

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON EMOR - 5759

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(23:1) The above sentence is a perfect example of how translation fails to convey the beauty of the Torah, let alone its profound depth: "Appointed festivals," "holy convocations." What do these words mean? The word in Hebrew which is usually translated in English as festival is mo'ed. The word mo'ed means "a meeting time." The Jewish Festivals are times when we can meet with G-d. Quite literally. Every festival contains in it the primordial power of that first historical event, of that first meeting with the Divine, which we are celebrating. Take Pesach for example: Once a year we pass through the spiritual landscape of that day. Like a train returning to the same station on some vast circular time-track. When we do the specific mitzvot of that day properly, we jump aboard this spiritual train and we ride it for an entire year. The taste of matza lingers on the palate of our souls much longer than just one night. It stays part of us until we return to that same station, to that same meeting point with G-d. Hebrew however, the words mikra'ei kodesh can also mean "calls to holiness." In other words, the Jewish Festivals are a call, they can draw a person to holiness like a magnet

One Meter Exile "You shall dwell in booths" (23:42) Why do we go out and live in a succah after Yom Kippur? On Rosh Hashana, G-d judges the world. On Yom Kippur, He seals the decree. The Midrash says that it's possible that G-d had decided that the Jewish People must go into exile. So we make ourselves a succah, "banishing" ourselves from our houses, and G-d considers this "exile" as though we had in reality been exiled. This is a very strange idea. How can it be that by merely walking a few meters from our houses it is as though we had gone into exile? And such a pleasant exile at that! Let's answer one question with another. What makes people distant from each other? If there's one thing that separates people, it's acquisitiveness, the desire to take, to grab. The underlying mindset of acquisitiveness is that whatever you have depletes from what I have. In other words, you're filling my space, you're breathing my air, you're crowding up my world. Everything you have means I have less. When a person feels like this, the very existence of other people bothers him. This is what is called sinas chinam -- baseless hatred. Sinas chinam brings exile to the Jewish People. Two thousand years ago, the Second Beis Hamikdash was destroyed and we were exiled and dispersed all over the world because of sinas chinam. But the punishment for sinas chinam -- exile -- is also its cure. Exile causes a person to feel rootless and destabilized. Inevitably this negates his acquisitiveness. The feeling that others are depriving me of what is rightfully mine is replaced by a feeling of unity: "I may not have a lot, but what I have, you're welcome to share." The punishment of exile cures the separation between people that is the manifestation of sinas chinam. The succah represents the nullification of material power and acquisitiveness, for however wealthy we may be, we are obliged to leave the realm of our wealth, our house and all its symbols of power and status -- all the things that make us think that the world is ours -- and dwell in a temporary dwelling. Now that we are destabilized, we feel how much we need G-d to protect us; that our own power is nothing. We dwell under the "shade of faith." By living in a temporary dwelling, we sensitize ourselves to the very temporary nature of our dwelling in this world. This process of living in the succah gives us the sense of vulnerability and instability which is the hallmark of exile. This feeling unifies the Jewish People and nullifies what is puzzling about this law is that the judge already knows that the rich man's selfishness that leads to sinas chinam, which was the reason for the verdict of exile in the first place. Remarkably, by moving just a few meters out of our homes, we have, in reality, experienced exile.

Sources: * Cosmetically Challenged - Talmud Shavuos 32a, Ohr Yahil, Rabbi Mordechai Perlman * Holiness Calling - Michtav M'Eliyahu, Chidushei HaRim * One Meter Exile - Michtav M'Eliyahu, Yalkut Shimon with this idea, maybe we can understand a puzzling aspect of this week's Pars

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.

From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] * TORAH WEEKLY * Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas Emor this Issue Is Made Possible by the Generosity of Congregation P'nei Shmuel Mitzpeh Nevo, Ma'aleh Adumim in Memory of Yehuda Aryeh Brand ___Cosmetically Challenged___ "Any man of your offspring throughout their generations in whom there be a blemish shall not come near to offer the food of G-d" (21:17) The door of the restaurant swung open, letting in the sound and smell of Hollywood Boulevard. A short, dapper figure whose smile was fraying a little at the edges stood at the door. He looked around for a second and then started to pick his way through the restaurant; a couple of waiters, their trays held high, neatly pirouetted around him. Finding the booth I was sitting in, he slumped himself down on the opposite bench. He looked at me for a long second. I asked him "How did the audition go?" He smiled his worm smile and said "I just found out I'm too old for the parts I used to be too short for." In Hollywood their is no dichotomy between appearance and reality -- appearance is reality. The way you look is everything. Which is not to say that appearance is nothing. The Torah teaches us that in a dispute between a rich man and a poor man, the judge must take the rich man aside and tell him to either dress the poor man in clothes that are the equal of his own, or to put on poor man's clothes. Only then will he judge their case. The reason is that the judge may be influenced by the status of the rich man. On the one hand he may be impressed by his status and be biased to the rich man's version of the case. Alternatively, he may feel sorry for the poor man and judge in his favor. evocative, a sound may be more soothing, but nothing is as immediate as a sight. Seeing, as they say, is believing. And seeing can make you believe, even when you know that what you're seeing isn't true. In our own times, we know the tremendous hold that advertising has over us, even when we know that their entire agenda is to sell more soap. The visual sneaks beneath the fences of discernment and lodges itself in the subconscious. thigh longer than the other; a kohen who was a hunchback, had abnormally long eyebrows or had a white line extending from the white of the eye into the iris. All these were excluded from service. exclude kohanim who were physically imperfect? The answer is that the service of G-d must not only be perfect, it must look perfect as well. Such is the nature of the human being, that what the eye sees, the heart feels. ___Holiness Calling___ "These are the appointed festivals of G-d, the holy convocations, which you shall designate in their appropriate time"

Yeshivat Har Etzion Virtual Beit Midrash Project(vbm) Student Summaries of Sichot Delivered by the Roshei Yeshiva Parashat Emor Sichot of Harav Yehuda Amital Shlit"a

"Opening the Heart and the Mind" Summarized by Rav Eliyahu Blumenzweig

There is an apparent redundancy in the opening verse of our parasha: "Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and you shall say to them..." (Vayikra 21:1). Rashi, based on the gemara, explains that the repetition comes "in order to warn the adults concerning the children." The Midrash (Vayikra Raba 26:5) offers another understanding: "So it is with the angels, who have no yetzer ha-ra (evil inclination): it is sufficient to 'say to them' once... But humans, who have a yetzer ha-ra - if only it would be sufficient to 'say to them' twice!" In the gemara quoted by Rashi, Chazal are teaching us the obligation of chinukh - the parents' responsibility to educate their children towards service of God. In contrast to the gemara, Chazal teach us in the midrash not that we are obligated in chinukh, but rather how to achieve our goal of chinukh. The need for two 'sayings' to which they refer is not simple repetition, but rather a way of conveying chinukh in such a way that each 'saying' has a different character and a different purpose. When attempting to educate a person and mold his character, it is not sufficient to merely recite information and mention new concepts. Every person has his own individual attitudes and opinions and conceptual system, and when he hears new thoughts and opinions which don't coincide with his own, he will often fail to internalize what he has heard. Alternatively, he will twist what he has heard to fit into his own conceptual system, with the result that the same words uttered by the same person may be understood differently by each listener in light of each one's own perspective and according to his own views. Influencing a person or molding his personality requires a 'first saying.' Not a 'saying' that aims to convey defined and quantified information, but rather a 'saying' that will open his heart, penetrate his thoughts and influence him to reveal his innermost self, in order that he will be prepared to hear and to accept, and to internalize what he is hearing. This 'saying' cannot be quantified or clearly defined. Sometimes a person will have to keep listening to it for a long time before he feels genuinely ready and willing to hear and to accept. Upon reaching this point, it is quite possible that if he attempts to determine what he has heard until then, he will discover that he remembers nothing. He is unable to say exactly what he has been told and what has made an impression upon him, but nevertheless he feels ready to hear, and is eager to take in more. In Chassidut much attention is paid to this 'first saying,' to the opening of the heart. A story is told of a chassid who returned from visiting his Rebbe and started to tell his friend all about the experience - how remarkable the Rebbe's words had been, and how excited he was by what he had heard. When his friend asked what the Rebbe had said, he replied: "As if one can understand the Rebbe!" The chassid didn't know what he had heard and hadn't understood anything, but his heart was open to hear more. Only once the 'first saying' has succeeded is there place for the second, for the actual transfer of information and concepts. Only then, when the ideas find willing ears and an open heart, can they be accepted. It is then that the person not only hears physically, but feels the words penetrate his very being, building him and developing his character. Someone who wishes to educate and influence - or someone seeking to be educated and influenced - must understand the secret of these two 'sayings'. If a person succeeds in taking in what he hears in such a way that his very personality is influenced, then the message will carry quite naturally from him further. He will not need to influence anyone by forcing himself, his opinions or his thoughts on anyone else. Someone whose personality combines and reflects all his views and attitudes is readily understood by others in terms of his way of thinking, his morals and his world-view. These things emanate from him naturally, and that which emanates from the heart will undoubtedly find its way into the hearts of others, who are waiting to hear and to be built. (Originally delivered on

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From: :yated-usa@ttec.com

Kortz Un Sharf-Short and Sweet Parsha Vertlach by Shaya Gottlieb "Emor El Hakohanim Bnei Aharon"-tell the Kohanim, sons of Aharon 21:1 Rashi comments, "I'hazhir gedolim el haketanim"-to exhort the older ones regarding the younger ones. The 'gedolim', the adults, who are involved with the needs of the meis, should be warned to remember the 'ketanim', the young, innocent orphans, and care for their needs as well. -Chasam Sofer

"Ve'al Kol Nafshos Meis Lo Yovo"-and he shall not approach the (souls of the) departed 21:11 The Torah forbids the Kohen Godol to attend the levaya of his closest relatives, including his parents, his wife and children. The Kohen Godol must constantly be thinking about Klal Yisroel, and having their welfare in mind, above the needs of his own family. He may not feel more closeness to his own relatives than to any other member of Klal Yisroel. - Kotzker Rebbe

"Ki Kol Ish Asher Bo Mum Lo Yikrav" Any man who has a blemish, shall not offer sacrifices 21:18 Why is a Kohen with a blemish unfit to offer sacrifices? Hashem, who discerns the 'shoresh neshomo' of every individual, singled out those who were unfit for their role and gave them a blemish. This is alluded to in the possuk, "Every man who has a blemish, Lo Yikrav." This proves that his neshomo was originally unfit to serve.

