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Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Beshalach - Shabbos Shirah - Tu Bish'vat 5777

1 - Topic - Kasha on Klal Yisroel regarding Mitzrim running after them.

We welcome Tu Bish'vat and the spring feeling with a snow storm here in NY. Let me start with a Kasha I had when I was Mavir Sedra. I have been Mavir Sedra this Parsha so many times and I don't know why I did not Chap the following question.

We find that the Mitzrim run after Klal Yisroel and the Mitzrim. What does Klal Yisroel say? As it says in 14:11 (וַיֹּאמְרוּ, אֵל-מִצְרַיִם, הַמִּבְּלִי אִין-קָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם, (לְקַחְתֶּנּוּ לְמוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר (לְמוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר). Are there no Kevarim in Mitzrayim that you took us to die in the Midbar? I don't understand. Who is talking about being killed? The Mitzrim said as is found in 14:5 (וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֶה-זֹּאת עֲשִׂינוּ, כִּי-שָׁלַחְנוּ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל (מְעַבְדֵנוּ). What have we done that we have allowed the Jews to stop working for us. They weren't coming after Klal Yisroel to kill Klal Yisroel. They were running after Klal Yisroel in order to bring them back to be Avadim. So why are you complaining to Moshe (לְמוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר) to die in the Midbar? Who is talking about killing them? What is Pshat? This needs an explanation.

2. Topic - A thought about Zeh Keili V'aveihu - (זֶה קְלִי וְאֵוֵיחֻ) .

We have in this week's Parsha (Perek Tes Vav) the Shiras Hayam, the Mekor for the Minhag of Hiddur Mitzvah, of being Mehadeir when you are doing a Mitzvah. Zeh Keili V'aveihu - this is my G-d and I will beautify him. In the Sefer V'harev Na from Rav Zilberstein, who never fails to bring fascinating stories to bring out Halacha, he brings the following Maaseh that he says happened. Someone donated a Sefer Torah to a Shul. However, the Gabbaim saw that the Sefer Torah was not Mehudar, it was not really a Mehudar beautiful Sefer Torah. It was Kosher but not as beautiful as the ones they had. Therefore, the Gabbaim decided that they were not going to use the Sefer Torah and they will use the more Mehudardika Sifrei Torah. Just because someone donates a Sefer Torah doesn't obligate you to use it. The owner of the Sefer Torah was very upset. Here he gave a Sefer Torah and it is not being used. He hit upon a plan. He went into Shul one night,

took the Mantel (cover) off of the Mehudar Sefer Torah and took the Mantel off of his Sefer Torah and switched them.

When they did Pesicha that Shabbos, they thought that they were taking out the Mehudar Sefer Torah but underneath the Mantel it was really his Sefer Torah. When they opened the Sefer Torah they realized and the Gabbai was extremely upset. He put the Sefer Torah back and took out the Mehudar Sefer Torah. The question that was asked is was it the right thing to do or not.

In his answer, Rav Zilberstein deals not with the question of whether or not he should put back the Sefer Torah that was taken out which is certainly wrong, but the question of whether it is right to not use a Sefer Torah because it is not Mehudar.

He brings a Teshuva Marsham, Cheilek 6, Teshuva 3 which says a rule that you don't do a Hiddur Mitzvah by being Mevazeh other Mitzvos. Meaning if you have a Sefer Torah in the Aron that is never used, if Halachically it is a Shailla then Takeh you don't use it. But just because it is not so beautiful, it is wrong. They should use every Sefer Torah at least occasionally. Therefore, they were wrong in their behavior, they were wrong by putting back the Sefer Torah. That is his Psak.

I have a Ha'ora on this. Rav Zilberstein is the son in law of Rav Elyashiv, the Gadol Hador and he quotes him extensively. I have a big Kasha. In Rav Elyashiv's Kovetz Teshuvos he writes the following Chiddush. He was asked is there a Hiddur in Laining from a more beautiful Sefer Torah. Again, both are Kosher L'chal Hashittos. But one is a more beautiful writing, more experienced Sofer, the letters and the lines are neater. Is there an Inyan? Rav Elyashiv there says a Chiddush. Rav Elyashiv says that Laining is a Mitzvah of Limud Hatorah, of learning. The Sefer Torah is only the Hechsher Mitzvah. The Mitzvah is the learning that comes from the Laining. You have to have a Sefer Torah so you have a Sefer Torah. It is only the Hechsher Mitzvah not the Guf Hamitzvah. Zagt Rav Elyashiv, there is absolutely no difference if it a more beautiful Ksav or a less beautiful Ksav. The learning is exactly the same.

Ai, you will ask a Kasha. Zeh Keili V'aveihu it says should be a Sefer Torah Na, to have a beautiful Sefer Torah. Zagt Rav Elyashiv, that is for the Mitzvah of Kesivas Sefer Torah. There the Sefer Torah is the Cheftza Shel Mitzvah, the Mitzvah to write a Sefer Torah and Mehudar is better. As far as Kriyas Hatorah is concerned Zagt Rav Elyashiv, they are all the same. I don't know why Rav Zilberstein doesn't quote his Shver, maybe he had a Kasha on his Shver, maybe he had some other reason, some other Cheshbon. But that is Rav Elyashiv's Teshuva and it is a Mussar that when you listen to Kriyas Hatorah it is Limud Hatorah and you are supposed to be paying attention.

We had a Shailla in Shul. Somebody gave a small Sefer Torah. A beautiful Sefer Torah but a small one. It is very handy for using in a Bais Aveil or when someone has to be on the move. It is a beautiful Ksav but a very small Sefer. Absolutely beautiful Sefer Torah. To put it in the Aron, it wasn't practical to put it in front, so what was done is that in the second row (we have two rows of Sifrei Torah), a little stage was built up and on top of that is the small Sefer Torah. Now, in order to get to the small Sefer Torah if you want to Lain from it, we have to put your hands over the Sefer Torah which is in front of it, in the back there are 3 Sifrei Torah and in front there are 3 Sifrei Torah. The small Sefer Torah is one of those in back. So you have to stick your hand over the regular size Sifrei Torah to reach the small one. The Shailla is, is it Mutter as Ain Mavirin Al Hamitzvos. You are not supposed to pass over a Mitzvah. When you take out the Tallis your Tallis should be first in your bag. You don't pass the Tefillin to take your Tallis as Ain Mavirin Al Hamitzvos. The question is how do we have a right to take out the small Sefer Torah if we have to pass over the big Sefer Torah. On a Shabbos that we are Laining with 2 Sifrei Torah then I understand. You take out one in front and then the one in back. Otherwise, Ain Mavirin Al Hamitzvos. Based on Rav Elyashiv's Psak I said that it is ok. Ain Mavirin Al Hamitzvos is usually found by a Guf Hamitzvah not by the Hechsher Mitzvah. To pass

over a Hechsher Mitzvah to get to another Hechsher Mitzvah, you will not find certainly in Kadmonim, Gemaras or in Rishonim that there is an Issur of Ain Mavirin Al Hamitzvos. If you want to get a hammer to hang up your Mezuzah there is no Issur to pass one hammer to get to a second hammer because a hammer is not the Cheftza Shel Mitzvah. Mimeila, based on Rav Elyashiv's Psak that the Sefer Torah is only the Hechsher Mitzvah it should be Muttar to pass over one to get to the other. This is a topic of Sifrei Torah that I wanted to share with you today.

