

Candles (earliest)	R'EI	Havdala	Next week
6:56pm (6:07)	Yerushalayim	8:10pm	6:49 (6:02) 8:03
7:13pm (6:09)	S'derot	8:12pm	7:06 (6:04) 8:05
7:11pm (6:07)	Gush Etzion	8:10pm	7:05 (6:02) 8:03
7:13pm (6:09)	Raanana	8:13pm	7:06 (6:04) 8:05
7:12pm (6:08)	Beit Shemesh	8:11pm	7:05 (6:03) 8:04
7:13pm (6:09)	Rehovot	8:12pm	7:06 (6:04) 8:05
7:13pm (6:09)	Netanya	8:23pm	7:07 (6:04) 8:05
7:10pm (6:08)	Be'er Sheva	8:11pm	7:03 (6:03) 8:04
7:12pm (6:08)	Modi'in	8:11pm	7:05 (6:03) 8:04
6:56pm (6:09)	Petach Tikva	8:12pm	6:49 (6:03) 8:05
6:56pm (6:07)	Maale Adumim	8:10pm	6:49 (6:01) 8:03
7:12pm (6:08)	Ginot Shomron	8:12pm	7:06 (6:03) 8:04
7:11pm (6:07)	Gush Shiloh	8:11pm	7:04 (6:02) 8:03
7:11pm (6:07)	K4 & Hevron	8:10pm	7:04 (6:02) 8:03
7:11pm (6:08)	Giv'at Ze'ev	8:11pm	7:05 (6:02) 8:03
7:13pm (6:09)	Yad Binyamin	8:12pm	7:06 (6:03) 8:05
7:13pm (6:10)	Ashkelon	8:13pm	7:07 (6:14) 8:05
7:02pm (6:08)	Tzfat	8:12pm	6:55 (6:02) 8:04
7:13pm (6:09)	Zichron Yaakov	8:13pm	7:07 (6:04) 8:06

Rabbeinu Tam havdala - Parshat R'ei (m'vorchim) - 8:50pm

**Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
24 Menachem Av - 3 Elul (Aug 4-13)**

Earliest Talit & T'filin	4:56-5:03am
Sunrise	5:53-5:59am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:27-8:31am)	9:18-9:21am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 9:53-9:55am)	10:27-10:29am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	12:45¼-12:45pm
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	1:21-1:19pm
Plag Mincha	6:12½-6:06¼pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 7:38-7:31pm)	7:43-7:36pm

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The ear of the kosher animals

Sounds a bit like Heckle and Jeckle

President Shimon R?

the sedra-appropriate bird

The "preferred" drink for this week's sedra

When more or less is less

first R'ei doesn't match sense

The two says...

☞ Much selfishness and vanity stem from a lack of faith. When one believes, he has something to live for besides himself.

From "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

A Candle by Day • The Antidote • The World of Chazal
by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein
Now available at 054-209-9200

Tuesday night, the eve of the first of Elul, we start saying T'hilim 27 (L'David) at the end of Maariv, and on Tuesday morning, at the end of Shacharit. Standard practice for Nusach S'fard is not to say it after Maariv, but at Mincha instead

LEAD TIDBIT cont. from front page

only in a very specific way, then Sh'chita is the only option.

Meat from a live animal? No. Meat from non-Sh'chita? No.

Therefore, SH'CHITA.

Prohibition of Eiver Min HaChai - necessary. Prohibition of Neveila - necessary. Prohibition of T'reifa - necessary. Positive command - that is, MITZVA, to use ritual slaughter, to SHECHT? Actually, not necessary. It is the only option. Sh'chita could have been the technical method of being able to eat meat. Nothing more than that.

But it is more. It is a Mitzvat Asei in the Torah. One of the 613 mitzvot. It gets a bracha which speaks of G-d sanctifying us with His mitzvot - Sh'chita included.

Hold that thought.

We may eat kosher fish. We may not eat non-kosher fish. Eating non-kosher fish is prohibited. One of the 365 prohibitions among the 613 mitzvot says so. What's the difference between a kosher fish and a non-kosher fish? Scales and fins.

Okay, you are camping by the river and decide to fish for your dinner. Your patience pays off when you land a whopper of a fish. Your Coleman stove, frying pan, spices and lemon are ready to go. You look at the fish and it's a smooth skinned catfish. No good. Dinner is on hold. Throw it back or give it to a non-Jew who is similarly

fishing 100 yards down river. You rebait your hook, cast your line, and are rewarded with another fish 15 minutes later. You look it over and there they are: beautiful fins (the catfish had them too) and scales which easily scrape off with your fingernail leaving no damage to the fish's skin. Kosher fish! B'TEI'AVON.

Why'd you look over the fish? To see if it was kosher or not. Very practical thing to do, since you need to know what's what before you can eat.

But there is more! Examining a fish, an animal (mammal), a bird, (a locust,) to determine its kosher status is a Mitzvat Asei, a positive command (actually, four different mitzvot, one for each kind of animal).

It didn't have to be a mitzva. It would still be needed to be done in order to avoid prohibitions. But it is a Mitzva!

One more example from R'ei (we find more in R'ei and many others throughout the Torah): It is forbidden to send away a freed Jewish manservant empty-handed. Prohibition among the 365. To avoid transgression, you have to give the former EVED IVRI a significant gift at the time of his release.

There are several answers - here's one - Rabbi Chananya b. Akashya says: G-d wanted to merit Israel, therefore He heaped upon them Torah and Mitzvot. Not just gave them (us) Torah and Mitzvot; He gave us more than would be necessary. Our gain - if...

R'EI stats

47th of the 54 sedras;

4th of 11 in D'varim

Written on 257.8 lines in a Torah (rank: 4th)

20 Parshiyot; 5 open; 15 closed (rank: 10 tied)

126 p'sukim - ranks 13th (first in D'varim)

Same number of p'sukim as Lech L'cha, but Lech L'cha ranks 23 in size, compared with 4th for R'ei. Interesting, no?

1932 words - ranks 7th (first in D'varim)

7442 letters - ranks 7th (first in D'varim)

Relatively long p'sukim like most sedras in D'varim (hence, jump in ranking)

MITZVOT

55 of the 613; 17 positive, 38 prohibition

Only Ki Teitzei & Emor have more mitzvot

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

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

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma respectively. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Kohen - First Aliya

17 p'sukim - 11:26-12:10

[S> 11:26 (3)] After setting down the fundamentals of Judaism (including the formative history of the Nation, Aseret HaDibrot, Sh'ma, Brachot & Davening, and more) in the first three sedras of D'varim, Moshe Rabeinu proceeds with the "Tachlis" part of the Book - mitzvot. The sedras of R'ei, Shoftim, and Ki Teitzei contain 170 mitzvot, the greatest concentration for three consecutive sedras. They are 3 of the top 6 mitzva-sedras of the Torah.

Blessing = keeping the mitzvot; curse = not keeping them. These are the simple equations that Moshe presents here and that Yehoshua will again present when the People stand on Har G'rizim and Har Eival.

SDT: *Note the phraseology in the opening p'sukim: the Blessing - THAT you will keep the mitzvot. The Curse - IF you won't... There is an implied "recommendation" to choose Blessing (similarly, "And you shall choose Life"). The Bracha, of course, WHEN you choose it... good things will happen. The curse, IF (not assumed) you are misguided enough not to choose it...*

[S> 11:29 (23)] The Nation was born in Egypt, had its infancy in the wilderness, and will grow and flourish in the Promised Land. "These are the mitzvot to be preserved in the Land..."

(Note that not all of the mitzvot that follow are Israel-related, yet it is possible to suggest - as Rashi and Ramban do, very strongly - that ALL mitzvot were meant to be observed in Eretz Yisrael).

Sites, altars, idols, etc. of the nations in Eretz Yisrael are to be destroyed [436,A185 12:2]. However, we must be careful not to do the same to G-d [437,L65 12:4] - this mitzva includes the prohibition of erasing G-d's Holy Names.

While their places are to be eliminated, THE Place (site of the Mikdash) is to be the focal point of Jewish spiritual life and energy. All sacrifices and offerings are to be made there and only there, at the first festival encountered [438,A83 12:5]. It is on those occasions (the Shalosh Regalim, the 3 Pilgrimage Festivals) that sacred foods (such as Ma'aser Sheni, Neta Reva'i) are eaten in Jerusalem. Things won't be as "do your own thing" as they are in the wilderness. Soon we will be entering the Land for a more "permanent", down to earth life.

MitzvaWatch

There is a fairly common situation among the Torah's mitzvot, of a positive command and a prohibition basically saying the same thing. We have a mitzva to fast on Yom Kippur and a prohibition of eating and drinking. Same thing. We may not do Melacha on Shabbat and we must

abstain from Melacha on Shabbat. Same thing. In R'ei, we are commanded to "cancel" uncollected loans at the end of Sh'mita year. We are forbidden from collecting loans after the Sh'mita year has past. Same thing. There are many examples of these "two-sides of the same coin" mitzvot. And there are reasons for the positive mitzva and a "partner" prohibition.

