

BS"D



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**INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON BESHALACH - 5765**

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From: TorahWeb.org [torahweb@torahweb.org] Sent: Jan. 20, 2005 Subject: Rabbi Yonasan Sacks - Lechem Min Hashomayim: The Miracle of the Mann
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RABBI YONASAN SACKS
Lechem Min Hashomayim: The Miracle of the Mann

The Even Ezra explains (Shemos 15:35) that the nes of the mann, which sustained Bnai Yisroel for forty years, was the greatest of all miracles which they experienced in the midbar. Unlike all the other nissim which were isolated occurrences, the mann served as daily testimony affirming Divine providence.

Even today we acknowledge and communicate this nes each Shabbos. The Gemara (Shabbos 117b) explains that the requirement of lechem mishna, having two challos at each Shabbos meal, and the obligation of shalosh seudos, three Shabbos meals, stem from the nes of the mann. Indeed, Rabbeinu Tam explains that although women are generally exempt from time bound positive commandments, they are obligated in lechem mishna and shalosh seudos, based on the principle of af hein hayu b'oso hanes, they too were included in this miracle.

Interestingly, the mitzvah of seudas Shabbos has two different sources. The Torah teaches "Vayomer Moshe ichloohu hayom ki Shabbos hayom la'donay hayom lo timsa'ohu ba'sadeh - Eat it today for today is a Shabbos for Hashem - today you shall not find it in the field" (Shemos 15:24). The Gemara (Shabbos 117b) explains that the word "hayom", today, which is found three times in this passuk, alludes to the three Shabbos meals.

The Gemara (Pesachim 105a), however, brings a second source for seudas Shabbos. Yeshaya Hanavi emphasizes (58:17) "v'karasa laShabbos oneg l'kedosh Hashem mechubad" - if you proclaim the Shabbos a delight, and the holy day of Hashem honored."

These two sources - "ichloohu hayom" and "v'karasa laShabbos oneg" - emphasize different aspects of seudas Shabbos highlighted by several halachic differences. "V'karasa laShabbos oneg" underscores the need to have two meals on Shabbos, one at night and the other during the day (Pesachim 105a). "Ichloohu hayom", however, stresses the requirement of an additional third meal. In fact, the Mechaber (Shulchan Aruch O.C. 529) maintains that whereas the mitzvah of oneg applies even on Yom Tov, "ichloohu hayom" is limited to Shabbos. Therefore, the mechaber asserts that on Yom Tov there is no need for seudas shlishis, an additional third meal.

Furthermore, although oneg requires a complete festive meal which includes pas, bread, the Mechaber (Shulchan Aruch O.C. 291) cites several views regarding "ichloohu hayom". Therefore Mechaber concludes that although one should wash and have challah at seudas

shlishis, if one forgot to recite retse v'hachalitseinu in Birkas Hamazon at the seudas shlishishe he is not required to repeat Birkas Hamazon.

The Mechaber further explains that if one was unable to have a Shabbos meal leil Shabbos, Friday night, he should eat three meals during the day. This Halacha can be understood in light of the two sources for seudas Shabbos. One who failed to partake of a seudah on leil Shabbos missed the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah of oneg balayla. He is nevertheless obligated to have a total of three meals based on the passuk of ichloohu hayom. In such a case, his first meal on Shabbos morning is rooted in the mitzvah of oneg. The next two meals, however, are based on ichloohu hayom.

Accordingly, one can understand the view of Birkei Yosef who maintains that in this case, when one failed to have a seudah on leil Shabbos and therefore has three meals during the day, if one failed to include retse v'hachalitseinu in Birkas Hamazon in the second meal, he need not repeat the Birkas Hamazon. In this instance, the second meal is similar to seudas shlishis, whose basis is the passuk of ichloohu hayom.

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[from several years ago]
From: "RAV YISSOCHER FRAND
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Date: 2/1/96 10:46am

Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas B'Shalach

Parshas B'Shalach:

Strange Pshat + Strange Pshat + Strange Pshat = Beautiful Pshat
The pasuk [13:18] tells us, "The L rd caused the nation to go round about by way of the Sea of Reeds, and the children of Israel went up 'Chamushim' from the land of Egypt". There are three different approaches used by our Sages to interpret the word 'Chamushim' in this pasuk.

Rash"i cites a Medrash that the word "Chamushim" comes from the word "chamesh" meaning five. The interpretation is that only one fifth of the total Jewish population emerged from Egypt (the balance were unworthy and died during the plague of Darkness).

