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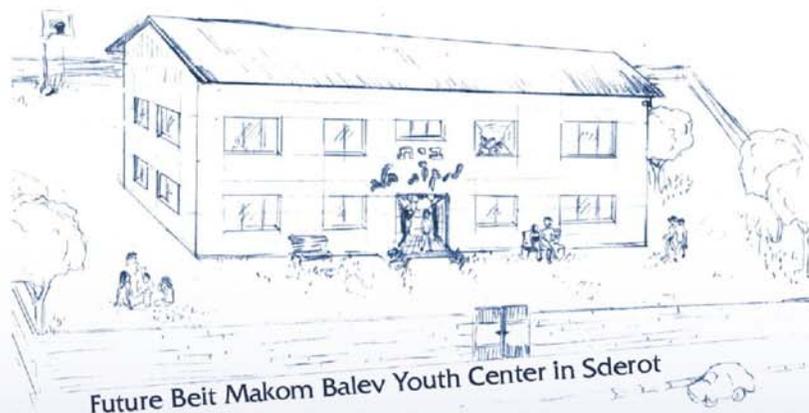
OU Israel
5th Annual Yom Yerushalayim Dinner
Sunday June 1st, 2008
Eve of 28 Iyar 5768
The Jerusalem Great Synagogue

honoring

Rabbi Nachman Kahane
Rabbi of Young Israel of the Moslem Quarter,
author, and a rabbinic consultant of the Israel Center
Torat Yisrael Award

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This Shabbat is the 206th day (of 383), 30th Shabbat (of 55) of 5768
...ראשון הוא לכם לחודשי השנה: שמות יבב

Reminds one of Chanuka in a way

All right, the title of the TTriddle was meant to grab your attention. But read on, we hope you won't be disappointed. The three mitzvot that are specifically mentioned as special targets of the Greeks of the pre-Chanuka period of the second Beit HaMikdash were Shabbat, Kiddush HaChodesh, and Brit Mila. These three themes converge on this SHABBAT when we read Parshat Tazri'a with its "uncounted" mitzva of MILA and the Maftir of HaChodesh when we read of the mitzva of setting up the Jewish Calendar.

Let's take a look at the mitzvot of Mila and Kiddush HaChodesh and see why they are really "super mitzvot", worthy of being targeted by our enemies.



Correct for TT 807 • Rabbeinu Tam (J'm) - 8:15pm

6:25 (5:42)	Yerushalayim	7:39pm
6:42 (5:44)	S'derot	7:41pm
6:40 (5:42)	Gush Etzion	7:39pm
6:42 (5:44)	Raanana	7:41pm
6:41 (5:43)	Beit Shemesh	7:40pm
6:42 (5:44)	Rehovot	7:40pm
6:42 (5:44)	Netanya	7:41pm
6:40 (5:44)	Be'er Sheva	7:40pm
6:41 (5:43)	Modi'in	7:40pm
6:25 (5:44)	Petach Tikva	7:40pm
6:25 (5:42)	Maale Adumim	7:38pm
6:40 (5:42)	Ginot Shomron	7:39pm
6:40 (5:43)	K4 & Hevron	7:39pm
6:40 (5:42)	Giv'at Ze'ev	7:39pm
6:30 (5:42)	Tzfat	7:39pm

The mitzva of Mila is found back in Parshat Lech L'cha and in this week's sedra of Tazri'a. Most mitzva counters point to Lech L'cha as the source of the mitzva, and not the more "logical" source in Tazri'a - logical because we find the language of a command: "Speak to the children of Israel saying..." In Lech L'cha, the mitzva is in the context of the story of G-d's commanding Avraham to circumcise himself

cont. p.0

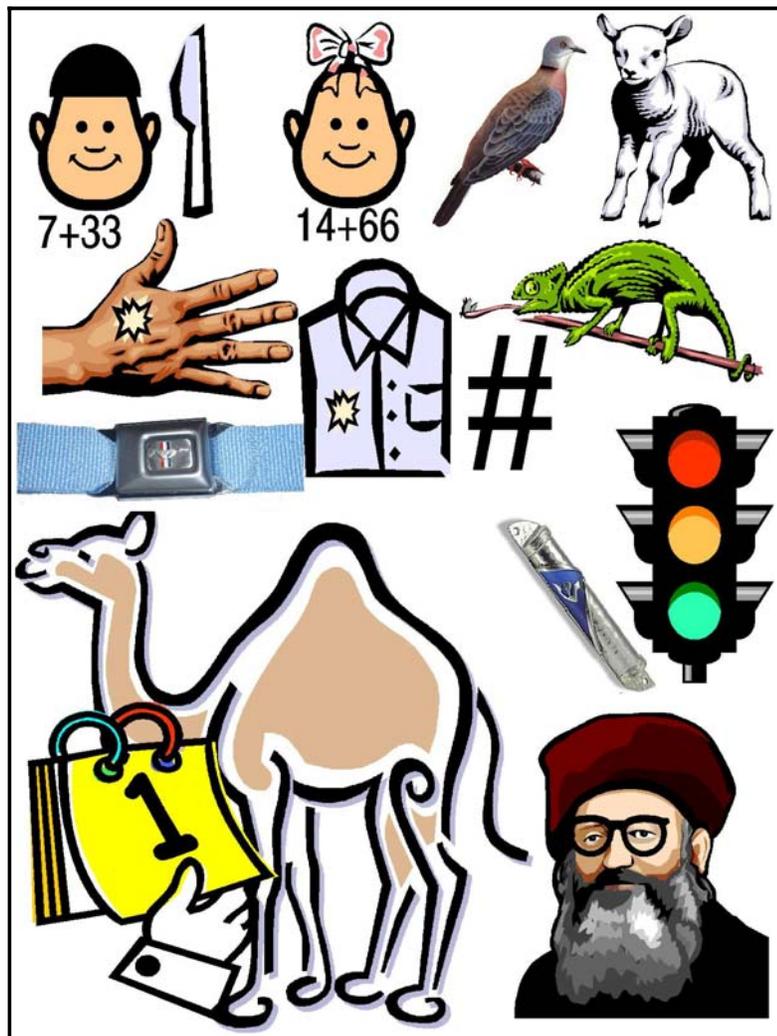
Shabbat Afternoon Shiur
This week 5:00pm (Mincha 6:00pm)

Dr. Moshe Kuhr
in the Wolinetz Family Shul
at the Israel Center

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OTHER Z'MANIM

Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are 10 days, WED-FRI
 26 Adar א - 6 Nissan • April 2-11

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:36-5:24am
Sunrise	6:27-6:15am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:48-8:41am)	9:34-9:27am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 10:06-10:00am)	10:37-10:32am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	12:42½-12:40pm
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	1:14-1:13pm
Plag Mincha	5:41-5:45pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 6:59-7:05pm)	7:04-7:10pm

Word of the Month

This Shabbat is the fourth of the special Shabbatot. HaChodesh is either the Shabbat of Rosh Chodesh Nissan (occurring 28% of years) or (72% of the time) it is the Shabbat before Rosh Chodesh. **p.4**



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 Eliezer Edelman, Exec. Dir. Operations and Management
 Headquarters: 11 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
 212-563-4000 • website: www.ou.org

Produced, printed*, collated, and folded in-house
 Phil Chernofsky • (02) 560-9124
 tt@ouisrael.org • www.ou.org/torah/tt

TORAH Tidbits

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 ttads@ouisrael.org • (02) 560-9125
 0505-772-111 • TT Distribution • ttdist@ouisrael.org

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22 Keren HaYesod • POB 37015 • Jerusalem 91370
 phone: (02) 560-9100 • fax: (02) 561-7432
 email: office@ouisrael.org • website: www.ouisrael.org

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Page Zero of Torah Tidbits 807

[Ed. note - A brief history of Page Zero and its sometimes change in location: The outermost sheet of each week's Torah Tidbits (hard copy) consists of the front page, page 2 (inside front page), the back page and the inside the back page. These are the four pages that are printed in color. (Sometimes, the innermost sheet (4 pages) is also in color.) All other pages of TT are printed in-house at the Israel Center by our print-team of Ernie and Ya'aqov. The outer sheet is prepared on Davka Writer (as is all of TT) and exported as a PDF file, which is emailed to Printiv for the regular printing and to ABC-print for the Large Print issue. The PDF file consists of two pages, each of which is made up of two pages. In order for the outsourced printing to come out the way it must, the original document needs to be in this order: Back page, front page, inside front page, inside back page. It is this file (e.g. this week - 807out.dwd) that is built into 807pdf.dwd (which is exported in two forms - 807.pdf, one page to a page and 807pdf.pdf, two pages to a page - you are reading one of these two files). Got it, so far? What all this means is that the front page of Torah Tidbits - which should be the first page of the PDF files - is page 2. The first page is either the back page of TT, if we decide that we'd like you to see that page (like this week's Dinner ad), or we replace the back page (which is the first page - still get it?) with Page Zero, where we continue the Lead Tidbit and the Word of the Month. When we leave the first page intact, we will put Page Zero later, as it is this week on page 4 of the PDF document, which we number from 0 rather than from 1, so that "officially" you are reading page 3. If you got all that, and cared enough to read through - we thank you for your time. Not everyone is interested in a "behind the scenes" glimpse into Torah Tidbits production. We appreciate that you are. - Phil]

Lead Tidbit [cont. from page 1 \(above\)](#)

and the males of his household. True, the p'sukim there contain the language of a command that is defined as the mitzva in perpetuity, but the story is of a 99 year old man, his 13 year old son, Yishmael, and various non-Jewish slaves being circumcised.