A maskil once challenged Rabbi Yisroel Vizhnitzer with the following: "Rebbe, why do the chassidim hate the maskilim? Aren't we brothers, children of one father?" "True, we share one father," the Rebbe replied, "but we don't share one Mutter, (mother)." "Why is that?" asked the maskil. "Because whatever is mutter (permitted) by you, is ossur by us," the Rebbe concluded.

Rav Shamshon Rafael Hirsh often said, "When the Rabiners became Doctors, the Yiddishkeit in Germany became sick

"Usfartem Lochem Mimocharas Hashabbos"- and you shall count from the first day after Shabbos 23:15 Why don't we say a Shehechiyonu for the mitzva of Sefiras Haomer? The actual counting, the sefira, was a preparation for the main mitzva, the offering of the korbon 'Shtei Halechem' on Shavous. Nowadays, we are satisfied with merely counting, since we cannot fulfill the mitzva of the Shtei Halechem. Therefore, we cannot say "Shehechiyonu ל Lazman Haze," who has renewed us for this occasion, because these words invoke sadness, reminding us of the Churban Bais Hamikdash and our inability to offer the korbon. Shehechiyonu can only be said during a time of simcha. -Rashba

The mitzva of Sefira begins with the offering of the Korbon Omer when the new wheat is harvested. Klal Yisroel was commanded to bring the Korbon Omer at that time. The Omer and Sefira-go hand in hand. This is alluded to in, "Im Ayn Kemach, Ayn Torah"-if there is no wheat, there is no Torah. Without parnossa, one cannot learn, and the Zchus of Torah is what brings parnossa. One is dependent upon the other. -Maharal of Prague

"Ki Kol Hanefesh ל V'nichriso Mayamehu" Any man who does not fast on Yom Kippur, his soul will be cut off from his nation 23:29 A Yid who does not feel a 'h'irhur teshuva', an awakening on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year, proves that 'he is cut off from his nation', his soul has already been severed from Judaism. -Lev Someach

Why is eating on Erev Yom Kippur counted as if one fasted for two days? When one realizes what a holy, lofty day is approaching, how can one eat? Is there a greater act of suffering than to eat?-Rebbe Elimelech of Lizensk

Halacha Discussion by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt The seventh day is a Sabbath day of complete rest you should not do any work (23:3) Cooking on Shabbos- Practical Applications

In order to simplify a very complicated-but very relevant-halachic problem, we will attempt to list various situations which arise on Shabbos both at the table and in the kitchen. To avoid confusion and for the sake of brevity, all explanations and definitions of technical terms, which are required for a fuller understanding of these halachos, appear only in the footnotes. The reader should be aware that due to the complex nature of the subject, even the slightest change from the exact case described below can change the halachah. In several instances, there is only a slight difference between a permissible act and a Biblically prohibited one. Some general definitions: [All temperatures are Fahrenheit.] -Cold-below 60-70 degrees -Warm-between 70-80 to 110 degrees -Hot-over 110 degrees(1) -Scalding-about 140-150 degrees(2) -Boiling-212 degrees -Cooked-completely cooked, ready to eat. -Dry food item-any food item which contains virtually no liquid, e.g., bread, meat, pasta. -Liquid food item-e.g., water, soup, sauce, gravy. Some general background information: No uncooked food items may be placed on or near a fire, or in a vessel that was on the fire so long as that vessel remains hot. Once a dry food item is fully cooked, it may be reheated [see more details further]. A liquid item which was fully cooked may be reheated only if it is still warm from the previous cooking. Davar gush, which is a dry, bulky item, e.g., a piece of meat or a potato, retains more heat than does a liquid. When a davar gush comes in contact with another food, the heat it has retained can heat other uncooked foods even after it has been removed from its heat source. When we refer to items served on a plate, we are referring to items which were placed on the plate by means of a ladle, spoon, etc. In the cases described below, we often refer to certain processed foods, such as instant coffee or salt, as "cooked". Note, though, that companies may change their manufacturing process and switch to procedures like freeze-drying etc., which are not considered, halachically, as "cooking."

At the Shabbos table it is permitted to -Pour ketchup, mustard or mayonnaise over any hot food served on a plate(3). -Pour cold gravy or cold soup on any hot food served on a plate(4). Some poskim hold that unless the liquid is somewhat warm, it should not be poured over a davar gush(5). -Pour lemon juice, which is generally cooked before processing(6), into a cup of hot tea(7). -Add sugar or salt [or any other previously cooked spice] to any food served on a plate or in a cup(8). -Add soup croutons to a bowl of hot soup(9). -Add cooked noodles to a pot of hot soup which has been removed from the fire(10). -Put pasteurized butter or margarine on a hot potato(11). Some poskim advise against this(12). -Place an ice cube or cold water into a cup of hot tea or a bowl of hot soup(13). If the tea or soup is scalding, some poskim advise against this(14). -Eat hot cholent, whether it is soupy or lumpy, together with cold cuts or other pieces of cooked, cold meat(15). -Dip challah into hot soup or hot cholent(16).

At the Shabbos table it is forbidden to -Dip a piece of cake or a cookie into hot tea or coffee(17). -Place a pickle, or any other uncooked food item, on top of or underneath a hot davar gush. -Place a slice of lemon into a cup of hot tea(18). -Pour uncooked spices (cinnamon, pepper) on a davar gush(19). -Dip a davar gush into cold gravy(20). In the kitchen it is permitted to -Place dry, cold(21) meat, chicken or kugel on top of a soup or cholent pot which is on the blech or in a crock-pot(22). If these items are wrapped in aluminum foil, the foil should be partially unwrapped to avoid the prohibition of hatmanah(23). -Place dry, cold meat, chicken or kugel on top of a radiator(24). -Place cold foods [dry or liquid] near a fire so that they can be warmed, provided that the foods are placed far enough away from the fire so that they could never become hot(25). -Pour hot water from an urn on a baby's cold milk bottle(26); -Pour hot water from an urn into a vessel, then place the milk bottle into it(27). The bottle should not be submerged entirely so as to avoid the prohibition of hatmanah(28). -Lift off the lid of an urn and replace it, if the water inside was previously boiled(29). -Add hot water from the urn to the soup or cholent pot. See pg. 211-212 for the many details involved. In the kitchen it is prohibited to -Place cold food [dry or liquid, cooked or uncooked] directly on the fire or on any area of the blech where the food could become hot(31). -Place cold liquid, such as soup or gravy, near enough to a heat source which will cause it to become hot(32).

-Place a cold, wet ladle [either from tap water or from previously ladled soup] into a pot of hot soup, even if the pot is presently not on the fire or blech(33). -Pour hot water from the urn directly into a cup containing a tea bag, cocoa or chocolate milk(34). -Pour hot water from the urn directly into a cup containing instant tea, coffee or cocoa(35). -Place a tea bag in a cup of hot water, or to pour hot water from a cup over a tea bag(36). -Add sugar or salt to a pot of hot liquid which was on the fire or blech and then removed(37). -Stir hot food in a pot which is on the fire or blech, even if the food is completely cooked(38). -Stir hot food in a pot which has been removed from the fire or blech, if the food is not completely cooked(39). -Dish out food from a pot which is directly on a flame(40), whether the food is completely cooked or not(41). Even if the pot is too heavy to pick up and remove from the fire, it is still prohibited to dish out food from a pot which is directly on a flame(42). -Cover a pot which is on the fire, unless it is clear beyond a doubt that the food inside is completely cooked(43). -Wipe wet hands with a towel, and then drape the towel over an urn or oven(44).

1 Contemporary poskim debate the exact intensity of heat for yad soledes bo. It is generally accepted, though, that 110 degrees is the minimum temperature which must be considered yad soledes bo. When yad soledes bo is used for a leniency (i.e., when an item is to be considered cooked before Shabbos so that it may be reheated on Shabbos), 160 degrees is required - Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-3. 2 This is referred to as yad nichveis bo, which, according to some poskim, is hot enough to cook food items even in a kli sheini or shelishi. Many poskim, however, do not agree with this stringency. 3 Since these items are precooked; Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-5. Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:267-8) permit this for other reasons. 4 Based on Igros Moshe, ibid. 5 Since a solid food is treated as a kli rishon, and cold gravy and soup are liquid items which have cooled off and are thus subject to the prohibition of cooking; Harav S.Z. Auerbach, Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:265-268). 6 Even if the lemon juice was not cooked there is room for leniency, since several poskim hold that no beverages become cooked in a teacup. 7 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 149); since it is permitted to reheat cold liquids in a kli sheini. 8 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-5; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 173); Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:257). 9 Many croutons are deep-fried, which is halachically considered as cooked and may be recooked. But this is permitted even for croutons which are baked, since we view the soup bowl as a kli shelishi. 10 Since it is permitted to reheat dry items even in a kli rishon. 11 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-6. 12 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1:58). 13 Since water does not become cooked in a kli sheini; Shaar ha-Tziyun 318:68. 14 Chayei Adam, quoted by Mishnah Berurah 318:48. 15 Since the meat is already cooked. 16 Mishnah Berurah 318:47; since it is permitted to cook a baked item in a kli shelishi. Even if the challah is eaten with a davar gush it is permitted, since the davar gush can only "bake" the challah, which is permitted. 17 Rama O.C. 318:5; since it is prohibited to cook a baked item in a kli sheini. 18 Consensus of many poskim (Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-18; Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 150; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, quoted in Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:221) unlike the Chazon Ish (O.C. 52:19) who tends to be lenient. 19 Since solid food is like a kli rishon. 20 Mishnah Berurah 318:78. 21 This should not be done for frozen items which have ice crystals on them, since cooking ice is prohibited; Minchas Yitzchak 9:31. 22 O.C. 253:5 and Beir Halachah 253:3. See Chazon Ish 37:14 for an explanation of why this does not constitute roasting after cooking. 23 The poskim disagree over whether hatmanah is a problem in this case; Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-3 and Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:86) are stringent, while Harav S.Y. Elyashiv and Harav Y.Y. Fisher (ibid. 84) are lenient. [This also seems to be the view of the Chazon Ish 37:32.] If the purpose of the aluminum foil, however, is to serve as a plate [and not to retain heat], all poskim agree that it is permitted. If more than one piece of aluminum foil is wrapped around the food item, all poskim agree that it is prohibited; see Machazeh Elyahu 32. 24 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-34. See preceding footnote concerning hatmanah. 25 O.C. 318:14. 26 Since only the bottle will become "cooked", not the milk inside; Harav M. Feinstein (Sefer Hilchos Shabbos, pg. 289); Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1:50. 27 Mishnah Berurah 318:23; since re-cooking a liquid item in a kli sheini is permitted. Under extenuating circumstances, even a kli rishon which has been removed from the fire may sometimes be used, see Shevet ha-Levi 5:31. 28 Mishnah Berurah 258:2; Minchas Yitzchak 8:17, unlike Shulchan Aruch Harav 318:23 and Chazon Ish 37:32, who are lenient. 29 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-14. It is also permitted to dish out water from an urn. 30 This review does not discuss the opening and closing of thermostat controlled ovens on Shabbos. 31 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-31,32. 32 O.C. 318:14-15. 33 Since cooking or reheating liquids in a kli rishon is prohibited. 34 This is strictly prohibited, since these are foods which were not cooked before Shabbos. 35 Even though instant coffee and tea are generally processed (cooked) foods, several poskim hold that one should not pour hot water directly from a kli rishon over them for several reasons; see Sefer Hilchos Shabbos, pg. 298. 36 Since tea leaves can easily become cooked in a kli sheini, and even by boiling water poured upon them from a kli sheini; Mishnah Berurah 318:39. 37 Mishnah Berurah 318:71, since in the opinion of some poskim, soluble foods dissolved in liquids are in themselves considered liquid and are subject to the prohibition of cooking cold liquids. It is permitted, however, to add precooked seasoning [sugar or salt] to solid food, e.g., a hot potato, since in that case the seasoning does not dissolve - see Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 173*. 38 Mishnah Berurah 318:118. See Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-8 for an explanation of why it is prohibited to stir food which is completely cooked. 39 O.C. 318:18. 40 But if the food is on the blech and not directly over the fire, many poskim permit scooping out food from the pot; Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-11. 41 Mishnah Berurah 318:113. 42 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-9. See Chazon Ish 37:15, who is somewhat more lenient. 43 O.C. 254:4; 257:4. See Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:10, who may hold that it is forbidden to cover a pot which is on the fire even if the food is completely cooked, but other poskim clearly permit this, and Harav Feinstein himself is quoted (The Shabbos Kitchen, pg. 9) as having given oral permission for this. 44 Mishnah Berurah 301:169.

