recite the YUD-GIMEL MIDOT.

Based on comments received from YL on last week's column, let's make a general statement and cite one example from Ki Tisa, specifically from the 13 Midot.

In both the Ashkenazic and S'fardic (Israeli) pronunciation of Hebrew vowels, there are (different) examples of two vowels that are supposed to be different, being sounded identically.

CHANUN without a DAGESH in the first NUN, was a king of Bnei Amon from the time of David HaMelech. It has other definitions, as well. In the 13 Midot, the word describes G-d as being Gracious, and the NUN has a DAGESH and should be emphasized to distinguish it from the other word. (in the bracha ATA CHONEIN, too.) In Ashkenazic pronunciation, the vowels under the CHET sound different. But in S'fardic, only the NUN stressed or not will distinguish.

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

Parshat KI TISA

Don't Take Down the Sign!

Times were very different then. When one of our books was torn, we didn't junk it. We took it to a little shop where a bookbinder rebound it.

When our briefcase (we didn't have backpacks then) was falling apart, we didn't discard it. Instead, we took it to that same shop where the proprietor stitched it and fixed it.

The proprietor of the shop that my friends and I frequented, down on the Lower East side of Manhattan, was an old man named Yossel.

Looking back, I now realize that Yossel, who was arthritic physically and far from genial emotionally, was a Holocaust survivor who eked out a meager livelihood by binding books, fixing broken zippers, and repairing all sorts of every day tools and trinkets.

I remember once bringing some books to Yossel for rebinding and finding that the shop was closed. There was no sign on the door indicating that he was out to lunch, or that he had gone to pray, or when he would return.

So I came back to Yossel's shop several times that week, and then but occasionally for the next two or three months. His sign, advertising his services, was still suspended

over his doorway. I had every reason to assume that he would eventually reopen.

Finally, one day I approached his shop, and saw that the sign over his door was taken down. Now I knew that Yossel was out of business.

This experience, hardly significant in its own right, took on a very profound meaning for me when I first heard an explanation, given by the great sage known as the Chofetz Chayim, of why the Torah calls Shabbat a sign in this week's portion, Ki Tisa.

"The people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath... It shall be a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel..." (Sh'mot 31:16-17)

The Chofetz Chayim explained that Shabbat is like a sign on a shopkeeper's door. However far a Jew might stray, he is still connected to the Jewish people as long as he keeps Shabbat in some manner. As long as there is a sign on the shopkeeper's door, he may one day return and reopen for business. But once the sign is removed, once Shabbat observance is totally abandoned, then even that tenuous connection is severed.

It occurs to me that just as there are all sorts of signs, and Yossel's makeshift shabby sign was certainly very different from signs on more luxurious stores, so too do

Jews differ in the way in which they observe Shabbat.

There are those who focus on every halacha involved in Shabbat observance. They are punctilious in following every rule contained in our code of laws.

There are others whose observance is a more spiritual one. They may keep the basic Shabbat laws in some fashion but find the joy of Shabbat more personally rewarding. They enjoy the festive meals, and they heartily sing the Shabbat songs.

Still, others take delight in intellectual indulgences in celebration of Shabbat. They study, they read, they converse, they teach.

Then there are those of a more mystical bent who use Shabbat for introspection, meditation, and contemplation, and maybe even as an occasion to delve into the classics of Jewish mysticism.

For some, Shabbat is something entirely different. It is merely a day of rest, a physical respite from the toil and stress of a busy week.

Whatever your Shabbat is like, dear reader, as long as it is a special day for you in some way, the sign of Shabbat is suspended over your door. You are, at least potentially, a Shabbat observer, and that is a sign of your connection to God and to the Jewish people.

But there is a lesson here for all of us: None of us can say that our Shabbat observance is a perfect one. None of us is innocent of some minor halachic infraction. Certainly, none of us can say that our Shabbat is one of pure and untainted spirituality. We all have "a way to go".

