

B'S'D'

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON BEHAR BECHUKOSAI - 5759

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Street in Warsaw?" Yankel kept his fork embedded in the fish and held tight as he nodded somberly. "He's dead." "What?" shrieked Reb Velvel, "Shloime is dead? How can that be?" He ran to the kitchen and shouted for his wife, while Yankel managed to finish his fish in comfort. He even got in a few nibbles off an adjoining plate. After the shock wore off, they served the soup. After the first sip, the banker was quick to his old ways. "You don't happen to know my father's brother Reb Dovid the bookbinder, do you?" With the waiter poised to pounce, Yankel nodded again. "He died too!" "What?" cried the stunned host. "How can that be? I just got a letter from him last week!" He ran next door to tell his brother the terrible news -- while Yankel calmly finished his soup. The main course, with chicken, kugel and tzimmes also saw the death of more members of the Warsaw community, each tiding throwing the banker into a tizzy. Meanwhile Yankel ate his portion and all the portions of those who were sickened by the terrible news that they had just heard. By the time dessert came, the banker got hold of the scheme. "What's going on?" he shouted. "Are you trying to tell me that the entire Warsaw has dropped dead?" "No," answered Yankel, "what I am trying to tell you is that when I eat, the whole world drops dead!"

The blessing of plenty is worthless without serenity. Peace in your land is not only a blessing for military men. It is a blessing that enhances every aspect of life, from breaking ground to breaking bread. What good are storehouses of plenty or a wonderful economy without the peace and harmony in which to enjoy them? Calm and composure are the greatest blessing. For without them, the bread of plenty can still be bread of affliction. The Torah does not give half-baked blessings. It tells us that we will eat our bread to satisfaction because it guarantees us peace in our land. For we must not only pray for sustenance, but also health, well being, and serenity with which to enjoy it.

Good Shabbos Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Drasha, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. 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/. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 602-1351

From: Don't Forget[SMTP:sefira@torah.org] Subject: Day 37 / 5 weeks and 2 days Tonight, the evening of Friday, May 7, will be day 37, which is 5 weeks and 2 days of the omer. Yours, Your friends at Project Genesis

From: Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky[SMTP:rmk@torah.org] Drasha Parshas B'har B'chukosai -- Grateful Bread Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Volume 5 Issue 34 05/07/99

It is rare to read two Torah portions together, each with nearly the exact verse. This week we read two portions: B'har, which commands the laws of shmita in which the Jewish nation lets its land lie fallow, and B'chukosai, which entails both blessing and curses bestowed upon the Jewish nation in response to its behavior. But in each portion there is a similar blessing. The Torah tells us, both B'har and in B'chukosai, that if we deserve blessing then "you shall eat to satisfaction and live securely in your land." (Leviticus 25:19 & Leviticus 26:5) Each time the Torah talks about eating to satisfaction, an agricultural issue, it suffixes a security issue. Now there are verses that deal with the curse of war and the blessing of peace. But why mention tranquility with eating?

Yankel was a vagabond. Every Friday he would spend the last of his few zloty at the bathhouse and barber and, well groomed, he would present himself in the synagogue as a respected businessperson from out-of-town. Then he would usually get a sumptuous Shabbos meal at the home of the wealthiest Jew in town. One Friday afternoon he was in the city of Lodz and inquired about the wealthiest Jew. "Velvel, the banker," he was told "is definitely the wealthiest Jew. But he is also the stingiest. You never get a chance to eat the delicious dishes that he serves you!" "How's that?" asked Yankel. "Well, as soon as you take your first bite he engages you in conversation. You begin to speak, and as soon as your eyes leave your plate, a waiter comes and snatches your food away!" With a game plan in mind Yankel posed as a businessman from Warsaw, and got invited to Reb Velvel's magnificent home. The table was set with exquisite china, and the delicious smells wafting from the kitchen made Yankel's hungry mouth water. After kiddush and challah, the first course was served, a succulent piece of white fish stuffed with gefilte fish. As Yankel speared it with his fork a voice boomed from the head of the table. "So, Yankel, tell me, how is my cousin Shloime feeling? You must know Shloime, the tailor of Podolska

From: Rabbi Yissocher Frand[SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org] "RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Behar-Bechukosai

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 192, Making Shabbos Early. Good Shabbos!

Behar - What Is The Connection Between Shmitah and Cheating? (Mah Inyan Shemita Eitzel Issur Ona-ah) Parshas Behar contains the mitzvah of Shemita - the Sabbatical year. All agricultural work in the Land of Israel must stop during every seventh year in the Shemita cycle. The laws of Shemita require that the land must remain fallow. One can imagine that in an agrarian society this mitzvah has a major impact on people's lives. However, right in the middle of the laws of Shemita, the Torah teaches us the following halacha: "When you sell an item to your fellow man, or buy from the hand of your fellow man, one man should not cheat his brother" [Vayikra 25:14]. It seems peculiar, to say the least, that the Torah taught this particular halacha [law] of "Ona-ah" (cheating) right in the middle of the halachos of Shemita. The halachos of "Ona-ah" apply primarily to moveable property. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as overcharging (or underpaying) for real estate. Why is "Ona-ah" located in the middle of the halachos of Shemita? The Beis Av says that the Torah is teaching us a lesson. The fundamental concept that underlies the mitzvah of Shemita is that one's livelihood comes from G-d. If a person works long enough and hard enough and is successful enough in his business, he usually becomes lulled into thinking, "it is ME who is making all this money". People attribute their successes to their own wisdom, skill, acumen, diligence, etc. There is a wonderful concept -- the Mitzvah of Shemita -- that unfortunately only exists in Eretz Yisroel and only applies to farmers, but G-d teaches us an important lesson through this concept: "You must remember something -- I give you your livelihood." A person's sustenance is determined yearly on

Rosh Hashannah. Of course, one must exert the appropriate amount of effort, but the amount and the success that one enjoys when it comes to Parnassah (livelihood) is provided by G-d. The proof to that is the Sabbatical year. During the entire Shemita year, we do not do any work -- and somehow or another, we have a livelihood. This Sabbatical makes us stop and think that it is not we who provide for ourselves. The Ribbono shel Olam [G-d] provides our livelihood. That being the case, it becomes eminently clear why the commandment against cheating is right in the middle of the portion of Shemita. As an oversimplification, if a person steals an extra \$1000, he will go home and his air-conditioner will break, costing him his new \$1000. It all works out in the end. If a person honestly believes that G-D is the One who ultimately writes and signs all the checks, there is absolutely no motivation for cheating -- not a friend, not a business, not the Federal Government, not the State Government -- no one. If a person truly believes in what Shemita is all about -- that G-d provides us with our livelihood -- then why would he cheat his fellow man? Such an attitude can only come from one who thinks that HE is making the livelihood himself. That is why "Ona-ah" is located in the middle of Shemita.

Bechukosai - Rains of Blessing: Getting The Most When The Farmer Can Do The Least The Beis Av points out this same concept in Parshas Bechukosai. The pasuk [verse] there says "I will give you your rains in their proper time" [Vayikra 26:4]. Rash"i explains the term "proper time" to mean Friday night (leilei Shabbos). We can then sit cozily in our houses and say "let it rain". Today's modern society considers a rainy weekend to be a minor calamity. "There goes the barbecue, there goes the sailing trip. Nebach, we have to go rent a video." That is terrible! But the Torah teaches that such rains are a blessing. On Friday night it can pour. We are safe in our homes. The Beis Av points out a deeper insight into this idea. In the agrarian economy, the farmer can work six days a week, putting in backbreaking hours sowing, fertilizing, plowing, and harvesting. However, all of the farmer's effort will be for naught if he does not have one thing -- rain. Without rain, the farmer is powerless. When rain falls on the very day when the farmer does absolutely nothing (Friday night - the Shabbos), the farmer is sent a precious message. That which the farmer needs the most, he receives on the very day when he can do the very least. This is the lesson. Ultimately, the farmer needs to depend on G-d, not on himself.

A Time For Faith and A Time For Heresy I would like to share one final insight. It is true that in the area of earning one's living, we must rely on faith (bitachon). However, we should never forget that this is a concept that we must apply to ourselves, but never to others. I heard a comment in the name of the Brisker Rav. It is hard for me to believe he said it, but we would in fact need a Brisker Rav to say such a thing. Every attribute, no matter how bad, has its place in the world -- even anger, haughtiness, jealousy, and argumentativeness. These are generally bad attributes, but there are times when one needs to become angry. There are times when it is appropriate to stand up for one's honor. There is even a time when it is right to make a machlokes - an argument. There is another bad attribute called 'kefirah', heresy. A person who knows Torah, but rejects G-d -- a 'kofer' -- possesses such an attribute. Where is the proper place for this attribute of 'kefirah'? The Brisker Rav explains, "When your friend needs a favor, that's when you should be a 'kofer'". In other words, when someone else has a problem, do not have the attitude that G-d will take care of him, G-d will find him a job, G-d will give him the loan. At such times, the Brisker Rav says, a person should "not believe" in G-d. A person should feel that G-d will not take care of him. Rather, a person must take the responsibility upon himself. That is no time for faith. It is a time for rolling up one's sleeves. I do not need to tell you about the "workplace". I do not need to tell you that it is too often "not what you know, but who you know". I do not need to tell you about how many jobs are found through "connections". When it comes to your livelihood, you must be a believer. But when it comes to someone else's livelihood, you must be an activist. In the words of the Brisker Rav, that is the appropriate situation for all of us to apply the attribute of 'kefirah'.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington

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From: Virtual Beit Midrash[SMTP:yhe@vbm-torah.org] SICHOT -29: Parashat Behar Bechukotai

Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash Project(vbm) Student Summaries of Sichoť Delivered by the Roshei Yeshiva Parashat Behar - Bechukotai SICHOT OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

