

BS"D

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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON BISHALACH - 5762

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND ryfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas B'Shalach

'Sweet' Can Emerge From 'Bitter'

This week's parsha contains the famous "Song of the Sea" (Az Yashir). The Medrash says that Moshe told G-d "I know that I sinned against You with my use of the word 'Az' [then], as recorded in the Torah: 'From the time (mei'Az) I came before Pharaoh, you have done evil to this nation' [Shmos 5:23]. Therefore I will praise You with the word 'Az,' as it is written 'Then (Az) Moshe sang' [Shmos 15:1]." This Medrash requires an explanation.

The Torah section immediately following the description of the Splitting of the Sea -- literally in the dawning days of the Jewish nation -- is the incident when Israel traveled for three days and could not find water. They came to a place called Marah. However, they were unable to drink the water there because it was bitter. They complained against Moshe, asking what they could drink. Moshe prayed to G-d. G-d showed Moshe a tree. Moshe threw the tree into the water and the water became sweetened. The Jews were then able to drink the water.

The Medrash adds that the bark of the tree that G-d showed Moshe was itself extremely bitter. The bitter water was sweetened through the addition of a bitter tree.

G-d is not in the custom of magnifying miracles. Normal 'procedure' would be to sweeten the water with something sweet. So we see that there must be a lesson here. In addition, since it is taught immediately after the Splitting of the Sea, during the infancy of the nation, this lesson must be of particular importance.

The lesson of these incidents is (to quote the words of the prophet) "From the bitter, sweet emerges" [Shoftim 14:14]. Sometimes, the sweetest outcome can emerge from the bitterest pain. G-d is trying to teach His nation a lesson. This is a difficult lesson that the Jewish nation, and every nation, must learn. And just as this is a lesson for nations, it is a lesson for us as individuals as well. Situations that sometimes appear to us as terribly bitter may eventually produce the sweetest of results. While a person is in the process of enduring and suffering through bitterness, he cannot imagine what positive outcome can come out of his situation. However, bitter wood in bitter water can eventually produce sweetness. This is a lesson that we needed to learn early on and that we have seen, in retrospect, over and over again. A situation that seemed like a terrible pill to swallow turned out to be the Salvation of G-d (Yeshuas HaShem).

This is also the key to understanding the above-quoted Medrash regarding Moshe's use of the word 'Az'. Moshe was not merely making a play on words. Moshe was not merely saying "Since I used the word 'Az' in a bad way, now I will use the same word 'Az' in a good way."

The first 'Az' was, in effect, a question: What positive outcome can emerge from all the pain and suffering that the Jews are enduring? "From the moment (mei'Az) I came before Pharaoh, the situation of this nation has worsened. How can this be positive? Where is the sweetness here?"

The answer is that this suffering and torture, in fact, eventually benefited the Jewish nation. Rather than living in Egypt for 400 years, as G-d told Avraham, they only had to stay there for 210 years. As our Sages teach us, the length of the Egyptian exile was diminished

because of the severity of the servitude. This ultimately saved them, because had they stayed in Egypt any longer, they would not have been able to leave at all -- they would have spiritually sunk too far into the depths.

This, then, is the explanation of what Moshe was saying in the above quoted Medrash. "With this very word 'Az', which represented a situation where I saw no possible silver lining -- namely the bitterness of Egyptian servitude -- I will now utter a Song of Praise (with this very same word 'Az'). Now I can look back and see in retrospect that the suffering was worth it. I can see that from the bitterest portion can come the sweetest of destinies. Mei'Az (from the bitter) yatza masok (emerged sweetness)."

The "Straightness" Of Parshas B'Shalach Justifies the Name "Shabbos Shira"

The Shemen HaTov suggests that the grammatical root of the word Shirah [Song] is YaSHaR, meaning straight. I am not a grammarian to state that this is correct, but in a homiletic sense it can certainly be suggested.

There are high points and low points in a person's life. There are peaks and there are valleys. When a person can look back and see the straightness (Yashrus) of life -- that somehow, after a while, things tend to work themselves out and become straight -- that is the time when a person can utter Shirah [Song]. In retrospect, the person can see that what happened was 'straight'.

The Shemen HaTov comments on the fact that this Shabbos is called "Shabbos Shirah" [the Shabbos of Song]. The reason for the name "Shabbos Shirah" could not be merely because the parsha contains the 'Shirah', for if that were the case, then Parshas Yisro, (next week) should be called Shabbos Torah, since it contains the story of the giving of the Ten Commandments. Why then do the Jewish people call Parshas B'Shalach by the name "Shabbos Shirah?"

The Shemen HaTov answers that the entire parsha contains this idea of "Straightness," of ups and downs which eventually balance out. No other parsha has such oscillation between peaks and valleys. The Jewish people came out of Egypt mightily, with a powerful Hand. Then the balloon was deflated when their backs were against the sea and the Egyptians were bearing down on them. The whole Exodus from Egypt seemed to be in jeopardy. It seemed to dissipate and go up in a cloud.

Then the sea split. That was a tremendous high. They were miraculously saved. Then what happened? They found themselves without water, and the 'lows' began again. Then the bitter water miraculously turned sweet and they again were on a 'high'. Then they had no food. They complain again -- another 'low'. Then they were miraculously given Manna and they were happy again. Then Amalek attacked and the cycle continued...

Parshas B'Shalach is the parsha of life. Life is all about the highs and lows, the peaks and valleys. That is why this parsha, which teaches us this lesson, is called Shabbos Shirah (the Shabbos of Straightness, or equilibrium).

When a Jew can look back on his life and recognize that while there have been defeats and low moments as well as the high points, he sees the Yashrus (straightness; fairness) of it all in retrospect, then he can indeed utter that which is the essence of this Shabbos -- Shirah, songs of praise to G-d.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, WA
DavidATwersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 315, The Prohibition of Living In Egypt. 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.

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<http://www.tzemachdovid.org/thepracticaltorah/beshalach.shtml>

THE PRACTICAL TORAH

BY RABBI MICHAEL TAUBES

Parshas BeShalach: Eating Shalosh Seudos

No definitive Halacha LeMa'aseh conclusions should be applied to practical situations based on any of these Shiurim.

On the first Shabbos after Moshe had informed the Jewish people that no Mon would fall on Shabbos, but that instead, a double portion would fall on Friday, he told the people, "Eat it today, because today is HaShem's Shabbos. You will not find anything in the field today." (Shemos 16:25). The Gemara in Shabbos (117b) derives from the fact that the Torah uses the word "hayom", today, three times in this Posuk (Ibid.) that there is an obligation to eat three meals on Shabbos. The Gemara further on (Ibid. 118b) documents the great rewards given to one who is careful to always eat these three meals.

