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ON **EIKEV** - 5773

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Rabbi Hershel Schachter –

The Nature of Moshe Rabbeinu's Receiving the Torah

Four times a year we read in the Torah about ma'amad har Sinai: on Shabbos when we lein the parshas of Yisro, V'eschanan, and Eikev, and on Shavuot. According to the Ramban in his commentary on the Torah, this constitutes a special mitzvah min ha'torah, just like parshas Zachor, to read the narrative of ma'amad har Sinai once a year. The Magen Avraham (Hilchos Ahava Rabba) points out that the Yalkut Shimoni says this as well.

In Tehillim (68:19) the receiving of the Torah by Moshe Rabbeinu on top of Har Sinai is described in three contradictory ways. The possuk starts off "Olisa la'morom", that Moshe Rabbeinu went up to the heavens; "shovisa shevi", he captured the Torah as one would grab the spoils of war; "lokachta", he took the Torah from Hakodosh Boruch Hu like one who purchases an item from someone else; "matonos", the Torah was given to Moshe Rabbeinu by Hakodosh Boruch Hu as a gift. The Bais Ha'levi (in his commentary on parshas Yisro) points out that the victor in the war marches off with the spoils of the enemy against the wishes of the enemy; in the case of one who purchases an item from someone else we require both da'as makneh as well as da'as koneh, because the purchaser has to agree to pay some amount of money to acquire ownership of the item; and in the case of matonah, a gift, the nosain ha'matoneh accomplishes the kinyan with his own da'as and does not require any da'as on the part of the one who receives the matonah.

The Bais Ha'levi explains, based on the gemorah in Megillah, that if someone says yo'gati u'motzosi, I worked hard in learning and I

succeeded, you should believe him. Even if the person is not that observant, and even if his middos are not up to par, if a person works hard on learning, he will succeed in understanding the text even if it is against the wishes of Ha'kodosh Boruch Hu, and even if he does not deserve to be successful in learning, similar to the victor in war who walks off with the spoils against the wishes of the rightful owner. However, the gemorah continues to say that in order to be successful in learning to the extent that he will be able to pasken a shailah properly, this is like one who purchases an item from someone else, where we would require s'yaita d'Shmaya on the part of Hakodosh Baruch Hu. The yegiyah on the part of the one who learns represents the da'as ha'lokeach, and the s'yaita d'shmaya on the part of the Ribbono Shel Olam represents the da'as makneh.

The braisa in the sixth perek of Pirkei Avos tells us that there is even a higher level of learning that can be attained. One who learns Torah in a pure fashion, l'shmoh, will be zocheh to become like a ma'ayon ha'misgaber, and from heaven they will reveal to him the "secrets of the Torah". This third level of success in learning Torah is what the Sefer Tehillim refers to as "matonos", where all that is needed is the da'as makneh, and there is no need for da'as koneh at all. The gemorah tells us that the reason why the psak of a talmid chochom is binding is based on the posuk in Tehillim (25:14) "Sod Hashem l'yiraov", that G-D will reveal the secrets of the Torah to those who fear him. Unfortunately, we sometimes meet talmidei chachomim who lack yiras Shomayim and although they have accomplished the first level of learning, they will be lacking the second level and certainly this third level.

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from: Aish.com <newsletterserver@aish.com> date: Thu, Jul 25, 2013 at 5:14 AM subject: Advanced Parsha - Ekev

Greatness and Humility

by Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Greatness and Humility by Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

A sequence of verses in this week's sedra gave rise to a beautiful Talmudic passage - one that has found a place in the siddur. It is among the readings we say after the Evening Service on Saturday night as Shabbat comes to an end. Here is the text on which it is based:

"For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awe-inspiring God, who shows no favoritism and accepts no bribe. He upholds the cause of the orphan and widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing." (Deut. 10: 17-18)

The juxtaposition of the two verses - the first about God's supremacy, the second about His care for the low and lonely - could not be more striking. The Power of powers cares for the powerless. The infinitely great shows concern for the small. The Being at the heart of being listens to those at the margins: the orphan, the widow, the stranger, the poor, the outcast, the neglected. On this idea, the third century teacher Rabbi Yochanan built the following homily (Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 31a):

Rabbi Yochanan said, Wherever you find the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, there you find His humility. This is written in the Torah, repeated in the Prophets, and stated a third time in the Writings. It is written in the Torah: "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awe-inspiring God, who shows no favoritism and accepts no bribe." Immediately afterwards it is written, "He upholds the cause of the orphan and widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing." It is repeated in the Prophets, as it says: "So says the High and Exalted One, who lives for ever and whose name is Holy: I live in a high and holy place, but also with the contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite." It is stated a third time in the Writings: "Sing to God, make music for His name, extol Him who rides the clouds - God is His name -

and exult before Him." Immediately afterwards it is written: "Father of the fatherless and judge of widows, is God in His holy habitation."

It is this passage that found its way into the (Ashkenazi) service at the end of Shabbat. Its presence there is to remind that that, as the day of rest ends and we return to our weekday concerns, we should not be so caught up in our own interests that we forget others less favourably situated. To care only for ourselves and those immediately dependant on us is not "the way of God".

One of the more unusual aspects of being a Chief Rabbi is that one comes to know people one otherwise might not. These were three moments that made a deep impression on me.

From time to time Elaine and I give dinner parties for people within, and also outside, the Jewish community. Usually, at the end, the guests thank the hosts. Only once, though, did a guest not only thank us but also asked to go into the kitchen to thank those who had made and served the meal. It was a fine act of sensitivity. No less interesting was who it was who did so. It was John Major, a British Prime Minister. Greatness is humility.

The oldest synagogue in Britain is Bevis Marks, in the heart of the City of London. Built in 1701, it was the first purpose-built synagogue in London, created by the Spanish and Portuguese Jews who were the first to return to England (or practice their Judaism in public: some had been marranos) after Oliver Cromwell gave permission in 1656 for Jews to return after their expulsion by Edward I in 1290.

Modelled on the Great Synagogue in Amsterdam, it has stayed almost unchanged ever since. Only the addition of electric lights has marked the passing of time - and even so, on special occasions, services are candle-lit as they were in those early days.

For the tercentenary service in 2001, Prince Charles came to the synagogue. There he met members of the community as well as leaders of Anglo-Jewry. What was impressive is that he spent as much time talking to the young men and women who were doing security duty as he did to the great and good of British Jewry. For security reasons, people volunteer to stand guard at communal events - part of the work of one of our finest organizations, the Community Security Trust. Often, people walk past them, hardly noticing their presence. But Prince Charles did notice them, and made them feel as important as anyone else on that glittering occasion. Greatness is humility.

Sarah Levene (not her real name) died tragically young. She and her husband had been blessed by God with great success. They were wealthy; but they did not spend their money on themselves. They gave tzedakah on a massive scale - within and beyond the Jewish community, in Britain, Israel and elsewhere. They were among the greatest philanthropists of our time.

When she died, among those who felt most bereaved were the waiters and waitresses of a well-known hotel in Israel where they often stayed. It transpired that she had come to know all of them - where they came from, what their family situation was, the difficulties they were going through, the problems they faced. She remembered not only their names but also the names of their spouses and children. Whenever any of them needed help, she made sure it came, quietly, unobtrusively. It was a habit she had wherever she went.

After her death I discovered how she and her husband came to be married. He was older than she was, a friend of her parents. She had some weeks free in the summer before the start of the academic year, and Mr Levene (not his real name) gave her a holiday job. One evening after work they were about to join her parents for a meal. In the street they passed a beggar. Mr Levene, punctilious about the mitzvah of tzedakah, reached into his pocket and gave the man a coin. As they were walking on, Sarah asked him to lend her some money - a fairly large sum, which she promised she would repay at the end of the week when he paid her wages.

He did so. She then ran back to the beggar and gave him the money.

"Why did you do that?" he asked, "I had already given him some money." "What you gave him," she said, "was enough to help him for today but not enough to make a difference to his life."

At the end of the week, Mr Levene gave her her wages. She handed him back most of the money, to repay him for the sum he had lent her. "I will accept the money," he told her, "because I do not want to rob you of your mitzvah." But - as he himself told me after her death, "It was then that I decided to ask her to marry me - because her heart was bigger than mine."

Throughout their marriage they spent as much time and energy on giving their money to charitable causes as they did on earning it. They were responsible for many of the most outstanding educational, medical and environmental projects of our time. I have had the privilege of knowing other philanthropists - but none who knew the names of the children of the waiters at the hotel where they stayed; none who cared more for those others hardly noticed or who gave help more quietly, more effectively, more humanly. Greatness is humility.

This idea - counter-intuitive, unexpected, life-changing - is one of the great contributions of the Torah to Western civilization and it is set out in the words of our sedra, when Moses told the people about the "God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awe-inspiring God" whose greatness lay not just in the fact that He was Creator of the universe and shaper of history, but that "He upholds the cause of the orphan and widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing." Those who do this are the true men and women of God.

from: genesis@torah.org reply-to: genesis@torah.org to: rabbiwein@torah.org date: Wed, Jul 24, 2013 at 6:05 PM subject: Rabbi Wein - Parshas Eikev

Rabbi Berel Wein

Parshas Eikev The Small Things

Ekev – the word itself and the parsha generally – stresses the cause and effect equation that governs all human and Jewish history. Blessings and sadder events are conditioned on previous human behavior, attitudes and actions. Life eventually teaches us that there is no free lunch. The rabbis stated it succinctly in Avot: "According to the effort and sacrifice, so too will be the reward."