Summarized by Rav Elyahu Blumenzweig

Overview and Detail "And God spoke to Moshe at Har Sinai saying..." (Vayikra 25:1) "Just as both the general concepts and the finer details of the laws of shemitta were given at Sinai, so were both the general concepts and the finer details of all the other laws given there." (Rashi) Sometimes a person grasps a general idea without understanding all the details which it involves. And sometimes he understands a multitude of details but fails to make of them a complete system in his mind; despite his command of the details themselves, he has no concept of how the whole is made up. In the case of Torah and mitzvot, such a situation is unacceptable. The overall concepts and the details are interdependent and inseparable. A defect in the smallest detail affects the entirety: a scribe who neglects to fulfil a seemingly minor halakha while writing the parshiyot for a pair of tefillin has in fact nullified the entire mitzva. This does not mean that there is no distinction between general concepts and details in the Torah. It means rather that the all-encompassing light illuminates and influences even the smallest details. The overarching inspiration penetrates and amplifies the whole system of tiny details such that every small detail contains some of the illumination of the totality. On the other hand, when a detail is neglected, then damage is done to the totality. Hence this concept works in both directions - every detail is nourished by the totality, and the totality is not complete without the entire system of details. In the Torah's description of the giving of the Torah at Har Sinai we are told, "And the whole nation saw the sounds..." The faculty of seeing is associated with totality - with one single glance a person can grasp a great deal, an entire picture. Hearing, on the other hand, is associated with detail - a person cannot pay attention to two voices at the same time and understand both simultaneously. The "seeing of the sounds" at Har Sinai hints at the unity of general concepts and details in the Torah. It was a comprehensive "seeing" that took in every detail, as well as perceiving their unity in a whole. Both general concepts and details of the Torah were given at Har Sinai, the place where this complete unity between them was revealed. This idea finds expression specifically in the mitzvot of shemitta and yovel, which our text connects to Har Sinai. Shemitta comes to bring everyone together, to break barriers, to cancel private ownership. Yovel, in a certain sense, comes to preserve the uniqueness of each individual by returning his property to him. This unity applies not only to each separate mitzva and its details, but also to the Torah as a whole. All 613 mitzvot together form a closely knit system and they cannot be separated. This sheds light on the Maharal's teaching that every time Moshe wanted to teach Bnei Yisrael a new mitzva, he reviewed the whole Torah with them - because no single detail or law can be detached or separated from the entirety that is the Torah. (Originally delivered on Leil Shabbat, Parashat Behar- Bechukotai 5732. Translated by Kaeren Fish.) Internet & e-mail list hosting for the VBM provided courtesy of: The Yerushalayim Network (<http://www.yerushalayim.net>) a Centennial Project of the Orthodox Union (<http://www.ou.org>)

Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash Alon

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From: torahweb[SMTP:torahweb@torahweb.org] Sent: Friday, April 30, 1999 10:28 AM To: weeklydvar Torah@torahweb.org Subject: Rabbi Sacks - Sefirat Ha-Omer Rabbi Yonasan Sacks Between Pesach and Atzeret: Perspectives in Sefirat Ha-Omer

The Exodus from Egypt serves as the basis for numerous mitzvot and for one of the fundamental principles of our faith. The first of the Ten Commandments links the belief in God with His having freed us from Egypt. Twice daily we are obligated to acknowledge our indebtedness to God by recalling the Exodus at the conclusion of the Shema. In fact, R. Chaim Soloveitchik zt"l explains that according to the Rambam, the mitzvah of zechirat yetzi'at mitzrayim (remembering the Exodus from Egypt) is not an independent obligation, but is rather an inherent part of the Shema, and as such is a component of our kabbalat ol malchut shamayim (acceptance of the yoke of heaven).

Even our observance of Shabbat is tied to the Exodus. Unlike the Ibn Ezra, who explains the verse, "You shall remember that you were slaves in Egypt" (Devarim 5:14), as commanding that even slaves refrain from work on Shabbat, the Rambam and the Ramban explain this reference as a basis of shemirat shabbat generally. In this sense, the Talmud (Pesachim 117b) insists that we incorporate the theme of yetzi'at mitzrayim into the text of kiddush. Accordingly, the Minchat Chinuch (mitzvah 31) asserts that although many rishonim maintain that any need for wine during kiddush is only mi-derabanan, one would certainly not fulfill the Torah obligation of kiddush with tefillah alone, for nowhere in the shabbat evening amidah do we mention the theme of yetzi'at mitzrayim.

Even the thirty-nine melachot themselves are linked to the Exodus from Egypt. Tosafot (Pesachim 117b s.v. le-ma'an) cite the Midrash which states that on Shabbat we demonstrate our freedom by abstaining from the various forms of labor that we performed while slaves in Egypt.

Although yetzi'at mitzrayim plays such a central role in our belief, it would be incorrect to view this event as an end in itself. When Moshe Rabbeinu expresses his doubt as to his worthiness of taking the Jews out of Egypt, God assures him that the fact that the Jews would later receive the Torah makes the Exodus worthwhile (see Shemot 3:12). The very purpose and challenge of yetzi'at mitzrayim is to channel this newfound freedom toward the service of God. The Ramban explains that the essence and purpose of sefirat ha-omer is to link the experience of yetzi'at mitzrayim with that of kabbalat ha-Torah. The Ramban comments that the days of Pesach are to be viewed as the first days of yom tov and the days of Shavu'ot as the last days of yom tov, with the intermediate days of sefirat ha-omer serving as a form of chol ha-mo'ed. For this reason the rabbinic literature often refers to Shavu'ot as "Atzeret," the true and fitting conclusion of Pesach. Accordingly, R. Ovadiah Yosef (Yechaveh Da'at 1:24) argues that although the days of sefirah mark the tragic passing of the students of R. Akiva (see Yevamot 62b), it would be incorrect to consider this period as one of aveilut. Essentially these are days of great joy in anticipating kabbalat ha-Torah. Perhaps it is for this very reason that the Torah makes no mention of the mitzvah of simchah on Pesach. Only on Shavu'ot, when the true purpose of yetzi'at mitzrayim is realized, does the Torah obligate us to rejoice.

In this sense, the Aruch ha-Shulchan (O.C. 489) explains the view of the Ramban who maintains that the mitzvah of sefirat ha-omer is a Torah-obligation even today. Even without the Beit ha-Mikdash and the minchat ha-omer (the special sacrifice that was made in connection with sefirat ha-omer), the need to link Pesach to Shavu'ot, and thereby to see freedom as a means to further and enhance one's service of God, is as significant today as it was when the Beit ha-Mikdash stood.

Although the special sacrifices of Pesach and Shavu'ot (the minchat ha-omer and the sh'tei ha-lechem, respectively) have much in common, they are nonetheless brought from different grains. Whereas the minchat ha-omer is brought from barley, which the Talmud describes as ma'achal beheimah

(food for animals), the sh'tei ha-lechem is from wheat, described as ma'achal adam (food for people). Perhaps this distinction as well can be understood given the link between Pesach and Shavu'ot. The experience of freedom, in the sense of relief from physical service and oppression, is not one which is unique to humanity. Even an animal can sense the removal of a physical burden. Hence, the minchat ha-omer marking this form of freedom comes from ma'achal beheimah. Shavu'ot, however, which challenges us to use this freedom wisely, to ascend in the distinctly human endeavor of acquiring holiness and enhancing our commitment to God, has its sacrifice brought from wheat, ma'achal adam.

Mitzvot which are performed relatively infrequently are generally accompanied by the blessing of shehechyanu, in which we thank God for allowing us to perform them. Why then is no shehechyanu recited on the mitzvah of sefirat ha-omer? The Ba'al ha-Ma'or (end of Pesachim) explains that this blessing is only recited on mitzvot that possess qualities of joy. When the Beit ha-Mikdash stood, this was true of sefirat ha-omer and certainly the blessing of shehechyanu was recited. In our time, however, sefirat ha-omer is only a zecher le-Mikdash, devoid of joy, and therefore no shehechyanu is recited.

According to the Rambam and Rabbeinu Yeruchum, however, who maintain that the mitzvah of sefirat ha-omer is a Torah-obligation even today, other reasons must be given to explain the omission of shehechyanu. Rabbeinu Yeruchum explains that the shehechyanu recited on Shavu'ot itself covers the mitzvah of sefirat ha-omer as well. The very purpose of sefirah is to underscore the significance of Shavu'ot. In fact, whereas all other holidays are linked to specific calendar dates, Shavu'ot commences at the conclusion of the sefirat ha-omer. Therefore only after counting these days and successfully bridging the gap between Pesach and Shavu'ot do we recite the blessing of shehechyanu.

The days of sefirah are indeed days of intense preparation and be worthy recipients of Torat Hashem.

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] Simcha's Torah Stories Parshas Behar / Bechukosai 5759

HE'S TAKING CARE OF US Chaim, you're not going to believe this. Believe what, Avi? Believe what my teacher taught us today about the Shmitta year (Sabbatical year). Is that the year where the farmer is forbidden to work the land? Correct, Chaim. One every seven years the land is allowed to rest. What's so unbelievable about that? Crop rotation is supposed to be a good thing. My teacher quoted the great Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz, the late head of the yeshiva in Mir, Poland. What did he say? Those who observed the Shmitta year were like heavenly angels. Their strength is unfathomable. How can it be that a person can achieve such great things from the mitzvah of Shmitta? Let's think about this a minute, Avi. Let us try to imagine ourselves back in the days of the Beis HaMikdash (Holy Temple). And so, Chaim begins to tell a story.