The Pri Megadim, (Orach Chaim Siman 291 in Mishbitzos Zahav Sif Katan 1) quotes from the Levush that this obligation is from the Torah; the Sefer Chareidim, in his listing of the Mitzvos from the Torah (Perek 14 Ot 3), concurs, and asserts that this is the position of Rashi on the first Gemara in Shabbos above (Ibid. s.v. Talta). The Taz (Ibid. Siman 472 Sif Katan 1) quotes that the Maharal of Prague held this way as well. This seems, however, to be the minority opinion, as most of the Monei HaMitzvos (those authorities who wrote books listing all the Taryag Mitzvos) do not enumerate this as an independent Mitzvah. The Maharil (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Maharil Siman 94), among others, writes that this obligation is MideRabbanan, and the Pri Megadim cited above (Ibid.) assumes this as well. The Aruch HaShulchan (Orach Chaim 291:1) suggests that this Mitzvah was instituted by Moshe Rabbeinu, and that the three Shabbos meals hint at various important ideas, as mentioned in the Tur (Orach Chaim Ibid.). Whatever the origin, the Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos 30:9) writes that one must be sure to eat no less than three meals on Shabbos, one in the evening, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon, even if one is very poor.

The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim Ibid. Sif 1) stresses that one must be extremely careful to eat Shalosh Seudos (the third meal) even if one is not hungry. The Kaf HaChaim (Ibid. Sif Katan 3) quotes from the Chida that this extra effort for Shalosh Seudos is necessary because one would normally eat a meal on Friday night and some time on Shabbos morning anyway, even were it not required (see Sukkah 27a), while one would probably not otherwise eat late in the afternoon. Shalosh Seudos, then, is the meal which clearly is being eaten only in order to honor Shabbos and thus by eating then, one indicates that the other two meals too were actually eaten in honor of Shabbos. The Shulchan Aruch (Ibid.) says that one need not, of course, risk making oneself sick by eating Shalosh Seudos if one is so full; the purpose of the meal, as the Mishnah Berurah (Ibid. Sif Katan 3) points out, is to give one pleasure, and not pain. But one should, the Shulchan Aruch (Ibid.) adds, have enough foresight to eat a little less at lunchtime in order to be able to eat Shalosh Seudos and enjoy it.

Tosafos in Shabbos (118a s.v. B'Minchah) derives from the Gemara there that Shalosh Seudos may not be eaten earlier than Minchah time, which is approximately half an hour after mid-day. The Rosh (Ibid. Perek 16 Siman 5) agrees, and although the Ran (Ibid. 43b in the Rif s.v. Tnu Rabbanan Kamah) quotes a view that there is no fixed time for Shalosh Seudos, the Shulchan Aruch (Ibid. Sif 2) rules that Shalosh Seudos must be eaten no earlier than half an hour past mid-day. One should also not begin Shalosh Seudos after it gets dark, as the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim Siman 299 Sif 1) rules that one cannot eat at that point; the Mishnah Berurah (Ibid. Sif Katan 1) quotes that this cut-off time is actually sunset, although there is some discussion about that (See Ibid. in the Biur Halacha s.v. MiSheTechshach), and he himself allows one to begin Shalosh Seudos as late as half an hour before nightfall. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Igros Moshe Orach Chaim Chelek 4 Siman 69 Ot 6) questions this leniency and says that the cut-off point is earlier. The Shulchan Aruch (Ibid.) adds, however, that if one began eating earlier, and the meal extended even until after dark, one may continue eating. Although another view is quoted, the Ramo (Ibid.) asserts that the first one is correct.

As far as davening Minchah, Rabbeinu Tam is quoted in Tosafos in Pesachim (105a s.v. VeHanei Milei) as confirming the Minhag that one shouldn't eat between Minchah and Maariv, and the Rosh (Ibid. Perek 10 Siman 13) agrees. Shalosh Seudos, then, should be eaten before

Minchah. The Rambam, however (Hilchos Shabbos Ibid. Halacha 10), writes that one should daven Minchah before eating Shalosh Seudos, and the Hagahos Maimoniyos (Ibid. Ot 20) concurs, quoting a different version of Rabbeinu Tam's view. The Ramo (Orach Chaim Siman 291 Sif 2) quotes both opinions, expressing that the latter is more commonly followed; Shalosh Seudos thus generally follows Minchah. The Mishnah Berurah adds, however (Ibid. Sif Katan 11) that if for some reason one cannot eat after Minchah, one fulfills the Mitzvah fully if he eats beforehand.

What kind of food constitutes a proper Shalosh Seudos? Tosafos in Yoma (79b s.v. Minai) holds that one must eat bread because of the connection between Shalosh Seudos and the Mon which replaced bread; many other Rishonim agree. The Tur (Siman 291), quoting his father the Rosh, and the Rambam (Ibid. Halacha 9) both rule that one should have Lechem Mishneh for Shalosh Seudos as well; the Shulchan Aruch (Ibid. Sif 4) accepts this view. Tosafos in Berachos, however (49b s.v. Ei), quotes Rabbeinu Tam as holding that one may eat other foods at Shalosh Seudos as well and need not eat bread; Rabbeinu Yonah (Ibid. 36b in the Rif s.v. Birchah) and others concur. The Shulchan Aruch (Ibid. Sif 5) rules that one must have bread, but if one is overly full, one may eat other Mezonos foods, or even meat or fish, as allowed by Tosafos (Ibid.) or perhaps even just fruit, as allowed by Rabbeinu Yonah (Ibid.), and the Ran (on Shabbos 44a in the Rif s.v. V'lka). The Aruch HaShulchan (Ibid. Sif 12), though, writes in strong terms that it is highly improper to be lenient and eat other foods and not bread, unless one is ill.

It should be pointed out that the Rokeiach (Siman 55) allows one to forgo eating Shalosh Seudos altogether in order to hear a Shiur on Shabbos afternoon; the Magen Avraham (Ibid. Siman 290, beginning of the Siman) quotes this opinion, but then adds that this Shiur must be the type which teaches people Halachos and instills Yiras Shomayim in order for it to supersede the Mitzvah to eat Shalosh Seudos, as opposed to the type of Shiur often presented today. It appears that most Poskim, however, do not accept this leniency at all; the Pri Megadim (In Eishel Avraham Ibid. in the end of the Siman) states that one should not miss Shalosh Seudos in order to hear an entire Shiur, and the Aruch HaShulchan (Ibid. Sif 3) and the Kaf HaChaim (Ibid. Ot 14) concur. The Mishnah Berurah (Ibid. end of Sif Katan 8, and see Shaar HaTzion Ibid. Ot 5) states that one should not present a Shiur in such a way that it interferes with Shalosh Seudos.

