

Candles	SH'MOT	Havdala	next week
4:05pm	Yerushalayim	5:22pm	4:10 / 5:26
4:23pm	S'derot	5:25pm	4:28 / 5:29
4:21pm	Gush Etzion	5:22pm	4:25 / 5:27
4:21pm	Raanana	5:22pm	4:25 / 5:27
4:21pm	Beit Shemesh•RBS	5:23pm	4:26 / 5:27
4:20pm	Netanya	5:22pm	4:25 / 5:26
4:22pm	Rehovot	5:23pm	4:26 / 5:28
4:21pm	Be'er Sheva (& Otniel)	5:24pm	4:26 / 5:29
4:21pm	Modi'in• Chashmona'im	5:22pm	4:25 / 5:27
4:05pm	Petach Tikva	5:22pm	4:10 / 5:27
4:05pm	Maale Adumim	5:21pm	4:10 / 5:26
4:20pm	GINOT Shomron	5:21pm	4:24 / 5:26
4:19pm	Gush Shiloh	5:21pm	4:24 / 5:25
4:21pm	K4 & Hevron	5:23pm	4:26 / 5:27
4:20pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:22pm	4:25 / 5:26
4:22pm	Yad Binyamin	5:23pm	4:26 / 5:28
4:23pm	Ashkelon	5:25pm	4:28 / 5:29
4:06pm	Tzfat	5:18pm	4:11 / 5:23
4:19pm	Zichron Yaakov	5:21pm	4:24 / 5:26

Rabbeinu Tam Havdala - SH'MOT 5:59pm

**Ranges are 10 days, WED-FRI
15-24 Tevet • December 22-31**

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:41-5:45am
Sunrise	6:36-6:40am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:27-8:31am)	9:06-9:10am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 9:25-9:29am)	9:56-10:01am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	11:37½-11:42am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	12:08-12:12pm
Plag Mincha	3:36¾-3:42pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 4:39-4:45pm)	4:44-4:50pm

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ABCDEFGHIJLEFGHK

☞ Similar effects can stem from different causes. We often err by indiscriminate association in ascribing the wrong causes to such effects.

From "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

Yaakov's and Moshe's awareness

"And on the fourth day, ten bulls..." Who's hiding right up front?

Aharon's rod and Amram - how so?

Wave(s) = גל, גלים

Low point of a wave is a

trough = משפּל and its

high point is the crest = רָכֵס

A breaker is a מְשַׁבֵּר

Eliezer to Rivka ≈ Egyptians to Israel

consume, finish, eat, fear to speak

whatsthis?

וְתִירָאֵן הַמִּיכָלֶדֶת אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים...

בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁית בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁית...

Full p'sukim Gimatriya Match - ponder it

Names: Pinchas or Matot

764 Moshe in Tanach (724 alone, 40 prefixed)

18,000 men - who's hiding at the end?

What's in a name? YISRAEL is spelled YUD (Yitzchak, Yaakov), SIN (Sara), REISH (Rivka, Rachel), ALEF (Avraham), and LAMED (Leah). That's what's in a name!

LEAD TIDBIT cont. from front page

in a safe way, of course, thereby giving the astrologers of Par'o the erroneous notion that the destined redeemer of Israel was indeed drowned.

Now back to Miriam, who stood watch over Moshe in the basket.

Par'o's daughter found him, recognized that he was Jewish (that he should have been drowned and killed) and saved him from the harsh decree.

Miriam again, suggests to Bat Par'o that she bring someone from the Israelites to nurse the baby.

Guess who? His own mother Yocheved.

And we are taught the the Jewish women kept up the morale of their husbands (who were abandoning hope) and it is in their merit that we were redeemed.

Women, women, women. Where did they get their courage and determination from?

Let's go back a book.

Sara Imeinu sees that Yishmael is a potentially harmful influence on her son Yitzchak. She tells Avraham to send away Hagar and her son. Avraham doesn't want to. G-d tells Avraham to listen to Sara. What would have happened without Sara's insistence?

Itzchak loves Eisav and plans to give him the main blessing. Rivka has a different idea. (Some say that she was guided by some form of prophecy.) She tells Yaakov what to do and is prepared to take a possible curse on herself in order to accomplish what she knows is the

right thing. What would have happened without Rivka's bold actions?

Yaakov Avinu falls in love with Rachel. He wants only to marry her. Rachel and Leah have a different idea. And they cooperate with Lavan's deception of Yaakov to achieve the goal of building the future Nation of Israel. What would have happened without their determination?

Go back even further and see who put into motion the line that would lead to David HaMelech and his entire line until Melech HaMashi'ach. Lot's daughters. And they are joined by the pro-active Naomi and Ruth many generations later, to bring about the rightful place of IMA SHEL MALCHUT.

And from the other side? Boaz came from Yehuda. Yehuda "forgot" about Tamar - the other Mother of Royalty, until she engineered events to bring about the progenitor of the Davidic line.

Women, women, women.

Couldn't David HaMelech be born from a more "normal" lineage? Apparently not. From both the Alter Bubby's and Alter Zeidi's side, we have very unconventional origins. Mainly brought about by the bold, courageous actions of women.

You know why firstborn males fast on Erev Pesach and firstborn females do not? Because the males should have died with their Egyptian counterparts - males on their own were not worthy of being saved. The females were worthy. They have nothing to atone for. Kol HaKavod.

SH'MOT stats

13th of the 54 sedras;
1st of 11 in Sh'mot

Written on 215.2 lines in a Torah; rank: 18th

7 parshiot; 6 open, 1 closed

124 p'sukim - 15th (tied w/Emor) (Shmot: 2nd)

1763 words - 14th (Emor: 22nd) (Shmot: 2nd)

6762 letters - 16th (Emor: 23rd) (Shmot: 2nd)

Its p'sukim are above average in length
(number of words and letters). Emor was put in
for comparison - look at the differences in rank

MITZVOT

None of the 613 mitzvot are found in Sh'mot

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

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

Kohen - First Aliya

17 p'sukim - 1:1-17

[P> 1:1 (7)] Sh'mot begins with
the conjunctive VAV to link the
birth of the Jewish Nation to the
foundation laid by the Patriarchs
and "Sh'vatim" in B'reishit. The

sons of Yaakov are lovingly
enumerated again. The starting
number of "70" is repeated to
impress upon us the tremendous
growth of the people even (or
especially) under Egyptian oppres-
sion, as described in the p'sukim.

SDT: *The opening words of the sedra
and book of Shmot - V'EILEH SH'MOT -
form the initial letters of*

וְחַיִּיב אָדָם לְלַמּוֹד שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאֶחָד תְּרַגּוּם

*(V'chayav Adam Lilmod Sh'nayim Mikra
V'echad Targum) - And a person is
obligated to review the Torah text twice
and another time in translation. Baal
HaTurim extends this acronym to the next
two words. His whole statement is: "One
who learns the sedra 2+1, singing it
pleasantly, shall merit long life."*

SDT: *The final letters (sofei teivot) of the
opening words rearrange to spell the word
T'HILIM. When the People of Israel are in
trouble (a play-on-words on Egypt -
MITZRAYIM - MEITZARIM), they shall
use T'hilim to help them focus their
prayers to G-d, thereby meriting redemp-
tion.*

SDT: *Our first exile was associated with
the number 70, the number associated
with the members of Yaakov's family who
went down to Egypt. The exile following
the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash
lasted 70 years. The termina- tion of the
final exile will be associated with our
dominance over, or recognition and
respect by the "70 nations" of the world.*

[P> 1:8 (15)] A new king "who
does not know Yosef" considers
the Jewish people a threat and
takes measures to enslave and
demoralize them.

Ironically, he is the first one to refer to
us as a nation - "Am Bnei Yisrael".
Sometimes it is our enemies who
recognize who and what we really are.
Par'o called us the Jewish Nation even
before we felt that and knew that
ourselves.

The Gemara tells us of a dispute
between Rav and Shmuel as to
whether this is really a new king or the
same one with new attitudes and
decrees. This dispute impacts on a
practical halachic issue. If a person sells
something as "new" and it was old but
renewed (refurbished, renovated,
reconditioned), can the buyer claim
"false pretenses". Depends on the
definition of NEW.

He instructs the midwives to kill
the baby boys at birth to prevent
the development of his "potential
enemies" (and to kill off the
potential redeemer of the People).
They refuse to do his bidding and
save the lives of the boys.

