

B'S'D'
INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON BISHALACH - 5761

To receive this parsha sheet in Word and/or Text format, send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@yahoogroups.com, or go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/join>. Please also copy me at crshulman@aol.com. For archives of old parsha sheets see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/messages>. For Torah links see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/links>.

From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND ryfrand@torah.org "RavFrand"
List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas B'Shalach Dedicated This Year Le'eluy Nishmas Chaya Bracha Bas R. Yissocher Dov - In memory of Mrs. Adele Frand

Manna Gathering Separates The "Men" From the "Boys"

There is an interesting Medrash which says that when the Manna originally came down, it came down with precious stones and diamonds. The greatest people (Gedolim she'bahem) of the nation went ahead and took these precious stones and diamonds. However, the simple people, the masses, only collected the Manna.

This is very strange. Everyone appreciates a bargain - especially free diamonds! How was it that only the leaders of the people took advantage of free riches?

I once heard a very interesting observation from Rav Michel Twerski of Milwaukee. He pointed out the unique economic conditions that existed in the Wilderness. For perhaps the only time in the history of civilization, there existed a society where all of a person's physical needs were met. Food was effortlessly available from Heaven. Water was effortlessly available from the Well. Clothing did not wear out, so it was not necessary to buy new clothing. Shelter was available from the Clouds of Glory. We can probably assume that G-d threw in Health Insurance as a guaranteed benefit as well. This was a society that did not have any needs whatsoever.

If one does not have any needs, then of what use are precious stones? What would one do with them? There was nothing to buy and no need to buy anything. Therefore, people looked at these precious stones, determined that they had no purpose for them, and considered them worthless.

However, the great people among them knew that there would come an occasion when there would be a Mishkan [Tabernacle] and Bigday Kehunah [Holy Vestments (of the High Priest)] which required the contribution of precious stones.

This Medrash teaches us that what differentiates the masses from the leadership, is perspective. A person who only sees in front of his nose, who only considers his requirements for the day, is in the category of a non-leader. The leader recognizes that although certain things might be unnecessary in the current situation, in the future there may come a time when these things will have value.

It is well known that trees do not grow in deserts. The Jews needed a significant amount of lumber to build the Mishkan. Where did they obtain the lumber? Our Rabbis credit the existence of the trees to the foresight of Yaakov. Our Sages tell us that Yaakov planted cedar trees when he first came down to Egypt so that his descendants would be able to cut them down and take them out with them for the purpose of building the Mishkan. This is the perspective of a great individual. He is not merely caught up in 'today'; he plans for and considers what will be in the future.

The Lesson of the Manna: Complaining Reflects An Attitude

The narration of the Manna gathering, which is first mentioned in this week's reading [Shmos 16:4-27], is repeated again in Parshas BeHa'aloscha [Bamidbar 11:6-9]. There, the Torah tells us that after a while, a certain segment of the people became tired of the Manna. They complained: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner is always Manna. Manna, Manna, and more Manna. Every day was 'Mon'-day. They could not take it anymore!

The Torah says that the Manna was like coriander seed. (V'HaMan k'zra gad hu). Rashi (1040-1105) says that this pasuk [verse] is telling us that G-d, as it were, was saying, "Look what my children are complaining about. They are complaining about the Manna, which is so outstanding - it is like coriander seed."

There was nothing better than Manna. It tasted like whatever one wanted. It was spiritual food. It was great for both body and soul. It was the best food that a human being could ever aspire to eat.

The Torah went out of its way to describe the Manna in order to teach us a lesson. The lesson is that if people will complain about Manna, they will complain about anything.

A person can have the best situation in life - compared to his neighbors, compared to people in other countries, compared to people in other times in history - and still complain about everything under the sun!

I recently heard from a Rosh Yeshiva [Dean of a Yeshiva] that a couple came to him for marital counseling. The husband complained that his wife, who was a full-time mother, did not keep a neat house. Whenever he walked in, he was likely to stumble on the children's toys strewn all over the floor. His wife responded that kids will be kids, and that she can't go around every minute picking up after them.

The Rosh Yeshiva told the fellow as follows: "How many couples in the world would give their right arms to have your problem -- who would like nothing more than a child leaving his toys on the floor? How many couples would give anything to live in a home that was not immaculate, because there were a bunch of kids creating a mess?"

If people can complain about Manna, they can complain about children... or any other of life's blessings that sometimes go unappreciated. That is what Rashi is emphasizing in this verse about the Manna. "See, oh world, how my children complain about an outstanding gift that I have given them." This is the paradigm for all future complaining.

It is all a matter of attitude. A person can have nothing and still be happy, and a person can have everything and still complain. When we see all the troubles that exist in the world around us, we can really begin to appreciate how well off we are. Our mantra should be the pasuk "And the Manna is like coriander seed..." The next time we are tempted to complain, we should think of the lesson of the Manna. If a person does not have proper values, if he can not distinguish between what is important in life and what is secondary, he will always find something to complain about.

The Passive Battle With Egypt: A Symbolic Prototype

The Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) points out that there are two wars in Parshas B'Shalach - the war against Egypt at Yam Suf and the war against Amalek. The Ibn Ezra asks, since we see from the war with Amalek that G-d was prepared to allow the Jewish people to fight a real military battle on their own - albeit with Divine Assistance - why was it that in the war against Egypt, G-d insisted that the Jewish people not lift a finger, that the entire battle be waged solely by the Hand of G-d? Why was this necessary? Why were the tactics changed between the battle against Egypt and the battle against Amalek?

Of course, the battle with Egypt would prove to be the historical exception. In all future wars -- be it the wars of Yehoshua or the wars of King David -- the Jews were obliged to participate in battle. Why was the war with Egypt different?

Rav Yosef Neiman suggests the following answer: The first time that something happens in the Torah it is instructive. It sets the tone. This is the prototype of how one should behave and how one should act in the future. G-d wanted the Jewish people to know that just as in the very first battle which they fought, where they were not required to do anything because "G-d will fight for you and you shall be silent," so too in all future generations -- even if you will have to participate physically in the battle, never forget the lesson of the first. The lesson is that ultimately Help from Heaven and G-d's Mercies determine our fate. If it is G-d's will, we will be victorious, regardless of what we do or do not do militarily. And if, Heaven forbid, as we find in numerous cases in Tanach, it is not G-d's will, we will lose miserably regardless of our military prowess. The determinant of our fate is not our military prowess; it is our meriting G-d's desire for us to be successful.