There are really no shortcuts in life. All attempts to accommodate eternal Jewish practices and values to fit current fads and societal norms, have ended in abysmal failure. The road of Jewish history is littered with the remains of people and movements who looked to reform and improve Judaism and instead only succeeded in making it irrelevant to their followers.

The Torah emphasizes that Moshe brought the people closer to Heaven but he did not degrade heaven by dragging it down to the level of the people. The tragedy of much of American Jewry and of many secular Jews generally is not that Judaism was too hard and difficult – rather, it was rendered too easy and convenient and thus had no meaning in their lives and everyday existence.

Moshe in this week's parsha (as he does generally in the book of Dvarim) emphasizes the difficult times that the people endured in their forty years sojourn and travels in the desert of Sinai. And Moshe does not deign to promise them a rose garden in the Middle East upon their entry into and conquest of the Land of Israel. He warns them of the consequences of abandoning God and Torah. The God of Jewish and general world history is exacting and does not tolerate the easy path that leads to spiritual weakness and eventual physical destruction.

Rashi in this week's parsha comments that this message is particularly true regarding the "small" things in life that one easily crushes with one's akeiv – heel. It is the small thing that truly characterizes our personality and our relationships with others and with our Creator as well.

I have noticed that there is a trend in our current society that when eulogies are delivered they concentrate on the small things in life – on stories, anecdotes, memories and personal relationships – rather than on the public or commercial achievements of the deceased, no matter how impressive those achievements might have been.

It is the small things in life that engender within us likes and dislikes, feelings of affection and love and emotions of annoyance and frustration. So our Torah is one of myriad details and many small things. The God of the vast universe reveals Himself, so to speak, to us in the atom and the tiny mite. For upon reflection and analysis there are really no small things in life.

Everything that we do and say bears consequences for our personal and national future. It is this sense of almost cosmic influence exercised by every individual in one's everyday life that lies at the heart of Torah and Judaism. We build the world in our own lives' seemingly mundane behavior.

Shabat shalom

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from: Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com>
to: Potpourri <parshapotpourri@shemayisrael.com> date: Thu, Jul 25,
2013 at 8:19 PM subject: [Parshapotpourri] **Parsha Potpourri by
Rabbi Oizer Alport - Parshas Eikev**

Parshas Eikev - Vol. 8, Issue 42 Compiled by Oizer Alport

V'achalta v'savata u'veirachta es Hashem Elokecha al ha'aretz ha'tovah asher nasan lach (8:10) Parshas Eikev contains the mitzvah of reciting Birkas HaMazon (Grace after Meals), in which we thank Hashem after we have eaten a meal containing bread. Many commentators discuss the tremendous value in saying this blessing with intense concentration and the numerous benefits and blessings that a person can receive for doing so. Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein recounts an inspiring story which demonstrates the power of Birkas HaMazon to alter people's lives in completely unintended ways.

A young Torah scholar in Yerushalayim went to a library to study a certain rare book that was not available in his yeshiva or synagogue. Since he knew that there were no kosher restaurants in the area around the library, he brought his lunch with him, and when he got hungry, he took a break to eat. At the conclusion of his meal, he recited Birkas HaMazon aloud with great fervor.

To his astonishment, the secular librarian approached him when he finished to ask him why he had said she'lo neivosh v'lo nikasheil - we should not feel ashamed or be humiliated, and we should not stumble - when the correct wording is simply she'lo neivosh v'lo nikasheil, omitting the phrase v'lo nikasheil. The librarian explained that although she had recently abandoned the path of Torah observance, she was familiar with the text of the prayer because she had grown up in a religious family. The young man, who had been accustomed to include the phrase v'lo nikasheil in Birkas HaMazon since his youth, promised to show her a photocopy of a page of a prayer book proving that there is a text of the prayer which includes this expression. However, to his chagrin, when he attempted to locate a source for this wording by searching the relevant books in the library, not one of them contained this phrase.

After the young man finished his research in the library, he proceeded to Meah Shearim, where after many hours of searching, he discovered an old Haggadah which included the phrase v'lo nikasheil in Birkas HaMazon. Excited by his find, he photocopied the page, and he highlighted these words and drew red arrows pointing to them so that the librarian would understand the purpose of the letter. Because he did not

know her name, he sent it to the library with a request that it be delivered to the young woman who was working on that day. After mailing the letter, he moved on with life and forgot about the entire episode.

Many months later, the young Torah scholar received an invitation to a wedding, but to his surprise, he didn't recognize the names of the bride or groom or their families. Although he obviously had no intention of attending, Hashem caused him to "coincidentally" pass by the hall on the day of the wedding, so he decided to enter and quickly survey the room to see if he recognized anybody. After looking around and confirming that he did not know any of the members of the wedding party, he concluded that the invitation had been sent to him by mistake and turned to leave. However, before he could do so, somebody approached him and said that the bride desperately wanted to speak with him.

At this point, he was completely baffled, as he was certain that he had no relationship with the bride, but as he approached her, she excitedly asked him whether he recognized her. When he responded that he did not, she told him that she was the librarian who had debated him regarding the proper text of Birkas HaMazon, and she cryptically added that the entire wedding was in his merit. She explained that at the time of their interaction in the library, she was involved in a serious relationship with a non-Jewish man who wanted to marry her. Although she was no longer religious, she was still uncomfortable with the idea of marrying a non-Jew. Finally, her boyfriend grew impatient and gave her an ultimatum, demanding that she agree to marry him by a certain date, or else he would move on without her.

She went to work on the appointed day confused and tormented about what answer she would give him. When she arrived at the library she discovered the letter, which had circulated throughout the library for several weeks until finally making its way to her desk on that fateful day. She opened the letter and was astonished to see the highlighted words v'lo nikasheil - we should not stumble - which she interpreted as a Heaven-sent message imploring her not to stumble by agreeing to marry a non-Jew. This wake-up call helped her resolve her doubts, and she informed her boyfriend that she would not be marrying him. From that point onward, she slowly returned to the religious lifestyle of her family, and now she was about to get married and establish a new Jewish home, all in the merit of one passionate Birkas HaMazon.

Eretz asher Hashem Elokecha doreish osah tamid einei Hashem Elokecha bah me'reishis ha'shana v'ad acharis shana (11:12) The Gemora in Rosh Hashana (16b) teaches that any year which is "poor" at the beginning will be rich and full of blessing at the end. This is homiletically derived from our verse, which refers to the beginning of the year as "reishis ha'shana" (leaving out the letter "aleph" in the word "reishis"), which may be reinterpreted as a poor year ("rash" means poor). The Gemora understands the Torah as hinting that such a year will have an ending different than that with which it began (i.e. rich and bountiful).

As Rosh Hashana grows ever closer, what does this valuable advice mean, and how can we use it to ensure that the coming year will be a prosperous one for us and our loved ones? Rashi explains that a "poor" year refers to one in which a person makes himself poor on Rosh Hashana to beg and supplicate for his needs. In order to follow this advice, we must first understand what it means to make oneself like a poor person.

Rav Chaim Friedlander explains that it isn't sufficient to merely view oneself "as if" he is poor for the day. A person must honestly believe that his entire lot for the upcoming year - his health, happiness, and financial situation - will be determined on this day. In other words, at the present moment, he has absolutely nothing to his name and must earn it all from scratch. This may be difficult to do for a person who is fortunate enough to have a beautiful family, a good source of income, and no history of major medical problems. How can such a person honestly stand before

Hashem and view himself as a pauper with nothing to his name?

Rav Friedlander explains that if a person understands that all that he has is only because Hashem willed it to be so until now, he will recognize that at the moment Hashem wills the situation to change, it will immediately do so. Although we are accustomed to assuming that this couldn't happen to us, most of us personally know of stories which can help us internalize this concept.

