

BS"D

To: Parsha@YahooGroups.com
From: crshulman@aol.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON KI SAVO - 5762

To receive this parsha sheet in Word and/or Text format, send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/join> Please also copy me at crshulman@aol.com For archives of old parsha sheets see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/messages> For Torah links see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/links>

From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [ryfrand@torah.org] Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Ki Savo
"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Ki Savo

It's a Mitzvah to be Happy

This week's parsha contains the mitzvah of bringing one's first fruits (Bikurim) to Jerusalem. The farmer must thank G-d for the bounty with which he has been graced. In addition to the declaration, the Torah commands the farmer to rejoice: "You shall be glad with all the goodness that Hashem, your G-d, has given you and your household..." [Devarim 26:11]

Rav Mordechai Gifter (1916-2001) asks, why it was necessary for the Torah to add the command for the farmer to be happy? The farmer has just had a bountiful harvest and has arrived in Jerusalem loaded down with first fruits. He already feels terrific. So why must the Torah specify a new positive command -- be happy with all that G-d gave you?

Rav Gifter explains that this command is necessary. A person could come up to Jerusalem with a bounty of Bikurim and still be thinking to himself "it could have been better!" He could be jealously looking at his neighbor's fruits and thinking, "he had a better crop than I did". Unfortunately, one can be blessed with the biggest bounty and yet choose not to be happy. Therefore, as part of the mitzvah of Bikurim, The Torah commands that we should be appreciative. We must look at what we have and be happy about what we have.

We must be happy with what we have even if it COULD have been better and even if our neighbor DID have a better crop. If G-d has seen fit to bless us with this, then we must be happy with it.

In fact, this may be the interpretation of the verses in the middle of the Tochacha [Curses] in our parsha [Devarim 28:47-48] "Because you did not serve Hashem your G-d, amid gladness and goodness of heart, when everything was abundant". These terrible curses, described in graphic detail in the Tochacha, are occurring because we failed to serve G-d out of joy and happiness -- when we had abundance of everything (m'rov kol).

These two words ('rov' and 'kol') should remind us of an earlier passage in the Torah. Eisav is the one who said [Bereshis 33:9] "yesh li ROV" [I have plenty] and Yaakov is the one who responded [Bereshis 33:11] "yesh li KOL" [I have everything I need]. The difference between an Eisav and a Yaakov is that however much Eisav possesses, he only sees it as "plenty". Yaakov, however, recognizes that what he has is, in fact, "kol" - everything that he needs.

The pasuk in the Tochacha is explaining that the source of a person's unhappiness is "m'rov kol" -- the fact that he views all the good things that he possesses as only "plenty", in the same way that Eisav viewed his possessions. Anytime a person thinks that he does not have "kol" [everything], he will never be happy. The greatest amount of "rov kol" [plenty] will never make a person happy, as the Talmud teaches, "One who has one hundred wants two hundred".

'Faithful' Illnesses Are Part of the Curse

At the end of the Tochacha [Devarim 28:59] the pasuk states, "Then Hashem will make extraordinary your blows and the blows of your offspring -- great and faithful blows (makos gedolos v'Neemanos), and

evil and faithful illnesses (Cholayim gedolim v'Neemanim)." The Talmud [Avodah Zarah 55a] comments on the peculiar choice of adjective for the blows and the illnesses: faithful. This is certainly not a modifier that we would ever choose to describe an illness. The Gemara teaches an amazing insight. Before G-d decides to send illness upon a person, he (figuratively speaking) makes the illness take an oath. The illness is instructed that it will reside within the person for so many days, it will cause so much amount of pain, and it will be cured by such and such medicine and then depart. The illness 'swears' that it will abide by these instructions and only then is it sent out to inflict the person.

Sometimes a person may have a chronic disease. It can drag on for days and weeks and even months and then one day it disappears. Then it can reappear later and the cycle is repeated. Chronic illnesses can be like that. But whatever the case may be, the Gemara teaches, is all part of the oath. The oath insures that the illness will cause a specific amount of suffering, will last a specific duration and not a moment longer.

Rabbeinu Tam [Rosh HaShanna 16a D.H. Kman Matzlinan] states that the exact time when a person will become sick is in fact a decree from Heaven, however the timing of the cure is not decreed. This statement of Rabbeinu Tam seems to contradict the previously quoted Gemara in Avodah Zarah that explicitly states that the cure and duration of the illness is also decreed.

The Yavetz in Tractate Rosh HaShanna explains that Rabbeinu Tam means to say that the suffering can leave earlier than expected through the power of prayer. In other words, Rabbeinu Tam agrees that there is a decreed time when the illness will leave, however a person has the power through his prayers to expedite that departure.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington
DavidATwersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org This week's write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion (#428). Tape # 428 - Mentioning G-d's Name in Vain Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. RavFrand, Copyright © 2002 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 203 (410) 602-1350 Baltimore, MD 21208

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2001/parsha/rsac_kitavo.html

TorahWeb [from last year]

RABBI YONASAN SACKS

THE TOCHACHA: A FOUNDATION OF PERSONAL AND COMMUNAL RESPONSIBILITY

Each member of Kenesses Yisroel is endowed with an inherent Kedusha which manifests itself both individually and collectively. A true ovid Hashem not only strives for personal piety and religious growth, but also concerns himself and identifies with the aims and needs of others.