The answer is fairly obvious, but let's say it anyway. [Especially since there is a great nephew's brit scheduled IY"H B'SHA'A TOVA for Erev Shabbat Parshat Tazri'a.]

This can be said the long way or the short way (dealing out the property cards at the beginning of the game - just kidding); let's go for somewhere in between.

BRIT MILA is a two-part mitzva whose two-word name announces as such. MILA is the physical removal of the foreskin and whatever else is done by the MOHEL on the 8th day - or whenever thereafter. The Mohel says the b'racha AL HAMILA and then in a matter of seconds, that aspect of the mitzva is accomplished. The BRIT part of the mitzva takes much longer. As soon as the AMENs fade from the Mohel's bracha, the father of the boy makes a second bracha of mitzva - to enter him into the covenant of (BRITO SHEL) Avraham Avinu. This is the multifaceted, longterm mitzva that the parents continuously and variously fulfill as they raise their son to Torah, Chupa, and Maasim Tovim. The MILA part of circumcision comes from Tazri'a. The commitment part, the BRIT part, is from Lech L'cha. That's why our Sages pointed to Lech L'cha as the (primary) source of the mitzva. And that is why the Greeks targeted this mitzva as one to prevent us from fulfilling. Matza is for the individual. So are T'filin and M'zuzah. Brit Mila is for the Jewish People, horizontally and vertically.

Kiddush HaChodesh, the other target of the Greeks, is not just a mitzva in and of itself. The whole calendar of the year is based on it. If the Rosh Chodesh of Nissan 5768 is not sanctified (and this was provided for by a Sanhedrin of old, until such time as a new Sanhedrin takes over the privilege and responsibility), then the 15th day of the month will have no sanctity, it won't be Yom Tov, we will not have a mitzva bring Korban Pesach, to eat matza, etc. Chametz will not be forbidden...

Everything rides on Kiddush HaChodesh that has anything to do with our cycle of the year. The Greeks knew what they were doing when they chose which mitzvot to ban most extremely.

And, of course, Shabbat is the other mitzva the Greeks tried to take away from us. And this week, it is Shabbat that brings the other two mitzvot together on Shabbat Parshat Tazri'a - HaChodesh. Shabbat is our constant (not just weekly) reminder that G-d created the world and is the Master of all.

As we've mentioned often in Torah Tidbits, we have little but meaningful ways of fulfilling the spirit of the mitzva of HaChodesh. Know the Jewish date. Know your Jewish birthday and those of your children and grandchildren. Date checks with the Jewish date. And more...

WORD of the MONTH cont. from p.2

A weekly TT feature to help clarify practical and conceptual aspects of the Jewish Calendar, thereby enhancing our appreciation of G-d's gift to us of HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem...

Benching Rosh Chodesh Nissan, then, gets a special fanfare because of Shabbat HaChodesh. Besides two Torahs rather than the usual one, this Rosh Chodesh is blessed deservedly with the Maftir and Haftara ringing in our ears. It focuses our attention on "the first of our months of the year".

Rosh Chodesh Nissan will be MACHAR on Yom Rishon (Sunday)...

רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן יְהִי מָחָר בְּיוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְטוֹבָה:

The molad is Motza'ei Shabbat 21h 34m 7p (10:13pm Israel summer time)

As we've often explained, the 21h 34m 7p timing of the molad does not change with location or with daylight savings time. Nor does the following announced molad change. Shuls all over the world should use the same wording (or acceptable variation thereto). The time in parentheses, on the other hand, should be adjusted for location and DST where applicable.

Side point: The following is correct for this month only - each month has its own numbers. Hawaii is usually 12 hours earlier than Israel, and with our Summer time and their lack of DST, we have a 13 hours difference. So the molad in local Hawaii time is Shabbat morning at 9:13am. If a shul there benches Rosh Chodesh this Shabbat after 9:13am, then they would say the Molad WAS, rather than the more common, the Molad will be. JTYLTK

הַמּוֹלַד יְהִי מוֹצְאֵי שַׁבָּת קוֹדֶשׁ, שְׁלֹשִׁים וָאַרְבַּע דְּקוֹת וְשִׁבְעָה חֲלָקִים אַחֲרֵי תְּשֻׁעַ.

Rambam notation: א'ג:תריט • Actual molad - 6:55am Sunday morning

TAZRI'A STATS

27th of 54 sedras; 4th of 10 in Vayikra
Tazri'a finishes the first half of the sedras

Written on 128 lines in a Sefer Torah (rank: 48)

9 Parshiyot; 5 open and 4 closed

67 p'sukim - 48th in the Torah; 8th in Vayikra

1010 words - 48th in the Torah; 8th in Vayikra

3667 letters - 48th in the Torah; 8th in Vayikra

Tazria is small. Only 6 other sedras are shorter
(2 others in Vayikra and the last 4 of D'varim)

MITZVOT

7 mitzvot of the 613; 5 positive; 2 prohibitions

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 - 13 p'sukim - 12:1-13:5

[P> 12:1 (8)] Perek 12, the shortest in the Torah with 8 p'sukim, deals with "birth". A woman becomes "ritually unclean" following a (normal) birth -

one week for a boy - and on the 8th day the boy is circumcised - and two weeks for a girl. This period of TUM'A is followed by a special "waiting time" of 33 or 66 days for boy or girl respectively, after which the mother is to bring the korbanot of a YOLEDET. The whole issue of the "ritual impurity of a woman having given birth" constitutes a mitzva [166,A100 12:2], as does the bringing of the sacrifices [168,A76 12:6]. This portion of the Torah is also the source of the general prohibition of eating "sacred meat" while in a state of "ritual impurity" [167,L129 12:4].

MITZVAWATCH

See Lead Tidbit for why MILA is not counted as one of the mitzvot in Parshat Tazri'a.

Additionally, because we have already been commanded on MILA back in Lech Lecha, the Gemara teaches us some "new" aspects of the mitzva from the "repetition" of the mitzva here. E.g. that an 8th day Mila can be performed on Shabbat. (And that this applies only to a birth through the birth-canal, as opposed to a C-section delivery whose Mila is not done on Shabbat.) That Mila cannot be done at night.

TAHARA & TUM'A To oversimplify: one aspect of the rules of ritual purity and impurity for a Yoledet (a woman who have given birth) is to show the sharp contrast between life and death. This can be seen in the Tum'a of a dead body, in the laws of Nidah, the rules of pregnancy, as well as the Yoledet. A

woman's period signifies that life has not begun within her - there is TUM'A. A pregnant woman has life developing within her - TA'HARA. When that life emerges into the world, she is no longer carrying that extra life - TUM'A.

Another aspect of the procedures for the new mother is geared to help her recoup her physical, psychological and emotional identity and well-being.

[P> 13:1 (8)] After the parsha of BIRTH, the Torah moves on to the topic of NEGA'IM (various skin afflictions). The rest of Tazria (and most of Metzora) deals with these topics.

A person with an affliction that MIGHT be Tzora'at (in one of its many forms) is to be examined by a kohen (expert in the laws and identification of N'GA'IM, with a degree, perhaps, in dermatology, as well). Under certain circumstances, the kohen might declare the afflicted individual a METZORA rendering him immediately ritually unclean. Or, a kohen might order a one week quarantine with an additional examination to determine the status of the individual, to take place on the seventh day of said quarantine.