Daddy, thank you so much for taking such good care of us. Thank G-d, we have a nice farm, and every day you go out and work the fields. You plow, plant, and tend to the crops. When they are grown, you pick them and bring them to Mommy to cook into the delicious meals that we eat. We are so fortunate that we have such a farm and that it is able to provide food for our family. Children, do you know what next year is? What, Daddy? The Shmitta (sabbatical) year. Next year I take a big vacation. No plowing, planting, cultivating or working the land. We will see what will grow by itself. Even those crops not ours. They are hefker (ownerless) and free for anyone to take. But Daddy, what will we have to eat next year? If you do not work the land, and anyone can take what grows by itself, we will have hardly any food. Children, the Torah asks the exact same question in Vayikra, chapter 25, verse 20. The answer is that G-d will provide for us. This year He will give us enough food to last until after the Shmitta year.

And so it was Avi. There are no records of any famine ever occurring amongst the Jewish people in Biblical times as a result of keeping the Shmitta year. In the times of the Beis HaMikdash, farming was the main

occupation of the Jewish people. Without the crops of the farm, there would be literally no food to eat. Observing the Shmitta was therefore a very big test of one's trust in Hashem. That is why Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz says that those who observe Shmitta are compared to heavenly angels who have no desire to go against G-d's will. That is the strength of their trust in Him.

Simcha's Quiz Question of the Week Two boys on bicycles, 20 miles apart, began racing toward each other. The instant they started a fly on the handle bar of one of the bikes started flying toward the handle bar of the other bike. As soon as it reached, it turned around and went to the other bike and so on until the bikes met. If each bike had a constant speed of 10 mph, and the fly was traveling 15 mph constantly, how far did the fly travel? Write Simcha with the correct answer at [simchag@netvision.net.il](mailto:simchag@netvision.net.il)

Written and Compiled by Simcha Groffman General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon Prepared by the Jewish Learning Exchange of Ohr Somayach International Kinder Torah Copyright 1999 All rights reserved to the author Simcha Groffman

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From: Kenneth Block[SMTP:kenblock@worldnet.att.net] Subject: NCYI Weekly Divrei Torah - Parshat Behar - Bechukotai Rabbi Aron Mirocznik Young Israel Of Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, N.Y.

The opening verse in this week's Torah reading begins with a warning and a promise from G-d: Im bechukosai tayleychu... If in My statutes you will walk and My commandments you will keep... Then I will give your rain in its season, and the land shall give its produce and the trees of the field will give its fruit... The Torah uses a strange expression. G-d admonishes us to walk in His statutes. Surely, a more conventional expression such as Aif you keep My statutes would have been more understandable. Yet, the Torah uses a much stronger expression of walking.

To truly grasp the reason for this expression we need to comprehend the ramifications of performing a Mitzvah properly. The mishna in Kiddushin (39b) tells us that whoever does a single mitzvah will merit from this world and the world to come. At first glance this is somewhat perplexing. The mishna implies that if one were to G-d forbid neglect the whole Torah save one mitzvah, paradise would be his! However, this is not the correct interpretation. What the mishna does mean is that whoever does a single mitzvah in its proper fashion shall merit the world to come. All too often we perform mitzvot without the proper care or thought, executing them in an almost perfunctory fashion. This is not correct, for we must perform them with devotion, sincerity and thoughtfulness - we must perform them properly. This seems difficult for the average individual, and it is. However, the mishna assures us not to worry. Even if one performs all the mitzvot in an unattached perfunctory fashion, paradise can still be acquired if he executes one mitzvah properly. Perform one mitzvah correctly, just one mitzvah, and enjoyment of this world and the world to come will be yours!

There is a Rambam that can be understood in a similar vein. The Rambam inquires into the necessity of having so many mitzvot. Surely it would have been easier upon us if there were only a handful. However, he explains that with 613 mitzvot, invariably there will be one mitzvah that any person will be able to perform properly. Different people have different likes, faculties, and enthusiasms. With hundreds of mitzvot to choose from every individual will be able to find at least one mitzvah that shall suit his/her temperament and abilities precisely. Of course they must perform the other mitzvot as well, but even if the other mitzvot are not accomplished with the same degree of proficiency, they will still merit paradise. This is truly uplifting. G-d, first of all, promises us Gan Eden if we perform one mitzvah properly. He then significantly increased our chances to do so by giving us hundreds of mitzvot.

How wonderful! G-d has purposely made it easier for us to merit this world and the world to come. This is in the spirit of the Talmud (Macot 23b), ARabbi Chanania Ben Akasha says: G-d wished to confer merit upon Israel; therefore He gave them Torah and mitzvot in abundance. There is one question remaining in this discussion - what is required to be able to accomplish a mitzvah properly? Obviously, we must have pure sincerity and devotion when performing it, but there is more. We must fully understand the mitzvah. We must comprehend why the mitzvah was given, its

mechanics, its applications and its ramifications. For example, to fully understand the mitzvah of shatnez, the prohibition of wearing wool and linen that is intertwined, we would have to understand the nature of wool and linen and what happens when they are woven together. This could easily require some basic knowledge of botany, zoology, organic chemistry as well as the art of weaving on a loom. For other mitzvot other subjects would be required. We can just imagine how much one would need to know to understand every single mitzvah. We can find this idea at the end of the fifth chapter of Avoth (which is actually read this week), ABen Bag Bag said, 'study the Torah again and again for everything is in it; constantly examine it; .. there is nothing more excellent than it'. Indeed, with hundreds of mitzvot one would need great expertise in all of science and humanities to fully understand them all; as Ben Bag Bag agrees, everything is contained in the Torah. We now can finally understand why the Torah used the strange expression of 'walk in my statutes'. The Torah is explaining to us how we must perform mitzvot so that we shall merit the rewards of 'the rain in its season and the land [giving] its produce'. As we know from the mishna in Kiddushin, to merit this reward we must perform at least one mitzvah properly, and that it will require a great deal of effort to do so. The Torah therefore, could not simply tell us to do the mitzvot, but needed to use a stronger expression. It will take a strong and committed effort to do this mitzvah properly. This idea could only be conveyed if we were told to walk in the mitzvah - not if we were simply informed to perform it. We must be dedicated to the proper execution of the mitzvah. We must be sincere in our efforts. We must be fully knowledgeable of all the details and background. We must be engrossed by it. We must walk in the mitzvah.

A project of the National Council of Young Israel

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<http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/parsha.htm> Behar-Behukotai  
Rabbi Shlomo Riskin Ohr Torah Stone Weekly Torah Portion  
Shabbat Shalom: Behar-Behukotai

by Shlomo Riskin Efrat, Israel --- Jubilee! The very word has become synonymous with the number 50 - an anniversary of a couple's marriage as well as of a State's independence. The Bible even goes one step further; every fiftieth year all Hebrew slaves were given their freedom and all lands reverted to their original owners. All of society was given a reprieve and an opportunity for a new beginning. After all, individuals sold themselves into slavery because they saw no other option for economic self preservation and they were sold into slavery by the Courts if there was no other way for them to make restitution for goods they had stolen; in an agrarian society, people sold their homestead only when they saw no other way to put bread in their mouths. Hence, the Jubilee year provided economic recovery and opportunity for every citizen of Israel.

But the Bible goes beyond an Economic Recovery Act when it declares that the essential task of the Jubilee is "to give redemption (geulah)" to the land as well as to the people who dwell on the land [259,10,24]. Redemption is a super-charged term which resonates with echoes of utopia, millennium and messianism, the ultimate vision of all of humanity. How does the Jubilee year prepare us for the very goal which the Bible insists we shall eventually achieve?

To probe deeper in the nature of this 'jubilee' year, perhaps a linguistic investigation into the unique Hebrew word 'Yovel' (Jubilee) will help us. Nachmanides (Ramban), in his commentary on the Torah, suggests that the Hebrew 'Yovel' means to walk, lead or direct [2510]. The first and most obvious expression of freedom is the ability to walk to wherever one wishes to go, the right to lead the way and the confidence to direct one's own destiny. A slave is subject to his master's desire as to where and when he moves; a servant is an object rather than a subject, is led and cannot lead, is directed and dare not direct. An individual under foreign domination is automatically limited as to his ability to determine his own fate and direct his own destiny.

Such objectification and perversion of human dignity and majesty can be a result of political domination as well as of economic privation. Our Sages

compare a pauper to one who is dead, because - in the midst of a frantic search for fundamental subsistence - there is neither time nor energy to express the unique human qualities of intellect and creativity. "One often brings his bread at the expense of losing his eternal soul," cries out the Cantor in one of the most moving Yom Kippur prayers. Hence, the Jubilee Year "proclaims liberty throughout the land and to all its inhabitants [2510]" first and foremost by returning every individual to his ancestral homeland and by giving him the opportunity for a fresh economic start. On a national level, Maimonides emphasizes the fact that Hanukkah is a festival of praise to the Almighty if only for the fact that political independence was regained by Israel for 200 years. Political and economic freedom is the first stage of redemption.

Rashi gives a second explanation to the word Jubilee, defining its unique name as referring to the sounding of the ram's horn (2510). His source is a famous Talmudic discussion in which R. Akiva declares, "When I went to Arabia, they used to call a ram a yobla [B.T. Rosh Hashana 26a]." Now this 'year of the ram's horn' also evokes a more substantive form of redemption and that is Torah, the laws and statutes which govern Jewish life. When the Ten Commandments are about to be given on Mt. Sinai, we read the prohibition against anyone actually touching the mountain, and only when "...the ram's horn (hayovail) is sounded with a long blast, shall they come up to the mountain. [Ex. 19:13]." Thus it's a ram's horn that paves the way for Torah, and in our Rosh Hashanah liturgy it is shofarot or the sound of the ram's horn which is identified with return to Torah.