But let's take a look at another aspect of mitzva pairs. Less common than the perfectly matched positive mitzva and prohibition, is the pair of mitzvot that overlap, but not completely. Take a look at [438], the mitzva to fulfill a pledge of a korban or other donation to the Beit HaMikdash. There is a partner prohibition (in Ki Teitzei) which forbids delaying the fulfillment of a pledge to the Mikdash. These mitzvot do not perfectly align. To fulfill the positive mitzva, one must "pay up" by the next Regel. However, one is not in violation of the prohibition unless three Regalim have past since the pledge. This means that a pledge to the Beit HaMikdash made during Aseret Y'mei T'shuva should be fulfilled on Sukkot. If so, then the person is fulfilling an ASEI and not in violation of a LAV. If he doesn't fulfill the pledge until Pesach, then he has NOT fulfilled the positive mitzva, but neither has he violated the prohibition. If Isru Chag Shavuot comes and he still hasn't fulfilled the pledge, then he is in violation of the LAV (because three chagim have passed).

Levi - Second Aliya

18 p'sukim - 12:11-28

There, a special place will be designated for the bringing of all offerings. There, spiritual rejoicing will take place, and there, we shall help the Levite and the less fortunate to also have cause to rejoice. It will be forbidden to bring sacrifices anywhere else [439,L89 12:13]. All Korbanot are to be brought only at the Mikdash [440, A84 12:14] (another mitzvapair). Only those consecrated animals that become unfit for the Altar due to blemishes must be redeemed [441,A86 12:15] (without an invalidating blemish, a consecrated animal may NOT be redeemed) and then may be eaten as "regular" meat. The animals' blood, of course, may not be consumed.

It is forbidden to eat Ma'aser Sheni outside Yerushalayim, neither of grain [442,L141 12:17], nor of wine (or grapes) [443,L142 12:17], nor olive oil (or olives) [444,L143 12:17]; nor to eat sacred first-born animals outside of Yerushalayim [445, L144 12:17], nor the more sacred sacrificial meat outside of the Temple courtyard [446, L145 12:17], nor eat the meat of an Olah (completely-burnt offering) at all [447,L146 12:17], nor other korbanot before their blood is properly sprinkled on the Altar [448,L147 12:17], nor eat First-

Fruits before they are placed in front of the Altar [449,L149 12:17].

The previous paragraph lists 8 mitzvot that all come from a single pasuk (12:17). Here too is an example of how we would be lost in trying to understand all that this pasuk is commanding us, without the Oral Law. This is not rabbinic interpretation nor extension that we are dealing with; it is Torah as much from HaShem as Matza on the Seder night or Shofar on Rosh HaShana.

All of the above-mentioned foods are to be eaten where they are supposed to be eaten. Be careful not to forget the Levi, the gifts due him, and other forms of help [450,L229 12:19].

[S> 12:20 (9)] "When G-d will expand your borders as promised..."

Notice that the Torah speaks of prosperity immediately following the portion about generous charity-giving and concern for others. This is G-d's "illogical" promise: the more you give, the more you will have.

If and when we desire to eat meat (other than the sacred meat of korbanot), we may do so anywhere we choose, but we must properly slaughter the animals we eat first [451,A146 12:21].

In the pasuk commanding Sh'chita, G-d says "(slaughter the animal) as I have

commanded you". Yet we do not find the details of Sh'chita in the Written Torah. This is one of the sources for the concept that the Torah consists of a written portion and an Oral Law - both the Word of G-d.

Non-sacred meat does not have the same restrictions as sacred meat (i.e. ritual impurity - yours or the animal's - is not an impediment to eating it). Many other halachot, of course, do apply.

An animal must be killed before its meat is taken. This is the universal prohibition (it is both one of the 613 and one of the 7 Noahide Laws) of "Limb from a living animal" [452,L182 12:23]. Blood must be removed from meat before we may eat it.

Korbanot shall be brought from all over (even from outside of Israel) to the "Place of G-d's choosing" - the Mikdash [453, A85 12:26]. These korbanot shall be offered on the Mizbei'ach, the blood sprinkled thereon, the meat (when permitted) to be eaten there.

Be careful to do all that G-d asks, so that things will be good for us and our children.

Shlishi - Third Aliya

22 p'sukim - 12:29-13:19

[S> 12:29 (4)] Repeat warning: Do not get interested in the idolatrous practices of the nations whom we will replace in the

Land, lest we too anger G-d and be punished by Him.

We shall do all that we are commanded, neither adding to [454, L313 13:1], nor diminishing from [455,L314 13:1] Torah & mitzvot

[P> 13:2 (5)] If (when) there arises among us a prophet or dreamer - even one who performs miracles or signs to back up his words - who prophesies in the name of idolatry, it is forbidden to listen him [456, L28 13:4]. This is to be viewed as a test by G-d of our faith in Him. We must be true to G-d, follow Him, revere Him, keep His mitzvot, serve Him, and cling to Him. The above-mentioned false prophet shall be put to death for his attempts to turn us away from G-d. We thus uproot evil from our midst.

[S> 13:7 (6)] If any fellow Jew (even a close relative or beloved friend) tries to entice us to idolatry of any type (familiar, exotic, or foreign), we must show no love to such a person [457, L17 13:9], nor overcome our hatred of him [458,L18 13:9], nor rescue him from danger [459,L19 13:9], nor speak on his behalf in court [460, L20 13:9] nor refrain from speaking against him [461,L21 13:9].

The Torah must be very clear and strong in these commands, because it has become second-nature (ideally) for us to love our fellow, not hate him, and try to save him. But not in

this case. These mitzvot stand in startling contrast to the mitzvot from K'doshim (and other places) which command love of fellow Jew, not to hate him, to save him from danger, etc. These mitzvot (from this week's sedra) underline the seriousness with which the Torah treats the enticer to idolatry. He is a cancer in our midst that must be removed.

But rather, the enticer shall be put to death by stoning (after trial and conviction), the accusing witnesses initiating the execution. And (it almost goes without saying that) it is forbidden to entice a fellow Jew to leave G-d and worship idols **[462,L16 13:12]**.

[S> 13:13 (7)] If we find out that an entire city is being enticed to idolatry, we must very carefully investigate the matter. This command is generalized to require thorough examination and questioning of witnesses in all types of cases **[463,A179 13:15]**. If the charges are substantiated, the population of the "city gone astray" is to be killed by sword, the possessions of the people are to be burned, and the city itself destroyed **[464,A186 13:17]**. The city may not ever be rebuilt **[465,L23 13:17]** (unless security considerations determine otherwise). No one may benefit from anything from the city **[466,L24 13:18]** so as not to provoke G-d's anger. Proper fulfillment of these and other mitzvot will find favor in

G-d's eyes.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya - 21 p'sukim - 14:1-21

[S> 14:1 (2)] As "G-d's children", it is forbidden to gash oneself (for idolatrous purposes or to mourn the dead) **[467,L45 14:1]** nor tear out one's hair in grief **[468,L171 14:1]**.

[Mitzva 467 also prohibits factionalization of the community when it is detrimental to Jewish unity - two totally different mitzvot attributed to the same source.]

It is our destiny to be the chosen from among the nations of the earth.

[S> 14:3 (6)] It is forbidden to eat "any abomination", defined here as the meat of a korban that had become "disqualified" **[469,L140 14:3]**.

The Torah next lists 10 types of mammals that are kosher (3 domestic, 7 wild), and then gives signs to determine a kosher animal (split hoof, cud-chewing). This is followed by four examples of animals we may not eat.

Remember that in Sh'mini, the first place where kosher and non-kosher animals are presented, only non-kosher animals are named.

The kosher domesticated animals are very familiar to us: Cow, Goat, Sheep. Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan z"l

identifies the 7 wild kosher animals (Chayot T'hortot) as gazelle, deer, antelope, ibex, chamois, bison (or wild ox, maybe water buffalo), giraffe. [See page 34 for pictures of these kosher animals. Note that the water buffalo is included - making 11 pictured animals - because it is possibly the T'O or possibly it is included in the cow family. In his footnotes, he brings different opinions about the Hebrew terms for different animals. Rabbi S.R. Hirsch, on the other hand, translates very few of the animals and birds mention in this parsha, and leaves all the rest in transliteration only. He defends his refusal to translate some of the animals because a mis-translation (which he considers very likely) can result in someone eating non-kosher.

[S> 14:9 (2)] Fish with scales and fins are permitted to be eaten; that which has no scales (or fins) is forbidden to us. Scales (that are easily scraped off without damaging the skin of the fish) determine the kashrut of a fish.

[S> 14:11 (11)] We may eat kosher birds. We are therefore obligated to examine and determine the kosher status of a bird we would like to eat **[470,A150 14:11]** (The corresponding mitzvot for the other types of animals have been counted as mitzvot from Shmini.)

The Torah lists 21 types of birds that are forbidden. (Don't confuse

the term species for type. Torah classification does not necessarily conform to modern taxonomy.)