3 - Topic - Simcha of Tu Bish'vat

The Simcha of Tu Bish'vat which this year has an extra Simcha because it comes out on Shabbos we don't have to lose a Tachanun to observe Tu Bish'vat. Normally we have to give up saying Tachanun and now we don't because it is Chal on Shabbos. What is the special uniqueness, significance of Tu Bish'vat?

Of course it is that Tu Bish'vat is the Rosh Hashana of the Ilanos and there is a second Chashivos. Tu Bish'vat marks Sheloshim Yom Kodem Hachag, 30 days before Purim and we start thinking about Purim. I would like to share with you a quick Dvar Halacha because I started to study the Megillah and I never before spent time on the Dikduk of the Megillah and I figured let me do it this year.

I know that Dikduk is not your favorite topic, so therefore, I want to mention only the first Posuk. In the first Posuk of the Megillah there are two words which if mispronounced change the meaning of the word. So if you Lain the Megillah or if you listen to the Laining of the Megillah, listen carefully.

The first Posuk talks about (וַיְהִי, בַּיּוֹם אֲחַשְׁוֵירוֹשׁ: הוּא אֲחַשְׁוֵירוֹשׁ, הַמֶּלֶךְ מֵהַדּוֹר עֵד -) (כּוֹשׁ) Achashveirosh Hamoleich Mai'hodu V'ad Kush. Hamoleich means he is a king. The Moleich is an Avoda Zorah. If you say it as an Avoda Zorah then it is an Avoda Zorah and if you say it as a king then it is a king. He rules. Be careful on the Mil'ail and the Mil'ra.

The same thing with (מֵהַדּוֹר עֵד-כּוֹשׁ) Mai'hodu V'ad Kush. Hodu Mil'ail with the accent on the Hei and Vav is the name of a place. Hodu with the accent at the end of the word means praise as we say (הוֹדוּ לַר' קְרָאוּ בְשֵׁמוֹ. הוֹדִיעוּ בְעַמִּים) (עֲלִילוֹתָיו). You say HOdu or hoDU. Hamoleich and Hodu have to be pronounced correctly and there are many other words like that in the Megillah and we will talk about it a different time. At least in the first Posuk please make sure to get it right and do the Mil'ail and the Mil'ra correctly.

And so, as we prepare for Tu Bish'vat and Purim and dig out from the snow I wish everybody a wonderful Shabbos, a Tu Bish'vat of growth and Shabbos Shirah, a time of song to the Ribbono Shel Olam. A Gutten Shabbos to all!

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Healing the Fracture

"...and you shall bring up my bones..."(13:19)

The Torah tells us that when Bnei Yisroel were leaving Egypt, Moshe involved himself in the retrieval of "atzmos Yosef" – "the bones of Yosef". "Bones" would seem to be a pejorative manner in which to describe the body of a tzaddik. When the brothers stood before Yosef, unaware of the fact that he was their brother, Yehuda referred to Yaakov as Yosef's servant.¹ The Talmud teaches that since Yosef remained silent and allowed Yehuda to speak in such a manner regarding his father, Yosef is described as "bones", even during his lifetime.² In another statement on the same issue the Talmud relates that as a punishment for his silence, Yosef lost ten years of his life, corresponding to the ten times he heard his father being called "your slave".³ The Torah Temima points out that both statements are made in the name of the same sage, Rav Yehuda in the name of Rav. Therefore, there appears to be a contradiction.⁴ Why would Yosef be punished twice for the same act? As to why Yosef was called "bones" the Torah Temima offers the following explanation: Since a corpse depicted as bones implies that decomposition

has occurred, the Torah uses this term as a punishment to Yosef for his insensitivity to his father's honor.⁵ However, the Torah Temima's interpretation is difficult to understand, for in Parshas Vayechi, Yosef referred to himself as "bones".⁶ Therefore, it is impossible that the term is being used as a punishment, especially since the reference that the Talmud makes to Yosef being called "bones" in his lifetime is the occasion when he used the term to refer to himself. Furthermore, how does Yosef's being referred to as "bones" compensate for him slighting his father's honor? According to the Talmud, a person's bones, providing the physical structure of his body, are genetically transferred to him from his father.⁷ The Hebrew word for "bone" is "etzem". The word "atzmiyus" which describes a person's sense of self has the same root word. This connection indicates that a person acquires his sense of self, his psychological structure from his father as well. This sense of self comes to a person who can define himself by his parents. A person will approach life with confidence if he has a strong sense of his roots. It is imperative that we identify positive qualities within our parents to which we ourselves can aspire, for having a strong foundation allows for our growth to endure. Yosef's error resulted not only in a dishonour to his father, but it also reflected a chink in the manner that he defined himself. Holding his father in lower esteem indicates a flaw in himself. Therefore, when Yosef realized that he had facilitated a slight against his father by his inaction, he began referring to himself as "bones". Since his bones and, on a deeper level his very sense of self came from his father, he compensated for his inadvertent slight by defining himself completely by his father. Acting in this manner served to acknowledge that he had dishonored his father and to correct the way he defined himself. It emerges that being called "bones" was not a punishment, rather Yosef's own manner of rectifying his insurrection. Consequently, there is no contradiction in the words of Rav Yehuda. One statement reflects Yosef's own measures and the second statement identifies his punishment.

1.Beraishis 43:28 2.Sotah 13a 3.ibid 4.Beraishis 50:25 5.See Torah Temimah Shemos 1:1 6.Beraishis 50:25 7.Niddah 31a

More Than Skin Deep

"...this is my G-d and I will exalt him..." (15:2)

When Bnei Yisroel emerged from the Red Sea, they chanted "The Song of the Sea". Contained within this song is the verse "zeh kayli ve'anvayhu" – "this is my G-d and I will exalt him".¹ From this verse the Talmud derives the requirement to endeavor to perform Hashem's mitzvos with the most aesthetically pleasing objects, such as a beautiful esrog, tefillin, or succah. The root word of "ve'anvayhu" is "noi" – "beauty"; the verse should be interpreted as "This is my G-d and I will serve him in a beautiful manner."² The Rabeinu Bechaya explains that beautifying the objects of mitzvos is the manner in which we express our love for Hashem.³ This explanation appears to contradict the Mesilas Yesharim's classification of "beautifying the mitzvos". The Ramchal in the Mesilas Yesharim divides true Divine Service into two categories, love of Hashem and fear of Hashem. Under the penumbra of "love of Hashem" he includes joy – serving Hashem with happiness, communion – uniting with Hashem to the extent that we can no longer separate ourselves from Him, and "kinah" – "zealousness", despising those who despise Hashem. Under the penumbra of "fear of Hashem" he includes humbling ourselves before Him, feeling shame when coming forth to perform Divine service, and honoring the mitzvos. In his explanation of how to honor the mitzvos, the Ramchal cites the Talmudic interpretation of the verse "zeh kayli ve'anvayhu", the exhortation regarding beautifying the mitzvos.⁴ The Ramchal clearly sees beautifying the mitzvos as a function of "fear of Hashem". Would logic not dictate that beautifying the mitzvos is a function of love, rather than fear of Hashem? Why is Bnei Yisroel's first reaction to being saved their commitment to beautify the mitzvos? Would it not be more appropriate to first commit themselves to simply perform the mitzvos? The Talmud derives another interpretation for the word "anvayhu". This word can be divided into the words "ani vehu" – "I and Him" which