The Torah ascribes added significance to a mitzva by virtue of its collective nature. Hence, should an individual lose a close relative during a festival his personal obligation to mourn is suspended until the conclusion of that festival in order to allow him to allow him to fulfill the obligation of simcha (rejoicing) during that yom tov. In explaining the priority given to that simcha, the Talmud (Moed Kattan 14b) states: "Asi ase d'rabbim v'dachy ase d'yachid" ("a positive collective commandment comes and pushes aside a positive individual commandment"). The Rambam maintains that both of these obligations, mourning the loss of a relative and rejoicing on a festival are biblical commandments. Hence, even from a biblical perspective, preference is shown to a collective obligation. Furthermore, basing themselves on an incident involving Rabbi Eliezer freeing a slave in

order to insure tefillah b'tsibur, Tosafos asserts that even a collective rabbinical obligation can override a personal biblical prohibition. The distinction between individual and collective obligations is often evident in the Torah's formulation of the commandment itself. Whereas individual commandments are often stated in the plural, collective imperatives are formulated in the singular, thus emphasizing the collectivity as a whole. An example of the latter is the obligation of counting the Yovel (Jubilee) cycle. Unlike the mitzva of taking a lulav on Succos which is formulated in the plural, "u'l'kachtem lachem" (Vayikra 23:40) ("and you shall take for yourselves"), here the Torah states, "u'safarta l'cha" (Vayikra 25:8) ("and you shall count for yourself"). For this reason, the Sifrei (ibid) comments, " 'u'safarta l'cha' – b'beis din" (" 'and you shall count for yourself' – in a rabbinical court"), limiting the obligation of counting the Yovel years to the highest court which represents the people of Israel as a whole. Another example is the obligation of counting the omer which, although initially rendered in the plural, "u'safartem lachem" (Vayikra 23:15) ("and you shall count for yourselves"), is later repeated in the singular "tispar lach" (Devarim 16:9) ("count for yourself"). Accordingly, the Torah requires each individual to count the omer, thereby accounting for the initial plural formulation of this commandment. However, basing himself on the second singular formulation, Rabbi Eliezer argues (Menachos 65b) that the counting must be t'luya b'bais din, dependent on the highest court as well. Hence, this court, the collective representative of Israel, must determine when the counting begins. The Sifre (Devarim 16:9) requires that the omer be counted twice, once individually and a second time collectively, by the highest court. A further example of a Parsha which contains individual as well as collective elements is the tochacha, the portion of this week's Torah reading which discusses divine retribution. The Tochacha, like the commandment to count the omer, is found twice in the Torah. In Vayikra (26), it is formulated in the plural, addressing each individual member of B'nei Yisroel. In Devarim (28), however, it is repeated in the singular, which the Gaon of Vilna explains is directed to the collective unit of Kenesses Yisroel. The collective quality of this tochacha is emphasized by the verses (Devarim 29:13-14) which follow it: "v'lo itchem l'vadchem anochi kores es habris hazos v'es ha'aloh hazos, ki es asher yeshno po imanu omeid hayom lifnei Hashem Elokeinu v'es asher ainenu po imanu hayom" ("not only with you do I make this covenant and oath; but with him that stands here with us this day before the Lord our G-d, and also with him that is not here with us this day"). Rashi explains that the phrase "v'lo itchem l'vadchem" includes even "doros ho'asidim l'hiyos" - generations that are destined to yet come into existence. Thus, the collective nature of the tochacha in particular, and Kenesses Yisroel in general, includes any future member of B'nei Yisroel as well. Accordingly, the Gemora in Sotah(16b) and Sanhedrin(43b) derives the concept of arvus, communal responsibility, from the tochacha, which emphasizes the collective unit of B'nei Yisroel. In this sense, Rav Yeruchum Perlow (Sefer HaMitzvos L'Rasag, Chapter 57) explains the view of the Bahag who counts the tochacha and its blessings and curses among the 613 mitzvos. He suggests that he Bahag was not referring to the ceremony and ritual of the tochacha, but rather to the mitzva of arvus which is rooted in the tochacha itself. The reading of the tochacha this Shabbos is not coincidental, but rather a Takanas (enactment of) Ezra requiring that the tochacha be read before Rosh Hashana. We must approach Rosh Hashana and the yemei hadin (days of judgement) with a heightened appreciation and awareness of the uniqueness of arvus and Kedushas Yisroel. May the reading of the tochacha realize our fervent tefilos, "she tichle hashana u'klaloseha" (the year and its curses come to an end).

<http://www.artscroll.com/parashah.html> Parashah Talk
 Parashas Ki Savo
 EXCERPT FROM DARASH MOSHE,
 BY RABBI MOSHE FEINSTEIN

"An Aramean tried to destroy my forefather. He descended to Egypt and sojourned there" (26:5)
 Whenever we thank Hashem for His kindness to us, it is also important to mention the merits of our forefathers and Hashem's promises to them. We do this to be certain we realize that the kindness Hashem does for us are not in the merit of our own mitzvos and good deeds. Indeed, in the opinion of Sefer Mitzvos Gedolah such thoughts are forbidden. Many people make the mistake of thinking that Hashem blesses them because of their own righteousness, but this is an error for which they are required to do teshuvah like any other sin. On the surface there seems to be no connection between the attempt of Laban the Aramean to destroy our forefather Jacob and Jacob's later descent to Egypt. Why, then, does the Torah relate the two events in the same verse? Although Rashi comments that not only Laban but others, including the Egyptians sought to destroy us, we would like to suggest a more direct connection between these two events. Elsewhere (Bereishis 32:5) , Rashi tells us that in spite of all the trials to which Jacob was subjected throughout his sojourn with Laban, he observed all the commandments. We may assume that had he succumbed to Laban's wicked influence in any way, he would not willingly have taken his family to Egypt, with the far greater trials he knew awaited him there. True, Joseph was ruler over all of Egypt and still remained as much of a tzaddik as he had always been. Nonetheless, Jacob would not have exposed his family to the spiritual dangers of Egypt in the hope that they would remain committed there to the path of Torah and Mitzvos based on the experience of one individual. Hashem wanted Jacob to go to Egypt of his own free will, not in chains as Joseph has gone. It was therefore necessary that Jacob spent time in Laban's house to assure himself of his ability to overcome Laban's attempts to destroy him and his family as a Torah unit. Having prevailed in that situation and having left there intact, he would agree to go to Egypt. Thus the attempt of Laban the Aramean to destroy our forefather Jacob was a necessary precondition for Jacob's voluntary descent to Egypt.