Yet the vast majority of Jews whom I know, of whatever level of observance or denominational persuasion, have the sign of Shabbat on their shop door, in some manner or another.

As long as that sign hangs suspended over our doorway, we can confidently look forward to that day when each of us will celebrate a Shabbat worthy of the ultimate redemption of which our Sages assure us. For they have said the geulah, the final redemption of our people, will come about when we fully observe two Shabbatot in succession.

Don't take down the sign!

Gimatriya observation:

The following each total 335

פּרַה אֲדָמָה

רַחַל אִמּוֹ

הַר סִינַי

You make something of it
(if you want)

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*

Individual/National Purity

This week, as every year, we review in maftir the Laws of Para Aduma (red heifer). The purpose is to prepare for individual purity which would allow each person to participate in the sacrifice of the Pesach offering, even if now we are currently impure. That ritual reminds us annually of the defining moment of national freedom and binds us again as a single unified nation under G-d.

The Haftara for Parshat Para is taken from Sefer Yechezkel. It also deals with impurity and the way to remedy it. The impurity dealt with, however, is a spiritual impurity not related to touching dead bodies or impure animals. The haftara deals with the impurity of the People of Israel and the Land of Israel, not the impurity of individuals.

The spiritual impurity of the People of Israel caused the land to become impure, which in turn caused the expulsion of Bnei Yisrael from its land. The dispersion of the Jewish People among the nations is seen as a desecration of G-d's name. G-d decided to redeem his people in order to stop this disgrace of His Name - his people living in the Diaspora, outside of G-d's holy land.

The plan for redemption is then set in place.

He will sanctify us by gathering us from

all the countries and bring us to our land.

He will throw water upon us and purify us of all the defilement.

He will give us a new heart of flesh and not stone and a new spirit.

He then will help us keep his commandments.

We then accept the responsibility of settling the land and becoming his people.

First, groups of individuals return to the land. Then, the return to creativity and initiatives of a refounded nation, which acts in unity of purpose and rebuilding. Only then comes the acceptance of the purpose of nationhood – the mitzvot and moral leadership as the people of G-d. Only at the next stage do we inhabit the Land and receive the mantle of “G-d's People” and He, the role of being our G-d.

The script is clear – we as individuals and as a people must stop the desecration of G-d's name which is caused by living in the Diaspora.

We must accept the responsibility of peoplehood under the guidelines of the Torah, and then come together as a single nation, in the Land of our forefathers, promised to us by G-d as an inheritance and a heritage.

Am Yisrael, b'Eretz Yisrael, al pi Torat Yisrael.

Only here can we become a free nation, undivided, under G-d.

AkivaWerber, Project Director, Olim from English-speaking Countries, J'lem Municipality

Praying with Passion

Giving more meaning to our
T'fillah One Week at a Time

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Birchot HaTorah (1) Torah: Sweet Essence Of Life

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ
לְעִסּוֹק בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה. וְהֵעֲרַב נָא ה'
אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ בְּפִינוּ
וּבְפִי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְנִהְיֶה
אֲנַחְנוּ וְצִאֲצָאֵינוּ וְצִאֲצָאֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּלָנוּ יוֹדְעֵי שְׂמֶךְךָ וְלוֹמְדֵי
תוֹרָתְךָ לְשִׂמְחָה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',
הַמְלַמֵּד תוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Translation: Blessed are You, HaShem our God, King of the Universe, who has made us holy through His commandments, and has commanded us to engage in the words of Torah. Please, HaShem our God, make the words of Your Torah sweet in our mouths and in the mouths of Your people, the house of Israel, so that we, our descendants, and the descendants of Your people, the house of Israel, may all know Your name

and study Your Torah for its own sake. Blessed are You, HaShem, who teaches Torah to His people Israel.

Theme:
An essential concept of the prayer

Torah study is the core mitzva, as well as the wellspring of all goodness and sweetness in a Jew's life in both the physical and spiritual worlds.