The Targum Yonasan ben Uziel offers a fantastic interpretation to the expression 'Chamushim': Each family came out from Egypt with 5 children. How strange! The Jewish People were more efficient in family planning than the American family. The American family has 2.2 children. The Jews in Egypt had exactly 5 children in each family! This is unbelievable. How could it be that everyone had, not 4, not 6, but exactly 5 children?

The third interpretation is found in the Targum Yerushalmi. The Targum Yerushalmi says 'Chamushim' means 'armed with good deeds'. This too is difficult. Our Sages tell us that the Jewish People were devoid of good deeds before they left Egypt. G d had to give them the two mitzvos of Pessach and Milah so that by virtue of having fulfilled these two mitzvos, they would have the merit to go out from Egypt. How could it be that just a few days prior to going out they were totally devoid of mitzvos, and now they went out according to the Targum Yerushalmi 'armed with good deeds'? Where did they suddenly accumulate all these good deeds?

The sefer Be'er Yosef by Rav Yosef Salant suggests the following interpretation of these three difficult medrashim: Rav Yosef Salant ingeniously says, that these three medrashim dovetail and complement each other and what emerges is a unified picture of what actually happened.

Eighty percent of the Jews died in Egypt. Now, perhaps the parents were wicked and G d wanted them to die, but why should their children die? It is inconceivable that G d would wipe out the children because they had wicked parents.

What happened, suggests Rav Salant, is that the children became orphans. What do Jews do when there are orphans in need of homes? Jews take the orphans into their houses. As such, each remaining family was responsible for their own plus 4 other families of children. This is what Targum Yonasan means when he says everyone went out with five children. Chamushim doesn't mean five children literally. It means five families of children their own, plus the four fifths whose parents died, for whom everyone else took responsibility.

With this, we can now understand the Targum Yerushalmi the good deeds. It is one thing to adopt an orphan into one's own house. But when one is about to embark on a journey and he does not know what will be, where he is going to get food for himself, his wife and his children; and yet he takes these 20 little orphans with him on an unknown and uncharted path that is an entirely different matter. The Jewish People did just that. And that is why they were considered 'armed with good deeds'.

With this in mind, we see that the 3 Medrashim on Chamushim: that 4/5 died, that they went out with 5 children, and that they were 'armed' with good deeds are all part of the same idea.

I just want to add, that we see from this explanation of the Targum Yerushalmi that taking in an orphan can transform a person who is devoid of mitzvos into a person who is armed with good deeds. I think it is worthwhile to point out that we owe a great deal of respect and gratitude to those people in our community who have taken in (Iranian) families and children into their homes.

May they be strengthened and blessed.

Unhappy with Manna? Never Expect Happiness from Anything

In the end of the parsha, we find the incident with the Manna. The Jewish people complained they had nothing to eat and G d gave them the Manna. In past years, we have spoken about some of the practical implications of what the Manna means. It is a lesson in Faith in G d; it is a lesson in Sabbath observance; it is a lesson in wealth; etc.

Recently I heard a discussion on tape from Rav Pam, shlit"a, where he pointed out a very simple idea, but I think it is worth repeating. Rav Pam was giving a talk about Shidduchim to the boys in the Yeshiva.

Rav Pam described how before marriage a young man tries to get the "perfect shidduch" a girl that has "all the maylos". The amount of effort that is expended and the calculations that are made to get the perfect mate is phenomenal. The person gets married and everyone wishes him all the best and all kinds of blessings. Sometimes we find that after a person has been married for a while, that which had seemed just perfect, now leaves him dissatisfied.

Rav Pam said, happiness in marriage or in anything in life has nothing to do with "things", but it has everything to do with perception. There are two types of people in this world the people who will always be happy and the people who will never be happy.

From the parsha of the manna, we clearly see that happiness has nothing to do with having things. What could be better than the manna? From a spiritual perspective, Chaza"l tell us it was the food of angels; it was the concretization of the aura of Divine Presence (Ziv haShechina). From a physical perspective,.... imagine sitting down to a meal and wishing what you want and that is what it tastes like! Could there be anything better in the world than Manna? And there's no waste! We all know the problems that stem from the digestive system. With the Manna, there were no digestive problems.

But what did the Jewish People say? "...we are getting disgusted from this wasteless food" [Bamidbar 21:5]. Why don't we like it? Because there is no waste! We can't stand this manna! Why? Because we don't have to go to the bathroom!

Rav Pam says "If one doesn't like manna, he'll never like anything!" Manna is the proof that happiness has nothing to do with having things or having items. Happiness is dependent on a person's perspective on

life. One can be terribly happy with very little and terribly miserable with very much.

