

Us, them, and the other them

Yaakov and Eisav were born two weeks ago (sedra-wise) and shortly thereafter began having problems with each other. After the B'CHORA and B'RACHA incidents, Yaakov was sent to Rivka's hometown to get out of Eisav's way and to find a suitable wife (or two or four).

Last week, in Vayeitzei, successfully out of Eisav's range, Yaakov finds himself deep in the clutches of Lavan.

No sooner does he take his leave of Lavan, Yaakov finds himself at the beginning of this week's sedra, about to meet up with his estranged twin after a gap of twenty years.

And Yaakov is exceedingly afraid, and deeply distressed by how very scared he is. The reunion with Eisav goes well, it seems, but Yaakov is not finished with problems from outside the immediate family - this time with the abduction and rape of Dina, and the reaction of Shimon and Levi to their sister's plight.

[See also Rabbi Shmuel Goldin's well-done piece on Yaakov's handling of his encounter with Eisav - pages 35,36, and 52.]

By the time next week's sedra rolls around - and we will have its preview yet this Shabbat at Mincha - and Yaakov's troubles are far from over, but this time the problems are in-house.

The Yosef and his Brothers story is unfolded in Vayeishev, Mikeitz, and Vayigash - significantly the pre-Chanuka, Chanuka, and post-Chanuka sedras. Significant because Chanuka is a story of more problems for Israel from the outside, in the form of the Syrian-Greeks and Hellenism AND the tragic infighting between Jew and Jew with their different outlooks.

cont.
page 4

Jerusalem Shabbat in/out times for **VAYISHLACH**

4:02pm / 5:17pm (see page 3 for other zmanim)

Checked, double checked, and triple checked for Parshat Vayishlach

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ParshaPix Explanations on p.37



Word of the Month

Last opportunity for Kiddush L'vana each month - both for those who follow the custom of starting at the 3-day mark after the molad or those who wait for seven days after the molad - is the midpoint between the previous molad and the next molad. Or (same thing), 14 days, 18 hours, and 22 minutes after the molad of the current month. The (announced) molad of Kislev was on Motza'ei Shabbat, November 6th, 8:43pm. Adding 14d 18h 22m we come to Sunday, November 21st, 3:05pm. Since that time is before nightfall, the last op for KL this month is Motza"Sh, Nov. 20. Friday night is not available for KL unless it is the last op, which it isn't.



Candles	VAYISHLACH	Havdala	next week
4:02pm	Yerushalayim	5:17pm	4:00 / 5:15
4:20pm	S'derot	5:20pm	4:18 / 5:18
4:18pm	Gush Etzion	5:17pm	4:16 / 5:15
4:18pm	Raanana	5:17pm	4:16 / 5:16
4:18pm	Beit Shemesh•RBS	5:18pm	4:16 / 5:16
4:18pm	Netanya	5:17pm	4:15 / 5:15
4:19pm	Rehovot	5:18pm	4:16 / 5:16
4:18pm	Be'er Sheva (& Otniel)	5:19pm	4:16 / 5:18
4:18pm	Modi'in• Chashmona'im	5:17pm	4:16 / 5:16
4:02pm	Petach Tikva	5:17pm	4:00 / 5:16
4:02pm	Maale Adumim	5:16pm	4:00 / 5:15
4:17pm	GINOT Shomron	5:16pm	4:15 / 5:15
4:16pm	Gush Shiloh	5:16pm	4:14 / 5:14
4:18pm	K4 & Hevron	5:17pm	4:16 / 5:16
4:17pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:17pm	4:15 / 5:15
4:19pm	Yad Binyamin	5:18pm	4:17 / 5:17
4:20pm	Ashkelon	5:19pm	4:18 / 5:18
4:04pm	Tzfat	5:14pm	4:01 / 5:12
4:17pm	Zichron Yaakov	5:16pm	4:14 / 5:15

Rabbeinu Tam Havdala - VAYISHLACH - 5:53pm

**Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
10-19 Kislev • Nov 17-26**

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:16-5:23am
Sunrise	6:10-6:17am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:09-8:13am)	8:46-8:51am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 9:08-9:11am)	9:38-9:43am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	11:24-11:26½qam
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	11:54-11:57am
Plag Mincha	3:33-3:31pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 4:38-4:35pm)	4:43-4:40pm

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☞ "The pen is mightier than the sword", and it is, therefore, even more important to know when to sheathe the first than the second.

☞ Most of the time it isn't worth the work it takes to get out of working.

From "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

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When a die is rolled and the one is on the bottom, it's like a kiss.

Location which gives us the first two sounds of the Witch Doctor's chorus

We have done like here before one time

No is no. How do you make that more emphatic? No way! Absolutely not!
No way, no how! And probably another few ways. In Hebrew? LO VaLO! לא ולא

THE ALIEN WITH ME, SLOWLY

Loud! The lion's roar, the elephant's trumpet, the grey wolf's howl are among the loudest sounds produced by animals. Howler monkeys have them all beat - they are the loudest land animals. The blue whale is louder by far, and thought - until recently - to be the loudest animal in the world. Until the discovery of an unlikely world champion of loud. A small marine animal, the tiger pistol shrimp can emit sounds as loud as 200dB. The loudest creature on Earth.

LEAD TIDBIT cont. from front page

Despite the fact that Yaakov and Eisav were twins, which of course means that they were born of the same mother and father, they represent the Jewish people and the non-Jewish nations respectively. True, that's an oversimplification, but our history is filled with encounters with different Eisav-types - individuals as well as nations.

And here is another oversimplification and generalization: Rashi quotes R' Shimon bar Yochai as stating that it is a well-known fact of life that Eisav hates Yaakov. This hatred, the Torah testifies to. That it extends through the generations, is due to Eisav's poisoning his grandson Amalek with this hatred. And Jewish History has more than enough proof that the hatred is alive and well in all generations since then... until today.

Generalization that it is, we MUST take it into account in our dealings with the rest of the world - especially with our sworn enemies. HALACHA HI B'YADU'A, it is well-known (tried and unfortunately true).

It is important to pay attention to the different interpretations of Eisav's kiss of Yaakov. In a Torah scroll, the word for And he kissed him, is written with dots above each letter. One opinion says that we are to learn that the kiss was not sincere. The other opinion is that it was atypically sincere, Eisav having been overwhelmed with emotion at that moment - even though he still hated Yaakov. No one suggests that Eisav was ready to let bygones be bygones.

And no one today should be deceived

into thinking that the Arab world wants to live in peace with a thriving Jewish State.

Thirty-three years ago, when Sadat came to Jerusalem, people debated the sincerity of his overtures of peace.

But enough of talking about that past; let's mention today, and relate to the title of this Lead Tidbit.

We, the Jewish People, of the State of Israel and elsewhere, have a variety of enemy-types. They are the thems. Some are open and clear in their hatred and desire to be rid of us. They are so obviously Jew-haters that it sometimes fools us into thinking that others who are not so obvious, would not also like to see us disappear. Then there are people who want what is best for themselves (who doesn't) and their opposition to Israel is more self-serving and (a bit) less Amalek and Haman and Hitler like. We must be on guard always.

Then there are our friends. True friends - but with agendas and self-interests that sometimes favor us and sometimes work against us. Remember (just as an example) that the United States does not, never did, and doubtfully will in the foreseeable future, recognize Israeli sovereignty over any of Jerusalem. How can they recognize it as our capital and move their embassy here when they still don't accept that Jerusalem is part of Israel? This does not mean that the US is not helpful to us in many ways. It just means that we have to be careful with what we give in to. *More, but for another TT.*

Vayishlach

8th of 54 sedras; 8th of 12 in B'reishit

Written on 237 lines in a Torah; ranks 11th

9 Parshi'ot - 6 P'tuchot; 3 S'tumot

153 p'sukim - 4th (1st in B'reishit), same number as No'ach, but more words and letters

1976 words - 6th (4th in B'reishit)

7458 letters - 6th (4th in B'reishit)

The drop in rank for words and letters is because its p'sukim are well below average in number of words and letters (but not as low as No'ach). In other words, Vayishlach has many - but relatively short p'sukim

MITZVOT

The is one mitzva counted in Vayishlach, One of three mitzvot in B'reishit. The only prohibition of the 365 in the Torah in the book of B'reishit.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

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

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.

Kohen - First Aliya 10 p'sukim - 32:4-13

[P> 32:4 (47)] Yaakov sends messengers to his brother Eisav with a message of conciliation (and warning?).