I think that at this particular junction in Jewish history -- when we are living in literally amazing times -- it is vital to never forget the lesson of "G-d will fight for you, and you will be silent".

It was Thursday night, a week ago, that we were all in this room [at the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991]. We all remember how we felt when we left the radios and the media to come to the class. We literally did not know what was happening. The initial reports were that there had been a chemical attack on Israel (by Iraq). When we came out of this room at 10:00 o'clock last Thursday night we heard that there were 7 minor injuries and no fatalities. I do not want to make light of anyone's injuries or the accompanying fright and terror, Heaven forbid. But we saw miracles from G-d. I do not think it is hyperbole to say that this was an 'Open Miracle.' This was even without American Patriot missiles as a defense system. This was the Chasdei Hashem defense system [G-d's Mercy].

This does not mean that our approach can be to sit back and not prepare. We are not allowed to rely on miracles. If we have what is currently considered the top of the line defense missiles, we certainly must deploy them and certainly must use them. But, on the other hand we should not rely on benefactors who are not able to save (Al tivtichu b'nedeevim sh'ayin lahem teshua). We should never put our faith in the wizardry of electronic military might. We must put our faith in the Master of the World. We should not allow ourselves to get caught up in the 'Evil Inclination' of "Kochi v'Otzem Yadi" [my strength and the might of my arm have accomplished this valor].

We must realize that ultimately we rely on the concept that "G-d will fight for you, and you be silent". It must be our prayers, our charity, our learning Torah, and our merit that will ultimately carry the day. Whether the patriots will be effective or not depends on the merits and the spiritual level of the Jewish people.

I was in Los Angeles on Shabbos. The Rabbi, who is also a principal in a school there, related that he overheard two second graders discussing various strategies and scenarios. They were discussing what President Bush should do and what Saddam Hussein should do and what Israel should do. It was a ludicrous scene. These seven-year-olds were giving opinions about what actions world leaders should take. Upon pondering the matter, he realized that G-d looks down from Heaven and He hears us discussing these matters - For Him, even George Bush and Saddam Hussein and Colin Powell's discussion of these matters are like the conversations of second graders: "What do they know? Everyone has an opinion!"

That which counts is that we should merit the Salvation of G-d, which can come at the bat of an eyelash.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington
twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD
dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 269, Paternal Wishes vs. Staying in

Israel Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B learn@torah.org Baltimore, MD 21208

From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP:skatz@torah.org] Subject: HaMaayan / The Torah Spring - Parashat Beshalach Sponsored by Micheline and David Peller in memory of David's parents a"h; Irving and Arline Katz, in memory of their parents Fradel bat Yaakov Shulim Reiss a"h and Chaim Eliezer ben Avigdor Moshe Hakohen Katz a"h; The Marwick family in memory of Reba Sklaroff a"h and on the birth of granddaughter, Nava Rivka Benoff Today's Learning: Daf Yomi (Bavli): Gittin 3
"And they believed in Hashem . . ." (14:31)

Rambam z"l ("Maimonides"; 1135-1204) writes (Hil. Yesodei HaTorah 1:1): "The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of all wisdom is to know that there is a First Being, and that He created all that exists . . ." R' Elazar M. Shach shlita (rosh yeshiva of the Ponovezh Yeshiva in Bnei Brak) comments on this:

Rambam does not speak of "believing" in Hashem, but rather, of "knowing" that Hashem exists. Apparently it is possible for someone to know that Hashem exists, to be as confident of His existence as one is confident of the existence of something tangible. And, it appears that this is a mitzvah which even a thirteen-year-old is capable of fulfilling [since Hashem would not command a person to fulfill a mitzvah which he is not capable of fulfilling].

The midrash relates that Avraham began in his youth to wonder about the existence of a creator. Is it possible, he pondered, for the universe to function constantly without a director directing it? Any person who thinks intelligently and does not twist his logic can come to the same conclusion, writes R' Shach. And, by the same logical process, one can come to the conclusion - one can know - that the Director of the universe has unlimited power, that He is one, and that He is incorporeal.

R' Shach continues: The midrash teaches that Avraham's search for the Creator was like a person walking past a lighted palace and asking, "Is it possible that such a beautifully lighted palace has no master?" When Avraham asked that question, Hashem revealed Himself to Avraham - like the master of the palace sticking his head out of the window and calling, "Indeed, I am the master of the palace." But Hashem does not reveal Himself to us, so how can we know Hashem as Avraham did?

R' Shach answers: The question itself ("Is it possible that such a beautifully lighted palace has no master?") is all that we need. It is a rhetorical question, for it is plainly obvious that such a well-organized world could not exist by chance. Simply by pondering this we can know there is a master of the palace. (Haggadah Shel Pesach Avi Ezri p. 140)

Hamaayan, Copyright 1 2001 by Shlomo Katz and Torah.org.
Posted by Alan Broder, ajb@torah.org . Torah.org: The Judaism Site
<http://www.torah.org/> 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B learn@torah.org
Baltimore, MD 21208

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2000/parsha/rtwe_beshalach.html
[From last year]

RABBI MAYER TWERSKY

Attaining Faith

"And the people feared Hashem, and they believed in Hashem and Moshe his servant"(1)

The Torah clearly and emphatically describes that Benei Yisroel attained emunah in the aftermath of kerias yam suf. The Midrash

reinforces this point by commenting,

"And why is it necessary to mention kerias yam suf in emes v'yatsiv? Because once Hashem split the sea for them, they believed in Him, and in the merit of their belief they merited to say shirah and the shekhinah rested upon them"(2)

This, however, is puzzling. The entire process of redemption from mitsriyem was an odyssey of emunah. When Moshe Rabbeinu first came to Benei Yisroel, they responded with faith - "and the people believed"(3). They demonstrated profound emunah in reversing directions and heading back towards the onrushing Egyptian army. They did not question Moshe Rabbeinu, and, without provisions, simply followed him and Aharon into the vast desert wasteland. According to Chazal, the miracle of keris yam suf happened in the merit of these remarkable manifestations of faith. "Hakadosh Baruch Hu said by virtue of the faith they have displayed in me, they are worthy that I should split the sea for them "(4). Clearly Benei Yisroel possessed and displayed emunah throughout. What dimension or level of emunah was attained only after kerias yam suf?