SDT: *VA-T'CHAYENA ET HAYLA-
DIM ... and they gave life to the boys".
The Midrash says that not only did the
midwives defy Par'o by not killing the
boys, they also were responsible for
saving those that might have died during
childbirth naturally. It is natural that
some babies do not survive birth. The
midwives were concerned that if they
happened to deliver a stillborn, it might
appear as if they had carried out Par'o's
orders. Their prayers were answered and
miraculously none of the babies died.
Thus they are credited, not just with
assisting in the births, but also with giving
life to the babies.*

*There is a parallel idea concerning the
night of the Exodus. It is said that even the
normal deaths that might be expected in a
large population did not occur on the
night of the Exodus, lest it detract from the
miraculous nature of the Night. Thus, we
have then similar miracles at either end of
the Mitzrayim experience.*

SDT: *AND THEY EMBITTERED THEIR
LIVES... The trop (Torah notes,
specifically, KADMA V'AZLA) on these
words seem unduly happy for such sad
words. The GR"A points out the "happy"
result of the unusually harsh oppression,
namely, that G-d reacted to Egypt's excess
by cutting down our time in bondage to
210 years from the original prophecy of
400, by counting from the birth of
Yitzchak, rather than from Yaakov's
descent into Egypt. Understand that this is
not just an exchange of 210 years of extra
harsh conditions for 400 years of regular
slavery. Commentaries say that if we did
not get out when we did, we would not
have made it to Nation- hood.*

Levi - Second Aliya 15 p'sukim - 1:18-2:10

When Par'o sees that his goal is
not being accomplished, he orders
that all male babies (Jew &
non-Jew alike, say our sources) be
drowned. The People of Israel
miraculously flourish under these
adverse conditions.

[P> 2:1 (22)] Anram reunites
with Yocheved and a baby boy is
born. When he is no longer able to
be hidden (some say that Moshe
was three months pre- mature; that

the Egyptians knew when Yocheved was due; therefore she was able to hide him only for those 3 months), Yocheved prepares a water-proof basket and sets him on the river under the watchful eye of his sister.

Bat-Par'o finds Moshe and sends Miriam to bring a wetnurse for the crying infant who apparently will not nurse from an Egyptian breast. Miriam brings Yocheved, Moshe's mother, who takes Moshe until he is weaned. From that point on, Moshe is raised in the royal palace by Bat Par'o (Bitya). She names him Moshe.

SDT: Egyptian astrologers read in the stars that Israel's redeemer was soon to be born. They recommended the systematic drowning of all baby boys (including non-Jews, since they were not sure from what nation this redeemer would come). When Moshe was floated on the Nile, the astrologers reported to Par'o that Israel's redeemer was indeed "cast into the river". As a result of this not quite accurate reading of the stars, Par'o withdrew the decree to drown the boys. [This points to the notion that there is something to astrology, but it is a "power" granted and limited by G-d to some individuals.]

SDT: On the phrase: VAYEILECH ISH... And a man (from the house of Levi) went... the Baal HaTurim points out the only

SDT VAYAKUTZU... and Egypt was disgusted with Bnei Yisrael. This, says the Sfas Emes, is a CHESED from G-d that allowed the Jews to be isolated and thereby protected from assimilation.

other occurrence of that phrase, in Megilat Ruth: VAYEILECH ISH MI'BEIT LECHEM YEHUDA... In both cases, a redeemer of Israel results. In our case, Moshe Rabeinu. In Ruth, the progenitor of David HaMelech, his line, to Mashiach ben David. (Had the Baal HaTurim not made this point, there would have been a TTriddle on the phrase!)

"And she called his name Moshe, for from the water he was drawn."

Shlishi - Third Aliya 15 p'sukim - 2:11-25

It is amazing how many significant events are packed into the 15 p'sukim of this aliya. Moshe goes out to see what is happening with the Jewish People. He kills an Egyptian who was beating a Jew. He breaks up a fight between two Jews (Datan & Aviram). They had seen him kill the Egyptian and report him to Par'o. Moshe flees to Midyan where he saves Yitro's daughters from danger. Yitro welcomes him to his home (and family). He takes Tzipora as a wife. She gives birth to son Gershom.

SDT: Yosef was identified by the Wine Steward as a NAAR IVRI, a Jewish lad. Moshe was identified by Yitro's daughters as ISH MITZRI, an Egyptian man. Yosef was privileged to have his remains buried in the Land of Israel. Moshe did not have that same "z'chut", although it was mainly Moshe who brought Yosef's remains from Egypt to the threshold of Eretz Yisrael. Gives you pause for thought. No criticism is intended.

[P> 2:23 (3)] Meanwhile, after much time passes, the king of Egypt dies (or maybe got so sick that it was like he died) and the oppression in Egypt is greatly intensified. The People react by calling out to G-d. He too, "reacts"...

SDT: When Moshe realized that Datan and Aviram informed on him to Par'o, the Torah tells us that Moshe was afraid. Rashi says that we can understand that literally, but also on a deeper level. With Jews like Datan and Aviram, Moshe feared that the people of Israel might not merit redemption. (Note that Rashi includes the p'shat (plain) meaning as well as the additional meaning. Both apply in this case. It isn't always so that the plain meaning is retained when there is a drash that is the preferred way of understanding the text.)

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 15 p'sukim - 3:1-15

[S> 3:1 (39)] Moshe is tending Yitro's sheep. An angel appears to him from a "burning bush that is not consumed". Moshe turns aside; G-d calls to him. He tells Moshe that He has heard the people's screams and that he is going to take them out of Egypt and bring them to a Land of Milk and Honey. Moshe asks "why me?". G-d assures Moshe that He will be with him and that as proof of the Divine nature of his mission, Moshe will be bringing the people back to

"this spot" (Sinai) to "serve G-d" (and receive the Torah).

Furthermore, Moshe is to "reintroduce" G-d to the People. Moshe asks G-d what he should tell the People when he comes to them at G-d's command. G-d's answer spans nine p'sukim (3:14-22). G-d identifies Himself as EH-YEH ASHER EH-YEH (ALEF-HEI-YUD-HEI is one of the 7 names of G-d that may not be erased. It is probably the least known of the list of seven.)

This name of G-d's has the meaning: I will be with you (Bnei Yisrael) in your time of trouble (in Egypt) as I will be with you in future situations of enslavement and oppression.

SDT: Baal HaTurim points out that the letters of this unusual name of G-d total 21. The initial letters of the first three names of G-d in the Thirteen Divine Attributes are YUD, YUD, ALEF = 21 (HaShem, HaShem, Keil...). The initials of the Patriarchs are ALEF, YUD, YUD = 21. The initials of the Five Books of the Torah are BET, VAV, VAV, VAV, and ALEF = 21.

At Moshe's suggestion, so to speak, G-d agreed to be identified to the people as "just" EH-YEH, with the more comforting connotation of "I will be with you", without the implication that there will be other periods of oppression in the future (based on Rashi).

G-d gives Moshe detailed instructions as to what to say to the people. He tells Moshe how the

people will react and how Par'o will react. He tells him about the plagues and about the "friendly" reaction of the Egyptian people.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 24 p'sukim - 3:16-4:17

The prophecy at the Bush continues... G-d tells Moshe: (a) to gather the elders of Israel and tell them that G-d will be taking them out of Egypt and bringing them to the Land of Israel, (b) the elders will accompany Moshe to present the demand for release before Par'o, (c) Par'o will not acquiesce, (d) I will smite Egypt and then they will send you out, (e) the Egyptians will "lend" the People of Israel many belongings.

Moshe asks "on what basis will they believe me?" G-d gives Moshe three signs to perform for Par'o and the People.

The three signs are the staff becoming a snake and then turning back into a staff. His hand inserted into his cloak and emerging stricken with Tzoraat and then being restored. Taking water from the river and spilling it on the ground and it turns to blood.

SDT: *Rashi says that the first two signs were also reprimands to Moshe for speaking against the people and doubting in advance their potential to believe what he would tell them. This is Lashon HaRa, and both the snake and the Tzoraat are*

associated with Lashon HaRa. The third sign seems to have been specifically selected by G-d (perhaps) to be a bridge and introduction to the MAKOT (plagues), the first of which was an extension, let's say, of the third sign.

Moshe still questions G-d as to "why me"; G-d gets angry (so to speak) at Moshe for doubting His choice of leader. G-d informs Moshe that Aharon will assist in these matters. Moshe is instructed to have his special staff with him when he presents himself to the People and Par'o.

SDT: *The Staff, HaMateh. Baal HaTurim says that there is/was a scribal custom to put Torah crowns on the TET in the word THE STAFF. This, to hint to the fact that Moshe was the ninth (TET=9) righteous individual who had the miraculous staff in hand. (Pirkei Avot tells us that the Staff was one of the items created in the instant between the Six Days of Creation and the first Shabbat B'reishit.) The previous eight are: Adam, Chanoch, No'ach, Shem, Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yosef.*

The Midrash says that Moshe had many names: Yered, Chever, Y'kuti'el, Avigdor, Avi-Socho, Avi-Zanu'ach, Tovia, Heiman, Sh'maya. The Midrash further tells us that of all his names, he is only called Moshe - even by G-d - to give honor to the acts of kindness of the one who found him and saved him from the water - Bat Par'o, the future Bitya (not Batya).