SDT: *Onkeles seems to consider the messengers that Yaakov sent to be human (IZGADIN are runners or messengers); Rashi states that the word MAL'ACHIM is to be taken literally, as heavenly angels. Commentaries point to the end of last week's sedra (which tells of Yaakov's encountering the "camps" of angels upon his return to Eretz Yisrael) as support for Rashi's point of view. Bartenura further explains that Biblical references to angels always include something they said or a prophetic message. When Yaakov encountered the angels, nothing is said. It could be argued, that the Torah mentioned the angels in connection with Yaakov's sending them to Eisav. Other commentaries say that Yaakov sent angels because humans might be affected by Eisav and angels would be able to "read" the situation accurately. One Chassidic Master put it this way: When a Jew is facing a threat from an Eisav-type and needs help, he may even bother heavenly angels for their support.*

SDT: *One of Yaakov's statements was that he had been living with Lavan and was delayed until now. Rashi learns, that "he lived with Lavan but did not learn from his evil ways". Some see this as a compliment to Yaakov, that he was able to maintain his complete adherence to the Torah in such an alien atmosphere. Others see an implied criticism: All those*

years in Lavan's home, and he did not learn from Lavan's evil ways... how to channel the cunning and enthusiasm he witnessed towards his own service of G-d. There are lessons to be learned even by negative example.

Yaakov announces to Eisav that he has "oxen, donkeys, sheep, and servants".

SDT: *Why does Yaakov tell this to Eisav? Is he boasting about wealth that he has amassed in Lavan's house? No, just the opposite. Yaakov is telling Eisav that although he has much material wealth and large flocks and herds, he does not have land. He has not (yet) benefited from the blessing (that Eisav felt should have been his) of "from the dew of the heavens and the fertility of the ground..." Therefore, Yaakov hoped that Eisav would not be angry with him.*

Put it this way: Yaakov is, so far, blessed with the "Shehakol" type of wealth. The other 5 of the 6 brachot for food are all related to that which comes from the ground, the blessings of TAL HASHAMAYIM & SH'MANEI HA'ARETZ, which Yaakov has not yet received.

The report of Eisav's pending arrival with 400 men prompts Yaakov into three modes of action. He first divides his camp into two, so that one will be able to escape if the other is attacked. Then he prays to G-d for His help and the fulfillment of promises made. (the third phase is in the next portion.)

SDT: *Commentaries point out that Yaakov asks G-d to save him "from my*

brother - from Eisav". This is not a redundancy. The Jew faces two enemies: The Eisavs of the world who would destroy the Jewish people, and the "friendly brothers" who would gladly permit us to assimilate into their cultures - thereby also bringing about the destruction of the Jewish People. Yaakov prays for salvation from both threats.

Similarly, in the very first pasuk of the sedra, Yaakov sends the angels (or messengers) to his BROTHER EISAV. Yaakov is always aware that Eisav is both, and he must be weary of both persona.

The Beit HaLevi puts it this way. Danger #1 is war. Danger #2 is a treaty with Eisav that can also be disastrous. Does this say anything to us today? It should!

Levi - Second Aliya 17 p'sukim - 32:14-30

Yaakov next prepares elaborate gifts from his flocks and herds for Eisav to be delivered with a good-will message of appeasement.

SDT: *Baal HaTurim points out that there are two p'sukim in the Torah in which every word ends with a "final mem". Here in Vayishlach (32:15): 200 she-goats, 20 he-goats... and BaMidbar (29:33): And their (referring to sacrifices) flour-oil offerings, their wine of libation, for the oxen... Is there a connection? Baal HaTurim shares an amazing calculation with us. Yaakov sent 550 animals as an appeasement to Eisav, even though G-d had assured him that He would protect him. Yaakov's descendants were destined to offer 550 animals per year as Musaf sacrifices. (Ed. note: The*

number of Shabbatot in a year vary from 50-55; Rosh Chodeshes can be 12 or 13. Chagim are the same for all years. Animals of Chagim Musaf total 307. Shabbat Musaf will add 100-110; Rosh Chodesh adds 132-143. Totals therefore range from 539 to 560 with an average somewhere in the 550 ballpark, as the Baal HaTurim says.)

He instructs his servants what to say when they meet up with Eisav.

During the night before his encounter with Eisav, Yaakov finds himself alone. (This is one of the sources for the rule that a person should not go out alone at night.)

SDT: Commentaries tell us that Yaakov returned across the Yabok to retrieve small flasks of oil that had been left behind. Some say this was the oil with which he anointed the altar and monuments, and that this flask of oil was the antecedent of the sole flask of oil found by the Chashmona'im centuries later.

Yaakov battles with an ISH (a "man", whom we are taught is the guardian angel of Eisav). Yaakov prevails in this struggle but is injured. He receives an unusual blessing from the angel in the form of an additional name - Yisrael.

SDT: Yaakov asks the angel who has wrestled with him to give him a bracha. Rashi says that he was asking that the angel acknowledge the brachot that Yaakov had received from Yitzchak, which Yitzchak had intended to give to Eisav. Perhaps what prompts Rashi to

this explanation rather than the situation being simply that Yaakov was asking for a new bracha, is the unusual word BEI-RACH-TANI (which relates to the past) and not BOR'CHEINI (bless me now). Some say that the ISH he wrestled with was himself, reflecting the inner turmoil and mixed feelings he had about his "history" with Eisav.

Note that the angel does not declare that Yaakov will no longer be his name, but rather Yisrael. He does say that it will no longer be said that he is a "Yaakov" (one who holds onto his brother's heel to hold him back) but rather he will be referred to as Yisrael, the one who prevailed before G-d and man.

Unlike Avraham, whose previous name is no longer used after he is renamed Avraham, Yaakov carries both names. In fact, the second word after the angel's declaration of the new name is Yaakov. Similarly, when G-d confirms the name Yisrael upon Yaakov, he (Yaakov) is still called Yaakov, and sometimes Yisrael. This is the flavor of Rashi's commentary on LO YAAKOV, which he explains thus: People will no longer call you "the one who held your brother back", but they will acknowledge you as having justly prevailed.

wrestling certainly raises dust

Yitzchak made it; Yaakov gave it; Yosef got it

Shlishi - Third Aliya 8 p'sukim - 32:31-33:5

MitzvaWatch

The perennial battle between Eisav and Yaakov, which this battle typifies, is "commemorated" by the prohibition of "Gid HaNasheh" [3, L183 32:33]. Even though the Torah introduces this mitzva in the context of the story, the mitzva is part of the Revelation at Sinai, as if it would have said (later in the Torah): "And G-d spoke to Moshe saying - command the People not to eat the Gid..." The only "negative" mitzva in the book of B'reishit is this prohibition against eating the "Gid HaNasheh". Removal of the "gid" and its innervating branches in the thigh and leg of the animal, as well as the fats and flesh in the area, is required, and difficult. Further problems result from blood vessels that must be removed from that part of the animal's body. The process of removal of the GID and other vessels is known as "Nikur" (Heb.) or "treibering" (Yiddish). It is, in most cases, not economically feasible to remove the "gid". The whole hind section of the animal is generally sold as non-kosher (thereby removing the GID from the rest of the animal's body). This is the standard practice in the U.S. In Israel, however, where there is not so readily available non-kosher market, nikur is more common. This means that some fancy hind cuts of meat are available to the kosher consumer,

such as Tenderloin, sirloin, porterhouse, T-bone.

Yaakov sees Eisav and his men coming; he pushes his family behind him and repeatedly bows to his brother. Eisav runs towards him embraces him, k*i*s*s*e*s him, and weeps.

SDT: Mishlei 24:16 says: For a righteous person will fall seven times and rise up... Baal HaTurim relates this pasuk to Yaakov's bowing 7 times before Eisav.

Finally, Yaakov and Eisav - brothers, twins! - are face to face, and Eisav runs towards Yaakov and embraces him, hugs him, and kisses him. Asterisks on the word VAYISHAKEI- HU. The Scribal custom is calling our attention to something important. A message we dare not overlook or ignore. Rashi presents us with two opinions: The dots tell us that the kiss was not sincere because of his hatred... or, even though Eisav hates Yaakov, at this moment he was overcome by genuine feelings of brotherly love and kissed him with all his heart. Note that both opinions accept the fact of life of the eternal hatred of the Eisavs of the world for the Yaakovs (us) - they just dispute this particular kiss. See more in the Lead Tidbit

Eisav asks about the women and children and Yaakov prepares to introduce his family to Eisav.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya

15 p'sukim - 33:6-20

Yaakov humbles (humiliates?) himself before Eisav as he presents his family to him, all of whom bow to Eisav. Yaakov presented his wives and 11 children.