It is worth noting that Rabbeinu Tam, in his Sefer HaYoshor (Chelek HaSheilos U'Teshuvos Siman 70 Ot 4), rules that women too are obligated to eat Shalosh Seudos, because "Af Hein Hayu B'Oso HaNais", meaning that they too benefited from the miracle of the Mon; many Poskim quote and agree with this ruling. The Ran (on Shabbos Ibid. s.v. V'Kasav) cites another reason: women are obligated in all the positive Mitzvos of Shabbos just as men are, as indicated by the Gemara in Berachos (20b). The Shulchan Aruch (Ibid. Sif 6) thus rules that women must eat Shalosh Seudos; the Aruch HaShulchan (Ibid. Sif 4) notes that many women are unaware of this and ought to be told that they too should be careful to observe this important Mitzvah.

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WATER OR TORAH

BY RABBI EZRA WEINER

The Midrash and Gemara are replete with Drashot from Pesukim that teach us various Halachot. Too often, we understand these Drashot only superficially, and thus we create for ourselves an impression that Chazal affixed Drashot to certain Pesukim almost haphazardly with little or no reason. This misconception cannot be further from the truth.

A well-known Drash that emerges from a Pasuk in this week's Parsha serves as a perfect example. We will examine this Drash and attempt to determine the inherent difficulties in the text that compelled Chazal to indeed learn a Drash.

Immediately following Shirat Hayam (the song of the sea), we read as follows: Vayisa Moshe Et Yisrael Mayim Suf Vayetz'u El Midbar Shur, "Moshe led Bnai Yisrael from Yam Suf and they went out to the desert of Shur" (15:22).

In its interpretation of this Pasuk, the Gemara in Bava Kama (82a) comments that the Jews traveled for three days without Torah and became weary as a result. Moshe therefore instituted that there be

public readings of Torah on Monday, Thursday, and Shabbat to prevent this weariness in the future. A number of questions emerge. First, the Torah had not been given yet, and the Jews had spent many years without a Torah and never seemed to have a weariness problem. Second, the Pasuk reads *Velo Matzu Mayim*, "And they did not find water." It mentions nothing about Torah. Granted that from the Pasuk in *Yeshayahu 55*, "*Hoy Kol Tzameh Lechu Lemayim*", we learn "*Ein Mayim Shelo Torah*", "there is no 'water' that is not 'Torah,'" but where in our Pasuk does there exist any indication that it was Torah and not water that *Bnai Yisrael* were lacking? After all, they had traveled three days in the hot desert; why would one contemplate that *Mayim* refers to something other than water?

To better understand this teaching of Chazal, we must appreciate the phrase "*Vayelchu Derech Shloshet Yamim Bamidbar*" in our Parsha by reexamining an almost identical expression that we have already encountered in Parshat Shemot. Moshe and Aharon, following Hashem's order, request of Paroh as follows: "*Nelcha Na Derech Shloshet Yamim Venizbecha LaHashem Elokeinu*", "Let us travel for three days in the desert and we will sacrifice to Hashem our G-d " (3:18). When did Moshe and Aharon intend to discharge this obligation? Ostensibly, this was to be fulfilled upon the Exodus from Egypt, or, more specifically, precisely at this juncture following *Shirat Hayam*. Paroh's pursuit and the splitting of the sea had prevented the performance of this long-awaited sacrificial service. It is when the Jewish People travel from *Yam Suf* and enter the wilderness that we should read "*Vayelchu Shloshet Yamim Bamidbar Vezavchu LaHashem Elokeinu*". Instead, much to our chagrin, after witnessing the wondrous ten plagues and the miraculous splitting of the sea, *Bnai Yisrael* spend the three days of potential offering of praise and thanksgiving looking for water. At this point, Moshe understood that even miraculous experiences become fleeting memories and the only way to insure the constant acknowledgement of Hashem's everlasting assistance and protection is to recreate the experience. When Moshe saw that the Jews spent three days looking for water he realized that the next upcoming miraculous experience (*Matan Torah*) must be preserved. He therefore instituted a public reading of the Torah, which would serve as a tri-weekly recreation of *Matan Torah*.

"*Mayim*" in this context is to be taken literally. It is the replacement of this opportune time for *Korbanot* by a convergence on seeking water that elicits Moshe's response of instituting public Torah reading.

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

TorahWeb [from last year]

RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY

THE HAND OF HASHEM - MIRACLES AND NATURE

The *Kerias yam suf*, receiving of the man, *shlav*, and *mayim* in the *midbar*, and *milchemes amalek*, are all found in Parshas *Beshalach*. These incidents occur within the span of a few weeks- but are they related to one another merely by their chronological proximity, or is the Torah trying to teach us a deeper message by juxtaposing these three incidents?

The *Kerias yam suf*, the epitome of a *nes nigleh* - a revealed miracle, was the culmination of the miraculous events surrounding *yetzias mitzrayim*. The Torah addressed the two reactions people might have to such an event.

Most people who experience an open miracle recognize it as being the hand of Hashem but there are always some who are skeptical. How could Amalek attack the Jewish people so soon after *krias yam suf*? Did Amalek not realize they were trying to destroy a nation that had open miracles performed for them? Amalek closed their eyes to the miraculous events of *yetzias mitzrayim* by explaining them away as mere natural occurrences. Amalek is described in Parshas *Ki Teisei* as the nation, "*Asher karcha baderech*" f their entire philosophy was that everything was a *mikreh* f a coincidental happening. If one views everything as a coincidence even *krias yam suf* can be explained away as a bizarre natural event that happened to take place at the right time. If one chooses to deny the obvious hand of Hashem one can deny every miracle by calling it nature.

There is another possible reaction to a miracle. One acknowledges the miracle as being the work of Hashem but views the event as a one-time demonstration of the involvement of Hashem in this world. The Ramban in Parshas *Bo* explains that the ultimate purpose of a revealed miracle is to enable people to realize that they are surrounded by miracles every day. What the world calls nature is also a miracle. Chazal teach us that to recite *Hallel* daily is inappropriate whereas to say *Ashrei* everyday is praiseworthy. The *Meshech Chochma* explains that the theme of *Hallel* is praising Hashem for revealed miraculous events. *Ashrei*, which says, "*poseach es yodecha umasbea l'chol chai ratson*" ("you [G-d] open up your hands and satisfy all living creature's needs") is the ultimate praise for *parnasa*. Hashem takes care of our daily needs through seemingly natural ways. *Ashrei* teaches us to recognize Hashem even in the "natural" miracles that surround us daily. One who says *Hallel* daily but neglects the everyday saying of *Ashrei* demonstrates that he only recognizes Hashem's "extraordinary" miracles but fails to see the miracles of everyday life.