Word to the Wise:
Meaning within the meaning

With the words V'HAAREV NA, we ask Hashem to "sweeten the words of Torah in our mouth." As we speak words of Torah, we should feel the taste of a delicious dessert. The spiritual pleasure that we have from Torah study should permeate into our physical beings as well. This can more readily come when we recognize that our Torah study is not only an obligation and requirement, but a privilege and honor as well.

Insight:
Deeper meanings of the theme

The first blessing on Torah study is expressed in words typical for a blessing on a mitzva: "He Who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us..." The last blessing employs the wording used for birchat hanehenin – a blessing on partaking in a pleasure: "He Who selected us from all the nations and gave us His Torah."

G-d's mandate that we study Torah, thereby imbuing our lives with spirituality and knowledge of the mitzvot, is a mitzva of which every observant Jew is aware. The blessing attached to that mitzva is therefore understandable. What is not as clear, however, is why we recite a

birchat hanehenin. What pleasure does the Torah give us?

From a variety of sources, we learn that Torah, like the manna given to our ancestors in the desert, is tailor-made to taste sweet to each individual who imbibes its wisdom. One such source is a discussion in the Gemara regarding which day of the month of Sivan should be designated as the holiday of Shavuot, which marks the giving of the Torah. Not only is the exact date unclear, but so is the exact location of Mount Sinai, where this world-changing drama took place.

Rav Moshe Feinstein commented that these ambiguities illustrate that there is no set place, date or specific person upon whom Torah learning is incumbent, and therefore, there is no time, place or person to whom it is unavailable. The concept of "Dibra Torah bilshon b'nei adam" – the Torah speaks in the common language of men (Yevamot 71a) - teaches us that the Torah is written for everyone to understand on their own level. Every person has his own "portion" of Torah.

Visualize:
Images that bring the prayer to life

Photo archives from the Warsaw ghetto show a door of an inn that read, "Society of Wagon Drivers for the Study of Talmud in Warsaw". This referred to coachmen who seized a few moments from their work to gather in a group to "nosh" (grab a tasty morsel of) a page of Talmud... These were not intellectuals, concerned only with the intricacies of scholastic dialectics; they were deeply religious men thirsting for spiritual refreshment and they found it, as countless generations of Jews before

them, in the study of Torah.

When the true value of Torah enters a person's heart, it becomes not only his obligation, but his longing and his joy. It becomes an exertion that re-energizes, rather than drains, the spirit of the learner.

**Take It With You: Your
personal connection to the prayer**

The life we live as Torah Jews has its difficulties, as does every person's life in this world. However, the power the Torah possesses to lift us up above the fray is in direct correlation to the toil we put into it. We are commanded not only study Torah, but LA'ASOK, to engross ourselves, in Torah (study).

You could compare the concept to the experience of marathon runner; his practice schedule seems to be a heavy demand which he must muster all his self-discipline to fulfill. Once he is out there, though, running with all his strength and skill, he enters a mindset in which time and fatigue fall away. In contrast, were he to jog half-heartedly around the track, he would soon feel bored and tired. By fulfilling his obligation wholeheartedly, he experiences the exquisite sweetness in his exertion.

Cont. IY"H next week

THE CHALLENGE OF MONEY: Acquiring and Spending Wealth [5]

by **Dr. Meir Tamari**

The degree, pattern and level of our wants and needs actually determine the parameters of our moral behaviour. Our ability to say that we have enough, or conversely, our belief that having more is always better than being satisfied with less, determine to what extent we can approach the standards of the godly man. Morality can easily be eroded by the desire for an ever rising standard of living and by the pressures for greater consumption. The individual man and woman often find it difficult to withstand such desires and pressures that lie at the heart of the economic yetzer. If this was true during the centuries of scarcity and poverty, how much must it be true in our modern age of unprecedented global wealth? It should not be surprising therefore to find that throughout the ages Jewish communities enacted varied and detailed sumptuary laws which by fixing communal standards and patterns of personal consumption, made it easier for the individual to live up to the standards of the chasid.