SDT: *Why did Yaakov hide Dina from Eisav? Some explain that Yaakov did not want Eisav to take Dina as a wife and thereby subject her to his wickedness. For this, Yaakov was punished, because Dina might have been (probably would have?) a positive influence in Eisav's life. (The very next portion of the Torah tells us of the kidnap and rape of Dina and the subsequent debacle of the revenge exacted by Shimon and Levi.) Commentaries ask whether Yaakov should be praised, rather than punished, for protecting Dina. Bartenura says that Yaakov's reason for hiding Dina was not the fear of anything negative happening to her, but the fear that she would succeed in reforming Eisav, which would make him worthy of the blessing that he would dominate his brother.*

Eisav asks about the groups of animals that he met on his way. Eisav at first refuses to accept the gifts, but eventually takes them. Then Eisav suggests that he and Yaakov join together. Yaakov adamantly refuses.

NOTE: At first, Yaakov seems to want to avoid antagonizing Eisav, even to the point of humbling himself before his brother. However, when

the possibility of subjecting his family to the influences of Eisav is at issue, Yaakov boldly risks confrontation. Lesson to learn.

[S> 33:18 (3)] Yaakov travels to the Sh'chem area where he purchases land and builds a Mizbei-ach.

The land that Yaakov purchased was later used for the burial of Yosef's remains.

Chamishi 5th Aliya

42 p'sukim - 34:1-35:11

[S> 34:1 (31)] Dina (who had been hidden from Eisav) now goes out to explore the "local attractions". She is kidnapped and raped by Sh'chem who then falls in love with her. His father proposes an alliance with Yaakov's family for the purpose of intermarriage and fusing of their cultures. Shimon and Levi trick Sh'chem and his people into circumcising themselves. When the people are weakened, Shimon and Levi kill them to avenge what was done to Dina. Yaakov is upset at what they have done (perhaps not - some commentaries say he was upset at not being consulted in the first place), but they defend their actions.

[P> 35:1 (8)] G-d tells Yaakov to move to Beit-El and build an altar there. Yaakov rids his household of idols. G-d prevents the locals from pursuing Yaakov and family

to avenge the killing of the people of Sh'chem.

Rivka's nurse Devora dies and is buried. (There is a Tradition that Rivka died at this point too. Some suggest that the Torah was silent about Rivka's death because Yaakov was not around to tend to her burial, only Eisav was.)

Who was D'vora, the nursemaid of Rivka? Why does she rate mention by name? Why is her death mentioned? It has been suggested (we heard it from Rabbi Sholom Gold) that she was one of Avraham and Sara's "converts", but that they purposely did not take her when they went to Eretz Yisrael, with "the souls they had made in Charan". Rather, they left her as a tutor for Rivka, someone to teach her and influence her to become worthy and fitting to be Yitzchak's wife and one of the Matriarchs of the Jewish People.

[P> 35:9 (14)] G-d appears once again to Yaakov and blesses him. He confirms the new name Yisrael (which is used alongside the name Yaakov, each having different connotations).

Shishi - Sixth Aliya

37 p'sukim - 35:12-36:19

G-d reiterates His promise of the Land to Yaakov and his descendants. Yaakov erects another monument to mark the place at which G-d appeared to him. Rachel gives birth to Binyamin (11th of Cheshvan) and dies in

childbirth. She thanks G-d with her dying breath for her having a second son. She is buried on the "road to Efrata" and her burial place is marked "even unto this day".

Reuven **UNTRANSLATED** Bilha...

SDT: *The Gemara states: Anyone who thinks that Reuven actually slept with Bilha, as the literal translation of the pasuk would indicate, is grossly mistaken. Some say that Reuven moved Yaakov's bed from the tent of Bilha - where Yaakov had placed it after Rachel's death - into his mother's (Leah's) tent. The Torah's cryptic description of what he did is considered a sharp rebuke of his actions, which were disrespectful to his father. Nonetheless, he was motivated by protective jealousy for his mother Leah. The Mishna states that when the Torah was translated into Aramaic during public Torah reading, this pasuk was not translated. It was read, but it was left without TIRGUM so as not to mislead and confuse the people. This is a glaring example (of which there are many more, as well as subtle ones) of the inability to understand the Written Word without its inseparable partner, the Oral Torah. This is so for "story" parts of the Torah, as well as Halachic texts. This is the tragedy of the nations of the world clutching their bibles and thinking that they hold in their hands the Word of G-d. They hold only part of the Word of G-d which is so easily misunderstood and perverted in the absence of its Oral component.*

[P> 35:23 (7)] ...the sons of Yaakov are 12.

SDT: *This statement is part of the same pasuk (although it begins a new parsha)*

as the statement about Reuven's deed. This is considered proof of the Talmudic statement mentioned above. Had Reuven actually sinned in the literal sense of the pasuk, he would not immediately be acknowledged as one of the sons of Yaakov, he would have been ostracized, or worse. Additionally, he is identified as Yaakov's B'CHOR in the very next pasuk. Yaakov's sons are enumerated. Yaakov returns to his father's home. Yitzchak dies at 180 and is buried by Yaakov and Eisav.

[P> 36:1 (19)] Eisav's descendants are enumerated.

The fact that this is done at this point in the Torah, before the Torah continues with the accounts of the family of Yaakov seems to say: Let's finish up with Eisav first, before we continue with the important line of descent. Eisav is a force in this world, but he is not the reason for its existence.

Another reason: it might serve as a rebuke for Yaakov's humbling himself before Eisav. Call him your master and you his servant, says G-d, then I will establish him and his line of royalty in their own land many years before you and your descendants are ready for nationhood and their own kings.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya **24 p'sukim - 36:20-43**

[S> 36:20 (11)] The Torah continues with the descendants of Se'ir the Chori. These are people who lived in Edom before Eisav's

clan received it. Eisav married Oholivama of Se'ir and Eisav's eldest son Elifaz married (actually, concubine) Timna from Se'ir. Eisav "had a life" in Canaan, and then when the clan moved to Se'ir, there are other wives and sons who become family heads.

[P> 36:31 (13)] Finally, the Torah enumerates the kings that ruled the city-states of Eisav/Edom/Se'ir, "even before there ruled a king in Israel". Israel must still go through many stages of refinement and pass through many trials and tribulations before they are to emerge as The People of Israel.

Haftara 21 p'sukim **The book(let) of Ovadya**

The ongoing battle between Yaakov and Eisav is the main theme of the prophecy of Ovadya. The prophecy focuses on the ultimate judgment that Eisav's descendants face; G-d will emerge as the true King of all. The Haftara "answers" the question raised in the sedra as to what are the real feelings of Eisav to Yaakov.

Divrei Menachem

Parshat Vayishlach relates of Yaakov's eventual meeting with his brother Eisav and of the events that followed that fateful event. We learn that Yaakov journeyed on to Sukkot and then to the city of Sh'chem where he bought the land on which he pitched his tent. Clearly, then, Yaakov intended to stay some time there.

One of the outcomes of Yaakov's tarrying in Sh'chem was the incident whereby his daughter Dina was kidnapped by Sh'chem, the son of Chamor the Chivite, the prince of the region. The young man violates Dina so that her brothers - notably Shimon and Levi - take the law into their own hands and conspire to rescue their sister, kill all the men in Sh'chem, and to loot the city.

Our rabbis tell us that Yaakov paid a heavy price for his sojourn in Sh'chem. For the messy outcome clearly defamed his good name and put his family in danger of a vengeful attack.

Moreover, Yaakov forfeited the Divine protection that had served him so well for 22 years (Rashi, Radak). Now, G-d - described as Elokim, the G-d of justice - implores Yaakov to speedily make good of his vow to return to Bet El. And, notably, only when Yaakov focuses on turning Luz into Bet El (the House of G-d) does a Godly terror fall upon the surrounding hostile cities (B'reishit 35:5).

VEBBE REBBE

QUESTION: *Is it necessary to tovel equipment used in food production (e.g. restaurant, factory)? Some equipment is impossible to tovel; some equipment is too big to tovel anywhere but a natural body of water. What if the factory is far away from any mikveh other than an ocean? Must one shlep everything there?*

ANSWER: There are several areas in which leniency can be considered, which is helpful.

The gemara (Avoda Zara 75b) says that only klei seuda (literally, utensils of a meal) require tevila. Keeping matters simple, let us say that utensils that come in contact with food during the preparation, serving, eating, or storage of food require tevila. Yet, the minhag is not to tovel certain "utensils" that seem to meet that definition. For one example, few people tovel refrigerator racks or the body of ovens (even when made from material that requires tevila and food is put directly on them). The Aruch HaShulchan (YD 120:39 - see similar explanation in the name of Rav S.Z. Auerbach in Tevilat Keilim (Cohen) 11:(39)) says that a kli seuda is something that is not too big and/or is made to take from place to place, as opposed to things to which food is brought. Others say that specifically utensils that were made to be connected to the ground are not obligated in tevilat keilim (see Tevilat

Keilim 1:(16)). Some of the bigger equipment might be exempt from tevila on these grounds.