To combat this reaction to miracles, the story of *krias yam suf* is immediately followed by the events of the *slav*, man, and the finding of water in the desert. Hashem, who performs great miracles, also provides for our daily needs such as food and water. We are required to elevate the world by always seeing our attainment of *parnasa*, and the natural world in general as miraculous.

From:RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY rmk@torah.org Subject: Drasha - Parshas *Beshalach* - Out of Bounds

In this week's parsha the *B'nai Yisrael* are given the manna. It falls every day from Heaven - except on the Sabbath. The Jews may not collect it on the Shabbos and thus a double portion falls from heaven on Friday. "See that Hashem has given you the Sabbath; that is why He gives you on the sixth day a two-day portion of bread." In addition the Torah proscribes the Jews from traveling distances on the Shabbos. "Let every man remain in his place; let no man leave his place on the seventh day" (*Exodus 16:29*).

Rashi explains that this refers to the *t'chum Shabbos*, a *Shabbos* ordinance that confines one's boundaries under certain settings to 2,000 cubits from the initial point of origin. One cannot walk farther than that distance on *Shabbos*.

Though this is not the forum for a discussion of the intricate laws of Sabbath borders, including certain limitations to the restrictions, one basic question arises: There are many intricate laws regarding *Shabbos* activities. None were yet mentioned. Why discuss the concept of confinement to an approximate one-mile radius before the Jews learned about the most basic prohibitions of the Sabbath such as lighting new fires or carrying in the public domain? In fact, this law of *t'chum* does not carry the severe penalties associated with other transgression. Why, then, is it the first *Shabbos* law that is introduced?

Once a religious man came to the *Brisker Rav*, *Rav Yitzchok Zev Soleveitchik*, and asked him whether he should join a certain organization comprised of people whose views were antithetical to Torah philosophy. Well intentioned, the man felt that his association would perhaps sway the opinions of the antagonists and create harmony among the factions. He would be able to attend meetings and raise his voice in support of Torah outlook.

The *Rav* advised him not to get involved. The man unfortunately decided to ignore the advice. Within a few months, he was in a quagmire, because policies and actions of the theologically-skewed organization were being linked to him, and were creating animus toward him throughout the community.

For some reason he could not back out of his commitments to the organization. He was torn. How could he regain his reputation as a Torah observing Jew and ingratiate himself to his former community? He returned to the *Brisker Rav* and asked him once again for his advice.

The *Rav* told him the following story. There was a young man who aspired to become a wagon driver. He approached a seasoned wagoner and began his training. After a few weeks, he was ready to be certified.

Before receiving an official certification the veteran decided to pose a few practical applications.

"Let's say," he asked his young charge, "that you decide to take a shortcut and deviate from the main highway. You cut through a forest on a very muddy trail. Your wheels become stuck in the mud and your two

passengers become agitated. The horses are struggling to pull out of the mud. They can't seem to get out. What do you do?"

The young driver looked up in thought. "Well," he began, "first I would take some wooden planks and try to get them under the wheels. "Ah!" sighed the old timer, "you made a terrible mistake!" "Why?" retorted the neophyte driver, "I followed procedure in the precise manner! What did I do wrong?"

The old man sighed. "Your mistake was very simple. You don't take shortcuts into muddy forests!"

The activist understood the Brisker Rav's message.

Rav Moshe Feinstein of blessed memory explains that before the Jews were even given the laws of Shabbos they were taught an even more important lesson in life. Before you can embark on life's journeys and even approach the holy Shabbos, you must know your boundaries. So before discussing the details of what you can or can not do on Shabbos, the Torah tells us where we can and cannot go on Shabbos. Sometimes, keeping within a proper environment is more primary than rules of order. Because it is worthless to attempt to venture into greatness when you are walking out of your domain.

In Memory of Reb Yisroel Zisha Ben Reb Hersh Mordechai - Irving Tanzer Of Blessed Memory -- Yahrzeit --11 Shevat Drasha, Copyright 1 2002 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Torah.org. Drasha is the e-mail edition of FaxHomily, a Project of the Henry and Myrtle Hirsch Foundation. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore, <http://www.yoss.org/>. Torah.org depends upon your support. Please visit <http://torah.org/support/> or write to dedications@torah.org or donations@torah.org. Thank you! Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/>

From: SHLOMO KATZ skatz@torah.org Subject: HaMaayan / The Torah Spring - Parashat Beshalach Beshalach: Every Good Deed Rewarded

Sponsored by Irving and Arline Katz in memory of grandmother, Henia Rachel bat Pinchas Spalter a"h and mother Fradel bat Yaakov Shalom Reiss a"h Micheline and David Peller in memory of David's parents a"h The Marwick family in memory of Reba Sklaroff a"h

Our parashah opens, "It happened when Pharaoh sent out the [Jewish] people . . . , and the midrash comments that "sending out" always means, "with accompaniment." (See, for example, Bereishit 18:16.) Says the midrash: "The same lips that uttered (Shmot 5:2), 'I will not send out Yisrael,' later said (Shmot 10:10), 'I will send you forth with your children.' What was Pharaoh's reward for these words? Hashem commanded us (Devarim 23:8), 'You shall not reject an Egyptian . . . Children who are born to them, in the third generation they may enter the congregation of Hashem!'"

The midrash continues: "The same lips that uttered (Shmot 5:2), 'I do not know Hashem,' later said (in our parashah, 14:25), 'I shall flee before Yisrael, for Hashem is waging war for them against Egypt.' What was Pharaoh's reward for this? We read (Yishayah 19:19), 'On that day there will be an altar [dedicated] to Hashem in the midst of the land of Egypt.'"

R' Eliyahu Lopian z"l (1872-1970; mashgiach of Yeshivat Kneset Chizkiyahu in Kfar Chassidim) observes that this midrash is incredible. Pharaoh was an evil man who oppressed an entire nation, murdered babies, ridiculed Moshe and Aharon, and ignored G-d's obvious rebuke. Is it any wonder that he sent Bnei Yisrael away with accompaniment? [He probably wanted to make sure they really left!] Why did G-d reward him for this act?