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

They shall be holy to their G-d and they shall not desecrate the Name of their G-d. (21:6) It seems strange to present two extremes, holiness and desecration, in such close proximity. After all, is holiness not diametrically in opposition to desecration? It is like saying, "Be honest, do good, so not to be a bank robber! Is there not some compromise between kedushah and chillul? In addressing this question, Horav Shlomo Breuer, zl, claims that Hashem is very exact with His close/pious ones. He judges those closest to Him in a very strict manner, because a tzaddik's "insignificant" error can have a strong effect upon the average Jew., The good performed by the righteous rarely causes a ripple. His "crime," however, raises a storm of peer indignation which is difficult to quell. That is human nature; we tend to concentrate on the tzaddik's weakness and mistake. Thus, the chasm between holiness and desecration is minimized. Every injustice at the hands of a righteous Jew immediately becomes a chillul Hashem. That which is true for the Kohanim is equally true for every Jew who represents a religion founded upon and governed by the Torah. In the Talmud Yoma 86a Chazal comment that when a person speaks and acts as a ben Torah should, people say about him, "Praised is the father who taught him Torah." Conversely, one whose demeanor does not reflect a Torah orientation causes a grave chillul Hashem. The Rambam supplements Chazal when he maintains, "Any act, even though not a sin, committed by a Torah scholar; such as, words of anger, or simply 'losing it', becomes a chillul Hashem when people talk about it". Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, adds, that in such a case it is unimportant if the scholar is humble and does not view himself as great in stature. Everything is measured in the eyes of the people. If they consider him a scholar, then they respond to him as a scholar.

After all is said and done, the responsibility of one who studies Torah is awesome. Indeed his error is not measured realistically, but rather from the perspective of others. One must realize that this responsibility accompanies the role. One who is insensitive to this fact simply does not respect the reality of Torah life.

I should be sanctified among the Bnei Yisrael. (22:32) Every Jew is commanded to sanctify Hashem's Name. A Jew's total demeanor is to reflect his subordination to Hashem. His behavior must be admirable; his dealings with others, the height of integrity, his devotion to mitzvos, exemplary. This pasuk serves as the general commandment to give up one's life, if necessary, to sanctify Hashem's Name. It, therefore, seems strange that the Torah does not write this mitzvah in a stronger, more emphatic form. It simply says, "I should be sanctified." Why does the Torah not say, "Sanctify My Name," as a form of command. The Torah seems to take a nonchalant approach to Kiddush Hashem. It is as if it were saying, "I will become sanctified." Horav Nissan Alpert, zl, explains that the goal of the Torah's text is to teach us how one develops the level of conviction to be prepared to give up his life as a martyr for Hashem. From where does he call upon such remarkable fortitude that he is willing to give up his life to sanctify Hashem's Name? The answer is: it cannot happen over night. One does not suddenly conjure up the ability to be moser nefesh, sacrifice himself for Hashem. Only the willingness to live as a Jew can produce the willingness to die as a Jew. A Jew who observes mitzvos, who sanctifies his life through Kashrus, Shabbos, family purity; who strives constantly to cling closer to Hashem, who, when he errs, confesses his sin and seeks atonement through teshuvah, repentance, is the one who sanctifies his speech and overall personality. Such a person is prepared to give up his life for the Almighty. By fulfilling the "h,asebu", "I should be sanctified," by experiencing a wholesome life of kedushah, one elevates himself to the sublime level of mesiras nefesh. This may be inferred from the Tanna who personified mesiras nefesh, whose life ended in a most tragic but striking example of Kiddush Hashem-Rabbi Akiva. Chazal tell us that when Rabbi Akiva was led out to be executed, he recited the Shema. He continued while his skin was being flayed off his body with steel combs. Imagine the excruciating pain and suffering he must have sustained. Yet, he continued to recite Shema with the same religious fervor and conviction he

had demonstrated on a daily level. His students who were watching in shock and disbelief asked, "Rebbe, so much? How much is one supposed to suffer?" Rabbi Akiva responded, "My whole life I awaited the moment that I could sanctify myself to Hashem." Horav Alpert interprets the dialogue between Rabbi Akiva and his students in the following manner. The students wondered how a human being could endure so much pain and suffering-even if it was for the sake of Heaven. Rabbi Akiva told them that he spent an entire life conditioning himself for this moment when he could martyr himself for the Almighty. It did not occur overnight; it took a lifetime of preparation that climaxed with the ultimate sacrifice-himself.

The son of the Yisraelite woman pronounced the name and blasphemed-so they brought him to Moshe They placed under guard to clarify for themselves through Hashem. (24:12,13) Two people were in jail awaiting their fate, the blasphemer and the m'koshesh eitzim, the one who desecrated Shabbos. They were placed in different cells for an interesting reason. The m'koshesh awaited his punishment-death. His punishment was certain. The fate of the blasphemer, on the other hand, was yet to be decided. Had they placed both of them in the same cell, the blasphemer would naturally assume that he was to receive the same fate as his cellmate-death. Since this was not certain, it would cause the blasphemer undue anxiety to think that he was also to be executed. To avoid this unnecessary suffering, Moshe decided that the two would be placed in separate cells. Let us examine this further. The Daas Zekeinim notes that Bnei Yisrael were reluctant to sentence the blasphemer to death because they were unsure if execution would atone for the outrage that he had committed. Perhaps death was insufficient punishment for his reprehensible deed. If one who curses his parents is put to death, should we not infer that cursing Hashem is a much graver sin? It might be so serious that meting out punishment for this sin should be left totally to the hands of Hashem. Consequently, if the blasphemer was considered such a despicable sinner that he would deserve a fate even worse than death, why did Bnei Yisrael arrange to make life easier for him? Let him suffer in accordance with his sin! Horav A. Henach Leibowitz, Shlita, feels that Bnei Yisrael were communicating to us the importance of being sensitive to the needs of all Jews, regardless of their religious persuasion and moral tendency. While the blasphemer was a rasha gamur- truly wicked-he still was a Jew who had feelings; he was a human being whose dignity was to be preserved. While he will surely receive the punishment he deserves, it is still wrong to add insult, humiliation and fear to his present state. How compelling is this statement? We live in a time in which we feel we have license to disparage and humiliate anyone who does not see eye-to-eye with us. After all, "he is a rasha" is the usual response for every indignity we have suffered. We have no right to humiliate or hurt someone's feelings unnecessarily. Perhaps, if we would act more like tzaddikim, "they" would not be such resham. We may suggest another reason for not placing these two together. We are not to bunch together two sinners if their sins are distinct from one another. People are motivated to do evil for different reasons. In one instance it may be family background; in another it might be the social environment to which the person has been exposed; in yet another, it might be something innate within the sinner that has caused him to go wrong. We should not view all mistakes through the same looking glass. Even a sinner deserves his day in court. Whether it is an infraction against the Almighty or it is two children at home or at school who "commit" wrong, we should give each action and each individual its own moment of judgment, one distinct from the other.

From:Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky[SMTP:rmk@torah.org] Drasha Parshas Emor -- Holier than Thou Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

One of the most disheartening episodes that occurred during the 40-year desert sojourn is recorded in this week's parsha. A man quarreled with a fellow Jew and left the dispute in a rage. He reacted by blaspheming Hashem. This abhorrent behavior was so aberrant that no one even knew what the punishment was! So Hashem reviewed the grievous penalty for the deplorable act. As in any society, the ultimate act of treason was met with a

capitol sentence. The Torah declared a death penalty. But curiously enough, Hashem does not leave it at that. When the Torah reveals the penalty for the heinous act of blasphemy, it continues: "And one who blasphemes the name of Hashem shall be put to death. And if a man inflicts a mortal wound in his fellow man, he shall be put to death. If he inflicts damage then restitution shall be paid. The value of an eye for the loss of an eye, the value of a break for a break the value of a tooth for the loss of a tooth. And one who wounds an animal must be made to pay. (Leviticus 24:15-21) Shouldn't blasphemy be in a league of its own? Surely the act of affronting G-d Almighty can not be equated with attacking human beings. And surely it has no place next to the laws of injurious action towards animals! Why, then is it

Rabbi Y'honasan Eibeschutz one of Jewry's most influential leaders during the early 1700s, was away from his home for one Yom Kippur and was forced to spend that holy day in a small town. Without revealing his identity as Chief Rabbi of Prague, Hamburg, and Altoona, he entered a synagogue that evening and surveyed the room, looking for a suitable place to sit and pray. Toward the center of the synagogue, his eyes fell upon a man who was swaying fervently, tears swelling in his eyes. "How encouraging," thought the Rabbi, "I will sit next to him. His prayers will surely inspire me." It was to be. The man cried softly as he prayed, tears flowed down his face. "I am but dust in my life, Oh Lord," wept the man. "Surely in death!" The sincerity was indisputable. Reb Y'honasan finished the prayers that evening, inspired. The next morning he took his seat next to the man, who, once again, poured out his heart to G-d, declaring his insignificance and vacuity of merit.

During the congregation's reading of the Torah, something amazing happened. A man from the front of the synagogue was called for the third aliyah, one of the most honorable aliyos for an Israelite, and suddenly Rabbi Eibeschutz's neighbor charged the podium! "Him!" shouted the man. "You give him shlishi?!" The shul went silent. Reb Y'honasan stared in disbelief. "Why I know how to learn three times as much as he! I give more charity than he and I have a more illustrious family! Why on earth would you give him an aliyah over me?" With that the man stormed back from the bimah toward his seat. Rabbi Eibeschutz could not believe what he saw and was forced to approach the man. "I don't understand," he began. "Minutes ago you were crying about how insignificant and unworthy you are and now you are clamoring to get the honor of that man's aliyah?" Disgusted the man snapped back. "What are you talking about? Compared to Hashem I am truly a nothing." Then he pointed to the bimah and sneered, "But not compared to him!"

Perhaps the Torah reiterates the laws of damaging mortal and animals in direct conjunction with His directives toward blasphemy. Often people are very wary of the honor they afford their spiritual guides, mentors and institutions. More so are they indignant about the reverence and esteem afforded their Creator. Mortal feelings, property and possessions are often trampled upon even harmed even by those who seem to have utmost respect for the immortal. This week the Torah, in the portion that declares the enormity of blasphemy, does not forget to mention the iniquity of striking someone less than Omnipotent. It links the anthropomorphic blaspheming of G-d to the crime of physical damage toward those created in His image. It puts them one next to each other. Because all of Hashem's creations deserve respect. Even the cows.

Good Shabbos Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Dedicated by Ohad and Yonit Rosenthal in honor of the birth of their daughter Ariella Zahava Special Mazel Tov to the grandparents Eitan and Rachel Dombrowsky, who spread words of Torah every week at Congregation Toras Chaim of Hewlett A Hearty mazel Tov to the great-grandmother Mrs. Benjamin Dombrowsky. May they all see only nachas from the new baby!

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days, [and this] must be a law forever for all generations. You must celebrate it in the seventh month, [by] living in temporary structures for seven days. Everyone considered part of Israel must dwell in such temporary structures, [so] that future generations may know that I caused the children of Israel to live in temporary structures when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am Hashem, your G-d. (Vayikra 23:41-43)

Within this verse is a contradiction. The Torah is commanding the Jewish people to dwell in succos for seven days, and even gives a reason for the mitzvah: that future generations may know that I caused the children of Israel to live in temporary structures when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. The only problem is, that, this occurred in the month of Nissan, when the Jews left Egypt; the Torah commands us to live in succos for seven days in the seventh month, that is, the month of Tishrei!

There are many explanations given for this discrepancy, one of the most popular being to make the point to the world that we move to our succos for the sake of the mitzvah itself, and not because it is "cottage-season." To move to the succah in the Spring could mislead one to think that it is a seasonal thing. Living in a succah for a week in the Fall makes it clear--to others and to us--that we are there only to fulfill the mitzvah of succah.

However, the Gra (Vilna Gaon) offers a more historical reason:

"When they made the golden calf, the Clouds of Glory left them, and did not return until they began work on the Mishkan. Moshe came down on Yom Kippur, and the next day he gathered them to command them concerning the Mishkan. That had been on the eleventh day of Tishrei, and, as it says, 'They brought him more gifts each morning ...' (Shemos 36:3)--another two days until the thirteenth of Tishrei. On the fourteenth day of Tishrei, the 'wise-of-heart' took the gold that was counted and weighed, and on the fifteenth day they actually began the work, and the clouds returned. Therefore, we keep Succos on the fifteenth of Tishrei." (Kol Eliyahu, Emor, 84)

In other words, since the thatched roof of the succah is supposed to remind us of the Clouds of Glory that encompassed the Jewish camp, and protected it from the harmful elements of the desert, it makes sense that the mitzvah should be performed at the time that corresponds to when the clouds protected us. True, the clouds first accompanied us after we left Egypt, but that had been for only eighty-nine days; the next time the clouds remained with the Jewish people for forty years.

Knowing this, that the succah is connected to the second "set" of clouds, we can draw a parallel to the second set of tablets that Moshe had also descended with on Yom Kippur. If you recall, Moshe had broken the first tablets--carved out and engraved by G-d--when he had seen the golden calf. The second tablets he brought down had been carved out by Moshe, and engraved by G-d.

Perhaps, just as the tablets represented a lower level of spirituality that resulted from the incident of the golden calf, so too did the second set of clouds. And just like the broken first set of tablets were retained to inspire us to reach for higher levels of spirituality, so too can sitting in our succos, in the month of Tishrei, and looking up into the starry night sky above, act as a reminder of the first set of clouds, and the high spiritual level we had enjoyed before the sin of the golden calf--and hopefully inspire us to reach for the stars.

Perceptions, Copyright (c) 1999 Rabbi Pinchas Winston and Project Genesis, Inc. Rabbi Winston teaches at both Neve Yerushalym (Jerusalem) - <http://www.torah.org/neve/> and Neveh Tzion (Telzstone) - <http://www.neveh.org/> Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org <http://www.torah.org/>

<http://www.wein-destiny.com/parasha.htm> EMOR

The very concept of an elite class among Jews is somehow disturbing to our modern mindset and societal value system. Our slavish devotion to the ideal of democracy has forced many Jews to forsake all Jewish values and traditions in order to prove ourselves truly democratic. The current unceasing campaign against religious Jewry by the secular Left in Israel carries as its

From: Rabbi Pinchas Winston[SMTP:winston@torah.org]

Subject:Perceptions - Emor: Speaking Reveals All

Each year you must celebrate it [Succos] as a festival to G-d for seven

banner the cynical slogan, "We are for a democratic society in Israel." Of course democracy has many definitions in many different circles. As usual, it depends on whose ox is being gored. The religious are always guilty of "incitement" and "coercion" while the erstwhile leftist champions of democracy are only practicing "freedom of speech" and "the will of the majority." But, be that as it may, it is obvious to all of us that the democratic principles that form so much of a basis to our current Western civilization are dedicated to the principle of equality among citizens and frown upon the existence of a prescribed, dynastic, elite group within the society. Therefore, the special status of the children of Aaron - the kohanim - the priests of Israel - within the Jewish society smacks of being undemocratic. And yet the Torah, in its Divine wisdom ordains the creation of such a class of elite public servants within the body of Israel society in order to further the national challenge and goal of becoming a "a holy nation and a kingdom of priests."

The world is just now leaving its most horrific century, one that has seen almost 150,000,000 human beings done to death by war, governmental policies and brutal social engineering schemes. One of those social engineering schemes, practiced in Russia and China and in other Marxist-run societies as well, was to make everyone equal in those societies. Of course, some people were more equal than others, but basically the idea was to rid the society of leaders, intellectuals, religious models and others who were "bourgeois" or "elitist." A drab facelessness covered the landscape of those countries and a tyranny almost unequalled in human annals devoured its "equal" citizens. And by making everyone "equal" these tyrannies attempted to effectively silence any dissident thoughts or politically incorrect behavior.

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For many centuries there was a concept of noblesse oblige in European and American society. The wealthy, the powerful, the talented and gifted were felt to have an obligation to work for the betterment of their society as a whole, simply because they were blessed with an unequal and favorable share in life's bounties. This concept was based upon the foundations of Torah thought that legislated special rules and obligations for the priest, the Levite, the Torah scholar and the king and temporal leaders of Israel. In democratizing the concept of leadership in our current world, we have lost the sense of obligation and duty that should inspire the elite of the society. There are higher standards by which to judge those who claim the right to rule and strive to be part of history's elite. Not everyone is the same. No one is above the law. But some people, the leaders, the kohanim, the representatives of Torah and its people must realize that there is a higher law that binds them to supremely moral and inspirational behavior.

Shabat Shalom. Rabbi Berel Wein

From: Kenneth Block [SMTP:kenblock@worldnet.att.net] To: yitorah@vjlists.com
The following request for Tehillim and a Mi'Shebayrach was received from a highly reliable source. Please add your prayers to ours. ... Her name is ALTA DEENA BRACHA bas GILA FREIDEL

From owner-os-special [SMTP:owner-os-special@vjlists.com] Subject: The Other Side of the Story - #11

The Other Side of the Story Giving People the Benefit of the Doubt Based on "The Other Side of the Story" by Mrs. Yehudis Samet, ArtScroll Series Judging favorably means finding excuses for questionable behavior, excuses which make sense to us and leave us with a positive feeling towards the person in question. When we find ourselves suspecting others, we must ask ourselves: Are there any redeeming factors? Did I miss something? Did I jump to the wrong conclusion? For instance, take the following four cases. If you see or hear of something that sounds quite foreign, don't make a snap judgment, because maybe the "cow jumped over the moon" as in the case of the ...

