



Not about Para Aduma

CHUKAT is about the Para Aduma, so it is natural to write about it. But we'll resist the temptation and present something else.

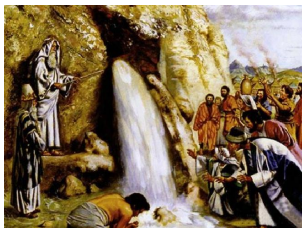
The Torah tells us that after Miriam died, the people had no water to drink. Our Tradition is that the well that miraculously accompanied the people in the Wilderness was in the merit of Miriam's watchful protection of baby Moshe at the water of the Nile. When she died, the well disappeared and the people went thirsty.

So they complain to their leaders, Moshe and Aharon, about the lack of water. They went further than just shouting about their thirst; they said some terrible things (again) about having been taken out of Egypt to this terrible waterless place.

In response, G-d tells Moshe and Aharon to gather the people and speak to the rock in front of the people (L'EINEIHEM, before their eyes) and they (M&A) would thus bring forth the water for the people and their animals.

Moshe takes his staff as he was instructed to by G-d and he and Aharon gather the people before the rock.

Then Moshe says, "Listen now, you rebels! Shall we produce water for you from this cliff?" According to some commentaries, this statement contains two things that Moshe should not have said - calling the people rebels, and giving the impression that it was he and Aharon who would bring the water out of the rock, not G-d. Each or both of these slips of the tongue (errors in leadership judgment) might have led to G-d's punishing them by not allowing them to enter the Land, nor lead the people into the Land.



Then, of course, there was the hitting of the rock rather than speaking to it. This too, according to some commentaries, lessened the "wow!" effect of the miracle, resulting in not properly

cont. next page

J'lem Shabbat in/out times for **Parshat CHUKAT**

7:12 pm (plag: **6:18**) / **8:30pm** (see page 3 for other zmanim)

LEAD TIDBIT

cont. from front page

(or maybe, fully) sanctifying G-d's name.

And then there is another factor that some commentaries present.

Let's take a step back first.

"Officially", the sin that condemned the generation of the Wilderness to wander for 40 years and die out, rather than enter Eretz Yisrael, was the Sin of the Spies, Cheit HaMeraglim. In fact, it was more than "just" that one sin. It was an accumulation of ten times we "tested G-d's patients" (so to speak) in the Midbar. The sin of the spies was the culmination of the list, the clincher of the decree against that generations (adult males).

Rav Aryeh Kaplan z"l in The Living Torah, renders Bamidbar 14:22,23 thus: "[I will punish] all the people who saw My glory and the miracles that I did in Egypt and the desert, but still tried to test Me these ten times by not obeying Me. They will therefore not see the land that I swore to their ancestors. All those who provoked Me will not see it." It seems that Cheit HaEigel (sin of the golden calf) is part (a serious, major part) of the "cause" of the decree. Together with the sin of the spies and various and sundry other occurrences in between. You can also say that the other eight items were minor compared with the Golden Calf and the Meraglim.

If this is so - and some m'forshim say it - then the Golden Calf episode happened on Aharon's watch, so to speak. The Torah actually refers to the calf as the Eigel that Aharon made. But we need not fault Aharon for anymore than the fiasco happened when he was in charge of the people.

The Meraglim debacle happened when Moshe Rabienu was at the helm. He was in charge. In D'varim, he admits his involvement in that he thought it was a good idea to send the spies. He instructed the spies with the intent of their coming back with a good report. It backfired. We don't blame Moshe for the sin of the spies, but it happened on his watch. He was involved with the spies as Aharon was involved with the Eigel.

It seems - and we are getting these ideas from venerable Torah commentaries, without whom we would not dare even bring up this topic - that it as if G-d said, I cannot let you enter the Land when the rest of the generation are being kept out.

CEOs of corporations that something serious occurred within the company can be fired even if they are not involved at all in the scandal. Baseball managers are sometimes fired because their teams pitchers are not pitching well and/or because their batters fail to produce enough runs. These analogies, obviously, are not from the commentaries, but they might help understand the point.

Bottom line: All of the above can be missing the mark in trying to understand why Moshe and Aharon were barred from entering the Land, from leading the people into the Land. It is likely that G-d's reasons are a mystery that is His and not revealed to us. And some sources say exactly this. The facts are that Moshe and Aharon did not enter the Land of Israel. The facts are that G-d states that they would not enter the Land because of the missed or muffed opportunity to sanctify G-d's name. The reasons are a matter of speculation on our part.

Candles (earliest)	SH'LACH	Havdala	Next week
7:12pm (6:18)	Yerushalayim	8:30pm	7:13 (6:20) 8:31
7:28pm (6:20)	S'derot	8:31pm	7:29 (6:22) 8:33
7:26pm (6:18)	Gush Etzion	8:30pm	7:28 (6:20) 8:31
7:29pm (6:21)	Raanana	8:33pm	7:30 (6:22) 8:34
7:27pm (6:19)	Beit Shemesh	8:31pm	7:28 (6:21) 8:32
7:28pm (6:20)	Rehovot	8:32pm	7:30 (6:22) 8:33
7:29pm (6:21)	Netanya	8:33pm	7:31 (6:22) 8:34
7:25pm (6:19)	Be'er Sheva	8:30pm	7:26 (6:20) 8:31
7:27pm (6:19)	Modi'in	8:31pm	7:29 (6:21) 8:32
7:12pm (6:20)	Petach Tikva	8:32pm	7:13 (6:22) 8:34
7:12pm (6:18)	Maale Adumim	8:30pm	7:13 (6:19) 8:31
7:28pm (6:20)	Ginot Shomron	8:32pm	7:29 (6:21) 8:33
7:27pm (6:19)	Gush Shiloh	8:31pm	7:28 (6:20) 8:32
7:26pm (6:18)	K4 & Hevron	8:30pm	7:27 (6:20) 8:31
7:27pm (6:19)	Giv'at Ze'ev	8:30pm	7:28 (6:20) 8:32
7:28pm (6:20)	Yad Binyamin	8:32pm	7:29 (6:21) 8:33
7:29pm (6:21)	Ashkelon	8:32pm	7:30 (6:22) 8:33
7:18pm (6:20)	Tzfat	8:33pm	7:20 (6:21) 8:34
7:29pm (6:21)	Zichron Yaakov	8:34pm	7:31 (6:22) 8:35

Rabbeinu Tam havdala CHUKAT (J'lem) - 9:15pm

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
4-13 Tamuz (June 16-25)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	4:34-4:36am
Sunrise	5:34-5:36am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:10-8:12am)	9:06-9:08am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 9:40-9:42am)	10:17-10:19am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	12:39½-12:41¼pm
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	1:16-1:18pm
Plag Mincha	6:17½-6:19½pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 7:46-7:48pm)	7:51-7:53pm

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Word of the Month

First op for KL this month is Tuesday night, June 15 (Minhag Yerushalayim). Many (most?) people will wait for Motza"Sh (June 19), which "satisfies" the people who try to say KL only on Motza'ei Shabbat and those who wait until after 7 full days from the molad.

Minhag Yerushalayim holds that not only is the first opportunity after 3 days from the molad, but that is the BEST time - regardless of season of the year, regardless of expectations of clear skies, regardless of YK, Shavuot, 9 b'Av.



ParshaPix Explanations on p.25



Chukat stats

39th of 54 sedras;

6th of 10 in Bamidbar

Written on 159.2 lines in a Torah (rank: 39)

10 Parshiyot; 6 open, 4 closed

87 p'sukim; ranks 43rd; smallest in B'midbar

1245 words; ranks 40th; smallest in B'midbar

4670 letters; ranks 41st; smallest in B'midbar

Fewer p'sukim than Sh'mini, more words, same number of letters. Chukat is a bit longer.