teaches us the concept that in order to become G-d-like we must imitate G-d's ways.⁵ What is the connection between this concept and beautification of the mitzvos? At the beginning of any relationship there is a distance between the two parties. Each party respects the other and is therefore willing to relate to the other on his (the second party's) terms. When the distance dissipates, the respect may dwindle, and each party begins to demand that the other adjust to their behavior. It is this clash of needs which breeds contempt. This problem can occur in our relationship with Hashem as well. The Talmud teaches that Bnei Yisroel's relationship with Hashem at the Red Sea was so tangible that even babies were able to sense Hashem's presence.⁶ Hashem's presence transcended from an intellectual to a tangible perception; the distance had dissipated. It was at that point that the seeds of contempt could be sown. The solution to this problem was making a commitment to beautify the mitzvos. When we see something beautiful our instinct is to consider it unapproachable. Beauty elevates an object and creates a distance between us and it. The ultimate relationship with Hashem is one of love. By beautifying the mitzvos, we inculcate the respect in the relationship which preserves this love. The Mesilas Yesharim is explaining that since the purpose of beautifying the mitzvos is to instill respect, it is classified as an element of fear of Hashem. We instill into the mitzvos a dignity which creates awe in the eye of the beholder. The foundation of genuine love in any relationship is respect. Respect assures that there will not be contempt. Developing the G-dliness within ourselves by imitating Hashem's ways enables us to elicit the respect which will preserve our relationships. Therefore, the same verse which teaches us how to preserve our relationship with Hashem is also the source of how to maintain our own personal relationships.
1.15:2 2.Shabbos 133b 3.Kad Hakemach 4.Ch.17 Chelkei Hachasidus 5.Shabbos 133b 6.Sotah 30b

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subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

In My Opinion SHABBAT FOOD

One of the many distinctive features about the holy day of Shabbat is its full menu. This naturally varies among the different ethnic groups that comprise the Jewish people. As a descendant of Lithuanian Eastern European Jews, I actually associate Shabbat with gefilte fish, chicken soup and hot cholent. Now that may not have been the menu for Jews in Yemen or in Iraq, and I readily acknowledge that fact, nevertheless to me these foods are inextricably bound to the holy day of Shabbat. Much of life and memory is composed of physical associations. Special and unique foods have always marked the commemoration of Shabbat in the Jewish world and throughout Jewish history. The Talmud records for us that a certain rabbi served cholent or some other form of that food on Shabbat to his Roman guest. The Roman was so impressed by this dish of hot food that he took the recipe and requested his own court prepare this for him on a Tuesday. Naturally, the dish did not taste the same and was not nearly as good. When he complained to the rabbi, the rabbi told him that one ingredient was missing in the recipe that the Romans were using. And he told him, the missing ingredient was Shabbat. So it is not only that food influences and makes Shabbat for us, but it is equally true that Shabbat influences and enhances the food that we prepare and eat on that holy day. Shabbat is, in itself, one of the ingredients that make up the food that we serve at our Shabbat meals. The Talmud makes a special point about the necessity for hot food and/or drink to be consumed on Shabbat. Since there were sects of Jews who mistakenly denied the authenticity of the Oral Law and did not allow for any fire whatsoever to be present in their homes on Shabbat, these Jews necessarily ate only cold food on the holy day. In order to reinforce the belief of the Jewish people in the interpretations of the Oral Law and in the traditions of Rabbinic Judaism, the rabbis of the Talmud insisted that Jews must eat/drink hot foods or hot

beverages on the Shabbat. Differing ethnic groupings located in the widely scattered countries of the Jewish diaspora fulfilled this obligation with differing types of food. In the Eastern European Ashkenazic world, a pot roast of potatoes, barley, beans and meat was concocted and given the name of cholent – a name of origin as uncertain as the recipe for the delicacy itself. Cholent has the wondrous characteristic that it never tastes the same, in spite of using the exact same ingredients and recipe from one Shabbat to the next. As a longtime expert on the matter, I can testify that it is never the same in taste and in the nuance of flavor from house to house and family to family. The common denominator is that it is always hot food and somehow delicious, no matter what ingredients one may have used in preparing it. Again, it is apparent to me that Shabbat itself is the main ingredient in that traditional stew. There is a halachic basis for serving gefilte fish on Shabbat as well. If one serves regular fish, unless it is extremely well fileted, there will always be the problem of dealing with the bones that of the fish being eaten. One of the prohibitions of work on Shabbat is removing part of the fish – the bones – from the edible flesh of fish itself. In order to avoid this problem the fish itself was ground-up so that all of it now became edible, and the problem of removing the bones was obviated. I still remember both as a child and later as a very young husband setting up the hand grinder for the fish on Thursday nights and proceeding to grind the raw fish from which my mother, and later my wife, rolled into balls, spiced and then cooked. This gefilte fish became one of the staple delicacies of my Shabbat life. My mother never used the frozen fish loaves to make her delicious fish. It had to be freshly ground or otherwise it was not fit for the Shabbat table. My wife was also very reluctant to use such a time-saving creation but upon my prodding to do so – since I began to feel it beneath my dignity to have to grind raw fish on Thursday nights – succumbed to the advances of our progressive era and used the fish loaves. But both she and I agreed that our gefilte fish never quite tasted the same Shabbat shalom Berel Wein

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Parsha B'SHALACH Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog

This week's Torah reading mentions the eternal problem that all fundraisers for institutions face – namely, that though one may have been successful in raising great sums of money for buildings, it is much more difficult to raise funds for the necessary daily maintenance of the institution and for the salaries of those who are involved with it on a daily basis. The Jewish people truly appreciated and sang God's praises for extricating them from Egyptian bondage and splitting the sea to allow their exodus to be complete. But they found themselves in the midst of a trackless desert without visible supplies of food, water and shelter. In short, the building has been built but the question of how it would be maintained was still a problem? The Lord's answer, so to speak, to this fundamental issue is intriguing and instructive. Just as the entire process of the Exodus from Egypt was wholly miraculous, unexpected and beyond mere human comprehension, so too was the sustenance of the Jewish people as they wandered in the desert of Sinai for forty years. It was miraculous, unexpected, unpredictable and also beyond human comprehension. The line between the miraculous and what we deem to be natural is a blurred one as far as Jewish thought is concerned. Everything in the world is miraculous and everything is also natural and in some ways can be explained rationally. The rabbis of the Talmud summed this up in the pithy statement of that indigent scholar who had no money with which to buy oil for the lamp. So he used vinegar instead and confidently stated: "The One Who commanded and ordained that the oil should burn will also command and ordain that vinegar should burn." Bringing forth wheat from the ground and grinding it into flour and baking it into bread is no less a miracle than manna falling from heaven to sustain millions of people for decades. The education of the Jewish people, in the forty year course of their initial schooling as a unique and special people,

was aimed to make them realize how thin the line is between what we humans consider to be natural and rational, and what is miraculous and beyond our understanding. It is fairly clear that many times we live in a world that seems to be completely irrational and beyond our understanding and control. However, instead of being humbled by this realization, many times we retain our hubris and arrogance and claim to have true understanding and lasting solutions to difficult problems that constantly arise. We certainly have to make every attempt to do our best and industriously try to solve our problems. However, at the end of the day, we should realize that we are all sustained by manna from heaven, in whatever form it is received by every generation. The drawing forth of water from the rock by Moshe is certainly to be considered a miraculous event. However, the ability to desalinate salt water from the sea, a process attributed to human creativity and invention, realistically viewed, is no less miraculous. And this overriding lesson that the Torah teaches us in this week's reading, is a basic axiom of Judaism and Jewish life. Shabbat shalom Rabbi Berel Wein

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The Basics of Techum Shabbos Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Question #1: Camping sisters "My sister's family and ours are each spending Shavuot at nearby campsites. We were told that we could get together at a third spot between our two places for a Yom Tov barbecue. If we return on Yom Tov with the leftovers, must we keep track of who brought which food?"