Moreover, the midrash implies that if not for Pharaoh's saying, "I will send you forth," Egyptians would be prohibited to marry into the Jewish nation just like Moabites. What about Pharaoh's words made him worthy of having his descendants welcomed into Klal Yisrael?

Our Sages teach that no good deed goes unrewarded. Hashem does not deprive any person of his just reward, even when his good deed is incidental to a long series of bad deeds. Pharaoh was humiliated by the plagues and he had to free Bnei Yisrael, but he did not have to admit that "Hashem is waging war." He could have kept quiet. He did not have to humiliate himself further by sending Egyptians to accompany Bnei Yisrael on their way. He could have dispatched a messenger to Moshe to tell him to leave with Bnei Yisrael as quickly as possible. For having the courage and the moral strength to admit he was wrong, Pharaoh deserved a significant reward. (Lev Eliyahu)

"Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him, for [Yosef] had firmly adjured the Children of Israel, saying, 'G-d will surely remember you,

and you shall bring up my bones from here with you.'" (13:19)

R' Chaim Vital z"l (Tzefat and Damascus; 1543-1620) asks: What is added by the words "with you"? He answers: We read in Tehilim (114:3; recited in Hallel), "The Sea saw and fled." The midrash asks: "What did the Sea see that made it flee, i.e., split? It saw the coffin of Yosef." Thus, the words "with you" are crucial. Yosef was telling his brothers: "Only if I am with you will you succeed in leaving Egypt." (Etz Hadaat Tov: Parashat Vayechi)

What does it mean that the Sea split because it saw the coffin of Yosef? R' Naftali of Ropschitz z"l (died 1827) explains: Yosef's greatness was his refusal to succumb to immorality. When the Sea "saw" how the population of Bnei Yisrael had exploded in Egypt, it "realized" that they, like Yosef, had maintained the purity of their families. In this merit, the Sea split. (Quoted in Haggadah Shel Pesach Ezrat Avoteinu)

"This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him." (15:2)

The gemara (Sotah 30b) teaches: "When Bnei Yisrael stepped out of the Sea, they wanted to recite a song of praise to G-d. How did they sing? Every child sitting on his mother's lap and every nursing infant looked up and said, 'This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him!'"

R' Yoel Halevi Herzog z"l (1865-1933; Chief Rabbi of Paris) explains this gemara based on the following midrash on our parashah: We read in Tehilim (106:11-12), "And the waters covered their tormentors, not one of them was left. Then they believed His words, they sang His praise." [This implies that prior to the splitting of the Sea, Bnei Yisrael did not believe.] The midrash says: Although the Torah states that Bnei Yisrael believed Moshe when he first appeared before them in Egypt - as it is written (Shmot 4:31), "And the people believed" - they later did not believe him. Thus it is written (Tehilim 106:7), "Our fathers in Egypt did not contemplate Your wonders." [Now they believed again.]

Says R' Herzog: Although Bnei Yisrael believed Moshe when they saw that he performed wonders in G-d's Name, as related in the verse from Shmot quoted above, many of them still were not sure that G-d exercises complete control over the world. They believed, yet they did not believe. As the verse in Tehilim relates, they did not contemplate His wonders. They did not realize that He alone controls everything; instead, they thought that there exist other powers besides Him. However, the midrash teaches, after the splitting of the Yam Suf, all of Bnei Yisrael realized that G-d alone is the only true power.

This is alluded to in our gemara. Nursing infants and very young toddlers do not know any source of sustenance other than their mothers. They do not realize that their mothers themselves must obtain sustenance from another source. Only when they mature do they realize that their mothers are not the ultimate power. This is what happened at the Yam Suf. Previously, Bnei Yisrael had recognized Moshe's power and they had recognized the power of other forces, for example, nature. Now, however, they realized that none of these is the ultimate power; rather, Hashem is. Like a baby who stops nursing and realizes that his mother too needs support and sustenance, Bnei Yisrael recognized G-d as the Power above all powers. (Imrei Yoel)

"They gathered it morning by morning, every man according to what he eats, and when the sun grew hot [the remaining mahn] melted." (16:21)

R' Yerucham Levovitz z"l (the "Mirror mashgiach"; died 1936) writes: Let us get an idea of the love which Hashem shows man with regard to his food-gathering. Was there any greater kindness than what Hashem did for Bnei Yisrael by giving them mahn in the desert? Our Sages say that enough mahn fell every day to feed Bnei Yisrael for 2,000 years. Why? After all, no matter how much a person collected, a miracle occurred so that he always found himself with exactly the amount that he needed to feed his family for one day. What was the purpose of so much mahn falling?

R' Levovitz answers: The Sages explain that the purpose of the extra mahn was to keep warm the mahn that would be eaten. It was "worthwhile" (so-to-speak) for Hashem to waste 2,000 years worth of food just so that Bnei Yisrael's food would stay warm.

Why did the mahn fall every day? Since it was miraculous in any case, why didn't a forty-year supply fall? The midrash explains that it was a favor on Hashem's part. Imagine a parent who has a child away at school. If the parent does not enjoy receiving letters from his child, he will send the child his allowance for the whole year in one lump sum. However, a parent who values any communication that he receives from his child will send

smaller amounts so that the child will have to write and call more often. [Ed. note: The preceding parable is an updated version of the parable which the midrash offers.] Similarly, Hashem values our prayers, and He therefore makes our sustenance harder to come by. He could give us our yearly sustenance on Rosh Hashanah, but this would have the effect of cutting us off from Him.

This is itself a kindness to us. Why is prayer important? Because it is through prayer that we experience closeness to G-d. (Quoted in Haggadah Shel Pesach Rashei Yeshivat Mir p. 229)

"Each man, for those in his tent he shall collect [mahn]." (16:16)

A couple once came to R' Asher'l Horowitz of Riminov z"l (died 1935) with a problem. The woman complained that her husband could not earn a living because he was "too" honest. Did he have that right, his wife wanted to know, when his family was starving?