 From: Yeshivat Har Etzion Office [office@etzion.org.il] Subject: SICHOT62 -44: Parashat Ki Tavo
 Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash (Vbm) Student Summaries Of Sichot Delivered By The Roshei Yeshiva Parashat Ki Tavo
 This shiur is dedicated in memory of Shmuel David Reece, David S. Reece z"l, by his children and grandchildren.
 Mazal tov to Tani '89 and Miryam Wallach upon the birth of their daughter - may they be zocheh to raise her le- Torah, le-chuppa u-le-ma'asim tovim. Mazal tov as well to the proud grandparents, Paul and Kathy Wallach. May you have much nachat from all the grandchildren.
 SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A
 FIRST FRUITS AND PRAYER: MAINTAINING JEWISH IDENTITY
 Summarized by Dov Karoll

The Torah's discussion of bikkurim, the first fruits brought to the Temple (Devarim 26:1-11), places great emphasis on thanks to G-d. This is not merely thanks for the produce, but rather a full recognition of the history of the Jewish people up to and including the entry to the land. Accordingly, this declaration expresses identification with Jewish history as well as recognition of one's part in it, emphasizing the individual's connection with the Jewish people throughout the generations.

Midrash Tanchuma (Ki Tavo, 1) explains that Moshe anticipated that the Temple would be destroyed, and that bikkurim would be discontinued. Accordingly, he established that the Jewish people pray three times daily, for prayer is more beloved before G-d than any other action or offering. The element of identification with the Jewish people mentioned above holds true for prayer as well as for bikkurim. In the course of our prayers, the emphasis is clearly on the Jewish people as a whole. First, our requests are always formulated in the plural. Second, the requests themselves emphasize the

national element: we ask for G-d to save us (Goel Yisrael), to gather in our exiles (Mekabbetz niddechei ammo Yisrael), to restore justice (Hashiva shofetenu), to rebuild Jerusalem (Ve-li-Yerushalayim), and so on. Through our prayers we can also gain an appreciation of our connection to the Jewish people and to the land of Israel.

But what can we do for people who do not pray three times a day? How are they to maintain Jewish identity? We need always to assure that there are ways for people to maintain this identification with the Jewish people, so that they remain part of the Jewish collective.

Over recent years, this feeling of connection to the Jewish people has waned. The dream of many Israelis was that we become a nation like any other nation. Over the course of this last, difficult year, it has become clear again to people that the Jewish people is not a normal nation; rather, we are an "am levadad yishkon," a nation that dwells alone (Bemidbar 23:9). If we cannot learn this lesson on our own, then G-d teaches it to us the hard way. May it be His will that we should learn this lesson, and that G-d should have compassion on us and redeem us.

(This sicha was originally delivered on leil Shabbat, Parashat Ki Tavo, 5761 [2001].)

Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash Alon Shevut, Gush Etzion 90433 E-Mail: Yhe@Etzion.Org.II Or Office@Etzion.Org.II

http://www.ou.org/torah/tt/5762/kitavo62/specialfeatures_mitzvot.htm

MEANING IN MITZVOT

By RABBI ASHER MEIR

Each week we discuss one familiar halakhic practice and try to show its beauty and meaning. The columns are based on Rabbi Meir's Meaning in Mitzvot on Kitzur Shulchan Arukh.

AVOIDING CELEBRATION FOR A MOURNER

Our parsha opens with the declaration of thanks made by the farmer who brings his first fruits. He affirms that he separated out tithes including maaser sheni, and adds, "I did not eat of it during mourning" (Devarim 26:14). The sadness of mourning is a contradiction to the joy required for eating maaser. (Technically this prohibition only applies during the first stage of mourning known as aninut.)

A modern-day analog of this law is the prohibition for the mourner to take part in a rejoicing such as a wedding. This prohibition is for thirty days; if the mourning is for a parent, then the prohibition is for twelve months (Yoreh Deah 391).

WAVES OF JOY AND SORROW The primary celebration that is forbidden is a wedding. A wedding is not only inappropriate to mourning; it is in fact a mirror image. During a wedding, the person renews and reconstructs the self by expansion, by incorporating a new person into the self and the family; during mourning, the renewal and reconstruction takes place after the contraction of the self and the family through the loss of a loved one.

The parallel relationship between mourning and the rejoicing of the wedding is hinted at in the Yerushalmi which explains that Moshe instituted both the seven day period of rejoicing for bride and groom and the seven day period of mourning for the bereaved (Yerushalmi Ketubot 1:1).

One central theme of the laws of mourning is that death is a momentous event, one that we do not allow to pass unnoticed. It is obligatory to make a funeral, which it is a mitzva to attend; the mourners sit shiva and all of their friends and relatives come to console them, and so on. The idea is to extend the wave of bereavement as far as possible. This is a way of giving proper respect for the departed soul, and also spreads the burden of the mourning as widely as possible.