MITZVOT

3 mitzvot of 613; all positive. Only 6 sedras have only positive mitzvot: B'reishit and Lech Lecha with 1 each, Metzora with 11, Chukat with 3, Pinchas with 6, and Vayeilech with 2

Again, to show the very uneven distribution of mitzvot in the Torah - Chukat has 3 (so do two other sedras). 26 sedras have more than Chukat; 25 sedras have fewer mitzvot. 3 is way below average (which is 11.4 mitzvot per sedra), but it is the median number of mitzvot in a sedra. 17 sedras have no mitzvot. The top 17 have 530.

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 17 p'sukim - 19:1-17

[P> 19:1 (22)] This whole Aliya plus the following 5 p'sukim deal with the topic of the PARA ADUMA. (The 22 p'sukim of ch. 19 constitute the Maftir for Shabbat Parshat Para - 2nd longest Maftir of all - what's the longest?)

The mitzva involves taking a cow with reddish hair (even two black or white hairs invalidate it), that is blemish-free (i.e. fit for the Altar - even though the Para Aduma is NOT a korban; it is prepared away from the Mikdash and Har HaBayit, across the valley, on Har HaZeitim) and that has not worn a yoke or carried a burden for people. (If it carried upon its back something for its own benefit - e.g. a blanket to keep flies away - it is still acceptable.) Elazar b. Aharon was in charge of the preparation of this first Para Aduma.

SDT: "And G-d spoke to Moshe and Aharon saying... DABEIR (you Moshe, not both of you, DAB'RU) to the children of Israel... Only Moshe could tell the

people about the PARA ADUMA, which is an atonement for the Sin of the Golden Calf. Aharon was too involved in the Golden Calf episode. He didn't tell this mitzva to the people and he didn't prepare the PARA ADUMA; his son did. Yet the pasuk tells us that G-d spoke to both Moshe and Aharon. Perhaps this contains a private rebuke by G-d to Aharon... And perhaps a bit of the opposite as well, since Aharon IS included in the command to prepare the Para Aduma.

SDT: Rashi says that the mitzva is for the assistant Kohen Gadol to tend to the Para Aduma, although any kohen qualifies. Commentaries see a symbolism in the son of Aharon doing the work: just as the cow atones (so to speak) for her calf, so too the son atones for his father who was somewhat involved in the Golden Calf.

"Take a PARA ADUMA T'MIMA" T'MIMA usually means blemish-free, fit for the Altar. However, here the word T'MIMA is followed by the phrase "that has no MUM (blemish)", making the adjective T'MIMA superfluous. Therefore, we are taught that T'MIMA in this context is describing ADUMA, indicating that COMPLETE reddish hair is required. Without T'MIMA, a cow that was a "jinji" would be acceptable even if it had some non-red hairs. Not so, because of the phrase ADUMA T'MIMA.

As opposed to all korbanot in the Mikdash which had to be brought "inside" (the Beit HaMikdash area), the Red Cow is slaughtered and prepared "outside" (not even on Har HaBayit - across the valley

on Har HaZeitim). It is not a korban, but it does have korban-like features (atonement, among others).

After the cow is slaughtered, it is burnt whole (some of its blood having been sprinkled towards the Mikdash first).

The complete process of the Para Aduma (including what is thrown into the fire, how the ashes are collected and how the potion is made) is a positive mitzva [397, A113 19:2] that has been fulfilled nine times, so far. The next (tenth) time will be in the time of the Moshiach.

A person who comes in contact with a dead body is rendered ritually impure for a seven-day period [398, A107 19:4]. The "Para Aduma Potion" is to be sprinkled on the defiled person on the third and seventh day. Without this procedure, the state of ritual impurity remains forever. It is most important to avoid entering the Mikdash (and eating of sacred foods) while one is defiled. Intentional violation is a (Divinely imposed) capital offense.

MitzvaWatch

Today, (temporarily) without a Beit HaMikdash, the are (at least) three ramifications of the rules of ritual impurity to the dead.

[1] A kohen must still avoid contact with a dead body (except those of his close relatives for whom he sits shiva),

even though he is already "tamei". This is both for "practice" as well as not to "add" to his state of TUM'A.

(2) We are not permitted to go onto Har HaBayit in those areas where the Beit HaMikdash and its courtyard stood (or might have stood).

(3) Some gifts of the Kohen (such as t'ruma, t'rumat maaser, challa) are not given to a kohen, but are "disposed of" according to alternate halachic procedures, because of TUM'A of both the Kohen potential recipient, as well as the giver, and therefore, the gift itself. Note that there are gifts to the kohen that pose no TAMEI problems; these are given today (e.g. Pidyon HaBen).

Levi - Second Aliya

11 p'sukim - 19:18-20:6

The Torah summarizes the Para Aduma procedures.

Note that the cedar branch and hyssop are added to the potion as well as to the burning of the Para Aduma. Commentaries see special significance in the fact that the cedar is a lofty tree and the hyssop is a lowly shrub.

The dual nature of the Para Aduma potion (that it purifies the defiled and defiles the ritually pure) is counted as a mitzva of its own [399,A108 19:19]. And, it is this feature of the Para Aduma that is considered most mystifying and enigmatic.

[P> 20:1 (6)] The next topic the

Torah deals with is the death of Miriam in the Tzin Wilderness in Nissan (on the 10th of the month). The Torah immediately tells us that the People had no water (Midrashim speak of Miriam's Well that miraculously accompanied the People during their wanderings. This well disappeared upon her death, since it was in her merit - because she had watched over Moshe at the river - that we had the Well.) The People complain bitterly to Moshe and Aharon.

The custom of emptying out water containers in the room in which someone has died, comes from the sequence: "...and Miriam died ...and there was no water..."

Commentaries point out a connection between Para Aduma and the death of the righteous Miriam. Both are "instruments" of atonement.

Shlishi - Third Aliya

7 p'sukim - 20:7-13

[P> 20:7 (5)] In response, G-d tells Moshe to take the Staff, gather the People, and that he (Moshe) and Aharon should SPEAK to the rock in the presence of the People, so that the rock shall give forth its water for the People and their flocks. Moshe gathers the People and admonishes them to witness another of G-d's miracles. He lifts the Staff and strikes the rock

twice; water flows from it in abundance.

[S> 20:12 (2)] G-d is "angry" at Moshe and Aharon for missing a chance to sanctify His Name by having the People see water come from the rock by speaking to it. (The People had previously seen water come from a struck rock.) G-d decrees that neither Moshe nor Aharon shall lead the People into the Land of Israel.

Because of the inclusion of Aharon in this decree, there is an implication that he was not punished for any involvement in the Golden Calf - a point that needed clarification. Rashi says that the Torah is telling us that Moshe and Aharon would have gone into Eretz Yisrael, except for this, and only this sin. Interesting that Moshe himself tells the people (in D'varim) that he carries some of the blame for the Sin of the Spies. With Aharon's involvement in the Calf incident and Moshe's in the Spies episode, there is an interesting balance. On the other hand, Aharon IS held accountable in this case, even though it was Moshe who "acted".

G-d's decree seems excessively harsh on Moshe and Aharon. Commentators point to this as an example of how strictly G-d judges the greatest of our people.

Observation...

Note that the rock gives forth water even though Moshe did not speak to it, as G-d had told him to. There are

two possibilities (maybe) as to why.

(1) It avoids a Chilul HaShem that would result if water did not come forth.

(2) Moshe Rabeinu was on the high level that he was able to control and divert nature (within limits). He had previously stricken a rock to get water; this now is something he can do.

(3) A twist on the Chilul HaShem possibility of (1) is that G-d wanted to avoid Moshe's losing face. G-d and Moshe are very much partners, so to speak, in the perception of the People. At the Sea, the people believed in "HaShem and in Moshe His servant, BASHEM UVMOSHE AVDO. In contrast, their lack of faith is expressed as their talking against G-d and against Moshe, BEILOKIM UVMOSHE. These are the only two times the word UVMOSHE (and in Moshe) appears in all of Tanach.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya

8 p'sukim - 20:14-21

[S> 20:14 (8)] Moshe sends messengers to the Edomites, to recount Israel's brief history and request right of way through Edomite land. The request is denied. A second attempt is made to obtain permission; this too is strongly rejected. The People of Israel change their route in order to avoid confrontation with Edom (according to G-d's command).