There are two levels of emunah. Fundamental emunah, itself deep and profound, entails belief in Hakadosh Baruch Hu as creator of the world and giver of the Torah. This belief may be fostered by parents and/or teachers, or perhaps may be the result of one's own intellectual quest. Moreover, such emunah must be manifest through kabolas ol malchus shomayim and ol mitsvos. The Rambam identifies belief in yichud Hashem with the practical commitment of kabolas ol malchus shamayim (5).

Such emunah, albeit eminently laudable, is lacking. It is an impersonal emunah. The higher level of faith is personal. It involves experiencing Hashem - not only believing in Him, but feeling His presence. At this level, emunah is not merely intellectual, but experiential as well.

This personal, experiential level of faith was attained after kerias yam suf. Chazal express this idea, inter alia in their comment that, "everyone ascending from the sea pointed with his finger and said 'this is my G-d and I shall glorify Him'"(6). In parshas Shemos, Moshe Rabbeinu was instructed to inform benei yisroel that, "Hashem the G-d of your ancestors appeared to me, the G-d of Avraham, Yitzchok and Ya'akov"(7). After kerias yam suf, the Jews pointed and said, "this is my G-d". The higher level of emunah had been attained.

The pasuk and medrash point to two corollaries of this singular attainment. Benei Yisroel were now able to say shirah because while praise may be recited in an indirect, impersonal manner, shirah necessitates immediacy and intimacy. Moreover, having themselves experienced Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Benei Yisroel now appreciated the uniqueness of Moshe Rabbeinu's ongoing intense and intimate relationship with Hashem. Hence, "they believed in Hashem and Moshe his servant".

In our personal lives we must strive to travel this same trail of faith culminating in experiencing Hashem. To achieve this goal we must be mevakshei Hashem in every aspect of our lives. Inter alia this entails studying Torah and observing mitsvos not only to fulfill Hashem's commandments, but also as instruments of achieving deveikus(8). Moreover, we have to be sensitive to the hashgachah pratis which permeates our lives. Such commitment and sensitivity will d.v. allow us to become ba'alei emunah.

(1) Shemos 14:31

(2) Shemos Raba 22:3

(3) Shemos 4:31. According to one opinion in the Medrash (Shemos Raba 23:1), Bnei Yisroel regressed after their initial demonstration of faith, and at yam suf they regained their faith. Even according to this view, however, itEs absolutely clear that they regained emunah which encompassed Moshe Rabbeinu as well as qualitatively different.

(4) Shemos Raba 21:8, Mechilta parshas Beshalach 3

(5) Sefer Hamitzvos mitsvas aseh 2

(6) Shemos Raba 23:15

(7) Shemos 3:16

(8) The text of elokai netzor as it appears in our text in maseches Berachos (17a) is u-ve-mitzvosecha tirdof nafshi. The prepositional letter be (or ve) signifies the instrument, not the object of pursuit. Hence the correct understanding is may my soul pursue You, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, through observance of your mitsvos.

Copyright 1999 by Rabbi Mayer Twersky. All rights reserved

From: RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY rmk@torah.org

Subject: Drasha -- Parshas B'shalach -- Leap of Faith

Refuah Shlaima to Yehuda Boruch ben Sora Menucha

A defining moment of Jewish faith takes place on the shores of the Yam Suf, the Reed Sea, as the fleeing, fledgling nation is cornered into a quick and fateful decision. Trapped between raging waters and a raging Egyptian army, the nation had but few choices to make. Some froze in fright. Others wanted to run back to Egypt straight into the hands of their former tormentors. Others just prayed. Still others wanted to wage war against the former taskmasters. But one group, led by Nachshon ben Aminadav forged ahead. Replacing fear with faith, he plunged into the sea. Only then did the sea split and the Jews cross. The Egyptians pursued. The waters returned, and the enemy was left bobbing in a sea of futility, totally vanquished under the turbulent waters. In defining that moment of faith, the Torah tells us, "Israel saw the great hand that Hashem inflicted upon Egypt; and the people revered Hashem, and they had faith in Hashem and in Moses, His servant" (Exodus 14:31). The strange connection between faith in Hashem and Moshe His servant needs clarification. What is the minor role of the servant in relationship to the great role of faith in the Almighty?

After hearing a fiery speech about the meaning of faith, a disciple of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter approached him and asked, "Rebbe, are you telling me that if I have perfect faith in Hashem, He will provide me with all my needs?" Rabbi Salanter affirmed. "Yes, my son," he smiled. "If one has perfect faith in the Almighty, He will provide for him." The man mad a quick reposte. "Good, if that is the case I need no longer work. I will sit and study Torah and rely solely on my faith, and the 20,000 rubles that I'll need to survive will come to me in full as if it were manna from Heaven!" The man went home and began to study Torah. But after one week when the money did not appear he returned to the Rabbi to complain. "I have the faith you claimed to need, and so far no money has arrived!" Rabbi Yisrael was pensive. "I'll tell you what," he said. "I will offer you 8,000 rubles cash today if you would commit yourself to give me the 20,000 rubles that you are sure will come to you because of your faith." The man jumped from his chair. "8,000 rubles! Sure! I'll take it." Rabbi Yisrael Salanter smiled, "who in his right mind would give up 20,000 rubles for a mere 8,000 rubles? Only someone with does not have perfect faith that he will receive 20,000 rubles! If one is positive that he is about to receive 20,000 rules, and is absolutely confident that it is coming, he would not, in his right mind, give it up for a mere 8,000! Obviously you have more faith in my 8,000 rubles than in Hashem's 20,000!"

The Torah tells us that the nation feared G-d, and it believed in Moshe, His servant. Notice that the first and foremost belief is in the Almighty. That immortal faith is the springboard for faith in all the mortal messengers, who are only vehicles of His command. Normally, more or less, man believes in man much faster than he believes in G-d. On a hot tip, people throw thousands at the market. Ominous predictions of economic forecasters send us into panic. On a doctor's dire prognosis, we react with despair. We forget that the source of faith is in the Almighty. Only then can we believe in his messengers. Rabbi Yeruchom Levovitz, z"l, the Mashgiach of the Mirrer Yeshiva explains

that the Jews at the sea reached the highest level of faith. Their following of Moshe was not in any sense due to his charisma or prior leadership. It was due to a total subjugation to a faith in an immortal Hashem. Only then did they follow the lead of a Moshe. That is the faith of those who take the leap. It is a faith they would not trade or deal for any offer in the world.