The major reason for leniency is the commercial use of the utensils. The Shulchan Aruch (YD 120:8) assumes that one who bought a utensil to be used not for food is not obligated in tevila (and therefore one who borrows it from him may use it without tevila). The Beit Yosef (YD 120) extends this exemption to one who bought the utensil not to use but to sell, as the merchant is not obligated in tevila. One could say the same thing is true of equipment that is used by a factory not to enable the owner to eat but to have food to sell. The question is whether one can compare one who bought a utensil to sell and will never use it himself with food to one who uses the utensil with food, just that he plans to sell the food rather than consume it. There is a machloket regarding a restaurant, which makes food to serve people at their premises to make money. The Minchat Yitzchak (I, 46) says that this is also considered for commercial purposes and exempt according to a sufficient number of poskim. Rav M. Feinstein and Rav S.Z. Auerbach are among those who say that since it is used for eating, it is a kli seuda even in the commercial setting (see Tevilat Keilim, pp. 89-90), and this opinion seems to be the more accepted one. The case of a factory is somewhat more lenient, as no one uses the utensil in connection with a meal. Rather the Jew prepares and sells the food, after which he loses all connection. In this case, the Chelkat

Yaakov (YD 42) permits the matter based on the Tuv Taam VaDa'at, who himself was willing to be lenient only when most of the food is produced for non-Jews.

A final point of leniency relates to the difficulty to do tevila. Tevila is a positive mitzva. The prohibition of using a utensil without tevila is an outcome of the failure to perform the mitzva. If it is prohibitively expensive or time-consuming to get to a mikveh, there is room to say that the positive mitzva is not expected of the person (see Rama, Orach Chayim 656:1). On the other hand, when it is unfeasible to do tevila, the Shulchan Aruch and Rama (YD 120:16) say that one should give the utensil as a present to a non-Jew and then borrow it from him (as the mitzva applies only while the utensil is under Jewish ownership). For expensive equipment, selling it (without demanding full payment upfront) and then renting it back seems more reasonable.

We will summarize as follows. If it is difficult to tovel commercial food preparation equipment, whether due to immobility or lack of a nearby mikveh, one may rely on the opinions that they do not need tevila or transfer them to a non-Jew's ownership. If he wants to do tevila anyway, he should not make a b'racha.

"BOTH A LENDER AND A BORROWER BE" (part seven) THE CHALLENGE OF MONEY by **Dr. Meir Tamari**

The issue of changes in price levels, whether because of inflation or of changes in exchange rates, have existed since early history. When money was in the form of metallic coins then governments could change their buying power either by debasing the precious metal in them or by issuing new coins of a different value. With the use of paper money, they simply changed the exchange rates with other currencies by government decree. Now that the world has moved to floating exchange rates, the market determines the relative rates; however, governments still intervene in various ways to determine changes in the rates.

Assuming Reuven rented a home or took a mortgage from Shimon pegged in dollars when the rate was \$1=3 shekalim. Now the shekel is devalued and the new rate is \$1=3.50 shekalim. Shimon insists on receiving 3500 shekalim; is this ribit or merely giving him the purchasing power of his rent? Our sources predominantly insist that payments have to be made at the nominal value of money at the time the debt arose. However, where the creditor suffers a loss through appreciation of the currency, assuming the dollar rate was now \$1=2.50 shekel, some like the Raivid, have ruled that if Reuven paid only 2500, since Shimon does not receive more

shekalim than he lent, Reuven does not have to compensate him and this is not ribit. Those same opinions claim that discounts for cash, in economic terms certainly interest paid by the supplier, is not halakhic ribit.

Since sudden changes in the value of money can cause great hardships, other moral and religious questions emerge over and above that of ribit. Sometimes they are only imagined hardships because people have illusions about the real value of money as contrasted with its nominal value and tend to overlook rises or declines in prices in real terms. Irrespective, interpersonal relationships between borrowers and lenders deteriorate and feelings of fraud, theft and oppression develop. To solve or appease these tensions and quarrels, authorities have proposed decisions that are lifnim mishurat hadin and communities passed enactments designed to spread unexpected losses more equitably.

"It is not clear whether or not in the case of devaluation of the shekel the borrower is not required to pay at least the rise in prices generated by the devaluation" (Minchat Yitchak, vol. 6, sec 161). "Where one is not sure of the amount of the debt, one who desires to clear himself before Heaven may pay the higher sum without fear of interest. However, the borrower has to forgive the lender so that he should not be guilty of theft and of transgressing issur ribit by taking the increased amount" (Temimim Dei'im, sec 60).

Similarly, we have numerous commu-

nal enactments meant to arrive at peaceful solutions to the turmoil and strife caused by changes in rates of exchange. "The constant changes in the value of the coins have led to much strife since creditors wish to claim the increased value while the debtors want to pay only the nominal value. So the community has ordered that they should share the increase between them" (Fez, North Africa, 1614). "It is the custom in Eretz Yisrael to pay the k'tuva and other debts on the basis of an average [between the currency value at the contract date and that of the due date]. This custom fosters a spirit of comradeship and appeasement between the parties" (T'shuvot Maharit, Even Haezer, section 2). Rabbi di Boton [Salonika, 1625-1700] sees this as a means whereby the judges can make ethical judgments. "As the legal situation is not altogether clear, it is best as the community has done, to impose a compromise and each one will depart in peace since compromise is a judgment of peace" (Lechem Rav, sec. 13).

Such compromises are lifnim mishurat hadin rather than din. "Reuven agreed to pay Shimon a certain sum of groschen irrespective of whether their value rises or falls relative to silver. Both Rambam and Rif see the groschen as goods relative to silver which is haklakhic money, making it a loan of goods for other goods so he has to pay only the original sum. Other authorities disagree and argue that Reuven has to pay the increase. I however, rule that the good and righteous way, is for the Beit Din to

force both sides to do as we do in Constantinople and divide the increase equally between them" (T'shuvot HaRibasson, sec 61).

V'Asita et haTov v'haYashar, □

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

VAYISHLACH NAMELESS

There is something special about meeting up with an old friend that one hasn't seen in years. I recently had just such a special experience, when I spent a weekend in a community where a friend I hadn't seen in 10 years resides.

Of course, we spent much of the time catching up with each other's lives. He showed me a book he had just written, the product of many years of research on his part. He gave me the book as a gift, and I opened it to find that it was dedicated to a rabbi who had passed away some years ago, who had made aliya to Israel together with the famed Alter, or old man, of Slobodka, Rabbi Nossou Tzvi Finkel, in the mid 1920s.

I asked him what his connection was to the old rabbi. He told me that this rabbi was one of those anonymous scholars who can be found only in Jerusalem. He was someone with no official position, who lived in poverty, but who would gladly teach any young yeshiva student who would ask for time with him. He was

almost nameless, and, in the world's eyes, was insignificant, although my friend attributes all of his considerable Talmudic erudition to him. In gratitude, he dedicated his book to this sad soul, who now has a "name".

Reflecting upon this, I soon realized that I too had similar experiences, and that many people have influenced me who are, in a sense, nameless. I recall, for example, the rabbi, diminutive in stature but superlative in pedagogical skill, who was retained by my parents to teach me Talmud during summer vacations. I studied with him intensely in my early teens and then forgot about him until relatively recently, when I came to realize how much of my modest skill in Talmud I owe to him.

In this week's Torah portion, Vayishlach, we encounter just such a person. She unobtrusively walked onto the stage of drama of the biblical patriarchs and matriarchs in the portion we read three weeks ago, Chayei Sarah. There we read (B'reishit 24:59) "... And they sent away Rebecca their sister, and her nursemaid, and Abraham's servant..." We learn of this nursemaid's existence, but we are not told her name. Indeed we do not hear of her at all again.

That is, not until this week's Torah portion. This Shabbat we will read (35:8), "And Devorah, Rivka's nurse, died, and she was buried below Beit El under the oak; and the name of it was called, the Oak of Weeping." We learned that her name was

Devorah, and that Yaakov and his family sorely grieved and mourned for her.

It is left to our imagination, and to the midrash and commentaries, to speculate about her activities and relationships during the many years from the time she escorted her mistress to the land of Canaan until her sad demise so many years later.

Our rabbis tell us that she was sent by Rivka to bring Yaakov from his long exile in the land of Charan back to the land of Canaan. After all, when Rivka encouraged Yaakov to flee, she promised him that when it was safe, she would "send for you and fetch you." (27:45). It was Devorah whom she sent to retrieve Yaakov, to bring Yaakov back.

Devorah then spent much time, probably many years, with Yaakov and Rachel and Leah and their growing family. As is evident from the fact that her death occasioned such profound grief that it is memorialized in this week's Torah portion, she must have been much loved. I always imagine that she served as the grandmother figure for all the sons and the daughter of Yaakov who grew up without the advantage of a nearby bubby.