SDT: In asking for passage through Edom territory, Moshe's messengers state that the people "will not drink water of a well". Rashi says that we would have expected the Torah to say "the water of cisterns". Rashi explains that Edom had the cisterns; we had a miraculous well (as well as Manna for food). What we were offering Edom were the profits from selling us food and water. We had no need for their food and drink, but it was a proper offer to make. Rashi says that when staying at an inn, one should partake of the inn's meals rather than "Brown bagging it". This increases the benefit to the innkeeper and is a proper thing for a patron to do.

SDT: Moshe sends a message to Edom saying, "...you know all the trouble we had in Egypt." Imrei Shefer asks, how was Edom expected to know what happened to us in Egypt? The answer, he says, comes from Parshat To'l'dot, when Rivka sought out G-d to explain what was happening inside her. She was told that she would have twins and that they would grow to head great nations, and when one fell, the other would rise proportionally. Edom's life must have made a significant turn upward, says Imrei Shefer, during the dark years we spent in Egyptian servitude. That is how Edom would know what was happening to his brother Israel.

Chamishi 5th Aliya **17 p'sukim - 20:22-21:9**

[P> 20:22 (8)] The People travel from Kadesh to Hor HaHar. There Aharon is to die. Moshe takes Aharon and Elazar up the

mountain, where the garments of the Kohen Gadol are transferred from Aharon to his son and successor. ALL the people mourn Aharon's death for 30 days. Commentaries point out that Aharon's death had elements that were missing in Moshe's. Seeing his son continue in his footsteps and being loved by all the people as Aharon was, adds a special dimension to Aharon's full life.

The Midrash says that the Heavenly Clouds that protected the People, left upon Aharon's death.

We can see now that the miracles of the Midbar were each associated with one of our leaders: Moshe, the Manna; Aharon, the Clouds; Miriam, the Well.

[S> 21:1 (3)] That made them vulnerable to attack from Emori. The People of Israel made a pledge to G-d and the Emori attack was successfully countered by Israel.

[P> 21:4 (13)] The People then tired of their extended travels and complained once again to G-d and Moshe. Their tirade included gross disrespect to G-d's miracle of the Manna. For this they were punished by an attack of "fiery" (poisonous) snakes that bit many people, causing many deaths. The People repented and pleaded with Moshe to pray to G-d to spare them. G-d told Moshe to fashion a copper (the choice of copper was Moshe's and it was a play on

words - Nechoshet /Nachash) snake and mount it atop a staff, so that anyone who would see it * would live.

*The Mishna in Rosh HaShana (3:8) asks, "What? (The copper image of) a snake can kill or restore life?" Not so, says the Mishna. "Rather, when the People of Israel look towards the Heavens and subjugate their hearts to G-d, then they were cured; and if not, they would decay."

The Mishna in P'sachim (4:9) records different things that Chizkiyahu HaMelech did, and was either praised for them, or criticized by the Sages. He destroyed the Copper Serpent and the Sages approved of his actions. People were misusing it, and misunderstanding it. This same kind of problem exists with the use of Korbanot in the time of the Beit HaMikdash, and - in our time - amulets, Tashlich on Rosh HaShana, Kaparot before Yom Kippur, visiting holy places, notes in the cracks of the Kotel, red threads around one's wrist, and even saying T'hilim - meaning that there are people who do certain things in lieu of heartfelt prayer and sincere kavanot, somehow expecting miraculous salvation. All of the above, to some extent or another, are meant to be incentive and inspiration to sincere repentance and prayer, not substitutes for them. This is why Chizkiyahu HaMelech got rid of the N'CHASH NECHOSHET. This is why some rabbis banned Kaparot in their communities, etc.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya **11 p'sukim - 21:10-20**

The People continue their travels. They went to OVOT (identified as being due south of the Dead Sea). From there they went to "desolate passes" or "the ruins of AVARIM" (different understandings of the phrase IYEI HA'ARAVIM), along Moav's eastern border. They then continued on to NACHAL ZERED. Then to a part of the desert that was outside Moav territory (this because they were forbidden by G-d to encounter Moav.) These travels were recorded in the "Book of the Wars of G-d" (Some say that this was an ancient record of events that occurred since the days of Avraham Avinu. Some say that this refers to the Torah. Others say that it wasn't actually a book but an oral transmission of stories through the generations.) Finally, the people arrive at a place known as "the Well".

[S> 21:17 (4)] This was another significant event related to water. From a physical point of view, water is by far the most valuable "commodity" of the wandering Nation. On a spiritual level, water represents Torah and Life itself. The "Song of the Well", a short but beautiful song is recorded, highlighting the preciousness of water. The words are filled with symbolisms and allusions.

*It was then that Israel sang this song:
Rise, O well, respond to [this song].
A well was dug by princes
Sunk by the people's leaders
Carved out with their staffs.
From the desert, Matanah...*

The next piece of travelog is either part of the song at the well... or not. From the desert, the people went to Matana, from Matana to Nachliel, and from Nachliel to Bamot. From Bamot to Hagai in the field of Moav, on a cliff top that overlooks the Wastelands.

Notice that we have, shortly out of Egypt, before the wandering period in the Midbar, an AZ YASHIR... Shirat HaYam. Water. At the end of the period of wandering, shortly before leaving the Midbar and entering Eretz Yisrael, we have another AZ YASHIR... B'eir. Water.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya 16 p'sukim - 21:21-22:1

[P> 21:21 (16)] As Israel approaches the lands of Emori, requests are made for rights of passage. Not only are these requests denied, but Emori sends an army to confront Israel. Israel is completely victorious against King Sichon, and conquers the lands of Emori and Cheshbon. Further battles result in more Emori lands. Og, king of Bashan,

also falls, as G-d promised.

SDT: *It is important to note that Israel's military might is not absolute, nor are their military options equal. Israel fights against whom G-d tells us to, and we do not engage in battle anyone that G-d forbids us to. It is irrelevant whether Edom was stronger or weaker than Emori. We didn't fight the latter and avoid the former for military reasons. G-d is our Commander-in-Chief. We have to always keep this in mind; and it would help if our enemies knew this as well. Ironically, it is our enemies who sometimes seem to believe in G-d's role in these kind of matters, whereas we sometimes seem to stubbornly deny His role. And this point is applicable in modern times as it ever was.*

SDT: *Rashi explains why G-d had to tell Moshe not to fear fighting Og. Og was the sole survivor of the Flood (except for Noach and company), and he was the one who told Avraham that nephew Lot had been taken into captivity. Perhaps he had earned enough merit to resist the Israelites. G-d told Moshe not to worry.*

Israel's military victories in the Midbar, towards the end of the period of wandering, were very important for the morale of the people as they faced long years of many battles upon crossing the Jordan River into Eretz Yisrael. In the Midbar, they get a taste of G-d's promises and might.

Moshe sends Meraglim to Ya'zer. Rashi says that the spies who were sent said, "we will not do as our predecessors did; we have complete confidence in the power of Moshe's prayer." In a way, the sending of these Meraglim is a

TIKUN (repair) of the Sin of the Spies. Spies were always sent to facilitate the nation's next step. They were not meant to decide on what G-d already had decreed.

The final pasuk tells us that Israel traveled and arrived at Arvot Moav - this is their final stop before entry into Eretz Yisrael.

Note the significance of the above statement. The four remaining sedras of Bamidbar and all 11 of D'varim are still in front of us, and we are already at Arvot Moav. Mas'ei will give a summary of the wandering, but with the conclusion of Chukat, we have arrived at the threshold of Eretz Yisrael. Remember that back in Mikeitz we left the Land and went down into Egypt. Now we are readying ourselves to return.

Last 3 p'sukim are reread for Maftir.