The characteristics of kosher and non-kosher birds are NOT mentioned in the Torah (unlike mammals and fish). The Gemara gives us guidelines that distinguish between kosher and non-kosher birds. Practically speaking, neither the list nor the guidelines are what determine which birds we eat. MASORET (tradition) does. Basically, we do not trust ourselves to be able to properly identify the birds named in the Torah (modern Hebrew sometimes does not match Biblical or Mishnaic Hebrew - this is one problem). If we have a tradition in our communities that a particular type of bird is kosher, then we will eat it. Otherwise we take the cautious position of SAFEK (doubt) and choose to be strict with ourselves.

It is also forbidden to eat non-kosher locust and other winged insects **[471,L175 14:19]**.

Even though we may eat meat, it is forbidden to eat of an animal that died other than by sh'chita. This is the ISUR of N'VEILA **[472,L180 14:21]**. Benefit may be derived from N'VEILA but not from milk-meat mixtures (when cooked together).

Although this 3rd occurrence of BASAR B'CHALAV teaches the prohibition of benefit, it is not counted as a

separate mitzva, but is included in the prohibition of eating M-in-M from Ki Tisa. We have three p'sukim that each teach a prohibition - cooking, eating, benefit - but in counting mitzvot, Meat-in-Milk is not counted as one mitzva or three, but as two of the 613 - one prohibition to cook meat and milk together, and one prohibition that forbids eating and/or deriving benefit from meat and milk that has been cooked together. (It is the third occurrence that "reminds" us of the teaching from the Oral Torah, that benefit is also forbidden.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 8 p'sukim - 14:22-29

[P> 14:22 (6)] (Approx. 2% of the yield of a crop is given to a Kohen as Truma. One tenth of the remainder is separated as Ma'aser to be given to a Levi.) One tenth of what is left is separated as Ma'aser Sheni **[473,A128 14:22]**, which remains the possession of the owner but is sacred and must be brought to Yerushalayim and eaten (t)here in a state of ritual purity. If the amount of Ma'aser Sheni is great, a person is permitted to redeem the produce for fair market value plus a fifth (i.e. 1/4 is added, that amount becoming 1/5 of the total). If one redeems the Ma'aser Sheni of his neighbor, no one adds one fifth. The proceeds of the redemption are to be spent on food and drink in Yerushalayim. Again the Torah

reminds us to care of the Levi, who has no property of his own. (Ma'aser Sheni applies in years 1, 2, 4, 5 of the Shmita cycle.)

[S> 14:28 (2)] In the 3rd (& 6th) year of a Shmita cycle, the second tithe is to be given to poor people **[474,A130 14:28]**. This generous act of tzedaka will be rewarded by G-d's blessings.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 18 p'sukim - 15:1-18

[S> 15:1 (6)] If Shmita year passes, repayment of personal loans may not be demanded **[475, L230 15:1]**. This rule applies when both lender and borrower are Jewish. Loans due from a non-Jew must be collected **[476, A142 15:3]**, but it is a mitzva to cancel the personal debt of a fellow Jew following the Shmita year **[477, A141 15:3]** (again we see an example of a positive mitzva and a prohibition that say the same thing).

If the Jewish People follow the Torah and mitzvot properly, we will be blessed by not having poverty among us. We will also dominate among the nations of the world.

[S> 15:7 (5)] However, when we are confronted with poverty, we must not hold back generous support of those in need **[478, L232 15:7]**. Rather it is a great mitzva to give tzedaka and

support those less fortunate than ourselves in a giving and dignified manner **[479,A195 15:8]**. Be especially careful not to withhold loans to the poor because the Shmita year is approaching **[480,L231 15:9]**; if the poor person cries out to G-d, He will hold you accountable for not helping. Be generous in areas of tzedaka and Chessed, thereby meriting blessing from G-d. Poverty will be a "fact of life" under normal circumstances; give tzedaka freely.

Although a lender must void a debt after Shmita year passes (unless he has executed the document called PROZBUL, by which he is considered to have turned over his debts to a Beit Din for collection, in which case Shmita does not terminate such loans), the borrower may - and should - offer to repay the loan. The lender is obligated to tell the borrower that the loan has been canceled by Shmita, and the borrower is supposed to say that he would like to give the money back to the lender anyway (as a gift). The lender can accept the repayment in that case, and the borrower is considered to have acted in a proper Jewish manner. The borrower who "takes advantage" of the Shmita-voiding of a debt is considered to have behaved in an improper and un-Jewish manner.

[S> 15:12 (7)] If a Jew becomes an indentured servant to a fellow Jew, he shall work no more than six years and he shall be freed in the seventh. One must not send

the freed EVED IVRI away empty-handed **[481, L233 15:13]** but rather he shall be given a generous allotment upon discharge **[482,A196 15:14]** (another double-sided mitzva). We are to remember that we were AVADIM in Egypt and that G-d redeemed us and expects us to be sensitive to those less fortunate than ourselves. If the EVED IVRI does not want to be released, his ear is ceremonially pierced and he remains in his master's service until Yovel. Do not be stingy with the servant, for he has served you hard and long.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya 22 p'sukim - 15:19-16:17

[S> 15:19 (5)] Firstborns of cow, goat and sheep are sacred (if unblemished); they may neither be worked **[483,L113 15:19]** nor benefited from **[484,L114 15:19]**, such as shearing the wool for personal use. They are given to a Kohen as one of his Torah-granted gifts (after 30 or 50 days of age, depending upon the type of animal). They are to be eaten by the kohen and his family after being brought as a korban - within a year, unless "unfit for the Altar", in which case they are the Kohen's property, to do with as he pleases.

[P> 16:1 (8)] Preserve the spring month and bring Korban Pesach. (This is a reiteration of the mitzva to

adjust the calendar when necessary, by adding a month - a second Adar - to keep Pesach into the spring.)

Chametz is forbidden on Erev Pesach afternoon [485,L199 16:3]. This is a separate prohibition, and of a lesser status (based on comparing punishments for violation), to the prohibition of Chametz on Pesach itself.

The Chagiga cannot be left over beyond two days [486,L118 16:4]. KP cannot be brought on a private altar [487,* 16:5].

* This mitzva is not on Rambam's list - the **ONLY** mitzva on the Chinuch's list that Rambam does not count. The other shoe drops in Haazinu.

[P> 16:9 (4)] Count seven weeks until Shavuot; this is the OTHER Omer mitzva (in addition to counting 49 days - it's why we count days & weeks). Next, a mention of Sukkot and then the command to rejoice on the Festivals [488, A54 16:14]. Appear in the Mikdash and bring korbanot on Chagim [489,A53 16:15]; do not appear there empty-handed [490,L156 16:16].

Last 5 p'sukim are reread as Maftir.

Haftara 12 p'sukim Yeshayahu 54:11-55:5

We have the hopeful message that G-d will take back the exile-afflicted people of Israel in great

splendor. It is also a prophecy of a time when our enemies will not succeed against us. Spiritual thirst and hunger will be tended to and all will be good for us...

IF we will listen to G-d. There it is. The same deal as in the sedra. A deal repeated over and over again. A deal that is so simple, we should only be able to exercise our free will and keep our end of the covenant.

Divrei Menachem

In Parshat R'ei, Moshe instructs the people to offer up their sacrifices, offerings, tithes and pledges, "in the place that Hashem, your G-d, will choose." That place is Yerushalayim, where not only were the people to eat before Hashem, they were also to rejoice in their every undertaking - "As Hashem, your G-d has blessed you" (D'varim 12: 5-7). Then, but only a few verses later, we are urged that in the place where Hashem has chosen to rest His name - "You shall rejoice before Hashem, your G-d."

A unique tithe brought to Yerushalayim was Ma'aser Sheni, an additional portion of crops to be eaten in the city in the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of the Sh'mita cycle. If this extra portion was too burdensome, it could be redeemed for money that had to be spent in Yerushalayim.

Here, then, we see the centrality of Yerushalayim at two ends of the spectrum. At one end, the individual satisfies his basic bodily need to eat and at the other end he confronts Hashem's Presence in all its glory and majesty. How can the two phenomena be reconciled? One way, as indicated above, is through the individual rejoicing over the fruits of his physical labors while he concurrently senses and recognizes Hashem's eminence at that time and that place. No wonder then that the Torah bids us, additionally, to rejoice in the (foot-) festivals.

Vebbe Rebbe

We conclude our series of condensed and anonymous presentations of rulings from among the many Dinei Torah held at our Batei Din, Eretz Hemdah - Gazit.

CASE: The plaintiff (=P) approached his neighbor, the defendant (=D), with information that acquaintances wanted to buy D's apartment, which was being rented out. After consultations, D agreed to the sale. P, a registered real estate agent, demands a 2% fee from D (he is not demanding from the buyers for personal reasons). He presented himself as a friend, not an agent, and purposely did not raise the issue of a fee so as to not sour the deal. He says that even non-licensed people regularly take a full agent's fee. While P believes that D did not expect to pay, he received a service that is worth money to him (to buy a new apartment, he approached agents). D argues that he never agreed to pay and that, according to law and the practice he knows, one does not pay acquaintances in such a case. He adds that if he knew he would have to pay an agent's fee, he would not have sold at that price.