Levi - Second Aliya - 12 p'sukim - 13:6-17

That second inspection can result in the person being declared "clean", or "Tamei", or an additional week of quarantine can be ordered.

[P> 13:9 (9)] A kohen must examine

a case of suspected Tzora'at. He looks for changes in coloration of skin and hair, raised or sunken appearance of the blemished area, increase, decrease or no change in size, and other signs. Sometimes he declares immediate Tzora'at. Sometimes "ritual purity" is declared immediately, in which case a trip to the pharmacy for a salve might be the best thing. And sometimes a quarantine period is declared.

The expertise of a kohen in the area of Nega'im is both an art and a science. And more. Dozens of shades of white and other colors must be distinguishable to the inspecting kohen. An error in perception of a white like the shell of an egg as opposed to the color of the thin membrane under the shell (for example) can make the difference between declaring the examinee Tahor or Tamei. Only certain times of the day are permitted for examining a NEGA, because of the different effects of light and shadow.

The laws of Nega'im are unbelievably difficult and complex. And, in addition to everything else, the kohen has to know the psychology of the cases and be sensitive to the personal situations of the afflicted. One example is that a new bride or groom is not examined by the kohen, so they cannot be declared TAMEI. That could spoil their moods. Which puts an obvious subjective twist to the topic of N'GA'IM.

A look at some of the Mishnayot in TAHAROT, even without going in depth, can give one an appreciation of what is involved in this topic. Once

again, learning comes to the rescue and allows us to get "involved" in mitzvot even when they aren't active.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 13:18-23

[P> 13:18 (6)] The Torah presents further details on what the kohen looks for when inspecting boils and similar afflictions on the skin. The elaborate checking and time delays from inspection to inspection serve to give the afflicted person ample time for INTROSPECTION. A NEGA on the outside mirrors a character blemish or a religious shortcoming on the inside. While the kohen examines the external, the Metzora does a thorough job of seeing his own inner being.

MITZVAWATCH

Why all the detail? Why are there so many different types of N'GA'IM? Perhaps it is because WE are all different. So many different types of people. So many different temperaments. So many different sins. And so many different personal reactions to our individual situations. We need to feel this individuality. It helps us be responsible for our own deeds. One imagines that the kohen-examiner played the role of counselor too. Maybe sensing a disturbed soul that needs TIPUL along with the NEGA.

Keep in mind that the whole topic of TZORA'AT and N'GA'IM tells us that the body and soul are intimately connected. Of course, we should

know that already, but these mitzvot and details bring the point home. As an analogy - something to think about - modern psychology recognizes a connection between the physical and the mental. Physical and emotional. The word that sums up this idea is "psychosomatic" - Of or relating to a disorder having physical symptoms but originating from mental or emotional causes; Relating to or concerned with the influence of the mind on the body, and the body on the mind... Now just substitute the word spiritual for mental and you get a good picture of what N'GA'IM is about.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 5 p'sukim - 13:24-28

[S> 13:24 (5)] This portion discusses burns on the skin and different colorations within the affected area. Keep in mind that a blemish of any sort is NOT Tzora'at unless declared so by a kohen. It could look like Tzora'at, but it isn't unless declared "Tamei" by a kohen. In fact, two people can have identical signs and one can be declared a Metzora, the other not so. And the treatment of each case is completely different as a result.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 13:29-39

[P> 13:29 (9)] This next portion deals with yet another type or two of N'GA'IM - sores on the head, neck, or face, and blotches on the skin. As was mentioned before, we are dealing here

with a complex issue of a bridge between the physical and the spiritual. Or, to put it differently, of physical manifestations of spiritual problems.

To help understand this idea better, let's carry the above analogy a little further: There are physical afflictions and psychological problems that people can suffer. Sometimes, each type is treated independently. But sometimes, a trained professional in the field will see the physical problems as manifestations of the psychological problems. And sometimes, vice versa. In those cases, it is very important for the professional to decide what gets treated and what will improve when the other does, even without special attention. In N'GA'IM, the kohein is the expert who decides. And not every kohein is qualified, by the way. N'GA'IM is like a second degree for a kohein.

This was only an analogy, but this is one of the lessons, of Torat HaM'tzora, the laws of N'GA'IM.

The laws regarding the state of ritual impurity resulting from Tzora'at constitute a positive commandment **[169,A101 13:29]**. In other words, we would be doing the wrong thing to ignore these laws and details. Additionally, there is a specific prohibition of cutting the hair of a Tzora'at area on the body **[170,L307 13:33]**. Among other reasons, this would remove an important indicator for the inspecting kohen (and more importantly, perhaps, for the afflicted individual.)

Let's run with the analogy. If a doctor feels that a rash on a patient who

came to him might be the result of stress and tension in the workplace, then it would serve no purpose to merely treat the rash. In fact, the rash might clear up after some stress-reduction measures without any treatment of the specific rash. In the case of N'GA'IM, it would be prohibited to treat the NEGA with physical means. Welts, burns, blemishes, boils, etc. might go away after T'shuva and the Tzara'at procedures. How can a korban heal an affliction? How can T'shuva heal it? Same question as, How can psychological counseling cure asthma. But it can (sometimes) and so can all of the "remedies" in this week's sedra. Mind, body, soul - they are all connected and interrelated.

[S> 13:38 (2)] In this small parsha, the Torah gives an example of a rash of white spots erupting on the body. In this case, a rash is a rash. TAHOR.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 13:40-54

[S> 13:40 (7)] Certain cases of baldness are discussed in the first part of this portion. Usually, baldness is just baldness. But occasionally, the skin that is exposed when the hair falls out is blemished in specific ways which might mean Tzora'at. A person who has Tzora'at, tears his clothes, lets his hair hang loose, and must announce in public that he is TAMEI. The proper conduct of the Metzora is a mitzva **[171,A112 13:45]**.

[S> 13:47 (13)] The rest of this Aliya

deals with infection of Tzora'at on garments. Wool, linen, and leather are the materials that are subject to Tzora'at HaBaged. The laws of infected garments also constitute one of the 613 mitzvot [172,A102 13:47].

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya - 5 p'sukim - 13:55-59

The topic of "afflictions of garments" continues into this Aliya, for the duration of Tazri'a. The fact that there is such a thing as an affliction of a garment tells us something. We are dealing with different ways that G-d communicates his "displeasure" with us, as individuals. Today, we might say, His communication is more subtle - but we must see it... and react appropriately.

Maftir - second Torah 20 p'sukim; Sh'mot 12:1-20

This Maftir adds to the Sedra Stats: 1 parsha (S), 20 p'sukim, 313 words, 1208 letters, 9 mitzvot - you do the totals for this week (if you want)

This is the fourth of the Four Parshiyot. Parshat HaChodesh is the Shabbat of or the Shabbat right before Rosh Chodesh Nissan. We read of the mitzva to establish the Jewish Calendar (the first two p'sukim), followed by the commands concerning Pesach - Korban Pesach, Matza, Chametz, etc. (the rest of the 20-pasuk maftir).

The main theme of the Maftir is Korban Pesach. K.P. is different from all other korbanot. All korbanot were

brought in the Beit HaMikdash between the two daily T'midim, except for K.P. which was brought after the afternoon Tamid. K.P. can be brought and eaten in a state of ritual impurity (in certain circumstances). This can be seen as a "compromise" by G-d to facilitate our performance of this mitzva. (An individual is postponed until Pesach Sheni because of TUM'A, but the community brings and eats K.P. while TAMEI, rather than wait the month.)

The Maftir contains several mitzvot — the Jewish Calendar [4], to slaughter the K.P. [5], to eat it [6], not to eat it rare or cooked [7], not to leave over any of K.P. to the morning [8], to destroy Chametz from one's possession [9], to eat matza on Seder night [10], not to possess Chametz on Pesach [11], not to eat any foods that contain Chametz [12]. We also find the source of SHMURA MATZA and the source of the permitted M'LACHOT on Yom Tov. Other mitzvot related to KP and chametz are found elsewhere in Parshat Bo and elsewhere in the Torah.

Haftara - 28 p'sukim - Yechezkeil 45:16-46:18

S'faradim start 2 p'sukim later and end 3 p'sukim before the end (for Ashkenazim)

The Haftara contains the prophecy of the building of the Beit HaMikdash and the restoration of Korban Pesach — hence the connection to the Maftir. Both the Torah and Haftara announce



the holiday of Pesach, in very similar words, and both speak of putting blood on the doorpost. Not only do both readings talk about Pesach, but both focus on Rosh Chodesh Nissan.