The same applies to a wedding. The creation of a new family is of inestimable importance. It is a mitzva to take part in the bridal procession, and to gladden the bride and groom; after the wedding, all the friends and relatives come to the sheva berakhot to extend the rejoicing.

The parallel extends even to the idea of panim chadashot – new faces. Just as the sheva berakhot are said only if there is a new celebrant present, so in previous generations the special blessing of mourning was said only if a new person came to console (Tur Yoreh Deah 376 -

Today this blessing is not said). Again, the emphasis on new faces shows the importance of extending as much as possible the participation in the event.

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY This halakha underscores a paradox in the laws of mourning. On the one hand, the prohibition to eat maaser while in mourning expresses the contradiction between the public character of simcha and the private seclusion of mourning. The maaser is shared with "the Levi, the stranger, the orphan and the widow" (26:12), while the mourner is alone in his sorrow. On the other hand, mourning, like all other periods of personal transition, requires the participation and support of the community, to give expression to the communal nature of the Jewish people and to our mutual responsibility.

Rabbi Meir has completed writing a monumental companion to Kitzur Shulchan Aruch which beautifully presents the meanings in our mitzvot and halacha. It will hopefully be published in the near future. Rabbi Meir authors a popular weekly on-line Q&A column, "The Jewish Ethicist", which gives Jewish guidance on everyday ethical dilemmas in the workplace. The column is a joint project of the JCT Center for Business Ethics, Jerusalem College of Technology - Machon Lev; and Aish HaTorah. You can see the Jewish Ethicist, and submit your own questions, at www.jewishethicist.com or at www.aish.com.

From: Shema Yisrael Torah Network [shemalists@shemayisrael.com]

To: Peninim Parsha

PENINIM ON THE TORAH

BY RABBI A. LEIB SCHEINBAUM

PARSHAS KI SAVO You shall take of the first of every fruit of the ground... and go to the place that Hashem, your G-d, will choose to make His Name rest there. (26:2) The mitzvah of Bikurim, offering one's first fruits to the Kohen in the Bais HaMikdash, is a mitzvah which symbolizes the Jew's sense of gratitude, by dedicating everything that he has to the service of Hashem. We must realize that regardless of the time and effort we invest in any given endeavor, the successful results are a gift from Hashem. Much has been said and written about one's overwhelming responsibility to recognize, appreciate and pay gratitude to those who benefit us. Indeed, this is probably the measure of a man. One who appreciates, is a human being - one who does not appreciate, simply is not to be counted among the members of the human race.

Among those who are on the top of the list of those who earn and deserve our gratitude are, of course, Hashem and our parents. They share one thing in common: we can never sufficiently repay them for what they do for us. I recently came across a noteworthy story which is well worth imparting. It is about a woman who wanted to do something special for her mother, to give her a gift that would convey her gratitude and love.

She tried to imagine what it was that her mother needed most. After careful introspection she came to a simple, but profound conclusion, one that probably applies to all parents: Her mother needed to know that she made a difference in the lives of her children. While we all know this to be true, how many of us stop to think about it?

Furthermore, how many of us do something about it? Parents give up so much for their children. Some give up money, others give up time.

There are those very special parents who even give up their dreams, their own opportunities for personal growth and advancement - all for their children. All they really want in return is a little feedback, some indication that their efforts were not in vain.

So, in recognition of her mother's efforts and in gratitude, she made a "memory jar" for her. She purchased a large glass jar with a lid and placed over one hundred little pieces of paper in the jar. On each piece of paper she jotted down a memory that she wanted to share with her mother. They were simple but meaningful memories. She remembered the talk they had when she became engaged and the one right before she got married. She remembered how she saved her money to buy a dress and how her mother had paid for half of it. She remembered how scared she was as a little girl when her mother was sick and had to go to the hospital. She remembered calling her mother to inform her that

she had just become a grandmother. Simple memories - but each one told a story of love and caring.

There are variations to this jar. I am sure that if we would sit down and think we could come up with a "number" of instances during our lives for which we must thank our parents. Some of us might find it difficult to say thank you because that is human nature. The debt of gratitude we owe our parents is overwhelming and the time during which we can express ourselves is limited. So, what are we waiting for ?

Gaze down from Your Holy abode, from the heavens, and bless Your People, Yisrael. (26:15)

The parsha of Bikkurim ends with a special prayer entreating Hashem to gaze down from His sacred abode in Heaven, and listen to the pleas of Klal Yisrael. The Midrash Tanchuma relates that Moshe Rabbeinu, upon seeing through Ruach HaKodesh, Divine Inspiration, that the Bais HaMikdash will one day be destroyed, established for Klal Yisrael a ritual of three daily prayers. Prayer is even more beloved to Hashem than good deeds and sacrifices. We see from here that there is an intrinsic relationship between prayer and Bikkurim.