RULING: The Rashba (IV, 125) discusses one who brought customers to a store without discussing payment and says the owner must pay, mentioning two reasons: 1) The societal practice to pay; 2) It is no worse than one who works his friend's field without permission, who is paid.

These represent two conceptual reasons for payment for unauthorized work: 1) practice makes it as if he was authorized; 2) there is a concept of NEHENEH, that one who provides benefit to another naturally deserves payment unless the benefit provider intended to do so as a favor. The GRA (Choshen Mishpat 185:13) stresses the second reason.

In a few places, the Rama obligates the recipient when a favor is provided without previous discussion, but regarding one who was invited to live at his friend's home, he does not allow the friend to demand rent retroactively (CM 363:10). The Shach (363:13) rules that, out of doubt, one may not extract payment; the K'tzot Hachoshen (246:1) and Netivot Hamishpat (246:1) say he must pay. The Aruch HaShulchan (CM 363:26) says that if the recipient does not usually pay for such services, he should have been informed.

In this case, P and D belong to different segments of society. In P's circles, it is standard for people to receive payment in such cases. The fact that P did not mention the payment is not, in such circles, a sign of forgoing payment. D belongs to the broader Israeli society, where friends provide helpful information gratis.

Obligation based on custom does not apply to D, who did not have a custom to obligate him, but the NEHENEH approach can justify an obligation. According to the Aruch HaShulchan, we have to see if the recipient usually pays for this type of benefit. The

following is also a reason to not apply NEHENEH. While it is difficult to accept D's claim that he would have sold the home for the same price without an agent (which is possible but not definite), D was indeed not intending to sell the home. When one works his friend's field that was not slated for cultivation, he is reimbursed for expenses and no more. Furthermore, when one sells his home not of necessity, the price must be good enough to justify the sale. Thus, D's claim that the price he agreed to was only because he didn't expect to pay an agent's fee is valid.

[The final part is very condensed.] The law of the land is that a party is required to pay an agent's fee only if he signs an agent's agreement. We implement this type of law of the land even when it is against the original halacha when it was legislated to "prevent denials and quarrels" (Rashba II, 365). In such a case, Batei Din might also have instituted the matter had they had the opportunity. Experience shows us that this logic applies to agents' fees.

There are not halachic grounds to require D to pay an agent's fee. However, it is proper to obligate D to pay 1000 shekel for HAKARAT HATOV for the help in enabling a significant transaction for his benefit.

THE CHALLENGE OF MONEY: WAGES AND LABOR; EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE [part 3]

by **Dr. Meir Tamari**

In view of the human element involved in labor relations over and above the economic and legal aspects, Judaism has taken special steps to protect workers; steps that are relevant to present-day discussions world-wide concerning health costs, job security, severance pay and pensions. For the first three-quarters of the 20th century, most social thought centered on these issues resulting in various forms of socialism. In these, as in Jewish religious labor circles of Hapoel Hamizrachi and Poalei Agudat Yisrael, there was a tendency to overstress the rights of the worker exclusively, although Judaism balances Tzedek with Tzedaka. A Jewish attitude to social costs is not whether poor, sick, and elderly workers have to be cared for and supported, that is a given of tzedaka, but rather whether this is the responsibility of the employer or of society. Social costs undertaken voluntarily in order to smooth labor relations are merely employers' investments, while those that society wishes to take upon itself, become in Jewish law, binding custom. Our concern is with the extent to which halakha obligates the employer beyond these.

What is the employer's responsibility, beyond that imposed by contract or

legislation, to share in the medical costs incurred by his employees?

Regarding those costs for which the employer is directly or indirectly responsible, the worker, like any other injured party, is entitled to the fivefold damages awarded by the Torah: loss of income, loss of limb, medical expenses, pain incurred, and any shame resulting from the injury. However, there are normal elements of risk inherent in any human activity including work, which the employer has no automatic obligations to shoulder; the worker considered and accepted normal work related risks when he accepted the work. Workers, like everybody else, are commanded, "You shall surely guard yourselves very much" (D'varim 4:15), so may not place themselves beyond reasonable risk even in consideration of the extra wages they are offered.

As distinct from this, custom seems to have acknowledged employer liability for social and medical costs even where an injury occurs during normal everyday activities and even though the employer is blameless. For example, responsibility for the medical care of Kohanim who suffered from intestinal diseases as a result of working conditions in the Beit Hamikdash [drinking water rather than wine considered in their day as medicinal, working barefooted dressed only in a single shift and eating the meat of the korbanot] was placed on the Temple treasury (Yerushalmi, Sh'kalim 5:1). Another example concerns the claim of a worker who

was hired to accompany his employer through the villages to sell articles of glass, etc. "Even if the worker became ill the custom is to pay him the full salary agreed upon. It is also customary to pay the full medical costs involved. The reasoning is that requiring him to travel away from his home and to wander, increases the probability of him becoming ill" (Ru'ach Chayim 333:1, Rabbi Chayim Pallache, 18th century Turkey).

However, cognizance must be taken of the difficulties inherent in foisting the costs of normal occurrences onto the employer, simply because he had hired the sick person. Perhaps the following communal edict regarding a domestic servant who had become ill, can serve as a feasible and ethical compromise. "For the first two weeks the householder is required to pay all the hospitalization costs. If a further period of two weeks is required, then the costs shall be shared equally between the domestic and the householder. Any period after that shall be financed out of the charitable funds of the community" (Vaad K'hillat Crakow, 1598). This is parallel to Rabbi Hirsch's comment that first a person should make every effort to help himself, then his family has to help and only beyond that is it right to turn to the community.

The late Chief Rabbi of Israel summed up the halakhic attitude to these employer responsibilities as follows: "The worker labors more for his own self-interest than for the benefit of his employer. The law therefore does not

place any special responsibility on employers for the worker's welfare or make him responsible for injuries suffered [excepting the responsibility placed on him by custom]. At the same time however, the Torah obligates him to make every effort to protect his workers from injury or ill-health; failure to do so would make him liable to the moral crime of "You shall not spill blood in your house (D'varim 25:6)" (Mispatei Uzziel, Choshen Mishpat 4). □

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

R'EI

The Thief of Blessing

I am sure that you, dear reader, have had the occasion to come across a book which you simply could not put down. Something so fascinating, so gripping, that you were compelled to read it cover to cover in as short a time as you could manage.

I came across such a book several weeks ago. It is a Hebrew book, the biography of a rabbi named Dov Cohen. Rabbi Cohen passed away several years ago at the advanced age of 94. He was one of the last, if not the last, of the students of the yeshiva in Hebron which experienced the horrible massacre there in the summer of 1929, almost exactly 81 years ago.

The book is entitled **Vayelchu Shnayhem Yachdav** (And the Two

of Them Walked Together). Much of Rabbi Cohen's story is encapsulated in that title. For, you see, he was born in Seattle, WA into a family of Lithuanian Jewish immigrants. The family faced all of the challenges of Americanization in the early years of the last century.

Rabbi Cohen's mother witnessed the inexorable process of assimilation with which her older children were involved. She was determined that her youngest child, Dov, would receive a Jewish education as intensive as the one she witnessed back in the old country.

So, in 1926, she took her then 14-year-old son from Seattle eastward across the United States, across the Atlantic Ocean, through the straits of Gibraltar, and ultimately to the then totally primitive and isolated village of Hebron. She committed him there to the tutelage of the famed Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel of Slobodka. Indeed, "the two of them walked together."

I cannot possibly share with you, in the context of this column, all of the ensuing adventures in Rabbi Cohen's life. But there is one episode that I must relate.

Dov visited the United States several times during the eighty years that followed his first days in the land of Israel. And each time he experienced a sort of "culture shock".

Once, on a Sunday morning, he found himself in a taxicab with the radio on. He soon realized that the

radio was playing a sermon being delivered by a Christian minister in his church. He was unable to have the taxi driver change the radio station. And so, quite uncomfortably, he listened to the preacher's sermon. And this is what he heard:

"The group in charge of increasing the enrollment in gehenna, or hell, was discussing ways to get more people to sin. One suggested encouraging them to steal. But the others all protested that the laws against theft were too strict and not enough people would sin by stealing. Another suggested encouraging people to lie. Again, the others protested that lying would make people feel too guilty. Finally came the suggestion with which everyone agreed:

"Let's encourage people to do good deeds, acts of loving kindness, acts of charity, acts of courage and justice. But let's tell them not to do those things today. But rather, tomorrow!"

Rabbi Cohen was moved to the core by that story and was inspired by it. Indeed, he shared it with Jewish audiences whenever he could. The lesson he learned and shared was one that Judaism also teaches, albeit not with that particular story. It is the lesson of the dangers of procrastination, of the importance of doing things as soon as possible and not putting them off for tomorrow.

This lesson is conveyed in the opening verse of this week's Torah portion, R'ei. "See, I set before you

today blessing and curse." Homiletically, the stress is upon "today", this day and this moment. Do the right thing today and it will be a blessing. Put it off until tomorrow and the result is cursed.