Question #2: Bungalow bar mitzvah "A friend is making a bar mitzvah in a nearby bungalow colony. How can I find out if his colony is within my techum Shabbos?"

Question #3: Eruv Techumin "A lecturer will be speaking in the mountains not far from where I will be spending Shabbos. I was told that he will be just a bit beyond my techum Shabbos. Is there a way that I can go to hear him?"

Introduction: In this week's parsha, the Torah recounts the story of the manna, also including the unbecoming episode where some people attempted to gather it on Shabbos. In the words of the Torah: And Moshe said, "Eat it (the manna that remained from Friday) today, for today is Shabbos to Hashem. Today you will not find it (the manna) in the field. Six days you shall gather it, and the seventh day is Shabbos – There will be none."

And it was on the seventh day. Some of the people went out to gather, and they did not find any.

And Hashem said to Moshe: "For how long will you refuse to observe My commandments and My teachings? See, Hashem gave you the Shabbos. For this reason, He provides you with a two-day supply of bread on the sixth day. Each person should remain where he is -- no man should leave his place on the seventh day" (Shemos 16:25-29). Staying in place

Although someone might interpret the words, Each person should remain where he is -- no man should leave his place on the seventh day to mean that it is forbidden even to leave one's home, this is not what the Torah intends. According to Rabbi Akiva (Shabbos 153b; Sotah 27b; Sanhedrin 66a), the Torah, here, is indeed prohibiting walking beyond your "place" on Shabbos, but this proscription prohibits walking only more than 2000 amos (approximately half to two-thirds of a mile*) beyond the "locale" where you are spending Shabbos. This border beyond which it is forbidden to walk is called techum Shabbos, quite literally, the Shabbos boundary. How do we determine where this boundary is, beyond which I may not walk on Shabbos?

There are some basic factors that determine the extent and boundaries of one's techum Shabbos. The first is whether you are spending Shabbos within a residential area or not. I am going to present several options which will help explain how to determine someone's techum Shabbos.

Our first case is someone spending Shabbos in a typical city, town or village where the houses are reasonably close together, meaning that the distance between the houses is 70 2/3 amos (about 105-120 feet*) or less. In this

instance, one's techum Shabbos is established by measuring the 2000 amos from the end of the city, town or village.

The "end" of the city is determined, not by its municipal borders, but by where the houses are no longer within 70 2/3 amos of one another. When two towns or cities are near one another, halachah will usually treat the two towns as one, provided that the houses of the two towns are within 141 1/3 amos of one another (Mishnah, Eruvin 57a). This is twice the distance of the 70 2/3 amos mentioned above. The details of the rules when and whether one combines two cities for determining techum Shabbos purposes will be left for another time.

Techum Shabbos in a bungalow colony Until now, we have discussed the techum Shabbos of someone spending Shabbos in a city. How far is the techum Shabbos of someone spending Shabbos in a resort hotel, side-of-the-road motel, or bungalow colony?

One spending Shabbos in a bungalow colony will have a techum that is at least 2000 amos beyond the last house of the colony. If there are other houses or bungalows within 70 2/3 amos of the residences of your colony, those houses or bungalows are included within your "place." Under certain circumstances (beyond the scope of this article), they can be included within your "place" even if the houses or bungalows are within 141 1/3 amos of one another. If the house, hotel or motel in which one is spending Shabbos is outside a city and more than 70 2/3 amos from any other residential building, one measures the techum Shabbos from the external walls of the house. Shabbos while hiking Someone spending Shabbos in an open field is entitled to four amos (between 6 - 7.5 feet*) as his "place," and the 2000 amos are measured from beyond these four amos.

Proper placement We have now established that the definition of one's "place" for techum Shabbos purposes depends substantively on whether one's residence for Shabbos is indoors and on whether there are other residences nearby. We will now learn that although techum Shabbos is a boundary of 2000 amos, one usually has a greater distance in which one may walk. This is because techum Shabbos is always measured as a rectangular or square area. We take the four points that are the easternmost, the southernmost, the westernmost and the northernmost points of your "place," and then draw an imaginary straight line that begins at 2000 amos beyond each of these points. In other words, we will measure 2000 amos east of the easternmost point and draw an imaginary north-south line at that point. We will similarly measure 2000 amos north of the northernmost point and draw there an imaginary east-west line. We repeat this for the other two directions of the compass. The result is a rectangle (or perhaps a square) whose four closest points are each 2000 amos distant from your "place." Obviously, this means that the techum Shabbos area is significantly larger than 2000 amos beyond one's "place." This establishes the techum within which one is permitted to travel on Shabbos. By the way, all the rules of the laws of techum apply on Yom Tov.

Property placement One of the interesting, and lesser-known, details of the laws of techum Shabbos is that possessions is also bound by the laws of techum Shabbos. This means that my possessions cannot be transported on Shabbos beyond the area in which I myself can walk. This halachah is not usually germane to the laws of Shabbos, since, in any instance, it is forbidden to carry on Shabbos outside of an enclosed area. The halachah is therefore more germane on Yom Tov, when one is permitted to carry. For this reason, the discussion of these laws is in mesechta Beitzah, whose subject matter is the laws of Yom Tov. This subject is one of the main points of the fifth chapter of the mesechta. Camping sisters

At this point, we can discuss our opening question: "My sister's family and ours are each spending Shavuot at nearby campsites. We were told that we could get together at a third spot between our two places for a Yom Tov barbecue. If we return on Yom Tov with the leftovers, must we keep track of who brought which food?"

These two families are spending Yom Tov in locations where they have different techumin, yet they are close enough that there is some overlapping

area located within both of their techumin. Each family may walk on Yom Tov to this overlapping area, carrying the items necessary for the barbecue. Everyone must be careful not to walk beyond the area of his own techum. In addition, since the items used for the barbecue were owned by one or the other of the families when Yom Tov started, each item may not be removed beyond its owner's techum until Yom Tov is over. Thus, if one sister brought the hotdogs or the paper plates, the other sister may not take those items back with her, if she will be removing them to a place beyond her sister's techum.