I once learned this lesson the hard way on a trip to Israel. Shortly after arriving in Jerusalem, I took a taxi to the Kosel. My enthusiasm quickly turned to shocked disbelief when I suddenly realized that I'd forgotten my wallet in the back seat of the cab. Numerous frantic calls to the taxi's company bore no fruit, and instead of proceeding to pray at the Kosel, I had to first stop to call my bank to cancel my credit cards. Looking back a few years later, I realize that I painfully learned that just because I had something and assumed it to be firmly in my possession, I shouldn't rely on this belief and take it for granted. On Rosh Hashana, Hashem decrees what will happen to every person at every moment of the upcoming year, including what they will have and to what extent they will be able to enjoy it. Each person begins the year with a clean slate and must merit receiving everything which he had until now from scratch. If we view ourselves standing before Hashem's Throne of Glory like a poor person with nothing to our names, we will realize that our entire existence in the year to come is completely dependent on Hashem's kindness. A person who genuinely feels this way can't help but beg and plead for Divine mercy. The Gemora promises that if he does so, Hashem will indeed be aroused to give him a decree of a wonderful year, something that we should all merit in the coming year.

from: **Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald** <ezbuchwald@njop.org> via njop.ccsend.com reply-to: ezbuchwald@njop.org to: internetparshasheet@gmail.com date: Mon, Jul 22, 2013 at 4:52 PM subject: Weekly Torah Message from Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald Eikev 5773-2013

"Eating Bread Without Poverty"

by Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald

In this week's parasha, parashat Eikev, Moses continues to encourage the nation of Israel to trust in the Al-mighty. This trust and faith would ensure the people's communal prosperity, guarantee their conquest of the land of Israel, and provide unparalleled blessing in every aspect of their lives. Faith will be the key to the people's success, and lack of faith will result in much pain and suffering.

Parashat Eikev opens with the theme of love. Moses assures the people (Deuteronomy 7:13-16) that G-d will love them, bless them, and multiply them, will bless the fruit of their womb, the fruit of their land, their grain, their wine and their oil, the offspring of their cattle, and the flocks of their sheep and goats. They will be the most blessed of all people and will achieve great victories over their enemies.

Following the assurance of G-d's love, the Torah dwells on the importance of gratitude, a cornerstone of proper religious ideology. Although G-d tested the people, subjecting them to hardships and hunger, He then gave them the Manna to eat, made certain that their clothes did not wither, and that their feet did not swell for 40 years. Israel has very good reason to express gratitude.

The Torah then emphasizes the goodness of the Promised Land, graphically illustrating the nature of the "good land," a phrase that appears no fewer than ten times in the book of Deuteronomy. The Torah proudly enumerates the species and fruits for which Israel is renowned: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and the honey of dates.

In Deuteronomy 8:9, scripture states: "Eretz ah'sher loh v'mis'kay'noot toh'chahl bah leh'chem, loh tech'sar kohl bah," a land where you will eat bread without poverty—you will lack nothing there.

The Torah (Deuteronomy 8:11-14) again warns the people not to

forget G-d or neglect the observance of His decrees and commandments. Beware, scripture warns, lest you eat and be satisfied, increase silver and gold for yourselves, and everything you have will increase, and your heart will become haughty and you will forget the L-rd your G-d who took you out of the land of Egypt from the house of slavery.

The Torah particularly admonishes the people against hubris, and against those who say in their hearts (Deuteronomy 8:17), "My strength, and the might of my hand, made me all this wealth."

It is well-known that often the challenge of wealth can be greater than the challenge of poverty. Yet, to paraphrase Tevye: Wouldn't it be nice, if sometimes, G-d would allow us to prove to Him that winning the lottery will not spoil us!

Perhaps the most difficult to comprehend of all the blessings in the aforementioned statement of Deuteronomy 8:9, is the blessing in which the Torah declares that the Land of Israel is a land where the people will eat bread without poverty, and will lack nothing there. Can that be true? What is the meaning of this promise of unremitting abundance and prosperity?

Both the classical and contemporary commentaries are hard-pressed to explain this challenging assertion. Some of the commentators, including Rabbeinu Bachya, resort to a metaphorical interpretation, concluding that "bread" here does not literally mean bread that is eaten, but rather refers to bread as a euphemism for Torah, as the verse in Proverbs 9:5 states, "Come eat of my bread," meaning Torah. The commentators similarly interpret the verse in Genesis 2:12, "The gold of the land is good," to mean that there is no Torah like the Torah of the land of Israel, and there is no wisdom like the wisdom of the land of Israel.

The statement, "You will eat bread without poverty," therefore means that you will not find any scarcity of Torah in the land of Israel. The very air of the land of Israel makes one wise. Whereas scholars who live outside of the land of Israel are subject to the bread of affliction and poverty, this is not so in Israel.

A number of commentators insist that the verse be taken literally. The Kli Yakar states:

Our land [Eretz Israel] is different than the land of Egypt, of which we are told (Exodus 1:11), "They built storage cities for Pharaoh, Pithom and Ramses," where they would store produce and wheat for bad years. The land of Israel doesn't need storage cities, it always has abundance, and has no need to save from one year to another. Its crop is blessed every year without a break.

The Or HaChaim explains the expression, "Nothing shall be lacking in it" to mean that there is no other country in the world as self-sufficient as the land of Israel. While some countries have abundant crops, they lack other essentials. These countries must pay to import those things that it does not have. The land of Israel, however, is so blessed with abundance that it will not need to import anything, since everything is available in the country itself.

The Oznyayim LaTorah explains that the word "full" in the verse (Deuteronomy 8:10), "You shall eat and be full, and you shall bless," refers to G-d's ability to make every person feel satisfied. G-d can sanctify a person's desires in such a way that the person will feel satisfied with whatever he has, even if it is little. This is what is meant in the well-known Psalm 145:16, Ashrei, that assures that G-d satisfies the desire of every living thing, by allowing them feel satisfied with what they have.

Thus, according to many commentators, the blessing given to the land of Israel is that all its inhabitants will be satisfied with what they possess.

May we too prove worthy of this unparalleled blessing.

May you be blessed. Please note: This year, the joyous festival of Tu B'Av, the fifteenth of Av, is celebrated on Sunday night and Monday, July 21st and 22nd, 2013. Happy Tu B'Av (for more information, please click here).

from: Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com>
to: Daf Hashavua <daf-hashavua@shemayisrael.com> date: Thu, Jul 25, 2013 at 8:29 PM subject: Daf Hashavua by Kollel Beis HaTalmud - Parshas Eikev

**It's D'je Vu All Over Again.
by Rabbi Yosef Levinson**

"It will be that if you hearken to my commandments that I command you today" (Devarim 11:13.)

Chazal (the Sages) teach us "B'kol yom yihiye b'einecha k'ilu hayom nitra- every day we should look at the Torah as if it is being given today." This concept is alluded to in this week's parsha and in many other places in the Torah. This week's parsha contains the portion of V'haya im shamoa ,the second section of Shema, , in which we affirm our acceptance of the mitzvos. Even though Moshe taught the Bnei Yisrael this parsha over three thousand years ago, we still recite daily 'It will be that if you hearken the mitzvos that I command you TODAY.' The Torah uses the present tense to give the reader the impression that he is not reading an historic account, rather he is presently experiencing this passuk.

It is commonly understood that Chazal's statement to look at the Torah as if it is being given today is an exhortation to always approach Torah and mitzvos with freshness and enthusiasm. Every mitzva should be valued and cherished for one acquires eternity through its fulfilment. Chazal teach 'better one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world, than the entire life of the world to come' (Avos 4:22).

It is related that in his last moments, the Vilna Gaon began to weep. Even though the Gra knew what treasures awaited him in the afterlife, he held his tzitzis and said, "I bought this garment for such a little bit of money, yet every day when I wore it, I was able to fulfil such precious mitzvos. In Olam Haba, even this simple mitzva is not possible to fulfil. I am weeping for this is my last opportunity to fulfil mitzvos."

This is true in regard to any mitzva - all the more so with Talmud Torah, learning Torah. The Gra writes that we fulfil the mitzva of Talmud Torah with each word that we learn and each mitzva of Talmud Torah is equivalent to all the other mitzvos combined (Peah 1:1). No matter how much wealth one accumulates, one always desires more "Mi sheyeish lo manna rotzeh masain" - when someone has one hundred dollars, he then wants two hundred (Makkos 10a). We must realise that Torah is the ultimate treasure. Each time we review our learning or repeat a mitzva we are accumulating wealth. We should be excited to be presented with this opportunity.

There is also an additional meaning to this Maamar Chazal (teaching of the Sages). Rabbi Simcha Zissel Ziv, the Alter of Kelm, writes that in our youth we are taught the fundamentals of Judaism, namely, Yetzias Mitzrayim - the Exodus from Egypt, Matan Torah - receiving of the Torah, the basic mitzvos, Shabbos, tzitzis, tefillin and many areas of Chumash and Gemara. As we grow older and mature intellectually, we learn new subjects and mitzvos with our advanced abilities. Yet, we still approach the mitzvos and learning of our youth as we did then. The Gemara says it is harder to learn something old than something new (Yoma 29a). When we learn something new we know we do not know this subject and we use all our mental abilities to grasp the topic. However when we review something that we already learnt, we feel we understand the subject matter completely and do not concentrate fully on our studies.

The Alter says this is what Chazal meant. We should constantly view the Torah as if it is being given today. No matter how many times we have learnt something or performed a particular mitzva, we should try to approach it as if it is the first time we are learning or observing it. Often when we really apply ourselves, we raise difficulties and wonder why we never asked these questions before. When we view the Torah and mitzvos as something new we will come away with a wealth of

insights and in that sense, it IS a new Gemara or a new mitzva. No matter how well we master a particular passage, there are always new insights to be gained and new meanings to be learnt. (Chachma U'Mussar 1:83).

Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetzky zt"l brings out this point beautifully with the following mashal (parable). A boy who turned three received his first tallis katan (pair of tzitzis). The child looked adorable in the small tallis katan, it fitted him well. At the age of four, it was no longer a perfect fit, but he could still wear it. If the boy were to don the same tallis katan at the age of ten or bar mitzva, he would rightfully be the subject of derision. For an adult to continue wearing the same garment would be ridiculous. If we do not re-evaluate our approach and knowledge of mitzvos, then we resemble the child who continues to wear his first tallis katan into adulthood.

May we always view the Torah as something new. This should be reflected both in our enthusiasm and joy for learning and mitzvos and in our search to deepen our mastery of Torah and make our fulfilment of mitzvos more meaningful. Daf-hashavua mailing list Daf-hashavua@shemayisrael.com http://shemayisrael.com/mailman/listinfo/daf-hashavua_shemayisrael.com

from: Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com> to: Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com> date: Thu, Jul 25, 2013 at 8:22 PM subject:

**Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum - Parshas Eikev
PARSHAS EIKEV**

Then you shall remember Hashem, your G-d: that it was He who gave you strength the make wealth. (8:18)

How easy it is to believe in ourselves - to think that our power is the result of our own strength; our battle skills, the result of our being formidable warriors. Hashem wants us to dispel this notion, by remembering that whatever success we enjoy is only because He gives us the means. In his Ben Ish Chai, Horav Yosef Chaim, zl, m'Bagdad, observes that whenever it is demanded of a person to remember, it is because it is concerning a subject that he is prone to forget. Indeed, there are six places in which the Torah enjoins us to remember, the Sheish Zechiros: the Egyptian exodus; Revelation; the incursion of Amalek; the trials of the forty-year trek in the Wilderness; Miriam's speaking ill of Moshe; and the mitzvah of Shabbos - all of these remembrances are to reinforce our memory, so that it does not fall prey to the weakness of forgetting.

The Maharia explains that we are commanded to "Remember the Shabbos," because, by nature, man will otherwise lose sight of its distinction and compare it to the rest of the week. Six days a week he labors, employing all thirty-nine primary categories of labor which are prohibited on Shabbos. He became habituated in this lifestyle, making it difficult to draw the line between Shabbos and weekday. Thus, the Torah reminds him with the mitzvah, Zachor es yom HaShabbos I'kadsho, "Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it."

Likewise, explains Rav Yosef Chaim, man becomes complacent with life. He works, makes a living, invests and receives a decent return for his money; basically, life seems to go smoothly - as expected. He presses the right buttons; he receives the right responses. Suddenly, he thinks that it is all about him. He is the reason for his own success. He went to the right schools, made the right contacts, acted appropriately - so what could go wrong? He has done it all himself!

It is so easy to lose sight, to forget, that Hashem is the Source of our success. Thus, He enjoins us to remember. It is better that we should remember of our own accord, then that He has to "remind" us.

Rav Yosef Chaim employs this premise to explain why Chazal established the obligation to offer thanks by way of Bircas HaGomel, concerning four specific instances: one who was healed from an illness; been freed from prison; traveled across the sea; traveled through the desert. When we think about it, in each of these instances, one is predisposed to err and think that his success has been his doing.

One who emerges healthy from an illness that otherwise could have taken a fatal turn often thinks that it was his choice of hospital, physician, procedure, which raised his odds for recovery. Hashem is usually farthest back in a remote place in his mind. This idea would appear to have support in the instances of a traveler who successfully crosses the sea, or one who makes it through the wilderness. It will always be the choice of a sturdy boat, captain, sailors, caravan with proper preparations, and guards for safekeeping. The individual who is released from prison ultimately attributes his success to a benevolent parole board, governor, warden, civic leaders, who were on his side. In all of the above examples, it is only

natural to ascribe one's delivery from danger to anything and anyone - but Hashem. Thus, in an effort to reinforce our belief in the Almighty as the Source for all that occurs, Chazal initiated the obligation to offer a Korban Todah, Thanksgiving Sacrifice, or to recite the Gomel blessing. We must remember to Whom gratitude really belongs. This, too, is an intrinsic part of gratitude.

I took hold of both of the Tablets, and I cast them from my hands, and I broke them before your eyes. (9:17)

A powerful lesson can be derived from this pasuk, which describes Moshe Rabbeinu's act of shattering of the Luchos not simply as a negative act or an act of weakness, but rather, as a forceful, compelling, even positive act. Horav Yaakov Kamenetzky, zl, comments that, were it not for the Torah's unembellished description, one might harbor the thought that Moshe was so overcome with shock in seeing the Golden Calf that he dropped the Luchos. Perhaps another scenario would be that they were too heavy. Moshe's strength came from the People. Their merit infused him. Once they fell off their spiritual perch, Moshe no longer had the ability to hold the extremely heavy Luchos, and they dropped from his hands.

The pasuk conveys an entirely different message. Moshe's act of breaking the Luchos was deliberate. With deep circumspection and forethought, Moshe assumed responsibility for the Luchos and decided that the nation did not deserve them. So he acted accordingly by shattering them. He was not weak; he was not indecisive. He was acting with great decisiveness when he broke the Luchos. He was not giving these Tablets to a nation that reveled with a molten idol. Furthermore, Moshe's decision was far from popular. Chazal teach that the Seventy Elders attempted to prevent Moshe from breaking the Luchos. His own brother, Aharon HaKohen, also tried unsuccessfully to convince him to rethink his decision and not break the Luchos. Moshe's mind was made up. He knew what had to be done, and he was determined to do it. It was his duty as leader to break the Luchos. Sometimes leadership calls for the leader to put a stop to something - not to give it a chance, because it will be a blemished achievement; it will mean short-selling a product, settling for mediocrity when only a superior, untainted product will suffice.

The closing pesukim of the Torah laud Moshe for breaking the Luchos. U't'chol ha'yad ha'chazakah... asher asah Moshe le'inei kol Yisrael, "And for all the mighty hand... that Moshe did, before the eyes of all Yisrael" (Devarim 34:12). Rashi explains "the mighty hand" as a reference to the courage and determination manifest by Moshe when he broke the Luchos. It was no accident; it was duty at its most sublime implementation.

Horav Yisrael Belsky, Shlita, explains why Moshe took it upon himself to break the Luchos "before the eyes of all Yisrael," an act which was arguably his greatest act as leader of the Jewish People. Moshe realized that presenting the Luchos which had engraved upon them the enjoyment, "You shall not have any other gods," to a nation that was in the midst of celebrating around a molten calf/idol would be their undoing. If Moshe were to give the Luchos to Klal Yisrael at that moment, they would immediately be held accountable for idol worship; thus, they would be deserving of execution. By breaking the Luchos, Moshe saved the nation from punishment.

Our leader went out of his way to break the Luchos, rather than conceal them for a later date when the nation would be deserving, because he sought the shock-effect. Shattering the Luchos would jar the people into humility and submission. The shock would shake them up and "shatter" their false sense of security and invincibility. Thinking that they could withstand and even triumph over the forces of evil with which the evil-inclination challenged them was fool-hardy. No human is spiritually invincible. Everyone has a spiritual Achilles heel which makes him conquerable. "Pride goes before the fall" is the expression that has accompanied so many haughty people to the dung heap of history.

The Rosh Yeshivah offers a strategy for fighting pride. When one is aware of the nadir of sinfulness and depravity to which misplaced pride can lead, he thinks twice before falling victim to his own shortsightedness. Second, one only has to think of the valuable treasures he will lose as a result of capitulating to his base desires. The Jews lost the precious Luchos. Others have lost their families, the respect of their friends and community. Everyone has that one precious commodity which supersedes everything. We must never lose sight of it.

Now, O' Yisrael, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d, to go in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and all your soul. (10:12)

In the Talmud Menachos 43b, Chazal derive from this pasuk that a Jew is obligated to recite one hundred brachos, blessings, daily. This is derived from the word, Mah, before the words, Hashem Elokecha sh'oe' meimach, "What - does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you?" The "mah" is interpreted to mean meah, which means one hundred. Midrash Tanchuma, Korach 12, adds that David Hamelech

initiated the decree to recite one hundred blessings daily as a merit to save the nation from continuing to lose one hundred men each day. Apparently, as explained by the Tur Orach Chaim 46, one hundred Jews died every day, and no one understood why. Employing the means of Ruach HaKodesh, Divine Inspiration, David was able to determine that, by having the nation recite one hundred brachos daily, they could circumvent the Heavenly curse placed upon the nation.

Horav Moshe Leib Sassover, zl, writes, "Who am I, the smallest of the small, who never feared (had reason to fear) the Master of Masters? (In other words he was a truly righteous and holy Jew). But if I sinned but once (in the fact) that I do not recite the one hundred blessings with (proper) yiraah u'pachad, fear and trembling; that (as a result of this) I am angering my Creator Blessed is He, one hundred times a day! Woe is to me, and woe is to my soul that I (am responsible for this) blemish every day."