We have all heard the advice, "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today." This advice is useful in all aspects of life, but it is especially useful in the context of religious behavior and spiritual service. Postponing until a tomorrow which may never come can be, as the Gentile preacher's story suggests, nothing less than sinful.

You may also have heard the adage, which originates with the 18th century poet Edward Young, "Procrastination is the thief of time." The opening words of the Torah portion suggest that procrastination is not only the thief of time but it is the thief of life and of blessing.

"See, I have given you today, this day, now and not later, to perform the good deed, and if you do it now it will be a blessing. If you procrastinate you may never do it at all, and the result may be quite different from a blessing." This is the lesson of the opening verse of R'ei. And how ironic it is that the subject of the engrossing biography that I just finished reading, Rabbi Dov Cohen, a yeshiva boy and eventually a well-known Jewish rabbi, learned this lesson from a Protestant preacher on a Sunday morning long ago! □

Medical Secrets

The Puah Institute

for Fertility and Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha

Mental Illness and Shidduchim

We continue this week with the subject of mental illness and shidduchim: must a person reveal information regarding mental illness before entering into a shidduch?

[Before we continue, it is important to clarify that our aim is not to answer specific questions in this column, but rather to raise awareness of the subject, especially for those who may be unfamiliar with the issues.]

Last week's column dealt with a possible shidduch with someone who had suffered an episode of mental illness; this week I would like to discuss the family.

Many people are very wary when hearing that someone in the family of a potential shidduch suffered from mental illness; they consider this to be reason to call the shidduch off. And, indeed, there is some basis for this fear. Schizophrenia, for instance, is a serious mental illness characterized by a disintegration of the thinking-process, a loss of contact with reality, and emotional unresponsiveness. It most commonly manifests as auditory hallucinations, paranoid or bizarre delusions, or disorganized speech and

thinking, along with significant social or occupational dysfunction. Onset of symptoms typically occurs in young adulthood, and diagnosis is based on the patient's self-reported experiences and observed behavior; no laboratory test for schizophrenia currently exists.

There are many possible causes of schizophrenia: studies suggest that genetics, early environment, neurobiology, psychological and social processes are important contributory factors. While it is clear that in certain cases there is a genetic element to mental illness, it is an oversimplification to say that this is the only factor.

As an example: Schizophrenia affects 1-1.5% of the general population, but if one has a sibling with the illness, the risk rate increases eight-fold. When dealing with a child born to parents who both suffer from schizophrenia, the incidence rises to about 40%. With identical twins - where one is schizophrenic - the chance of the second twin also becoming schizophrenic is approximately 50%.

These numbers are indeed high, but the situation is even more complicated: in the case of identical twins, with identical genes, one would expect the rates to be 100%. And with two schizophrenic parents it would seem that the rates ought to be 100% as well. Obviously, then, it is difficult to blame genetics alone. Someone with mental illness in their family is therefore not necessarily genetically destined to suffer from the disease,

and need not automatically be considered a poor prospect for a shidduch.

Practically speaking, those affected need to speak with a professional as to their exact medical situation, and then consult with a Rabbi in order to determine whether their specific circumstances need to be revealed within the context of shidduchim.

Praying with Passion

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

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Birchot HaShachar

(part three)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
פּוֹקֵחַ עֵוְרִים... מְלַבֵּשׁ עֲרָמִים...
מְתִיר אֲסוּרִים... זֹקֵף כְּפֹפִים...

Translation:

Blessed are You, HaShem our God,
King of the Universe,

...who gives sight to the blind.

...who clothes the naked.

...who releases the bound.

...who straightens the bent.

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

Waking Up With Hashem

The Birchot HaShachar have the ability to reawaken in us each day a profound awareness of Hashem's constant care and faith that He continually provides us with all we need to live.

Insight: Deeper understanding...

How To Make Emunah Real

From the moment we awaken, we are constantly using gifts from Hashem. Each time we benefit from these gifts, we have the opportunity to build our relationship with Him. The key is to remember Who gave these gifts. By thinking of the Giver and offering thanks, we build a bond with the Giver.

An analogy would be a loving grandfather who lives far away from his grandchildren. To let the children know that he cares about them, the grandfather sends them gifts. The parents know that the bond will only be built if it is developed from both sides, and therefore, they encourage the children to thank their grandfather. In this way, the attachment between them grows.

Likewise, each morning blessing gives us a chance to acknowledge the Giver, creating a strong cable that connects us to G-d. The cable is strengthened throughout the day as we use these gifts again and again - if, as we use them, we remember to think of the Giver.

Through this process, we develop a faith that is not shaken. As the saying goes: "Seeing is believing". Philosophy, thinking and logic can impart faith to a person, but it is only an intellectual faith - EMUNAH SICHLIS. While this intellectual faith is essential, it could be shaken by competing intellectual ideas. What we see and feel with our own eyes and hearts, however, cannot be countered. This is EMUNAH CHUSHIS - a sensory awareness imprinted on one's consciousness through direct experience. The b'rachot are a con-

crete, verbal expression of this awareness. By saying the b'rachot, we acknowledge the tangible, physical manifestations of G-d's goodness as they impact our lives.

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Awaiting Hashem's Kindness

Imagine that rather than starting each day "fully loaded" and ready to go, you needed to be re-equipped each morning with the faculties and abilities required for productive daily life. There you are, lying in bed, surrounded by complete darkness, waiting for G-d to return your eyesight to you. When will He bestow it? At last, light and shadows come into view, then colors, and finally, it all snaps into focus and you can see!

POKEI'ACH IVRIM!

You want to get up out of bed, but you are immobile. Your limbs are frozen in place. You become restless and uncomfortable, waiting for the bonds of paralysis to be released. Finally, G-d sends a surge of strength and energy into your muscles and you can move!

MATIR ASURIM!

It's time to get out of bed. There is so much you need to accomplish this day. But as you try to stand up, you realize that your back is still stuck in the curled-up position of sleep. Like a beggar, you stand with your eyes cast on the floor in front of you as you wait for G-d to set you straight. At last, you feel the flexibility return to your spine and you stand up to face the day.

ZOKEIF K'FUFIM!

Now, it is time to leave your home and go to shul to pray. You stand before

your closet wearing your pajamas, wondering how you will protect yourself against the cold. The closet is empty - no clothing, no jacket, nothing. You are essentially stuck in your bedroom, unable to encounter the rest of the world until suddenly, G-d presents you with a suit of clothes and a warm coat. Now life can begin!

MALBISH ARUMIM!

Take It With You:

Your personal connection to the prayer

Blessings Anyone Can See

Some of the prayers you pray every day call for a deeper level of understanding in order to say the words with real meaning. What does it mean, for instance, to pray for the Final Redemption? Or for the revival of the dead? Or even for real peace - a phenomenon we have never experienced?

The Birchot HaShachar discussed here, however, are the nuts and bolts of a person's daily life. If you are blessed with sight, mobility and clothes to wear, you do not need profound commentaries to explain how these blessings benefit you each and every minute of the day. The benefits are simple and tangible - and they are from G-d... the perfect spark to start your day.

More TReader Feedback

- this time by fax. MD correctly caught the careless indication of an incorrect accenting of a word. We were focusing on the first word and "blew" the fourth word. The corrected line: v'a-hav-TA et HaShem elo-KE-cha - and not as it appeared last week.

Not to justify the error in any way, but it is important to distinguish between a wrong accent that changes the meaning of a word, and one that doesn't. v'a-hav-TA and v'a-HAV-ta mean two different things. elo-KE-cha and elo-ke-CHA mean the same thing - the second accenting is "just" wrong.

We should strive to say the words of davening and Torah reading correctly, always. But there is a qualitative difference depending upon whether the meaning is changed or not.

A practical application of this distinction is whether or not the BK (baal k'ri'a, a.k.a. baal korei) should repeat a word (or a pasuk) or not.

On this last note, let us add a reminder that one should avoid embarrassing a BK who makes a mistake. Don't pounce on him - let the gabai or rav be the ones to correct him, gently and quietly.

Portion from the Portion SUNSET HIGHWAY

A month of summer vacation has passed, but there is still the whole month of August to go. Parents try to find meaningful activities to do with their children. Families can take the opportunity of having the kids home during the summer to travel in our land and make verses of the Torah come to life. This week's portion gives us just that opportunity.

At the beginning of the portion

(11:29), the people are told that when G-d brings them to the Holy land they should recite blessings on Mount Gerizim and curses on Mount Eval. Hashem spends a whole verse describing where these mountains are (11:30) - HALO HEIMA B'EIVER HAYARDEN ACHAREI DERECH MEVO HASHEMESH B'RETZ HAK'NAANI HAYOSHEIV BAARAVA MUL HAGILGAL EITZEL EILONEI MOREH - They are across the Jordan, just beyond the Sunset Highway on the way to Gilgal, near the plains of Moreh, in the territory of the Canaanites who live in the flood plain."