For me, as for the old friend with whom I was briefly reconnected this past weekend, Devorah is an archetype of the nameless soul who makes a powerful impact upon us, and who is forgotten for a very long time until we finally remember him and "name" him. Rivka's nursemaid

had no name when we first learned of her existence. Only when she passes on, do we finally learn, under the Oak of Weeping, that her name was Devorah.

The name of my summer time teacher from so long ago? We called him "Rabbi Abramchik", and although I remember him fondly, and he clearly was a major influence in my life, I cannot remember his full name anymore.

Perhaps it is of Devorah and of Rabbi Abramchik that the prophet Yeshayahu spoke when he said in the Name of G-d:

I will give them, in My House

And within My walls,

A monument and a name

Better than sons or daughters.

I will give them an everlasting name

Which shall not perish.

(Yeshayahu 56:5) □

TTTRIDDLES

Last issue's (VAYEITZEI) TTriddles:

[1] closest matches between name and reason

She became pregnant again and gave birth to a son, and she said: HAPAAM ODEH ET HASHEM, this time I will thank G-d, therefore, she named him YEHUDA. ODEH and HASHEM combine to YEHUDA. Okay, but there are others whose name matches more closely the wording of the reason for the name. Actually, there are two of Yaakov's sons whose names are found in the reason, without altering them at all (almost). GAD, from BA GAD. And YOSEF, from YOSEF LI BEN ACHEIR. They are the answers to this TTriddle.

[2] The 8:00pm TZAKIN on Israel TV

Many TTreaders probably remember the notion that the word NEWS was an acronym of north, east, west, south. And the explanation that news comes from all directions. According to word experts, it just ain't so. News is the plural of new, as fits the Hebrew, CHADASHOT. The north, east, west, south thing came along later and is not the origin of the word news. Be that as it may, if we take that idea and translate it into Hebrew using the terms for the directions, the ones found in Vayeitzei and the old Lubavitch song, UFARATZTA, and if we keep them in the order of NEWS, we get TZAFONA, KEIDMA, YAMA,

NEGBA, which in acronym form is TZAKIN.

[3] and she gave - gave she and

Forget this one - it is in error. It was supposed to describe a palindrome. Problem is, the word isn't a palindrome. Just forget this one. Hope no one lost sleep over it. Speaking of palindromes, we found two among the words of B'reishit 29:21.

[4] Yocheved was in his heart, as was she

BILVAVO, in his heart. Gimatriya, 42. YOCHEVED = 42. And so does BILHA. (So does Jackie Robinson, in a different way.)

[5] Gad and Asher are both candidates for this syndrome

Middle child syndrome. In several articles on the internet, this syndrome addressed middle children as well as secondborns. If we take Yaakov's 12 sons and add Dina onto the list, then the middle child is number 7, namely GAD. ASHER was the secondborn to Zilpa, so both were candidates for middle child syndrome. (Actually, any child between the first and the last can be considered a middle child, according to some psychologists.)

[6] The walnut is the king of the nuts, but this nut lives in the palace

Not all misspellings in Torah Tidbits are a result of carelessness; some are intentional. When a TTriddle has a word misspelled, it usually signals a difference in spelling in the TTriddle

solution. The part of the TTriddle about the walnut was just thrown in for window dressing. The actual TTriddle is, This nut lives in a palace. Palace is misspelled. So is ARMON. With an AYIN, the word - as found in Vayeitzei - refers to the chestnut tree. Its sound alike (okay, guttural AYIN people - its sound similar) is with an ALEF and it means palace.

[7] Yaakov, the People of Israel, Yiftach

VAYIDAR, and he vowed. This specific word occurs only three times in Tanach. In Parshat Vayeitzei, Yaakov vows to return home if G-d will provide for him on his journey and mission. In Parshat Chukat, the people of Israel vow that they will sanctify (CHEIREMize, can also mean to totally destroy) the spoils of war if they are successful against the K'NAANI. And in Shoftim, we read of that terribly poorly worded vow made by Yiftach.

[8] New MazalPix

MAKO is the Israeli news and entertainment website owned and operated by Keshet, Israel's largest TV broadcast company. Keshet is Hebrew for rainbow as well as the archer's bow. Keshet is the Hebrew term for the Zodiac sign, Sagittarius, the mazal of Kislev. This MazalPic replaces the inappropriate one from last week.

[9] Unexplained from the ParshaPix (TT 930 - lower-right corner)

You have to read the following the right way to get the answer. There was a notepad and a male sheep. PAD

AND A RAM. Try it. PADAN ARAM. Side point (of interest - depends on what interests you). The place, PADAN ARAM is mentioned four times in the end of Parshat Toldot... and nowhere else in Tanach. Furthermore, its four occurrences are PADENA ARAM, which, as Rashi teaches us, means L'PADAN, to PADAN ARAM.

There are 6 times PADAN ARAM is mentioned with a prefix letter: MIPADAN ARAM and B'FADAN ARAM. All ten mentions of PADAN ARAM are found in the Book of B'reishit. □

Maharal on the Sedra

The Three Who are Forgiven

B'reishit 36:3 - [Esav married] Bas'mat, the daughter of Yishmael...

Rashi: Elsewhere, she is called Machalat [28:9]. I found a midrash on the Book of Samuel that there are three whose sins are forgiven - one who converts, one who rises to high office, and one who marries. The reason is found here - when she married she became Machalat [forgiven] for her sins were forgiven..

Gur Arye: The reason for all three is that they are new human beings, and since it was the previous person who sinned, Hashem forgives them.

The conclusion that they are new beings is reached differently for the three.

In the case of marriage, before he or she was half a person and afterwards a whole person. The gemara tells us [Yevamot 61b] a man is only half a man without a wife, as it is written [B'reishit 5:2], "male and female he create them and called their name Adam."

A prince who rises to high office - before, he was his individual personage, and now, so to speak, he "is" his entire people.

A convert is considered as a newborn [Yevamot 22a], a brand new creature.

Column prepared by Dr. Moshe Kuhr

Praying with Passion

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

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Baruch She'amar

Created with Words

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם, בְּרוּךְ הוּא,
בְּרוּךְ עֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית, בְּרוּךְ אוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה,
בְּרוּךְ גּוֹזֵר וּמְקַיֵּם, בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל הָאָרֶץ,
בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל הַבְּרִיּוֹת, בְּרוּךְ מְשַׁלֵּם שְׂכָר
טוֹב לִירְאָיו, בְּרוּךְ חַי לְעַד וְקַיָּם לְנֶצְחַת, בְּרוּךְ
פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל, בְּרוּךְ שְׂמוֹ...
... בְּרוּךְ שְׂמוֹ...

Meaning: translation...

Blessed is He who spoke and the world came into being, blessed is He. Blessed is He who creates the universe. Blessed is He who speaks and acts. Blessed is He who decrees and fulfills. Blessed is He who shows compassion to the earth. Blessed is He who shows compassion to all creatures. Blessed is He who gives a good reward to those who fear Him. Blessed is He who lives for ever and exists to eternity. Blessed is He who redeems and saves. Blessed is His name.

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

The Power of Hashem's Word

Hashem is the Creator Who brought all of creation into being with nothing more than His word.

Insight: Deeper meanings...

**Breathing Spirituality
into the World**

The Torah (Bereishit 2:4) teaches several profound lessons about how the world was created: "These are the products of the heaven and the earth when they were created." The word B'HIBAR'AM, meaning "when they were created," can be divided into two words - b'HEI BAR-AM, meaning that G-d created these products with the letter HEI. The sound of the letter HEI requires a mere exhalation of one's breath, an effortless act with no movement of the lips, tongue, or mouth (Tanchuma Bereishit 16). This symbolizes the effortless creation of the world out of nothing - as the verse (T'hilim 33:6) testifies, "By the Word of Hashem the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their hosts."

The Gemara (Menachot 29b) explains that G-d used the letters YUD and HEI to create the World to Come and this world, respectively. The HEI which indicates creation of This World, is also found in the Divine Name when the letters YUD and HEI are combined. Thus, G-d did not create This World as a purely physical world, but also imbued it with the Divine Spirit. Maharal teaches that the letter HEI consists of a DALET and a YUD. The vertical and horizontal lines of the DALET represent the physical world that is measured in its expanding width and height. The YUD signifies spirituality, the World to Come. Thus, the HEI teaches us to instill spirituality into our physical lives in this world.

The Wisdom in the Hebrew Alphabet,
Rabbi Michael L. Munk, Artscroll, p. 85

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

The Power of Our Words

Hashem created the universe with His words – a seemingly impossible feat. However, even in the world of human beings, words have the power to change reality or even to create new realities. When a person signs a contract, the words within it redefine his world.

Suddenly, he owes a bank \$200,000. Suddenly, the house on the corner of the block belongs to him. Suddenly, an insurance company is required to pay for his doctor's visit. Spoken words, too, create new realities. With a few words, a man and woman become a husband and wife. By uttering a promise, a person becomes obligated to do something that, only moments before, he had no obligation to do.