Dedicated by Michael & Rikki Charnowitz in memory of Ephraim Spinner Liluy Nishmas Ephraim Yitzchok ben R' Avraham -- 17 Shevat Drasha, Copyright 1 2001 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Torah.org. Drasha is the e-mail edition of FaxHomily, a Project of the Henry and Myrtle Hirsch Foundation. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore, <http://www.yoss.org> Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/>

<http://www.jpost.com/Editions/2001/02/08/Columns/Columns.21055.html>

SHABBAT SHALOM: A time to pray, a time to act
BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN
February, 08 2001

"And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were extremely frightened, and the children of Israel cried out in prayer to G-d..." (Ex. 14:10)

Action and prayer: how does Judaism negotiate between these two often contradictory directives? It has been said that when one acts one must act as if everything depends on us; and when one prays, we must pray as if everything depends on G-d.

But what does this mean in theological terms?

This week's portion of Beshalah presents a terrifying picture. After Pharaoh has supposedly freed the Israelite slaves, the Egyptian charioteers relentlessly pursue them. If they continue their flight, the Red Sea will drown them; if they stay put, the chariots will crush them.

The Bible records: vayitzaku and they cried out in prayer (Ex 14:10). Rashi adds: "they grabbed onto the artistry of their ancestors" - a poetic reference to the prayers established by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whose "art" is the "art of prayer."

Moses then confronts G-d who, we should think, would be desirous of prayer and whose response is therefore rather strange: "Why do you cry out in prayer for Me? Speak to the children of Israel and let them start moving." (Ex. 14:15)

Here Rashi is even more explicit than in the previous verse. He comments, "This teaches us that Moses too stood and prayed. G-d said to him: 'It is not the time now, when Israel is in danger, for you to engage in lengthy prayer.'"

Rashi is telling us that the Almighty is not chiding Moses and the Israelites for praying; He is rather chiding them for their overly lengthy prayer, for their prayer without action in a situation which calls for both prayer and action.

Indeed, all of life requires a combination of prayer and action, a realization that history is the unfolding of a magnificent partnership between human action and Divine intervention.

There is a fascinating Talmudic passage which may well be the source for Rashi's condemnation of lengthy prayer devoid of action: "R. Yossi said: once I was traveling on the road, and I entered one of the ruins of Jerusalem in order to pray. Elijah... appeared, and after I finished my prayer, he said to me: 'My son, why did you go into this ruin?' I said 'To pray.' He said 'You ought to have prayed on the road.' I answered, 'I feared that a passerby would interrupt me.' He said 'You ought to have said a short prayer.'

"I learned three things from him: One must not go into a ruin; one must pray on the road; and when one recites a prayer on the road, one

recites a short prayer." (B.T. Brachot 3a)

In effect, Elijah, the herald of Israel's ultimate redemption, is teaching R. Yossi, a Talmudic sage suffering the aftermath of the destruction of the Second Temple, the true act of Jewish prayer: stay on the road of action towards redemption, do not get side-tracked by wallowing in the ruins, pray while you are engaged in achieving your goal, and when you pray on the road, make it a short prayer so that there is adequate time and energy for human initiative.

There are times when lengthy prayers are simply not suitable; our proper and sanctified actions are a necessary prerequisite for world redemption. G-d wants us to keep moving, to take the step, to start the journey.

FURTHER evidence linking this theme of prayer and action is found in Maimonides' thought. He writes, "To pray is a positive commandment, as it says, 'And you shall serve the Lord your G-d,'" (Laws of Prayer, Ch.1, Hal.1) Maimonides quotes from a section of the Torah that deals with conquering the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, with a warning not to bow down or worship their gods: "But you shall utterly overthrow them, and break into pieces their pillars. And you shall serve the Lord your G-d." (Ex. 23:23-25)

Maimonides teaches that prayer must be linked to the very concrete action of combating the evil of idolatry in the world.

A modern example of the tension between prayer and action comes through in a story about St. Petersburg's Rabbi Isaac Blazer, affectionately called Reb Itzele Petersburger.

One day a rumor spread that he was a Zionist. A delegation of community leaders announced that he was to be fired for heresy because our prayers declare thrice daily "Blessed art thou, O G-d, builder of Jerusalem," - quite explicitly stating that any return to Zion must depend solely on G-d! How dare Reb Itzele attempt to build Jerusalem with his own hands - and with the help of non-religious Jews at that!

R. Itzele greeted his accusers with a smile, "You're right," he said, "but then what about you, Reb Shmuel," he said to the judge of the city. "Me?" the judge responded, aghast at the suggestion that he too was a heretic. "I'm not a Zionist!"

Countered Reb Itzele:, "But when your daughter recently had an asthma attack, didn't I see you take her to a doctor, a non-religious Jew at that? And do we not pray thrice daily: 'Heal us, O G-d, and we shall be healed... Blessed are you, O G-d, who heals the sick among your people Israel.'" ?

And then Reb Itzele turned to Reb Moshe, president of the congregation: "You're also a heretic. Didn't I see you keep your business open till 10 o'clock last night? And yet you also pray three times a day: 'Blessed are you G-d who blesses the years with good sustenance.'"

Apparently, as in health and sustenance, prayer can only begin after we have done whatever it is possible for us humans to do. And that what G-d is teaching Moses and Israel must be the rule for all challenges of life!

Shabbat Shalom!

From: RABBI JONATHAN SCHWARTZ jschwrtz@ymail.yu.edu
Subject: Internet Chaburah -- Parshas Beshalach/Shabbat Shirah

Prologue: Why exactly does one need to mark his own space? Wouldn't we be a more spiritual nation if we were able to live in peace and perfect harmony together?

Yet, when the laws of Shabbos are mentioned in the Torah, among the first mentioned is the issue of Techumin (the 2000 cubit limit on travel on Shabbos). It is based upon the Possuk (16:29) which notes that man should not leave his place on Shabbos. Why preface all the complex laws of Shabbos with this Mitzva of Techumin? Isn't it limiting?