There seems to be a very straight forward explanation, but Rashi has a lot to say about this verse. Most people would read the verse with the words "ACHAREI DERECH MEVO HASHEMESH - connected and teaching us one thing. But Rashi reads it otherwise - On the word ACHAREI, he says that it means beyond - very far away - he even teaches us that any time it says ACHAREI it means very far.

Then on the words DERECH MEVO HASHEMESH - the Sunset Highway - he says it tells us that we should look for these mountains to the west of the Jordan. He brings a proof to his explanation of these words from the cantillation marks. The marks that are written on the words are marks that make the reader separate the words from each other. ACHAREI has a PASHTA and DERECH is with a MISHPAL.

Mount Gerizim is about one mile

west of Shechem 2849 feet high and Mount Eval is about two miles north east of that rising 3077 feet high - the highest point in Samaria. There are many lovely places to tour in Samaria and the summer and especially this week is a good time to start.

Since the verse talks about the sun, here is a recipe for a cool salad with sunflower seeds that can be served on these hot summer days.

BULGUR SALAD WITH SUNFLOWER SEEDS

1 cup bulgur wheat
 2½ cups boiled water
 2 lg. tomatoes, diced
 1 med. cucumber, diced
 1 med. yellow pepper, diced
 2 green onions, chopped fine
 1 Tbsp. dried parsley (or 3 Tbsp. fresh)
 ¼ cup dry roasted unsalted sunflower seeds

DRESSING:

1 tsp. oregano
 1 tsp. soy sauce
 ½ tsp. salt
 1 tsp. black pepper
 1 Tbsp. olive oil
 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
 1 Tbsp. water

Soak bulgur wheat in a bowl in the water for at least a half hour. The wheat will soak up the water and

become puffy and chewable. Drain excess water. Combine dressing ingredients. Add vegetables, parsley, sunflower seeds to bulgur wheat. Mix. Add dressing and toss well.

ParshaPix explanations

- ♥ Har G'rizim (right) and Har Eival are represented by hills, one of which has a lush tree, the other a barren tree;
- ♥ Negated plus or minus is the prohibition of adding to or subtracting from the Torah - Bal Tosif and Bal Tigra;
- ♥ Negated eraser is the prohibition of erasing any of G-d's names;
- ♥ The slice of bread with a clock face could be LECHEM HAPANIM, except that there is no mention of LECHEM HAPANIM in R'ei. What it does represent is the time in the morning of Erev Pesach that is the deadline for eating Chameitz - this is a topic that fits with R'ei;
- ♥ Tzedaka box is for the mitzva of giving tzedaka and for several other related mitzvot from R'ei;
- ♥ CI (and IOI) = R'EI ANOCHI. C=see, I=ANOCHI;
- ♥ The giraffe gets two thumbs up for chewing its cud and having split hooves. It is kosher;

- ♥ The camel, on the other hand, is in the negation circle, indicating that it is a b'heima t'mei'a;
- ♥ Meanwhile, the locust has a question mark above it, because some types are kosher others are not, and most Jews do not have a tradition as to how to identify the kosher kind. Yemenites are known to have a Masoret as to how to identify kosher locust and include various recipes for them in their cookbooks. B'TEI'AVON;
- ♥ The slab of meat on a plate with knife and fork at the ready, represents meat that we are allowed to eat (as opposed to sacred meat of korbanot, which is very strictly regulated, and as opposed to meat we may not eat - EIVER MIN HACHAI, N'VEILA, T'REIFA, B'HEIMA T'MEI'A, non-kosher fish, non-kosher birds...);
- ♥ Note too the distance between the piece of meat and the container of milk (which refers to the haftara). It can represent the separation of milk and meat beyond the Torah's prohibition of BISHUL, ACHILA, and HANA'AH (cooking, eating that which is cooked together, and deriving benefit therefrom), to include the rabbinic rulings that are meant to keep milk and meat separate;
- ♥ In addition to the prohibitions of non-kosher food, we have a positive command to check for the kosher signs of our food. Since the mitzva

counted in R'ei relates to birds, the bird-watcher was chosen to represent this mitzva. Checking the kashrut of food we buy and restaurants we eat in is within the spirit of these mitzvot;

- ♥ The hands taking money from a wallet represent the mitzvot related to lending money to our fellow Jews;
- ♥ The stalk of wheat represents the mitzvot related to agricultural produce. That it is standing straight up is meant to resemble the numeral 1. With the dot before the one we have .1 or one tenth, 10%, representing Maaser Sheni, one of the mitzva-topics in the sedra;
- ♥ The burning trees represent the destruction of AVODA ZARA which we are commanded in Eretz Yisrael;
- ♥ The sword is used to kill the people of an IR HANIDACHAT, a city that goes astray towards idol worship;
- ♥ Symbols of the three Regalim, as presented in the sedra;
- ♥ The smiley guy is for the mitzva of SIMCHA on Yom Tov;
- ♥ The wine and milk are on sale in the haftara, at 100% off their regular prices. i.e. FREE;
- ♥ Perry Mason represents (yes, he always did) the mitzva to meticulously examine and cross-examine witnesses. Objection, your honor, irrelevant, immaterial, and calls for a conclusion of the witness;
- ♥ The Omer counter is for the other Omer mitzva in R'ei - namely, counting weeks. Counting days was commanded back in Emor;
- ♥ The feather and candle are for B'dikat Chametz - part of the procedure for avoiding the prohibition of possession of Chametz on Pesach;
- ♥ The word AM, meaning nation, is colored light purple (lavender) - it is, therefore, AM SEGULA, a play on the words of D'varim 14:2 (and other p'sukim) Often translated as the Chosen People or Treasured People, the word SEGULA allowed this wordplay;
- ♥ The lamb in a baby carriage represents the mitzva of B'CHOR B'HEIMA T'HORA, the firstborn (male, blue carriage) of a kosher domesticated animal, i.e. cow, goat, sheep;
- ♥ Vampire bat is in the ParshaPix because it is the ATALEIF, one of the non-kosher birds AND because of the repeated mention in the sedra of the prohibition of eating blood;
- ♥ Bullets. Can these not be described with a phrase from the haftara: AVNEI EKDACH, the stones of a pistol? Actually, the phrase refers to carbuncles (precious stone)
- ♥ At the bottom, purposely even a bit lower than the bottom, is an EFES-KEY that is LOW. EFES key is a blank skeleton key that serves as a

master key that will open many different locks. D'varim 15:4 begins with those words, EFES KI LO...

- ♥ Kiddush cup is a KOS, which is also one of the non-kosher birds;
- ♥ The ray is for R'EI
- ♥ The triangle is an Unexplained...

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE
OF JEWISH LAW
Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean
Lesson # 529

To Remove Dangerous Conditions

As I have written many times, the Shulhan Aruch as composed by Rabbi Yosef Karo (1488-1575) together with the emendations of Rabbi Moshe Iserles (1520-1572) is the authoritative codes that governs the lives of Jews the world over. Of course there are many commentaries on the Shulhan Aruch, and subsequent minor codes and the vast amount of response literature that interpret the Shulhan Aruch for us. Also the rabbi of each community answers many of the halachic questions addressed to him on the basis of these sources.

In our Kolel, I was giving a series of lectures about the development of halacha, when one of the students asked what is the very last chapter of the entire Shulhan Aruch. I told him it was "To remove Dangerous conditions".

There are two Torah commandments involved in these laws. A positive commandment to remove sources of

danger from our homes (including making a parapet on one's roof) and a negative commandment (prohibition) not to leave obstacles that may injure people on public or private property. These commandments are derived from the verse: "If you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you will not place blood in your house if a fallen one falls from it." (D'varim 22:8) The commandment to have this parapet on one's dwelling applies if the roof is at least approx. four square amot. (an AMA is about 20 inches). It applies to the roof of a dwelling. According to one opinion it does not apply to a roof of a synagogue, a house of study, a stable, or a storehouse. Another opinion holds that a parapet is necessary on these types of structures too. No parapet is required if the roof is sloping and people cannot walk on the roof. No parapet is required if the street is higher than the roof. The parapet must be at least ten tefachim (each tefach is about 3.7 inches) in height and it must be strong enough for a person to lean against it without breaking it.

If one does not build a parapet for his roof he transgresses a positive commandment, as well as the negative commandment not to place blood in his house. There is no flogging for violating this negative commandment since it does not entail an action.

A roof belonging to partners requires a parapet. If one buys a house without a parapet, he must build one.

A parapet or fence also must be built around areas similar to a roof, for example a well or a pit in a yard, which

may be covered in lieu of building a parapet around the pit.

Every reader can think of many things that a person should not do so as not to put himself or others in danger. These can include having a swimming pool without having a fence around it, things that are known in law as attractive nuisances and not having adequate circuit breakers in one's home. The list is almost never ending. The determining guideline is that if there is the possibility of something causing harm it should be safeguarded.

TTreader Feedback

EB of Beit Shemesh expressed his concern about the Bracha Mei-ein Shalosh (BM3) that we printed in last week's TT. His concern is for the wrong impression that some people seem to have, that if one says this B'racha Acharona, then a Borei Nefashot is unnecessary, even when other foods eaten together with the Mezonot item (or fruits of the 7 species).