S'faradim (and others) have the custom of adding to the haftara of HaChodesh, the first and last p'sukim of the haftara for Rosh Chodesh, when HaChodesh falls on Rosh Chodesh, or the first and last p'sukim of the Machar Chodesh haftara, when Rosh

Chodesh Nissan is on Sunday, as it is this year. Standard Ashkenazi practice is NOT to add p'sukim from another haftara. This does not mean that all Ashkenazi congregations will follow the "official" Ashkenazi procedure. If your shul asks you, tell them that Ashkenazim don't do the Machar Chodesh first & last pasuk thing. If they don't ask you and they do otherwise, let them be. Not worth arguing about.

THE JERUSALEM INSTITUTE OF JEWISH LAW

Rabbi Emanuel Quint, Dean

Lesson #421 **Laws of Injuries to Neighbors** part two

Continuing with the topic of the last lesson, where Reuven set up gutterpipes to conduct the water from his roof to the neighbor's domain, we come to the topic where Reuven wishes to set up waterpipes so that they will conduct the water from his roof into the public domain. The citizens can obtain an injunction to enjoin him from doing so. The passerby will get wet as the water cascades down, or they will slip in the puddles created by the water on the ground or they will have to detour around the puddles that he creates. Assume that Reuven and Shimon have the entrances to their houses in separate courtyards. Reuven and Shimon share a first courtyard. Shimon and several homeowners share a second courtyard that is close to the first courtyard. Some of the backs of the houses in one courtyard face the other courtyard. The back of Shimon's house faces Reuven's courtyard. Reuven wishes to set up his gutterpipes so that the water will splash onto Shimon's wall, which faces Reuven's courtyard and flow from Shimon's wall

into Reuven's courtyard. Shimon may obtain an injunction to prohibit such action although Shimon is not a member of Reuven's courtyard. Although the water is ending up in Reuven's courtyard, it will be cascading off Shimon's wall.

When Reuven has the right to use a common sewer that passes over or under Shimon's land, Reuven may use the water as much as he needs to and for any type of waste water. A common sewer is one that when it needs repairs, the members of the community or all of the people who use it are required to contribute toward its repair. But if Reuven has negotiated or acquired a presumption to use a noncommon sewer that passes over or through Shimon's land, he may not increase the amount of waste water than was negotiated or more than he used to use when he acquired the presumption. There is an opinion that Reuven cannot acquire a presumption for a sewer. Each case should be decided individually by Beit Din to see if it is equitable to permit the presumption in the

particular case.

Assume that the wall of Reuven's house is against the boundary line between Reuven and Shimon or close enough so that Reuven cannot place a ladder to fix or paint his house unless the ladder is resting on Shimon's land. If the ladder is classified as a tall ladder, that is, it contains four or more rungs, Reuven can obtain a presumption to maintain his ladder on Shimon's land. The presumption is obtained by Reuven placing his ladder there and Shimon not objecting within a reasonable time. By obtaining such a presumption Reuven violates Shimon's right to privacy and prevents Shimon from building on that space where the ladder stands. Shimon should be careful to make timely objection and go to Beit Din to obtain an injunction. Failing to make such timely objection Reuven will obtain a presumption that he may keep his ladder there and not only can Shimon no longer build upon the land where the ladder rests, he must, when building his own improvements provide adequate access for Reuven to get to his ladder. If the ladder is classified as a small ladder, that is, it has fewer than four rungs, then Reuven cannot obtain a presumption to keep the ladder there. Thus there is only one test violated, that of overlooking his land every time he enters upon Shimon's land to use the ladder. If Shimon did not immediately protest, then Reuven may maintain the ladder there but he cannot obtain a presumption for the ladder to remain there. However, Shimon can at any time decide to build on the spot where the ladder is standing and Reuven must remove his ladder. Until Shimon builds, there is no reason to prevent Reuven from entering upon Shimon's land to get access to the ladder to make repairs to his roof or walls.

Shimon may have waived his rights against overlooking. If the small ladder was affixed to the wall by a nail, then Reuven can obtain a presumption for the ladder to remain on Shimon's land.

There is a party wall that separates Reuven's house from Shimon's house or Reuven's land from Shimon's land or Reuven's house from Shimon's land or Shimon's house from Reuven's land. The party wall belongs to both Reuven and Shimon. It is not that each owns the half of the wall or the part of the wall that is on his side of the boundary line. Both Reuven and Shimon may place beams into cavities that each is able to make in the wall, provided that such cavities or beams do not affect the safety of the wall and such cavities do not reach the property of the other outside the wall. The failure of Shimon to use the wall after Reuven has commenced to use the wall does not preclude Shimon from deciding to use the wall after some time.

Shimon owns the wall that is entirely on his own land on the boundary between his land and that of Reuven. Reuven may not place any object into the wall. If Reuven did place a beam into the wall and Shimon did not protest then Reuven has obtained a presumption to keep the beam in the cavity that he made in Shimon's wall. Once Reuven has obtained the presumption, he may replace the original beam that he inserted into the wall with another beam, even if the second beam is larger than the first beam. If the beam was obviously a temporary beam such as scaffolding, then such maintaining of the beam does not ripen into a presumption, if the scaffolding was there for no more than 30 days. If it is maintained there for more than 30 days it is subject to the same laws as any other beam. If the projections into the wall of Shimon were to be used for a sukka, then Reuven

does not obtain a presumption during the festival but will if the beams remain there beyond the festival.

If Reuven attaches the beam into or to Shimon's wall with plaster or other adhesive, Reuven will acquire a presumption immediately after Shimon becomes aware of the plastering and does not protest. The same holds true if Shimon aided Reuven in so attaching his beam into Shimon's wall. If Shimon pleads that he

did not know of the plastering or that he did not help Reuven do the plastering, the burden of proof is upon Reuven to prove that Shimon did know or did help.

IYH in the next lesson we shall discuss other relationships between neighbors

The subject matter of this lesson is more fully discussed in A Restatement of Rabbinic Civil Law by E. Quint. Copies of all volumes can be purchased at local Judaica bookstores. Questions to quint@inter.net.il

Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Sh'mot Stories: by Dr. Meir Tamari • "In the Desert of Sinai" [5]

"You were revealed in Your cloud of glory to Your holy people to speak with them. From the heavens You made them hear Your voice" (Machzor, Rosh Hashana). Here is Torah's centrality of Man and Woman created in the G-dlike image to whom G-d reveals Himself, that we see from the very beginning of B'reishit where there is nothing written about what G-d is, little about Creation, but everything about human beings; their achievements and failures, their spirituality and materialism, their contact with G-d as well as their denial of Him, His ways and His commandments. Mankind that is worthy and able to receive Revelation. Yet the same revelation draws Israel apart from the nations of the world for the divine purpose of creating a nation-religion that would devote itself eternally to realizing the laws of the King of the Land in that Land. Then all mankind would be able to likewise model their social, political, and moral societies on those laws. "You will be a special treasure to Me above all the nations, 'Segula', in that you shall be a nation of priests teaching all the human race, to call to them in the Name of G-d; 'From Zion shall go forth Torah (Yeshayahu 2:3)" (Soforno).

"You have seen what I did to Mitzrayim while I raised you up on eagles' wings and brought you to Me. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Sh'mot 19:4-6). "Each and every one is to become a kohen' insomuch as he is to allow all his actions to be regulated by G-d. A holy nation; just as individually the Jews are to appear priest-like, so is the impression that Israel as a nation is to make on the world is to be one of holiness to G-d" (Rabbi S. R. Hirsch). "In addition to Torah and Divine Worship, without which it is impossible to be Israel, G-d made us a nation of kohanim. That refers to our dealings with other people beyond the exact forms of Torah or to legalities; doing that which is good and straight are not matters for law and courts, but they are part of the Divine Will for which is required a nation of kohanim. Furthermore, He also made us a holy people, referring to our connection with G-d through our sanctification of that which is permitted to us" (Ha'amek Davar). "'You shall be holy (Vayikra 19: 2)'; how is it possible for ordinary men and women to become holy people and attach themselves to G-d? This injunction is written in the singular since Hashem was speaking to Am Yisrael as an

entity, so we can only become holy by attaching ourselves to the holy nation; the greater the degree of attachment, the greater the degree of holiness that can be achieved" (Menachem Mendel of Kotsk).