Indeed, our Sages teach us that the only truly free individual is the individual who is dedicated to Torah; Torah frees him of any and every addiction to instinct or physical blandishment; Torah teaches him that service to G-d obviates any possibility of enslavement to any despot. As we read in the Ethics of Our Fathers, "...for none can be considered free except those who occupy themselves with the study of Torah [Mishna Avot 62]." Of the ten kabbalistic sefirot, keter is the highest. Keter means 'crown', and the crown of Torah, unlike the crown of the priesthood or the crown of kingship, is the only crown which cannot be inherited but must be earned; however, one must choose - in freedom- the values and life-style delineated in Torah, our source of spiritual freedom and gateway to true redemption.

I would like to add another nuance to our understanding of the word Yovel or Jubilee. Our portion of Behar and its theme of 'jubilee' always fall out during the period between Passover and Shavuot. "You shall count seven sabbaths of years, that is seven times seven years; the period of the seven sabbaths of years shall thus be forty nine years [Lev. 25:8]," is what we read in our portion concerning 'yovel'. This serves as a striking parallel to the forty-nine days of counting between Passover and Shavuot when we first mark our physical freedom from Egyptian slavery and progress towards the receiving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai seven weeks later. As we have seen, according to the Ramban (Lev 25:10), the word 'yovel' means to 'walk', even to 'walk quickly' which has the image of a steady progression. This period from Exodus to Sinai, from the beginnings of physical freedom to complete spiritual independence with Torah and the redemption expressed by the bringing of the first fruits to the Jerusalem Temple on Shavuot, constitutes a steady progression. This idea is preserved in the kabbalistic identification of each of the forty-nine days between Passover and Shavuot, a spiritual journey and a religious ladder upon which one must progress in order to receive the Torah and be worthy of complete redemption. So too, the count of forty-nine years, seven sabbaths of years between the first Sabbatical year and the seventh, which climaxes in the Jubilee year, our return to ancestral homeland in the fullness of physical and spiritual freedom. With the Jubilee year, we must remove the chains of slavery and don the cloak of true freedom, a life dedicated to Torah, economic opportunity and human rights for every person on the planet.

Shabbat Shalom

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\* TORAH WEEKLY \* Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas

Behar-Bechukosai For the week ending 22 Iyar 5759 / 7 - 8 May 1999

This issue is dedicated in memory of my late parents  
Benjamin L. and Marion Hillson

\_\_\_Clear as a Bell\_\_\_

"Proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants" (25:10) On July 8, 1776, a chime that changed the world rang out from the tower of Independence Hall in Pennsylvania. The Liberty Bell summoned citizens to hear the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence by Colonel John Nixon. Some twenty years earlier the Pennsylvania Assembly had ordered the making of the Bell to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of William Penn's 1701 Charter of Privileges. The bell was inscribed with a verse from this week's parsha: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." As the bell was to commemorate the "jubilee" (from the Hebrew yovel) of Penn's Charter, this quotation from the Bible was considered apt, since the preceding line is "And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year." One of the most famous aspects of the Liberty Bell is its crack. When the Bell was hung for its trial ringing on March 10, 1753, Isaac Norris wrote: "I had the mortification to hear that it was cracked...by a stroke of the clapper." The bell was melted down and recast. An ounce and a half of copper per pound was added in an attempt to make the new bell less brittle. On March 29, 1753, the new bell was raised into the belfry. Nobody was too happy with the way it sounded. "It seems that they have added too much copper." This second bell also cracked. This crack grew and grew until finally, on Washington's Birthday in 1846, it rendered the Bell "un-ringable." To this day, on the Fourth of July, the Liberty Bell is "rung" by being tapped symbolically. If you think about it, it's amazing that a famous symbol should be something so imperfect. More -- its very imperfection is part of its fame. Sometimes, when we look at our lives, it's easy to become despondent. The clock seems to tick faster every minute. There is so much to achieve, and we have done so little. More and more what seemed minor imperfections in ourselves now appear to us as major character flaws. Will we ever dominate our negative drives? Will we ever free ourselves from the knee-jerk reactions of our lower selves and take the wheel of our lives in accordance with the wishes of the Creator? It's easy to despair... Maybe it's not by chance that it should be that a cracked bell "proclaim freedom throughout the land." We're not perfect. All of us have our cracks. But even the most flawed of us, even those whose merits do not ring out like a bell, have the potential to proclaim freedom -- real freedom. For real freedom is when we control our impulses rather than them controlling us. We can only achieve that freedom, however, if we are prepared to engrave deeply the words of the Torah on our hearts. The Torah can make an impression even on the hardest heart of iron. Even the least sensitive and the most forlorn of us will find that, if we are prepared to engrave the Torah's words of liberty on our iron hearts, we will hear freedom proclaimed like a bell throughout our lives.

\_\_\_Day of the Land\_\_\_ "I will make the Land desolate and your foes who dwell upon it will be desolate... Then will the land be appeased for its sabbaticals during all the years of desolation, while you are in the land of your foes; then the land will rest and it will appease for its sabbaticals..." (26:32/35) When the Jewish People fail to keep the laws of shemita and yovel -- the Land of Israel's years of rest -- they are sent into exile. If they do not let the land rest during their presence, it will rest during their absence. Seventy violated Sabbatical years before and during the First Beis Hamikdash era resulted in seventy years of Babylonian exile. Prior to the Roman exile, Josephus Flavius testified to the abundance in Eretz Yisrael: "For it is an extremely fertile land, a land of pastures and many varieties of trees.... The entire land is planted by her inhabitants and not one stretch of earth is left uncared for. Because the Land is blessed with such goodness, the cities of the Galilee and numerous villages are densely populated. Even the smallest of villages boasts of at least 15,000 inhabitants." In 1260, the Ramban (Nachmanides), writing to his son from Eretz Yisrael, gave a very different picture: "What shall I tell you concerning the condition of the Land... She is greatly forsaken and her desolation is great... That of greater

holiness is more desolate than that of lesser holiness. Jerusalem is most desolate and destroyed." Six centuries later, in 1867, Mark Twain found the Land in similar condition: "A desolate land whose soil, though more than sufficiently rich, produces only thorn bush and thistle -- a silent mourning expanse. There exists here a state of neglect that even the imagination is incapable of granting the possibility of beauty of life and productivity. We arrived in peace to Mount Tabor...we did not see a soul during the entire journey...everywhere we went there was no tree or shrub...." And Twain wrote: "The Land of Israel dwells in sackcloth and ashes. The spell of a curse hovers over her, which has blighted her fields and imprisoned the might of her power with shackles." Twain saw the desolation as so great that he wrote: "The Land of Israel is a wasteland...The Land of Israel is no longer to be considered part of the actual world..." Compare this quasi-post-nuclear scene with the Torah's dire warning: "And the foreigner who will come from a distant land -- when they see the plagues of the Land and the illnesses with which Hashem has inflicted it; sulfur and salt, a conflagration of the entire Land, it cannot be sown and it cannot sprout, and no grass shall rise up on it...And all the nations will say 'For what reason did Hashem do so to this Land?' " (Devarim 29:21) For centuries, the Christian church tried to make mileage out of the above verse, claiming that the desolation of the Land of Israel was proof that G-d had rejected the Jewish People. However, the Ramban points out that the desolation of the Land is really a blessing in disguise. In this week's parsha, the Torah says "I will make the Land desolate, and your foes who dwell upon it will be desolate..." During all our exiles, our Land will not accept our enemies. It will refuse to be fertile, so that no other nation may settle in it. An army may conquer territory, but to establish a permanent settlement requires the co-operation of the Land. Maharsha writes: "As long as Israel does not dwell on its Land, the Land does not give her fruits as she is accustomed. When she will begin to flower again, however, and give of her fruits, this is a clear sign that the end -- the time of the Redemption -- is approaching, when all of Israel will return to its Land." Eretz Yisrael is like a faithful wife told that her husband languishes in a foreign jail from which he will never return. Nevertheless, she waits for him, accepting no suitor in his place, convinced that one day, he will return. When we read of Mark Twain's description of the Land of Israel, it's difficult for us to believe that he could be speaking of the Eretz Yisrael that we know today, a land blooming and blossoming. Exported Israeli fruit, vegetables and flowers grace tables around the world. Israeli agricultural experts are sent to developing countries. The desert which "is no longer to be considered part of the actual world" has become a most beautiful garden.

Sources: \* Day Of The Land - Talmud Shabbos 33a, Josephus Flavius - "The Jewish Wars"; Ramban "Letter to his Son" 1260; Mark Twain "The Innocents Abroad or the New Pilgrim's Progress" 1867

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon Prepared by the Jewish Learning Exchange of Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel Tel: 972-2-581-0315 Fax: 972-2-581-2890 E-Mail: info@ohr.org.il Home Page: http://www.ohr.org.il (C) 1999 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved. http://www.virtualjerusalem.com

\* PARSHA Q&A \* ...