For example, if one has spaghetti and meatballs, not only are two "first" brachot required (mezonot on the pasta and shehakol on the meatballs), but in addition to the Al HaMichya for the spaghetti, one needs to say Borei Nefashot on the meatballs.

Of course, if all one has is cookies or dates, for example, then only a BM3 is said. But it is common that one has other foods together with crackers or whatever, and this often calls for the

additional bracha of Borei Nefashot.

EB's concern was by our printing BM3 without Borei Nefashot, some people might forget to say the Borei N'fashot.

Next time we print BM3, we'll include Borei Nefashot with it, even though many people know it by heart. Some probably do not.

One more detail of many: if one eats grapes and an apple (for example) then the BM3 on the grapes cover the apple too, since an apple is a fruit of the tree, and that is what is mentioned in the BM3. An apple on its own (or any HaEitz fruits besides olives, dates, grapes, figs, and pomegranates) gets a Borei Nefashot after it. But all HaEitz fruits can take a "trempe" (a ride) on an Al HaEitz v'al Pri HaEitz that is being said on one of the 5 "special" fruits.

The same does NOT apply for cookies and apples. The cookies get a BM3 and the apple needs its own after-bracha, Borei Nefashot.

There is plenty more to learn...

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא נִפְשׁוֹת רַבּוֹת וְחֶסְרוֹנָן, עַל כָּל מֵה
שֶׁבְּרָא(ת) לְהַחֲיוֹת בָּהֶם נֶפֶשׁ כָּל חַי.
בְּרוּךְ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים.

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*

Parshat R'ei opens with a reminder to Am Yisrael that they are about to enter the Land of Israel, where they will be obligated in a series of seminal commandments. First and foremost is a command to locate two mountains, Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eival, and to pronounce a b'racha and a k'lala - a blessing and a curse. This commandment is expanded upon later on in D'varim (ch. 27), and, in fact, fulfilled in the Book of Yehoshua (ch. 8) after the successful capture of Yericho and Ai.

The Torah gives no particular reason for performing this ceremony, but it is clear from the reaction of the Canaanite nations that it was a ritual that had great significance. Immediately after the curses and blessings are presented, the prophet reports two reactions. On the one hand, all those nations now join in a pact to fight "as one" against Am Yisrael (Yehoshua 9:1-2). On the other hand, the Givonim choose to present themselves as coming from "a faraway land" to make peace with the Jewish People. While before the ceremony on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eival the Canaanite leaders were willing to let Yericho and Ai fend for themselves, now they understood that something out-of-the-ordinary was taking place.

It appears that this ceremony - in

many ways, a reenactment of the Revelation of the Torah in the Land of Israel - clarified to the Canaanites that this was not simply a new, nomadic tribe that would settle amongst them. These people were coming with a new belief system that totally rejected the basic values of the lifestyle that the Canaanites held dear. They understood (as we must) that moving to Israel is not simply a geographic move; it is a statement of belief in HaShem and acceptance of a moral, ethical, principled way of life.

Rabbi Shalom Z. Berger, Alon Shvut

Parsha Points to Ponder

R'EI

1) The Torah commands us regarding the Korban Pesach, eating matza, and not eating chameitz on Pesach. Why does it conclude the section by teaching IN ORDER TO REMEMBER THE DAY YOU LEFT EGYPT ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE (16:2). How will observing these laws on these seven days enable us to remember our leaving Egypt ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE?

2) Why does the Torah command to count seven weeks between Pesach and Shavuot twice in the same verse (16:9)?

3) The Torah describes the mitzva for all males to appear in Jerusalem for the three festivals where they bring an olah offering (16:16-17). The entire time it speaks of YOUR MALES (ZECHURCHA) and YOUR G-D

(ELOKECHA). Why does it change to HIS HAND (MATNAT YADO) when describing people how each person should bring an offering according to what he can afford instead of YOUR HAND (YADECHA)?

Parsha Points to Ponder

by Rabbi Dov Lipman

teacher at Reishit Yerushalayim and Machon Maayan in Beit Shemesh; author of "DISCOVER: Answers for Teenagers (and Adults) to Questions about the Jewish Faith" (Feldheim); "TIMEOUT: Sports Stories as a Game Plan for Spiritual Success" (Devora); "SEDER SAVVY" (Targum)

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Answers are elsewhere in this issue • Ponder the Qs first, then...

TTreader Feedback

Last week, we printed a TTreader's question about the first TU b'AV - how could it have been a joyous occasion if it was right in the middle of the Shloshim for Aharon HaKohen (the Torah tells us that the people cried for Aharon for 30 days)?

ADS writes: Perhaps the answer lies in the question itself – “the first joyous TU b'Av, which ‘seemingly’ occurred in the final year in the Midbar.” A practical look at what actually happened and the resultant psychological impact thereof might explain the seeming paradox.

Each year, every single male “went to his grave” with 15,000 actually taken from us each year on Tish’a b’Av. That means that in the final year of the Midbar, the 15,000 remaining men lied down to a “certain” death (imagine the feeling). When, on TU b’Av, they realized they were saved, were they truly joyous? Not only did they suffer through the trauma of “certain death” in the final year, they suffered through

the agony of doubt 38 or 39 times previously. Moreover, it is safe to presume that each and every one of them had family and friends who perished - year after year after year.

That final TU b’Av would have been cause for thankfulness to HaKadosh Boruch Hu for having been saved and given the z’chut of Yishuv Ha’aretz, but joy? I would think more of feelings of contrition, penitence, introspection, reverence, and t’shuva - all of which fit perfectly with aveilut for Aharon HaKohein.



Last issue’s (EIKEV) TTriddles:

[1] The command & sample text

According to the Rambam (and Sefer HaChinuch and others), the mitzva to Pray (daven) everyday is found in Parshat Eikev. In addition to that command, we also find a familiar sequence of descriptions of G-d in the sedra, as in the Amida - namely, that G-d is HAKEIL HAGADOL HAGIBOR V'HANORA (D'varim 10:17) - "For HaShem your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, A GREAT GOD, MIGHTY AND AWESOME, which favors no person, nor takes bribes."

[2] Eikev is with an AYIN, but ALEF can be its sign

The first part of the TTriddle was just to confuse (a bit). The main statement was that ALEF can be the sign or

SIMAN for the sedra. This refers to the word or words that are printed after each sedra (in many Chumashim), indicating the number of p'sukim in the sedra - first by "number" and then with a name or word (or two) with the numeric value equal to the number of p'sukim. ALEF is spelled ALEF-FEI-LAMED, which is 1+80+30, which is 111, the number of p'sukim in EIKEV.

[3] tough homeland security

The equivalent of "homeland security" in Israel is called PIKUD HA-OREF. OREF is like the rear guard, but it is also the word for the back of the neck. The people of Israel are described as AM K'SHEI OREF, a stiff-necked nation. Sometimes, the term is a criticism, but sometimes it can be viewed with a certain kind of pride. Whichever, the answer to this TTriddle is "K'SHEI OREF".

[4] Response to "Yasher Ko'ach"

We don't know if there is an official response to Yasher Ko'ach, but it is common to use the response to the "other" version of Yasher Ko'ach - namely, CHAZAK UVARUCH. The traditional answer to that is BARUCH TIH-YEH, which happens to occur once in Tanach - in Parshat Eikev.

[5] This week, THEY ARE; in Ki Tavo's, instead.

ERETZ ASHER AVANEHA VARZEL, a land whose rocks are iron. This is part of the description in Parshat Eikev of the land of Israel. This week, tehy (the rocks) are iron. In Ki Tavo's haftara,

Yeshayahu HaNavi describes the Geula, and these words are included: In place of the copper I will bring gold; and in place of the iron I will bring silver; and in place of the wood, copper; and in place of the stones, iron.

[6] The word that almost causes noisemaking

There is a word in the beginning of Eikev that almost sounds like HAMAN and often triggers the instinctive reaction to make noise. That word is HAMAM.

[7] Additional 10/10 warning

10/10 means the 10th of ten, referring to the tenth commandment of LO TACHMOD, You shall not covet. Aside from twice in commandment #10 in Yitro and once in commandment #10 in Va'etchanan, the words LO TACHMOD occur only one other time - in Parshat Eikev, where it is silver and gold that we are warned not to desire and not to take from the Avoda Zara that we are to destroy in Eretz Yisrael.

[8] Our version of Haman's "Whom would the king want to honor besides me?"

In Megilat Esther, the king asks Haman how someone in the king's favor should be honored. Haman says 'in his heart',"Whom would the king want to honor besides me?" Our version of that in Eikev 8:17 is: "[When you later have prosperity, be careful that you not] say to yourself (in your heart), 'It was my own strength and personal

power that brought me all this prosperity."

[9] Unexplained in ParshaPix

The basketball player in the photo is Michael Jordan. U is you is ATA. The U is over, similar to the Hebrew word OVEIR (in sound and in meaning), together becomes, "Sh'ma Yisrael ATA OVEIR (hayom) ET HAYAR-DEIN... U are going OVER the JORDAN.