Haftara 33 p'sukim Sho-f'tim 11:1-33

The haftara consists of most of the story of Yiftach, the at-first scorned, later sought after, son of Gil'ad. He was shunned by his "half-brothers" and fled to the Land of Tov where he lived a rogue's life. The people of the Gil'ad region are attacked by the Ammonites and they pursue Yiftach to be their leader. In the description of the wars with Amon, reference is made to the

historical background of the area - specifically, the episode recorded in the sedra about Israel requesting permission from Emori for passage through their territory. This is a major connection to the sedra. The story of Yiftach seems to be peripheral to the reason that Chaza"l chose this reading for Chukat.

And yet... the haftara ends with the first part of the story of Yiftach's vow and the resultant fiasco with his daughter. Chaza"l generally consider Yiftach to have erred; such a vow as his would be halachically invalid under the circumstances. The significance (if it does, in fact, connect to the sedra) of the story of Yiftach's daughter vis-a-vis the sedra is elusive.

Soccer There are two positions on a soccer team whose names in Hebrew sound like they have extreme political views: The left wing and the right wing are called קיצוני שמאלי & קיצוני ימני
More SOCCER: Penalty arc
קֶשֶׁת הָעוֹנָשִׁין

📖 Man's ingratitude is nowhere more apparent than in the paradox of his coming to regard himself as deserving things more, the more abundantly they are given to him.

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Divrei Menachem

Parshat Chukat incorporates the famous incident whereby Moshe strikes the rock to produce water for the thirsting people in the desert, instead of talking to it as bidden by Hashem. In the original command Moshe is told to speak to the rock in front of all the gathered assembly so that, "You shall bring forth water... and give drink to the assembly and to their animals" (Bamidbar 20:7-8).

It is instructive to note that a distinction is raised, by the inclusion of the Hebrew word ET, between giving the people to drink and the animals to drink. That is to say, according to the Meshech Chochma, that there is a qualitative difference between the consumption of humans and animals. And by Moshe's speaking to the rock, the gathered assembly would clearly discern that the source of any food or drink is to be found with the Almighty.

But when Moshe hit the rock - "And the people and their animals drank" (v.7) - no distinction is made between them; the people and animals are bunched together with no separation by the word ET. The people probably gulped up the water like animals with no thought as to Hashem's beneficence. No wonder then that Hashem rebuked Moshe by saying that he failed to sanctify G-d in the eyes of Bnei Yisra'el.

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

Parshat CHUKAT

Discovering our Mortality

It was at a house of mourning, and she was saying something that I had heard many times before. In fact, I had said it myself when I was sitting shiva for my own mother.

She is a friend of long-standing, and a member of my former congregation. I hope that I am not being unchivalrous by describing her as late middle-aged. She had just lost her own mother, having lost her father several years ago.

"It is not just that I feel orphaned," she said. "It is that I feel vulnerable. As long as even one of my parents was alive, it was as if there was a kind of buffer between me and death. Now that they are both gone, it begins to feel that it is my turn. No one to protect me. I face the malach hamavet (angel of death) directly, face to face, head on."

We all deny our mortality, and as long as the older generation is around we feel that they, and not we, are the ones on death's frontlines. We are insulated from death's claws by them. It is their turn and not yet ours. But once we lose our own parents, we can no longer deny our mortality. It is our turn.

There is an excellent book by my

esteemed colleague, Rabbi Marc Angel, entitled "The Orphaned Adult". I often recommend this book to mourners, particularly those who are fortunate to have entered adulthood, even late middle age, with both parents alive, and experience their deaths only after having long ago reached adulthood. Their feelings are unique and very different from those who experienced the trauma of a parent's death at an earlier stage of life. Rabbi Angel also describes this sudden sense of mortality, of vulnerability. With the death of parents, these older people finally must surrender their comfortable denial of their own inevitable demise.

In this week's portion, Chukat, we read of the death of two beloved leaders of the Jewish people, Miriam and Aharon. Both of them were parent figures, albeit not actual parents, of the Jews in the years of their wandering in the wilderness. Instructively, a period of vulnerability ensues immediately upon their respective deaths.

We read first of Miriam's death. "The Israelites arrived at the wilderness of Zin... Miriam died there and was buried there." And then, immediately, "The community was without water" (Bamidbar 20:1-2).

As long as Miriam was alive, she was a source of water, a source of life. While she was alive, the Be'er

Miriam (Well of Miriam) provided water for the people. With her death, and in her case, the well immediately dried up, the water ceased, and the people were vulnerable. Without "mother" Miriam, death by thirst threatened the people.

Soon afterwards, we read, "...and Aharon died there on the summit of the mountain." And then, this time not immediately but after thirty days of mourning, "When the Canaanite king of Arad heard... he engaged Israel in battle and took some of them captive..." (20:28-29 and 21:1) "Father" Aharon died, and peace and security were shattered. War and that worst of fates, captivity, reared their ugly heads.

It seems that it is more than mere psychological reality that with the passing of its leaders, a nation faces calamity. With the death of ones parents, one's own well-being is threatened. No wonder that when the young sister-in-law of the 18th century sage Rabbi Yonasan Eybeshitz lost her husband, the Rabbi cautioned her, in a letter which has come down to us, to take special care of her own physical well-being and the health of her young children. As our sages put it in the Talmud, "When one member of a group perishes, the entire group needs to be anxious."

How apt are the words of the Psalmist, "When my father and mother abandon me, HaShem will

take me in" (T'hilim 27:10). When our parents "abandon" us and leave this world, we are bereft in many ways, and our positions in life become precarious. We need G-D at those moments, and turn to Him, confident that He will "take us in".

Parsha Points to Ponder **CHUKAT**

1) Why does G-D command Moshe to tell the Jewish people that the laws at the beginning of the Parsha are laws THAT G-D COMMANDED (19:2)? We already know that every law which Moshe teaches originates from G-D!

2) Moshe tells the people to give the Para Aduma to Elazar, Aharon's son, who was the Deputy Kohein Gagol (19:3). Why wasn't the Para Aduma in that generation given to the Kohein Gadol like in all future generations?

3) Why does G-D have to specify that Moshe should strip Aharon OF HIS CLOTHING when preparing him for his death (20:26)? Once it described stripping him, of course it meant of his clothing!

Parsha Points to Ponder

is prepared by

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

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WISDOM & WIT

by Shmuel Himelstein

When R' Moshe Feinstein was a young man, he received a draft notice from the Russian army. For him to be drafted would mean a tremendous hardship, both physically and - even more so - spiritually, because he would be forced to transgress mitzvos.

Before being drafted, R' Moshe went to see the Chafetz Chayim - whom he had never met - to ask for his blessing. As R' Moshe told it fifty years later, when he entered the Beis Midrash in Radin, he found the Chafetz Chayim learning with R' Elchanan Wasserman. R' Moshe went over and joined them. Soon, the two saw that he was indeed a person steeped in Torah.

The Chafetz Chayim finally asked him why he had come, and he explained his predicament. At this, the Chafetz Chaim remarked:

"We are told in Avos (3:5) that 'whoever accepts the yoke of the Torah has removed from him the yoke of the government and of worldly care.' Now, shouldn't it have stated, 'does not have imposed upon him...' rather than 'has removed from him...'? From this we see that one who is dedicated to Torah study has the yoke removed - even if it was imposed upon him."

A short time later, R' Moshe received noticed that as the draft had been more successful than anticipated, his call-up notice had been revoked. □

VEBBE REBBE

QUESTION

I often have to speed up my Shemoneh Esrei in order to be finished in time for Birkat Kohanim (duchening). Someone told me that I could actually go up even if I am still in the midst of Shemoneh Esrei. Is this true? In general, I am interested in suggestions of how to deal with the situation.

ANSWER

The idea of going up for Birkat Kohanim in the middle of Shemoneh Esrei exists, and we will explain it before discussing its limitations.