In order for these laws to be effective, communities have to have law enforcement powers and the ability to punish transgressors. Throughout the galut, autonomous Jewish communities had the status of mini-states, giving them the legal and moral authority to enforce halakhic business practices including restrictive patterns of consumption. In Western Europe, such communities were the norm until the

end of the 18th century, while in Eastern Europe and the Sefardic world, they persisted even till later years. Our modern communities are basically voluntary and so lack to a large extent, the coercive power to enforce similar restrictions. This poses a problem for religious and lay leadership in solving the moral and spiritual dilemmas caused by rampant consumerism. In the modern world, the chassidic groups are the closest approximation to community in the classic sense. Some of them, such as Gur, have indeed successfully introduced limited sumptuary laws regarding family s'machot.

Even the most limited review of the communal enactments regarding limitations on consumption, will show the range and scope of Jewish attempts to curb the negative effects of consumerism on religion and spirituality. While to some extent these enactments were prompted by the need to avoid jealousy and anti-Semitism, basically they stemmed from intrinsic Jewish concepts and teachings. All of our prophets saw the connection between excessive demands for consumption and economic immorality, and foretold G-d's punishment. Yeshayahu's description of the need for luxurious clothing and jewellery of the daughters of Zion as a sin leading to the destruction of Israel (3:18-23), is only one example of a common prophetic theme. The call for modesty in everything we do re-echoes from all of them: "G-d has told you, O man what is good and what He demands of you, only that you do justice, love chesed and walk modestly with your G-d" (Micha 6:8). "The Talmid Chacham [the Jewish role model]

provides for his family according to his means, yet without extreme devotion to this. His [and their] clothing should be neither of kings [fashion trendsetters] nor of the poor. Eating in public [expensive and conspicuous consumption] should be limited to seudot mitzva" (Hilkhos Deot 5:14-15).

It is within this tradition that we may learn from the following sample of enactments from various countries and from different periods of history, guidance for our own generation.

"No one may possess or wear cloaks of any colour other than black, sleeves may not have silk linings and garments of sable or expensively dyed material may not be worn" (Synod of Italian Jews, 15th century). In 1728 the kehila of Furth prohibited the serving of tea or coffee, then expensive items of luxury, limited the number of musicians, and all festivities were to end by midnight. The weight, type and number of silver and gold ornaments, were limited by the community, not only for the citizens but even for their servants. Restricting the number of guests at s'machot was a common feature of communal enactments; some imposed fines for each additional guest while others linked this to the communal tax bracket of the hosts.

These and similar communal actions, free the individual from onerous borrowing and sometimes from being involved in unethical business practices to finance living beyond their means. Naturally this reduces social friction and class conflicts, so making a major contribution, not only to the individual's peace of mind but also to religious and

spiritual achievement.

ParshaPix EXPLANATIONS

- ☀ Last week, we explained our choice of the rain cloud bullet over other possible choices related to the sedra or to Purim. We said it was our extra prayer for rain. B"H, it worked. We continue with it this week, and will do so as long as we say V'TEIN TAL UMATAR LIVRACHA in our davening.
- ☀ The sedra begins with the command to count the people. The abacus is for keeping tally...
- ☀ half-shekel (ח) coin represents (only represents - it isn't THE half-shekel) the silver half-shekel that was used for the count. (At today's price of silver and the NIS value relative to the dollar, the original half silver shekel is worth a bit less than 20ח.)
- ☀ The faucet stands for the washing basin and the kohein's requirement to wash hands and feet before doing service in the Mikdash
- ☀ Mortar & pestle, used to grind the spices for the incense (K'TORET) and the special anointing oil
- ☀ Bottle of olive oil for that same SHEMEN HAMISHCHA
- ☀ The two fellows checking the blueprints represent Betzalel and Aholiav, the two chief craftsmen in