The ultimate creative use of a person's words is his prayers. Those are the words that literally re-create and re-energize Hashem's creation from moment to moment. By praying, a person draws Divine power and energy into his life, sustaining his health, bringing success to his endeavors, bolstering his spiritual strength and giving him literally all he needs to perform his mission in the world.

Try This:

Think of a time when a few words from you changed a situation dramatically. Perhaps you were able to make a crying child smile, or stop an argument in its tracks, or close a difficult deal. Think of the power of that moment when you

say the words BARUCH SHE-AMAR V'HAYA HA-OLAM. A few words from Hashem, and a universe was created!

Closer look:

In the context of the opening, BARUCH SHE-AMAR V'HAYA HA-OLAM, "Blessed is He Who spoke, and the world came into being," it appears redundant to repeat BARUCH HU, "blessed is He." Tz'lusa D'Avrohom explains that BARUCH HU is an abbreviated way of identifying the "He" as HAKADOSH BARUCH HU. Therefore, by opening with these words, we are declaring that it is Hashem, "Who spoke and the world came into being," who is blessed. Therefore, BARUCH SHE-AMAR and BARUCH HU are one thought.

Baruch She-amar contains 87 words, the same numerical value as the word PAZ, "finest gold." This alludes to the verse in Shir HaShirim 5:11: "His opening words, referring to P'sukei d'Zimra, were 'finest gold'" (Mishneh B'rurah 51:1).

Portion from the Portion

High or Low Profile

There haven't been many times in Jewish history when we were sovereign and we had the power to decide how to treat those who were carrying out injustices against our Jewish nation. The past 60 years returning to our homeland has been one of those time periods. Our leaders should analyze our forefathers' behavior in order to learn guiding principles on how to deal with our enemies.

This week's portion has just such an episode. Sh'chem seduced Yaakov's daughter Dina and raped her. Then he fell in love with her, tries to make up with her and wants to marry her. He asks his father to negotiate with Yaakov for her hand in marriage. The verse tells us that Yaakov remained silent when he heard what had happened to his daughter (34:5), and his sons seethed with anger. They would not tolerate such an act (34:7). Shimon and Levi answered Sh'chem and Chamor with an ulterior motive B'MIRMA (34:13). They said they would make a pact with them and give them their daughters as wives and vica versa if the men of Sh'chem would undergo circumcision. The village of Sh'chem thought this was fair and they agreed. On the third day after the circumcision, when the people were in agony, Shimon and Levi went to the city and killed every male and redeemed their sister Dina.

The episode raises many questions. To our eyes, Shimon and Levi's actions seem very brutal and undermine the trust of the inhabitants of Sh'chem. Were they justified? And what about Yaakov? How could he let such a thing happen to his daughter? How could he agree to this pact of intermarriage and what was his opinion towards the actions of the brothers? It seems that Yaakov at the outset believed that the inhabitants of Sh'chem would never agree to such conditions and then he and his sons would be able to take Dina back. The Rambam (Hilchot Melakhim 9:14) states that since the citizens didn't penalize Sh'chem, they all were considered accomplices and hence were deserving death.

At first glance it looks like Shimon and Levi react emotionally, whereas Yaakov keeps the international safety of the family at the fore (34:30). 'You have gotten me in trouble, giving me a bad reputation among the Canaanites and Perizites who live in the land. I have a small number of men. They can band together and attack me, and my family and I will be wiped out.' This is the attitude of the Jew from the galut - keep a low profile, don't make waves and that way we will be safe and survive.

Shimon and Levi have a different opinion - only a strong response will allow the Jewish nation to protect their moral standing amongst the nations. In this case they were right, as the verse relates (35:5), "The terror of G-d was felt in all the cities around them, and they did not pursue Yaakov's sons." But in the portion of VAYCHI, Yaakov, on his deathbed curses the excessive passion that they used, ARUR APAM, but he blesses the motive and spirit which lay behind it. He says that political and military decision powers should not be put into their hands, but their strong spirit, always conscious of their own worth and Israel's lofty destiny, should come into contact with every sphere of the whole nation, actively imparting and teaching its life-giving, sustaining and saving effect. The same sword that we see Levi using here against an external foe to rescue the honor of his sister, we see him wielding against his brethren, during the sin of the golden calf, for which he was rewarded (Hirsch).

May our current leaders learn how to hold their heads high, learn how to stick up for our way of life and do it with the right measure of violence when needed.

WISDOM & WIT

by Shmuel Himelstein

R' Menachem Mendel of Kotzk was once asked, "It states in Avos 1:10 that one should hate the rabbinate. That means that no person should become a rav. If that is the case, who will serve as the spiritual guides of the Jewish people?"

"We need to be specific here," replied R' Menachem Mendel. "There is a great deal of good for a rav to do as the leader of his community, and that is something that every rav should love. What he should hate is all the trappings of the rabbinate - the excessive honor shown to him and the conceit which may result."

When the rabbinate of Kovno became vacant in 1849, the great Torah scholars of the city invited a number of rabbis to come for an interview. When the appointed day came, all the rabbis were asked to sit at the front of the hall. All did so, except for R' Aryeh Leib, the Rav of a small village.

Each rav was asked to deliver a Torah speech, and each demonstrated his great skill and knowledge in all the branches of the Torah. Finally, R' Aryeh Leib was called. Unlike the other Rabbis, he told the assemblage that did not have a speech prepared, because that was not the way he learned Torah. When asked what he could do, he answered: "I can learn a page of Gemara." "Fine, which page would you

like to learn?" he was asked. "That is irrelevant," he answered. A volume of Gemara was taken out and opened at random. R' Aryeh Leib then proceeded to give a shiur on that page, a shiur in which he expounded at length on a passage in Rashi which seemed unintelligible. As he explained it, everything fell into place.

When R' Aryeh Leib completed his shiur, they scholars decided unanimously that this unassuming Rav was the one for their community.

VAYISHLACH Adapted from
Unlocking the Torah Text
by Rabbi Shmuel Goldin

To Appease or Not to Appease?

Context: Yaakov adopts a subservient attitude towards Eisav both prior to and during their fateful reunion. The patriarch initiates communication with his brother, repeatedly refers to Eisav as "my lord," plies his brother with gifts, bows down to him again and again and, in general, diminishes himself before his older brother.

Questions: Was Yaakov right or wrong in assuming this subservient posture towards his brother? Should a potential enemy be met with conciliation or strength? Where does diplomacy end and self-debasement begin?

Approaches:

A. Numerous commentaries are strongly critical of Yaakov's approach to his brother. One source in the Midrash, for example, contends that Yaakov's plan

was flawed from the very outset: "Rav Huna applied the following verse: 'One who passes by and meddles in strife that is not his own can be compared to an individual who takes a dog by the ears...' God said to Yaakov: '[Eisav] was going on his way and you dispatch a delegation?'"

Rav Huna maintains that Yaakov was unnecessarily asking for trouble simply by initiating communication with Eisav. The patriarch should have quietly slipped back into the Land of Israel without alerting his brother.

Building on Rav Huna's observation, the Ramban claims that the destructive potential of Yaakov's behavior becomes tragically evident centuries later in Jewish history. During the period of the Second Temple, the Hasmonean kings of Judea repeat the patriarch's mistakes when they willingly initiate and enter into a covenant with the Roman Empire. This covenant, contends the Ramban, invites the Romans into our lives, opens the door to Roman domination of Judea and directly leads to the subsequent downfall of the Second Jewish Commonwealth and to our nation's exile from the Land of Israel.

The Ramban's remarks acquire even greater poignancy in light of the rabbinic tradition which identifies the Roman Empire as the spiritual heir to Eisav. The Talmud, Midrash and numerous other sources, including Ramban himself, often refer to Rome as "Edom," the biblical nation descended from Esav.

Another Midrashic source goes even further in its condemnation of Yaakov's behavior. Noting that, during the encounter, Yaakov refers to his brother Eisav by the title "my lord" no less than eight times, the rabbis state: "At the

moment when Yaakov referred to Eisav as 'my lord,' God proclaimed: 'You have debased yourself and called Eisav "my lord" eight times. By your life! I will establish from his descendants eight kings who will rule over their nation before even one king reigns over your children.' As the Torah states: 'And these are the kings who ruled in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the Children of Israel.'"

Finally, the Midrash HaGadol connects Yaakov's obsequious approach to his brother to a series of disastrous losses eventually experienced by the Jewish nation. "Yaakov bowed to Eisav seven times, therefore seven [cherished locations/institutions] were forcibly taken from [his children]: the Sanctuary, Gilgal, Shilo, Nov, Givon, the First Temple and the Second Temple."