Upon reading this personal self-assessment of the holy Sassover, we are all obviously weakened and anxious about the efficacy of our blessings. If this righteous Jew was anxious concerning his kavanah, proper intention, upon reciting these blessings - what should we say? Better we should say nothing. We are all witness to the constant deluge of tzaros, troubles, financial, physical, spiritual and emotional, with which we are all in one way or another beset. Yet, this simple remedy which comes to us from none other than David Hamelech is ignored. Perhaps it is as the Sassover implies: It is simply too much to expect. Is there any way to salvage the remedy without so much of the responsibility? Is there an "easy" way out?

In his Shvilei Pinchas, Horav Pinchas Friedman, Shlita, explores the issues, devoting an entire thesis to this subject. He quotes the Daas Zekeinim m'Baalei Tosfos, in their commentary to the above pasuk, who write, "Our Sages decreed that we recite the blessing of Modim (in the Shemoneh Esrai), which coincides with the one hundred blessings. One who recites the brachah/tefillah of Modim with the proper kavanah will thereby fulfill his obligation to recite one hundred blessings. The gematria, numerical equivalent, of Modim is one hundred.

Rav Friedman continues with an explanation of the significance of the Modim brachah, especially the critical importance of bowing down in concession as he begins the blessing. The Talmud Bava Kamma 16a teaches that the spine of a deceased person transforms into a snake seven years after he is buried - if this person, when he was alive, had not bowed down for the Modim prayer. This same bone which is transformed into a snake is the bone from which the person will be recreated in the World to Come. Thus, Tosfos adds, a person who was deficient in properly expressing his gratitude during the Modim prayer will have no bone from which to be recreated. It has been transformed into a snake. His options are eliminated. Tosfos actually have great difficulty with this concept, since every person has the potential to enter the World to Come. The Zohar adds that such a person will not rise up for Techiyas HaMeisim, Resurrection of the Dead.

In any event, the consensus is clear: One who does not bow for the Modim prayer will be the victim of eternal punishment. Why is this? Rav Friedman illuminates us with a citation from the Toras Chaim's commentary to Mesesech Bava Kamma 16a. He explains that Chazal were mesakein, decreed, that one recite the Modim prayer thrice daily to fulfill the mandate indicated by the pasuk in Sefer Tehillim 150:6, Kol ha'neshamah tehallel Ka, "Let all souls praise G-d." Chazal interpret kol ha'neshamah - all souls, as Al kol neshimah u'neshimah tehallel Kah, "For each and every breath of air that one takes, he should praise G-d." We have a constant obligation to offer our gratitude to the Almighty for every moment of life. Nothing is to be accepted as chance. It is all by Heavenly design and gifted to us by the Almighty.

I take the liberty of quoting a loosely translated version of the Toras Chaim's commentary. "Hashem performs an incredible kindness for man every day, every moment, every second. The baal ha'nes, one who experiences a miracle, is rarely aware of his miraculous gift. He thinks olam k'minhago noheig, the world goes about in its usual custom. In other words, out of a sense of complacency, man thinks that this is the way of life; thus, he loses sight of the miracles which sustain him. He does not realize that every step, every movement, every breath, which he takes is (a gift) from Him.

It would be only proper that man should pay gratitude for these myriad miracles of which he is the beneficiary. This is what is meant by Chazal when they say that one should give praise Al kol neshimah u'neshimah - "for each and every breath." This is really how it should be: One should constantly bless Hashem, because one's debt of gratitude is ceaseless and never-ending.

Since it is unrealistic to expect a person to remain in constant prayer throughout the day, our sages established a prayer whereby we are able to offer gratitude to Hashem in a cumulative manner for the boundless good which we receive from him. This is the Modim prayer.

The Toras Chaim now addresses Chazal's statement concerning the spine of one

who does not bow down during Modim. The first premise which he establishes is that when one pays gratitude - he bows. David Hamelech says, Eshtachaveh el heichal kodshecha v'odeh es Shimcha al chasdecha, "I will prostrate myself toward Your Holy Sanctuary, and I will acknowledge Your Name, for Your kindness" (Tehillim 138:2). One who remains erect while conceding/confessing/paying homage demonstrates his lack of sincerity. This was demonstrated by Dasan and Aviram, Moshe Rabbeinu's primary nemeses, who, upon being called to present themselves before him, (the Torah emphasizes that they), stood erect before him, in defiance of his exalted position. The Midrash teaches that the primordial serpent came to entice Chavah. It came standing erect, filled with conceit, expounding arrogance with malice. This was the serpent's way of saying, "I do not fear Hashem." Thus, explains Rav Friedman, one who does not bow down for the Tefillah of Modim will have his spine turn into a snake. The snake was the "father" of all those who refuse to bow down. This person might utter the words of Modim, but it remains mere lip service. He does not really mean what he is saying. Adam HaRishon's teshuvah, repentance, spared him a similar punishment.

Horav Bunim, zl, m'Peshishcha was once queried by a fine, observant Jew who simply found it very difficult to provide for his family: "Why do those who do not put on Tefillin and do not observe Shabbos live in fancy homes, while those of us who adhere strictly to the Torah often suffer the pangs of hunger and deprivation?"

The Rebbe answered with a powerful insight into the distinction of punishments meted out to the three participants in the sin of eating from the Eitz HaDaas, Tree of Knowledge. Adam was told that he would earn and eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. Chavah was told that she would have great difficulty and suffer pain when delivering her children. The serpent, however, seems to have gotten away with a light punishment. He would crawl on the ground and eat dirt. Crawling on the ground is not fun, but having one's "food" available whenever is a plus. How is this to be considered a punishment?

We fail to acknowledge that the greatest reward available to man is the ability to establish and maintain a close relationship with Hashem. As long as one must pray to the Almighty for sustenance, there is an indication that Hashem cares and that He wants to hear from man, that He wants to maintain this relationship. When Hashem grants him his livelihood on a silver platter, it means that Hashem really wants nothing more to do with him: As He said to the serpent, "Here is all the food you will ever need. Do not bother Me. I want nothing to do with you." When Hashem "grants" us opportunities for prayer, it is a sign of love. He is waiting to hear from us.

Gratitude is an attitude. When one allows himself to delve into the character trait of gratitude, he soon realizes how much good there really is in life. While there will always be some things which we are lacking, we should shift our focus on that which we have. There is no limit to what we do not have. If this becomes our central focus in life, we will be bitter, dissatisfied people. Horav Nachman Breslover, zl, was wont to say, "Gratitude rejoices with her 'sister,' joy, and is always ready to light a candle and have a party. Gratitude does not have a strong relationship with such traits as boredom, despair and taking life for granted. Gratitude does not allow for one to feel sorry for himself - regardless of his situation. One of the distinguished Baalei Mussar, Ethicists, began his Mussar shmues, discourse, by pounding on the lectern, followed by, "It is enough that we are alive!" That was his entire shmues.

We close with a now well-known story. It concerns the famous virtuoso violinist, Izhak Perlman. He was in New York to give a concert. When he was a child, he was stricken with polio, resulting in his difficulty in getting around. His mobility was quite limited, as he had to wear braces on his legs and was relegated to getting around with the support of crutches. When the famous violinist ascended the stage, it was a sight to behold him crossing the stage slowly and reaching the chair upon which he sat during his recital. The audience waited patiently for the super-star to traverse the stage.

Perlman signaled the conductor to begin. No sooner had he completed the first few bars of his solo than one of the strings of his violin snapped loudly, making a noise much like a gun shot. While it was early in the concert and Perlman could have halted the concert to fix his violin, he did not. He waited momentarily and once again signaled for the conductor to continue from where they had left off. With only three strings left on his instrument, Perlman was able to redesign the score in such a manner that he was able to complete the concert with three strings, playing with passion and artistry. When he finally finished, the audience came to their feet and cheered him excitedly. They realized that they had been privy to a stroke of brilliance, an extraordinary demonstration of human skill and genius.

When the crowd quieted down, the master spoke, "You know," he began, "I could have changed the string, but it is the artist's task to make beautiful music with what he has left."

We all lack something. Instead of focusing on our deficiencies, we should train

ourselves to contemplate all of the positive things that we have been granted. We would be so much happier and more complete people.

From: Rabbi Kaganoff <ymkaganoff@gmail.com> Date: 07/21/2013 5:33 PM (GMT-05:00) To: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com Subject: mezuzah on a rental is attached

Mezuzah on a Rental By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Question #1: Tenancy "We rented a new apartment but did not put up mezuzos immediately, figuring that we had thirty days to do so. Someone told me that Rav Moshe held that we should put up mezuzos immediately. Is that true?"

Question #2: Temporary Dwelling "When we went to visit our children in Ramat Beit Shemesh for two weeks, they had borrowed for us a brand-new apartment that the owners themselves had not yet used. I was surprised to see mezuzos on the doors already. My son-in-law explained that he put up mezuzos in the entire apartment, so that we could use it. Was he required to do so? I thought that one is not required to have mezuzos unless one lives in a place for at least a month."

Question #3: Mezuzah on a Rehab "My mother unfortunately fell and broke her femur and will be staying for an extended period of time in a rehabilitation hospital. Are we required to make sure that there is a kosher mezuzah on the door of her room?"