The Rambam (Hil. Deos 6:1) notes that man typically is a product of

his environment. Hence, we are instructed to make our environment one of Talmidei Chachamim. We are instructed to open our homes to the Talmidei Chachamim, and to seek their advice. Additionally, we are told that one should forsake all the money in the world in order to live in a Makom Torah. Clearly environment impacts a person and the lack of positive influence makes it very difficult for man to "keep up with the Jones" spiritually.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (Darash Moshe II) ztl. notes that for this reason the laws of Shabbos are introduced with the laws of Techumin. Of all the Shabbos-related Mitzvos in the Torah, Techumin presents us with the unique message that, we must set our space within the confines of our environment. If we don't know our boundaries, then we could wind up being influenced by most of the world instead of focusing on the Makom Torah and Makom HaYahadus. By setting our places aside, we are not cutting ourselves off from the Jewish nation, we are spiritually combining and demarcating the Jewish community from the rest of the world. Ata Vichartanu MeeKol HaAmim.

For the Birds???

Shabbos Beshalach is also Shabbos Shirah. On this Shabbos, the Shiras HaYam is read in the Shul and is the source of great Simcha, B'Rov Am. Sefer Taamei Haminhagim (Likuttim 34) notes that on this shabbos there is a strong Minhag to feed the birds, either because they joined in with the Shirah. Alternatively, they were the ones who thwarted the efforts of Dasan V'Aviram who wanted to embarrass Moshe by hiding Manna outside the camp on Shabbos to appear as if it had fallen. When the people came out to search for the Manna it was not there because the birds had eaten it. In that honor the Minhag of feeding the birds has become a custom. Is it Mutar to follow this practice on Shabbos?

The basis for this question begins with the statement of the Tur (Siman 324 quoting Shabbos 19a) that one must feed all animals and birds that are dependent on him for food. Animals that are not dependent upon a person for food are not to be fed on Shabbos. The reason cited is that there is a Tircha Yesaira (extra unnecessary amount of work) involved in feeding such animals on Shabbos.

The definition of dependence upon you, becomes somewhat sticky in the Poskim. The Mishna Berurah (324:29) concludes that one whose animal eats elsewhere is not dependent upon him for food on Shabbos. The Biur Halacha adds that dependence is based upon the home and thus, a son or worker can feed the animals of the master of the house even if the animal is not dependent upon him directly. Clearly, animals living in the home and fed in the home must be fed on Shabbos.

But what about animals not in the home. The Levush (324) notes that one may only feed a dog that is one's pet but not any other dog on Shabbos. The Mogen Avraham (324:7) disagrees. He states that since it is Derech Eretz to feed all dogs, even those that do not belong to you, then it would be Mutar to do so on Shabbos. (The Aruch HaShulchan deduces the same opinion from Rashi). Tosafos takes this principle to the extreme and adds one can feed any animal that one knows is starving because of the principle of "V'Rachamav Al Kol Maasav." Thus, knowing an animal is starving allows one to feed it on Shabbos.

But what about feeding the birds on Shabbos Shirah? The Mogen Avraham (324:7) is very clear that he feels this is a violation of the laws of Shabbos since the birds are not regularly dependent upon you for food. Hence, he is against the Minhag of feeding the birds on Shabbos Shirah. The Taz (324:6) differentiates between birds that are starving and birds that will be sustained elsewhere. If the bird is not able to find food and will starve, this is called dependent upon you and you can feed it on Shabbos. Otherwise, he'd agree with the Mogen Avraham. The Mishna Berurah (324:31) strongly opposes the Minhag based upon the logic of the Mogen Avraham. Still, the Aruch HaShulchan (324:3) and Tosefes Shabbos (324:17) note that here the intention is not for the birds but

rather for himself. Here the person is showing gratitude for the actions of the birds and is reminding himself of the joy associated with Shabbos Shirah. Since these activities are for the person himself, they are not considered Tircha Yesaira.

L'Halacha, the Shemiras Shabbos K'Hilchasa (27:21) recommends that one shake out his tablecloth outside if he wishes to keep this Minhag. In that manner he will be able to feed the birds while his main intention will be the relief of his own crumbs, a Tirchas Atzmo.

Battala News

Mazal Tov to Yigal Marcus and Caryn Mell upon their recent engagement.

From: RABBI MENACHEM LEIBTAG tsc@bezeqint.net To: par-abs@tanach.org

PARSHAT BE'SHALACH - abstracts

From Egypt to Sinai

Parashat Beshalach bridges the two seminal events of Sefer Shemot: the Exodus and the receiving of the Torah. However, when G-d first appeared to Moshe at the burning bush, He spoke of Bnei Yisrael's direct journey to Sinai (3:12) and then to Eretz Yisrael (3:8, 17). But our Parasha describes a journey far from direct. Before Bnei Yisrael reach Sinai, they: 1) confront the Egyptian army at Yam Suf, 2) face a water crisis at Marah, where they could find only bitter water, 3) run out of food in the desert, requiring the miracle of the "mann", 4) experience another drought in Refidim, and 5) face Amalek's unprovoked attack. Why must all this occur before Bnei Yisrael receive the Torah at Sinai?

After centuries of bondage, Bnei Yisrael had developed a sense of absolute dependence on Egypt. Yechezkel (20) speaks of G-d's command that the people abandon their worship of Egyptian idolatry in order to earn redemption, an order neglected by Bnei Yisrael. Although the Paschal offering granted them redemption, their servility to Egyptian culture must transform into their unwavering subservience to G-d before they come to Sinai to accept the responsibilities of G-d's special nation.

The events of Parashat Beshalach help achieve this critical goal. As the nation stood at the shores of the Red Sea, G-d tells them, "Stand and behold the salvation of G-d, for the manner in which you saw Egypt today, you will never see them again." As Ramban explains, the splitting of the sea stripped Bnei Yisrael of their slave mentality, by which they viewed the Egyptians as their masters. G-d orders the people to never again look upon their former oppressors in this light. Indeed, after the sea splits, we are told, "they believed in G-d and in Moshe." They then arrived in Marah, where the bitter waters became drinkable through Moshe - G-d's agent. Appropriately, here Moshe tells the nation, "If you listen to the voice of HashemB all the afflictions that I put on the Egyptians I will not put on youB" In the next encampment, however, it appears as though Bnei Yisrael have yet to learn this lesson. They respond to their food shortage not by praying to G-d, but by yearning for the "good old days" in Egypt when they had food to eat (16:3). The trauma of Yam Suf and Marah did not suffice; this recognition required an extended period of constant reinforcement. G-d therefore provided Bnei Yisrael with "manna", giving them only one day's ration at a time, developing within them a sense of total dependence upon Him. One final phase of preparation remained before Bnei Yisrael could gather round Mount Sinai for the Revelation. They once again encounter a serious water crisis, only this time the solution comes from Mount Sinai. G-d bids Moshe to take the nation's elders to "Chorev" (= Sinai) and smite a rock that would then produce water. On the brink of the Revelation, Bnei Yisrael are shown that their basic sustenance comes from Sinai - the Torah. Similarly, as they battle Amalek, Moshe ascends "the peak" (17:9), which Ibn Ezra understands as a reference to Mount Sinai. Whenever Moshe lifted his hands, thereby directing the people's