Horav Gedaliah Schorr, zl, explains that both through the mediums of Bikkurim and of prayer, one recognizes and conveys the notion that everything comes from Hashem. It is for this reason that we begin the Shemoneh Esrai prayer with the berachah of "Atah chonen l'adam daas," "You graciously endow man with knowledge," a prayer that expresses our gratitude for being endowed with intelligence and the ability to recognize the source of all things. Likewise, in the Bikkurim entreaty we convey our gratitude for the blessings that we have been granted. Consequently, Moshe implored Hashem that Klal Yisrael always retain the power of prayer - even when the Bais HaMikdash and its ensuing mitzvah of Bikkurim are no longer functional. The recognition of "Atah chonen," "You graciously endow," catalyzes our hakoras ha'tov, appreciation and gratitude, for all that He does for us. In an alternative exposition, Rav Schorr cites the Chidushei Ha'Rim who explains that just as Bikkurim is a way of consecrating the reishis, beginning/first fruits, so too, does prayer sanctify the beginning of our "time." Subsequently, immediately upon rising in the morning we hurry to the shul to pray to Hashem. In the afternoon, as the sun begins to set in the west, we hasten to the shul so that we may convey our gratitude to Hashem. Likewise, at the onset of night, we accept upon ourselves the Ol Malchus Shomayim, yoke of the Heavenly Kingdom. We hope that our actions will have an "overflow" effect on the other hours of the day, so that our zman, "time," will be holy. What Moshe Rabbeinu achieved through his entreaty was that Hashem will accept our heartfelt prayers although they are not embellished by the sanctity of the Bais HaMikdash. Our prayers should be like the Bikkurim of old, which were offered with profound gratitude to He that is the Source of everything.

All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you. (28:2) The berachos, blessings, will reach one who is worthy of blessing. What does one do to be worthy of blessing? What merit catalyzes blessing? The following narrative sheds light on this question. It was Purim day in the small town of Bendin. The entire community was involved with the mitzvos of the day. Some were sending Mishloach Manos, traditional gifts of food, to each other, while others were occupied with the mitzvah of Matanos l'Evyonim, giving charity to the poor. Yet others were observing simchas Purim, the joy of Purim by singing, dancing, and feasting, celebrating the Jewish People's being spared from Haman's evil decree. The entire community was thus engaged, well almost the entire community, everyone but one Jew, Rav Zev Nachum Burnstein, zl, who studied Torah all day long, "Lo posak pumei migzsei," "His mouth did not stop for a moment. He was always studying Torah. A scholar of note, Rav Burnstein was also a chassid of the famous Kotzker Rebbe.

The Kotzker later related that on that Purim there was a great uproar in the Heavenly Tribunal. Had Rav Nachum Zev not been learning during that period, there would have been an interval when the study of Torah - pure study with toil and diligence would have been lacking. This would have created an awesome spiritual crisis. Rav Nachum Zev

must therefore be rewarded. His zchus ha'Torah, merit of Torah study, achieved great heights. His reward was commensurate with his deed. He was given a special gift - his son, Rav Avraham, who authored the incredible volumes of Iglei Tal and Avnei Nezer, whose encyclopedic knowledge and brilliance illuminated the Torah world.

We may add that we derive from here that Hashem rewards a person commensurate with his values. One who appreciates and values Torah will have unparalleled joy to see his son grow up to be a gadol b'Yisrael, Torah leader. Conversely, others might not be enamored with such a blessing, viewing the Torah scholar in a somewhat disdainful manner. They would much rather see their son become a successful professional. Well, to each his own.

Hashem will confirm you for Himself as a holy people...if you observe the commandments of Hashem...and you go in His ways. Then all the peoples of the earth will see that the Name of Hashem is proclaimed over you and they will revere you. (28:9,10)

Horav M.D. Soloveitchik, Shlita, cites Chazal who interpret the enjoinder to "follow in His ways," as to emulate Hashem. Just like He is compassionate, so shall you be compassionate, etc. Subsequently, we achieve deveikus, we cling to Hashem, through our mitzvah performance. Thus, when people will observe that Hashem's Name is "called upon us," they will ultimately fear the Almighty. What greater Kiddush Hashem, sanctification of Hashem's Name, is there than by seeing the positive actions and good deeds of His followers.

Rav Soloveitchik notes the awesome responsibility this presents for the Jew. When one performs a mitzvah it no longer is a personal experience - it has a direct influence on the klal, general community. Consequently, when one transgresses it has a negative effect not only on him, but on the community as well. A Jew must realize that he cannot isolate himself from the community. He does not live alone in a vacuum. His actions - both positive and negative - have an effect on others. This should inspire and motivate our positive performance.

Because you did not serve Hashem, your G-d, amid gladness and goodness of heart. (28:47)

Simchah, joy, is the characteristic upon which our Sages have placed great emphasis. Indeed, it is one of the primary tenets upon which the concepts of Chassidism is based. Being born into a world of lingering doom and depression, the world of chassidus focused on overcoming dejection and melancholy and its overriding effect on one's religious life. While joy and the display of joy became the benchmark of chassidus, they did not have a monopoly on the concept. While there were detractors who felt that excessive joy betrayed a lack of seriousness, most others felt that these emotions injected a welcome vitality into the solemnity of religious life.

The focus on joy takes on a number of aspects. At its most basic level, joy means not being depressed. At its zenith, a Jew is overjoyed at being part of the Chosen People. Fundamental to chassidic doctrine is the joy inherent with being near Hashem. The world is Hashem's creation and man is a part of that world. Man is filled with joy knowing that the Almighty has befriended him.

We must add, however, that even in sadness there are two aspects. Horav Nachman, zl, m'Breslov distinguished between a lev nishbar, broken heart, and atzvus, sadness and sorrow. He explains that sadness is expressed in anger and irritability, whereas brokenheartedness is much like a son cleansing himself before his father, like a child crying and complaining that he has been sent far away from his father. The purifying desire, the longing for reconciliation is interpreted as a "brokenheart." This form of sadness is not the antithesis of joy. Indeed, for us to achieve such a plateau of longing for Hashem, should in itself be a source of joy.