Basic Information: The Torah requires that a mezuzah be placed on the doorposts of "your" house, beisecha. What is the definition of beisecha? Does the mitzvah apply even when I live in a house that I do not own? Does it apply to a property I own, even if I do not live there? These questions are addressed by the Gemara and its major early commentaries. The Gemara (Pesachim 4a; Bava Metzia 101b; Avodah Zarah 21a) teaches that the obligation to put up a mezuzah devolves upon the person living in a house, and not upon a non-resident owner. Thus, a Jew who rents his home from a gentile is obligated to have mezuzos on the doors (Rambam, Hilchos Mezuzah 5:11; Beis Yosef, end of Yoreh Deah 286; however, cf. Hagahos Maimonis 5:7 who quotes a disputing opinion), whereas a Jewish landlord who owns residential properties where he does not live is not obligated to place mezuzos there. When one Jew rents his house or apartment to a second Jew, the requirement to place a mezuzah rests with the tenant.

The Gemara's Statement There is another Talmudic passage that expands upon the previously-quoted rulings: "One who lives in an inn in Eretz Yisroel, or one who rents a house in chutz la'aretz, is exempt from the mitzvah of mezuzah for thirty days. [If he rents] for longer, he is required to put up a mezuzah. However, one who rents a house in Eretz Yisroel must put a mezuzah up immediately, because this assists in the settling of Eretz Yisroel" (Menachos 44a). This passage of Gemara mentions three halachos: 1. Someone who lives in an inn, hotel, or other temporary residence is, in general, not obligated to put up a mezuzah. The Gemara states that someone who dwells in an inn in Eretz Yisroel for thirty days becomes obligated in mezuzah. 2. Someone who rents a house or apartment for thirty days or more must put up a mezuzah. 3. However, someone who rents or borrows a house or apartment in Eretz Yisroel must put up a mezuzah immediately.

More Details In order to answer our opening questions, we will need to clarify each of these halachos in more detail. First we will explain the rules governing a tenant in chutz la'aretz, who is required to put up a mezuzah when he lives thirty days in a rented or borrowed residence. The first question is: As we mentioned above, the Torah requires placing a mezuzah on beisecha, your house. If a rented residence qualifies as "your house," then a tenant should be obligated to place a mezuzah there immediately, and if a rented residence does not qualify as "your house," then the tenant should not be obligated in the mitzvah, even if he lives there longer. What difference does thirty days make? As we can imagine, we are not the first to raise this question. Tosafos (Menachos 44a s.v. Talis) asks this question and presents two very different answers. I. The person dwelling in a residence is the one who requires the shemirah that the mezuzah provides. For this reason, the mezuzah is the tenant's responsibility. However, someone living in a dwelling for less than thirty days is not yet considered to be a resident. According to this approach, the requirement to install a mezuzah on a rented dwelling in which one lives for thirty days is min haTorah. II. The second approach understands that min haTorah a tenant is not required to have a mezuzah on his door, since the Torah's word beisecha, your house, implies that only one who owns the residence is required to have a mezuzah. A tenant who lives in a residence for thirty days is required to have a mezuzah as a takkanas chachamim instituted by the Sages, because the house appears to be his. Several later authorities conclude that the second approach, that a tenant's obligation to put up a mezuzah is only miderabbanan, is the approach that we follow in practical halachah (Shu"t Rabbi Akiva Eiger, 1:66; Shu"t Avnei Nezer, Yoreh Deah, #380).

What if I Borrow? The halachic authorities rule that just as someone who rents a residence for thirty days is obligated to have a mezuzah, so, too, someone who borrows a residence for thirty days or more without paying any rent is obligated to have a mezuzah (Rabbeinu Manoach, quoted by Beis Yosef, Yoreh Deah, end of 286).

Is the Requirement for a Mezuzah Immediate? At this point, I want to address the first question we quoted above: “We rented a new apartment but did not put up mezuzos immediately, figuring that we had thirty days to do so. Someone told me that Rav Moshe held that we should put up mezuzos immediately. Is that true?”

The question here is: If someone knows that he will be living in a house or apartment for more than thirty days, does he have no chiyuv until the thirtieth day, or does the fact that he will be living there for thirty days create an immediate chiyuv? This matter is disputed. Some authorities contend that someone who intends to rent or borrow a home or apartment for more than thirty days becomes obligated in mezuzah immediately (Derech HaChayim; Shu”t Harei Besamim 2:219, quoted by Shu”t Minchas Yitzchak 2:82). This approach is implied by Rashi (Menachos 44a), who writes that a tenant is not obligated in mezuzah for thirty days because he might back out of the rental, thus implying that if he is already committed to renting it for more than thirty days, he is required to put up a mezuzah immediately. Some derive support for this position from the halachah that someone who moves into a community is not obligated in local taxes until he lives there for thirty days. However, someone who demonstrates intention to live in the community for thirty days or more becomes obligated to pay taxes immediately. Thus, we see that intention to live somewhere for thirty days may determine permanent dwelling status. However, other authorities contend that a tenant’s obligation to put up a mezuzah is because it looks as if he is living there permanently, and this does not happen until he is actually there for thirty days. They contend that even someone who signed a multi-year lease is not obligated to put up a mezuzah until he lives in the rental home for thirty days (Nachalas Zvi to Yoreh Deah 286:22; Pischei Teshuvah, Yoreh Deah 286:18). Although some later authorities prefer that a long-term tenant put up the mezuzah immediately in deference to the Derech HaChayim’s position (Shu”t Igros Moshe, Yoreh Deah 1:179), the more common practice is to follow the second approach, that of the Nachalas Zvi, that one is not obligated to put up the mezuzah immediately upon moving in.

When should I actually put it up? Assuming that a tenant is not required to do so until thirty days have passed, may he put up the mezuzah earlier and already recite a brocha, or should he wait until the thirtieth day? The question is: since the Nachalas Zvi rules that a tenant is not obligated to put up a mezuzah until he is living there for thirty days, perhaps one cannot recite a brocha upon installing the mezuzah until one is obligated to do so. We find a dispute in this matter. The Nachalas Zvi and the Halachos Ketanos (quoted by Birkei Yosef, Yoreh Deah 286:7) conclude that, although it may be a bigger mitzvah to wait until the thirtieth day, so that one performs the mitzvah at a time when one is required to do so, one may put up the mezuzah any time during the thirty day period with a brocha. Others rule that one should not recite a brocha until the thirtieth day (Toras Chesed quoted by Birkei Yosef, Yoreh Deah 286:7; and others quoted by Chovas Hadar, page 29, fn. 8). Thus, we have three approaches as to what to do: 1. Put up the mezuzah immediately. 2. Put up the mezuzah any time during the thirty days. 3. Put up the mezuzah specifically on the thirtieth day. I advise each individual to ask his or her own posek which approach to follow.

Temporary Dwelling in Eretz Yisroel At this point, let us discuss the third point made by the Gemara I quoted above – that someone who rents or borrows a house or apartment in Eretz Yisroel must put up a mezuzah immediately. How does putting up a mezuzah assist the settling of Eretz Yisroel? To explain this idea, we need to discuss a different law. The halachah is that, when vacating a residence, one is usually required to leave the mezuzos in place. To quote the Gemara: “When a Jew rents a house to a fellow Jew, the tenant is responsible to affix the mezuzos. However, when the tenant vacates, he may not remove them. On the other hand, a Jew who rents a residence from a gentile removes the mezuzos when he leaves” (Bava Metzia 102a). Based on this halachah, Rashi (Menachos 44a) explains why Chazal required someone renting in Eretz Yisroel to put up a mezuzah immediately. Since the tenant may not take the mezuzos with him, he will be reticent to move. And even if he does move, since the mezuzos are left behind, a different Jew will be eager to rent it, since he spares himself the expense of purchasing mezuzos. Either way, the dwelling will remain with a Jewish resident, which accomplishes that “this assists in the settling of Eretz Yisroel.”

Borrowing in Eretz Yisroel We can now discuss the question I raised at the beginning of our article: “When we went to visit our children in Ramat Beit Shemesh for two weeks, they had borrowed for us a brand-new apartment that the owners themselves had not yet used. I was surprised to see mezuzos on the doors

already. My son-in-law explained that he put up mezuzos in the entire apartment, so that we could use it. Was he required to do so? I thought that one is not required to have mezuzos, unless one lives in a place for at least a month.” As I mentioned above, the Gemara rules that someone who rents a house in Eretz Yisroel must put a mezuzah up immediately, because this assists in the settling of Eretz Yisroel. And, since borrowing a house is the same as renting it (Rama 286:22), a person who borrows someone’s house for just one night is required to install mezuzos on the entire house.

The “Inn” Thing As I mentioned above, someone who lives in an inn, hotel, or other temporary residence is, in general, not obligated to put up a mezuzah. Since it is assumed that an inn is not a place in which one lives permanently, it is not considered a “dwelling” (Shach, Yoreh Deah 286:28). Rashi (Menachos 32b s.v. Hayu) implies that someone living temporarily in a residence that is clearly not intended to be permanent is not required to have a mezuzah, even if he owns the “residence.” Thus, we see that if one is in a hotel in Eretz Yisroel, he or she is not required to have a mezuzah, and therefore certainly not required to ascertain if the mezuzos on the hotel room door are kosher.