charge of the construction of the Mishkan

- Finally completing the topics of the first Aliya of Ki Tisa, we have Shabbat candles, representing the reminder of the command to keep the Shabbat
- An edited version of Davka's Golden Calf graphic
- Another Davka graphic of Moshe holding the Luchot high (perhaps just before he smashed them and/or upon his return to the people with the second pair)
- The hatchet can be that which Moshe used to destroy the Eigel, or the tool used to fulfill the commands at the end of the sedra to destroy the Avoda Zara in the Land of Israel upon our entry and conquest
- There is a slab of meat together with an ice cream pop in a frying pan over a camping stove. This, of course, stands for the prohibition of MEAT-IN-MILK. In Ki Tisa, it is eating cooked mixtures that is prohibited.
- The welder's mask might be the most appropriate method of shielding the people from Moshe's radiance
- The quill and feather remind us of the command of G-d to Moshe to write the Written Torah down for the people
- Matza is matza, as in a reiteration of

Parsha Points to Ponder

KI TISA

1) Why does G-D say AND YOU (V'ATA) to Moshe when commanding him to appoint Aharon and his sons as the Kohanim (28:1)? G-D was already speaking to Moshe so identifying Moshe seems to be unnecessary.

2) The Torah first commands that the names of the tribes were to be engraved into the AVNEI SHOHAM, the precious stones (28:9) but then says the stones would be ON THE NAMES OF THE TRIBES which imply that the stones must be raised above the names (28:11). How can these seemingly conflicting commands be reconciled?

3) Why does the Torah say I AM HASHEM YOUR G-D twice in the same verse (29:46)?

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"YH 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 command to eat matza on Pesach

- The ear with the gold earring refers to the stalling tactic of Aharon which resulted in the Golden Calf

- The eraser stands for Moshe's powerful statement to G-d: If you don't forgive the people then erase me from the Book which You wrote. As is well known, his name does not appear in Parshat T'tzaveh - starting from Ki Tisa where Moshe made that statement, G-d reluctantly (so to speak) "complied" by removing Moshe's name from the last sedra possible, T'tzaveh.
- The black goblet was used to give the people the Golden Calf potion that Moshe prepared from the remains of the destroyed calf. It can also represent Kiddush, as part of the Shabbat morning Kiddush comes from Ki Tisa - V'SHAM'RU.
- But that isn't really it. Look again at the goblet. It is a famous optical illusion. Focus on the white on either side of the stem of the goblet (rather than on the black goblet itself) and you will see two face-to-face profiles, as in PANIM EL PANIM, the description of the direct communication between G-d and Moshe Rabeinu.
- At the bottom of the ParshaPix is a rare S'fardit-Ashkenazic Visual TTriddle. The KEY is the KI, as in KI SEESAW, if you follow the KEY with the SEESAW below it - or KI TISA, if you follow the KEY with the El Al flight number.
- On the left side of the ParshaPix we find a Para Aduma, as in the Maftir
- a cedar (of Lebanon), a branch of

which was thrown into the fire that burned the Para Aduma

- So too a sprig of hyssop (EIZOV), pictured between the matza and the big candle
- Speaking of which - candle is NER in Hebrew, spelled NUN-REISH. In Parshat Ki Tisa we find a big NUN in the word NOTZEIR, within the portion of the 13 Midot of HaShem, and a large REISH in the word ACHEIR, as in EIL ACHER, another god. Some say that the large REISH is to emphasize the difference between this word, that refers to idolatry, and the word ECHAD in the first pasuk of the SH'MA, which, of course emphasizes G-d's uniqueness. ECHAD is written with a large DALET. REISH and DALET resemble each other.
- This leaves us with two items under the Cedar of Lebanon, both are from the haftara for Parshat Para.
- There is a photo of a heart-shaped stone - the Navi speaks of the heart of stone of the Jew which G-d will replace with a new heart, a heart of flesh.
- And there is a child dressed in a lamb costume, representing the TZON ADAM referred to twice at the end of the haftara.