Rashi says that Moshe's experience at the Burning Bush and his communication with G-d there lasted for SEVEN DAYS! All during that time,

G-d was trying (so to speak) to convince Moshe to undertake his mission.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 14 p'sukim - 4:18-31

[P> 4:18 (9)] Moshe returns to Yitro and tells him that he must go to his brethren. Yitro sends Moshe on his way. G-d tells Moshe that it is safe for him to do so. Moshe takes his wife and sons and returns to Egypt. G-d reminds Moshe about the signs he is to use before Par'o, that Par'o will not listen, and that he (Moshe) is to say to Par'o that if he does not release the People, G-d will kill his firstborn. (Thus the last Plague was really the first warning to Par'o. All the other Plagues served their purposes, but all pointed to Makat B'chorot.)

On the way, Tzipora circumcises her son. Commentaries explain that Moshe had neither circumcised his son Eliezer because of the danger in traveling when recently circumcised, nor did he postpone his return to Egypt, which would have been in defiance of G-d's command. It seems that he was in error in not having circumcised him, hence his life was in jeopardy until Tzipora did the circumcision.

A question that arises from this episode concerns the acceptability of a female circumcising. Commentaries solve this problem in different ways.

[P> 4:27 (29)] G-d tells Aharon to greet Moshe. Moshe tells Aharon all that has happened. They gather the elders and Aharon tells them what will occur. The People believe what they hear and bow to G-d.

SDT: *Rashi says that the donkey that Moshe used to bring his family to Mitzrayim was the same one that Avraham took to the Akeida and the one that the Mashiach will ride upon. Why not a regular donkey? To tell us that these monumental events were not haphazard, but rather specially prepared parts of G-d's master plan for the world.*

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya 6 p'sukim - 50:21-26

"And then, Moshe & Aharon go" to Par'o and say to him "Thus says G-d: Let my People go..."

SDT: *Notice that the elders are not mentioned. Rashi tells us that one-by-one, the elders "disappeared" (in fear of Par'o) as the entourage was going to Par'o, until only Moshe and Aharon were left. Because of this, it was to be this way at Sinai also. The elders were left at the foot of the mountain and Aharon and Moshe ascended. (Then Aharon stopped and Moshe proceeded to the top.)*

Par'o refuses, questioning who this G-d of Israel is. He then increases the burden on the People (who obviously have too much free time because they ask for a 3-day release) by requiring them to also collect the straw for the raw materials of the bricks they have to

make. The leaders of the People bear the brunt of the new edicts and complain to Par'o. Par'o blames Moshe; the People react with anger and disappointment (excusable under their circumstances). Moshe tells G-d that his efforts were counter-productive. G-d says that NOW you (Moshe) will see what G-d will do to Par'o...

Maftir is the last 3 p'sukim.

Haftara 23 p'sukim Yeshayahu 27:6-28:13, 29:22-23

As the sedra tells of the family of Yaakov in exile, so does the prophet tell of the exiles of the People of Israel. The sedra contains G-d's prophecy to Moshe Rabeinu at the Burning Bush, of the redemption of Israel, the subsequent Standing at Sinai, and the entrance into the Land flowing with Milk and Honey. The Haftara contains the prophecy that there will come a day when the Great Shofar will sound, and the exiles will come from their places of dispersion, and they will come to serve HaShem and bow to Him in Jerusalem. The sedra speaks of the First Redemption; the haftara of the Complete Redemption.

Interesting... EIDOT MIZRACH read a different haftara for Parshat Sh'mot - the first perek of Yirmiyahu, which is the first of the three Haftarot of Calamities which are read between

Shiva Asar b'Tamuz and Tish'a b'Av. Notice how the S'fardim went in the direction of matching the enslavement in Egypt with the prophecies of destruction, whereas the Ashkenazim went in the direction of Geula to Geula.

Train of thought...

Ashkenazim have a custom not to eat roasted meat at the Seder, in commemoration of the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash. S'faradim have a custom to eat roast meat at the Seder, in commemorate the Beit HaMikdash. Opposite ways to mark the opposite aspects of the Mikdash - its standing and its destruction. The perspectives switched from the haftara of Sh'mot to the Seder meal. Just an observation.

Divrei Menachem

What's in a name? Our Parsha, Sh'mot, as its names suggests, has something to tell us about the importance of names and name changes. True, we already encountered an additional letter in Avraham's name and a switch in letters in Sara's, the special significance attached to each of the names of the tribes, Yaakov "upgraded" to Yisrael, and Yosef accredited with an Egyptian name.

But now we will learn that there are two G-d-fearing Hebrew midwives who are introduced in the Torah by their Egyptian names, namely, Shifra and Pu'ah. They rebelled against Par'o's edict to kill the Jewish males at birth. The Midrash tells us that they were, in fact, Yocheved and Miriam, the mother and sister of Moshe. The Rebbe of Minov remarked that Par'o insisted (unsuccessfully) on these foreign designations so that the women's names would draw them closer to the Egyptian lifestyle and values.

Ironically, it was the daughter of the same Par'o (and as such she is initially presented) who takes pity on the baby Moshe. In appreciation, as it were, this princess is referred to in the book of Divrei HaYamim by the Hebrew name Bitya - the daughter of Hashem, just as she named Hashem's precious son, Moshe, so Hashem bestowed an elevated name upon her (Avnei Ezel).

Indeed, in an age where so many change their names, we might well continue to ask, "What's in a name?"

VEBBE REBBE

[The following is adapted from a Din Torah at Eretz Hemdah's Beit Din with the litigants' permission. We are sharing only portions of the deliberations.]

QUESTION: *The Cohens were making aliya from the US. In order to make it more financially feasible to send a lift in a large container (where one saves money if he can come close to filling it) which they could not fill with their own items, they decided to rent space to acquaintances. The Levis (also olim) were among those who accepted the offer and ended up paying \$1500 (out of a total of app. \$10,000) for their things. They were told that in the professional packing process, their items (especially breakables) would take up much more room than one would expect. The Levis brought over many household items in marked boxes, where they were placed in a corner of the Cohens' basement. The Levis took up the Cohens' offer to insure part of their goods, but underpriced the value for insurance because they heard that the companies do not always pay. The Levis had no contact with the companies involved in the shipping; everything was in the Cohens' name. The movers did not pack all of the breakables with bubble wrap and did not separate different families' items as instructed. As a result, several of the Levis' things were broken, and they had to return to the Cohens' Israel home several times to look for things. Although the Cohens sent claim sheets to insurance three times, the insurance evaded dealing with it and the Cohens have given up. The Levis wants the Cohens to pay*

for the lost and broken items. They also want a refund of part of the shipping fee due to the poor service they received and the fact that their items were not packed in the bulky way that justified the \$1500 fee. How much, if at all, should the Cohens pay?

ANSWER: The Cohens are shomrei sachar (paid watchmen) for the shipment, even if they only charged per space, as defrayal of costs is of value and a shomer sachar need not receive formal payment (Bava Metzia 80b).

If a shomer hands over responsibility for the items to another shomer, within expectations, shomer 1 is exempt from responsibility (Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 291:21). If shomer 2 did an insufficient job, shomer 2 has to pay (ibid. 24). There is a machloket (two opinions in Rama, ad loc.) whether, when shomer 2 has no money to pay, shomer 1 assumes responsibility to pay. Since, according to the arrangement, the Levis cannot approach the shippers or the insurance, this case seems parallel. However, when owners knew who would be serving as shomer 2, shomer 1 is not obligated if shomer 2 fails to pay (Shach, CM 291:32; see Pitchei Choshen, Shomrim 4:(44)). That is the case here. In fact, the Levis' description of why they insured as they did displays their understanding that the insurance company would be the address for such common problems. They should have raised the issue of the Cohens' responsibility if they thought they should be responsible. Both sides realized the Cohens were

obligated to do their part by filing a claim, which they seemed to have done. Thus, the Cohens are, on a certain level, exempt.

However, there are claims with some basis, that the Cohens were deficient in performing their part of the job, which includes giving the packers firm instructions how to pack, supervising the job, and filing with the insurance in a way that they would not evade payment. The gemara (Bava Metzia 42b) teaches us that even when giving responsibility over to shomer 2, how it is given over can obligate shomer 1. Even if their performance was not negligent (p'shiya) given the difficulty involved, it is far from clear that they took all of the precautions a shomer sachar is obligated in. Since in any case, a shomer has to, in theory, swear that he fulfilled his obligation, and in lieu of oaths in our times a compromise is enforced instead, we obligate the Cohens to pay [a certain amount - the calculation is beyond our scope, as are other elements of the analysis].