The Radvaz (IV, 293) says that if there is no other kohen who will be doing Birkat Kohanim, then a kohen who is still in Shemoneh Esrei should stop to go up and do it. He says that since Birkat Kohanim is from the Torah, while any specific tefilla is only rabbinic, the kohen should make sure that Birkat Kohanim is done. The precedent for that is the halacha that when a kohen serves as a chazan, if he is able to return to his tefilla afterward, he can stop for Birkat Kohanim (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 128:20). If, on the other hand, there are other kohanim, there is no need to disrupt Shemoneh Esrei, and although a kohen has a personal obligation to duchen, that is activated only when he is called to do so (see Shulchan Aruch ibid.:4). The Radvaz assumes that when someone calls out to the kohanim, he does so with the intention

that only those who are available should come up. The Magen Avraham (128:40) says that if an individual kohen still davening was specifically told to go, his obligation would be activated and he would have to stop his tefilla and fulfill it in any case. One requirement is that the kohen at least started slightly to move in the direction of the place of Birkat Kohanim during the beracha of R'tzei, which he may do (Shulchan Aruch ibid.:8).

The Mishna Berura (128:106), after citing the Magen Avraham, cites significant opinions that say that the strictness with which Chazal treated Shemoneh Esrei precludes interrupting it even if he is the only kohen and even if he is called. Only if he is up to the same part of Shemoneh Esrei as the chazan at the time of Birkat Kohanim would he be allowed to proceed. In that case, neither walking to the front of shul nor reciting Birkat Kohanim at its appointed place in Shemoneh Esrei is a significant break. The Kaf Hachayim (OC 128:56) also paskens this way.

When he may not go up, the kohen does not leave shul. The matter of leaving is either to avoid being called, which we saw does not apply, or is a non-crucial step so people will not think he is pasul (Terumat Hadeshen II, 22), which is not justified here.

If you are already up to Elokai Netzor, you can skip or shorten it, as is suggested regarding answering Kedusha (Shulchan Aruch, OC 122:1).

If you are not able to take the steps back in time, you can go up during Elokai Netzor, as we have seen that this is no worse a break than answering Kedusha, which is permitted in that situation (ibid.). In these cases, you should remember to take a minimal step toward the duchan during R'tzei and make sure to keep your hands clean as of the last time you washed, which according to most, can even be the morning washing (Va'ani Avarcheim p. 165; see Yalkut Yosef, OC 128:(11)).

It is obviously not an optimal situation to have to possibly miss Birkat Kohanim or to have to deal with timing matters, which, among other things, is probably disturbing to one's concentration. If you feel that it is easy to speed up your tefilla with little to no concentration loss, we suggest doing so, especially if we are talking about missing by a matter of seconds. Another possibility discussed by the poskim is to start Shemoneh Esrei somewhat early and thus finish at a workable time. Although it is good to start Shemoneh Esrei with everyone else, many permit starting a little early if there are significant gains by doing so (see Yabia Omer II, OC 7; Ishei Yisrael 33:(25)). While you are certainly not required to do so, if it puts you more at ease in your Shemoneh Esrei, you may do so.

THE CHALLENGE OF MONEY: COMPETITION, PRICES AND PROFITS [part 5] by Dr. Meir Tamari

Just as there is Ona'ah in buying and selling, so too, there is verbal ona'ah. All the examples of ona'at devarim given by the following Mishna reinforce our understanding of ona'ah as exploitation of a lack of full disclosure of relevant information. "One may not say to him [the seller] 'what is the price of this article, 'if he [the buyer] has no intention of buying it [from this seller]. One may not say to a ba'al t'shuvah, remember your previous deeds.'" (Bava Metzia 4:10). "Ona'ah in speech is far more serious than in business, since the latter can be rectified by restitution whereas the injury inflicted by speech cannot be. Ona'ah in business only affects one's material goods whereas one's very being is affected by other forms of ona'ah" (Bava Metzia 58b).

The Torah's concern over asking a seller the price of articles that one has no intention of buying from him flows from concern as to the mental damage or psychological loss suffered by him over the loss of the expected sale. Regarding this injunction against comparative shopping, it seems that we have to distinguish between the marketing practices of the department or chain stores and those of the owner-operated businesses. Regarding the latter, the injunction applies as the owner personally expects to benefit and therefore suffers a non-financial

loss when the inquiry turns out to a casual one or for comparative purposes only. However, modern large scale marketing enterprises encourage customers to browse around even if they do not intend to buy; they depend, in effect on impulse buying and comparative shopping so they aim advertising at it and devote store layout, space and staff to make it available. They are prepared to pay both the psychological price and actual costs involved in customers who do not actually buy anything, in return for the possible profits from impulse buying. These marketing conditions constitute a waiver of the claim of exploitation that is the basis for ona'ah. Furthermore, their hired staff suffers no loss, financial or otherwise, from our enquiries.

It has been suggested that the protection against exploitation or oppression through insufficient or misleading pricing information that lies at the root of ona'ah, should not be restricted only to consumer goods. There are many sophisticated forms of modern financing and investing which depend primarily on the flow of information and we have to consider whether the protection of ona'ah applies where relevant or material information regarding market price was withheld.

One example is that of officers who withhold information regarding discovery of a new vein of copper, buy stock at the prevailing market price which is not affected yet by the discovery, release the news and thereby benefit from the new price that

they in effect manipulated by exploiting the markets lack of information that they had caused. Is there ona'ah? Buyers of information services could find themselves overcharged when following the advice of consultants, financial analysts, accountants or stock brokers without full disclosure of conflicts of interests or insider trading. It would seem plausible that the protection of ona'ah would be provided for those who have lost money through these and other forms of price exploitation. Alternatively, they would possibly be protected by the dictate of LIFNEI IVEIR that makes for full disclosure. Accounting practices or corporate reports that present stock at below or above real market value might be viewed as G'NEIVAT DA'AT.

The discussion to this point has centered on ona'ah in relation to charging an above market price that already includes profit. Such ona'ah may be claimed in Beit Din and forms the subject of many t'shuvot. There is, in addition, a halakhic limitation of profit that is above 1/6 of the costs. Such a limitation would be difficult to enforce by legal means since using the 1/6 markup of the inefficient producers will yield the efficient ones greater profits, while enforcing that of the efficient entrepreneurs will lead to bankruptcy of the others who cannot compete at those prices. Rabbi Chaim David HaLevi, the late Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, was asked about what the pricing policy of a building subcontractor should be since there is no viable market price for his services.

The Rav's answer was to choose an average between the highest and lowest prices being charged. This would yield him a profit and his clients would not be overcharged.

The moral basis for such decisions would be, "and your brother shall live with you" (Vayikra 25:35). □

Praying with Passion

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

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YIGDAL

13 Principles of Faith (part two)

יְגַדֵּל אֱלֹהִים חַי וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, נִמְצָא,
וְאֵין עֵת אֶל מְצִיאֹתוֹ... מְתִים יִחְיֶה
אֶל בָּרַב חֲסֵדוֹ, בְּרוּךְ עַד עַד שֶׁם
תְּהִלָּתוֹ.

Translation: (Koren/OU Siddur)

Great is the living God and praised. He exists, and His existence is beyond time... God will revive the dead in His great loving-kindness. Blessed for evermore is His glorious name!

Full text and translation in last week's TT

Meaning within meaning:

In YIGDAL, we say, " Exalted be the Living G-d and praised." The Rambam writes (Berachot 10:26), "This is the general principle: A person should always cry out [in prayer] regarding what the future will bring, and plead for mercy,

and he should express his gratitude over what has passed; he should thank and praise to the best of his ability. And whoever is profuse in thanking Hashem and praising him consistently is considered praiseworthy." This language is reminiscent of the final lines in the Avadim Hayinu of the Haggada recited on Pesach, "And whoever is profuse in telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt is considered praiseworthy (HAREI ZEH M'SHUBACH)." Rav Mattisyahu Salomon says he learned from his Rebbe, Rav Eliahu Lapian, that the word M'SHUBACH does not just mean that one deserves to be praised for doing a good thing. Rather, Rav Lapian connects the word to YAYIN M'SHUBACH, fine wine, wine that is improved. By speaking at length about the Exodus, he says, a person becomes improved. Here too, we can say, that by thanking and praising Hashem profusely, we become M'SHUBACH, we become improved, we become better, higher, holier, worthier people. This, concludes Rav Lapian, in itself is an additional factor in making our prayers more effective.