Min hatorah or miderabbanan? The rules of techumin that I have so far presented are held universally. However, there is a major dispute whether these rules are min hatorah or miderabbanan. There are three basic opinions. The tanna Rabbi Akiva, mentioned above, rules that the Torah forbade walking on Shabbos more than 2000 amos from one's place, as we previously defined it. The Sages who disagreed with Rabbi Akiva contend that the prohibition of traveling 2000 amos is only miderabbanan. (Whether Rabbi Akiva held that techumin on Yom Tov [as opposed to Shabbos] are prohibited min hatorah or only miderabbanan is a dispute among rishonim; see Rashi, Tosafos, and Turei Even, Chagigah 17b.) However, there is a further dispute whether the Sages contend that there is no prohibition of techumin min hatorah at all, and the prohibition is always only miderabbanan, or whether the basis for the prohibition is min hatorah. According to the Talmud Yerushalmi (Eruvin 3:4), traveling more than 12 mil, which is the equivalent of 24,000 amos (approximately 6 - 8.5 miles*), is prohibited min hatorah. This last position is quoted by the Rif (end of the first chapter of Eruvin). Several rishonim rule according to this Yerushalmi (Rambam, Hilchos Shabbos 27:1 and Sefer Hamitzvos, Lo Saaseh #321; Semag (Lo Saaseh 36); Sefer Hachinuch, Mitzvah #24). On the other hand, many rishonim (e.g., Baal Hamaor, Milchemes Hashem, and Rosh, all at the end of the first chapter of Eruvin; Ramban's notes to Sefer Hamitzvos, Lo Saaseh #321; Tosafos, Chagigah 17b s.v. Dichsiv) contend that the Bavli disagrees with this Yerushalmi and holds that the concept of techum Shabbos is completely miderabbanan, and that the halachah follows the Bavli, as it usually does.

A nice-sized place Six miles sounds like a distance considerably more than I would walk on a Shabbos. From where did the Yerushalmi get this measurement? The basis for this distance is the encampment of the Bnei Yisrael while in the Desert, which occupied an area that was 12 mil by 12 mil. Thus, when the Torah told each Israelite not to leave his "place," it prohibited walking outside an area this size (Tosafos, Chagigah 17b s.v. Dichsiv). According to the Talmud Yerushalmi, no matter when and where one is spending Shabbos, one draws a square or rectangle 12 mil by 12 mil around one's city, colony or campground and this area is considered your "place." Beyond this area, the Torah prohibited you to walk, according to the Yerushalmi.

Although it is anyway prohibited to walk beyond one's 2000 amos techum on Shabbos and Yom Tov because of the rabbinic ruling of techumin, there are some practical instances where the question of whether there is a Torah-forbidden techum of 12 mil becomes germane. For example, the Gemara (Eruvin 43a) discusses whether the prohibition of techumin applies when one is more than ten tefachim above ground level, called yesh techumin lemaalah miyud or ein techumin lemaalah miyud. An example of this case, quoted by the poskim, is a situation in which someone wants to walk quite a distance on Shabbos atop narrow stands or poles that are all more than ten tefachim above ground. If one rules that there is no law of techumin above ten tefachim, ein techumin lemaalah miyud, then it is permitted to travel this way on Shabbos, no matter how far one travels. On the other hand, if there is a law of techumin above ten tefachim, it is prohibited to travel this way.

This question is raised by the Gemara, which does not reach a definite conclusion (Eruvin 43a). Both the Shulchan Aruch and the Rema (Orach Chayim 404:1) rule that one may travel lemaalah miyud for a distance greater than 2000 amos, because one may be lenient in a doubt regarding the

rabbinic prohibition of techum shabbos. However, since traveling 12 mil is prohibited min hatorah according to those authorities who rule like the Yerushalmi, one should be stringent not to travel lemaalah miyud for a distance of 12 mil or farther. The Gra, however, rules that one may disregard the opinion of the Yerushalmi and the ruling of the Rambam, because the halachah follows the Bavli and there is no prohibition of techum at all min hatorah. Since the prohibition of techumin is always miderabbanan, one may be lenient to rule that ein techumin lamaaleh miyud. There could be contemporary applications if someone ended up on an airplane when Shabbos begins (for example, because of a life-threatening emergency), whether he is permitted, upon landing, to leave the airport terminal before Shabbos ends.

How do we rule? Regarding the dispute between Rabbi Akiva and the Sages whether the requirement of remaining within a techum of 2000 amos is min hatorah or miderabbanan, it is universally accepted that we follow the opinion of the Sages that techum Shabbos of 2000 amos is miderabbanan. A result of this ruling is that if someone needs to use comfort facilities and there are none available within his techum, he is permitted to leave his techum for this purpose, because of the rule that kovod haberiyos, human dignity, supersedes a rabbinic prohibition (Berachos 19b).

Moving my techum Shabbos "A lecturer will be speaking in the mountains not far from where I will be spending Shabbos. I was told that he will be just a bit beyond my techum Shabbos. Is there a way that I can go to hear him?"

The answer is that one certainly can, by creating an eruv techumin. This halachic entity allows me to move the "place" from where we measure the techum Shabbos. Ordinarily, my techum Shabbos is measured from where I am when Shabbos starts. However, when I make an eruv techumin, I move my "place" to the location of the eruv. If my eruv is placed such that both locations -- where I am when Shabbos begins and where the speaker will be delivered -- are within its techum Shabbos, I may go hear the speaker.

But be careful. Creating an eruv techumin is not only a leniency, it also creates a stringency. Since I cannot be in two different "places," if I use an eruv techumin, I have moved my techum Shabbos, not expanded it. Although I gain in the new direction, I lose the full techum I would have had in my actual location.

In this way, eruv techumin is different from the other two types of eruv, eruv tavshillin made when Yom Tov falls on Friday, and eruv chatzeiros, which is made so that I can carry between two adjacent, enclosed properties that are owned by different people. The other two eruvim create leniencies but carry with them no attached stringencies. For this reason, the other two eruvim can be made for someone who does not know that the eruv is being made, since it provides him with benefits and no liabilities. However, since an eruv techumin includes liabilities, one cannot make an eruv techumin for someone who does not want it or who does not know about it (Mishnah, Eruvin 81; Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 414:1).

Only for a mitzvah There is another major difference between eruv techumin and the other two types of eruvim. One may use an eruv techumin only if there is a mitzvah reason to walk where it would otherwise be outside one's techum (Eruvin 31a, 82a; Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 415:1). For example, someone who wants to hear a shiur or attend a sheva brachos may use an eruv techumin to do so. But one may not use an eruv techumin to attend a social gathering, where no mitzvah is accomplished (see Mishnah Berurah 415:5). On the other hand, one may make and use either an eruv tavshillin or an eruv chatzeiros even if there is no mitzvah reason to do so.

How do I make an eruv techumin? To make an eruv techumin, one puts some food before Shabbos where you want your "place" for Shabbos to be. There must be enough food there so that each person who wants to use the eruv techumin could eat two meals. If one used a condiment for an eruv, one needs to have enough so that each person who wants to use the eruv would have enough condiment for two meals. One recites a brocha asher kideshanu bemitzvosav vetzivanu al mitzvas eruv, and then makes a declaration that this is his eruv to permit him to walk in this direction. Since this food will

basically be left exposed to the elements and animals, many people use a bucket of saltwater, which qualifies as an eruv techumin. Note that saltwater does not qualify for the other two types of eruv, eruv chatzeiros and eruv tavshillin.

Because there are many complicated laws about eruvim that are beyond the scope of this article, I suggest that someone who needs an eruv techumin consult with his rav or posek.

Who instituted eruv techumin? The Gemara teaches that Shlomoh Hamelech instituted eruvim (Eruvin 21b). We find a dispute as to which type of eruv the Gemara is referring to. Rav Hai Gaon (Teshuvos Hageonim #44) explains that Shlomoh Hamelech instituted eruv techumin, whereas Rashi (Eruvin 21b) and the Rambam (Hilchos Eruvin 1:2) explain that he instituted eruv chatzeiros.