The Breslover focuses much of his lectures on the significance of joy and the harmful effect of depression. He considers sadness as being part of the kelipos, outer shells, the Kabbalistic symbol of evil. Sadness and melancholy are like dust which clog the Jewish heart, rendering it unable to burst into flame from the fiery passion of serving Hashem. By removing extraneous emotional burdens, joy enables one to intellectually cogitate upon his ultimate purpose in the world, and thereby make it possible for his religious experience to flourish. When

one dances out of joy at a simchah shel mitzvah, for the sake of Heaven, he is able to rid himself of all sinful and immoral acts involved with his legs. A cheerful frame of mind gives one the opportunity to pray to Hashem with greater ease and ecstasy. As mentioned, the joy inherent in being a part of Klal Yisrael should be most inspiring. The Divrei Chaim, zl, was wont to say, "If a Jew would realize how lucky he is to be a Yehudi, he would be delirious with happiness." What a penetrating statement! If only more of us would realize our distinctiveness we might act appropriately. It goes even further. A widow once approached the Divrei Chaim as he was sitting in conference with Rav Sholom, zl, m'Kaminka. She bewailed her miserable lot in life. Her husband's demise left his family bereft of a breadwinner. She and her children were overcome with abject poverty. Now, their landlord was trying to eject them from their home. Her incessant weeping and grievous circumstances had their effect on Rav Sholom, who began to cry with her. The Divrei Chaim, on the other hand, declared in a joyful tone, "Do not worry. Go home, things will work out for you." After she had left, Rav Sholom, queried the Divrei Chaim how he could retain his happy disposition after listening to the widow's tale of woe. He responded, "To be able to intercede on behalf of another Jew one must be b'simchah, filled with joy." We submit that the reason for this is that one must approach Hashem with confidence, with faith, with belief that Hashem will see the positive virtue of the one in need. After all, it is difficult to "sell something" that one does not believe in. Lastly, to sum up the feeling of joy intrinsic in mitzvah performance, we cite the following anecdote. Horav Avraham, zl, m'Teschinov had a close friend who was also a great gaon, brilliant scholar. His friend once asked him, "Explain something to me. Both of us have studied Torah for many years, and have become proficient in its profundities. Moreover, we both diligently perform mitzvos and serve Hashem with great devotion. Why then is it that you are called "Rebbe" by everyone and I am not?" Rav Avraham responded, "Can you tell me when you experienced such heightened joy that you can not even describe it?" "Yes," answered his friend. "Once, I made ten thousand rubles on a single business venture." Hearing this, the Teshchinover Rebbe said, "My friend, when I stretch out my arm to put on Tefillin as my Creator has commanded me, I am filled with much greater joy than you experienced when you profited ten thousand ruble!" When the friend heard this, he declared, "If so, the world is not mistaken - you truly deserve to be called Rebbe."

Sponsored by Ruthie and Sam Salamon in loving memory of MR. VICTOR GELB

<http://www.koltorah.org/ravj/bishulakum.htm> Parshat Ki Tavo
16 Elul 5760 -- September 16, 2000 [from 2 yrs ago]

BISHUL AKUM

BY RABBI HOWARD JACHTER

Introduction Many people observe the prohibition of Bishul Akum at a less-than-optimal level. A review of this topic might motivate us to upgrade our standards in this area of Halacha. We will base our discussion on an essay authored by Rav Menachem Genack (the director of the Kashrut division of the Orthodox Union) that appears in the first volume of the Torah journal Mesorah.

The Basis of the Prohibition The Mishna that appears on Avoda Zara 35b teaches that Chazal prohibited us to eat food cooked by a non-Jew. The primary reason for this restriction, as explained by Rashi (ibid. s.v. V'hashlakot) and Tosafot (38a s.v. Ela), is to discourage intermarriage. The fact that we must bear in mind the prohibition of Bishul Akum (food cooked by a non-Jew) when we interact with non-Jews teaches us to distance ourselves somewhat from non-Jews. Although we are friendly and honest in our dealings with non-Jews, there must be significant separation. The Bishul Akum prohibition helps us achieve this important goal.

Food Suitable for a King At first glance, this prohibition seems to be oppressive and exceedingly difficult to observe. This would especially appear to be the case in the contemporary context when much of the

food that we consume is prepared in factories by non-Jews. However, Chazal made numerous exceptions to the Bishul Akum restriction. These exceptions make observance of this Halacha well within our reach.

A most significant exception is that the food must be Oleh Al Shulchan Malachim, suitable for a king's table (Avoda Zara 38a). This rule can be interpreted in two possible ways. The Chazon Ish (cited by Rav Shimon Schwab, Mesorah 1:86) believes that it refers to food that is not of poor quality and would be eaten by a very wealthy person. The Chazon Ish ruled that canned sardines cooked by non-Jews were forbidden because "the King of England eats sardines for breakfast." The Aruch Hashulchan (Yoreh Deah 113:18) seems to agree with this strict ruling of the Chazon Ish. Rav Schwab notes that many of the great Rashei Yeshiva of pre-war Eastern Europe ate sardines cooked by non-Jews. The practice of the Rashei Yeshiva appears to be in accordance with Rav Soloveitchik's interpretation of this rule. Rav Soloveitchik believes that Ole Al Shulchan Malachim means that the food has to be suitable to serve at a state dinner. Rav Soloveitchik's interpretation has great implications, as according to his approach, almost no canned food would be included in the Bishul Akum prohibition because food served at a state dinner is cooked fresh.

Foods Eaten Raw The Gemara (Avoda Zara 38a) mentions a second exception to the rule. A food item that people eat raw is not included in the Bishul Akum prohibition. Rav Genack writes (Mesorah 1:89) that fish may be in this category today since sushi has become a common delicacy not only in Far Eastern countries but also in this country as well.