Visualize:

Images that bring prayer to life...

A child wakes up in the morning in his bed, warm beneath his blankets, his head buried in a soft down pillow. He believes that it is his bed, his blanket and his pillow. He dresses and goes to the kitchen to eat breakfast. In his view, the clothes are his clothes, the toast and eggs on his plate are his food, and the cup of orange juice next to his place, which has his name on it, is his cup.

What the child does not see is that all of "his" belongings are in fact purchased and prepared for him by his mother. He does

not perceive her active participation in every facet of his day; he has a bed and fresh linen because she purchased them and launders the linen; he has his very own juice cup because she bought it and painted his name on it; he has a plate of food because she purchased the ingredients, cooked the food and served it to him. Yet he perceives none of this. His mother is an "invisible hand" guiding his life along, unseen and yet essential to every aspect of his day.

Like this child, who lives a life invisibly orchestrated by his mother, we conduct our lives using the props and scenery placed before us by the Creator. G-d has written the script, created the characters and has even written the ending of the story - the coming of Moshiach and T'chi'at HaMeitim.

Take it with you:
Your personal connection...

As you go through your daily routine, it often seems that there's life, and then there's G-d. Life is the real-time, practical aspects of your day, whether pleasant or difficult, productive or futile. G-d, it would seem, is confined to the praying, learning, blessings before and after food, mitzvos and acts of chessed.

But Israel's G-d doesn't dwell in one compartment. He is ELOKIM CHAI - the "living G-d", Who is the essence of every event, object, achievement and emotion you encounter in your day. He is a constant, active force, the main character in the life's story of every human being and of the Jewish nation.

Kavana builder: Exercising mind, memory and imagination to carry kavana into your davening

Think of a moment in your life in which you felt clearly that G-d's hand was at work. Relive that moment and how it felt. Choose one image, like a snapshot, that portrays that moment for you, and try to visualize that image when you say the words ELOKIM CHAI in YIGDAL.

Speaking of YIGDAL...

There is a "thing" that occurs in parts of the davening that are often sung rather than said, and that is pausing in the wrong place based on the meaning of the words, but in the right place for the beat of the song. For example, the 5th line of YIGDAL: HINO ADON OLAM... Behold, He is the Master of the Universe, and every creature (V'CHOL NOTZAR) shows His greatness and majesty. V'CHOL NOTZAR belongs to the second phrase, but is attached to the first part because of the flow of the song. Not much to do about it; just be aware.

The Puah Institute
for Fertility and Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha

Medical Secrets

It is a Matter of Significance

We have been discussing the obligations that an individual or family has in revealing a medical issue to potential mates. Last week we introduced a Gemara that tried to solve the problem of a man whose lineage (he had a non-Jewish father) impeded him from finding a spouse. Rav Yehuda advised him to move to a place where his lineage was not

known, implying that he could successfully hide his lineage and get married.

Some authorities maintain that one can hide information for the purposes of finding a shidduch. They base their reasoning on the fact that people are inherently flawed. It is impossible to find the "model" spouse. When people marry, they choose the person who they want to be with, one who is attractive to them and has character traits that they find compelling. It is obvious that everyone has some flaws and we are perfectly willing to overlook flaws in a potential spouse.

In this vein, the Gemara relates that Beit Hillel would shower praise and compliments upon each and every bride, saying how beautiful and righteous she was. Beit Shammai were horrified that Beit Hillel would lie; not all brides are beautiful and righteous. Beit Hillel retorted that in the eyes of her husband she is beautiful and righteous; these are subjective (not objective) qualities. As such, it is indeed proper to commend him upon a choice that is appropriate in his eyes.

According to this reasoning, one can hide information from a prospective marriage partner. Medical imperfections are certainly a flaw, but are no more pertinent than lineage or any other flaw, since each of us expects that there are unknown flaws in their spouse.

Most Poskim disagree with this

position. Rav Elyashiv is among these poskim and explains their position and the gemara as follows:

In the case of the man with a non-Jewish father, the simple people mistakenly thought that his lineage was a slur on his character. Even though he was actually one hundred percent kosher, as proclaimed by Rav, no one would marry him because he was perceived to be flawed, even though he was not. Rav Yehuda suggested that he go to another locale where the simple folk would not know anything of his past and would not be able to mistakenly damage his character. The reason he is able to hide his past is because, as Rav proclaimed, the man is 100% kosher and there IS no issue to disclose.

We cannot carry the same reasoning forward, however, to the case of a medical issue. Medical issues are an objective problem that will have relevance for the life of the affected person and by extension for the life of their spouse and children. As such, the flaw has material significance and is not synonymous with that of the Gemara.

Next week: Putting these theories into practice

The white Bella and a booky moon each claim him

(02) 624-0504

Location in, same as Shimon's b'chor after

Just an observation; you make something of it: PARA ADUMA = HAR SINAI

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*

Although the Torah does not call attention to it, Parashat Chukat marks a great transition in the Exodus story. According to most commentators (and the simple reading of the text), Parashat Korach describes an incident that took place in the wake of the nation's disappointment following the unsuccessful spy caper during the early years of Israel's travails in Midbar Sinai. By the end of our parsha, on the other hand, we hear about the negotiations between Moshe and the kings of the nations bordering the Land of Israel in the final year of the 40-year trek through the desert. The wars that follow on the Jordan River's "east bank" constitute the first stage in the actual conquest and settlement of Eretz Yisrael as promised to the Patriarchs.

The Torah's description of the failed negotiations with the neighboring kings (Sihon, Og, etc.), as well as the wars that followed, appears to have been part of the basic curriculum taught to Jewish children in the following generations.

When Yiftach HaGiladi (Shoftim 11-12, a section of which is this week's haftara) needs to defend Am Yisrael from the attacks of the Amonites, he responds not only with a successful military defense, but first and foremost with a historical refutation of the Amonites' claim to the Land. Knowing that our claim to the Land is true and that the enemy's claim is spurious is a

precondition for rallying the support that is necessary for a successful engagement with the enemy.

In our own day it is essential that we be knowledgeable about the history of Eretz Yisrael both ancient and modern, so that we will be able to refute the false claims of others, and even more so, that we will understand that it is our right and destiny to live there.

Rabbi Shalom Berger, Alon Shvut

TTTRIDDLES

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

Last issue's (KORACH) TTtriddles:

We had some very nice solution sets submitted by more than the usual solvers. Kol HaKavod (and CDs) to HC, YYW, the Ganchrow gang of Rochester, MM/Bklyn, and others.

[1] a druggist researched a distant insect

A druggist is a ROKEI'ACH, spelled REISH-KUF-CHET. Researched in Hebrew is CHAKAR. An insect is a CHARAK. and a distant one is a CHARAK RACHOK. Each word is an anagram of KORACH. With KERACH meaning ice as a fifth anagram, we are left only with KUF-CHET-REISH, which seems to be the only one of six permutations (order counts, as opposed to combinations, which for the letters of KORACH there is but one) of the letters of KORACH that is not a word.

[2] a quarter, not Jan. 4th or April fools day, but when?

A quarter is 1/4. In the common American notation of dates, 1/4 is January 4th. In the European method, which is most common in Israel, 1/4 (or 1.4) is April 1st, a.k.a. April fool's day. But in "Jewish" (especially for those who are insistent on not numbering the secular months, since the Torah tells us that Nisan is the first of our months - not January), 1/4 would be the first of the 4th month, a.k.a. as Rosh Chodesh Tammuz - which was the date this past Shabbat Parshat Korach.

[3] If Korach took, what did Chaggai do?

VAYIKACH KORACH, and Korach took - the word VAYIKACH is spelled VAV-YUD and then the first and last letters of the person, in this case, Korach. Consistant with that would be VAYCHI CHAGGAI, the same VAV-YUD, followed by the first and last letters of the name CHAGGAI. So what did Chaggai do? He lived.