"I did not reveal Myself to you through mere tradition, nor did I send you writings thereof, nor did I present you with witnesses, rather you yourself witnessed and saw what I did to Egypt" (Mechilta). "The two fundamental truths on which the whole of Judaism rests, the Exodus and Matan Torah, stand firmly on the actual evidence of your senses and as they were seen, felt, heard and experienced simultaneously by thousands of people, every possibility of deception is ruled out" (Rabbi S. R. Hirsch). The imagery of being carried to G-d on eagles' wings, conveys the passage of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children brought from slavery to Sinai for the revelation of Torah. "It also tells of the love and protection afforded by G-d to Israel; just as the eagle carries its young on its back and not between its talons like other birds, so that any arrows should pierce its own body and not that of its young" (Mechilta). "As the eagle stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes the young and bears them on her wings" (D'varim 32:11); here the imagery is that of G-d teaching Israel, guiding the as-yet-untrained people to strengthen itself and raise itself up spiritually to wing its way up and reach the heights to which it is destined" (Rosentzweig).

Bringing Israel to Sinai was foretold to Moshe as the sign that G-d had spoken to him, at the Burning Bush. It has been seen by our commentators as the very reason for the Exodus; Shavuot is the 'Atzeret',

conclusion, of the Pesach festival as Sh'mini Atzeret is that of the Sukkot festival. However, it would be a distortion of Judaism to see the relationship between the Exodus and Matan Torah as that of preparation or marginal; rather the verses in Sh'mot 19 make it clear that the two are ideologically and spiritually intertwined and constitute a single whole.

"A person cannot obligate his son to carry out the vows or obligations that he, the father undertook, so that the generation of Matan Torah could not obligate us and our descendants to observe that which they undertook to obey. However, when one buys a slave one acquires him and his descendants forever. Therefore, since G-d acquired us as His slaves by redeeming us from Egypt, we and all our descendants are obligated to serve Him" (Abarbanel).

"On what do you base your avoda?" R' Simcha Bunem asked R' Menachem Mendel of Kotsk. "When I see the greatness of His creation, I am immediately filled with recognition of Him, as the Rambam writes". "That is normal for all other peoples and is expressed by their solar calendar that expresses the Creation. However, our special and particular calendar is the lunar calendar that follows the order of Pesach, Shavout, and Sukkot, that are all connected with the Exodus. So our Avoda and our knowledge of Him flow from our experiencing His choosing us and the resultant special relationship that was created by the Exodus".

"That is why the Ten Commandments speak of G-d who took us out of Egypt and not of Him as the Creator of heaven and earth" (Yehudah Halevi, The Kuzari).

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[1] From the virtual desk of the OU

VEBBE REBBE

The Orthodox Union – via its website – fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and the Israel Center. The following is a Q&A from Eretz Hemdah...

Q Someone showed me a Gemara that says that one has to own his matza on seder night. Yet I have never seen people being careful to acquire ownership when they have the Seder in someone else's home. Can we reconcile the practice with the sources?

A The Gemara (Pesachim 38a) does appear to say that one must own his matza. In discussing matza that is made from ma'aser sheni (produce that

can be eaten only in Yerushalayim when it possesses a status of kedusha), it says that according to the opinion that ma'aser sheni is considered Hashem's property, one cannot use it to fulfill the mitzva of eating matza. This is derived from the textual comparison between matza and challa taken from dough, which applies to one's own dough. We accept the opinion that ma'aser sheni is owned by its human owner, and thus the question is moot in that regard. However, the concept finds expression in the halacha that one does not fulfill the mitzva with stolen matza, which, according to the Mishna Berura (454:15), is due to a lack of ownership over stolen matza. Therefore, even if one "steals" matza unintentionally and no one cares (e.g., two people mix up their matzot), there is a problem to rectify (ibid.).

Why then do we not find people being careful to make a halachic acquisition (kinyan) on the matza? In regard to general approach to halacha, it is crucial not only that standard practice ignores the issue but also that the classical poskim are silent on the subject. This phenomenon, called setimat haposkim, is also a major halachic factor. Therefore, we do not suggest going out of one's way to be stringent and make a kinyan because creating a chumra that is clearly a new one on a common matter is not warranted. (Regarding unusual occurrences, it is more reasonable to say that the lack of a source or a minhag of stringency is due to a dearth of discussion about rare cases... but that cannot be said here). Let us, then, explore why there is no problem.

The Sefat Emet (Sukka 35a) suggests that we can apply the Rosh's position that when a groom borrows a ring to effectuate a marriage, we assume it was given to him to

halachically acquire it, for if not, the marriage cannot take effect. This explanation is somewhat difficult, as many people are not aware that they need to own matza and so the assumption of intention may be unreasonable.

Another idea is that one acquires matza when he makes a change to it by chewing it. He fulfills the mitzva later when swallowing. This does not help for stolen matza (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 454:4) because there, the chewing, which begins the mitzva, is forbidden. Since the chewing is necessary to acquire the matza, the entire mitzva is disqualified (see Mishna B'rura 649:3). This explanation is difficult because changes to an object alter ownership only in cases like that of a thief, who already did an action of bringing the object into his control; this is missing here.

Some poskim (Imrei Bina, Pesach 23; Tzitz Eliezer II, 37) argue with the premise that one needs to own matza. They argue, based on the comparison to challa, that one needs only full permission to freely eat the food, not ownership. Guests and family members certainly have this.

The Mishna B'rura (454:15) hints at a strong answer. Intention for acquisition is pertinent when one could either be acquiring or borrowing. If the object will return to its original owner, it is borrowing unless something makes it an acquisition. When one receives matza with permission to eat it, the piece will not return; thus there is effective intention to acquire it. Putting food into or onto one's body is a kinyan (see Gittin 77a). Thus one acquires matza before he swallows it.

So as long as you're not stealing someone's matza, eat it without worries on this account.

Ask the Rabbi Q&A is part of Hemdat Yamim, the weekly parsha sheet published by Eretz Hemdah. You can read this section or the entire Hemdat Yamim at www.ou.org or www.eretzhemdah.org. And/or you can receive Hemdat Yamim by email weekly, by sending an email to info@eretzhemdah.org with the message:

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[2] **Candle by Day**

Sometimes the time wasted in preventing waste is a greater waste than the waste prevented.

From "A Candle by Day"
by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

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• The World of Chazal
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[3] **CHIZUK and IDUD**

for Olim & not-yet-Olim respectively

In this week's portion, we meet a unique form of impurity - Tzaraat. (Vayikra 13:20). Comparatively, this form of defilement is the severest.

The First Mishnayot in Seder Taharot delineate Ten Levels of Tum'a (Kelim 1:1-5). According to this list, a person who is a metzora is at the highest level of defilement that a person can contract exceeded only by the tum'a of a decaying cadaver.

The mishna then goes on to delineate 10 levels of Kedusha in Israel. The holiest of course being the Holy of Holies upon the Temple Mount where only the Kohen Gadol can enter once a year on the holiest

day. The mishna then correlates the various defiled people and lists those who are forbidden to enter the Temple, the Temple Mount, Jerusalem, and finally any walled city in Israel. As would be expected the person with the greatest level of defilement, the Metzora, is exiled to the most remote part of Israel being forbidden to live within the confines of any walled city in the country. The Talmud (Er'chin16a) teaches us that tzaraat is contracted by speaking lashon hara. One who speaks lashon hara about a fellow Jew is ostracized from the community but may still dwell within the confines of Israel. There is however one person whose defilement is so great that he is banished totally from the land - One who speaks lashon hara about Israel. The Torah prescribed a punishment for the spies and their followers of being banished not only from the community but from all of Israel "...All who detest me shall not see her (Israel)". (Bamidbar 14:23). "In this wilderness will your cadavers decay" (Bamidbar 14:29). From this we can see the extreme severity of speaking negatively about Israel. It is tantamount to the epitome of defilement.

May we merit to cherish the Land in our hearts, deeds, and speech. As the Kuzari concludes "For Yerushalayim will verily be reconstructed only once the Jews yearn for it with all of their heart".

Rabbi David Samson, Jerusalem

TORAH THOUGHTS as contributed by Aloh Naaleh members for publication in the Orthodox Union's 'Torah Insights', a weekly Torah publication on Parshat HaShavu'a

[4] **Wisdom & Wit**

While there were many fine yeshivas in Europe and large numbers of people who devoted their entire lives to Torah study, there was also a very large class of people who were ignorant in terms of Jewish knowledge. Many children were given the opportunity to learn for only a few years, before being forced to go out to work to help support their families. These people were Torah-observant, but were viewed as a distinct underclass and often had no means of acquiring knowledge.