Rav Pam, switching from Yiddish to English, quoted a quip he once heard: "Everyone looks for the City of Happiness, but they fail to realize that the City of Happiness is in the State of Mind". That is the lesson of the Manna you either learn to look at life positively (be a sameach b'chelko) or you'll never ever be happy.



From: "Seth Ness <ness@aecom.yu.edu>"

Date: 2/2/96

Subject: enayim l'torah beshalach

Beshalach Enayim L'Torah Parshat B'shalach

Publication of Student Organization of Yeshiva

University

ON EMUNAH

BY RAV AHARON KAHN

We would expect that the scientist of today would be the greatest Ma'amin. After all, who knows better than the astronomer the profundity of the cosmos? Yet he is not a Ma'amin. Who can peer into the very edge of being, intuit the infinitesimal, claim the microcosmic, if not the nuclear physicist. But he too is not a Ma'amin.

Who, if not the scientist on the threshold of discovery, about to learn what no other human knows, can better sense what the hand of Hashem has wrought. Why, then, are there so few scientists intoxicated with Hashem? what happened to modern man that, although he can appreciate Hashem's world as never before, he does not know Hashem?

All man needs, the Ramba"m teaches, is to contemplate the creation, to gaze upon the Divine Handiwork, and he is seized with a profound love. He sings panegyrics to the Creator and craves to know Him. If so, we must ask, what has happened to modern man? What happened to modern Homo Sapiens, apparently capable of sensing the infinite and the infinitesimal and yet incapable of sensing Hashem? Where are the odes of joy, what happened to the paeans to Hashem? Why has modern man forgotten even how to pray?

The answer is that modern man is thoroughly intoxicated with himself. Look at the concrete towers, the steel pyramids, the mighty bridges and tunnels, and despair! As the Torah warns the generation about to enter Eretz Yisrael: "Lest you eat and be sated, build houses and dwell therein, grow in gold and silver, and declare: 'My strength, the force of my own hand, has wrought for me all this might.'" The "Kochi V'Otzem Yadi" of today's scientist does not let him peer beyond the telescope to discover Hashem. The scientist is too intoxicated with his capacity to launch a telescope beyond earth's atmosphere and then correct with amazing prowess the lenses' defects. In this telescope's mirror he can see nothing but himself.

The Chofetz Chaim marveled at the innovation of the telegraph and the telephone. He sensed that man would better comprehend the dictum in Pirkei Avot: "Know what is above you an eye that sees, an ear that hears." Today we have sophisticated computers which allow us to do what was unimaginable yesterday. Should we not be sensitized by the computer's speed and capacity to be more aware than ever of the "Kol Ma'asecha BaSefer Nichtavim". Yet we are more remote than ever. Today's agenda, burning and urgent, in every day school and every cheder, in every yeshiva and every Bais Yaakov, is the Ribono Shel Olam. We must understand that today our mandate is to return Hashem to His world. Whether in our B'rachot or in our Chumash lessons or in our science projects, we must place Hashem back into equation.

A Talmid became a Melamed in a modern day school. "Any words of advice?" he asked, as he informed me of his recent appointment. I told him, "teach them Chumash and Na"Ch and Halacha, but don't forget to teach them Hashem."

The Atah must be returned to the Baruch Atah . . . We must regain the sense of our presence before Hashem. We know, most of the time, that in shul we are Lifnei Hashem. In a very real sense, however, the entire world is Lifnei Hashem. That is the sense we should have after reciting the hundred daily B'rachot. Whatever we do, wherever we are, morning to night we recite Baruch Atah.

Eino Domeh Mi SheShoneh Pirko Meah Pe'amim. We practice saying Atah Hashem a hundred times a day! A hundred times a day we declare to Hashem in the personal, familiar "You" that we are in the middle of a cosmic rendezvous with Him. This is the "You" of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, who used to sing a "Dudele" to Hashem. Mizrach? Du! Maarav? Du! And it was Du, the familiar "you" in Yiddish; not "Ir" which is the formal, official "you" in Yiddish. East, West? You Hashem, only You!

The Ramba"n at the end of his commentary on Parshat Bo makes a powerful remark: "A person has no part in Torat Moshe if he fails to perceive the miracle of the everyday event, if he cannot see Hashem's command in all that befalls him." As once again we read the Shirah, let us repeat VaYaminu BaHashem with the conviction of a witness who sees and hears and feels Hashem everywhere.