Conclusion The Gemara teaches that the rabbinic laws are dearer to Hashem than the Torah laws. In this context, we can explain these mitzvos, created by Chazal to guarantee that the Jewish people remember the message of Shabbos. * All measurements in this article are meant for illustration only. For exact figures, consult your rav or posek.

<https://yated.com/significance-shalom-zochor-minhagim-associated/>

What is the significance of a shalom zochor and the minhagim that are associated with it? By Rabbi Ahron Rapps –

Insights Question: What is the significance of a shalom zochor and the minhagim that are associated with it?

Insight: A shalom zochor is a custom performed on Friday night before a newborn male child reaches the eighth day of his life, the day that he is to have a bris milah. It isn't necessarily a meal, but a festive gathering that includes the minhag of eating chick peas. This custom reflects the fact that although everyone is ecstatic over the birth of the child, there exists a sense of mourning, as well. While the child was present within his mother as a fetus, he was learning Torah with a malach. Upon being born and entering the realm we call olam hazeh, the malach touches him above his mouth and he forgets his learning. Thus, there is a sense of sadness that permeates the gathering, and we therefore eat arbis, a round food that conveys a state of mourning, similar to the round bagels eaten in the house of a mourner.

We will first discuss the meaning of the shalom zochor, which occurs specifically on Shabbos, and then, next week, continue with the child forgetting his learning.

The Torah requires an animal to be eight days old before it is permissible to be used as a korban. Something that is only seven days old, the days of teva, has not entered the realm of eight to be used for avodas Hashem. There are two distinct systems that exist in our world. One functions naturally and openly. That is teva, which is represented by the seven days of the week and reflects the physical world of olam hazeh. The realm of eight represents that which is beyond teva and refers to the world of Olam Haba with its sense of kedushah that is hidden within the world of teva. Thus, only something that has in some sense connected with the world of eight through reaching his eighth day milestone could be used for a korban. For now it could serve as a keili, vessel, to reveal the kedushah that is hidden in our world.

The absolute sense of kedushah is represented in eight, but there is a mei'ein, a glimmer of that world, that is present in our world of teva as well. Hashem created the physical world in seven days and "rested" on the seventh. The concept is that our world is not to be simply looked upon as existing as the seven days of creation, but, rather, that there are six days of physical creation, with the seventh day considered part of the physical world of teva, but reflecting the glimmer of the absolute realm of kedushah of Olam Haba. It serves to represent menucha, a sense of rest that occurs as a form of completion, when all the physical work is completed and the goal has been reached. The tachlis of olam hazeh is to lead to our existence in Olam Haba as a function of our earning it through our learning of Torah and performance of mitzvos while in this world. Thus, the seventh day of Shabbos represents the glimmer in our world of Olam Haba and is thus a

requirement for the newborn child to experience before he receives his bris milah.

Just as the animal enters his capacity to be utilized for avodas Hashem when he becomes eight days old, so does the young child enter his world of avodah through bris milah on the eighth day of his life. This mitzvah establishes the child as existing for the realm of Olam Haba, and thus it must first be prefaced by the seventh day of Shabbos. In order for the child to be able to relate to the absolute realm of eight, his neshamah must first be "to'em," or taste, the "mei'ein" of the world of eight in the seventh day of Shabbos. Chazal refer to this as to first experience the "matronisa," the princess, before we can enter the realm of eight. It is this idea that reflects the awesome kedushah of the seventh day of Shabbos. This idea can be seen with regard to the specific day Matan Torah occurred.

The Gemara discusses what specific day of the month of Sivan Hashem bestowed His Torah upon Klal Yisroel. Although there is a dispute about what day of the month it occurred, all agree that it occurred on Shabbos. Shabbos represents the capacity for our physical world to relate to kedushah. As such, it had to be the day when the ultimate dimension of spirituality, Torah, came to the world. Shabbos could be considered the ultimate host for all the specific kedushah that is to be represented. Thus, when a Yom Tov occurs on Shabbos, the specific tefillos of Yom Tov become dominant, with the day of Shabbos merely being referenced in some added words. For this is kedushas Shabbos, serving as the conduit of kedushah in our world. Therefore, a shalom zochor is celebrated on Shabbos, for through that holy day, all, including the young newborn, are able to relate to the hidden kedushah that is represented in Olam Haba.

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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

Rav Shlomo Aviner Shu"t Trump - Q&A Regarding President Trump & His Daughter, Ivanka

Q: First of all, is Ha-Rav happy that the Americans chose Trump to be the President of the United States? On one hand, he seems to be more Pro-Israel than Hillary Clinton, but, on the other hand, he is unknown, and we say in Halachah: When there is a known and an unknown, the known is preferable.

A: There are two answers:

1. This question recalls that when Golda Meir became Prime Minister, a student asked Ha-Rav Joseph Soloveitchik: Is it permissible to appoint a woman to such a position? After all, the Rambam (Hilchos Melachim 1:5) brings the Halachah of the Sifri, that we learn from the verse (Devarim 17:15) "You shall surely set a king over you" – a king and not a queen. Ha-Rav Soloveitchik immediately answered: And appointing Ben Gurion was not a question? Although he was not a woman, he was not religious, and it was forbidden to appoint him as well (see Shut Igrot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:45). The answer is that they did not ask us, and the responsibility of these appointments is therefore not incumbent upon us (Nefesh Ha-Rav, pp. 90-91). The Americans did not ask me who was best for them.

2. We don't know. Politics is a not math and it is difficult to predict the future. There are too many factors at play to know if President Trump will be good for us or not.

Q: Some say that Trump is the Mashiach since "Donald Trump" is the same numerical value in Hebrew letters (424) as "Mashiach ben David"? A: Nonsense. Ha-Rav Shmuel Eliyahu, Rav of Tzefat, already pointed out that 424 is also the same Gematria as "Chatzi Mana Felafel" (a Half-Portion of Felafel)

Q: It is known that Trump's daughter, Ivanka, converted to Judaism, and there was a storm over her conversion, which was performed by Ha-Rav Haskel Lookstein. Is she Jewish? A: It is impossible to express an opinion regarding such a serious matter of whether or not one is Jewish, based on hearsay. Regarding the issue, we have not heard that there are questions

about Rav Lookstein's conversions. The two Chief Rabbis, Ha-Rav David Lau and Ha-Rav Yitzchak Yosef already expressed their opinions that there is no issue with his conversions. Who then are we to ask questions?! I have met with Rav Lookstein many times. He is an Orthodox Rabbi. He is modern and open, but he is Orthodox. He is also a man of integrity, with proper character traits and a heart of gold, who has done much good for the Jews of America. He is also humble, modest and flees from honor.

Q: Then she is Jewish? A: Yes. I heard that she openly proclaims that she observes Shabbat and Kashrut. If only this was the state of all Jews in America.

Q: It doesn't seem like she covers her hair. Does she wear a wig? A: I don't know. It is forbidden to stare at a woman.

Q: I heard that at Trump's Inauguration, a Rabbi permitted Ivanka Trump and her husband Jared Kushner to violate Shabbat by being driven by a non-Jew because of Pikuach Nefesh? A: If it was based on a Rabbi's ruling, then it is violating Shabbat with permission. I am not an expert in the details but understand, however, that they consult with an Orthodox Rabbi, since they are indeed in a complex situation. After all, her husband is one of the senior advisors to the President. The Rabbi instructed them on what to do. In general, one should choose a Rabbi and ask him what to do in difficult situations. This is in fulfillment of the dictum: "Get yourself a Rav" (Pirkei Avot 1:6, 16). By the way, some people say that when Trump's son-in-law is observing Shabbat, the President loses control and begins Tweeting all sorts of things. This is how people are, if they observe Shabbat, people criticize them and if they violate Shabbat (with permission), people criticize them. People should stop sticking their noses in their business.