[4] Daniel follows the sedra, but the haftara is from Shmuel

At the conclusion of each sedra - in many Chumashim - the number of p'sukim in the sedra is given, followed by one or more SIMANIM, signs or codes for the number of p'sukim. Parshat Korach has 95 p'sukim and the siman given is DANIYEIL, 4+50+10+1+30 = 95. The regular haftara of Korach (which was preempted last week by the Rosh Chodesh haftara, is from the book of Sh'muel. So, Daniel, Shmuel, and Yishayahu all follow Korach - in some way or another.

[5] Wordwise, which Ben No'ach gets along least well with Korach?

Bnei No'ach - No'ach's sons, were SHEIM, CHAM, and YEFET. Playing with the words, CHAM means warm, which gets along least well with Korach, whose letters spell KERACH, ice.

[6] The matching musical letters (Hebrew and English)

This was the only one of the 9 TTriddles that no one got (one solver came close). The last letter of the ALEF-BET, which many people call TAF or TOUGH, is actually TAV. TAV is the Hebrew word for a musical note. The matching letter to TAV in the English alphabet is T, which in music is spelled TI and which is one of the 8 notes of an octave - as in DO RE MI... TI, DO. TAV and T are therefore, matching musical letters.

[7] Ranging from 2 to 9, we are in the midst of a run of four 3s. There are six other 3s. What are the three 2s?

If you fill in the missing words, the TTriddle becomes a simple question. The trick is to figure out what those missing words are, without being told. Here is a restatement of the TTriddle: Ranging from 2 to 9 letters long, we are in the midst of a run of four sedras whose names have three letters each. That would be SH'LACH, KORACH, CHUKAT, and BALAK. There are six other threes (which we didn't ask for, but which are MIKEITZ, EMOR, B'HAR, NASO, EIKEV, and R'EI). The 9-letter name is V'ZOT HAB'RACHA (which we also didn't ask for - no other sedra name is longer than 6 letters), and the

three twos (which we did ask for) are NO'ACH, BO, and TZAV.

[8] EGR and Frank DeKova

Frank DeKova was the actor that played AVIRAM in the movie, the Ten Commandments. Much more famous is the actor who played DATAN, Edward G. Robinson, which is why we represented him by his initials only. Frank Dekova played gangsters, as did Robinson, but many of us remember him as Wild Eagle, the peace-loving Hekawi Indian chief on the 1960s TV sitcom F Troop.

[9] Knock out radium, Switzerland

A knock out in boxing is also known by its initials, KO, pronounce "kay, o". The element Radium's symbol is Ra. And the Swiss website and email "extension" is CH. Together that spells KORACH. CH, by the way, stands for Confoederatio Helvetica, which is Latin for Helvetic (Swiss) Confederation. All Swiss coins carry this name in Latin and the code on cars is CH.

The Mystery of the Red Heifer

Guest article by

Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher
Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

The laws concerning the Red Heifer have always been regarded as the most mysterious of the Torah's Mitzvot. Although this Mitzva has always been considered to be above human reason,

attempts have nevertheless been made to interpret it.

The Midrash states that the reason why a heifer is chosen is that it should atone for Israel's sin in worshipping the golden calf. Let the mother cow clean up the mess of her child. Its red color indicates blood guilt, as does the scarlet which was to be thrown into the midst of the burning animal. The heifer had to be one that had never borne a yoke since its purpose was to rid man of the yoke of sin. The cedar-wood which the Kohen took stands for pride, the hyssop for excessive humility. Both were thrown into water mixed with earth, giving an intermediate substance between solid and liquid to show that both extremes are undesirable. That the ashes of the heifer cleansed those who were unclean but defiled those who prepared and handled them is explained by the fact that what heals the sick may be dangerous for the healthy; what purifies the sinner is defiling to those without that sin. The use of ashes is to teach us that we, too, consist of dust and ashes; spiritual purification can never be attained where humility is lacking.

The person who had become defiled through contact with the dead was to be purified with the ashes of the heifer on the third and the seventh day following his defilement. The third day represents the third decade of a person's life when passions are at their height and sins have to be atoned for. The seventh day represents the seventh decade of human life when one should

cleans himself from sin before meeting his Maker. Symbolic explanations such as these do not fully explain the irrational nature of the Red Heifer.

The Talmudic view of the Mitzva of the Red Heifer is that it cannot be grasped by the limited human mind; G-d's will is beyond a human being's understanding. The Talmud tells of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zacchai who, having given a heathen an explanation of the Red Heifer from the world of witchcraft, when challenged by his disciples, said "The dead do not defile, nor do the waters purify: it is a Divine decree which we are not permitted to criticize." The rabbis noted that the word "chok", used in connection with the command of the Red Heifer, refers to a Mitzva the reason for which eludes human intellect. And it is with reference to this commandment that King Solomon, the wisest of men, exclaimed: "I said: I will get wisdom; but it was far from me" (Kohelet 7:23).

ParshaPix explanations

- 🐄 The cow is an actual possible PARA ADUMA (subject to careful examination, and then if it is found pure red, has to stay that way, remain unblemished, and never be worked).
- 🐄 Following Miriam's death, the Well dried up and there was no water for the people (the faucet with the spider's web at the spout).

- 🐄 Although Moshe was commanded to speak to the Rock (the rock's ear indicates that it was ready to listen), he struck it with the MATEH twice and water gushed forth from the rock(s).
- 🐄 Kohen Gadol with the garments that were transferred from Aharon to Elazar.
- 🐄 The people panicked and a plague of serpents attacked the people. G-d told Moshe to put the form of a snake on a rod (which he did, making the snake from copper) and anyone bitten by a poisonous snake who looks at the snake-on-the-stick would live. The symbol of the medical corps is a serpent (or two) wound around a staff. Known as a caduceus, encyclopedias give it an origin in Greek mythology. One wonders if the Torah is its original source...
- 🐄 The sedra mentions SEFER MILCHAMOT HASHEM, perhaps some kind of written record of the battles. It is represented by the open book with a tank on one page and the HEI-apostrophe on the other.
- 🐄 DO NOT ENTER sign has a double-double meaning. Edom and Emori both responded to Israel's request for safe passage through their territory with DO NOT ENTER. Moshe and Aharon, as a result of the "hitting the rock rather than talking to it episode", were given DO NOT ENTER orders for Eretz Yisrael.
- 🐄 The bottle of water marked 2NIS


represents the offer Bnei Yisrael made to pay for the water they would use while passing through Edom's land.

- 🐄 The well with the musical clef stands for the Song of the Well.
- 🐄 Mathematical expression equals $256+44+1$, which is 301, the g'matriya of fire. That is what the expression is equal to in the ParshaPix, and altogether represents the phrase, "For a fire has come out of CHESHBON..."
- 🐄 The epaulet is of the rank of lieutenant-general in the IDF, the rank of the chief of staff. Sword crossing an olive branch and two leaves (known as falafels). This represents Yiftach (from the haftara) who was asked to be ROSH and KATZIN, head and officer.
- 🐄 MELECH CHESHBON, i.e. the math king. Emori's king Sichon is also referred to as MELECH CHESHBON, as in the haftara of Chukat. (In Chukat, there is reference to Sichon Melech HaEmori, who sits in (the city of) Cheshbon). For the title of Math King, we've selected Leonhard Euler (pronounced oiler) - that's his picture in the ParshaPix. He is considered by many to be the most significant mathematician of all time so we have dubbed him MELECH CHESHBON.
- 🐄 Top middle is the emblem of Chevrolet. As we read in Bamidbar 21:1, "And when king Arad the Canaanite, who lived in the Negev, heard tell that Israel came by the

way of Atarim; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners." As to the "prisoners", the Midrash says it was only one single person, a servant woman. The term in the pasuk for prisoner or captive is SHEVI, i.e. CHEVY as in CHEVROLET.