The Chafetz Chaim could not allow this condition to persist. In spite of his heavy schedule, he took time to give a class specifically for these people, between mincha and ma'ariv each day. During that time he would teach the halacha, using the Chayei Adam as his text. He would also utilize this time to teach a variety of other topics, such as the fundamentals of Jewish belief. On Shabbos, he would have a class in Parshat HaShavu'a, again geared to those who did not have a strong Torah background.

This class was maintained for decades, and there were many who attended it regularly and became truly learned people.

Shmuel Himelstein has written a wonderful series for ArtScroll: Words of Wisdom, Words of Wit; A Touch of Wisdom, A Touch of Wit; and "Wisdom and Wit" — available at your local Jewish bookstore (or should be). Excerpted with the permission of the copyright holder

[5] **Parsha Points to Ponder**

TAZRI'A

1) Why does the beginning of the Parsha refer to the newborns as MALE (12:2) and FEMALE (12:5) and then switch to SON

and DAUGHTER (12:6)?

2) Why does the impurity of tzara'at require the involvement of the kohein to become pure as opposed to all of the other forms of impurity in the Torah where the kohein is not involved in the process? (see 13:2, 13:49, and 14:35)

3) Why does the Torah mention the kohein looking at the person with tzara'at twice in the same verse? (13:3)

THESE ARE THE ANSWERS

Ponder the questions first, then read here

1) The Meshech Chochma explains that since a child is not deemed halachically viable until 30 days, the Torah refers to them as MALE and FEMALE right after birth. However, verse 6 deals with the laws after the child has survived for 30 days and, therefore, they are halachically viable and change status to actual sons and daughters.

2) The Kli Yakar answers that the kohanim embodied the positive side of all of the negative traits which lead to the various forms of tzara'at. Aharon, the patriarch of the kohanim, was a lover of peace and unity and, therefore, kohanim represent the opposite of the lashon hara which causes the bodily tzaraat. The tzaraat on the house, according to our sages, comes because of jealousy of what others have. Kohanim had no personal possessions and were supported by the nation, so they did not function within the race to accumulate more and more wealth which is the source of most jealousy. Finally, the tzara'at of the clothing, according to the Kli Yakar, results from haughtiness and ego. People often use their clothing to demonstrate their conceit. Aharon, along with Moshe, was among the most humble of people, and his sons certainly embodied this trait as

well. Thus, the person with tzaraat or the owner of possessions with tzaraat was forced to meet with someone who embodied the proper mode of behavior to serve as an inspiration to this sinner to change.

3) The Meshech Chochma teaches that the first AND THE KOHEIN SEES refers to him checking the mark on the person's skin, as the words clearly indicate. The second time the verse says AND THE KOHEIN SEES HIM. This refers to the Kohein checking to make sure that this person can be declared as impure. There are people such as a newlywed who cannot be declared impure to prevent their happiness from being negated. Thus, after checking the mark, the Kohein then SEES HIM to determine that he can be declared impure.

Parsha Points to Ponder is prepared by Rabbi Dov Lipman, who teaches at Reishit Yerushalayim, Tiferet, and Machon Maayan in Beit Shemesh and RBS and is the author of "DISCOVER: Answers for Teenagers (and adults) to Questions about the Jewish Faith", just re-published by Feldheim, ppp@ouisrael.org

[6] From Machon Puah

Ya'akov's Anger

We are going back to the story of Rachel and Ya'akov this week.

When Rachel complained to Ya'akov that he must give her children, instead of answering her softly and feeling her pain, the Torah tells us that he became angry.

"Ya'akov became angry with Rachel and said, 'Am I in the place of Hashem who has prevented you from having children!'"

All the commentators on this verse question why did Ya'akov become angry; after all, Rachel had a perfectly good

claim, she saw her sister having children and she wanted to have children as well. This was even more pertinent in the light of the complexity of the relationship between Ya'akov, Rachel and Leah, where having children seems to have cemented the relationship between Ya'akov and Leah, possibly at the exclusion of Rachel.

Then why did Ya'akov get angry?

The Ramban explains that Ya'akov was angry as he really wanted to answer his wife's heartfelt request, he would have wanted nothing more than to see Rachel bear him children like her sister Leah. However, he was unable to change the situation, as much as he wanted and whatever he had done had so far been unsuccessful.

Ya'akov got angry as he could not grant Rachel's appeal, not because she had done anything wrong.

It is common to see such situations where either the husband or the wife is extremely frustrated with their circumstances and even more so with their inability to change the situation. This frustration often expresses itself as anger towards others around them and even towards their spouse.

This in turn creates more frustration between the husband and wife and can lead to each blaming the other for the problem which leads to an escalation of strife between them.

The first thing to realize is that this is a normal situation and while the person is showing anger they are not really angry at the other person, rather, they are expressing their own frustration at the situation.

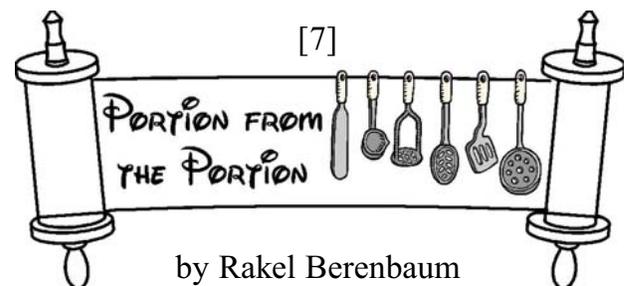
This is important for both husband and wife to understand, as it is for all those around them, friends and family alike. One

cannot and should not blame people in difficult circumstances for their anger, but accept that they are angry at the situation that they cannot change and have to learn to live with.

More on this next week.

The Puah Institute for Fertility and Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha is based in Jerusalem and helps couples from all over the world who are experiencing fertility problems. Puah offers free counseling in five languages, halachic supervision and educational programs. Puah has offices in New York, Los Angeles and Paris. To contact the Puah Institute please call (02) 651-5050 in Israel or 718-3360603 in the US.

Visit our website at www.puah.org.il



by Raket Berenbaum
FEEDback to berenbau@actcom.net.il

GUARD YOUR TONGUE

One of the topics in this portion is the affliction of tzora'as. The Ramban writes that this was a supernatural disease sent to warn people about speaking LASHON HARA - slander. One might think that talking badly about another person isn't such an evil. We didn't cause them bodily harm we just said a few words about them. But the Chafetz Chaim in his famous book on Shmirat Halashon says that from the severity of the tum'a of the M'TZORA we can understand the severity of LASHON HARA. The TUM'A of a M'TZORA is the only kind in which the person must stay entirely out of the camp or city where other people live.

The Dubno Magid said that people speak LOSHON HARA because they don't realize the power of the spoken word. Words can destroy a business, someone's reputation, or even a friendship.

The Torah tries to teach the M'ITZORA the lesson of the importance of even a single word. This is by the fact that his whole fate lies in the utterance of one word. If the Kohein says TAMEI (unclean), then he will be completely isolated from society. The utterance of one three letter word can change his whole fate. This will certainly teach the M'ITZORA the destructive potential of even a single word. He will be careful with his speech in the future. Let us too take this lesson to heart - and tongue.

TONGUE WITH RAISIN SAUCE

- 1 tongue
- 3 small onions
- 2 small carrots
- 4 stalks celery & leaves
- 6 sprigs parsley
- 8 peppercorns
- Salt
- 1/2 cup almonds, blanched & split
- 2/3 cup seedless raisins
- 6 Tbsp. oil
- 3 Tbsp. flour
- 1/4 cup crushed gingersnaps
- 1 lemon, cut into small cubes

Cook tongue in a pot of water with onions, carrots, celery and parsley, peppercorns and salt. When water boils and darkens, change the water and continue cooking in fresh water.

Bring to a boil then cook on medium flame for 2-3 hours until tender. Drain. Reserve liquid.

It will be done when it can be easily pierced with a fork. If you want to use it right away, take off the skin and set tongue aside to cool. Do not take the skin off until ready for use. When the tongue cools off cut it into slices.

Warm oil, add flour and stir until blended. Gradually stir in enough tongue liquid to make 3 cups in all. Add gingersnaps, almonds, raisins and lemon cubes. Season with salt and paprika. Pour over sliced tongue.

Serve hot.

[8] Torah from Nature

Ocean Sunfish

A.k.a. Mola Mola, or just Mola, they are the heaviest bony fish in the world (does not include sharks, which are cartilaginous fish) averaging over 1 ton and sometimes weighing over 2 tons. They look like they have no tail... short pectoral fins serve as rudders... dorsal (back) and anal (bottom) fins are so long that the fish can be as tall as it is long... feed mostly on jellyfish, which they eat in huge amounts. Females produce more eggs than any other vertebrate, more than 300,000,000 at one time... often rise to the surface of the ocean and lie on their sides to sunbathe. NOT KOSHER.