TTTRIDDLES

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Last issue's (T'tzaveh-Purim) TTtriddles:

[1] Moshe : Bnei Yisrael :: Yehoshua : Kohanim

This reads: Moshe is to Bnei Yisrael as Yehoshua is to the kohanim. The answer is V'ATA T'TZAVEH, the opening words of Parshat T'tzaveh. Aside for Sh'mot 27:20 (Parshat T'tzaveh), the phrase occurs only one other time in all of Tanach. Yehoshua 3:8 begins - V'ATA T'TZAVEH ET HAKOHANIM... And you, Yehoshua, shall command the kohanim who are carrying the "Aron HaB'rit".

[2] Reynolds Boys' Choir

Aluminum foil is generally called NIYAR KESEF, which would render back into English as silver foil, a common term for aluminum foil, even though it was never made of silver. It looks like silver (which is also easier to say than aluminim) and on a roll it can easily be called G'LILEI CHESEF. That phrase is used in the description of Achashveirosh's decorated garden where the special 7-day party for Shushites was held. The hangings were on silver rods and AMUDEI SHAISH, pillars of marble. AMUDEI SHAISH is also the name of a boys' choir that made a name for itself a bunch of decades ago.

[3] 456 gems

The gemstones of the CHOSHEN were arranged in four rows of three stones each. The keypad of a telephone or

cellphone has its 12 keys arranged in the same way. The 456 row is the TUR HASHEINI, the second row. In the CHOSHEN, those stones were NOFECH, SAPIR, YAHALOM. The Artscroll Stone Chumash wisely transliterates the names of the stones rather than attempt to translate them, because there are so many different opinions. Living Torah translates them as carbuncle, sapphire, and beryl, and in the footnotes brings many other possibilities and colors.

[4] From Yechezkel HaNavi to Shimon HaTzadik

Just for the connection, let's start at the Israel Center and go north on Keren HaYesod. After Kikar Paris, the street name changes to King George. Keep going north. After Yafo, the street is now called Straus. Past HaNevi'im and Bikur Cholim Hospital, you can wave to the old Center building at 10 Straus. Keep going north and after Kikar Shabbat you are now on Rechov Yechezkel. We're getting there. After the Bucharian shuk, you come to Rechov Shmuel HaNavi. Past it, the road turns to the right and becomes Rechov Shimon HaTzadik. But the piece of the street that is the curve between Yechezkel and Shimon HaTzadik has its own name - PITUCHEI CHOTAM, engraved like a signet ring. It is a term used in Parshat T'tzaveh (and in P'kudei), to describe the method of engraving the names of the sons of Yaakov on the stones of the EIFOD and the CHOSHEN (and KODESH LASHEM on the TZITZ).

[5] Limited to 250.5

When Achashveirosh asks Esther what she wants, he offers anything up to half his kingdom. AD CHATZI HAMALCHUT. Numerically, HAMALCHUT is

$5+40+30+20+6+400 = 501$. Therefore, CHATZI HAMALCHUT is $250\frac{1}{2}$. 501, by the way, is one off a significant number in Megila gimatriya. Both BARUCH MORDECHAI and ARUR HAMAN have the same gimatriya, 502. This fact makes it not only difficult to distinguish between those two phrases - which is the test for sufficient consumption of wine on Purim, but impossible. Unless you use AT-BASH gimatriya, in which case the phrases total 596 and 595 respectively.

[6] Ours have 2; its has one

Our mouths have two lips. The "mouth" of the ME'IL had one SAFA that went completely around it.

[7] Fighting Illini, Hoosiers, Hawkeyes, Wolverines, Spartans, Golden Gophers, Wildcats, Buckeyes, Nittany Lions, Boiler Makers, Badgers - and who?