R' Asher'l answered: A person's obligation to support his family is learned from the above verse regarding the mahn. This verse was said at a time when Hashem openly sent food to each family according to its needs. No one took another's share, and no one cheated. [And if someone did cheat, he gained nothing from it, as the Torah testifies.] Similarly, now, even though Hashem's ways are less obvious, each person can, and must, support his family honestly, without any question of wrongdoing. (Quoted in Iturei Torah)

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@ohr.edu] To: weekly@ohr.edu
Subject: Torah Weekly - Beshalach

Help Yourself! "And Yisrael saw the great hand..." (14:31) "A person's sustenance is as hard as splitting the Reed Sea." (The Sages)

How can anything be 'hard' for Hashem? Was splitting the Reed Sea more difficult than the Creation of the whole universe? And that Hashem accomplished with two letters. And how can providing a livelihood for someone be hard for He who spoke and the world came into being? A person has to make as much of an effort as he can in order to sustain himself and those who depend on him. Although everything that we receive is decreed on Rosh Hashana, nevertheless, Hashem requires us to make an effort to help ourselves as much as possible. So it was with the splitting of the sea: The Children of Israel had to go down to the sea, to go as far as possible, and only then the sea split before them.

In this way the splitting of the sea and a person's livelihood can be equated. Beginnings are always hard. It's hard for a person to start to work, uncertain how things will turn out, pursued by more and more bills -- an army of responsibilities which seem to want to drown him. And it was hard for the Children of Israel to plunge into the Sea of Reeds, pursued by an army of Egyptians who wanted to drown them. All we have to do is try, and Hashem will make sure that neither the Egyptians, nor the bills, will drown us. Adapted from Ma'asei Lemelech

Hands Up! "It happened that when Moshe raised his hand Yisrael was stronger, and when he lowered his hand Amalek was stronger." (17:11) There is a force in this world that seeks to imprison reality within the confines of Man's understanding; a force that defines what is beyond human reason as non-existent; a force that seeks to bind all existence within the hollow skull of man. That force is called Amalek. The Jewish People stand immutably in opposition to that idea. The Jewish People are eternal witnesses that existence is not limited by Man's understanding of it. The Jewish People put action before words. We are the people who said at Sinai 'Na'aseh V'nishma' -- "We will do and we will hear." We commit ourselves to Hashem before we understand or even attempt to understand the meaning of His Torah. What other option could possibly be intellectually honest?

When Moshe's hands were raised above his head the Jewish People were triumphant. When action -- hands -- precede the head -- intellect --

then the Jewish People are triumphant in their battle against the force of Amalek. But when the head is above the hands, Amalek dominates. (Adapted from 'Worldmask' by Rabbi Akiva Tatz)

Magnetic Attraction "Hashem is a Master of war; Hashem is His Name." (15:3) Rashi explains that Hashem wages war, not with weapons, but with His Name. How is Rashi enlightening us with this comment? Did we really think that Hashem has an armament factory? When Moshe killed the Egyptian in Parshas Shemos, our Sages teach us that he 'laid his eyes' on him and the Egyptian was transformed into a pile of bones (Berachos 55a). Every living thing in this world stays alive only because inside it is a spark of holiness. When Moshe 'laid his eyes' on the Egyptian, the spark of holiness that maintained the existence of that Egyptian was inexorably drawn to Moshe's eyes, and the Egyptian was left as a mere pile of bones. Something similar happened at the splitting of the sea, but on an infinitely greater scale. At the sea there was a revelation of G-dliness which drew all the fragments of holiness enmeshed in the bodies of the Egyptians back to the Source of all life. Thus, the Egyptians were left devoid of the life-force that sustained them. There is a mystical principle that the left hand corresponds to Din -- strict justice -- and the right hand corresponds to Rachamim -- mercy. Our Sages teach us that the left hand pushes away, while the right hand brings close. When a person is punished for his wrong-doing, it is referred to as the left hand -- strict justice -- pushing him away. However, Egypt was different. Their downfall came not at the hands of the messengers of justice, but totally the reverse. The Egyptians were punished by the right-hand of G-d bringing close all the fragments of holiness that were embedded within them. Now we can understand what Rashi meant when he said that Hashem doesn't wage war with weapons. Hashem's ultimate weapon is His Great Name -- the Name of Mercy, which represents His Essence. When this is revealed, all life must flock to it like metal to a magnet. This also is the explanation of the verse "Your Right Hand, Hashem, is exalted in power; Your Right Hand, Hashem, smashes the enemy." The Right Hand draws close all the sparks of holiness. (Shem MiShmuel)

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From: RABBI LIPMAN PODOLSKY podolsky@hakotel.edu

Parshas Beshalach
The Philistinian Problem

"It happened when Pharaoh sent out the people that G-d did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, because it was near; for G-d said, 'Perhaps the people will reconsider when they see a war, and they will return to Egypt' (Shmos 13:17)." Hashem was concerned that in the heat of battle the people will panic and regret their emancipation. They will then opt out for what was in their eyes the relative security of Egypt and run back "home".

I find this somewhat perplexing. For immediately afterward, Hashem steered the Jews right into a dead-end! "The Egyptians pursued them and overtook them, encamped by the sea -- all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and army... Pharaoh brought near; the children of Israel raised their eyes and behold, Egypt was journeying after them, and they were very frightened (Shmos 14:9)." So what was gained? In either scenario the Jews experienced the fear of war! What exactly distinguished these two battlefields?

One of the world's most frequently asked questions (besides 'What happened to Enron?') is, 'When will Moshiach come?' If only I knew! But the Gemara sheds some light. "Rabi Eliezer says, if the Jewish people do Teshuva (Repentance), they will be redeemed. But if not, they will not be redeemed (Sanhedrin 97b)." Thus, it would seem that Moshiach is in our hands. We determine when.

Allow me, though, to ask one obvious question: So what happens if we fail to repent? Will we never be redeemed? Will Moshiach never come?

A cryptic quotation from the Gemara: "He who raises a wild dog in his house... divests himself of Awe of Heaven (Shabbos 63a)." What is the connection between Awe of Heaven and wild dogs? Why should one affect the other?

The Maharsha elucidates, "A person who raises a wild dog usually does so to protect his house. Thus, the Awe of Shin-Dalet-Yud (A Name of Hashem) -- which is on the mezuzah as protection for his house -- is gradually forsaken and forgotten." A Jew who is entirely imbued with the awareness of his Creator needs no further protection. Physicality and all

will all attend the funeral." And off they went.

Shortly thereafter, the hearse was accompanied by an impressive column of hundreds of yeshivah students, who followed it slowly and solemnly to the cemetery. It was only when the hearse came to rest at an open gravesite and a lone rabbi emerged from the hearse that they discovered the identity of the deceased.

"This is so appropriate!" exclaimed the rabbi when he learned who they were and which yeshivah they attended. "How did you learn about her death? She was a total recluse, living like a hermit for the last fifty years. She would have nothing to do with people, rebuffing everyone's efforts to reach out to her. I am shocked that anyone knew that she died."