Recommended Reading List

Behar Ramban 25:3 First Six Years 25:9 Two Kinds of "Shofar" 25:10 The Word "Yovel" 25:20 Three Year Blessing 25:23 Ban on Perpetual Sale 25:36 Two Kinds of Usury 26:1 Commitment in Hostile Environment Sefer Hachinuch 330 Counting until Yovel 331 Call of the Shofar 337 Unfair Profit 342 National Land 343 Usury

Sforno 25:4 "A Shabbos to Hashem"

Bechukosai Ramban 26:6 Taming of Wild Animals 26:11 Theology of Medicine 26:12 Promise for the Future 26:16 Analysis of Jewish History Sefer Hachinuch 350 Dedicating One's Value 352 Switching Korbanos 360 Animal Tithes

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Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by Shlomo Katz Contributing Editor: Daniel Dadusc Behar / Bechukotai

The second of this week's two parashot begins: "If you will walk following My decrees and observe My commandments and perform them; then I will provide rain in its time and the land will give its produce and the tree of the field will give its fruit." Rashi writes: "Observe My commandments" clearly refers to keeping the Torah's laws. What then is meant by "walk following My decrees"? He answers: "Walk following My decrees" is a reference to toiling in Torah study. "Perform them" is a reference to studying the laws of the Torah in order to know how to live. [There are two components to Torah study: studying the laws in order to be able to observe them and studying for study's sake.] R' Eliezer Zusia Portugal z"l (the "Skulener Rebbe") elaborates: One who studies Torah is likened to one who plants seeds. One who also applies what he has learnt and observes the commandments is likened to one who harvests what he has planted. If, G-d forbid, a person were to study the Torah but not live a Torah way of life, he would be like a foolish farmer who plants but never harvests. In light of this metaphor, we can understand the reward that the Torah promises for the one who walks following Hashem's decrees and observes Hashem's commandments - i.e., he studies Torah and applies what he has learnt. "I will provide rain in its time and the land will give its produce and the tree of the field will give its fruit." If we plant spiritual seeds and harvest them, Hashem will see to it that the physical seeds that we plant also will bear fruit. (Noam Eliezer)

"And I will remember My covenant with Yaakov and also My covenant with Yitzchak, and also My covenant with Avraham I will remember, and I will remember the Land." (27:42) "I will remember for them the covenant of the ancients ..." (27:45) The Midrash Sifra asks: From where do we know that a covenant has been made for the Land (i.e., Eretz Yisrael)? Because it is written, "I will remember the Land." What does it mean to have a covenant with the Land? How can the inanimate Land enter into a covenant? R' Aharon Soloveitchik shlita (Rosh Yeshiva of the Brisk Yeshiva in Chicago) explains: The covenant is not with the Land; it is with the Jewish people about the Land. Hashem has two covenants with us - the covenant of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov (also called the "covenant of the ancients") and the covenant of the Land. The first covenant is a promise that Hashem will redeem us from exile if we act in the way that the Patriarchs taught us. The second is a promise that Hashem will redeem us from exile even if we do not follow in the ways of the Patriarchs, so long as we desire Eretz Yisrael. These two possible redemptions will not follow the same course. Our sages teach that if we are deserving, the ultimate redemption will come about in a sudden and supernatural way. This is a redemption based on the covenant of the ancients. If we are not deserving, the ultimate redemption will come about gradually and through natural means. This is a redemption based on the covenant of the Land, which requires no merit other than desiring Eretz Yisrael. (From a taped lecture delivered in 1964) ... Hamaayan, Copyright (c) 1999 by Shlomo Katz and Project Genesis, Inc. Posted by Alan Broder, ajb@torah.org /www.torah.org/learning/hamaayan/www.acoast.com/~sehch/hamaayan/ Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21208

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Parsha-Insights - Parshas B'har/B'chukosai

This week we read the double parsha of B'har/B'chukosai, thereby completing the Sefer {Book} of Vayikra. B'har begins with the laws of sh'mita--the Torah's prohibition of normal farming of the Land of Israel every seven years. The parsha then deals with different types of redemption including lands that were sold and Jews sold as slaves. B'chukosai deals predominantly with the to'chacha--the chilling punishment that will result if we don't live up to the responsibility of being the Chosen People. The parsha

begins however, with promises of prosperity if we'll follow Hashem's commandments. "If you'll keep the commandments... then I'll send the rains in their time, the earth and trees will give forth their produce... and you'll settle securely in your land... your enemies will fall before you, five of you will chase one hundred of them... I will make you multiply... you'll need to empty the storehouses from the old to make room for the new.[25:3-10]" Everything seems to be going fine until we reach the next passuk {verse}. "I will place my Tabernacle in your midst and I will not be disgusted by you. [26:11]" Talk about a back-handed compliment! Why does there exist this possibility that Hashem would be disgusted by us if we're doing the right things?

The Drash Moshe explains in the following manner. It's quite common for a person to become complacent. I'm a good person. I observe the commandments. A person, at that point, might begin to rest on past accomplishments and no longer seek further challenges. He'll thereby stunt his potential for further growth. Such a wasted potential would be a cause for Hashem's disgust. With this he explains the prohibition of setting up a matzaiva {an altar consisting of one stone} even in order to sacrifice upon it to Hashem [Devarim 16:22]. Rashi explains that, although in the time of the Forefathers, Hashem 'enjoyed' such an altar, once it became the Canaanites alter of choice for their idolatry, Hashem despised it. However, Rav Moshe asks, regular multi-stoned altars were also used for idolatry, yet they continued to be allowed for offering sacrifices to Hashem. What was the difference between those altars and the single-stone matzaiva? He explains that the multi-stoned altar represents that which Hashem demands from us throughout our lifetime. To constantly be adding to that which we do and to be increasing the level of sincerity and dedication of that which we are already doing. The antithesis of this is the stagnant, static single-stone matzaiva. That exemplified the Canaanites, steeped in their idolatry. That is despised by Hashem and can never be used in our service to Him.

I recently heard a story about Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky, zt"l, that when he was in his late eighties, he was finally able to pierce the Iron Curtain of Soviet Russia and visit a relative of his who he hadn't seen in over fifty years. Before Rav Yaakov had left Europe, they had both been studying in the same yeshiva. Rav Yaakov managed to leave Europe and went on to become one of the gedolai ha'dor {leaders of the generation}. With the Iron Curtain being a reality, Rav Yaakov was only able to bring with him a small volume of Tanach {Scriptures}. After the long, arduous trip, Rav Yaakov was finally reunited with this relative. At the meeting, this relative looked at the Tanach that Rav Yaakov was carrying and asked him what that was. The communists had succeeded in alienating him from his Judaism to such a degree that he no longer knew what a Tanach was! Rav Yaakov was so stunned and pained by this realization that when he returned home to the United States, at the age of eighty eight, he began the B'er HaGolah organization to help and educate the Russians who were able to leave the Soviet Union and come to the United States. ...

That is what is demanded of us. Rock added to rock. No stagnation. No stopping. No 'matzaiva'. Rock upon rock. Growth. Development. But perhaps, a person might feel that too much is being demanded. We're in 1999-- that's a pretty long road since Sinai. We are so busy and involved with our sophisticated and ever-changing world. How immersed in mitzvos {commandments} can we be expected to be? Perhaps a Chofetz Chaim on the first parsha we'll be reading, B'har, will aid in our understanding. The parsha teaches that if a person becomes very poor and sells his land, his relatives can redeem back that land, even against the will of the buyer. "And if a man will have no redeemers, and his hand will obtain and find his redemption [25:26]." The Chofetz Chaim explains that a person shouldn't think that all hope is lost if he has no redeemers. Ultimately, every person has the ability to redeem himself. He tells the story of a grain merchant during the time of World War I who was complaining bitterly. "I sell wagons full of grain to the largest mills but I still don't earn enough to support my family. Since there is such an abundance of grain available on the market, everyone is so picky about what they take. Half gets sent back to me and what does get taken only gets paid for months later." After the revolution,

there was a tremendous scarcity of wheat and the minute amount that was available was only being sold through the black market. When the same merchant was asked how he was doing, he now replied that he was earning an amazing living. "No one cares about the quality of what's sold to them. They'll take whatever is thrown at them and pay top dollar (ruble) in advance for it! I'm making more on the pittance that I sell them each month than I made on the wagons-full that I used to sell them each week!"

If that is the case with grain, the Chofetz Chaim explains, how much more so with Torah. In the earlier generations when the study houses were filled with people learning Torah, Hashem would check very carefully to only accept the highest quality and most sincere study of Torah. However, in our generation, the Chofetz Chaim said, (and certainly in our generation, I add) where the percentage of Jews studying Torah and observing mitzvos is so small, Hashem no longer checks the 'merchandise' so carefully. Even a small amount of lesser quality is treasured by Hashem. "And if a man will have no redeemers, and his hand will obtain and find his redemption." Every person can offer a certain amount of 'merchandise'.

Chazak, chazak v'nischazek. Good Shabbos, Yisroel Ciner

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From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org] A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

My Shabbos shall you observe. (26:2)

#### CLEANING GARMENTS ON SHABBOS

Laundering garments is prohibited on Shabbos for it is a tolada of one of the thirty-nine Shabbos Labors, melaben, Bleaching. While laundering usually entails the use of water and/or cleaning agents, removing dirt from a garment even without them may also fall under the halachic prohibition of Laundering. It is this type of Laundering which is the subject of our discussion.

#### REMOVING DUST OR DIRT PARTICLES FROM A GARMENT

There is a dispute among the Rishonim whether or not removing dust or other dirt particles from a garment is considered Laundering. Some hold that removing any speck of dirt from a garment, even if it is not absorbed into the fabric of the garment but is merely lying on its surface [like a feather or a loose thread], is Biblically forbidden since the garment is being transformed from "dirty" to "clean"(1). A second opinion maintains that removing any dirt, whether it is absorbed into the fabric [like dust] or not, is totally permitted, since a dusty garment is not considered dirty and removing the dust is not considered Laundering(2). A third, middle-of-the road view, holds that only dust which is trapped between the fibers of the fabric may not be removed, while dirt which lies on the surface, may(3). The basic halachah follows the middle-of-the-road opinion(4), forbidding one to remove dirt that has been absorbed into the fabric(5) while allowing one to remove a feather or a loose thread that has landed on the garment(6) [using one's hands or a soft, dry cloth; a brush may not be used(7)]. Accordingly, one should be careful not to let his clothing fall on the ground and get dusty so that he does not come to desecrate the Shabbos(8). If, however, one's clothes should get dirty from dust, there is a mitigating factor which may permit removing dust from a garment: Removing dust from a garment is only considered Laundering if the person wearing the garment(9) is particular not to wear clothes in such a condition. In other words, if the garment is so dirty that its owner would not wear it(10), then cleaning it is considered Laundering. If the garment is not significantly dirty, i.e., its owner would not refuse to wear it(11), it may be cleaned so long as the following two conditions are met: No brush is used. The garment it is not shaken or scrubbed vigorously; it may be gently shaken or lightly dusted only(12). Can anything be done to a dusty

garment [that is significantly dirty] whose owner has no other suitable clothing and is embarrassed to be seen publicly in such a dirty garment? The poskim permit one to ask a non-Jew to remove the dust(13). While generally one may not ask a non-Jew to do anything that a Jew is not permitted to do on Shabbos, in this case he may, since as stated above, there are opinions who maintain that it is even permitted for a Jew to remove dust from a garment on Shabbos. [It is questionable, though, if one may instruct the non-Jew to use a brush(14).] If a non-Jew is not available and the owner is embarrassed to be seen in public wearing a dusty garment, some poskim permit a Jew to clean the garment, provided that it is cleaned in an unusual manner, e.g., with one's elbow(15).