The sunbathing habit of the ocean sunfish seems to be a result of its diving deeply to feed, to where the temperature of the water is very cold.

Because its pseudotail is a short, lumpy clavus, and because its pectoral fins are

short (these being the two main propellers of "regular" fish, the ocean sunfish relies on its long upper (dorsal) and lower (anal) fins for propulsion, resulting in an awkward, atypical sideways motion of those fins.

These fish are host to a large number of parasite species and employ various methods of controlling or getting rid of them. E.g. seabirds help when they sunbathe.

On another note...

Last week we asked, (Not a TTriddle:) Is a dolphin not kosher because it doesn't have scales or because it doesn't chew its cud? Does the answer make a difference?

H(S)M writes: Answering your question seriously [which it was meant to be], the definition of a "dag" is a swimming (only) animal, just like an "of" is a flying animal. The analogy is that the Torah defines a bat (ATALEIF, based on the Artscroll translation) as an "of" which is not kosher. Thus, dolphins or whales are in the same categories as sharks and all fish.

Thank you for your answer H(S)M. What your saying is that a dolphin is not kosher because it doesn't have scales. And, by extension, it was created on the fifth day of creation, as was the bat, rather than on the sixth day. This, of course, is purely academic - which day it was created - but the status of a dolphin as a "DAG" has a halachic ramification or two. For example, its blood does not make someone TAMEI, as does the blood of a mammal. Further comment on this subject are welcome. Check future issues of TT.

[9] **Micro-Ulpan**

How do you say egg slicer in Hebrew?

MAFLEI'ACH BEITZIM

Spaghetti tongs? **YATUCH ITRİYOT**

How about a baster? **MANTEF**

[10] **Guest article**

Halacha Minhag and Music

by **Rabbi & Cantor Binyamin Z. Munk**

Birkat HaChodesh (Nisan)

There are various views concerning the saying of Birkat HaChodesh and Y'hi Ratzon. In the famous congregation of Frankfurt, for example, they did not say Y'hi Ratzon at all. One of the reasons is the problematic request for a livelihood (Chayim Shel Parnasa) which one should not pray for on Shabbat. Even those who oppose the saying of Y'hi Ratzon, agree that the custom to bless the New Moon is ancient... In Talmud Yerushalmi it is said that "Rabbi Yossi never prayed Musaf before he knew the exact time of the new moon" - Perhaps this is the earliest source of the blessing of the new month... The source of Y'hi Ratzon is Brachot 16. This prayer was said by Rav, one of the greatest Amoraim... But Rav did not say this Tfila before Rosh Chodesh; he recited it daily. Some end the Y'hi Ratzon with "Bizchut Tfilat Rav", referring to the source of the prayer...

There are those who consider Birkat HaChodesh to be like Kidush HaChodesh (sanctification of Rosh Chodesh by the Sanhedrin). This might be the origin of standing for our Rosh Chodesh benching, and of the announcement of the Molad. The Mishna B'rura writes clearly that Birkat HaChodesh is NOT Kidush HaChodesh, rather it is an announcement to the

congregation the day on which Rosh Chodesh falls... Mishna B'rura does point to certain practices that serve to commemorate "real" Kiddush HaChodesh, such as the Rav of the shul announcing the Molad and/or when Rosh Chodesh is - as the Av Bet Din did in the time of Sanhedrin... There is a custom practiced by some Chazanim and Baalei T'fila chant the "Rosh Chodesh Nissan will be..." part to the tune of ADIR HU, a popular melody of the Seder. This practice is mentioned in "Minhagei Frankfurt" by Reb Salman Geiger. The melody is known to come from the SHLAH HaKadosh, Rabbi Yeshaya Horowitz of Frankfurt. This beautiful melody inaugurates the Pesach season and brings to mind the many other cherished melodies of Pesach and its Seder.

[11] **Divrei Menachem**

Parshat Tazria deals with the state of purity of a mother after the newborn leaves the womb. Considering that the mother is an active partner with Hashem in the creative process and has experienced one of the most sublime acts of human existence, we might be amazed that she now becomes (spiritually) contaminated, "as during the days of her separation infirmity" (Vayikra 12:1).

One explanation is that the accompanying bloody excretions of birth share the same spiritual status for the mother as those bodily secretions that cause both men and women, according to the Torah, to become spiritually impure. Most often, but not exclusively, the excretion of these bodily fluids indicates the loss or waste of life, the absence of which spells impurity.

The Kotzker Rebbe explains that since birth is entirely in the hands of Hashem, as is written, "And G-d opened her womb", every birth is accompanied by the

disappearance of the Divine Spirit that enabled the birth to take place. By definition, then, the attendant spiritual vacuum is what constitutes the impure state of the new mother.

The mother is to bring an elevation and sin offering, for our rabbis tell us that at the painful moment of birth she may have had evil thoughts or vowed not to repeat the experience. The purification process then - and now - removes the impurities and also brings the mother closer to Hashem to remind her, perhaps, of the elevated goals to which she and her new offspring should aspire.

Shabbat Shalom, Menachem Persoff

Towards Better Davening and Torah Learning

TTreader feedback

TTReader Feedback

BT writes in reference to last week's TBDATR column on "The Little Sh'michik":

Whenever you write about the correct pronunciation (and transliteration) of the Sh'va, I mean to write to you, but I never get around to it.

In order to be consistent, you should change the way you write the names of some of the cities in the "Candle-Lighting & Havdala Times" section, as follows:

Y'rushalayim, R'chovot, N'tanya, B'er Sheva, Giv'at Z'ev and Tz'fat.

You can't claim that you are writing them the way people are used to seeing them, because you spelled S'derot correctly, not the way it is usually written.

BT, point taken. We will probably change the spellings as you suggested, but there are

still some names that "look better" the way people are used to them. Yerushalayim probably is a re-Hebrewizing of Jerusalem; but you are right, we'll try to remember to go for Y'rushalayim. Etc.

Speaking of the way we transliterate in Torah Tidbits. The apostrophe (shmichik) is commonly used in two major situations. One, to represent a SH'VA NA, as in (last week's column) SH'MA, rather than the blended SHMA or the over-separated SHEMA. B'RACHA rather than BRACHA or BERACHA - and so on. We will occasionally slip up. And two, to separate two vowels that are distinct and not to be blended int - remember this word? - a diphthong. As in this week's sedra of TAZRI'A. Technically, one would probably read TAZRIA correctly without the apostrophe, but it is needed in words like HO'IL, because OI is a common diphthong.

And speaking of transliterations, we generally render both the CHET and CHAF as CH even though some use KH for the CHAF and just H for the CHET.



- ◊ Following the birth of a baby boy, there is a 7 day period for the mother followed by a 33 day period. See the Sedra Summary.
- ◊ Knife for Brit Mila follows the 7th day. I.E. on the 8th day.
- ◊ For the birth of a baby girl, the period of Tum'a and Tahara is 14 days and 66 days.
- ◊ Then come the turtle dove and lamb, which are two parts of the Korban Yoledet, the offerings of the woman who has given birth, after 40 or 80 days.
- ◊ There is a hand afflicted by a

NEGA... this represents various N'GA'IM that can afflict the body of a person.

- ◊ The shirt with a NEGA represents those garments and materials that are able to be afflicted with NIG'EI HABEGED.
- ◊ That lizard-like reptile is a CHAMELION, noted for changing colors - a significant factor in the determination of NEGA'IM.
- ◊ The traffic light also refers to the changing of colors in the NEGA'IM. This is a particularly appropriate graphic to use for this, since its colors are all mentioned in the sedra. Hair in a wound changing to yellow (or not). And the term Y'RAKRAK, greenish (or maybe strong green). So too ADAMDAM, reddish, or powerful red.
- ◊ In the lower-right corner is HaRav Avraham Yitzchak HaKohein Kook, zt"l, wearing glasses. This stands for the oft repeated V'RA'A HAKOHEN, and the kohein saw. Searching the Tanach, one finds that the phrase occurs 14 times altogether, 13 in Tazri'a (chapter 13 therein) and once, a 14th time, in chapter 14 (M'tzora). And to make the life of a Bar Mitzva boy who is trying to study this parsha miserable, the V'RA'A HAKOHEN phrase comes in 8 different TROP-combinations. And this doesn't take into account the 5 V'RA'AHU HAKOHENS with their TROP variations. And this is also not to mention the 40 HEI-VAV-ALEFs in this short sedra, 18 of which are HI (meaning she) and 22 of which are HU (meaning he), but in most cases really

meaning "it". And none of this mentions M'tzora, another hard sedra to learn well, which is more often combined with Tazri'a than not. But we digress...