COW'S CRUISE Earlier this year, the dazed crew of a Japanese trawler was plucked out of the Sea of Japan clinging to the wreckage of their sunken ship. Their rescue, however, was followed by immediate imprisonment once authorities questioned the sailors on their ship's loss. To a man they claimed that a cow, falling out of a clear blue sky, had struck the trawler amidships, shattering its hull and sinking the vessel within minutes. They remained in prison for several weeks, until the Russian Air Force reluctantly informed Japanese authorities that the crew of one of its cargo planes had apparently stolen a cow wandering at the edge of a Siberian airfield, forced the cow into the plane's hold and hastily taken off for home. Unprepared for live cargo, the Russian crew was ill equipped to manage a now rampaging cow within its hold. To save the aircraft and themselves, they shoved the animal out of the cargo hold as they crossed the Sea of Japan at an altitude of 30,000 feet. (Submitted by Alan Silver)

Judging favorably isn't just a good idea; It's a command from the ... TREE OF LIFE A friend of mine had a "sheila" - a halachic query - but he didn't know which Rabbi to ask. After inquiring, he was referred to a certain Rabbi. Entering the Rabbi's house, he found the Rabbi at the table cutting out pictures of trees and pasting them on a paper. He therefore decided not to ask his question from this Rabbi, who had nothing better to do than to cut out pictures of trees and make a scrapbook. Later, to his surprise, he found out that this Rabbi was writing a "sefer," a halachic treatise, on a topic concerning trees and therefore needed these pictures to illustrate the sefer. So the Rabbi was not doing arts and crafts, but preparing his sefer. (S.W., Jerusalem)

Based on "The Other Side of the Story" by Mrs. Yehudis Samet, ArtScroll Series Compiled by Rabbi Reuven Subar General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon (C) 1999 Ohr Somayach International

From: Jonathan Schwartz [SMTP:jschwartz@ymail.yu.edu] To: chabura@samet.com Subject: Internet Chaburah -- Parshat Emor

Prologue: So they didn't show respect zeh l'zeh. We all have shortcomings. Why the aveilus for the students of Rabbi Akiva if they were Torah scholars anyway? Additionally, What is kavod? In discussing the issue of kavod and the respect and honor that the students of Rabbi Akiva seemed to be lacking, the Meforshim take many different approaches. The MaHarsha (Yevamos 62b) notes that the lack of respect meant that the students failed to employ the lessons from their studies into daily practice. As a result, their Torah was not properly studied. Rav Aharon Kotler (Mishnas Rabbi Aharon III, p. 170) learns that the fallacy was in their missing of the lesson of derech erez kadma l'Torah, that without derech erez Torah is as if it is not being studied altogether. Other meforshim note that their fallacy was in neglecting preparation for Kabbalat HaTorah by studying Torat Rabbam (Michtav MiEliyahu, Vol. IV) . As Harav Shlomo Hochberg shlita put it: Rabbi Akiva is the same one who notes that "Chaviva Haadam She'Nivra B'tzelem." Man's existence is in the image of Hashem. In that manner he is Chaviv, no matter what stage he is at, he deserves respect at that level. One might add, that Rabbi Akiva's statement also notes the significance of man's life (Chaviva HaAdam SHENIVRA B'Tzelem), one who cannot see the significance of another's right to life and respect in living is insulting not only kavod haAdam but Kavod Shomayim as well. Hence, "Lo Nahagu Kavod is a serious sin indeed. Kavod is a serious matter.

It affects the right of a person to live or die (See Sotah 12a mutav sheyapil adam l'toch kivshan) and, as we see in the parsha, a Kohein Gadol's requirement to remain Tahor (in the case of Mes Mitzva). Denegrating the living or the dead is a central theme in this week's Torah study and hence this week's chaburah entitled: Lo'eg L'Rosh: Who's the joke on? ...

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

Subject: Insights to the Daf: Sukah 20-28

INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>

SUKAH 16 - Dedicated by Mr. A. Neff of New Rochelle, NY SUKAH 17 - Dedicated by Seth and Sheila Jutan of Atlanta, Georgia, in memory of her grandfather, Mr. Bernie Slotin (Dov Ben Moshe Mordechai z'l), who passed away on Chol ha'Moed Pesach (18 Nisan 5759 - April 4, 1999). SUKAH 20 - Dedicated by Marsha and Lee Weinblatt of N.J., in honor of the 5th of Iyar SUKAH 21-25 - my brother Ari Kornfeld has generously sponsored one month of Dafyomi publications for the benefit of Klal Yisrael Kollel Iyun Hadaf employs a full-time staff; your support is urgently needed. Write to donations@dafyomi.co.il for contribution options.

Sukah 20 1) USING A MAT OF REEDS ("MACHTZELES HA'KANIM") AS SECHACH QUESTION: According to Rav Papa's explanation, the Mishnah (19b) states that a large mat of reeds is normally made for use as Sechach (even without expressed intent) and thus it is valid as Sechach, and a small mat of reeds is normally made for reclining and thus it is invalid as Sechach. The Beraisa states that a mat of reeds cannot be used for Sechach if it is interwoven ("Arugah"), but it may be used if it is braided ("Gedulah"). RASHI and TOSFOS point out that this means that even a small mat (that was made with no pressed purpose) may be used for Sechach if it is braided. In the end of the Beraisa, Rabbi Yishmael b'Rebbi Yosi and Rabbi Dosa say that a mat may be used for Sechach even if it is interwoven. According to Rashi, that means that a small mat of reeds may be used, according to these Tana'im, no matter how the reeds are intertwined (Arugah or Gedulah). However, this opinion seems to contradict our Mishnah which states that a small mat of reeds that was made with no specific intent is assumedly made for the sake of reclining upon and it cannot be used for Sechach. How is this opinion to be reconciled with our Mishnah?

ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA writes that Rabbi Yishmael b'Rebbi Yosi and Rabbi Dosa are arguing with the Mishnah. The Halachah does not follow their opinion, but it follows the Mishnah. This is indeed the ruling of the RA'AVAD (Hilchos Sukah 5:4). (b) The RIF and RAMBAM (Hilchos Sukah 5:4) omit the difference between a woven and braided mat of reeds. The MAGID MISHNAH explains that they rule like Rabbi Yishmael b'Rebbi Yosi and Rabbi Dosa in the Beraisa, who say that both types of mats are valid as Sechach. However, the Rif and Rambam understand that the word the Beraisa uses is not "Gedulah" (braided) but "Gedolah" -- large. As such, the Tana Kama of the Beraisa is stating that a *large* reed mat is valid, like our Mishnah says, but if the mat is woven, then it is Pasul even if it is large. The Rambam rules like Rabbi Yishmael b'Rebbi Yosi and Rabbi Dosa who argue with the Tana Kama of the Beraisa and say that a large mat is always valid, which is the same opinion as our Mishnah (which allows all large mats and does not differentiate between woven or otherwise).

HALACHAH: The difference between woven and braided mats is not cited by the Shulchan Aruch (who rules like the Rambam in this regard). In practice, though, it depends on the purpose for which mats are normally used in that place and time (MISHNAH BERURAH 629:18). In recent years, mats have been marketed which were made expressly for the purpose of using them as Sechach on Sukos (such as "Sechach la'Netzach"). There are four points that are dealt with in Halachic literature when discussing these mats: (1) Were they made in an area in which most such mats are used for reclining upon? No matter where they are being used, if in their place of origin they are normally used for reclining they are Mekabel Tum'ah. (2) We rule that l'Chatchilah, one should not support the Sechach with an object that is not itself fit to be used as Sechach (i.e. the "Ma'amid" must fit the criteria for Sechach -- see Insights to 21b). If the mat is held together with ropes, they are considered to be Ma'amidim. Some ropes are Mekabel Tum'ah, so they should not be used as Ma'amidim. (Vines or natural fibers may be used, since they are not Mekabel Tum'ah and are themselves valid Sechach.) (3) The Rabanan deemed a board that is three or more Tefachim in width to be invalid for Sechach due to "Gezeiras Tikrah" (Daf 14a). Does this apply to a mat? It is true that each slat in the mat is not 4 Tefachim wide, but the combined width of the tied slats is over 4 Tefachim. Perhaps, since they are tied together, they are to be viewed as one large entity. (If the mat is not woven with slats, but with unprocessed bamboo or sticks, this should not apply.) (4) The Gemara discussed the so-called "Gezeiras Chavilah", due to which the Chachamim disqualified a bundle consisting of 25 or more sticks to be used as Sechach. Is the mat of tied slats considered a Chavilah? (Interwoven slats are obviously not considered Chavilah; this question arises only when the mat consists of parallel slats tied together.) L'Halachah, not all mats are the same, and not all Poskim rule similarly. Therefore in practice, one should consult his local Orthodox Rabbi regarding which mats to use and which not to use for Sechach.

Sukah 21 HALACHAH: "MA'AMID" AND "MA'AMID D'MA'AMID" OPINIONS: According to one reason given for the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah, an item which can be Mekabel Tum'ah (or is otherwise invalid for use as Sechach) may not be used to support the Sechach. This issue is very relevant in practice. Is it permitted to use metal rods to support the Sechach of one's Sukah? Likewise, may one use nails to hold down the boards which support the Sechach? What is the Halachah? (a) In the Mishnah, the Rabanan argue with Rabbi Yehudah. The BA'AL HA'ME'OR says that the Halachah follows the Rabanan. His reasoning is apparently either because they are the majority opinion, or because we find that the Mishnah later (22b) permits placing Sechach on a portable object and on an object which is invalid to be used as Sechach (as the Ra'avad explains the intention of the Me'or). The other Rishonim say that since the Amora'im are discussing the reason of Rabbi Yehudah, the Halachah follows his opinion, and thus a Sukah built by placing Sechach on the legs of a bed is invalid. (According to the ROSH, the Rabanan and Rabbi Yehudah do not even argue; Rabbi Yehudah is explaining the opinion of the Rabanan.) However, two reasons were given

for Rabbi Yehudah's opinion. The ROSH says that the primary reason is because such a Sukah is not "Keva." He accepts the explanation for "Keva" of the Yerushalmi cited by Tosfos and the Ramban (see Insight #1.b); Rabbi Yehudah disqualifies the Sukah because it's Sechach is too low (it is less than ten Tefachim from the top of the bed) and thus it is not "Keva." This is how the SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 630:3) rules. However, the RAMBAN, RITVA, and RAN rule stringently that the other reason, that one may not support Sechach with an item which is Mekabel Tum'ah, is also accepted l'Halachah. The Shulchan Aruch (629:7) indeed mentions that it is questionable whether one may use a Ma'amid that is Mekabel Tum'ah. (Some, however, explain this Halachah in the Shulchan Aruch differently, and assert that the Shulchan Aruch rules elsewhere -- OC 628 -- leniently, that rods, which are Mekabel Tum'ah, may be used as a Ma'amid.)