**REMOVING A STAIN FROM A GARMENT** Halachically speaking, there are two types of stains: 1) a wet stain which is absorbed into the fabric of the garment, e.g. a ketchup stain; 2) a stain which is made when a piece of dirt or food falls on a garment and hardens there, leaving a stain(16). There are different rules for each of these stains:

**A WET STAIN WHICH IS ABSORBED INTO THE GARMENT:** A stain which is absorbed into the fabric and can be removed only with water or a cleaning agent is strictly prohibited to be removed on Shabbos. This is the classic Biblical prohibition of Laundering. Even if the stain is so insignificant that the owner will not be deterred from wearing the garment because of it, it is still strictly forbidden to remove it with water or any other cleaning agent. If no water or cleaning agent is used, then it is permitted to remove the stain if it is insignificant and would not deter the owner from wearing the stained garment. If the stain is significant, however, it is prohibited to remove it if the stain will be removed completely, i.e., it will leave no mark whatsoever on the garment. If, however, the stain is only partially removed - some mark will remain - it is permitted to be removed. Two conditions apply: No brush may be used. The stain may not be scrubbed away; it may only be gently wiped off with a dry cloth or removed by hand, with a knife, etc(17). Dirt which adheres to the garment's surface. A stain which results from dirt or food that has attached itself to a garment can also be removed if it will be only partially removed or when it is "insignificant", as explained earlier. It can be removed either by scratching it off or by rubbing the reverse side of the material until the dirt is dislodged. There is, however, one notable difference between this type of stain and the wet stain which became absorbed into the fabric of a garment. The removal of this type of stain is subject to the laws of "Grinding", a forbidden Shabbos Labor. If the dirt or food has dried or hardened, scratching or peeling it off will cause it to crumble, a Rabbinical violation of the prohibition against Grinding. Therefore: If the garment was stained by mud and the mud has dried, it may not be rubbed off - even if the stain is insignificant or will leave a mark - because of the prohibition against Grinding(18). If the garment is stained by unprocessed food which grows from the ground, e.g., fruits and vegetables, it may not be removed because of the prohibition against Grinding. But a stain from food which has already been ground, like baby cereal, may be removed because Grinding does not apply to previously ground food(19). Beans or potatoes from cholent are not subject to the prohibition against Grinding, since they are cooked so thoroughly that they are considered "previously ground", and the prohibition of Grinding does not apply to them(20). Even when the prohibition of Grinding applies, it is permitted - when necessary - to ask a non-Jew to remove this type of stain on Shabbos(21).

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 Sefer ha-Zichronos, quoted by Magen Avraham 302:4. 2 Tosfos, Shabbos 147a and many other Rishonim. 3 Rashi, Shabbos, ibid. as explained by Rama and Gra 302:1, and other Rishonim. 4 Rama, Shulchan Aruch ha-Rav and Aruch ha-Shulchan strongly recommend that one be stringent and follow this view [but do not absolutely require it]. Chayei Adam and Mishnah Berurah, however, are of the opinion that the basic halachah is in accordance with this view and one may not be lenient. 5 In theory, there may be some dust which lies completely on the surface of the garment and is not absorbed into the fabric. In practice, however, this is almost impossible to determine. See Salmas Chayim, second edition, 283, concerning surface dust on shoes. 6 A minority view rules like the first opinion that even feathers and threads are prohibited; Chayei Adam 22:9 quoting Magen Avraham; Ben Ish Chai, quoted by Kaf ha-chayim 302:11. See also Aruch ha-shulchan 302:9 who rules like this view in the unlikely event of a person who is reluctant to wear a garment because of the feathers, etc. See Machazei Eliyahu 44-4. 7 Beur Halachah 302:1. 8 Mishnah Berurah 302:6. 9 It remains questionable whether or not another person [who is bothered by the dirt] can clean the garment if the wearer himself is not particular; Beur Halachah 302:1. 10 This is determined by assessing the individual wearer's willingness to wear a dusty garment on weekdays, even if he would not wear it on Shabbos, Yom Tov or other special occasion; Harav S.Z.

Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 15, note 89 and Tikunim u'Miluim). 11 While this is sometimes difficult to determine, there are two general guidelines to follow: 1) One would normally be reluctant to wear dark (black or dark blue) clothes which are dusty but not brightly-colored clothing; 2) One would normally be particular not to wear new, or freshly laundered clothes which are dirty, but would be less particular if the clothing were obviously worn or faded. 12 Mishnah Berurah 302:36 and Beur Halachah 302:1 and 7. 13 Mishnah Berurah 302:6. 14 Since this may be prohibited according to all views. If the non-Jew uses the brush on his own, to make his job easier, he need not be stopped. 15 Misgeres ha-Shulchan on Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 80:80, quoted by Minchas Shabbos 80:143. See Beur Halachah 302:1 who seems to rely on this only when the garment is clearly not new or newly pressed. See also She'arim Metzuyanim b'Halachah 80:36 who disagrees with this leniency. 16 A third type of stain is one where the food was neither absorbed into the fabric nor dried and hardened; it merely remained on the surface and could be easily flicked off, e.g. a noodle. This type of stain is permitted to be removed according to the halachah described earlier, since it is similar to a feather or a loose thread which may be removed. 17 Entire paragraph based on the view of the Mishnah Berurah 302:11 and 36 and Beur Halachah. This is also the view of Da'as Torah 302:7. Note that there are poskim who are more lenient and allow a stain to be removed even when it will be completely removed as long as it is not scrubbed vigorously; see Aruch ha-Shulchan 302:9; Ketzos ha-Shulchan 116. 18 O.C. 302:7. 19 See Rama 321:12. 20 See Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 6:9 and 15:28. 21 Mishnah Berurah 302:36 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 44.

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From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com]  
Halacha Discussion by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

If you will follow my decrees "Chazak! Chazak! V'nischazeik!"

Torah Reading for Parashas Bechukosai This week's public Torah reading of Parashas Bechukosai, though seemingly no different from any other, is, in fact, governed by a set of special halachos. Let us take the opportunity to review them: When is Bechukosai read? Bechukosai is sometimes read together with Behar and sometimes not. Several factors enter into this determination, among them Ezra ha-Sofer's ordinance that Bechukosai be read at least two weeks(1) before the festival of Shavuos. The reason for the two-week hiatus is based on our tradition that Shavuos is considered a New Year, a Day of Judgment for the fruits of the tree. We are careful, therefore, to be finished with Parashas Bechukosai-in which the Admonition, the tochachah and its curses, occupy a central role-before this Day of Judgment and New Year begin(2). For the same reason we are careful to read Parashas Ki Savo, where the other portion of the tochachah is written, at least two weeks before Rosh Hashanah, so that "the old year may be ushered out along with its curses." Who is called to the Torah for the reading of the tochachah? In the past, deciding whom to call to the Torah for the reading of the tochachah was a serious point of contention. Many people, among them great scholars, felt that being called to the Torah for this portion was a bad omen that would result in tragedy and misfortune(3). Over the years, the situation deteriorated to the extent that a congregant would have to be paid to accept the aliyah(4), and if no one would agree to be "hired", the Torah reading of the week [and of Parashas Ki Savo] was omitted altogether(5). In other communities, shul decorum was shattered while congregants fought and argued as to who, in their opinion, should be punished by being called up for this portion(6). In other communities, the gabbai publicly announced from the bimah that whoever wished to do so should volunteer for the aliyah(7), while in other communities this part of the reading was read by the Torah reader without anybody being called up(8). Most poskim were critical of and dissatisfied with all of these options(9). Consequently, it has become customary in many shuls for the Torah reader himself to be called(10) upon to read the tochachah. If the reader is a kohen, the aliyos are then rearranged so that the tochachah is included in the aliyah of the kohen. Even when Bechukosai is read together with Behar, it should be arranged that the aliyah for the tochachah will be the last aliyah (acharon), so that the Torah reader who is a kohen will be called for the aliyah of the tochachah. Although the general rule is that whenever two parashiyos are

connected, it is proper to connect them at the fourth aliyah(11), we do not follow the rule in this case(12). If, mistakenly, the gabbai called a person other than the reader to the aliyah of the tochachah, that person may not refuse the aliyah. Even if he knows that the gabbai had malicious intentions when calling him up, he still may not refuse the aliyah once he has been called up. If, however, he knows in advance that he will be called, he may walk out of the shul before being called up(13). It is prohibited to "interrupt" during the reading of the tochachah, i.e., the portion cannot be broken into two or more segments to accommodate more aliyos(14). If, however, a mistake was found in the Sefer Torah during the reading of the tochachah, a new sefer should be brought out and the reading continued. In the opinion of several poskim, this is not considered to be an "interruption" because the same person who was called to the Torah remains there(15). The custom is to read the tochachah in a lowered tone of voice(16). Care must be taken, however, not to read it too quietly, lest it not be heard by the congregation(17). Chazak! Chazak! V'nischazeik! At the end of this parashah, as with every parashah that completes the reading of an entire Chumash, the custom is for the congregation to call out "Chazak! Chazak! V'nischazeik!" Several reasons are offered for this custom(18). The person who was called up for this aliyah should not say Chazak. Since he must still recite the final blessing after the Torah reading, some poskim consider reciting Chazak as an improper interruption (hefsek)(19). The custom is that the reader repeats Chazak after the congregation. The Sefer Torah should be closed at the time so that it does not appear as if those words are being read from the Torah(20). Many say the word Chazak three times, since the numerical equivalent (gematria) of the thrice-repeated Chazak-345-is the same as that of "Moshe"(21).