The bachurim looked at the rabbi and said, "Really, we have no idea who the deceased is. We never knew her, nor is she connected to any of us in any way."

"If you do not know whose funeral you are attending, then why are you here?" the rabbi asked incredulously.

"Well, it is a long story," and they began to explain how one thing led to another and before they knew it, the entire yeshivah was involved in the special mitzvah of halvoyas ha'mes, accompanying and seeing to the needs of the deceased.

The rabbi listened to the story and began to cry. After a while, he calmed himself and explained his behavior. "My dear bachurim," he said softly, "Your presence here today, escorting this lonely woman to her final resting place, is Divinely ordained. Let me tell you a story. Seventy years ago, a wealthy Jewish businessman donated an expensive piece of real estate to the Jewish community for the explicit purpose of building a yeshivah - your yeshivah.

"But, that was not all that he contributed. Beyond the initial donation of the land and the building, during his lifetime he made every effort to support the fledgling yeshivah with large sums of money, nurturing it and helping it flourish into one of the premier institutions of Torah.

"As he aged, on several occasions, the yeshivah tried to show its gratitude and bestow honor on him. But his exceptional humility and private nature did not allow for it.

"He had an only child - a daughter, who was the apple of his eye, the pride and joy of his life. When the rabbis would approach him wondering what they could do for him, how to repay his magnanimity, he would respond, 'Thank Gd, I am a wealthy and happy man. I really need nothing. But, maybe one day you can be of service to my beloved daughter. Maybe one day she will be in need of your help.' The rabbis, of course, gave their solemn word that they would never forsake his daughter.

"After a long and productive life, the philanthropist left this world. His daughter, sad to say, became distanced from the religion of her youth and abandoned it. She slowly severed her relationship with the Jewish community altogether. As time went on, her mind began to show signs of serious psychological trauma. She was in and out of psychiatric institutions for the rest of her life.

"The rabbis who remembered their promise to her father tried desperately to keep in touch with her, following her from one incident to another, from one home to the next. They offered her support and encouragement. She rebuffed their overtures and continued to live like an eccentric hermit. No one lives forever, and the original rabbi who had founded the school passed on. With their death, the pledge made to the woman's father was forgotten. The daughter was neglected and lived out her remaining days in depression and seclusion.

"My dear bachurim, it is to this woman's funeral that you "coincidentally" come today; she is the daughter of the major benefactor of your yeshivah. With your presence here today, you have fulfilled your Rosh Ha'Yeshivah's pledge many years ago - never to neglect the benefactor's daughter. You have repaid his largesse by performing this final act of chesed."

Another aspect makes this incident even more startling. The bachurim later learned that the hearse was not supposed to travel on the small, obscure street where the yeshivah is located. The driver for "some reason" became lost and drove down the wrong street. This is but one more episode in the unfolding saga of Divine Providence, of how Hashem repays everyone for their good deeds.

"So that they will see the food with which I fed you in the wilderness when I took you out of Egypt." (16:32)

The Meshech Chochmah has a fascinating insight into the parshas ha'manna. One might think that in order to merit the Heavenly bread, the miraculous manna, one must be on high spiritual plateau. We assume that Divine assistance is not doled out to the average Jew, that one must be a sage, a scholar, a devout and pious Jew to be worthy of such a gift. Rav Meir Simcha says this is not true. The only prerequisite necessary to merit this Heavenly gift is desire - desire to climb the ladder of Torah, to plumb its depths and delve into its profundities. One can be an am ha'aretz, ignorant of even the basics, but, if he seriously wants to study, he will be Divinely assisted.

This statement is substantiated conclusively from Klal Yisrael themselves. The manna began to appear, according to Rashi, on the fifteenth day of Iyar. There are other commentators who disagree and opine that it fell a day later. In any event, at that point Klal Yisrael had only been enjoined to observe just a few

mitzvos, such as Shabbos, Para Adumah, the Red Heifer, and dinnim monetary laws. They did not receive the remainder of the mitzvos until some three weeks later, when they stood at Har Sinai. Accordingly, as far as mitzvos were concerned, Klal Yisrael was basically ignorant. They knew nothing, because as of yet, the mitzvos had not been given to them. Nevertheless, they still merited to eat the manna. This indicated that Divine assistance is determined by the desire one has for ascending the spiritual ladder of Torah and avodah, service to the Almighty. Klal Yisrael uttered two words which were, and will always be, the catchwords of our belief, the hallmark of our conviction - "Naaseh v'Nishma", "We will do and we will listen." Our desire and determination to "do" made us worthy of receiving Divine assistance in the guise of manna.

Horav Avraham Pam, z.l., says that this can be an excellent source of inspiration and encouragement for the struggling ben Torah or yeshivah student, who is having a difficult time "making it" in the Torah world. One does not have to be a gadol b'Yisrael, Torah leader, to receive manna. One must have the will, the burning desire to study, to excel and grow in Torah, and he, too, will be included among those who are sustained by manna. Regrettably, there is a misconception "out there" that only those who are serious talmidei chachamim, Torah scholars, should be deserving of stipends and other forms of financial assistance. The one who is spending his days and nights engrossed in Torah study, but just does not have the acumen or in some circumstances the pedigree, is relegated to a distant second place. We must remember that if Klal Yisrael was worthy of receiving the manna when they were still in their spiritual infancy, then we should give assistance to all those who study Torah in earnest and with conviction.

Dedicated in appreciation of the "Cocoa Club's" completion of Meseches Chulin & Avoda Zara with their Rebbe.

<http://www.yu.edu/riets/torah/enayim/archives/issue19/articles19.htm>

[From several years ago]

THE TRIAL OF AFFLICTION, THE TRIAL OF AFFLUENCE RABBI ZEVULUN CHARLOP

Several years ago, a grandson of mine, may he be well, spent only the last days of Pesach with us. This was the first time he and his parents were not able to be at our Seder, and he had a bone to pick with me. He wanted me to give him a chance at the Afikomen on Shvi'i shel Pesach to make up for the regular Afikomen he had missed on the first days. I explained to him that the Afikomen is a Mitzvah prescribed exclusively for the Seder night, and we would be guilty of the prohibitive commandment of Bal Tosif -- adding to the Mitzvah if we instituted an Afikomen at the end of Pesach too. But he was not to be mollified.