The Big Ten Conference is a union of 11 (don't ask) world-class academic institutions who share a common mission of research, graduate, professional and undergraduate teaching and public service... strong tradition of competitive intercollegiate athletic programs... The names in the TTtriddle are the team names of the members of the BIG TEN. And who? TERESH, of course, as in BIGTEN VATERESH. (Okay, BIGTAN, but whose counting?)

PurimPix from 898 front page

From Upper-left, clockwise: Magilla Gorilla (Hanna-Barbera, Screen Gems 1963-67); Havdala candle for the havdala pasuk borrowed from the Megila; DOLLPHONE (DOLFON, one of Haman's sons); MASS as in the tax that Achashveirosh levied on his provinces; Megila

scene (from Esther 1:8) made with Playmobil by Dvir Moshe Schler; Purim S'meichim rather than Samei'ch, to reflect the "days of Purim" referred to in the Megila; POOH - RIM; ACHUZ (also means percent) B'CHAVLEI (can refer to the laces) VUTZ (boots) - from 1:6; and, especially if you say it with a Southern accent, SHOESHINE (HaBira).

Machon Puah OCD

One of the primary tasks in dealing with a couple turning to the Puah Institute for help is getting a complete picture of who they are. Occasionally, factors which may seem unimportant or unrelated to fertility (at least in the couple's opinion) are a direct obstacle to their getting pregnant. Treating or dealing with this factor will often lead to successful conception, without the need for extensive and expensive fertility diagnosis and/or treatments.

In the recent 10th Annual Puah Conference held in Jerusalem, Prof. Yosef Zohar, a world-renowned psychiatrist, discussed the fascinating subject of people who suffer from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. OCD is an anxiety disorder whose sufferers generally obsess about specific concerns (such as cleanliness, safety, health) and respond to those concerns with a compulsion to perform a specific behavior.

As an example, Prof. Zohar cited the case of a person who is concerned about locking their door properly. He

obsesses about the door being unlocked and the possible harm that may come from the unlocked door. Despite having locked the door, he is not 100% sure that he has locked the door properly. Prof. Zohar said that not only does such a person check the lock repeatedly; each time he checks the door, he actually becomes less certain that the door is locked. In this person's eyes, even the smallest chance that the door could still be unlocked is viewed as absolute and possible.

Although it was once thought to be extremely rare, worldwide some 2% of the population are estimated to suffer from some form of OCD. OCD sufferers often recognize that their fears and obsessions are illogical, yet they cannot separate themselves from their concerns or the resulting behaviors.

Unfortunately, OCD is a condition which often goes untreated. Since the person may well know that his fears are illogical, he is embarrassed to discuss the fears with others, even medical professionals. Often, it is only when his compulsions overtake his life and his is unable to function that the person seeks help.

It therefore takes a long time to arrive at a diagnosis. However, since it is both a common and chronic disease, once diagnosed it can often be effectively treated. The range of treatments includes both a psychological approach as well as a pharmacological approach. One needs to be carefully diagnosed and treated

by an expert psychiatrist in order to deal with this disorder.

Next week: When having OCD has halachic implications and results.

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WISDOM & WIT
by Shmuel Himelstein

When R' Simchah Zissel of Kelm was very old, he had great difficulty walking. Once, after he had walked quite a distance from home, he asked the young man accompanying him to come back with him to his home. "Rebbe," said the young man, "I know it's difficult for you to walk back. Let me go back to the house for you and fetch whatever you need. You can wait for me here." R' Simchah Zissel, though, insisted in walking back with him.

When he came home, he went over to his wife and apologized to her profusely, because - unlike his usual practice on leaving his home - this time he had forgotten to say goodbye to her.



"Rebbe," said a wealthy man to R' Hillel of Radoshitz, "I have no problems with poor people who come begging for alms, but I can't stand those who come with chutzpah, and demand that they be given a donation."