1 In a unique case (when Rosh Hashanah at the beginning of a leap year falls on a Thursday) Bechukosai is read three weeks before Shavuos. 2 Beir Halachah 428:4, quoting the Levush based on Megilah 31b and Tosfos. 3 There are a number of early sources who express this fear, see Magen Avraham 428:8 quoting Maharil; Kaf ha-Chayim 428:34 quoting Sefer Chasidim. See also Rama O.C. 53:19. 4 Chelkas Yaakov 3:174 reports that this was the custom in Belz in Europe. 5 Beir Halachah O.C. 428:6. 6 In one community the gabbai, a tailor, "punished" a competing tailor with this "honor". The gabbai did not live out the year (heard from Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky). 7 Rama O.C. 428:6, according to the understanding of the Machatzis ha-Shekel. Divrei Yisrael 1:61 testifies that this was the prevailing custom in Hungary. 8 Sho'el u'Meishiv 5:9. 9 Ha-elef Lecha Shelomo 63; Minchas Elazar 1:66; Igros Moshe O.C. 2:35. 10 Generally, when the reader himself receives an aliyah, there is no need to call him by his name, since he is standing at the bimah regardless; Rama 139:3 and Mishnah Berurah 8. For unexplained reasons, this is not the custom in many places. 11 Mishnah Berurah 282:5. 12 Mishnah Berurah 428:17 and Beir Halachah. 13 Mishnah Berurah 53:58; 428:17. 14 O.C. 428:6. 15 Kaf ha-Chayim 143:38; 428:32. There are dissenting opinions who hold that the reader should continue reading until the end of the tochachah; see Pischei Teshuvah 428:6 and She'arim Metzuyanim b'Halachah 78:3. 16 Magen Avraham 428:8. 17 Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 78:4; Kaf ha-Chayim 428:38. 18 See Maharam Mintz 85. See also Rama O.C. 139:11 and Pri Chadash, ibid. 19 See Shulchan ha-Kriyah O.C. 139. 20 Bein Pesach I'Shavuos, pg. 145. 21 Elef ha-Magen 669.

Peninim Ahl HaTorah: Parshas Bechukosai by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

If you will walk in My laws. (26:3) Rashi cites Chazal who maintain that "halichah b'mitzvos," walking in Hashem's mitzvos, refers to intensive Torah study. One who diligently applies himself to studying Torah merits the blessings detailed in the parsha. Horav Chaim Shmulevitz, zl, cites Chazal in the Talmud Yoma 35b who suggest a possible scenario of the dialogue that ensues in the Heavenly Court on the Day of Judgment when each human being stands before Hashem. If a poor man is questioned regarding his lack of Torah study and he replies, "I was poor and too busy earning a living," he is admonished for not following the example of Hillel who studied Torah amidst abject poverty. To the rich man who excuses his lack of Torah study due to his overwhelming preoccupation with his business affairs, the rejoinder is, "Were you wealthier than R' Elazar ben Charsam who rejected his awesome wealth so that he could study Torah?" Finally, to the wicked man who justifies his lack of Torah Study and his nefarious behavior, saying, "I was handsome and preoccupied with my evil inclination," the court says, "You were not more handsome than Yosef ha'tzaddik who triumphed over his yetzer hora." Thus, these three groups of people, the poor, the rich and the wicked are all accountable for their lack of Torah study. We learn a lesson

from Chazal's words. While we recognize each group's circumstances and position in life, each must still respond to the question, "Why did you not study Torah?" Three great tzaddikim, each in his own way, stand as the standard by which we measure all people. Is this appropriate? Should we not make some concession to the fact that we are only ordinary people, while they are giants. Their exemplary behavior may have been natural for them, but it is not for us. Why should their level of commitment obligate us all? Rav Chaim explains that Torah study is different. It represents the very essence of one's eternal existence. In the area of mitzvos, we may make concessions and justify our actions. We cannot do this when we are dealing with eternity. Since Torah is the source of one's nitzchuyus, eternal life, we are all equal in this regard. When it comes to living, no distinction exists between the great tzaddik and the simple Jew; they both need life! When one is seeking a luxury item, it makes sense that each pursue it according to his own refined taste. If an individual lacks bread or water, regardless of his station in life, he will pursue it with resourcefulness and vigor. This is Torah! It is indispensable; it is basic; it is an essential prerequisite for life. Every man must realize his individual potential. Rav Chaim adds one more point. We see from Chazal that one is not merely judged for the amount of time he has expended studying Torah. He is judged according to how close he has come to realizing his potential. One can study all day and become a profound Torah scholar. If, however, he has not achieved the profound level of erudition of which he is capable, then he must answer for his failure to do so. It only makes sense that when we are dealing with an individual's life, anything short of the total goal is not acceptable. This pasuk declares that regardless of where we are or the nature of our circumstances, Hashem will never reject His people. What is the meaning of "not rejecting"? Chovas Halevovos encourages us to look truthfully at our situation among the nations who govern us during our tenure in exile. We will apparently note that while we do not see eye to eye with the governing nations theologically and morally, it is obvious that our circumstances are similar to theirs in the areas of livelihood and sustenance. Their middle-class labors, however, more strenuously than does ours; their poor and homeless are in a much dire situation than ours. Yet, we are in exile, while they are not. To what do we attribute this "luck"? It is because Hashem has promised not to reject us. Horav Simcha Zisel Ziv, zl, comments that after having read the entire Tochechah, curses of the Torah, one would anticipate that hardly a remnant of Klal Yisrael would survive. And yet, after all that, we are here, thriving and growing. Furthermore, the entire Torah Shebaal Peh, oral law, was permanently arranged after the galus began. The Mishnah, Talmud and works of the Rishonim and Achronim all came into being after the destruction. All of this is attributable to the fact that Hashem did not reject us. Thus, Horav Avigdor Miller, Shlita, suggests the remarkable insight inherent in the seemingly innocuous statement, "I will not reject them," has a profound meaning-much more than meets the eye. Indeed, this statement includes the last two thousand years of galus. These years have been filled with the history of the Jewish communities in Bavel, including their mesivtos and countless talmidei chachamim. This glorious period of Torah learning produced the halachic literature of the Rishonim, followed by the many Torah scholars and Yeshivos and Jewish communities, each with its own distinct personality. "I will not reject them" is more than a statement of fact; it is a testament that Torah will be sustained throughout our history. This modest promise contains within it the major part of Am Yisrael's history. Imagine, if our glorious past is the product of Hashem's continued acceptance of us, how much more would he have achieved had we not sinned at all?

Peninim Ahl HaTorah: Parshas Behar

Do not take from him interest and increase; and you shall fear your G-d. (25:36) The Navi Yechezkel says (18:13) "(If he) Gives (loans) with usury and takes interest should he live? He shall not live!" Regarding this pasuk the Midrash comments, "The Almighty says, "He who has lived/sustained himself with usury in this world, will not live in the World to Come." Simply, the individual who does not have the sensitivity and human decency to provide his fellow man with a loan without squeezing interest from him

will not merit the Olam Habah reserved for every Jew. There is a famous incident that occurred with Rav Akiva Eiger, zl, which underscores this statement. In the city of Posen in western Poland, a very wealthy person passed away who had attained his wealth by lending money to people for a fixed usurious return. For years, this man had gouged the community without the slightest compassion. When his children turned to the Chevra Kaddisha, who were in charge of the cemetery plots, for a gravesite, they were asked for an enormous sum of money. This angered the rich man's children very much. After all, the more they spent to bury their father the less of his ill-gotten money would be left for them. They turned to the gentile governor of the city in anger, claiming that the Jewish community was prejudiced against them. The governor, who was not the greatest advocate of Jews and certainly not observant Jews, demanded that the rav of the community, Rav Akiva Eiger, immediately present himself before the court to offer an explanation for this apparent case of "intolerance." Rav Akiva Eiger came before the magistrate and presented the following argument, "We observant Jews believe that everyone has been granted a portion in Olam Habah. At the time of Techiyas Ha'Meisim, resurrection of the dead, all who are deserving will rise and take their rightful portion. Consequently, since they have no need for a "long term" grave, the price is set appropriately. Our Chazal, however, have stated that he who has taken usury will not be resurrected. The personal in question, was a usurious lender who will be making use of this burial site forever! It is only right that the family should be charged accordingly." When the magistrate heard the rav's counter-claim, he decided not to get involved.

This story has been recounted by many, regrettably, for its anecdotal message. It is unfortunate that we fail to see the depth of emunah exhibited by Rav Akiva Eiger. He believed in the words of Chazal to the point that it became halachah. One who does not observe the laws regarding usury will not rise with Techiyas Ha'Meisim. Final!-Consequently, he should pay more for his gravesite. We also see the attitude with which these people lived. They viewed death in the manner it should be viewed-as a bridge between life in this world to life in Olam Habah. May we merit to be imbued with such emunah.