HALACHAH: The SHA'AR HA'TZUYON (630:60) lists many Rishonim who do not put limits on the type of Ma'amid used to support the Sechach. Therefore, he says that although it is good to be stringent l'Chatchilah, b'Di'eved the Sukah is certainly valid even with a Ma'amid that is Mekabel Tum'ah.

What is the Halachah concerning a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid (that is, the item supporting the Sechach is something which is valid for Sechach, but the item supporting that Ma'amid is *not* valid for Sechach)? The MAGEN AVRAHAM and the VILNA GA'ON, commenting on the Shulchan Aruch (629:8), say that a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid is permissible even though it is Mekabel Tum'ah. The proof is that the Ramban, Ritva, and Ran -- who say that one should be stringent when it comes to a Ma'amid -- explain that if one supports the Sechach on wooden poles that are being supported by a bed, the Sukah is valid even though the bed is Mekabel Tum'ah and is supporting the Ma'amid (that is, the bed is a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid).

The CHAZON ISH (143:2), however, is stringent, because the Ramban permits such a case of a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid only because the Ma'amid (which is invalid as Sechach) is a horizontal surface that is serving the same purpose as the ground ("Ma'aseh Karka b'Alma"). That is only permitted, though, if the Pasul item is the floor of the Sukah. If the item is standing upright and supporting the Ma'amid of the Sechach, such as nails holding down the support beam of the Sechach, then that logic will not permit using a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid that is invalid for Sechach. (The RITVA seems to present the arguments of the Ramban slightly differently, saying that the Heter of a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid is because the secondary Ma'amid is further away from the Sechach, and not because it is merely serving as the ground of the Sukah. It could be, then, that this proof of the Chazon Ish is actually a Machlokes Rishonim between the Ramban and Ritva.) The Chazon Ish presents a second argument. He says that if the Ma'amid (even one which may be used as Sechach) of the Sechach rests on something which is Mekabel Tum'ah, then that Ma'amid can no longer be used as Sechach. If so, the Sechach resting on that Ma'amid is resting on something which cannot be used as Sechach (a chain reaction), and thus the Sukah should be invalid. However, it could be that this logic does not apply here to forbid a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid. These Rishonim (Ramban, Ritva, Ran) hold that using a Ma'amid which is Mekabel Tum'ah only invalidates the Sukah mid'Rabanan, due to a Gezeirah that one might err and think that it is permitted to use such material for the actual Sechach of the Sukah. Since it is only a Gezeirah d'Rabanan, the Rabanan limited their Gezeirah to an actual Ma'amid, and were not concerned for the logic of a secondary Ma'amid. The Chazon Ish concludes that one should be careful not to use even a Ma'amid of a Ma'amid that is Mekabel Tum'ah (except for the cases mentioned in the previous Insight, where it is permitted to use Sechach Pasul as a Ma'amid according to all opinions). As mentioned earlier, the Sha'ar ha'Tzuyon says that b'Di'eved the Sukah is valid.

Sukah 25 TRAVELING TO LEARN TORAH QUESTION: The Mishnah says that people who are traveling in order to perform a Mitzvah are exempt from the Mitzvah of Sukah. RASHI gives three examples: one who is traveling to greet his rebbi, one who is traveling to learn Torah, and who is traveling to redeem captives. Why is it that one who is traveling to learn Torah is exempt from the Mitzvah of Sukah? The Gemara (Mo'ed Katan 9a) teaches that a person must interrupt his Torah study in order to perform any Mitzvah which cannot be performed by others. How, then, could the act of traveling to learn Torah be more weighty than the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah itself? Furthermore, the Yerushalmi (Berachos 1:2) says that since the purpose of learning Torah is in order to know how to perform the Mitzvos, even Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai would stop learning in order to perform the Mitzvos of Sukah and Lulav, and one who learns Torah not for the sake of knowing how to perform the Mitzvos is "better that he not have been created." The same should apply to one who is traveling to learn Torah -- he should definitely be permitted, and required, to interrupt his traveling in order to perform the Mitzvah of Sukah! The MAHARACH OR ZARUA goes even further than Rashi and says that even when one has arrived at the place of learning and has started to learn, he is exempt from Mitzvos while he is learning! ANSWERS: (a) The OR SAME'ACH (Hilchos Talmud Torah 3, and in MESHECH CHACHMAH, Parshas Ki Savo 28) quotes the RI M'KURVILLE (quoted in Tosfos, Kesuvos 17a, DH Mevatlin), who says that even though one must be Mevatel Talmud Torah in order to perform the Mitzvah of Hotza'as ha'Mes (burying the dead), "Shimush Talmidei Chachamim" *does* override burying the dead (even a "Mes Mitzvah"). "Shimush Talmidei Chachamim" refers to learning directly from a rebbi and the reasons and explanations of the Torah. It is not in the same category as normal Torah study, because it requires close interaction with a rebbi who transmits the reasons and explanations that have been passed from generation to generation, since Sinai. As such, it overrides even a Mitzvah which cannot be done by someone else. Our Mishnah is referring to this type of learning. Since the Talmidim are traveling to the house of the rebbi in order to learn Torah from him, they have the status of those who are performing "Shimush Talmidei Chachamim," which overrides other Mitzvos.

(b) The CHAZON YECHEZKAL quotes the VILNA GA'ON (in the beginning of Pe'ah) who says that each word of Torah is a Mitzvah. Perhaps that explains why one must stop learning Torah for a Mitzvah, but one does not have to stop traveling when on the way to learn Torah. When learning Torah, after each word that one learns, he has fulfilled one Mitzvah. Before starting the next Mitzvah (by saying the next word), if another Mitzvah has come up which needs to be fulfilled, he must do that Mitzvah before he starts the next Mitzvah of Talmud Torah. He is not interrupting the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah in order to perform another Mitzvah, since he is in-between Mitzvos when the other Mitzvah needs to be performed. In contrast, when one travels to learn Torah, the traveling itself is one complete Mitzvah, and therefore one does not have to interrupt it to perform another Mitzvah.

ONE WHO IS PERFORMING A MITZVAH IS EXEMPT FROM OTHER MITZVOS

QUESTION: Our Gemara says that one who is involved in a Mitzvah is exempt from the Mitzvah of Kerias Shema. This is the source, the Gemara says, for the general rule, "ha'Osek ba'Mitzvah Patur Min ha'Mitzvah" -- "One who is involved in one Mitzvah is exempt from another Mitzvah."

TOSFOS (DH Sheluchei Mitzvah) asks that according to this, one who is wearing Tzitzis or Tefilin should be exempt from all other Mitzvos! ANSWERS: (a) TOSFOS answers that only when the second Mitzvah would interrupt one's performance of the first Mitzvah, is the person exempt from the second Mitzvah. If one could perform the second Mitzvah without affecting his performance of the first Mitzvah (such as is the case when wearing Tzitzis or Tefilin), he is not exempt from the second Mitzvah.

The OR ZARU'A questions this answer of Tosfos. It is obvious that one may not stop performing one Mitzvah in order to perform another. Why would we have thought to give precedence to one Mitzvah over another, had the verse not taught us otherwise? We could answer that Tosfos learns from the verse that one who is involved in one Mitzvah is exempt from other Mitzvos even in a case where the opportunity for the second Mitzvah will pass if it is not done right away. One might have thought that in such a situation, one should halt the performance of the first Mitzvah and fulfill the second Mitzvah. The verse teaches us that even in such a case, one may not leave the first Mitzvah to perform the second. (M. Kornfeld)

(b) RASHBA in the name of RAV HAI GA'ON, the MAGID MISHNAH (Hilchos Sukah 6:4) in the name of the GE'ONIM, and the OR ZARU'A (Hilchos Sukah) explain that as long as a person is involved in preparing to fulfill a Mitzvah, such as when he is traveling in order to perform a Mitzvah, he is not obligated by the Torah to perform other Mitzvos even if they do not distract him from the first Mitzvah. The Almighty does not give us two things to do at one time. With regard to Tzitzis and Tefilin, however, one has already done what was needed to fulfill the Mitzvah. He is now in the process of *fulfilling* the Mitzvah, and not in the process of *preparing to fulfill* the Mitzvah. The exemption from other Mitzvos applies only when one has not yet fulfilled the first Mitzvah, and is doing something in order to fulfill the Mitzvah.

(c) The RAN makes a compromise. He agrees with the Rashba that one is exempt from the second Mitzvah even if performing it does not distract him from the first Mitzvah. However, if there is a way to fulfill the second Mitzvah while still performing the first Mitzvah *in its normal manner*, then one is not exempt from the second Mitzvah ("Why not fulfill a Mitzvah if nothing is lost in the process?"). Only when one must change his normal way of performing the first Mitzvah in order to fulfill the second Mitzvah is he exempt from the second Mitzvah. (It could be that according to the Ran, the obligation to do the second Mitzvah does not stem from the normal obligation to perform Mitzvos, but rather from the requirement not to disgrace a Mitzvah. Technically, he may be exempt since he is involved in another Mitzvah. But in practice, since the second Mitzvah could be performed without making any change from one's normal way of performing the first Mitzvah, it would be disgraceful to the second Mitzvah not to perform it. -M. Kornfeld)

HALACHAH: The REMA (Orach Chayim 38:8) cites the opinion of the Ran as the Halachah; when there is a way to fulfill the second Mitzvah while still performing the first Mitzvah in its normal manner, then one is not exempt from the second Mitzvah. Otherwise, he is exempt.