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) S'forno teaches that this entire section begins with the command to GUARD THE MONTH OF SPRING (SHAMOR ET CHODESH HA'AVIV) which means to monitor each month to determine if there needs to be any additional days or if there needs to be a month added to a year, all to make sure that Pesach falls in the Spring. The IN ORDER TO... at the end of the section is explaining why G-D chose for us to follow a lunar calendar which requires GUARDING through leap years and months. Why not simply follow a solar calendar which would inherently make sure that Pesach is always in the Spring? The Torah explains that the demand to constantly manage and adjust the calendar is IN ORDER TO REMEMBER that G-D redeemed us from Egypt all the time. Throughout the year we will have to think about it as we monitor the calendar.

2) The Ohr HaChayim answers that the second command has one of two functions. If we hold that one must count the Omer in our times without a Beit HaMikdash on a Torah level, then the second command is the source for that. If we hold that counting today is only Rabbinic, the second command teaches that one should count the Omer even if there are no new crops to use as the basis for when the count should begin.

3) The Kli Yakar explains that an olah offering is a difficult offering to bring since the entire animal is consumed and the owner does not receive any meat to eat from it. Therefore, the Torah reminds us that when we bring these offerings, we are offering something which is not really ours but was given to us by the grace of HIS HAND, referring to G-D's hand. Recognizing that G-D is the source of our possessions will make it easier to offer the olah.

Towards Better Kashrut Awareness

Q&A on various aspects of kosher supervision, from the OU "home office" Kashrut articles written by Rabbi Dovid Bistricher, Rabbinic Coordinator, OU Kashrut

This article will focus on two common ingredients, carmine color and shellac, both of which are obtained from insects. There has been widespread discussion about both of these ingredients amongst modern-day poskim.

Carmine is a red pigment that is derived from carminic acid, which is produced by the cochineal insect. It is commonly used as a food coloring in a wide range of food products, including, candies, ice cream, juice, meats, and yogurt... It is called E120. The popularity of carmine in the food industry stems from its effectiveness and flexibility as a coloring agent... The carminic acid is principally obtained from boiling dried insects in water, which obviously could present a serious kashrus concern.

Based on the Gemara in Chulin 58a, poskim assume that thoroughly dried insects have the status of dust, and are permissible. Rav Yosef Shaul Nathanson zt'l writes (see Shoel Umaishiv 3:1:39) that whiskey colored with dye produced from dried insects is kosher. More recently, Dayan Yitzchak Yaacov Weiss zt'l addressed carmine color's kosher status, specifically, whether it is permissible to use as a coloring agent for meat. Dayan Weiss ruled that carmine color is permissible since the insect is completely dried in order to produce the color (see Minchas Yitzchok 3:96). The Rema rules (see Yoreh Deah 87:10) that skins from animal stomachs become permissible once they are salted and dried thoroughly before-hand. The basis

of this position is that the skins are inedible once salted and dried, and thereby lose their status as a food item. Once inedible, the skins are permissible and may be used to contain milk. Based on the Rema, Rav Akiva Eiger writes (see Teshuvos 1:207) that the skins may be used as a coagulating agent to produce cheese. The Pischei Teshuva's commentary (see Yoreh Deah 87:10:20) references to a position of the Tiferes Tzvi who asserted that the Rema's position would also extend to drying insects to produce a red dye. A similar type of ruling is found in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 84:17 that a burnt sheretz is viewed as dust and considered permissible. Based on the Tiferes Tzvi and other considerations, Dayan Weiss concluded that carmine color should be considered kosher.

Dayan Weiss' position was not accepted by many authorities. Rav Shmuel Vosner shlita writes that although strictly speaking carmine is permissible, one should still avoid consuming food containing it. Rav Vosner suggests that since carmine is derived from an impure source it is capable of tainting one's neshama (referred to by poskim as "Timum HaLev"). Rav Vosner based his reasoning on a position of the Rema quoted in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 81:7 (see shut Shevet HaLevi 8:184). Other poskim disagreeing with Dayan Weiss' lenient opinion include Rav Moshe Shternbuch shlita (see Teshuvos VeHanagos 3:251). Rav Shternbuch takes the position that carmine color should be prohibited on the basis of two considerations. The first factor is based on a discussion amongst earlier poskim whether a color is nullified (bateil) in a mixture when added at highly insignificant proportions. (See Rema, Yoreh Deah 102:1, and Darchei Teshuva

30). Although carmine is consistently added in infinitesimal amounts, Rav Shternbuch maintained that it is not bateil since the red color is noticeable. The second factor is that although insects that produce the red color are thoroughly dried beforehand, since the color is not nullified and it is added to a product that is consumed as food, the color would regain its non-kosher status (see Pesachim 20b, Rosh's commentary on Pesachim, and Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 442:9). On this basis, Rav Shternbuch concluded that carmine is prohibited, and did not accept the Tiferes Tzvi's position. Moreover, there is an additional consideration discussed by poskim whether the Rama's ruling is limited to instances when something edible was dried and made inedible, and not simply when something prohibited that begins as inedible is dried... The overwhelming consensus of kashrus agencies internationally is that carmine is treated as not kosher.

Shellac (E904), otherwise known as confectioners glaze, also originates from insects... used extensively in the food industry to improve appearance, extend

shelf life, and prevent coated products from sticking together when packaged. Shellac is a secretion of the lac insect, and there has been extensive discussion about its kosher status amongst poskim.

Rav Moshe Feinstein zt'l ruled leniently on this matter, and took the position that shellac is kosher (see Igros Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:24). Rav Moshe provides a number of reasons for this position... since shellac is an excretion that is in no way ever edible, it was never non-kosher. According to Rav Moshe, the principle that something derived from an impure source is considered impure itself only applies to something that is somewhat edible...

Authorities dissenting with Rav Moshe on this issue include Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv shlita (see Kovetz Teshuvos 1:73). There is no uniform consensus amongst kashrus agencies about whether shellac is permissible.

Food chemistry nowadays has become very intricate... it is therefore necessary for Rabbanim Hamachshirim and kashrus agencies to develop an expertise in the area of food chemistry...

help in the process: **וְרָגַעַךְ אֶת-לִבְבְּךָ וְאֶת-לִבְבֵי בָנֶיךָ** And HaShem your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your offspring, to love HaShem your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live. This pasuk (D'varim 10:6) is read on the Shabbat before Rosh HaShana and contains a four word sequence whose initials spell ELUL.

The pasuk in Megilat Esther which contains an "ELUL" features interpersonal acts of kindness:

לְעֵשׂוֹת אוֹתָם... יְמִי מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְשׂוֹמְנֵה וּמִשְׁכִּינֵה מִנּוּחַ אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמִתְנַחֵם לְאֲבִינָיִם:

There are 57 four-word sequences in Tanach, whose initial letters spell ELUL. Of those, most do not lend themselves to meaningful and appropriate comments. The three so far do, as do the following:

אֲזוּד לְחַטָּאת וְאֲזוּד לְעֵלֶה: and **אֲזוּד לְעֵלֶה וְאֲזוּד לְחַטָּאת**

Two types of sacrifices for different kinds of sins. The Chatat is for violation of prohibitions; the Olah for non-fulfillment of positive mitzvot. Both failings must be on our Elul agenda!

Prayer is an essential element of Elul. In Divrei HaYamim Alef 29:13 we find, "Now therefore, our God, we thank you, and praise your glorious name." With ELUL embedded therein: **וְעַתָּה אֲכַלְהֵינוּ מוֹדִים אֲנֻחֲנוּ לָךְ וּמִהַלְלִים לְשֵׁם תִּפְאֶרְתְּךָ:**

And look at this pasuk from Yirmiyahu (31:33), with ELUL embedded in it too:

כִּי אֶסְכֹּחַ לְעֵוֹנָם וּלְחַטָּאתָם לֹא אֶזְכֶּר-עוֹד:

"...for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will no longer remember their sin."

Another ELUL (see page 53): Yirmiyahu 12:15 shows us the other part of "Return" And it shall come to pass... and have compassion on them, and will bring them back, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.

וְהָיָה אֲזוּרֵי נַתְשִׁי אוֹתָם אֲשׁוּב וְרִנְיָמֵתִים וְהִשְׁבַּתִּים אִישׁ לְנַחֲלָתוֹ וְאִישׁ לְאֶרְצוֹ:

אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי וְדוֹדִי לִּי...

"I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine..." This quote from Shir HaShirim (6:3) is the well-known by its Rashei Teivot which spell ELUL. The phrase describes the mutual love between G-d and the People of Israel, which serves as an encouraging basis of our Elul-time task of sincere repentance.

Other phrases from Tanach are also associated with ELUL, not just "initially", but thematically as well. Notable among them are two other phrases which join ANI L'DODI to represent the three kinds of acts that help us avert an evil decree, T'SHUVA (repentance), T'FILA (prayer), TZEDAKA (chesed).

One of the p'sukim in the Torah that deals with the topic of T'shuva indicates G-d's