- 🐄 Below the Chevy emblem is a picture of one of the most famous clowns of the past in America, Emmett Kelly. We originally hoped to find that his birth name was Emmett Louis Kelly, or some other middle name beginning with an L, so he would be the best choice for the concluding words of ...MAYIM CHAYIM EL KELI (E.L. Kelly). But, alas, he doesn't seem to have had a middle name. Be that as it may, we went with Weary Willie rather than Princess Grace because of the E of EL. And we can also suggest that his first name makes him the most appropriate of Kellys for this ParshaPix because of the different examples of CHESSED SHEL EMET in burying of Miriam and Aharon.
- 🐄 XX is 20, representing the 20 cities referred to in the haftara.
- 🐄 Lower-right is a shape, the curved side of which is known as an OGEE, a double curve with the shape of an elongated S. From Ogee we get OG and from there we get OG MELECH HABASHAN.
- 🐄 Now comes the four graphic elements from the upper-right, linked with arrows. A gift-wrapped box representing the place - whose identity is disputed by various scholars - called MATANA. From

MATANA, the Torah tells us, the people traveled to NACHLI'EL. The bird the arrow points to is a wagtail, known in Hebrew as a Nachli'eili. From there, via another arrow, the people traveled to BAMOT, either a place name or just the high places. In modern Hebrew, BAMOT are stages. In TTriddle form, the connection is to stages as in stagecoach. From there, via yet another arrow, to HAGAI, which we are taking as HA (the) GAI (maybe a valley of sorts). The picture is one of Guy Smiley, a Muppets character.

 The people complain of their thirst with these words (Bamidbar 20:5): "And why have you made us come out of Egypt, to bring us in to this evil place? This is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink." Here are those same three fruits that the Meraglim brought back from their tour of the Land. Think of the extra slap in the face. □

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 523

ARCHITECT'S DUTIES

A recent case before the Beit Din of Jerusalem

Mr. Architect was hired by Mr. Owner to prepare plans for an addition to his

home. Mr. Architect prepared the plans and Mr. Owner hired Mr. Contractor to build the addition to his house. The contractor was an Arab who did not have a contractor's license. Several years later a crack developed between the original house and the addition to the house added by the Arab contractor. There was considerable expense paid by Owner to have the cracks fixed. None of these really helped the situation and Mr. Owner must now engage a home engineer and crew to permanently fix the cracks. Mr. Architect says it was not his responsibility to oversee the construction of the additions to the house and his job was completed when he presented Mr. Owner with the plans. Mr. Owner pleads that the price for the plans include supervision of the work done in conformity with the plans. And he would also be required to certify that the addition was built according to the plans and according to governmental standards. Mr. Architect denies that he was hired for all of these functions. He concedes that even if his duties included seeing that the addition was in compliance with the plans as to overall appearance it did not include his supervision of the details of the construction. Furthermore, the amount he was paid shows that it did not include any of the services that the owner alleges were to be performed by him, as if it were so, the price would have been considerably higher. Therefore he did not inspect the joints between the house and the addition to the house. Also many of the additions were completed after the work on the part of his plans were completed. Furthermore Mr. Owner caused himself the damage by

hiring an Arab contractor who did not have a license to do the work. The contractor counterclaimed against the owner because of time he spent in going to court and meetings that were held, all costing him money when he could have done productive work. The Beit Din held that the question it was faced with is if the preparation of the plans for the building included what is customarily done by an architect who is to supervise construction of a building? There was nothing in the contract to show that the architect undertook to see to the supervision of the work, which is usually part of a contract where the architect undertakes to do such supervisory work. Furthermore the claim of the architect was correct that the contract price would have been much higher, possibly twice as high, had it included supervisory work. The court cites as a precedent a case in which a lawyer was retained by the client to litigate a case, which he did. The case was lost and the client says that the fees paid include taking an appeal from the losing decision. The Beit Din there held that the amount paid would have included taking an appeal but since it was already paid there was no way the court can now say that the amount paid included an appeal. This should have been stipulated before the litigation began. Similarly in this case, since no provision was made to supervise the work and the fees having been paid, the Beit Din would not intervene.

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) The Ohr HaChayim explains that G-D told Moshe many things at Har Sinai which were just for Moshe to know but not to share with the Jewish people. This applied to the category of laws which have no revealed reasons, which we refer to as CHUKIM as well. G-D revealed reasons to Moshe but he was not to teach them to the people. The people would no doubt ask Moshe for explanations for these laws. Thus, G-D commanded Moshe to tell the people, THESE ARE THE CHUKIM OF THE TORAH WHICH G-D COMMANDED MOSHE TO SAY, preempting their questions by stating outright that he is teaching them whatever G-D told him to teach and there is no further information for him to reveal in terms of reasons for these laws.

2) The Kli Yakar answers that Aharon could not take part in the Para Aduma since it served as an atonement for the golden calf which he created. (In fact, the Baal HaTurim teaches that the gematria of Para Aduma is ZEH AL AVON EIGEL - THIS IS FOR THE SIN OF THE CALF)

3) The Ohr HaChayim teaches that had it simply said to strip Aharon, Moshe could have understood this to mean to remove all of Aharon's clothing. The double language with the emphasis on HIS CLOTHING indicated that Moshe was only to remove the extra four garments worn

by a Kohein Gadol. This would actually leave Aharon with the white clothing on as a preparation for his death.

Towards Better Kashrut Awareness

Q&A on various aspects of kosher supervision, from the OU "home office"

Question: Does every hechsher have an on-site mashgiach?

Answer: No. A mashgiach's purpose is to take responsibility for a hashgacha that is under his watch, which requires establishing a MIRSAS at the location of his assignment. MIRSAS may be loosely translated as "fear". In this context it means that the mashgiach's presence is supposed to make workers fearful and prevent them from compromising the level of kashrus at a factory or kitchen. However, this does not necessarily require that the mashgiach must be there constantly, but rather that an adequate presence must be established in order to establish a MIRSAS, thereby properly safeguarding kashrus and the public's best interests. Halachically and colloquially, a consistent, periodic presence of a mashgiach is termed, "yotzei venichnas" ("leaves and returns back")

Question: Does MIRSAS mean that the mashgiach is supposed to scare factory or kitchen workers?

Answer: Not exactly. The mashgiach is supposed to establish an authoritative presence that will make workers hesitate and stop them from compromising kashrus, and the mashgiach must be very much on top of the situation he oversees. However, this does not mean that a mashgiach needs to actively scare people. A MIRSAS can be established a number of ways. The first component that is an absolute must is that the mashgiach must be fully aware of everything that is happening. However, developing a good rapport with factory or kitchen workers can also be integral in creating a MIRSAS. In general, you get farther in life by dealing with people like a mensch. However, a mashgiach can't always be gentle or come across as a pushover, and how to deal with individual situations effectively requires quite a bit of ingenuity. Depending on the situation, a mashgiach doesn't necessarily have to always be present, and can still establish an effective MIRSAS while maintaining a positive relationship with the people he deals with.

Question: If that is the case, why ever use MASHGICHIM TEMIDIM?

Answer: In some cases, it is practically impossible to give hashgacha without a mashgiach temidi. One extreme example is a kosher slaughterhouse. Without an onsite Rav Hamachshir and multiple mashgichim temidiim, it is not possible to give a hechsher to shechitos. There

are also other situations where a mashgiach temidi may be halachically required. However, there are other, less unique situations that would also practically warrant hashgacha temidis. Ultimately, whether a mashgiach temidi is required is a judgment call by a hechsher... □

Yaakov, Yosef, Yaakov to Yosef, and what nation?

There are close to 4000 known species of frogs, including toads. They range in size from less than a cm (the length of the word nearly, coming up). to nearly 30cm long (from the left to the right edge of this open TT) and come in a rainbow of colors and patterns.

Adult frogs are carnivorous and will eat just about anything smaller than themselves, incl. insects, worms and even other frogs...

The biggest frog is the Goliath frog... can weigh 3.3 kilo....

Kashering vessels of Au, Ag, Cu, Fe, Sn, Pb (etc.)

Between Bogie and Birdie bad not RH, Boston's state