"ETHICAL ISSUES IN THE CORPORATION [3]"

A "Challenges of Money" article by Dr. Meir Tamari

Financial reports are meant to provide shareholders, investors, government authorities and creditors with a true picture of the corporation's business activities, its assets and its liabilities. The reliability and usefulness of such reports depends on the degree of full

disclosure, the veracity of that disclosure and the ease with which it is available. Such disclosure enables all concerned to conduct their relationships with the corporation in a manner most beneficial to them. As we have seen in many scandals and stock-market collapses, imaginative book-keeping and creative reporting falsify the data, causing losses and damages to many, including often innocent and trusting people. Such biased, misleading or false reporting becomes a defect in the article being traded, in this case the corporation, and is therefore in contradiction of the halakhic demand for full disclosure: "One is not permitted to cover a defect in the goods sold. If there is a defect, then the seller is obligated to make this known" (Choshen Mishpat 228:6).

In all countries, most corporations are not listed on a stock exchange but rather are closely held, with a few shareholders often family related. In such corporations it is difficult, often impossible, to separate the affairs of the corporation from the personal financial interests of the shareholder; for that reason creditors will not lend without a personal guarantee from the major shareholder. We are concerned here with the moral problems with regard to the allocation of profits in such corporations. Such firms distribute their profits either completely or predominately in the form of personal expenses, salaries and perks, rather than in the form of dividends. This is because of double taxation practiced in most countries, whereby the corpora-

tion pays income tax on its pre-distribution profits and the shareholder pays personal income tax on dividends from the same profits. The non-dividend forms of profit distribution are usually considered tax deductible and the recipient is liable for personal tax; however, this tax has been shown to be extremely difficult to collect. This tax problem is not restricted to corporations and will be dealt with elsewhere. However, since only part of the salaries, perks, expenses etc. are not in fact connected with the firm's functioning, they actually represent a distribution of profits in which those shareholders who are not active in the daily management of the firm, are unable to enjoy. This places a halakhic obligation on the active ones, to divulge the amount and nature of such distribution to the others.

Non-disclosure of the element of profits distribution of the active shareholders would seem to be g'neivat da'at (deception), if not geneiva mamash (actual monetary theft), similar to non-disclosure of defects or shortcomings in the quality of goods, false packaging, or advertising. This non-dividend form of distribution disguises the asset value of the corporation which is always affected by the profit-stream or earning power of the corporation. Since shareholders are in effect, buyers of the corporation, such distortion would seem to be a transgression similar to those protecting all other buyers in the market-place.

The separation of ownership from management and effective control may

also involve the active shareholders in the injunction against *ona'a* in which Rambam includes pressuring someone to sell or to act against his will. The shareholders active in daily management usually own more shares but, always have a greater degree of control, which enables them to exert great pressure on the others to agree to actions against their will and often not to their advantage. This issue of coercion exists in the corporation listed on a stock-exchange, in the person of the directors or controlling shareholder who are able to dictate policy to captive minority shareholders; its common form, but by no means the only one, is exaggerated managerial remuneration. In quoted corporations, in contrast to closely-held ones, this problem is well known and easier to control through legislation and public supervision.

Perhaps the following real life example may serve to highlight the ethical issues involved in corporate financial reporting in the closely held private corporation. A father wanted to bequeath his corporation equally to his four children, only two of whom were active in management. It was pointed out to him that he would actually be harming the other two. The active ones would draw their profits in non-dividend forms leaving less to be divided equally. Furthermore, over the years, the active ones would be at liberty to act solely in their own selfish interests thereby possibly disinheriting the others of their share of his bequest.

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

SH'MOT

Open Eyes, and an Open Heart

I was always taught of the advantage of simplicity in language. My favorite author during my adolescence was Ernest Hemingway, and I remember reading comments that he made criticizing those who used multi-syllable words when shorter words would suffice.

Then, I went to graduate school in psychology and learned quite the opposite lesson. There I learned that if one could invent a word with multiple syllables to describe a simple phenomenon, he could gain credibility as an expert, even without real expertise.

Take, for example, a word with seven syllables: compartmentalization. Sounds impressive, but what does it mean? The dictionary that I consulted offers two meanings. One, "the act of distributing things into classes or categories of the same type." A simple definition, but one having nothing to do with psychology. The second dictionary definition that I discovered is "a mild state of dissociation." Of course, to understand this definition, one must know that dissociation is a psychological process by which one splits two sets of perceptions or emotions into two separate inner worlds so that one does not affect the other.

All of us practice compartmentalization in this sense when we turn on the television, see some news events

that are especially troubling to us and simply turn off the TV. Many of us did this recently when we witnessed the terrible forest fires in northern Israel and the horrible deaths of more than forty people. Watching the agony of the families whose loved ones were consumed by that fire was, for many of us, too much to bear. And so, perhaps after a minute or so, we turned off the TV to avoid being confronted with such human suffering.

This might be normal human behavior, and perhaps even necessary to avoid being constantly overwhelmed with negative emotions. But it is not the behavior of a true leader. And it was not the behavior of Moshe in this week's Torah portion, *Sh'mot*.

Rather, "...he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens..." (*Sh'mot* 2:11). Upon which Rashi comments, "He gave his eyes and his heart [in order] to be troubled about them". Not only did he not avoid the scene of Jewish suffering, but he made sure that he beheld it ('his eyes'), and that it affected him emotionally ('his heart').

Two very important, albeit very different, early 20th century commentators have much to say about our verse. Rabbi Joseph Hertz, in his sadly neglected commentary, writes, "He went out to his brethren. In later ages it must alas be said of many a son of Israel who had become great, that he went away from his brethren." How well this former chief rabbi of the British Commonwealth captures the notion of compartmentalization.

It is the process by which we "look away" from upsetting scenes, rather than carefully looking "at them".

Rabbi Simcha Zissel Ziv, known as the "Alter" (old man) of Kelm devotes the opening sermon of his remarkable collection of ethical discourses to our verse and to the criticism of the psychological process which we call "compartmentalization".

The "Alter" points out that Moshe was not content simply to hear about the suffering of his brothers while he sat comfortably in the palace. Rather he "went out" to see for himself. Moshe wanted to witness the suffering of his brothers personally. Moshe knew the secret of the power of direct sensory perception. Moshe wanted to have the image of the burdens of slavery impressed upon his mind's eye.

For the "Alter", who was one of the earliest leaders of the Mussar movement, ethical behavior demands the use of imagery to arouse emotions and thus stimulate proper ethical behavior. Moshe used his eyes to inspire his heart to motivate his actions. Vision, feeling, behavior: the three essential components of the truly ethical personality.

The lesson for all of us here is that to be a truly ethical person, one must invest in the effort of becoming familiar with the plight of others. One must avoid the temptation of "looking away". From a psychological perspective, compartmentalization might be a healthy defense

mechanism, necessary to avoid being flooded by images of evil. From an ethical perspective, on the other hand, compartmentalization is a seven-syllable word which, in simple terms, means avoidance of one's responsibilities to another.

How instructive is the Hasidic tale of the Rabbi who met the village drunkard in the town square. The drunkard asked him, "Rabbi, do you love me?" To which the rabbi replied, "Of course I love you. I love all Jews!"

The drunkard then responded, "So tell me then, Rabbi. What hurts me?" The rabbi had no answer, and so the drunkard exclaimed, "If you truly loved me, you would know what hurts me."

To know what hurts, we must be sure to open our eyes and hearts to see and feel the pain. □

SH'MOT Adapted from
Unlocking the Torah Text
by **Rabbi Shmuel Goldin**

A Blueprint for Persecution

Context: The Israelites, initially welcomed to Egypt at the end of the patriarchal era, experience a precipitous change of fortune after the death of Yosef and his generation.

A "new" Egyptian king initiates a campaign of persecution against the descendants of Yaakov, transforming them into a subgroup of slaves within the Egyptian population.

Questions: Why does the Torah

dedicate 22 sentences of text to a detailed, step-by-step description of the enslavement of the Israelites at the hands of the Egyptians?

What eternal lessons can be gleaned from this tragic narrative?

Approaches:

A. The enslavement of the Israelites is not Pharaoh's endgame. While the king clearly intends to benefit from the forced labor the Hebrew slaves will provide, he will ultimately be satisfied with nothing less than this fledgling people's total destruction. Genocide, however, even when mandated by a mighty Pharaoh, cannot be perpetrated in a vacuum.

A careful reading of the text, therefore, reveals a frighteningly prescient reality. The first phase of our nation's birth is shaped by a painful pattern. We become the targets of a blueprint for persecution which, tragically, will be reused over and over again during the ensuing centuries.

B. The purpose of Pharaoh's malicious plan is twofold. On the one hand, as the Ramban explains:

"Pharaoh and his advisers could not attack [the Israelites] by the sword. An unprovoked attack upon a people that had originally come to Egypt at the invitation of the first king would be viewed as great treachery... The [Egyptian] populace would not have allowed such an abomination."

Instead, Pharaoh realizes, the stage must first be set. A painstaking, detailed plan must be set in motion that will render the destruction of the Israelites "acceptable" to their Egyptian neighbors.