Sukah 26 & 27 (Iyar 11 & 12) have been dedicated in memory of Harabbanit Sara Dvasya bas Rav Mordechai by her children (yahrzeit: 11 Iyar)

Sukah 26 HALACHAH: GOING ON A PICNIC DURING SUKOS OPINIONS: The Beraisa says that "Holchei Derachim" (travelers) are exempt from the Mitzvah of Sukah. Rashi says that the reason they are exempt is because of "Teshvu k'E'in Taduru" -- one is obligated to live in a Sukah during Sukos in the same manner that one lives in his house during the rest of the year; since, during the rest of the year, a person does not stay in his home at all times but he leaves on trips for purposes of business and such (at which times he is not living in his house), so, too, on Sukos he does not have to stay in his Sukah, but he may go on a trip and not live in a Sukah. This Gemara is cited as Halachah by the SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 640:8). The MISHNAH BERURAH (640:40) adds that if one can *easily* find a Sukah without difficulty while on his trip, then he is required to dwell in that Sukah. Also, if he travels only during the day but not during the night, he is Chayav to sleep in a Sukah at night. The Acharonim, though, argue how far the obligation to sleep in a Sukah at night goes. The LEVUSH rules that one is only obligated to look for a Sukah that is already built in the town in which he is lodging, but if there is no Sukah built (e.g. there are no Jews in the town), he is not required to build his own Sukah. In contrast, the MAGEN AVRAHAM rules that he is required to build his own Sukah wherever he lodges. The Mishnah Berurah (in BI'UR HALACHAH) and others side with the Levush, because one is not required to spend half the night building a Sukah to sleep in for one night; rather, one merely has to make an effort to find a Sukah that is already built. Does this mean that today, in practice, one who goes on a pleasure trip during Sukos is exempt from eating and sleeping in a Sukah? Is it permitted to go for a picnic outing during Sukos and eat outside of a Sukah?

(a) RAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN, zt'l, in IGROS MOSHE (OC 3:93) writes that when the Gemara (and Shulchan Aruch) says that travelers are exempt from the Mitzvah of Sukah, it refers only to those who are traveling for the sake of business. One who travels for personal pleasure, on the other hand, is *not* exempt from the Mitzvah of Sukah. One who goes on a picnic outing on Sukos is obligated to eat in a Sukah, and if he does not eat in a Sukah he transgresses a Mitzvas Aseh. Even though, during the year, it is the normal manner for people to leave their homes to eat outside, the principle of "Teshvu k'E'in Taduru" does not permit one to leave the Sukah to eat outside on Sukos. Rav Moshe's arguments are that, first, the Halachah (as stated by Rava in the Gemara) is that one who is *Mitz'ta'er* is exempt from the Mitzvah of Sukah. That is, if being inside a Sukah causes a person more distress than he would experience in the house (or anywhere outside of the Sukah), he is exempt (because "Teshvu k'E'in Taduru" tells us that just as a person would leave his house during the year if it was uncomfortable for him to be there, so, too, there is no obligation for him to remain in his Sukah during Sukos if it is uncomfortable for him to be there). That was the way Rava expressed this Halachah -- one who is Mitz'ta'er is exempt. If it is true that one is exempt from the Mitzvah if he wants to go on a picnic outing then Rava should not have focused on the negative (one who is uncomfortable in the Sukah is exempt), but on the positive -- one who *enjoys being outside* of the Sukah more than being inside of it is exempt! Second, Rav Moshe cites the Gemara (Menachos 41a) that states that a person should not attempt to exempt himself from a Mitzvas Aseh (for example, by wearing a garment that does not have four corners so that he does not have to fulfill the Mitzvah of Tzitzis). On the contrary, a person should make every attempt to obligate himself in Mitzvos Aseh, as we find that Moshe Rabeinu requested permission

to enter the land of Israel only so that he would be able to fulfill the Mitzvos Aseh that depend on the land (Sotah 14a). Rav Moshe therefore concludes that one should not go out for a pleasure trip on Sukos to a place where this is no Sukah in which to eat or sleep. (b) RAV Y. S.

ELYASHIV, shlit'a (as recorded by a Talmid in HE'OROS B'MASECHES SUKAH), opposes the above view and says that it is the manner for people to go out for a pleasure trip from their homes just like they go out for business trips. Since this is the manner in which one lives in his home during the year (that is, he goes out on a trip occasionally), then so, too, this may be his manner of living in the Sukah during Sukos, and he should be permitted to leave his Sukah to go out on a pleasure trip.

What about the Gemara in Menachos that says one should not attempt to exempt himself from a Mitzvas Aseh? Rav Elyashiv answers that in this case, he is *not* exempting himself from the Mitzvah. He still has his Sukah; he is simply living in it the way he lives in his house during the rest of the year. Even when leaving his Sukah to go on a pleasure trip, he is not forfeiting the Mitzvah of Sukah; rather he is just living in the Sukah the same way he lives in his house. (When Rashi says that "Holchei Derachim" refers to those who go on business trips, he does not mean to limit the exemption to those who go out on business. He merely mentioned that as an example of why one would travel on Sukos.)

Perhaps we can suggest a reconciliation for the difference of opinion as follows. The two opinions are discussing two different types of pleasure outings. If a person wants to go traveling in order to tour or visit certain places, then it is the same as going out on business. "Teshvu k'E'in Taduru" exempts a person from the Sukah during the trip. He might yet find himself sitting in a Sukah during his trip, since if he finds himself next to a Sukah at mealtime then he must go into the Sukah to eat (as the Mishnah Berurah writes, cited above), because that is what he would do during the rest of the year on a trip -- if he finds a house during mealtime in which to eat, he would certainly go into that house. However, a person may not exempt himself from the Sukah if he wants to eat outside simply for the very purpose of *being outside* -- because he enjoys the outdoors and he wants the pleasure of eating in the outside air. Doing so would truly be considered an attempt to shrug of a Mitzvas Aseh, since even if there is a Sukah nearby when he picnics he would not want to go into it to eat. Furthermore, since he specifically wants to eat outside, he is not just doing the type of action that does not *need* a Sukah (such as touring), but he is doing an action which shows that he does not *want* a Sukah! By going on a picnic on Sukos he is showing that he specifically wants to eat outside of the Sukah, which is a disgrace to the Sukah. We tell such a person to enjoy the outdoors during the rest of the year and not on Sukos. The intention of the tourist, on the other hand, is to travel in order to see the sites, but not to purposefully avoid sitting in a Sukah. Rav Elyashiv's ruling refers to the average Israeli tourist, who travels in order to reach a destination. Rav Moshe's ruling, on the other hand, addresses the Western phenomenon of picnicking in order to "be in the great outdoors," and since such an intent means that one specifically wants to get out of the Sukah, it is prohibited. (M. Kornfeld)

Sukah 27b VISITING ONE'S REBBI ON THE FESTIVAL QUESTION: A Beraisa relates that Rabbi Ila'i once went to greet his rebbi, Rabbi Eliezer, during Sukos. Rabbi Eliezer asked him how he could leave his home when the Torah requires that one stay home and rejoice with one's wife during the festival. The Gemara asks how can there be a requirement to stay home with one's wife during the festival? There is another requirement to go greet one's rebbi on the festival! We learn this requirement, says Rabbi Yitzchak, from the words of the Shunamite woman's husband, who asked his wife (Melachim II 4:23), "Why are you going to him (the prophet, Elisha) today? It is not Rosh Chodesh, nor is it Shabbos!" From here, says that the Gemara, we learn that one is required to visit his rebbi on Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos, and if so, Rabbi Ila'i was justified in visiting Rabbi Eliezer during Sukos. What is the Gemara's question? The requirement to visit one's rebbi seems to apply only on Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos, but not on Yom Tov, because the verse mentions only Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos and makes no mention of Yom Tov! ANSWERS: (a) The RITVA (here, and in Rosh ha'Shanah 16b) addresses this question. He says that there are three different requirements. (1) If one's rebbi is in the same town, then one is required to visit him every day. (2) If one's rebbi is outside of the town, but within the Techum Shabbos (2000 Amos), then one is required to visit him only on Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh. (3) If one's rebbi lives beyond the Techum Shabbos from one's town, then he is required to visit him only on the festival (such as during Chol ha'Mo'ed, when there is no Isur Techum, or he goes before Yom Tov). In Melachim, Elisha was outside of the town, but within the Techum Shabbos, and that is why the husband of the Shunamite woman mentioned only Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos. Rabbi Yitzchak, when he taught this Halachah, did not mention the requirement to visit one's rebbi every day when his rebbi lives in the same town, because everyone is heedful of that requirement (since not much effort is required in traveling); he mentioned only the Halachah with regard to Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos because when the rebbi lives outside of the town, people neglect the requirement to go visit him. (b) The MAHARSHA here says that if one is required to visit his rebbi on Rosh Chodesh, then certainly one is also required to visit his rebbi on Yom Tov, even though the verse does not specifically mention Yom Tov. (The Maharsha does not address why Yom Tov is left out of the verse.) (c) The TUREI EVEN (Rosh ha'Shanah 16b) points out that it is strange that the verse mentions Rosh Chodesh before Shabbos. It should have mentioned Shabbos first, since Shabbos comes more frequently than Rosh Chodesh. It must be, he says, that the word "Shabbos" in the verse refers to Yom Tov (as we find elsewhere, such as in Vayikra 23:16). (d) Although, ideally, one should visit his rebbi every day (in order to learn Torah), doing so is not possible because a person is occupied with his work. Therefore, only when one is not working is he required to visit his rebbi. We see this from the verse in Melachim, since the Shunamite woman's husband implied that on days that women do not do Melachah (Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh, as is the custom for women not to do Melachah on Rosh Chodesh), she would visit the rebbi. That implies that on days that men do not do Melachah (Shabbos and Yom Tov), they should visit the rebbi. Women, on the other hand, are not free during a Yom Tov since they have cooking and other work to do even on Yom Tov. They are only free on Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh (ETZ YOSEF, citing the IYEI HAYAM) (e) The CHANUKAS HA'TORAH (Rosh ha'Shanah 16b) explains that since it is inappropriate for a woman to visit the rebbi when his Talmidim are there (see Kidushin 81a), the only time she would be obligated to visit the rebbi is when the Talmidim are not there. Thus, the Shunamite woman's husband asked her why she was going to the prophet when it was not Rosh Chodesh or Shabbos -- days on which the Talmidim are not at their rebbi's, but are at home. The verse implies that she would have no obligation to visit the rebbi on the festival. Why not? It must be because the Talmidim are visiting the rebbi on the festival, which teaches that there is an obligation to visit the rebbi on the festival!