Q: But I also heard that they entered a Church during the Inauguration? A: See above. This recalls the words of Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein: "The Rabbi from Minsk should not interfere in a question for the Rabbi from Pinsk". Reb Moshe did not interfere with matters relating to Eretz Yisrael, and a Rabbi in Israel should not interfere with questions in America (Meged Givot Olam Volume 1, p. 55. Volume 2, pp. 31-32). Similarly, when Ha-Rav Aharon Lichtenstein would be asked questions relating to America, he would say: Ask the Rabbis of America (We heard this in the eulogy of Ha-Rav Mordechai Willig, one of the Roshei Yeshiva of Yeshiva University, for Ha-Rav Lichtenstein).

Q: But it once happened that when Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef was serving as a Rav in Egypt, a non-Jewish diplomat died and he was brought into a Church for a service. He was asked to represent the community and enter on account of "Darkei Shalom - keeping the peace". But he refused (Shut Yabia Omer Volume 2 Yoreh Deah #11)? A: One who questions them suspects the innocent (Choshed Ba-Kesherim) and disrespects the Rav whom they ask.

Q: Is Ivanka, as a convert, required to honor her biological father, President Trump, since a convert is like a new-born baby? A: Yes, just as a non-Jew would honor his parents (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 241:9. See Shut Igrat Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:130 and Shut Yechaveh Da'at 6:60).

Q: Trump was therefore required to honor his father? A: Correct. It is related in the Gemara Kiddushin (31a) that Dama ben Netina, who was a non-Jew, honored his father and did not wake him up even though he could have made a lot of money doing so. In merit, a Parah Adumah was born in his herd. The Sefardic Chief Rabbi, Ha-Rav Yitzchak Yosef, said: Just as Trump honored his father, he therefore merited what he merited... (In the Parashat Sheet 'Beit Maran' #103).

Q: In sum? A: Trump has said that he wants to focus on America and what is good for the American People. We hope that he adopts the Monroe Doctrine of President James Monroe, i.e. America decides for America. They should decide what is best for them, and we hope that they leave us to choose what is best for us and we hope that they leave us to choose what is best for us and not try to dictate what we should do.

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subject: Shabbat Shalom from the OU

www.ou.org/torah/parsha/rabbi-sacks-on-parsha

The Power of Ruach (Beshalach) Covenant & Conversation – Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

In September 2010, BBC, Reuters and other news agencies reported on a sensational scientific discovery. Researchers at US National Center for Atmospheric Research and the University of Colorado have shown through computer simulation how the division of the red sea may have taken place. Using sophisticated modelling, they demonstrated how a strong east wind, blowing overnight, could have pushed water back at a bend where an ancient river is believed to have merged with a coastal lagoon. The water would have been guided into the two waterways, and a land bridge would have opened at the bend, allowing people to walk across the exposed mud flats. As soon as the wind died down, the waters would have rushed back in. As the leader of the project said when the report was published: "The simulations match fairly closely with the account in Exodus." So we now have scientific evidence to support the biblical account, though to be fair, a very similar case was made some years ago by Colin Humphreys, Professor of Materials Science at Cambridge University, and Professor of Experimental Physics at the Royal Institution in London, in his book *The Miracles of Exodus*. To me, though, the real issue is what the biblical account actually is. Because it is just here that we have one of the most fascinating features of the way the Torah tells its stories. Here is the key passage: Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. (Ex. 14:21-22) The passage can be read two ways. The first is that what happened was a suspension of the laws of nature. It was a supernatural event. The waters stood, literally, like a wall. The second is that what happened was miraculous not because the laws of nature were suspended. To the contrary, as the computer simulation shows, the exposure of dry land at a particular point in the Red Sea was a natural outcome of the strong east wind. What made it miraculous is that it happened just there, just then, when the Israelites seemed trapped, unable to go forward because of the sea, unable to turn back because of the Egyptian army pursuing them. There is a significant difference between these two interpretations. The first appeals to our sense of wonder. How extraordinary that the laws of nature should be suspended to allow an escaping people to go free. It is a story to appeal to the imagination of a child. But the naturalistic explanation is wondrous at another level entirely. Here the Torah is using the device of irony. What made the Egyptians of the time of Ramses so formidable was the fact that they possessed the latest and most powerful form of military technology, the horse drawn chariot. It made them unbeatable in battle, and fearsome. What happens at the sea is poetic justice of the most exquisite kind. There is only one circumstance in which a group of people travelling by foot can escape a highly trained army of charioteers, namely when the route passes through a muddy sea bed. The people can walk across, but the chariot wheels get stuck in the mud. The Egyptian army can neither advance nor retreat. The wind drops. The water returns. The powerful are now powerless, while the powerless have made their way to freedom. This second narrative has a moral depth that the first does not; and it resonates with the message of the book of Psalms: His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor His delight in the legs of the warrior; the Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailling love. (Psalm 147:10-11) The elegantly simple way in which the division of the Red Sea is described in the Torah so that it can be read at two quite different levels, one as a supernatural miracle, the other as a moral tale about the limits of technology when it comes to the real strength of nations: that to me is what is most striking. It is a text quite deliberately written so that our understanding of it can deepen as we mature, and we are no longer so interested in the mechanics of miracles, and more interested in how freedom is won or lost. So it's good to know how the division of the sea happened, but there remains a depth to the biblical story that can never be

exhausted by computer simulations and other historical or scientific evidence, and depends instead on being sensitive to its deliberate and delicate ambiguity. Just as ruach, a physical wind, can part waters and expose land beneath, so ruach, the human spirit, can expose, beneath the surface of a story, a deeper meaning beneath

Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Beshalach Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com For the week ending 11 February 2017 / 15 Shevat 5777 Insights Higher than the Angels "The angel of G-d who had been going in front of the Children of Israel moved and went behind them..." (14:19)

The word in Hebrew, *chaya*, has two seemingly opposite meanings. A *chaya* is a wild animal, but it is also one of the names of the most elevated of the angels, as we say in our daily prayers: "And the Ofanim and the Chayot HaKodesh..."

What possible connection could there be between a beast and a celestial being?

Man is called a "walker". As it says in the Prophet Zecharia, "I will give you strides (*mehalchim*) amongst the 'standers' (the angels) here." (3:7)

An angel can only stand in its place; it cannot move up or down. It has no freedom to choose. Its perception of G-d is so overwhelming that it can do nothing other than the Will of G-d. A beast is the same. It too has no freedom of choice. It can only follow its instincts, which is the Will of G-d. Only man can choose between good and evil, and thus only man can move up or down.

When the Jewish People elevate themselves, when they exercise their freedom to choose to do the Will of G-d, G-d shines His Kindness upon them, and they can ascend to a level above even the holiest angels.

Thus, "The angel of G-d which had been going in front of the Children of Israel" — i.e. preceding them in holiness — now "moved and went behind them", because they had elevated themselves higher even than the angels.