These sources and others not only condemn Yaakov's behavior but see within that behavior seeds of disaster and tragedy that will affect his children across the ages.

B. At the opposite end of the spectrum are those rabbinic authorities who not only defend Yaakov's conciliatory approach to Eisav but believe that the patriarch sets a skillful example of diplomacy which we are meant to follow.

Looming large in this camp is the major historical figure Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, editor of the Mishna and leader of the Jewish people in the Holy Land during the second century C.E. Less than two centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple at the hands of the Romans, Rabbi Yehuda developed a friendship with the Roman emperor, Antoninus. The extensive Midrashic and

Talmudic record concerning this fascinating relationship includes the following interchange between Rabbi Yehuda and his secretary, Rabbi Aphen:

"Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi said to Rabbi Aphen: 'Write a letter in my name to his Majesty the Emperor Antoninus.'

"He [Rabbi Aphen] arose and wrote: 'From Yehuda the Prince to his Majesty the Emperor Antoninus...'

"Rabbi Yehuda took the letter and tore it up. He then instructed [Rabbi Aphen] to write: 'From your servant, Yehuda, to his Majesty the Emperor Antoninus...'

"He [Rabbi Aphen] objected: 'Why are you debasing your honor?'

"Rabbi Yehuda responded: 'Am I any better than my elder, Yaakov? Did not Yaakov say [to Eisav]: "Thus says your servant, Yaakov..."?'"

Using Yaakov's behavior towards Eisav as a model, Rabbi Yehuda eschewed his own personal honor in his dealings with the Roman monarch. Through such diplomacy and discretion, Rabbi Yehuda maintained good relations with the Roman authorities and was able to protect the interests of the Jewish population under Roman rule.

For his part, the S'forno underscores approval of Yaakov's behavior through a brief but telling reference to two Talmudic passages. He first cites the rabbinic observation concerning the curse pronounced by the prophet Ahiya the Shilonite: "The Lord will strike Israel as the reed is shaken in the water." This curse is preferable, claim the Talmudic Sages, to the blessing of the evil sorcerer Bil'am who prophesized that the Jews would be "as the cedars". A reed survives by bending in the wind while a cedar stands firm and is

uprooted. Yaakov's example teaches us, says the S'forno, that we must be flexible enough to bend - to humble ourselves, in order to escape the sword of Eisav's descendents.

The S'forno goes on to quote the powerful claim of Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai, the architect of Jewish survival at the time of the destruction of the Second Temple: "Had it not been for what the zealots did (responding to the Romans with resistance rather than negotiation), Jerusalem would not have been destroyed."


Finally, the Talmud itself frames the concept of diplomacy in halachic terms by stating: "It is permissible to offer false flattery to evildoers in this world." Reish Lakish traces the source of this legal ruling directly to Yaakov's behavior towards Eisav.


C. Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch adds new depth to our understanding of Yaakov's behavior towards Eisav by contrasting this behavior with Yaakov's earlier interactions with his father-in-law, Lavan.


When Yaakov confronted Lavan's deceit, the patriarch responded with strength rather than subservience. The contrasting conciliatory attitude that Yaakov now exhibits towards Eisav, says Hirsch, stems from his own sense of guilt over his taking of the birthright and the blessing from his older brother: "Better to endure corruption and injustice for twenty years (as did Yaakov at the hands of Lavan) than stand one moment before an individual who we know has been injured by our hands and who is incapable of understanding the circumstances which... might mitigate our guilt."


Yaakov can deal with the evil that Lavan represents. He has difficulty, however, confronting his own complex feelings of guilt as the reunion with Eisav approaches. Even though he may have been justified in his actions, Yaakov knows that his brother will never really understand.


ParshaPix explanations


 Silhouettes of the animals Yaakov sent as gifts to Eisav. Each animal has the number of males and females sent. The second 30 on the camel is not mentioned in the text, but is based on Rashi, that there were an equal number of males that accompanied the "nursing camels".


 The ribbon bow among the silhouettes represents the fact that the animals were a gift to Eisav.

 So too, the bullets of these ParshaPix explanations.


 And so too, the camel and donkey that flank the page numbers in the footers of these pages.


 The two ancient-looking jugs are the small vessels that Yaakov went back for after he brought his family across the YABOK river.


 Between the SOLD sign and the tree is the emblem of the World Wrestling Entertainment. It is the major company that deals with professional wrestling. We do not know if Yaakov and/or the Guardian Angel of Eisav were members, but...


 The SOLD sign over the FOR SALE sign is for the purchase of the land in the Sh'chem area by Yaakov Avinu for 100 K'sita.


 D'vora (the bee)... Rivka's nurse


 was buried under the "crying tree".


 The baby carriage is for Binyamin, the "sabara" among Yaakov's children.

 The sword was used by Shimon and Levi to avenge what happened to Dina.

 The die with six dots, for the six dots over VAYISHAKEINU. This was a former visual TTriddle. Now that you know the answer, show it to your children and guests and see if they can figure it out. Give hints as necessary.

 A soda can with a straw and a knife with a blade. Forget the can. It's the STRAW we're after. And the BLADE of the knife. KASH and LEHAV(A). As in the pasuk from the haftara that compares Beit Eisav to straw and Beit Yosef to the flame of the fire that is Beit Yaakov.

 Concerning the dots above the letters of VAYISHAKEIHU, the Midrash says that Eisav wanted to kill Yaakov, not with arrow or sword but with his mouth and teeth (and to drink his blood). He attempted to bite Yaakov's neck during the hug and "kiss" and Yaakov's neck changed to resemble a pillar of marble. There is the pillar of marble in front of the camel.

 The horned animal grazing in the ParshaPix is an addax, known in Hebrew as DISHON, also the name of one of the ALUFIM of SEI'IR.

Of course, the building of the Sukka in the PP represents Yaakov building sukkot for his flocks and naming the place where he did it Sukkot (B'reishit 33:17).

At the donkey's front feet is a picture of BELA LUGOSI (who played Dracula), a namesake of BELA, a king of Edom. BELA was also the name of a king of S'dom.

The flag in the upper-left corner is that of Yemen, known as TEIMAN in Hebrew, first named son of ELIFAZ, son of Eisav.

In the lower-left is an image of Kever Rachel - but you know that.

The kaffiya-clad, mustached actor towards the middle of the ParshaPix is Omar Sharif. Omar in the sedra is a grandson of Eisav's, a son of Elifaz, a brother of Amalek.

At the bottom of the PP, between the die and the carriage is ALVIN the mischievous, singing chipmunk. His counterpart in the sedra is ALVAN (close), grandson of SEI'IR, a CHORI whose land was taken over by Eisav and whose people were assimilated into Eisav's people, to the point that SEI'IR becomes synonymous with EDOM.

Bottom-left is 999 kilo, which is almost a metric ton, but not quite. We can say that it is not a ton, LO-TON or LOTAN, a son of SEI'IR the CHORI.

Upper-right. A quarter is a fourth (of a dollar). In Hebrew, fourth is R'VI'I, which is the name of one of the Torah notes.

It is above the word KATONTI, I have gotten small, I have been diminished. That's what Yaakov said to G-d on his way out of Eretz Yisrael, en route to Rivka's home town. Many Chumashing have an AZLA-GEIREISH above the word, but the "correct" note seems to be a R'VI'I. After Alice drank from the bottle that said Drink Me, she became very small, and might have used the same word as Yaakov had used, had she spoken Biblical Hebrew. Curious and curiouiser.

Under the Drink Me bottle is a FEZ with an L and an E on it. It stands for ELIFAZ, Eisav's son.

We'll leave the two graphic images under the FEZ as Unexplaineds and for you they are visual TTriddles.

The Puah Institute

for Fertility and Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha

How the Body Changes

Last week we discussed the relationship between advanced maternal age and fertility.

Today we will look at why age is such a significant factor in fertility - so much so that the ASRM (the American Society for Reproductive Medicine) as well as many other fertility profes-

sionals have claimed that the one major factor to explain the marked increase in fertility treatments worldwide is advanced maternal age, as women nowadays wait until they are older to get married and start a family.

When a female child is conceived, all the potential eggs that will ever develop in a woman's body exist in an undeveloped form within her ovaries. This is called the 'ovarian reserve'. When she reaches reproductive age, most of these eggs have already "died"; only a small number will ever reach maturity during her lifetime. Each month she will typically ovulate only one egg; many others might start to develop but will stop when the one lead egg develops.

Thus, over the years of reproductive capability, the ovarian reserve becomes depleted. When the ovary is empty of all potential eggs, the woman cannot become pregnant again, naturally. The exact age that this occurs depends on many different factors - family history, the number of children, the number of ovulations a woman has had - but the depletion will usually be completed sometime over the age of 40.