Smoked, Steamed, and Microwaved Foods The Rambam (Hilchot Maachalot Asurot 17:17) and the Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 113:13) rule that smoked foods are not included within the Bishul Akum restriction. The Rama (ibid.) writes that only foods cooked by using fire are included in this prohibition.

Approximately one hundred years ago, rabbinical authorities began to debate whether steamed foods are included within the Bishul Akum prohibition (see Darkei Teshuva 113:16). Proponents of the lenient view argued that steaming is analogous to smoking and not cooking, since the food is not directly cooked through means of a fire. Another argument for leniency was that since the steaming of foods was first introduced many centuries after Chazal forbade Bishul Akum, steaming was not a form of cooking that was included in the original decree. Rav Ovadia Yosef (Teshuvot Yabia Omer 5:Y.D. 9) rules leniently that steaming is not included within the parameters of the Bishul Akum decree.

Today, rabbinical authorities debate whether cooking by means of a microwave oven is included in the prohibition of Bishul Akum. The arguments for leniency are that when one cooks with a microwave he is not cooking by fire and that microwave technology was not available at the time when Chazal promulgated the Bishul Akum decree and thus was not included in the prohibition. Moreover, most food cooked in a microwave oven is not suitable to be served at a state dinner.

Pilot Lights The Gemara (Avoda Zara 38b) rules that if a Jew played a significant role in the cooking of the food, the Bishul Akum decree does not apply. The Rishonim debate how far we may extend this leniency. Rav Yosef Karo (Y.D. 113:7) rules that if a Jew merely turned on the flame but did not participate at all in the cooking process then the Bishul Akum prohibition does apply. The Rama (ibid.) disagrees and rules that even if the Jew merely turned on the fire this avoids the Bishul Akum prohibition. Rabbis in the future may debate whether a Jew turning on a voice-powered oven by speaking constitutes sufficient participation in the cooking process to avoid the Bishul Akum decree. The Rama cites a very lenient ruling that even if the non-Jew lit the fire used for cooking from a fire lit by a Jew this suffices to avoid concern of violating the Bishul Akum restriction. According to this very lenient view, the Jew is considered to have participated in the cooking process. This last leniency is particularly relevant to those ovens that are equipped with a pilot light that a Jew lit. In such a situation, when the non-Jew turns on the fire he is lighting the fire from a fire lit by a Jew. The Aruch Hashulchan (Y.D. 113:44) rules that one should not

rely on this great leniency except in case of great need and provided that the non-Jew performs the cooking in the Jew's home. Workers at Home and in the Factory Tosafot (Avoda Zara 38a s.v. Ela) cites two opinions whether the Bishul Akum prohibition applies when a non-Jew cooks the food in a Jew's home. Rabbeinu Avraham ben David rules that the prohibition does not apply because the reasons for the prohibition do not apply. Only when the non-Jew prepares the food in his own home is the concern for intermarriage relevant. Rabbeinu Tam rejects this view stating that we do not find that Chazal made such a distinction. The Halacha follows the view of Rabbeinu Tam (Y.D. 113:1).

Some Rishonim and Acharonim rule that the Bishul Akum decree does not apply to a non-Jew whom you employ. They reason that only in a relationship of peers does the concern for intermarriage constitute a concern. The Rama (Y.D. 113:4) seems to rule that one may rely on these lenient views B'dieved (i.e. that initially one should not rely on these opinions, but if the food was already cooked one may rely on the lenient opinions and eat the food). The Shach (113:7) and the Aruch Hashulchan (Y.D. 113:4) express serious reservations about relying on the lenient opinions even B'dieved. One should make every effort not to rely on the lenient views.

Rav Moshe Feinstein is cited by Rav Nata Greenblatt (Mesorah 1:94) stating that the Bishul Akum restriction applies even to food that is produced in a factory. Rav Moshe explains that the prohibition applies despite the fact that there is hardly any concern for intermarriage with the factory workers' families. However, Rav Moshe is lenient if the food is produced in a factory in a manner that one could not do with household equipment.

The Utensils Used by the Non-Jew The Rashba and the Rosh argue whether the Bishul Akum decree extends to utensils that touched hot food cooked by a non-Jew. The Rashba argues that we are not only forbidden to eat the food eaten by the non-Jew, but the utensils that touch hot food that a non-Jew cooked are also rendered not Kosher. The Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 113:16) cites both the view of the Rashba and the Rosh, but it presents the Rashba's strict view as the primary view. The Shulchan Aruch, though, presents a leniency that although one may not Kasher earthenware utensils, in this context one may Kasher earthenware dishes if they are Kashered three times. The Aruch Hashulchan (113:50) writes that the Rashba's strict ruling is accepted as normative.

Conclusion Chazal made numerous exceptions to the Bishul Akum decree to facilitate its observance. The fact that we must concern ourselves with this issue and determine whether the prohibition applies accomplishes the goal of reminding us of the need to distance ourselves somewhat from our non-Jewish neighbors. In an age of rampant assimilation and intermarriage, it behooves us to take appropriate steps to upgrade our observance of this rabbinical decree.

From: chrysler [rachrysl@netvision.net.il] To: Midei Parsha Subject: Midei Shabbos by RABBI ELIEZER CHRYSLER

Vol. 9 No. 45 This issue is sponsored l'iluy Nishmos Menachem Ze'ev ben Eliezer u'mishpachto hey'd & Yechezkel Sh'raga ben Menachem Monish u'mishpachto hey'd

Parshas Ki Savo MOSHIACH IS COMING

(Adapted from Tosfos and Rashi) The Torah relates how, in the same way as G-d rejoiced over us to do good to us and to increase us when we were worthy, when we are unworthy, He will let others rejoice as they proceed to destroy us and to wipe us out.