Inn Chutz La’aretz However, the Gemara states that someone who dwells in an inn in Eretz Yisroel for thirty days becomes obligated in mezuzah. What about someone whose permanent residence is in chutz la’aretz and in an inn? Is he obligated to put up a mezuzah? Most authorities explain that someone who lives permanently in an inn in chutz la’aretz is not obligated to put up a mezuzah, because this is not considered having a house (see Chovas Hadar, page 31, footnote 16). Only in Eretz Yisroel did Chazal require one to put up a mezuzah if he lives permanently in a place that is usually meant for temporary dwelling. (Perhaps this explains why so many people in Eretz Yisroel live permanently in temporary housing, such as caravans and caravillas.) However, the Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh Deah 286:48) implies that someone living in an inn in chutz la’aretz for more than thirty days is required to put up a mezuzah, and I believe that this is the more common practice. What about a Hut? Later authorities discuss whether someone who lives in a hut or similar accommodation for longer than thirty days must put up a mezuzah. The Sdei Chemed concludes that if someone moves for more than thirty days into a hut, bungalow or similar accommodation, he is obligated in mezuzah, whereas someone living in a hut as a refugee is not obligated to put up a mezuzah (Volume 4 page 245). Others rule that one should put up a mezuzah without a brocha, even if he is a refugee (Chazon Nachum, quoted by Birkei Yosef, Yoreh Deah 286:9)

What about a Mobile Home? The Minchas Yitzchak (2: 82) discusses whether someone who lives permanently in a mobile home is required to put up a mezuzah, concluding that he is required to do so; however the Minchas Yitzchak is uncertain whether he should recite a brocha when he puts it up.

A Boarding House The Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh Deah 286:46) rules that although someone staying temporarily in an inn is exempt from the mitzvah of mezuzah, this is true only when the room or the inn is not a part of someone’s house. However, a Jewish person who takes in boarders into his house is required to have mezuzos on all the doors. This is not a requirement because of the tenants, but because of the owner – having boarders is considered a residential use of his own property that requires him to have a mezuzah, just as all other rooms in his house must have one. A similar situation would exist if someone has gentile help living in his house, or if he rents out rooms in his house to gentiles. Even though a gentile has no obligation to put up a mezuzah, since this is a room in his house, he is required to put up a mezuzah.

A Guest House Chovas HaDor (page 20, fn 1) explains that the Aruch HaShulchan includes the obligation for mezuzah only when the guest rooms are in the owner’s house. However, if a separate structure is used as a guesthouse, the owner has no responsibility to place mezuzos there. If the gentile employees live in a separate building on one’s property, and the owner does not use that property for his own domestic needs, then there is no requirement to put a mezuzah on the gentiles’ residences (Chovas HaDor page 20, fn 1).

In a Rehab Center At this point, we should discuss the unfortunate third case mentioned above: “My mother, unfortunately, fell and broke her femur and will be staying for an extended period of time in a rehabilitation hospital. Are we required to make sure that there is a kosher mezuzah on the door of her room?” This question is discussed by one of the great Nineteenth Century halachic authorities, the Avnei Nezer. He concludes that someone hospitalized for an extensive period of time is not required to place a mezuzah on a hospital room for two reasons: Even according to those opinions that a long-term tenant is obligated min haTorah to put up a mezuzah, the Avnei Nezer notes that this is true only when he rents a specific room, apartment or house. However, a patient in a hospital or rehab program is entitled to a bed only somewhere in the facility, and the hospital may move him to a different room without obtaining his agreement. Thus, he certainly

has no ownership that requires him to have a mezuzah on the door. In addition, if a tenant's obligation to put up a mezuzah is a rabbinic requirement, it is because his use of the property is similar to that of an owner. Someone "dwelling" in a hospital can never be viewed as an owner or as having ownership. Therefore, the Avnei Nezer concludes that a patient in a hospital has no requirement to have a mezuzah on the door. (See also Shu"t Chayim Sha'al #22, who reaches the same conclusion.)

Mezuzah Rewards Aside from fulfilling a mitzvah commanded by Hashem, the mitzvah of mezuzah serves to remind us constantly of His Presence, every time we enter and exit our houses. In addition, the Gemara teaches that someone who is meticulous in his observance of the laws of mezuzah will merit acquiring a nice home (Shabbos 23b). We thus see that care in observing this mitzvah not only protects one's family against any calamity, but also rewards one with a beautiful domicile. May we all merit being careful, always, in our observance of the laws of mezuzah and the other mitzvos, and reaping all the rewards, both material and spiritual, for doing so!

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Is Fear Of Hashem Something So Insignificant?

Author: **HaRav Avigdor Nebenzahl**

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MOSHE RABENU KNEW WHO HE WAS Moshe Rabenu asks the Jewish people: "and now Israel what does Hashem your G-d ask of you but to fear Hashem" (Devarim 10:12). The Gemara asks regarding this pasuk: "is yirat Shamayim something so insignificant?" (Brachot 32b), to which the Gemara responds: "yes, for Moshe Rabenu it is something very small" (ibid.). There have been many who have struggled to explain the Gemara's response. After all, the Torah is not speaking specifically to Moshe Rabenu and not even to Elazar and Itamar, rather to each and every Jew even on the simplest level. Some have explained that Moshe, with his tremendous humility, considered himself as being less than everyone else. Thus, if fearing Hashem is a simple task for him then it must be quite easy for everyone else. We are forbidden to give such an explanation, Moshe certainly knew who he was and that he was not on a lesser level than the rest of the nation.

I once related to the Rav (HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l) the following incident: R' Akiva Eiger once received a letter to which he responded: "Dear HaRav HaGaon, Rashkebehag ("Rosh kol bnei hagola" - the leader of all the Diaspora"), etc." The recipient subsequently met R' Akiva Eiger and pointed out that he was not a Rav, nor a Gaon, and certainly not a Rashkebehag. R' Akiva Eiger responded that neither was he, but since he receives such letters all the time, perhaps this is how all formal letters begin. The Rav claimed that this story cannot be true, and it must be the invention of one of the maskilim looking to discredit R' Akiva Eiger. R' Akiva Eiger was extremely modest and honored his fellow gedolim, yet he knew who he was. He ruled on many halachic issues without deferring to others. This is not in contradiction to his humility. He certainly did not confer the title Rashkebehag on a simple ordinary Jew. (This leads me to a question regarding what we have just said in the name of the Rav. We know that the Rav was not fond of being praised, and when he was referred to as posek hador - ruling authority of the generation, he would really go out of his mind, if a person must know who he is, how is it that he himself did not realize that he was the posek hador? I do not have any answer to this). Based on what we have just said, the Gemara cannot mean that Moshe viewed himself as insignificant.

EACH OF US HAS THE ABILITY TO BECOME A MOSHE RABENU Perhaps we can explain as follows: the Torah is trying to teach us that each of us has the capability of rising to the level of Moshe Rabenu (clearly this does not refer to level of prophecy, for there has never been a prophet on the level of Moshe Rabenu, but in other areas). The Rambam even writes that everyone has the choice to become a Moshe Rabenu. In that case, if and when a person does approach the level of Moshe Rabenu, fearing Hashem will then be considered something insignificant.

Some have explained that legabei Moshe, which we explained above to mean regarding Moshe, really means next to Moshe. In other words, for one who is in Moshe's proximity and hears Moshe Rabenu's teachings, learns from Moshe's behavior, for him fearing Hashem is insignificant.

HASHEM PROVIDES US WITH WHAT WE TRULY DESIRE Each day we recite the pasuk: "Pote-ach et yadecha umasbia lechol chai ratzon" "You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing" (Tehillim 145:15). The simple interpretation of this pasuk is that Hashem fulfills the desires of each person. Does this really occur? Are there not many things that we wish for, which Hashem does not in fact give us? The intent of the pasuk must therefore be that Hashem does not give man what he (man) thinks he wants, but what he wants in reality. What a person thinks he wants is only a surface illusion, while deep down he may wish for something totally different. Hashem can see what is beneath the surface and what man's true desires are. It is regarding this desire alone that we are told: "You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing".

A proof for this explanation can be found in the incident involving the daughters of Tzafchad which we read in Parshat Pinchas. We read of the daughters of Tzafchad's claim to their father's inheritance in the Land of Israel, to which Hashem concurs and commands Moshe to provide them with this share. Immediately following this incident, the Torah records Moshe's asking Hashem: "May Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly" (Bamidbar 27:16). Rashi explains the juxtaposition: "Once Moshe heard that the Omnipresent said to him 'give Tzafchad's inheritance to his daughters', he said 'the time has come that I should claim what I need, that my sons should inherit my high position'". It was Moshe's desire that his spiritual legacy as leader of the Jewish nation be passed on to his sons.