"I too can't stand chutzpah," replied R' Hillel, "but with a difference. If I ask money from a wealthy man, who realizes that he was entrusted with his money by Hashem but is simply too miserly to give, I can tolerate that. I can't stand a wealthy man who has the chutzpah to think that whatever money

he has belongs to him, and it is his prerogative whether to give tzedaka or not."

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

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Lesson # 511

Declaring Who Are His Heirs

In a prior lesson we discussed that a doctor, or midwife or the mother or father is believed to state who is the firstborn. In this lesson we discuss when is a person believed when he states who are his heirs, Thus if a person dies without a will, the person he names will or will not share in the estate of the declarant depending on the halacha as stated below. Also, may a person recant a declaration he made as to were his heirs?

Yaakov declares that Reuven is his son, or that Aharon is his brother or that Moshe and Yehoshua are his cousins or have some other relationship. The person whom he names is a person who will inherit Yaakov if he dies intestate (without a will) according to the laws of intestacy. The declaration of Yaakov is given full credence by Beit Din and such person will be an heir of Yaakov. This holds true even if it is not generally known that such person is related to Yaakov. It holds true whether Yaakov so states when he is on his death bed or halachically healthy. This declaration may be in writing or he may make his intent known by nodding in response to a question put to him whether a certain person is his son or other relative. His declaration applies to all his assets when he made the declaration and to assets he will later acquire. It even applies to assets

that he thereafter acquires while he is in a coma before he dies.

Yaakov is believed when he declares that Reuven, a person assumed by the community to be his son is not his son. Neither Reuven nor Reuven's son will share in the inheritance of Yaakov's estate.

On January 1, Yaakov declared that Reuven was his son. On January 15, Yaakov declares that Reuven is not his son but is his servant. Reuven's declaration of January 15 is not give any credence and Reuven is deemed to be his son for the purpose of inheriting from Yaakov. This, in spite of the fact that Reuven performs those services usually performed by a servant. However, if on January 1, Yaakov declares that Reuven is his servant and on January 15 he declares that Reuven is his son, his January 15 declaration is given credence by the Beit Din. This, in spite of the fact that Reuven performs those services usually performed by a servant. Beit Din must weigh all of the factors, for example, Reuven was always called the servant, the son of a handmaid.

Yaakov while passing through customs or immigration authorities declares that Reuven is his son. Sometimes later he declares that Reuven is his servant. His later declaration is believed since he obviously made the first declaration to get Reuven through customs or immigration authorities who permitted sons but not servants to accompany their fathers. The converse does not hold true. If Yaakov at the customs or immigration authorities declared that Reuven was his servant and sometimes thereafter declared that Reuven was his son, his second declaration is not given credence.

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) The Kli Yakar explains that the entire concern with plague afflicting the Jewish people when performing a census is based on the problem of singling out individuals. As long as we are viewed as part of the nation as a whole, we have the protection of the merit of the nation. The problem which demands a special way of counting only arises when we are singled out as individuals as captured by the use of the singular HEAD.

2) Daat Zekainim MiBaalei Hatosfot answers that since the Mishkan came to atone for the sin of the golden calf and Chur was killed while trying to stop the people from sinning with the golden calf, the Torah gives special honor to Chur in linking him to the construction of the Mishkan.

3) The Ohr HaChayim teaches that the Torah is actually teaching us something very fundamental with these words. It is revealing that the tablets of the Ten Commandments embodied the entire Torah. The verse should be read as follows: AND G-D GAVE MOSHE WHEN HE FINISHED SPEAKING WITH HIM AT SINAI. AND WHAT WAS G-D TELLING MOSHE AT SINAI? THE TABLETS WITH THE COMMANDMENTS. This teaches that the entire Torah which G-D taught Moshe was in fact an extension of those two tablets. This also explains why G-D waited to present Moshe with the tablets until now. In essence, he had not completed teaching them to him until all the halachot of the Torah were completed.