thoughts upward (17:11 & Rashi), Bnei Yisrael defeated their assailants. Once again, Bnei Yisrael find themselves in a crisis whose solution comes from Mount Sinai, thus furthering their sense of dependence on G-d and His word. We commemorate this growth process between the Exodus and the receiving of the Torah through the "sefirat ha'omer" period. After we celebrate the Exodus on Pesach, we, like Bnei Yisrael, embark on a seven-week program of preparation for Matan Torah, the next fundamental stage of redemption.

Part II

The Eternal Battle Against Amalek

Parashat Beshalach concludes with Amalek's attack of Bnei Yisrael and G-d's oath of an eternal war against the aggressors. What's so bad about Amalek that warrants their singling out from all our enemies throughout history? In the end of Parashat Ki-Tetze, Moshe bids Bnei Yisrael to always remember Amalek's attack (Dvarim 25:17-18). He stresses several characteristics of this assault: Bnei Yisrael were on the road, Amalek attacked specifically those lagging behind, Bnei Yisrael were tired and weary, and Amalek was not "G-d-fearing." To better understand Moshe's account, let us consider the background of this war. The previous verses tell of Bnei Yisrael's water shortage and Moshe's hitting of a rock on Mount Chorev, also known as Sinai, to produce water. Using some simple conjecture, we can imagine that as soon as word got out about the river flowing from Sinai, the people, who had gone several days without water in the desert, frantically picked themselves up and headed there. The stronger, healthier ones made it there first, while the weak and frail straggled behind. Bnei Yisrael, particularly those lagging behind, were thirsty, weak, tired, frantic, frazzled, and in utter disarray. Amalek capitalized on this handicap and launched an attack. This is why the verse writes, "Amalek came and battled against Yisrael in Refidim." Amalek assaulted specifically those who still remained in Refidim; the stronger members of Bnei Yisrael had already made their way towards Sinai. Hence Moshe's observation that Amalek "was not G-d-fearing." In at least two instances, the concept of "yirat Elokim" - fear of G-d - appears in the context of basic, elementary ethics and morals. For example, Avraham explained the need for Sarah's disguise as his sister in Gerar based on the lack of "yirat Elokim" in that city (Breishit 20:11). He therefore feared that the locals would kill him to take his wife. Similarly, Yosef told his brothers that he would release them from prison because he is G-d-fearing (Breishit 42:15). The nation of Amalek lacked even the most basic standards of ethics. Even wartime has its rules and regulations (a "Geneva Convention" of sorts). Attacking a nation's weakest segment en route to collect long-awaited drinking water constituted a breach of the most rudimentary guidelines of moral conduct. Therefore, Bnei Yisrael, who carry Avraham's legacy of "tzdaka u'mishpat" (righteousness and justice - Breishit 18:19), must lead the eternal battle against Amalek and its ideological successors.

Abstracts by DAVID SILVERBERG

From: Young Israel Divrei
Torah[SMTP:yitrah-owner@listbot.com]

Young Israel Divrei Torah - <http://www.youngisrael.org>
17 Shvat 5761 February 10, 2001 Daf Yomi: Gittin 3

Guest Rabbi: RABBI FABIAN SCHONFELD Young Israel of
Kew Gardens Hills, NY

There is a famous statement in the Talmud (Gittin 36b) which reads as follows: "Hane'elavin v'einan olvin; shom'in cherpatan v'ein meishivin." Those who are insulted and do not return the insult; those who hear abuse directed at them and do not return such abuse. "Osin me'ahava usmeichin bi'yesurim"- Those who perform G-d's will out of love and are happy (even) in suffering.

Concerning them Scripture says, "v'ohavov k'tzeit hashemesh

b'gevurato," "but they that love Him be as the sun when it goes forth in its might."

There are many explanations for this rather enigmatic statement. The obvious question is: What does this text, taken from the Haftara of B'Shalach, have to do with the subject of insult and abuse?

Among the commentaries, the one that is perhaps quite relevant and meaningful is the commentary of Menachem HaMeiri. He points out that, according to the Midrash in Breishit, the sun was the object of jealousy expressed by the moon. It was the moon which wished to have equal standing among the heavenly planets. It was the moon who complained to the Al-Mighty as to why he does not have equal importance with the sun.

The sun listened to the vituperation and insults, and yet did not react in any fashion. That is why, explains HaMeiri, the text in this Haftara speaks about "the sun going out in his might," "k'tzeit hashemesh b'gevurato." Thus, the reference to this text seems most fitting when discussing the virtue of those that do not react when they are subjected to abuse. The result of the moon's complaints and the sun's tolerance was that the size of the moon was diminished and the sun became the greater of the two luminaries. The sun is then described in the Torah as "hameor hagadol," "the great luminary," whereas the moon is described as "hameor hakatan," "the small luminary."

Another interesting comment was made by the Chidushei HaRim, the first Gerrer Rebbe. He explains that while it is commendable and virtuous not to respond in kind to abuse, that does not free one's friends from reacting in a proper fashion. That is why the text reads "v'ohavav," "they that love him," meaning friends and associates need not, and should not, stand by when close friends and family members suffer indignity on the part of their opponents. The friends must go out and defend their loved ones "as the sun went out in its might."

Coming to the aid of a friend is the true test of friendship. Very often, a person may be maligned and subjected to attack, and is not in a position, or able, to defend themselves. Then it becomes the obligation of those that truly love him to do so.

This is true of individuals and of nations. The test of friendship for the Jewish nation on the part of gentile nations is whether or not they are willing to defend the Jewish people and the State of Israel against distortion and lies which are directed at us. If others remain indifferent, or even if they are supposedly "even handed," then they are not true friends of the Jewish people. It is a lesson we must learn well and act upon accordingly.