You shall not subjugate him through hard labor-you shall fear your G-d. (25:43) The Torah admonishes us not to take undue advantage of the eved Ivri, Hebrew slave. He is reprehensible to demand that he perform difficult tasks that have no purpose other than destroying his self-respect. Rashi cites two such instances that do nothing more than destroy the slave's body and spirit: ordering him to boil water when there is no need for it; ordering him to keep digging around a tree for a long period of time for no apparent purpose. The Rambam says that it is prohibited to require the slave to work just to keep him busy. While the slave has no idea what is going on, Hashem is keeping tabs on the master and will punish him in due time for using a fellow Jew in a demeaning manner. The pasuk ends with the words "you shall fear your G-d." This teaches us that while no one, especially the slave, may realize your real intention, Hashem, Who discerned in Egypt between the real firstborn and the one who was thought to be a firstborn, knows what you are doing. Nonetheless, if the slave does not have a clue as to what is happening, is it really morally wrong? Horav Chaim Shmulevitz, zl, lends insight to the words of Chazal which open a new vista for us into understanding the Torah's demand regarding the dignity of man. One who purchases a Jewish slave is to treat him with the respect and dignity that befits his own brother! Indeed, Chazal tell us that one who purchases a Jewish slave is considered as if he actually bought a master for himself. So demanding are the Torah's requirements for treating the slave respectfully. That is not enough, claims Rav Chaim. In order to demonstrate respect, one must have respect. It is incumbent upon the master to perceive the slave as a man of dignity and importance. He must imbue in his mind his positive qualities and characteristics. Now, he cannot really do that if he takes advantage of the slave. Thus, regardless of the fact that the slave is unaware that the master's request of him has no purpose, if the master can make such a demeaning request, he demonstrates a lack of sensitivity for the slave. He obviously does not respect him. Such respect does not merely translate into nice behavior, but rather, nice thoughts Rav Chaim explains the mitzvah

of Kibbud Av V'eim. In this manner, one would think that this mitzvah demands that a child exhibit respect towards his parents, always doing their bidding and seeking ways to make life easier for them. Rav Chaim claims, however, that is not enough. One must delve into his parents personality, study their virtue and reflect upon their positive qualities to the point that he is inspired to respect them because of who they are. One who lacks a true appreciation of an individual cannot possibly demonstrate true kibbud. Everybody has good qualities and unique characteristics. A child must endeavor to comprehend his parents positive qualities, so that he can display proper kavod.

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From: Mordecai Kornfeld[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il]

SUKAH 33 (Lag b'Omer) - Dedicated by Rabbi Yisroel Shaw in memory of his grandfather, Mr. Bernie Slotin (Dov Ber ben Moshe Mordechai z'l), whose soul ascended to its eternal resting place thirty days ago. The Dafyomi Advancement Forum employs a full-time staff; your support is urgently needed. Mail a tax-deductible contribution to D.A.F., 140-32 69 Avenue, Flushing NY 11367, USA

Sukah 33b PICKING BERRIES OFF OF A HADAS BRANCH ON YOM TOV QUESTION: According to Rebbi Eliezer bar Rebbi Shimon, it is permitted to pick off the berries on a Hadas branch on Yom Tov and it is not considered Tikun Kli (making a new Kli), even though the Hadas branch now becomes valid for the Mitzvah. RASHI explains that it is permitted because one is picking the berries to eat and not to fix the Kli, and thus the resultant Tikun Kli is a Davar sh'Eino Miskaven, since he had no intention to make the new Kli (but rather to eat the berries). The Gemara asks that even though it is a Davar sh'Eino Miskaven, it is a Pesik Reshei (even though he does not intend to fix the Kli, it is definitely going to be fixed as a result of his action), which everyone agrees is Asur. The Gemara answers that he has another valid Hadas, and he does not need the one which has the berries that he is removing.

How does that answer the question that his act is a Pesik Reshei? Even though he has another Hadas, when he picks the berries from the first one he is turning it into a valid Hadas and it is still a Pesik Reshei! ANSWERS: (a) TOSFOS (DH Modeh) says that since the person has another Hadas and he does not need this one, then even if he does fix this Hadas and make it valid, it will only be a Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah, for which one is Patur according to Rebbi Shimon. Even though Rebbi Shimon agrees that it is Asur mid'Rabanan to do such an act, here his son (Rebbi Eliezer) permits it l'Chatchilah because there is a Mitzvah involved (making a Hadas). (Granted, he does not intend to use this Hadas for the Mitzvah, since he is only picking the berries because he wants to eat them, but since it is possible that someone else will need this Hadas for the Mitzvah, the Rabanan permitted doing a Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah in this case.)

TOSFOS in Shabbos (103a) suggests another reason why this Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah is Mutar l'Chatchilah. Picking the berries is not a complete Tikun Kli. It is not a real Tikun, since he is not making a new item. Rather, it is a "Tikun Kal," a quasi-Tikun, since he is merely giving the item a new Halachic status as valid for the Mitzvah. Therefore, the Rabanan did not prohibit it when it is a Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah.

In Kesuvos (6a) Tosfos suggests another reason why we Rebbi Elazar b'Rebbi Shimon is lenient with this Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah. If the person never uses the Hadas, it will not be considered a Kli at all. It only becomes a Kli -- retroactively -- when the person decides to use it as a Hadas on Yom Tov. Since the person has another Hadas, and may not need this Hadas for the Mitzvah, picking the berries is really only a \*Safek\* Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah and not a certain Melachah sh'Einah Tzerichah l'Gufah. That is why Rebbi Elazar b'Rebbi Shimon permits picking its berries.

(b) The ARUCH (Erech "Pasak," "Savar") cited by Tosfos (Shabbos 103a) explains that a Pesik Reshei is only Asur if one benefits from it. If one does not benefit from the result of the Pesik Reshei it remains a Davar sh'Eino Miskaven which is Mutar (according to Rebbi Shimon).

(Rashi (Shabbos 75a, DH Tefei) seems to express an opinion similar to that of the Aruch, except that Rashi rules that a Pesik Reshei is Mutar only if the resulting Melachah is \*detrimental\* to the person who does it, and not if he is merely indifferent to it.)

(c) RASHI appears to have an entirely different approach to our Sugya. Rashi explains that "Tikun Kli" is something which depends on a person's personal preferences. That is, a Kli is not an item which has an objective definition. Rather, if a person does not want to use the item which he makes (e.g. the Hadas when he picks the berries), it will not be a Kli; it will be called a berryless Hadas, and not a Hadas which can be used for the Mitzvah. Even if it is later used for the Mitzvah, since the one who picked the berries did not intend to use it no act of Tikun Kli was performed.

Rashi is consistent with his opinion elsewhere. In Shabbos (103a, DH b'Ar'a d'Chavrei), Rashi writes that if a person picks weeds from someone else's garden on Shabbos because he wants to eat the weeds and not because he wants to improve the quality of the garden (since it is not his garden), he is not Chayav because he did not intend to improve the garden by weeding. Since it was not his intention to beautify the garden, it is not considered as though he beautified it. We see from Rashi that beautifying a garden is subjective, dependent upon one's intention. The act is defined differently due to his intention. This opinion is reflected in the MAGID MISHNAH (Hilchos Shabbos 10:17, 12:2) as well.

(Tosfos in Shabbos rejects this approach, because according to it, the reason Rabbi Elazer b'Rebbi Shimon permits picking the berries is not because the formation of the new Kli is a Davar sh'Eino Miskaven which is Mutar, but because one is not making a new Kli at all. The Gemara should have prefaced this answer with the word "Ela" since it is giving an entirely new answer why picking the berries is permitted.)

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] The Weekly Daf #273

This issue is dedicated in memory of my late parents

Benjamin L. and Marion Hillson

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Separate But Equal The relationship of each of the four species with one another is fascinating. It is impossible to fulfill the mitzvah of taking them on Succos unless you have all of them. This indicates unity. Yet each of the species has its own individual character. The gemara (Menachos 27a) breaks them down into categories -- the lulav and esrog from trees which produce fruit and the hadas and arava from trees which do not. The Midrash makes an even finer distinction in assigning to the esrog the qualities of taste and fragrance, the lulav taste (dates) with no fragrance, the hadas fragrance without taste, and the arava devoid of both. Taste and smell symbolize Torah knowledge and good deeds. There are four kinds of Jews corresponding to these species -- those with both Torah and good deeds, those with Torah but lacking good deeds, those with good deeds but lacking Torah, and those who lack both. The message in both the gemara and Midrash is that Hashem commanded us to take all four species to symbolize the need for all the different components of the Jewish People to unite when crying out to Him in a time of trouble and when celebrating in a Festival time of joy. Such a need for unity might lead us to think that all four species should actually be bound together into one unit. Rabbi Eliezer points out that an analysis of the passage (Vayikra 22:40) indicates that the esrog must be separate from the other three. The Torah connects the lulav, hadas and arava with a connecting prefix which translates as "and," but does not connect the esrog with this group. This is why we bind together those three and take them in the right hand, because they are three in number and deserving of being taken by the more important hand, while we take the esrog alone with our left hand. If unity is so crucial, it may be asked, why did the Torah order us to keep the esrog, symbolizing the righteous Torah scholar with both taste and fragrance, separate from the three other species which are so dependent on his influence? It has been suggested that in this balance between unity and separation lies the formula for successful interaction between the religious leader and those whom he wishes to teach

and inspire. The esrog must be careful to maintain his standards and not lower them out of a desire to achieve greater social acceptability. Maintaining this distance must not, however, lead him to abandon his responsibility to enrich the other species with his own taste and fragrance. All four species must therefore be taken together, three in one hand and one in the other, to achieve this perfect blend. \* Succah 34b

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