On the other hand, Pharaoh must "prepare" the victims, as well. Slowly and inexorably robbed of their confidence, of any vestige of self-worth, the Israelites will be transformed into unwitting

participants in their own demise. We watch with horrible fascination as the stages of this plan unfold - details that, centuries later, are much too familiar for comfort.

Stage 1: Propaganda

"And a new king rose up over Egypt who did not know Yosef. And he said to his nation: 'Behold the nation, the children of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we. Come let us be wise to them, lest they become numerous and it will be that if war occurs, they will join our enemies and wage war against us and go up from the land.'"

Persecution, the Torah testifies, inevitably begins with propaganda, with the verbal isolation of a people from surrounding society.

Clearly Pharaoh's description of the Israelites as "more numerous and stronger" than the Egyptians is patently false, even ludicrous. And yet the king knows that lies, boldly spoken, will be readily accepted by those who want to believe them.

Pharaoh's evil genius is also evident in his specific accusations against the Israelites. He consciously plays upon his own nation's envy, xenophobia and fear of a fifth column within their borders. Why should we tolerate, he asks, a dangerous separate "nation" in our own land?

Stage 2: Isolation

"And they appointed taskmasters over them in order to afflict them with their burdens and they built storage cities for Pharaoh, Pitom and Raamses."

Pharaoh's edicts move to the next level with the designation of taskmasters and projects specific to the Israelites. These people are different, the Egyptian king proclaims through these actions, and the

problems they create require special treatment.

The physical and psychological isolation of the Israelites is now complete.

Stage 3: Degradation

"And the Egyptians enslaved the children of Israel with crushing harshness (b'farech)."

When the Israelites respond to Pharaoh's initial decrees with resilience, the Egyptians ratchet the process up to the next level.

The biblical term **B'FARECH** potentially conveys, according to the commentaries, varied aspects of this new level of persecution:

Rashi leads a number of scholars who, choosing the path of p'shat (the straightforward explanation of the text), explain that the term refers to labor that crushes and breaks the body. Such toil has no real purpose beyond the physical torment and psychological degradation inflicted upon the laborers.

One particularly telling Talmudic source sees the word PARECH as a consolidation of the two Hebrew words PEH (mouth) and RACH (soft). The Egyptians beguiled the Israelites with soft, enticing speech. Through lies and false promises of security, the taskmasters induced the slaves to cooperate in their own enslavement.

Stage 4: Murder

"And the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives... 'When you deliver the Hebrew women, you shall see on the birthing stool, if it is a son you are to kill him, and if it is a daughter, she is to live.'

"And the midwives feared God and they did not do as the king of Egypt spoke to them....

"And Pharaoh commanded his entire people, saying: 'Every son that is born -

into the river you shall throw him! And every daughter - you shall keep alive!"

Murder, particularly when carried out in the public arena, must be perpetrated slowly and cautiously. Pharaoh, therefore, opens the final devastating stages of his design against the Israelites in a manner that not only attacks the weakest among them but that can be carried out secretly. He commands the Hebrew midwives to kill the male infants in such a way that "even their mothers themselves will remain unaware."

When this subterfuge is thwarted by the righteous midwives, Pharaoh finally proclaims his true intentions and commands that all male infants be cast into the Nile. Even at this point, however, as the king's malicious plan moves into the open, Pharaoh ingeniously shields himself from blame. Ramban notes that Pharaoh couches this final, devastating edict in language that distances the murder from the official seat of government. The king does not command his army or his officers to carry out this terrible act. Instead, he instructs his "entire people" to murder the Hebrew infants. In retrospect, the king will be able to protest, What do you want from me? This was not an official action. This was a spontaneous, popular pogrom.

Points to Ponder

The uncanny ability of the Torah text to speak across the centuries is nowhere more clearly - nor more frighteningly - evident than in its description of the enslavement of the Israelites at the hands of the Egyptians. Here, openly rooted at the dawn of our history, are the very methods used against us and other innocent victims, to such devastating effect, by enemies in every era, including our own. ©

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*

Chazal relate (Brachot) that every Jew deep down in the essence of his neshama wants to do G-d's will, but the yetzer hara and subjugation to the nations of the world, at times, prevent him from doing so. Hence, the land of Egypt where the yetzer hara was most intense and where the subjugation of the Jewish people was in force, prevented the Jews from expressing their true essence and expanding their horizons, and hence was a constricting and constraining, "narrow" atmosphere.

However, in Eretz Yisrael, the holy and pure land, a Jew can choose to utilize this atmosphere to free himself from the yetzer hara. Likewise, in Eretz Yisrael, we can be free of subjugation to the nations of the world. Hence, we can be wide opened, unobstructed and unconstrained in expressing our true essence by doing G-d's will.

Hashem revealed to Moshe this spiritual aspect of Eretz Yisrael as well as its physical attributes of being a land flowing with milk and honey.

However, the Jewish people were not yet on the level to appreciate this lofty spiritual aspect of Eretz Yisrael. Hence, they were to be informed only of its physical attribute of being an ERETZ ZAVAT CHALAV UDVASH and hopefully the desire for the land for purely physical reasons would in time

motivate them to a recognition of its spiritual attributes also. **MITOCH SHELO LISHMA BA LISHMA.**

Rabbi Zev Leff, Moshav Matityahu

Super-silent ALEF A review. ALEF is a silent letter. With a vowel under it, so the ALEF contributes to the pronunciation of the word. At the end of a word, the ALEF is there, but does not influence the sound of the word. So too when it is in the middle of a word and has no vowel under it. Example in Sh'mot: And the midwives feared G-d... וַיִּירָאוּ This word is read vati-RE-na, with no contribution from the ALEF, and NOT vati-RE-na. In this case, the meaning of the word changes from "fear" to "seeing", so the correct pronunciation is extra-important. Furthermore, (sometimes) when the letter before a voweled ALEF does not have its own vowel, it "steals" the vowel from the ALEF. For example, the Reuvenites are הַרְאוּבֵינִי ha-ru- vei-NI, not r'uveini. The REISH takes the SHURUK away from the ALEF.

Praying with Passion

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

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**P'sukei d'Zimra:
Hodu** The Eternal Nation

זָרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדוּ, בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו...
זָכְרוּ לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ... וַיַּעֲמִידָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב

לְחַק, לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם... לֹא הִנִּיחַ
לְאִישׁ לְעַשְׂקָם, וַיִּזְכֹּחַ עֲלֵיהֶם מְלָכִים. אֶל
תִּגְעוּ בְּמִשְׁחֵי...
...תגועו במשיחי...

Meaning: translation...

O seed of Israel, His servant, O children of Yaakov, His chosen ones... Remember His covenant forever... Then He established it for Yaakov as a statute, for Israel as an everlasting covenant... He let no man rob them, and He rebuked kings for their sake: 'Dare not touch My anointed ones...

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

Hashem's Promise of Protection

We thank G-d for protecting the Jewish nation by invoking Hashem's everlasting covenant and His warning, "Dare not touch My anointed ones."

Insight: Deeper meanings...

The Miracle of Jewish Survival

In 1899, the essayist Mark Twain wrote of his objective observations of a unique phenomenon in the history of the world - the enduring strength of the Jewish people. This was, of course, even before the Holocaust brought the miracle of survival to a whole new level.

"...Great and influential powers such as Egypt and Persia rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded and passed away; the Greeks and the Romans followed, and made their impact, and they are gone; others have held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they are no longer of import.

“The Jew has seen them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. Many have wondered, what is the secret of his immortality?”

The secret is G-d's promise to Avraham: “And I will make of you a great nation; I will bless you, and make your name great ...”

The realization of this promise throughout history is clear proof of Hashem's Divine guidance. Rabbi Chatzkel Levenstein would often refer to this miracle as it was expressed by Rav Yaakov Emden in the introduction to his siddur:

“One who thinks about the fact that we [the Jewish People] are standing in exile and cling to God between nations who persecute us and cause us trouble, recognizes the great wonder that we have survived since the destruction of the Holy Temple until today. To me, this miracle is greater than all miracles and wonders that God performed in Egypt and when He redeemed us from servitude and split the Reed Sea and all the other miracles.”

Each episode of Jewish history features dramatic tales of Divine intervention, steadfast emunah and moral courage that have foiled every effort to silence the Torah's voice in the world. Rather than being nullified by the cultures of exile, Jews have planted Torah wherever they have dwelled. Often, after a period of persecution, one can see clearly how Hashem had laid the groundwork for survival decades or centuries before the threat arose.

The vast Torah world that has flourished in America (and Israel - ed.) is but one more dramatic chapter in the miraculous saga of the Jewish People. In little more than half a century after near-total devastation, we can witness with our own eyes a rebirth that defies all odds and expectations. God's Hand is there, apparent as daylight, to anyone who wishes to see it.