In addition, the eggs themselves age and may display chromosomal abnormalities. This means that not only is it more difficult to get pregnant, but there is a much greater chance of birth defects, or eggs that do not fertilize properly and therefore do not develop at all, or that miscarry.

All of these are natural factors that cannot be changed; they all contribute

to decreased fertility as a result of age.

That said, many older women still have regular cycles and seem to be perfectly healthy. Is there any way to ascertain their chances of getting pregnant? More on this next time.

Word of the Month

In last week's TT, in the article entitled, Thirty Days Hath... we referred to the number of year-types and their frequencies, in determining how often the 30th days of Marcheshvan, Kislev, and Adar Alef occur. A TTreader pointed out our faulty arithmetic in that report, so we are taking this opportunity to clarify, expand, and organize the issue of the year-types - with the following chart and explanatory notes:

Year-type	days	freq.	30M	30K	2A
פב"ח	353	5.71%			
שב"ש	355	11.80%	✓	✓	
גכ"ז	354	6.25%		✓	
זח"ג	354	18.05%		✓	
שג"פ	355	3.31%	✓	✓	
חז"ח	353	4.33%			
שז"ש	355	13.72%	✓	✓	
בח"ג	383	5.80%			✓
שג"ב	385	4.72%	✓	✓	✓
גכ"ז	384	5.26%		✓	✓
חז"ח	383	3.87%			✓
שג"פ	385	6.66%	✓	✓	✓
זח"ג	383	5.80%			✓
שז"ש	385	4.72%	✓	✓	✓

Notes:

Year-type is a three-letter code with each letter representing a different factor that determines the type of the year.

The first letter is PEI, P'suhta, a plain, 12-month year - or - MEM, M'uberet, a "pregnant" year carrying an extra month.

The second letter is for the day of the week that the year begins. BET, GIMEL, HEI, ZAYIN - for Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Shabbat - the four possible beginning days for a year, based on the LO AD"U ROSH rule.

The third letter is for the status of Marcheshvan and Kislev. KAF, K'SEDER, in which Marcheshvan has its "regular" 29 days and Kislev has its "regular" 30 days - or - CHET, CHASEIR, with both variable months having 29 days - or - SHIN, SHALEIM, with Marcheshvan and Kislev both having 30 days. Although mathematically, there would be 24 possible combinations of these three factors, in practice - because of the way the calendar calculations work out, only 14 year-types exist.

Days is the number of days in the year.

Freq. (frequency) is the percentage occurrence of each given year-type.

30M is checked if the year-type has a 30th of Marcheshvan.

30K is checked if the year-type has a 30th of Kislev.

2A is checked if the year-type has two Adars. The Adar immediately preceding Nisan always has 29 days. The first Adar, when there are two, has 30 days.

There are many additional columns that

we can add to this chart - days of Rosh Chodesh, Eiruv Tavshilin days, Machar Chodesh... but not at the present time.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 540 (part three)

Lifnim MiShurat HaDin

Continuing with the sources of the concept of lifnim mishurat hadin...

The Talmud again relates an incident involving R. Papa. When three or more men eat together they must at the completion of the meal say Birkat HaMazon together, that is, one acts as the leader and the other two join him. If three men ate together and if two of them completed their meal and the third did not complete his meal, he must interrupt his meal and respond to the call of one of the other two to Birkat HaMazon with them. If one of the three finishes his meal first, the other two need not interrupt their meals to respond to his call to Bentsh, but rather he must wait for at least one other person to finish. The Talmud questions this latter statement by citing an incident when R. Papa was eating together with his son and another person. The son finished his meal first and R. Papa and the other person interrupted their meal to answer the invitation of R. Papa's son. The Talmud then explains that this incident regarding R. Papa should not be used as a precedent since he might have been acting lifnim mishurat hadin. It seems to me that the Talmud selected this last cited incident to teach us

several things, amongst which are that a father may waive his parental privileges and act with deference to his child, and this is accounted as lifnim mishurat hadin. It teaches that lifnim mishurat hadin extends to every day living, not only when a person is judged in a Beit Din of law, whether it be the Heavenly Beit Din or a Beit Din of men.

(There are several reasons given why at the conclusion of studying a tractate of the Talmud the names of R. Papa and his sons are mentioned. I submit that he and his sons are mentioned since the Talmud cites only a few cases where the concept of lifnim mishurat hadin are shown and R. Papa is mentioned in two of those cases, including the case where he showed deference to his son whose name is also included with his brothers in the concluding prayers. After having completed the study of the Talmud not only should one be aware of the principles of justice therein discussed, but one should learn to act in a manner which is lifnim mishurat hadin, with mercy and compassion.)

It should be noted that in the cases cited the Talmud does not cite any verse to show why a person should act lifnim mishurat hadin.

I have intentionally not translated the term lifnim mishurat hadin since when the reader will read a few of the cases that I have cited and will IYH cite in the next the lesson, he will translate the term his own way.

Lifnim mishurat hadin to a great extent is the dictum of Hillel when he said "What is hateful to you do not do unto your neighbor." (T. Shabbat 31a)

Parsha Points to Ponder **VAYISHLACH**

1) The Torah relates in numerous places that G-D promises that the Jewish people will be numerous and He uses the metaphors of the stars, the sand, and the dust of the ground. Why does Yaakov choose the metaphor of the sand when asking G-D to fulfill His promise and save him and his family from Eisav (32:13)?

2) Why does Yaakov ask the angel for his name after his encounter with the angel (32:30)? Why would this be useful information?

3) Why does the Torah identify Chamor as the PRINCE OF THE LAND when Sh'chem rapes Dina (34:2)? This information is not relevant to the horrific act that he did, so wouldn't it be better placed a few verses later when Chamor goes to speak to Yaakov about a possible marriage, something he could only do as prince of the land?

Suggested answers

1) The Kli Yakar explains that each of the metaphors represent the Jewish people in a different status. The stars represent the Jews when they are having great success; the dust captures our nation in a lowly state when we are completely persecuted and tread upon by the nations of the world; the sand describes a time when we are being persecuted but G-D saves us like the sand which stops the waves from crashing further into dry land. Since Yaakov was asking for salvation from the attacking Esav, the metaphor of the sand was most appropriate.

2) The S'forno answers that Yaakov understood that the angel attacked Yaakov to demonstrate that he had a spiritual weakness and since an angel's name captures its function, Yaakov hoped that knowing the angel's name would help him understand what spiritual flaw he had to improve.

3) The Ohr Hachayim explains that Sh'chem being the son of the prince relates specifically to the rape. His prominence in the area enabled him to violate Dina with no one coming to her rescue when she no doubt screamed and protested.

TTreader Feedback

We received the following email concerning the statement in last week's TT about the three-word p'sukim in the Torah...

Hi. Great Magazine as always.

Actually there are 14 three-word verses in the Torah. The list of them is here.

If you took the number from the PIYUTIM of MOTZA'EI SHABBAT, there is one missing since it is a curse/

www.xn--2hcm6cgyhbh.com/2010/07/shortest-psukim-in-torah.html

Regards, Gadi

Ed. response: Our thanks to Gadi for this e-address. TTreaders can check out the internet address - here is what you will find:

5 p'sukim in B'reishit:

25:14	וּמְשָׁמַע וְדוֹמָה וּמְשָׂא
26:6	וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק בְּגֵרָר
43:1	וַהֲרַעֵב כָּבֵד בְּאֶרֶץ
46:23	וּבְנֵי-דָן חֲשִׁים
49:18	לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קוּיָתִי ה'

3 p'sukim in Sh'mot:

1:3	יִשְׁשַׁכֵּר זְבוּלֹן וּבְנֵימָן
22:17	מְכַשְׁפָּה לֹא תַחֲפֶיָהּ
28:13	וַעֲשִׂיתָ מִשְׁבָּצוֹת זָהָב

2 (consecutive) p'sukim in Vayikra:

14:55	וּלְצִרְעַת הַבֶּגֶד וּלְבַיִת
14:56	וּלְשֵׂאת וּלְסַפְחַת וּלְבִהָרֹת

2 p'sukim in Bamidbar:

6:24	יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ
26:8	וּבְנֵי פְלוֹא אֱלִיאָב

2 p'sukim in D'varim:

28:5	בְּרוּךְ טִנְאָךָ וּמִשְׁאֲרֹתֶיךָ
28:17	אֲרוּר טִנְאָךָ וּמִשְׁאֲרֹתֶיךָ

Gadi correctly pointed out that we did get the list from the recitations and piyutim of Mota"Sh. That list also has 14, but we dropped one because it was only a partial pasuk with a parsha break in the pasuk that separated the three words. Yet they aren't a pasuk of their own.

Bottom line: Thanks to Gadi, we have the list of the 14 three-word p'sukim in the Torah. We still don't know why they became a Motza'ei Shabbat recitation, for those who do.