- ◊ In the lower left corner is a calendar marked with a 1. This obviously represents HaChodesh and the mitzva to make the calendar, and the designation of Nissan as the first month among the months.
- ◊ The big camel is a BIG GAMMAL, which sounds like and reminds us of a BIG GIMMEL, as in the word V'HITGALACH.
- ◊ The number sign, a.k.a. SULAMIT (in Hebrew), pound sign, hash, cross- hash, hex, and the best name: octothorpe. In this ParshaPix, it represents the SH'TI & EIREV, the warp & woof weave of garments afflicted by a NEGA.
- ◊ That leaves two items as UNEXPLAINEDs, visual TTriddles.

TTRIDDLES... are Torah Tidbits-style riddles on Parshat HaShavua (sometimes on the calendar). They are found in the hard-copy of TT scattered throughout, usually at the bottom of different columns. In the electronic versions of TT, they are found all together at the end of the ParshaPix-TTriddles section. The best solution set submitted each week (there isn't always a best) wins a double prize a CD from Noam Productions and/or a gift (game, puzzle, book, etc.) from Big Deal.

TTriddles are scattered through the hard copy of Torah Tidbits and are listed in the email and web versions. They are in the order in which they are found in the hard copy, but not necessarily in the order in which they were originally conceived. In the wild, they are sometimes overlooked. If you are interested, go page by page and keep your eyes peeled.

Last issue's (SH'MINI) TTriddles:

[1] Starts and ends with a KAPARA for this

Our Torah readings this past Shabbat, started with the command for Aharon to offer a calf as a personal CHATAT. This offering is clearly an atonement for the sin of the golden calf. The Torah reading ended with Maftir of Parshat Para. Many commentaries speak of the Para Aduma also being a KAPARA for the sin of the golden calf.

[2] The ostrich and stork have an S in their names. What is the only bird without an S?

This was a sneakier than usual TTriddle. Of course, ostrich and stork both have an S. But, for this TTriddle, so do eagle, griffin vulture, crow, hoopee, and owl - and almost all of the bird types mentioned in the sedra. And that is the curiosity. We are not referring to the English letter S, but rather to the Hebrew words ES or ET and EIS or EIT. Vayikra 11:13-19 contains the list of 20 kinds of birds that are not kosher. After ET HANESHER, we find another 15 V'ETs on the list, one EIT and two V'EITs. Leaving one bird without an S (or ACE or ET or EIT). And that is the ANAFA, translated as the HERON. This TTriddle only makes this observation, without a clue as to significance (if there is significance). BTW, in the list of the non- kosher birds in Parshat R'ei, we find differences: One additional bird, a few name variations, order, and a very different ET/EIT situation. Whereas in Sh'mini, 19 of 20 birds had some form of ALEF-TAV before it, in R'EI, only 10 of 21 birds have S (or a variation) before their names.

Here's a side by side comparison... * indicates a form of L'MINO follows that bird-name

Vayik. 11	prefix	bird	D'var. 14	prefix	bird
13	et ha-	nesher	12	ha-	nesher
	v'et ha-	peres		v'ha-	peres
	v'eit ha-	ozniya		v'ha-	ozniya
14	v'et ha-	da'a	13	v'ha-	ra'a
	v'et ha-	aya *		v'et ha-	aya
				v'ha-	daya *
15	eit kol	oreiv *	14	v'et kol	oreiv *
16 only identical pasuk	v'eit (ha-)	bat (ha-)yaana	15	v'eit (ha-)	bat (ha-)yaana
	v'et ha-	tachmas		v'et ha-	tachmas
	v'et ha-	shachaf		v'et ha-	shachaf
	v'et ha-	neitz *		v'et ha-	neitz*
17	v'et ha-	kos	16	et ha-	kos
	v'et ha-	shalach		v'et ha-	yanshuf
	v'et ha-	yanshuf		v'ha-	tinshemet
18	v'et ha-	tinshemet	17	v'ha-	ka'at
	v'et ha-	ka'at		v'et ha-	rachama
	v'et ha-	racham		v'et ha-	shalach
19	v'eit ha-	chasida	18	v'ha-	chasida
	ha-	anafa *		v'ha-	anafa *
	v'et ha-	duchifas		v'ha-	duchifas
	v'et ha-	ataleif		v'ha-	ataleif

[4] like when the president goes to the airport

TTriddles were not only "thinner" this week, but there is one we didn't even remember the solution of. But what can you expect after the massive Purim TTriddles collection. Time is needed to replenish the TTriddles pond.

This TTriddle was a variation on others that use the bird-names. ET HANESHER V'ET HAPERES... there's the president (Shimon Peres) and the taxi company that serves the airport - NESHER.

This week's TTriddles:

[1] Who is the Aramaic AZZA?

[2] Once in Sh'mot; once Last Week and once this week; once next week and 3 more times...

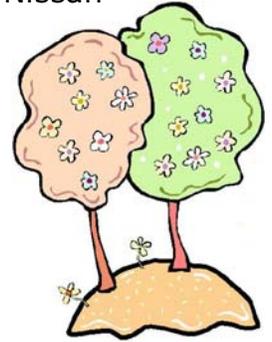
[3] Shave and a haircut - 5 cents - Discount for the big three!

[4] Could be seen as negative criticism of Steve Smith's role on CBC TV

"Mama used to say that Daylight Savings Time is like cutting off the end of a blanket and sewing it on to the other end to make it longer." (Sam Levenson)

ברכת האילנות ברכת האילנות

The following bracha is said only once a year, during the month of Nissan on fruit trees in blossom. It is not said on flowering trees that do not bear fruit. (Say the bracha ONLY if you are sure that the trees are fruit-bearing.) It is not said on fruit trees that already have fruit; only on fruit trees when they display the flower blossoms that precede their fruit.



It is preferable to say the bracha on at least two trees.

The bracha should be said with a sense of awe, appreciation, admiration, and joy of HaShem and the world He created for us.

We specifically acknowledge Him in the presence of fruit trees which delight our senses with their floral displays, even before they provide us with their tasty fruit. We realize that this is an extra-special gift from G-d to us.

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם שלא חסר בעולמו כלום,
וברא בו בריות טובות ואילנות טובים להנות בהם בני אדם:

Some versions have **כלום** instead of **דבר**

Some add these T'hilim

קב שיר המעלות לדוד, שמחתי באמרים לי, בית ה' נלך. עמדות היו רגלינו,
בשעריך ירושלים. ירושלים הבנויה, כעיר שחברה לה יחדו. ששם עלו שבטים
שבטי י'ה עדות לישראל, להדות לשם ה'. פי שמה ישבו כסאות למשפט, כסאות לבית
דוד. שאלו שלום ירושלים, ישליו אהביך. יהי שלום בחילך, שלוה בארמנותיך. למען
אחי ורעי, אדברה נא שלום בך. למען בית ה' אלהינו, אבקשה טוב לך.

קכ שיר המעלות, אשרי כל ירא ה', ההלך בדרךכו. יגיע כפיך כי תאכל, אשריך
וטוב לך. אשתך כגפן פריה בירכתי ביתך, בניה כשתלי זיתים, סביב לשלחנהך.
הנה כי כן יברך גבר, ירא ה'. יברכה ה' מציון, וראה בטוב ירושלים, כל ימי חייה. וראה
בנים לבניהך, שלום על ישראל.

KI HA'ADAM EITZ HASADEH - the Torah compares a person to a tree. The Gemara in Taanit gives us a beautiful analogy: To what does this compare? To a hungry, thirsty, and tired person who was walking in the desert, who came upon a tree with sweet fruit and pleasant shade, with a stream running by it. He ate its fruit, drank its water, and sat in its shade. When he was about to leave, he said: Tree, o' tree, with what shall I bless you? That you should have sweet fruit? Your fruit is already sweet. That you should provide pleasant shade? You shade is already pleasant. That you should have a stream run by you? You already do. So I will say: May all cuttings from you, grow to be like you. So too, how shall one bless a good, Torah observant, happy Jew with a nice family? With Torah? He has it. Happiness? He has it? Children? He has them. Rather, may it be Hashem's will that your offspring shall all be like you.