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Connections to Eternity

Miriam lights the candles on Friday night for the first time. It's her first Shabbos as a married woman. She adds her lights to those of her mother, who has been lighting for the past 25 years, following in the footsteps of Miriam's grandmother, her great-grandmother, and so forth, in an unbroken chain spanning the centuries. She says the same blessing they said. She sighs the same sigh of contentment, reaches for her siddur and sings the same words of “Lecha Dodi,” that have traveled intact from the Tzfat of the 16th century through the Europe of her ancestors, into her own American suburban home. She flashes for a moment on the future - as yet a far-off vision - in which her own daughter will light her own, first Shabbos candles.

There will always be Shabbat in the world, because there will always be Jews. G-d promises it will always be so. Connected to the Eternal through Torah and mitzvos, it is inevitable that the Jewish people, too, will endure forever.

Try this: Imagine being immortal. Even though you could be injured, you would always recover and live on. Now imagine that

the key to your immortality was to follow the directions of a wise man who knew the secret of eternal life... How careful you would be to follow his advice. How grateful you would be that he picked you for this rare privilege. How brave you would be in the face of danger, knowing that you will always survive. That is the Jewish people and our relationship with G-d, and that is what we give thanks for in these tefillot.

Gimatriya Matches

Two or more words, phrases, partial p'sukim, or whole p'sukim that share the same numeric value "tempt" us to express some significance between or among the matching items. Most often we cannot find anything of significance (that doesn't mean there is no significance), but sometimes a "nice" idea presents itself (which doesn't mean that there is significance to the "find", but maybe...

Here is an example of the latter - a Gimatriya which confirms a meaningful concept.

(It is better to let gimatriya be the "icing on the cake" rather than trying to bake the cake itself with just numeric value.)

"And Yosef and his brothers and that whole generation died out." (Sh'mot 1:6)

וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף וְכָל-אֶזְרָיו וְכָל-הַדּוֹר הַהוּא:

We believe, however, that righteous people continue to live beyond this world. One of the p'sukim that teaches us this is D'varim 4:4, וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבָקִים

כִּי אִתְּיִכֶם יָיִם כָּלְכֶם הַיּוֹם:

But you who held fast to the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day. Same Gimatriya.

Portion from the Portion

TAXES

The last days of 2010 are here - people finishing up their book keeping for this fiscal year to make sure everything is in order for the tax man.

An early reference to taxes is found in this week's portion. In describing the new Par'o's fear of the Israelites who were "too numerous and too mighty" and who might therefore join Egypt's enemies during a possible war, we see a progression of edicts enacted by Par'o. The first stage in Par'o's plan was placing SAREI MISIM - tax officers over the Israelites. What exactly were these tax officers supposed to do? What kind of tax were they supposed to collect?

The Magid D'varav L'Yaakov, Rabbi Yisrael Yaakov Algazi says that the purpose of this tax was L'MAAN ANOTO... He reads the word INU'I from the root word ANI - to become poor. This seems to be referring to a monetary tax.

Rashi on the other hand says this was a tax of physical labor - building the cities of Pitom and Raamses. The Ramban, agrees with Rashi saying it was one of the stages in Par'o's "final solution" plot. We see this kind of tax MAS OVED, in other places in the Tanach, such as Shmuel's description

to the nation of the services they will have to provide for the king if they choose to have one (Shmuel Alef 8:11-13). He, of course, was trying to dissuade them from having a king. Achashverosh also instituted a tax on his populace (Esther 10:1). Conquering nations would usually institute a laborers tax (Yehoshua 16:10, Melachim Alef 19:21). And King Solomon instituted a tax of 30,000 workers to go to Lebanon to cut trees in order to build the Beit HaMikdash (Melachim Alef 5:27-28).

The difference between Solomon's tax and Par'o's was that in the case of Solomon there were a limited amount of workers who worked a limited amount of time while in Egypt all the Israelites were forced to work an unlimited amount of time AVODAT PARECH.

Universally, tax men are despised - as we read in the translation of the Targum: VAYASIMU ALEIHEM SAREI MISIM - UMANI'U ALEIHON SHILTONIN MAVASHIN, he put people over them who would do evil. There are discussions in the Talmud (Baba Kama 113.) referring to tax collectors as bad and as thieves (Shavuot 39a) if they take too much money. This also raises the question (Sanhedrin 25b) whether tax collectors may be used as witnesses (for any case) in a Beit Din if they are thought of as robbers.



The purpose of Par'o's taxes was not to improve the roads or the health system in Egypt but was rather L'MAAN ANOTO - just in order to afflict the Jews. It wasn't so much that Par'o needed their money or their

work - he just wanted to afflict them. Nowadays we may also feel afflicted by the tax man. As the saying goes, "there are only two things one can not escape - death and taxes." But living in a somewhat democratic country we still have the freedom to get a good accountant to help us only pay what taxes we must, and we can try to elect people who we feel will use our tax money properly.











If you haven't already, there might still be time to give that donation you have been carrying around with you for weeks and still get a receipt to include in your 2010 taxes.

For more on this topic, see Yaakov Potzvosky's article edited by Aviad Hacohen and Michael Vigoda www.daat.ac.il/mishpat-ivri/skirot/58-2.htm









ParshaPix explanations

-  Pyramids under a hot sun = descent into Egypt... and are a symbol of slave labor, both ours and other enslaved people.
-  Lettuce is MAROR from the Seder table. It relates to the pasuk which describes the Egyptian's embittering the lives of Bnei Yisrael. Lettuce, explains the Talmud Yerushalmi, is a kind of vegetable that is tasty when picked ripe. The longer it stays in the ground, the more bitter it becomes. That is what happened to the people of Israel. They started out in Egypt with a good,


sweet life. The longer they stayed in the "ground", the more bitter their lives became. Lettuce, therefore, is the preferred choice of vegetable. (The Mishna lists five different vegetables that qualify for the mitzva of Maror; CHASA is number one on the list.)


-  That same pasuk continues to specify the work with bricks (see the trowel and bricks)
-  and the field work (the planting of the seedling).
-  Combining: The ball and chain represent enslavement
-  Davka Graphics of baby Moshe floating on the Nile with sister Miriam watching over him
-  Another Davka Graphics of Moshe at the Bush. Point the sheep out to your children and ask them if they know any of the stories about sheep. Don't restrict the discussion to Moshe; extend it back to the Avot.
-  See the MATEH, Moshe's staff?
-  The three signs that G-d gave Moshe to catch Paro's attention. The Staff that turned into a snake,
-  the hand that turned leprous like snow (represented by the snowman),
-  and the turning of water into blood (4 common bloodtypes: A, B, AB, O).
-  The goal of the Exodus: the land flowing with milk and honey - Parshat Sh'mot is the first of 14 times the phrase ERETZ ZAVAT

CHALAV UDVASH occurs in Tanach.

-  Letter with 57.6cm on it is a pun for Bat Par'o "sending her AMA".
-  See the "borrowed" gold and silver vessels...
-  Two hawks are NEITZIM (plural of NEITZ). spelled the same as NITZIM, what Datan and Aviram were doing when Moshe spoke to them.
-  George Bush is for the Burning Bush.
-  Above the sheep is a screen image of TURTLE GRAPHICS... (who remembers that?) Pictured is the screen turtle cursor having "drawn" a straight line. Allowing for misspellings, we find in the haftara of Sh'mot twice, the phrase: TZAV LATZAV TZAV LATZAV KAV LAKAV KAV LAKAV... TZAV (spelled TZADI-VET) is a turtle and KAV (KUF-VAV) is a line.
-  Eli Yishai and the referee combine to the taunt of Datan and Aviram to Moshe - who appointed you as SAR V'SHOFEIT.
-  Super 8 is a large chain of motels in the U.S. Here it represents the MALON (lodgings) that Moshe and family stayed at on their way from Minyan back to Egypt, where the famous emergency Brit Mila incident took place.
-  The Xed out straw is for when Par'o denied the enslaved Israelites the straw necessary to make

bricks and required them to collect their own, but without reducing the quota of bricks they were to supply.

 The shofar in the bottom right is from the haftara, a pasuk we are acquainted with from Yeshayahu, from the Rosh HaShana Musaf and from the song with these words.

 This leaves the picture in the upper-right corner of the Parsha-Pix, the solution to which finishes the following statement: This photo was taken ___ - ___

The Puah Institute

for Fertility and Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha

Ovarian Transplants and Halacha (I)

In recent years there have been a number of papers presented that report successful cases of ovarian transplants. This is a relatively new technology that seems to offer a promising option for certain select patients, while raising a number of halachic questions that we will discuss over the next few weeks. Interestingly, we will see that this is not a new discussion at all, but is rooted in a surgery that was reported to have been performed over a hundred years ago and was debated both in the medical community and in the halachic literature of the time. We will also see how recent medical discoveries may have an impact on halachic decisions regarding some of these questions.