(f) RAV YONASAN EIBESHITZ (Ya'aros Devash 1:12 and elsewhere) explains that when the Beis ha'Mikdash was standing (such as in the time of Elisha and the Shunamite woman), everyone would go greet the presence of the Shechinah in Yerushalayim. They would visit the rebbi only on Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh, when there was no requirement to go to Yerushalayim. After the Churban, though, the practice was instituted to visit the rebbi in place of going to Yerushalayim, because a Talmid Chacham reflects the presence of the Shechinah. (See also ARUCH LA'NER, and MALBIM to Melachim II 4:23, who explain similarly.) (g) The NODA B'YEHUDAH (OC II:94) says more or less the opposite. When the verse mentions Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos, it also means to include Yom Tov; it is referring to all days that have additional Kedushah (as is indicated by the additional Korban that is brought, the Korban Musaf), and on those day's the rebbi's ability to affect his Talmidim is heightened, and thus there is a practice to visit the rebbi on those days. However, there is no obligation to go on *all* of those days, because then one would be visiting his rebbi more often than he would be visiting the Shechinah (on the three Regalim), and it is not proper for the honor of the Shechinah to be less than the honor of one's rebbi (Kidushin 33b). The obligation to visit one's rebbi can apply only as much as one is obligated to visit the Shechinah, but not more. Therefore, the Gemara says that one is obligated to visit his rebbi on each of the three Regalim.

Based on this, the Noda b'Yehudah explains that today, while the Beis ha'Mikdash has not yet been rebuilt, there is no obligation to visit one's rebbi (unless, of course, one is going with the purpose to learn Torah from him) on the Regal, since there is no obligation to visit the Shechinah at the Beis ha'Mikdash, and the honor of one's rebbi should not be greater than the honor of the Shechinah. Therefore, the TUR and the SHULCHAN ARUCH omitted this Halachah, since they recorded only the Halachos that were relevant in practice in their days, when the Beis ha'Mikdash was not standing. The RAMBAM, though, includes this Halachah (Hilchos Talmud Torah 5:7), because he writes all of the Halachos which are relevant when the Beis ha'Mikdash is standing. (See also MAHARATZ CHIYUS, Rosh ha'Shanah 16b; CHIDUSHEI GE'ONIM in the Ein Yakov; and EINEI SHMUEL for other approaches; see also DIVREI SHALOM 2:25.)

1) RAIN DURING SUKOS AND THE OVERTURNED PITCHER AGADAH: The Mishnah (28b) says that when it rains during the festival and the Jews cannot stay in their Sukos, it is analogous to a servant who was preparing a drink to serve to his master, "and he spilled a pitcher on its face." (The Gemara (Ta'anis 2b) says that we pick up the Arba'ah Minim, which grow through water, as a way of supplicating to Hashem that He send us water. If He is not pleased with our Avodah, he throws the water back at us, so to speak.) The VILAGA'ON asks why does the Mishnah say "Limzog" ("to dilute," as in diluting a cup of wine with water)? It should have said that the servant w as "giving" a cup to his master, and not "diluting" a cup for his master! (KOL ELIYAHU #85) The Vilna Ga'on explains that the days before Sukos are days of judgement, from Rosh ha'Shanah to Yom Kipur, when Hashem acts with justice. The days of Sukos -- when we are surrounded with the performance of Mitzvos (the Sukah and the Arba'ah Minim) -- are days of Divine blessing, when Hashem gives to us bountifully (as it is the time of bringing in the fruit from the fields). When Hashem does not let us sit in the Sukah, it shows that He does not want us to have the ability to arouse His mercy by being surrounded by the Mitzvah of Sukah. Wine, in its raw state, is very sharp, and alludes to the attribute of justice. As Hashem's servant s, we try to mix the wine with water, by performing Mitzvos, to make the wine, the justice, less sharp. When the Mishnah says that the master "over turns the pitcher [of water] onto its face," it means that He does not want to mix any water with the wine, but rather He wants it to remain sharp, with His attribute of strict justice dominating.

SUN DIMINUTIONS QUESTION: The Gemara discusses the predictive properties of sun diminutions ("Likuy Chamah") as well as those of the moon and other celestial bodies. Most likely, the Gemara is referring to solar and lunar eclipses. RAV YONASAN EIBESHITZ (Ya'aros Devash, vol. 2, p. 67b) asks that an eclipse a natural phenomenon that occurs based on a set pattern. How, then, can it be a harbinger of inauspicious times, if it happens on a natural schedule? ANSWERS: (a) RAV YONASAN EIBESHITZ explains that the Gemara is not referring to eclipses, because those are not called a diminution of the heavenly bodies, but are merely shadows that are cast when the light of the sun is blocked from reaching the earth. Rather, Chazal are referring to sunspots and similar phenomena which occur on the moon (such as transient lunar phenomena). (b) The ARUCH LA'NER says that the Gemara indeed refers to eclipses, yet the question of Rav Yonasan Eibshitz is not problematic. RASHI (Bereishis 1:14) tells us that the fourth day of the week (Wednesday) is a day that is predisposed for certain illnesses, even though it occurs each week, on a natural calendrical cycle. Nevertheless, it can still be associated with tribulations. Similarly, Chazal knew that the times that Hashem arranges for there to be eclipses are signs that those are times of judgement being passed upon the world. Therefore, it is possible for it to be both a natural phenomenon and an ominous omen.

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From: Rabbi Yissocher Frand[SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org]

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Emor

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 191, The Bracha for Kiddush Hashem. Good Shabbos!

"Oh, Is That The Reason Why?" In the beginning of Parshas Emor, HaShem [G-d] told Moshe to "Speak to the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon" [Vayikra 21:1]. The Medrash comments on that pasuk [verse] that this teaches that HaShem showed to Moshe "each generation and its judges, each generation and its kings, each generation and its wise men, each generation and its robbers, and he showed him King Saul and his sons falling by the

sword in battle" against the Plishtim. The Medrash then quotes Moshe's query to G-d: "The very first king who took charge of your children should be stabbed by the sword?" G-d responded, "Why are you complaining to me? -- Instead, you should speak to the Kohanim who he (Saul) killed (in the priestly city of Nov), for they are prosecuting him." "That", the Medrash concludes, "is why it says 'Speak to the Kohanim.'" This is an amazing Medrash that, on the surface, appears to be merely playing with words. Among other difficulties, the prime sin of King Saul was not killing the Kohanim in the city of Nov. The pasukim [verses] tell us [Shmuel I, Chapter 15] that King Saul was given an explicit command to kill out the entire nation of Amalek -- men, women, and children. King Saul had mercy on Amalek and spared their king, thereby violating this command. Samuel came to Saul and told him that as a result of this sin, Saul was unworthy of the monarchy and HaShem would tear the Kingdom of Israel from him. We continue to suffer until this very day, as a result of this unfortunate incident. Haman, and most likely many of the oppressors of the Jewish people, are descendents of this Amalekite. So why does this Medrash say that the reason why King Saul was killed in such a horrible fashion was because of the incident with the Kohanim in Nov? How do we reconcile this Medrash with the explicit words of the pasukim? The Reish Rav gives a beautiful interpretation of this Medrash in his sefer HaDerash V'haYun. King Saul's primary sin was, in fact, his refusal to kill all of Amalek. But, had it been for that sin alone, Saul would not have been killed in such a fashion. Why? Because he could have excused himself by saying, "I am a compassionate person. I could not bring myself to kill innocent men, women, and children." That would have been a human emotion, which is understandable. Sometimes a person may have trouble controlling his emotions. However, the refutation of such an argument was the incident with Nov, the city of priests, where Saul was not compassionate. He wiped out an entire city of Jewish priests. Where was the compassionate person then? Had it only been for the crime of not killing all of Amalek, there could have perhaps been an excuse. However, Saul's action in Nov slammed the door in the face of any such excuse. Nov remained as a prosecutor pointing to the evidence. "No, Saul, you are not a compassionate individual." As the Beis HaLevi and other commentaries in Chumash say, that same phenomenon will be the source of our own judgement at the hands of Heaven. When we "go upstairs", after 120 years, and try to give excuses for what we did or did not do, G-d will look at our lives and ask, "Oh, is that the reason why?" "You didn't have any money? But for X, Y, and Z you had money!" "You didn't have any time? But for A, B, and C you had time!" "You were not smart enough? But you were smart enough for that other thing that you wanted to do." Our own deeds and our own lives will be the biggest indictment against us. When we will try to say that we were too "this" or too "that", HaShem, who has all the events of our lives written in a Book, will be able to call our bluff. "What about this, and what about that, and what about here". That is what the Medrash is saying, "Speak to the Kohanim." -- try giving that argument to the Kohanim in the city of Nov, whom you mercilessly eradicated.

For The System To Work We Need Not Just One Kind of Law The end of the parsha contains the incident of the Blasphemer - the person who cursed HaShem. This was the first time that such a thing ever occurred. The people did not know what to do with this person. Immediately after the incident, the Torah explicitly tells us what to do with such a person: He is put to death. The Torah then mentions several laws [Vayikra 24: 17-21] that appear to be totally unrelated to the law of the Blasphemer: 1) One who kills another person deserves the death penalty. 2) One who kills someone's animal must pay a monetary fine. 3) If one injures another person receives a monetary punishment. 4) One who injures an animal must pay a monetary fine. 5) One who strikes his father or mother deserves the death penalty. Only then does the Torah return to the story of the Blasphemer and relate that the people actually put the Blasphemer to death. This does not seem to be a smooth flow of narration. Why does the Torah digress from the discussion of the Blasphemer by inserting these seemingly unrelated laws? The Sefer Darchei Mussar suggests that this sequence of the pasukim contains a tremendous lesson. Some people feel that a dichotomy exists among Jewish

laws. There are laws that relate to the relationship between man and G-d, and there are laws that relate to the relationship between man and his fellow man. And never the twain need meet. "I can be the perfect gentlemen and citizen, and yet deny the existence of HaShem. I can be the most ethical and upright of individuals without a G-d." The Torah is telling us that this is not true. If the whole system of laws is legislated by man, then just as man can create laws, man can change laws. Man can legislate one thing today and can legislate the complete opposite tomorrow. [That which is considered a crime today (even murder!), can be considered a righteous act tomorrow.] Without a higher authority, there are no laws that can not be changed. If man is the creator of the system of laws, then there really are not any laws between man and man either. Therefore, after the Torah tells us the laws of the Blasphemer, the Torah begins to establish laws relating to man's relationship with his fellow man. Without that first category of law (relating to man -- G-d interaction), there can be no true laws of the second category (man -- man interactions). That is the only way that the system can work. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim dhoffman@torah.org Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 for further information. RavFrand, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis, Inc. 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