From: Kollel Iyun Hadaf[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il] Subject:
Insights to the Daf: Sotah

RABBI MORDECHAI KORNFELD INSIGHTS TO THE DAILY
DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim
daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il> *** Please send your
D.A.F. contributions to : *** D.A.F., 140-32 69 Ave., Flushing NY
11367, USA

Sotah 44b A KALAH GOING TO WAR QUESTION: The Mishnah states that when there is a Milchemes Mitzvah, everyone goes out to war, "even the Chasan from his room and the Kalah from her Chupah."

How can a woman be obligated to participate in a war? The Gemara in Nazir (59a) teaches that it is prohibited for a woman to even carry a weapon, and it is certainly prohibited for her to go out to war (see Kidushin 2b, "It is not the manner of a woman to wage war"). (RASHASH)

ANSWERS: (a) This question is discussed by the Rishonim. The RADVAZ (Hilchos Melachim 7:4) suggests in his first answer that the Mishnah does not mean that the Kalah leaves the Chupah to go to the

battlefront. Rather, it means that since the Chasan must leave and is no longer with the Kalah, the Kalah leaves her Chupah (that is, she does not celebrate the rest of the seven days of festivity).

(b) The RADVAZ suggests further that although the women do not actually go to the battlefield, they supply the soldiers with food and drink (or they help fixed the roads), just like those who do not participate in a Milchemes ha'Reshus (43a).

The BEN YEHOYADA, TIFERES YISRA'EL, and RASHASH give a similar answer.

The SEFER HA'CHINUCH (Mitzvah 603) writes that the Mitzvah of Zechiras Amalek does not apply to women, because the purpose of Zechiras Amalek is to remind us to wage war with Amalek until no one from Amalek remains, and women do not participate in war. The MINCHAS CHINUCH challenges the Chinuch's ruling from our Mishnah which says that in the case of a Milchemes Mitzvah, even a Kalah leaves her Chupah.

Perhaps the argument between the Chinuch and the Minchas Chinuch revolves around the two answers of the Radvaz. The Minchas Chinuch holds like the second answer of the Radvaz, that a Kalah also participates in the war by helping the soldiers who are fighting. The Chinuch might hold like the first answer of the Radvaz, that a woman does not participate in the war at all, and therefore he says that a woman has no Mitzvah of Zechiras Amalek.

Alternatively, even if the Chinuch also agrees to the second answer of the Radvaz, he might hold that it is not necessary for women to fulfill the Mitzvah of Zechiras Amalek in order to remember to help the men fight, because their role in the war is not considered part of the Mitzvah of destroying Amalek; they are only "Mesayei'a" -- they assist in the Mitzvah of the war, but they do not actually fulfill the Mitzvah

Sotah 46b HALACHAH: THE MITZVAH OF ESCORTING A GUEST OPINIONS: The Gemara teaches the importance of escorting a guest on his way when he departs. If one escorts him even four Amos within the city, the guest will be protected from all harm.

The obligation of Leviyah, though, is to escort one's guest even more than that. A Rav must escort his student until the last house in the city. One escorts a friend until the Techum Shabbos (2000 Amos outside of the city). A student must escort his Rav one Parsah (4 kilometers) outside of the city, and if the Rav is his Rav Muvhak, he must escort him three Parsa'os (12 kilometers).

The RAMBAM (Hilchos Avel 14:3) cites these Halachos of the Gemara. However, the TUR and SHULCHAN ARUCH make no mention of the obligations of Leviyah. In fact, we do not see this practiced today in the manner that the Gemara requires. What is the reason for this?

(a) The BE'ER SHEVA explains that today, there is a greater danger to travel on an inter-city road than there was in the times of the Gemara. Therefore, a person is not obligated to put himself in danger in order to escort his friend.

(b) The DARCHEI MOSHE (end of Choshen Mishpat) cites the MAHARASH who explains that nowadays we assume that since most people forego having their hosts escort them, the host may assume that his guest has been Mochel the obligation of Leviyah and therefore the host does not have to escort him. Nevertheless, the host should escort his guest to the gates of the city, or at least four Amos (this is because the Gemara mentions that it is improper for the guest to be Mochel the escort entirely, for if he does so it is like he is Shofech Damim; see AHAVAS CHESED 3:2).

The CHAFETZ CHAIM (Likutei Halachos #300) adds that if the roads are confusing and the guest might easily get lost, then it could be that the host has not fulfilled his obligation b'Yidei Shamayim until he actually escorts his guest and leads him on the proper road.

The EMEK BERACHAH (p. 135) writes that the four Amos which

one escorts his guest must be *outside* of his house, and not inside his house (since, otherwise, one has not escorted the guest "on his way").

(c) The HE'OROS B'MASECHES SOTAH cites the SHEVUS YAKOV who writes that it is not necessary to escort a guest today, since the purpose of escorting a person is to show him the proper way (see MAHARSHA). Nowadays, road signs (in most civilized countries) provide that service.

(d) The CHAZON ISH, cited by the Emek Berachah (ibid.), writes that the purpose of Leviyah is to provide protection. Therefore, it applies only when a guest departs by himself. Today, when a number of people usually travel together, each person traveling provides escort for his fellow traveler.

(The Emek Berachah adds that if the host is a Talmid Chacham, he would be exempt from Leviyah, since it is a Mitzvah that can be fulfilled by someone else, and one is not obligated to be Mevatel Torah to fulfill such a Mitzvah. See Moed Katan 9a.)

Sotah 48 HALACHAH: LISTENING TO SONGS AND MUSIC QUESTION: The Mishnah teaches that when the Sanhedrin ceased to convene, the Chachamim prohibited song at celebrations, like the verse says, "They do not drink wine with song" (Yeshayah 24:9). The Gemara in Gitin (7a) cites a second verse and learns from there that the prohibition of song applies not only to musical instruments but to vocal song (with no musical accompaniment) as well.

The wording of our Mishnah, and the verse which provides the source for the prohibition, imply that the prohibition applies only in a Beis ha'Mishteh, during a party or celebration, or while drinking wine. However, the Gemara teaches that "an ear that hears song shall be cut off," and that if there is song in a house "then destruction is at its doorstep." The Gemara continues and says that even "the song of the weavers" (which accompanies them while they weave) is prohibited. These statements imply that there is a blanket prohibition against song which applies even while one is not dining. How are these Gemaras to be reconciled?