Before we embark on the halachic

discussion let us look at the medical treatment itself.

Ovaries are organs that contain and develop all the eggs that will be produced during the reproductive lifetime of a woman. The currently-held opinion is that at the point of conception the ovary contains all the eggs that will ever develop during a woman's reproductive years. The ovarian reserve diminishes until it eventually is exhausted and the woman reaches menopause. In some rare cases, for reasons that we do not always know, some women suffer from premature ovarian failure - their ovaries cease to ovulate, behaving like the ovaries of a much older woman; this can occur at any age.

The only treatment option that we can currently offer in these cases is an egg donation from another woman. There are many who choose this alternative; for those who reject it, however, there is nothing else that can be done. This is the primary motivating factor for considering an ovarian transplant.

In the ovarian transplant procedure, the medical team involved was successfully able to remove part of an ovary from a fertile woman and transplant it, connecting it with the non-functioning ovary of the patient. The doctors observed that over time the failing ovary regenerated and started ovulating. They recorded that the signs of menopause that we discussed last time (such as a high level of follicle stimulating hormone - FSH) decreased and the recipient of the new ovary was,

for all intents and purposes, a fertile woman.

They then reported that some of these patients went on to become pregnant naturally and to give birth, a feat heralded as a medical breakthrough which offered new possibilities for women who had previously suffered from premature ovarian failure.

In our next article we will discuss some of the important limitations of this treatment.

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WISDOM & WIT
by Shmuel Himelstein

His entire life R' Naftali Amsterdam worked on his own moral improvement, in keeping with the teachings of his Rebbe, R' Yisrael Salanter and the Mussar movement. He explained this as follows: 'When a male is born, his body is imperfect and he needs a brit mila, by removing the foreskin, to perfect it. By the same token, each person's soul is imperfect. Only by removing once's bad traits does one perfect the soul.'

In the Communist drive to "rid" the Jews of their religion, many Jewish leaders were exiled to Siberia. Among these, was R' Yechezkel Abramski. Those who had been exiled were beaten mercilessly for the slightest infraction, made to wait in the freezing cold extremely long hours, and given very little to eat. Many died under this brutal regime.

Discussing that time, R' Yechezkel noted: "When I would arise each morning, I would recite the 'Modeh Ani' prayer, the prayer thanking Hashem for the new day. But I thought to myself, 'What type of day awaits me? Another day of very hard work, of beating and humiliation. Now, if I could at least have some time to study Torah ... However, I never had time then for that. What, then, was I thanking Hashem for on the new day?'"

However, when I continued saying the Modeh Ani and reached the words, 'rabbah emunatecha' - 'my faith in You is great' - I was comforted. The Communists could take everything away from me except for one thing, and that is my faith in Hashem, My Creator.

To have another day in which I could have faith in Hashem was a reason to appreciate the new day."



Warning: Contains regular serious material in addition to the light TTTriddles "stuff"

Last issue's (VAYCHI) TTTriddles:

[1] 14820+40624...

This first digit is for the book of the Torah. One is B'reishit; four is Bamidbar. The other numbers break into two two-digit numbers, representing perek and pasuk. B'reishit 48:20 and Bamidbar 6:24,25,26 (that was why the TTTriddle had the ellipsis - a.k.a.

dot-dot-dot) combine to form the blessing for one's (grand)sons.

[2] Leader of his brothers and top of... what?

Yehuda is the leader among the "brothers", the sons of Yaakov, the Sh'vatim, the tribes of Israel. His name is also at the top of a column in a Sefer Torah (in Parshat Vaychi). This is noteworthy because in many (most?) Sifrei Torah, all columns (over 240 of them) begin with a VAV except for five of them. Yehuda is the second one of these special column-starters, after the big BET of B'reishit.

[3] Cerulean, Prussian, Cobalt, Royal, Cornflower...

The above words are all descriptions of different shades of the color blue. They are BLUES. Yaakov Avinu tells Yosef that G-d appeared to him B'LUZ, in the city of LUZ (a.k.a. Beit El, but maybe a nearby town of Beit El). The word with the prefix B' occurs only this once in Tanach. The city is mentioned as LUZ a half a dozen times, and once, the word refers to the hazel-nut tree. Reading B'LUZ as BLUES works for a TTriddle, but points out a difference between English and Hebrew that we have discussed in the TBDATR column (Towards better Davening and Torah Reading). English has many examples of consonant blends. The B sound and the L sound blend in words like... BLEND, or BLUE. But in Hebrew, when the first of two letters has a SH'VA NA under it, we are not supposed to blend it with the sound of the following letter. B'LUZ,

not bluz. B'RACHA, not bracha. SH'NAYIM, not shnayim. Native English speakers have the natural inclination to blend consonants. When talking in English, we would say to a child, have you said Shma yet. But when saying the Sh'ma, one should carefully sound the SHIN/SH'VA distinct from the MA. That's why we use the apostrophe in SH'MA. Care also needs to be exercised not to overdo the SHIN/SH'VA as SHEMA, which is not the correct way to read the word either. SH'MA (not shma and not shema). There are many, many examples of this "don't blend the consonants like you do in English" problem.

[4] Hands and letters interchanged produce the same result

We rate this one as a five-star TTriddle. When Yaakov Avinu switched his hands so that his right hand rested on Efrayim's head and his left hand on Menashe's head, he was moving Efrayim into the first position and Menashe into the second position. By switching the NUN and the SHIN in Menashe's name, we get MISHNEH, which also indicates a second position. *(Ratings of TTriddles are not done by an independent TTriddle rater and are based on the subjective feelings of the Chief TTriddler of Torah Tidbits.)*

[5] He did it twice; his son, once

VAY-MA-EIN, and he refused, occurs nine times in Tanach, four of which are in the Chumash, three of which are in the Book of B'reishit (notice the apostrophe which "warns" against blending the BET and REISH of the

word). When Yaakov's children attempted to comfort him on the supposed passing of Yosef, he refused to be comforted. (Some commentators say that Yaakov was refusing to believe that Yosef was dead - which he wasn't.) Meanwhile, when Yosef was subjected to the advances of Potifar's wife, he refused to give in. In Vaychi, these two refuseniks join when Yosef attempts to "correct" Yaakov's positioning of his hands on the heads of Efrayim and Menashe, and Yaakov refuses to switch his hands back. He, Yaakov, did it twice; his son (Yosef) did it once.

[6] Burning the candle at both ends?

This TTriddle was a simple reaction to the name AVNER BEN NER, father of candle, son of candle. His name also occurs as AVINER BEN NER, which can be read as a redundancy.

[7] B'reishit (16), No'ach (15), Vaychi (total 2)

Although the sedra is called VAYCHI, that word occurs far more frequently in both the sedras of B'reishit and No'ach (16 and 15 times, respectively). In VAYCHI, there is one other occurrence of the word. And the word occurs nowhere else in the Book of B'reishit or in the rest of Chumash. Aside from the 33 occurrences in B'reishit, there are five other VAYCHIs scattered throughout NACH.

[8] Musical Director of the Royal Free Music Society

We really should have made this

TTriddle around our favorite Shavuot and Hoshana Rabba closing speaker and frequent Shabbat afternoon shiur-giver, Binyamin Wolff. With apologies to Binyamin, we went for Benjamin Wolf. He is also the musical director of the Zemel Choir, a leading Jewish choir in the UK. The name was TTriddlized (or should we say TTriddlised because of the UK connection) from the phrase BINYAMIN ZE'EV (YITROF) in Yaakov's brachot to his sons in Vaychi. Because of the phrase, Binyamin is often paired with Ze'ev or Volf as a first and second name, and in the two examples here, as a first and last name.

[9] What's the key to the "40 day - 6 month" question?

KI (the word key in the TTriddle was a hidden hint) CHEIN YIMLU Y'MEI... "For thus completes the days of..." The phrase occurs twice in Tanach, and hearing it in Vaychi immediately triggers in one's mind the other occurrence from Megilat Esther. In the Vaychi occurrence, the reference is to the 40 day period of embalming. In Esther, it refers to the sixth month period of perfuming and beauty treatments of the "Who will replace Vashti as queen" competition.

[10] Was 4 yrs old when Columbus sailed and his family fled Spain

Yosef ben Efrayim Karo was born in 1488 in either Spain or Portugal. His family was expelled from Spain in 1492 and lived in Greece and Turkey before settling in Tz'fat in Eretz Yisrael in

1535. He is considered to be the most universally recognized authority on Jewish law and practice. He is known as the MECHABEIR, the author (of the Shulchan Aruch) and as MARAN, and also as the BEIT YOSEF, his earlier pen name for his commentary of the TUR SHULCHAN ARUCH. It is this name that puts him in this TTriddle, since the phrase BEIT YOSEF occurs in Parshat Vaychi (one of its ten occurrences throughout Tanach).