Source: based on the *Kedushat Levi* © 2017 *Ohr Somayach International ou.org Song of the Sea Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb*

Teaching young children has always been a joy for me. One of teaching's special advantages is the clarity that emerges from conversation with people under the age of ten.

A cute and oft-told story describes the reaction of one fourth grader to the lesson in which he first learned the difference between poetry and prose.

He remarked, "Wow! I have been writing prose all of my life and didn't even know it!"

I guess it was in the fourth grade when I first learned the distinction between prose and poetry, and when I became aware not only that I was writing prose, but that much of what I was studying in Jewish day school was prose, not poetry.

We were taught that prose is ordinary writing, language which portrays everyday events. Poetry, on the other hand, is the language of the extraordinary. Poems are for special events and rare emotions.

Poetry is a song, and we only sing when special feelings well up within us. In this week's parsha, Beshalach, we finally encounter poetry. From the beginning of the book of Genesis until this week's portion, we have been reading prose.

Surely, much of what we have been reading has not been ordinary, and we have even read about some miracles. But the language, with the possible exception of Jacob's blessings to his children, has been prose.

It is only in this week's narrative of the crossing of the Red Sea that the poetic bursts forth.

One of the lesser differences between poetry and prose is that the words of the former are surrounded on the page by much blank space. Prose, on the other hand, consists of written or printed words with a minimum of space between them.

You will notice that in the Torah scroll too the prose of all of Genesis and of Exodus until this week's portion consists of words written by the scribe with only minimal space between them. Look at a Torah scroll for this week's portion, and you will see large white spaces between groupings of the holy written words.

These white spaces (in different formats) are found wherever the language of the Torah or of the Prophets makes use of poetry and song. It has been said that these blank spaces are symbolic to feelings so deep and inexpressible that they cannot be reduced to words of black ink and are, instead, wordlessly conveyed in the white empty spaces.

It is with the crossing of the Red Sea that the powerful feelings of the redemption experience emerge from the hearts of the former slaves. Words of poetry come to the surface. Song and music demand expression. These feelings have no precedent in all that has come before in the biblical narrative.

Today, many of us live lives of prose. Day fades into the night, and even years seem to march along uneventfully with only rare episodes of drama. Few of us sing, and even fewer would feel capable of poetry.

That is what is so amazing about the Song of the Sea in this week's Torah portion. Everyone sang. All of Israel joined in the expression of poetic exultation. Our sages tell us that even the "lowly maid servant on the sea saw more than the prophet Ezekiel!" and sang!

Moses led the all the men in the song, and Miriam, all the women.

Perhaps it was the contrast between centuries of oppressive slavery and the sudden experience of utter freedom that evoked song in everyone. Perhaps it was the release from the deadly fear of the approaching Egyptian army that gave vent to unanimous poetry. Or it might have been the sight of the hated and dreaded enemy drowning under the waves that inspired all present to sing out triumphantly. Most likely, it was all of the above.

As readers of the weekly Torah portion, each of us struggles to relate what we study to our daily lives. It is, therefore, important that we use this week's narrative to nurture our own poetic urge.

The Talmud compares the miracle of the Red Sea to quite ordinary processes, such as finding a spouse and earning a livelihood. The Talmud does this to inspire us to see the miraculous even in everyday events. Our sages realize the importance of poetry and soul and wish to motivate us to respond with poetry and song even to mundane events. They want us to see the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Of all the many Torah portions that we have read this year, beginning with Genesis and continuing until Beshalach, no biblical text is fully incorporated into our daily liturgy. Finally, from this week's portion, the Song of the Sea was made part of the daily Jewish liturgy, recited every single day of the year, weekday or Sabbath, ordinary day or holiday.

The message is clear: Poetry and song are vital for you. They are evoked by the experience of something very special. Every living moment is very special.

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Parsha Parables By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Drasha - Parshas Beshalach Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Clear Intructions

It was a battle for the ages. As the Jews departed Egypt and miraculously crossed the Red Sea, they were brutally and savagely ambushed by Amalek, a nation who would prove to be the perpetual nemesis of the Jewish People until this very day. The nation of Amalek repeated their malice again during the Israelites' trek in the desert after the death of Ahron. At that time, they posed as Canaanites and once again tried to defeat the Jews (Numbers 21:1). Both times they were repelled. Amalek's venom spewed throughout history. Eventually, Amalek's direct descendant, Haman, would unsuccessfully try his hand at the total annihilation of our nation during the era between the destruction of the first Holy Temple and the rebuilding of the second Temple.

It therefore is no surprise that historians and scholars alike have traced the German butchers of World War II as descendants of the Amalekites.

But history did not have to be repeated. Amalek could have been quashed at the beginning of his ruthless career. After the first ambush, Hashem gave specific instructions on how the Jewish nation must deal with Amalek. The directive was not pretty. It entailed war, but following the directives precisely would have prevented generations of bloodshed and preserved millions of Jewish lives throughout our history.

The failure to fulfill them in toto would lead to the Jewish People's eventual and constant persecution, even attempted annihilation. The plans were so precise that instructions were given as to how the directive was supposed to be transmitted. Yes, even the instructions were given with instructions!

"Hashem said to Moshe, 'Write this as a remembrance in the Book and put it in the ears of Yehoshua (Joshua) that I shall surely erase the memory of Amalek from under the heavens' " (Exodus 17:14).

And so Moshe is told to instruct Joshua, his warrior, in no uncertain terms how the Jewish nation must deal with those who sought to abort their growth only days from their triumphant emergence from the parted waters of the Red Sea. He is told write it down and then place it in the ears of Joshua. What troubles me is the double directive. The entire Torah was either written or transmitted orally. The Torah hardly ever tells Moshe to do both write and transmit orally. Wasn't the entire Torah written and taught? Why, then, when it comes to this particular command does the Torah instruct both a written and verbal instruction, the latter to be placed directly into the ear of Joshua?

Towards the end of last year, a Judge in Denver Colorado was presiding over a civil trial when she noticed that a screw must have fallen out of the Venetian blinds over a window on the right side of the courtroom, and they were beginning to give way. As the window treatments were suspended directly over the jury box, the judge was concerned. A screw must have fallen out and the shades were beginning to tilt precariously.

She did not want to interrupt the testimony of one of the litigants, and quickly scribbled a note and motioned for the court officer.

With a look of concern, and without even directing her attention toward him, she handed the note to the court officer.

The officer looked at the note and immediately raced from the courtroom for assistance. Within minutes, an ambulance, sirens blaring, screeched to a halt in front of the courthouse. The paramedics raced to the courtroom, stretcher opened, fully prepared to treat a stroke victim.

The startled Judge looked up in horror as she protested the onslaught of medics – until they handed her the note, she had given the court officer. In her own hand it read, "Blind on the right side. Send for immediate assistance."

Instructions that deal in life or death situations can be easily misconstrued. Wars have been fought, lives have been lost, and nations defeated due to homonymic misinterpretations. The formidable foes were on the verge of defeat all too often in Jewish history when misplaced compassion led to progenitors who returned the Jewish kindness with murderous onslaught. And so, writing messages or telling stories were not enough. The message had to be oral and written, spoken and recorded, documented and preserved. For hatred and evil must be eradicated – in our minds, in our mouths, with our ears, and with our quills.

Good Shabbos Dedicated in memory of Rose Horn Felig by Dr. & Mrs. Philip Felig Copyright © 1998 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore.

In dedication of Mr. Emilio Goldstein ע"ה