ANSWERS: (a) TOSFOS in Gitin (7a) quotes a Yerushalmi which says that a person should not arise in the morning and retire at night to the accompaniment of song. Tosfos writes that we see from there that listening to song on a frequent and consistent basis is prohibited even while one is not dining. According to Tosfos, these Gemaras that prohibit music in the house (and not only in a party) might be referring to people who are constantly listening to music. The song of the weavers was sung on a constant basis, for an extended period of time each day.

(RASHI, in DH Batel Zimra, writes that when Rav Huna decreed that song is prohibited, he prohibited it even in one's home. However, it does not seem that this decree endured.)

(b) The RAMBAM (Hilchos Ta'anis 5:14) seems to rule that although singing without musical accompaniment is prohibited only while drinking wine (like Tosfos says), nevertheless listening to music being played by instruments is prohibited at all times. The Rambam would explain that the Gemaras which prohibit listening to song even in one's home and not while dining are referring to song with musical instruments.

This prohibition of musical instruments at any time seems to have been a later enactment than the one mentioned in our Mishnah. The RI'AZ (see the following answer) implies that this is the prohibition to which the Mishnah later (49a) refers when it says that "Irus," a type of musical instrument, became prohibited after the invasion and conquest of Vespasian.

(c) The RI'AZ cited by the SHILTEI GIBORIM on the Rif in Berachos (Perek 5) rules even more stringently. He writes that the song of the weavers, and any song which is sung out of frivolity and is intended to lighten the heart, is always prohibited, because it draws a person towards bad deeds and character traits. Song is only permitted

when it serves a specific purpose and is not simply for entertainment.

The TOSFOS RID seems to explain that the prohibition of song even without musical instruments is not related to the Churban of the Beis ha'Mikdash; even while the Beis ha'Mikdash is standing, frivolous song is prohibited. This is the explanation for the statements in our Gemara that deprecate listening to song.

Why, then, was it necessary for the Chachamim to prohibit song at parties, when the Sanhedrin ceased to convene? It seems from the Yerushalmi (cited by the HE'OROS B'MASECHES SOTAH) that as long as there was a Sanhedrin, the members of the Sanhedrin would oversee the celebrations and ensure that people would not be drawn to sin. Even though song was a objectionable practice, it was not necessary to officially prohibit it while the Sanhedrin convened, because they would keep it in check. After the Sanhedrin lost power and could not appoint overseers, it became necessary to make a general prohibition against song so that people would not be drawn to sin during celebrations.

The Ri'az adds that the Chachamim later made an additional decree prohibiting "Irus," which refers to musical instruments such as tambourines and harps. If song was already prohibited even without musical instruments, then what did this additional decree add? The Ri'az explains that song without instruments is permitted for a purpose, such as to soothe a baby when the baby is going to sleep, while song with an instrument is prohibited even for such a purpose.

(d) The RAMBAM in Teshuvos (#224) cited by the TUR (OC 560) writes that it is prohibited to sing at any time, even without musical accompaniment (not like what is implied by his ruling in Mishneh Torah, as cited above in (b)). According to the Rambam, it is obvious why the Chachamim in our Gemara attributed such punishments to those who listen to song at any time.

The reasoning and source for the Rambam's ruling are not clear. It is possible that he rules like the Tosfos Rid, who rules that song is prohibited at all times because of frivolity. However, the Rambam in the Mishneh Torah writes that the prohibition of song was because of the requirement to mourn for the Beis ha'Mikdash. When he prohibited song in his Teshuvah, it is likely that he also prohibited it out of mourning, based on our Mishnah.

Why, though, would the Mishnah mention that song is prohibited during celebrations if the prohibition applies at all times? The VILNA GA'ON (on the Rambam, Hilchos Ta'anis, ibid.) explains that the main objective of the Chachamim was to prohibit song at celebrations. The reason the Chachamim prohibited song at all times was in order to ensure that no singing would occur at celebrations.

Why was it necessary to prohibit the musical instrument called "Irus" at a later time if song without an instrument was already prohibited? The Vilna Ga'on explains that the "Irus" was a primitive form of musical instrument which did not make a melody by itself (such as a bell or tambourine), and thus it was not prohibited by the first decree.

HALACHAH: The SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 560:3) cites the words of the Rambam in Hilchos Ta'anis ((b) above), who says that singing without instruments is prohibited only while drinking wine, and singing with instruments is prohibited all of the time.

The REMA cites the opinion of TOSFOS and RASHI ((a) above) who are even more lenient and rule that both singing with instruments and singing without instruments is prohibited only while drinking wine or when one does it frequently and consistently.

The MISHNAH BERURAH (OC 560:13) cites the BACH who sides with the more stringent opinions that singing is prohibited at all times, even without musical instruments (like (c) and (d) above). In the SHA'AR HA'TZION, though, he permits singing to lull a baby to sleep (like (c) above). RAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN zt'l (Igras Moshe OC 1:166) writes that although he considers the opinion of the Shulchan Aruch to be the primary Halachic opinion (and it is permitted to sing

without instruments when not dining and when not done regularly), nevertheless a "Ba'al Nefesh" should be stringent and conduct himself in accordance with the ruling of the Mishnah Berurah.

(All of this refers, of course, to songs which do not contain any form of profanity or immorality. Such songs are prohibited at all times, even when just spoken and not sung.)

The Poskim cite the RIF in Berachos (Perek 5, citing the Ge'onim) who rules that the prohibitions of song after the Churban of the Beis ha'Mikdash apply only to "love songs" and songs describing beauty. Songs of praise to Hashem and songs describing Hashem's kindness are permitted even during celebrations and while drinking wine, and even with musical instruments. The Rema adds that it is also permitted to play songs for the sake of a Mitzvah, such as in order to make the Chasan and Kalah rejoice.

The Gemara in Sanhedrin (101a) states that it is prohibited to compose a song from a verse in the Torah. The Rif in Berachos (ibid.) cites this Halachah. Although the Shulchan Aruch does not record this Halachah, the MAGEN AVRAHAM (as cited by the Mishnah Berurah (560:14)) records this Halachah and says that even at the Shabbos table one should not sing songs composed from verses, unless the songs are accepted songs that the Jewish people are accustomed to singing.

The *D*AFYOMI *A*DVANCEMENT *F*ORUM, brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf

Write to us at daf@dafyomi.co.il or visit us at <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>
Tel(IL):02-652-2633 -- Off(IL):02-651-5004 -- Fax(US):603-737-5728