Tosfos takes this very literally, treating it as an equation between the good times and the bad. In fact, he says, this is a hint to the date when Moshi'ach will come.

And he bases his reckoning on the Pasuk in Daniel (12:11), "And from the time that the Korban Tamid was removed and replaced by an abomination, a time period of one thousand, two hundred and ninety", which traditionally sets the date for the coming of Moshi'ach.

The 400 years of Galus Mitzrayim, plus the 480 years from the time that they left Egypt and the 410 years that the first Beis-Hamikdash stood (as hinted in the Pasuk "be'Zos yovo Aharon el ha'Kodesh" - "be'Zos" = 410), add up to 1290 years. And the Pasuk here is saying that just as G-d rejoiced to do good to Yisrael (in the desert and in Eretz Yisrael, where the Shechinah was with them constantly), and to increase them (in Egypt, where they multiplied at a miraculous rate), so too, when the next Galus occurs, (after the destruction of the second Beis-Hamikdash that would take place

shortly after Daniel's prophecy) will the nations of the world rejoice in destroying us and wiping us out - for 1290 years. And then, the era of Moshi'ach will begin. The Torah might have specifically alluded to the two and a half time-periods, Tosfos explains, only it stuck to its policy of avoiding direct mention of the ultimate redemption.

And that is "la'mo'ed, mo'adim va'chetzi" referred to by Daniel (in Pasuk 7), though we arrive at the total of 1290 using a slightly different method. We translate the first "mo'ed" simply as 'time', and "mo'adim va'chetzi" then refers to two periods of Golus Mitzrayim, plus another half of that (which is another way of saying that one should add a third period on to the first two). And if, based on the Pasuk in Bo (12:40), we reckon Galus Mitzrayim as having lasted 430 years, then "mo'adim va'chetzi" equals $430 \times 3 = 1290$.

And this same time-period is also hinted in Hoshei'a (2:17), where the Navi writes "Ve'onsoh shomoh ki'yemei ne'urehoh u'che'yom aloshoh me'Eretz Mitzrayim". There too, if we explain the word "ve'onsoh" as a derivative of 'Mo'on' (dwelling), and "ki'yemei ne'urehah" to mean "ki'yemei Galus ne'urehah", Hoshei'a is hinting that Yisrael will dwell in Galus for the same period of time as they dwelt in Egypt and in the period that followed until the destruction of the first Beis-Hamikdash - a period of 1290 years.

So here we have the 1290 years that the current Galus is destined to last, hinted in the Torah, in Nevi'im and in Kesuvim. And what about the following Pasuk in Daniel, which writes "How praiseworthy is he who awaits and who reaches the days 1335? How does that tie up with the 1290 years mentioned in the previous Pasuk?

This Pasuk, explains Tosfos, takes into account the additional forty-five years that it will take for Moshi'ach to bring the entire world under the jurisdiction of Yisrael. That is when peace will ultimately reign in the world.

The only problem is that we do not know when the 1290 years began, and can therefore not know when they are due to end. Indeed, our ancestors faced the same dilemma in Egypt, where one Pasuk refers to 430 years (beginning from the B'ris bein ha'Besarim, thirty years before the birth of Yitzchak) and another Pasuk, to 400 years (starting from the birth of Yitzchak). And it was as a result of this dilemma, the B'nei Efrayim erred, and left Egypt thirty years too early (because they reckoned, not 430 years, but 400, from the B'ris bein ha'Besarim, as the Torah records in Lech-Lecho), and were killed by the men of Gas. In fact, there are even some opinions that reckon the years from the time that the slavery began. The truth of the matter is that the 400 years' Galus began with the birth of Yitzchak, as we now know. But that only knew it with certainty after they actually left Egypt.

And the same happened in connection with Galus Bavel. There too, G-d told Yirmiyah that He would visit the exiles at the end of seventy years, yet first Belshatzar erred as to when the exile would end, then Achashverosh, and even Daniel made a wrong calculation, as the Gemara explains in Megilah.

And with our Golus too, perhaps the 1290 years began with the nullification of the Korban Tamid during the civil war between Hurkanus and Aristobulus, or perhaps it was from the time that Herod was crowned king ...

In any event, once Moshi'ach arrives, we will know retroactively when the 1290 years began.

If we reckon from the time of the Galus, Tosfos concludes, then the due date of Moshi'ach was the year 5163, six hundred years ago.

Rashi in Daniel (12:9, and 8:14), starting with Galus Mitzrayim, gives the following calculation. If one adds the 210 years of Galus Mitzrayim, the 480 years until the building of the first Beis Hamikdash plus the 410 years that the first Beis-Hamikdash stood, the 70 years of Galus plus the 420 of the second Beis Hamikdash, one arrives at 1584. However, the Tamid was stopped six years before the Churban, leaving a total of 1584 years. And if one adds to that the 1290 years predicted by Daniel, one reaches a total of 2874 years.

Now 2874 years is mentioned by Daniel in chapter 8, Pasuk 14, where he cites a prophecy which states "Ad Erev Boker Alpayim u'shelosh me'os ...". "Alpayim shelosh me'os (2300) plus the numerical value of 'Erev boker" (574) = 2874. Truly amazing! According to Rashi then, Moshi'ach ought to have come in the year 5157, 2874 years after the commencement of Galus Mitzrayim (six years earlier than the date suggested by Tosfos).

Both dates alas, have long passed. Let us hope that Moshi'ach comes soon, and all the calculations will fall into place.

For sponsorships and adverts call 651 9502