I had to devise a substitute, and I came up with an idea that I believe may deserve emulation of the rechush gadol. It is very much like the Afikomen: The grandchild (I suppose all children can play this game as well) has to look for the rechush gadol Matza put away in some clever place by the grandfather, and when the young man or girl, as the case may be, finds the rechush gadol, he/she receives a reward which ought to be even more valuable than the Afikomen. For the idea conveyed by the rechush gadol fits more appropriately with the notion of prizes and expensive gifts. Whereas on the first days of Passover we recall through the Matza the Oni, the affliction of our ancestors, on the second days of Passover we focus on the rechush gadol--the great bounty--which Hashem promised Avraham when Hashem allowed him a glimpse of the future and told him that "his descendants were to serve 400 years in a strange land and would then leave with rechush gadol - great substance" (Breishis 15:14).

The collection of this "great substance" was in two stages. One, when Bnei Yisroel left Egypt, and their Egyptian neighbors, in a miraculous turnabout, sent them off with expensive farewell mementos that they had ostensibly borrowed. Two, the gold, silver and jewelry they picked up at the Red Sea on Shvi'i shel Pesach a week after the Exodus: the gorgeous armor of their Egyptian pursuers who drowned in the tumbling waters of the sea. This armor surpassed by far the wealth they had collected in Egypt. In fact, the Torah uses the imperative - Vayasa Moshe es YisroelB"and Moshe forced the children to move on from the Red Sea" (Shmos 15:22). There are two explanations for the need for coercion here, which, superficially, seem altogether contradictory. Rashi says that Moshe literally had to tear them away from the Red Sea because they were so engrossed in accumulating the expensive remnants of the Egyptian cavalry. On the other hand, the Zohar, that central fount of Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism, understands the need for force here in an entirely different way. The Jews did not want to leave the Red Sea because never before did they sense so surely of so vividly and unmistakably of the Shechinah, Divine Presence.

My grandfather z"l, actually saw no contradiction here between Rashi's

understanding and the Zohar's. There are two tests of faith: the test of affliction, *nisayon ha'oni* and the test of affluence, *nisayon ha'osher*. It may sometimes be hard to recognize Hashem's Presence and believe in Him when things are going ill with us, certainly when we are being crushed under heel by unspeakable oppression. But possibly even a more difficult test is the test of affluence, to believe in Hashem and heed His Word in times of well being and ease. When one recognizes Hashem's Presence even in affluent times, it can be an even more sublime vision than in a time of adversity. There is no contradiction between Rashi and Zohar. For the powerful awareness of Hashem by Israel and their preoccupation with the riches at the sea were of one piece and indivisible. And this is what our tradition means when it says: "What the plainest maidservant saw at the Red Sea was not seen by Ezekiel in his marvelous conjuring of the chariot."

"What is expected of us," I told my grandson and anyone else who would listen, is "that we must be able just as certainly to feel the Shechinah when we are flushed with *rechush gadol*, and indeed it is possible to reach higher peaks of *yedias Hashem* in *osher* than in *oni*."

From: Rafael Salasnik[SMTP:rafi@brijnet.org] To: daf-hashavua@shamash.org Subject: daf-hashavua Beshalach 5762/2002 Shabbat ends in London at 5:29pm

Ask the Dayan...Our Dayanim answer your questions
INTRODUCTION: Monday the 28th of January is Tu B'Shvat - the Fifteenth day of Shevat - the New Year for trees. It is customary to partake of a variety of fruit to mark the occasion, with a specific focus on the importance of the correct Brachot, blessings, to be recited both before and after eating fruit, and food in general.

Q Are hydroponically grown fruit and vegetables, which are grown in water out of the ground, governed by the same Bracha laws as regular fruit and vegetables? Does one recite *Borei Pri Ha'etz/Ha'adama* or *Shehakol Niheye Bidevaro*?

A Dayan Yonasan Abraham replies:

BACKGROUND This issue is becoming increasingly prevalent, with the growing popularity of insect-free, hydroponically grown products as well as the ongoing technological advances, which make the process commercially viable.

The essence of the question boils down to the definition of the terms "*Pri Ha'etz/Pri Ha'adama*, fruit from the tree or the ground" mentioned in the Bracha. Are they determined by the general species, which, as a rule, grow either from a tree or from the ground or are they regulated by the individual fruit and vegetables in question?

The Gemara in Tractate Brachot (40b) determines that over mushrooms and truffles one recites a "*Shehakol*." Although they grow on the ground they don't grow from the ground, namely they draw moisture and nourishment from the atmosphere and not from their roots. Clearly, hydroponically grown fruit and vegetables aren't nourished from the ground. Nevertheless the species in general does grow from the ground.

The question is a point of debate among the leading contemporary Halachic authorities: *Shevet Halevi* Vol 1 #205, *Yechave Da'as* Vol 6 # 12, *Machaze Eliyahu* #28.

CONCLUSION In practice it is correct to recite a "*Shehakol Niheye Bidevaro*" on any fruit or vegetable known to have been hydroponically grown, given that in cases of doubt *Shehakol* suffices. Nonetheless, if one did recite *Ha'etz* or *Ha'adama*, one would not be required to make a second Bracha of *Shehakol*.

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@ohr.edu] To: dafyomi@ohr.edu Subject: Weekly DAFootnotes - #26 Bava Metzia 58-64 By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions
HONOR THY WIFE

When Avram (before Hashem changed his name to Avraham) came to Egypt to escape the famine in Eretz Canaan, his wife Sarah whom he presented as his sister in order to avoid his being slain as an obstructive husband by the lustful Egyptians was taken to Pharaoh's palace. Avram was generously rewarded because of her, says the Torah (*Bereishet* 12:16), and he came into possession of many animals and servants.

The Torah does not identify who Avram's benefactor was. Rashi, in his commentary on Torah, draws from the context of the passage that it was Pharaoh who showered these gifts upon whom he assumed to be the older brother of the beautiful woman he hoped to make his own. Rabbi Chelbo, in our gemara, saw in the Torah's deletion of the identity of the benefactor an indication that it was actually the One who has the power to bless His creations

with prosperity. It may be suggested that the two interpretations are complementary if Hashem put it into Pharaoh's mind to enrich Avram.

An important lesson is taught by Rabbi Chelbo on the basis of his interpretation. While giving of gifts "because of her" is easily understood as the ruler's way of finding favor with Sarah's "brother," if we view Hashem as the true benefactor it must mean that He blessed Avram "in the merit of his wife." This led Rabbi Chelbo to counsel us to be extremely careful in honoring our wives because a man's home is blessed only in the merit of his wife. The Sage Rava applied this lesson by counseling his townspeople of Mechuza to honor their wives in order to achieve prosperity. Bava Metzia 59a (C) 2001 Ohr Somayach International