Hashem's response was: "Take to yourself Yehoshua son of Nun, a man in whom there is spirit" (Bamidbar 27:18). Not only will Moshe's children not inherit the leadership from their father, but the future leader was not even destined to be a member of the same tribe as Moshe - it will be Yehoshua bin Nun, a member of the tribe of Ephraim. We thus see that the request of Moshe Rabenu - greatest of all prophets appears not to have been realized. Where then is the fulfillment of "You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing"? According to Rashi, Moshe's request was fulfilled to some degree. The pasuk states: "before Elazar the Kohen shall he stand" (ibid. 21), on which Rashi comments: "Here you have the granting of your request for which you asked, that this honor will not move away from the house of your father, for Yehoshua will also need Elazar". Yehoshua will be the leader, but he will be unable to wage war or divide the land without seeking the counsel of the Urim veTumim worn by Elazar. Yehoshua, in other words, will always require the services of Elazar HaKohen, nephew of Moshe Rabenu, thus we see that to some degree the leadership remained "in the family". Rashi's explanation does not offer much consolation. Was it not specifically his sons that Moshe Rabenu requested to inherit his position, and not his student or his nephew? Our original question remains: where do we see here any satisfaction of his desires?

Perhaps the explanation lies in an analysis of Akedat Yitzchak, the binding of Yitzchak. Hashem commanded Avraham Avinu: "please take your son, your only one, whom you love - Yitzchak" (Bereishit 22:2). Rashi quotes from Chazal the response of Avraham: "I have two sons". Hashem told him: "your only one", to which Avraham responded "this one is the only one of his mother and this one is the only one of his mother". Hashem continued: "whom you love", to which Avraham responded "I love both of them, can I delve down into my inner feelings to decide which one I love more"? Hashem's final directive was "Take Yitzchak". Does Avraham not know which son he loves more? Yitzchak who follows in the footsteps of his father, spreading the Name of Hashem, or Yishmael the "wild man" (Bereishit 16:12), whom Sarah had already expelled from the house, with Hashem's approval?

R' Yisrael Salanter explains that Avraham certainly manifested a stronger love for Yitzchak than for Yishmael, yet he was afraid that perhaps on an unconscious level, he actually harbored a greater love for Yishmael (R' Yisrael Salanter preceded Freud in discovering the unconscious). R' Yisrael Salanter explained his idea using the example of a man who had a wicked son, and a student who was a Talmid Chacham studying Torah day and night. On the surface displays greater love for the student. If, however, he were to be awakened in the middle of the night and discover that his son's house was on fire, as was the house of his beloved student, he would race to save his son before trying to save his student. The love a man has for his offspring is not readily apparent. However, this love needs only a slight awakening to glow like a fire. Deep down the man feels greater love for his son even though he is wicked, than the external love he has for his student. Unlike the above example, Yitzchak and Yishmael were both sons of Avraham Avinu. Avraham feared that there was a love for Yishmael buried deep in his subconscious that may have been greater than his love for Yitzchak. Hashem, Who knows the deep secrets that are inside man, knew for sure that "whom you love" referred to Yitzchak. Avraham's love for Yitzchak was a true one and went well beneath the surface.

HASHEM KNOWS OUR TRUE DESIRES The Almighty knows the true inner desire of Moshe Rabenu. Moshe Rabenu was interested in the spiritual continuation of the Jewish nation. He was searching for a leader who would continue to teach the Torah he received at Sinai, who would lead them to the Land of Israel and insure that they act properly once there (fulfilling mitzvot specifically associated with the Land as well as all other mitzvot). Moshe would not have suggested his sons for the position if he did not truly believe them worthy. Moshe Rabenu, unlike other people, is not interested in nepotism. He is not the type of person who thinks his children can do no wrong, and finds faults that do not exist in others. Moshe Rabenu must have felt that his sons were his true spiritual heirs. Hashem, however, felt that despite the spiritual closeness the sons had to their father, Moshe's protégé, Yehoshua was even closer. Had Moshe realized that Yehoshua was more fitting, Moshe certainly would have requested that he fill the role. On the surface Moshe appears to desire that his own sons become the leaders, underneath the surface, however he was looking for the appropriate leader and if this was Yehoshua, then it is he who should inherit Moshe's position. With the appointment of Yehoshua, Moshe's desire has now been fulfilled. Perhaps we can now explain that: "Take to yourself Yehoshua son of Nun, a man in whom there is spirit" (Bamidbar 27:18), means "a man in whom your spirit is in him" (Rashi offers another interpretation, but as we know there are seventy faces to the Torah). Hashem is telling Moshe, that it may be true that Moshe's spirit is found in Gershom, Eliezer, Elazar, and Itamar, but the one who truly carries the flame is Yehoshua.

If Moshe's children were indeed worthy, what did Yehoshua have to offer that led to his appointment as the successor of Moshe Rabenu? Chazal tell us (Bamidbar Rabba 21:14) that Yehoshua used to set up the benches in the Beit Midrash. Yehoshua did not view such a task as being beneath his dignity, as "an elder whom it does not befit his honor" (Baba Metzia 30b). Yehoshua saw himself as the servant of Moshe: "his servant, Yehoshua bin Nun, a young man" (Shmot 33:11), and it was in this way he wished to assist his Rebbe. Yehoshua would have been greatly disturbed if someone entering Moshe's Beit Midrash would have had to waste his time dragging in a bench from the outside - precious time that could be spent in learning.

We have no doubt that Yehoshua was concerned with his own bittul Torah as well. When Moshe descended from atop Har Sinai, Yehoshua was there at the foot of the mountain waiting to greet him. Why the need to wait over there, could he not have welcomed him back at the camp? No! Moshe was arriving with the Tablets and many wonderful chiddushim, eager to teach the Torah to the nation. Moshe was about to

deliver shiurim on Parshiot Mishpatim, Trumah, and all that he learned on top of the mountain. Yehoshua was so eager to learn that he was unable to wait until Moshe returned to the camp. Imagine how many chiddushim he would be able to hear during the time it takes to walk from Har Sinai to the camp of Israel. In addition, we know that it was not only on the fortieth day that Yehoshua waited at the foot of the mountain, but the entire forty days (see Rashi Shmot 24:13). Was he not aware that Moshe was planning to spend forty days on Har Sinai. Why did he not wait at the camp arriving at the foot of the mountain only on the fortieth day? He cannot! Perhaps Hashem will decide that Moshe can come down sooner, perhaps it will take Moshe only twenty days or even less to master that which an ordinary person would require forty days? Chazal in fact tell us that Moshe would study the Torah and forget it each and every day until it was given to him as a gift. If it was given as a gift, it means, that it was possible for Moshe to master the Torah in one day. It took Shlomo Hamelech only one night. Yehoshua could not risk losing even a single moment of hearing Torah from Moshe Rabenu, and thus he spent forty days waiting for Moshe to descend. Yehoshua was purely sincere in his actions, he was not even aware of the special treatment he received over there: "'a man ate abirim bread' (Tehillim 78:25) - this refers to Yehoshua for whom manna came down in a quantity equal to the amount that fell for all Israel" (Yoma 76a). This is how one becomes a leader of Israel. This is how Yehoshua merited to be part of the chain that continues to this day: "Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and transmitted it to Yehoshua, Yehoshua to the Elders" (Avot 1:1).

LIKE A FISH IN THE WATER Chazal tell us that our desire to study Torah must be as a fish in the water. A fish grows and lives in the water. When a single drop of rain falls, however, it opens its mouth wide in anticipation as if it had never tasted water. The Jewish people grow and live within the water of Torah. Yet, when a chiddush, a new insight and idea from the Torah is announced, they listen with eager anticipation as if they have never before heard words of Torah. (Bereishit Rabba 97:3). Yehoshua was destined to spend another forty years in the Beit Midrash of Moshe Rabenu, learning Torah from him - what an ocean of Torah was awaiting him! Despite this, Yehoshua was not willing to give up even a few minutes of an opportunity to learn from Moshe. Perhaps Moshe's sons had more of a flair for learning and spirituality. Perhaps their pilpulim were more profound. They did not, however, possess Yehoshua's thirst for Torah knowledge. Yehoshua spent every minute he could learning, presumably the time between sedarim as well as both days and nights of bein hazmanim.

The Torah commands us to act as Yehoshua did: "and these matters that I command you today shall be upon your heart" (Devarim 6:6). Rashi explains: "they should not be in your eyes like an old edict, to which a person does not attach importance, but rather, like a new one towards which everybody runs, such as an order of the king which comes in writing". There is little interest in long-standing army regulations and orders. However, news hot off the press from Obama's meeting with Netanyahu arouses great interest. Everyone is eager to find out whether anything positive has been decided. This should be our attitude to the Torah - as the latest edict from the news which we want to swallow every word of.

We do not have Moshe in our midst today, nor Yehoshua - yet some sparks do remain. We must do our utmost to take from Moshe's fear of Hashem and from his humility. With this we can also be servants of Moshe, and fulfill Moshe's wish that his spirit will continue to be alive and active in the Jewish nation. By learning Torah we are also fulfilling Moshe's desire, and of course that of Hashem: that the Divine Presence reside among us. May we all attain the level where yirat Shamayim will be something easy, and thereby merit the building of the Beit Hamidkash speedily in our day.