[11] Does Vaychi have 340 p'sukim abroad?

Maybe not a 5-star TTriddle (possibly 4-star), but one that earned the "cute" designation. Vaychi has 85 p'sukim. That's PEI-HEI, which is the SIMAN on the sedra, as in PEH-EL-PEH. PEI-HEI is also the word PO, reminiscent of the Israeli dreidel (okay, SIVIVON). That leads the mind to the SHIN of the other dreidel. The gimatriya of the word SHAM (there) is 340. Hence the question posed in this TTriddle.

[12] Unexplained from the ParshaPix

The fragment of parchment in the PP is a piece of the Torah in Greek. It is in the ParshaPix because of Asara b'Tevet (really, the 8th of Tevet), not because of the sedra.

The Jerusalem Institute of Jewish Law

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson # 544

Pledges to Charity

There is an authority that if one states "I hereby pledge that I give my watch to Charity A", the pledge is binding. This authority holds that this is true even if the person pledges something not yet in existence, such as by stating "I pledge to Charity A the fruit that will grow on my tree two years hence." The reason is that a person's pledge to charity is legally binding and may be sued upon by the charity. Therefore if a person who is on his deathbed makes a gift to charity of something not yet in existence, such as the fruit that his tree will bear two years hence, the pledge is binding. It is binding although the pledge is a non-physical thing and the thing that he pledges is not yet in existence. A person may pledge to a charity all of the income of a lease that will be entered concerning property that he owns. It is similar to his having transferred the tree to the charity for its fruit, which is a valid transfer. This is not a transfer of a thing not yet in existence, since the tree exists now. There is an authority that disagrees with the foregoing and holds that the halacha as stated above is not correct in two respects. (1) A vow is binding if the vow states that the person making it takes it upon himself to fulfill the vow, that it is a personal obligation and not a gift. Then he has the obligation to do

the thing he utters. Since the gift is for a thing not yet in existence, it need not be honored. The gift would have been binding if he had stated "I hereby take it upon myself that I will give the fruit that will grow on my tree two years hence to charity." (2) Even if he had stated it in the context of a vow that he obligates himself to do something it is not binding after he dies. But if he is on his deathbed and the gift is to Charity A, a thing not yet in existence, as soon as he dies the pledge to deliver the gift is terminated. Thus if he is alive when the tree bears the fruit he pledged, he must fulfill the pledge and the fruit of that year belongs to charity. According to this second view the donor's pledge would have been binding had he stated that he hereby gives the tree to charity for its fruit. Since the tree is transferred while the donor is alive, the fruit will be given to charity even after the death of the donor.

A creditor pledges money owed to him to a charity. Since the debt is not a physical thing he cannot give it to a charity. However, if he states "I hereby give the money to a charity when I collect it" it is binding. Similarly, if a person states that when I purchase this object it will be given to charity, it is not binding.

Parsha Points to Ponder

SH'MOT

1) Why does the Torah state AND THESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WHO ARE COMING TO EGYPT in the present

tense (1:1) considering the fact that they already came to Egypt in the past?

2) Why does Par'o state that the Jewish nurses should check on THE BIRTH TOOL to determine if the child was a boy instead of simply saying SEE IF IT IS A BOY (1:16)?

3) Why does the Torah say that Moshe's mother saw THAT HE WAS GOOD AND HID HIM FOR THREE MONTHS (2:2)? Had the child not been GOOD would she have not tried to hide her son?

Parsha Points to Ponder by Rabbi Dov Lipman

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Answers are elsewhere in this issue; ponder the Qs first...

Maharal on the Sedra

Moshe's Miraculous Light

Sh'mot 2:2 - She conceived and bore a son, and saw that he was good, and she hid him three months.

Rashi: When he was born, the house filled with light.

Gur Arye: Why does it follow that because he was good she hid him? Any mother would be concerned for her son and do whatever she could for him. If there is a possibility to save him, why wouldn't she hide him? There must have been a decree to kill mothers who hid

their babies. She may have had to decide between his life and hers, and who is to say his blood is "redder than hers" [Pesachim 25b]? When she saw the miraculous light, she felt she could rely on Hashem to make sure the Egyptians would not find him, so she hid him as long as she could.

The gemara states [Menachot 53b], "Let the good one come and receive the good." The "good one" is Moshe, as it is written, "she saw that he was good." The "good" received is Torah, as it is written [Mishlei 4:2], "for I gave you a good teaching - My Torah - forsake it not." Every other creation has some aspect that relates to the physical world. The Torah is unique in that it is Hashem's decree and has no physical aspect. Tov [good] means elevated and separated [nivdal] from physicality. It is known that loss and lacking and evil cleave to physicality. The only one prepared to receive the totally spiritual Torah is someone on a similar spiritual level. He was completely separate from the physical, thus could prophesy with the illuminating lens.

Column prepared by Dr. Moshe Kuhr

Ttreader Feedback

In last week's (Vaychi) ParshaPix there was a series of pictographs representing HaMalach HaGo'el Oti... For the Malach part, there was the emblem of the MLB team, the Angels. We referred to the team as the Los Angeles Angels. A fellow named Yaaqov (significant name for this, as you will see) commented that the name of the team is a sensitive issue for many fans from southern California. Some checking on the internet revealed the story. One of the earliest expansion teams, the Angels began their so far 50 year existence as the Los Angeles Angels. At the end of their 5th season, their name was changed to the California Angels because of their impending move to Anaheim, California, which is in Orange County, which borders Los Angeles county. The team played 31 seasons as the California Angels. Then their name was changed to the Anaheim Angels because of new ownership and an agreement with the city of

Anaheim. In 2005, the name was changed again, this time to Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. However, since that is a mouthful, many people refer to it as just the Los Angeles Angels. The city of Anaheim sued, claiming that the letter of their agreement was being fulfilled, but not the spirit. The team calls itself the Angels, without any other identifier, even on their away uniforms. So what's the Torah twist here? It was Yaakov Avinu who originally insisted on knowing the name of the angel with whom he fought.

Parsha Points to Ponder

Suggested answers

1) Daat Zekainim Mibaalei HaTos'fot answer that through the use of the present tense, the Torah is teaching that as soon as Yosef died, which happened at the end of last week's parsha, the Egyptians began to relate to the children of Yaakov as if they had just come to Egypt then, including the assessment of taxes. This laid the groundwork for the eventual persecution and slavery.

2) The Ohr HaChayim explains that Par'o's plan was for the Jewish women to not be aware of the fact that the nurses were killing the child since if they saw this, it would certainly lead to a revolt and problems for Par'o. The nurses were told to determine if the child was a boy before the mother could even see if the child was alive and then, after killing the child, they would say that the baby was born dead and the mothers would not realize that anyone killed their son. (This also explains why Par'o wanted the girls to live. If all children were being born dead this would definitely expose the plot)

3) Rav Hirsch explains that on its most basic level, GOOD means that he was

a quiet and well-natured child who did not make a lot of noise. Thus, she would be successful in hiding him. Most babies make a lot of noise and hiding them would simply not be an option.

From "**OzTorah**"
by **Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple**
AO RFD, Emeritus Rabbi of
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Q. What is the general Jewish view of reincarnation?

A. There is no question that reincarnation plays a role in Jewish thinking and it is not only mystics and Chassidim who accept it. Tanach, however, contains no clear statement of the belief, nor is it certain that the Sages of the Mishna and Talmud deemed it essential. It is only in about the 8th century that the doctrine entered Judaism, to the dismay of Sa'adia Gaon who thought it foolish. Chasdai Crescas and his disciple Joseph Albo said the doctrine was opposed to the spirit of Judaism. On the other hand Isaac Abravanel and Manasseh ben Israel supported it. Abravanel thought it was logical and fair that another chance should be given to a soul that had become tainted by a particular body, that if a person died young their soul should have a chance to perform in another body the good deeds it did not have time for in the first, and that the soul of the wicked should sometimes pass into another body to be punished on earth instead of in the other world.

The Zohar says, "All souls must undergo transmigration, but human beings do not perceive the ways of the Holy One, how the revolving scale is set up. They perceive not the many transmigrations and the many mysterious works which the Holy One accomplishes with many naked souls..." (Mishpatim 99b).

Clearly, reincarnation is - like all things - possible for God. But opponents of the doctrine are bothered with the thought that a soul can have many identities. How can one pray for the repose of a person's soul when for all we know that soul has already been recycled? What happens at the time of resurrection - into which of possibly many bodies does a soul re-enter? Does the doctrine not suggest that the soul and body can never attain a unique, intimate bonding?

The fact that there are great sages on both sides of the debate shows that neither can be said to be normative. There is a major difference between essential beliefs such as the Unity of God, the authority of the Torah and the coming of Mashiach, which everyone accepts as fundamental and binding, and the idea of reincarnation, which has respectable but not unanimous support.