From: Shema Yisrael Torah Network [shemalist@shemayisrael.com]

Sent: Jan. 20, 2005 To: Peninim Parsha

PENINIM ON THE TORAH

BY RABBI A. LEIB SCHEINBAUM

Beshalach

You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan. (22:21)

The Torah focuses its prohibition against taking advantage of the weak and helpless, specifically with reference to the widow, orphan and convert, because they are the most susceptible to such treatment. But, clearly this admonition applies to anyone who is weak. Now, let us ask ourselves a question: do we know who is really weak, and who puts on a show that he is strong and filled with self-confidence? Do we have a clue as to "who" stands before us? How often do we attempt to excuse our behavior towards another Jew by saying, "I did not know that he had a problem. I did not know that there are issues at home." Everybody who stands before us is a potential orphan or widow. This means that the loneliness and helplessness that is so much a part of the lives of the widow and orphan might very well also be their companion. They, too, suffer but do not necessarily show it. There is only one option: we must view everybody who stands before us as having a potential problem and deal with them accordingly.

We have no idea how the way we act might affect another person in need. Horav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi, Shlita, cites the following episode from the Mechilta. Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon, two of the greatest Tannaim, were being led to their execution. Rabbi Shimon turned to Rabbi Yishmael and said, "My heart troubles me, for I know not for what sin I am being killed." Rabbi Yishmael replied, "Did it ever occur that a person came to you to have a judgment rendered concerning a halachic question and you asked him to wait until you finished your drink, or tie your shoe? The Torah says that you are not to cause another person anguish - regardless of the intensity of the pain." When Rabbi Shimon heard this, he said, "You have comforted me."

What Chazal are telling us is that we never know how what we might consider a simple delay, could be a major infringement on someone else's emotions. We must think before we act - and then think again, because it is so easy to hurt someone whose emotions are already frayed.

You shall worship Hashem, your G-d, and He shall bless your bread and your water, and I shall remove illness from your midst. 23:25)

Hashem is a personal G-d, Who can be reached directly, without having to go through intermediaries. In prayer, we speak directly to Hashem, a

worship which results in our receipt of His blessings. The effect of Tefillah is even more compelling when prayed b'tzibbur, in a public forum of ten or more men. The Ma'or Va'shemesh derives the significance of Tefillah b'tzibbur from the above pasuk. He notes that the pasuk begins in the plural, va'avaditem, "and you shall worship", and ends with a blessing to the individual in the singular, lachmecha, meimecha, mikirbecha, "your bread, your water, your midst." Why the change? He explains that if one prays in a communal forum, the effect will be so powerful that the individual will be blessed with parnassah, a livelihood that is easy to come by, and good health. Alternatively, "your bread and your water" are a reference to spiritual achievements which will be gained only by he who prays to Hashem b'tzibbur.

The Ma'or Va'shemesh adds that one who prays b'tzibbur will have access to spiritual opportunities that are beyond the purview of the average person. Indeed, he interprets this into the meaning of the pasuk in Mishlei 14:28, B'rov am hadras melech, "A multitude of people is a king's glory." The word hadras, which is translated as glory/beauty can also be translated as being derived from hadar, as in hadarna bi, "I changed my mind," remorse, or a reversal of one's earlier decision or opinion. We thus praise Hashem, that He reverses His decision, so to speak, in favor of those who pray to Him, b'rov am, in a large communal forum.

The early commentators distinguish between Tefillah b'kavanah, prayer amid concentration and devotion, and Tefillah without kavanah. They compare the Tefillah without kavanah to a guf b'li neshamah, a body without a soul, which obviously has no sustaining life force. Likewise, without concentration, the prayer has no life to it. Individual prayer can easily fall into the category of Tefillah without kavanah, because one who prays alone is usually in a hurry, swallowing his words and certainly giving very little thought to them. The feeling of exaltation that one has upon praying with a large group, the enthusiasm, the excitement and fervor is overwhelming and inspiring. The words take on new meaning as one concentrates on their inner meaning, bringing one closer to Hashem.

The Ramban in his commentary to Shir HaShirim writes that one who prays b'tzibbur will have his prayer accepted by Hashem, even if he did not concentrate on every word. So great is the power of the tzibbur.

The significance of Tefillah b'tzibbur was recognized by the gedolei Yisrael throughout the millennia. Many stories are told of their overriding mesiras nefesh, devotion to the point of self-sacrifice, to be able to pray with a minyan. Rabbi Paysach Krohn in Reflections of the Maggid cites the Talmud in Berachos 47b that teaches us: "A person should always rise early (to go) to the synagogue, so that he should merit to be counted among the first ten." Chazal explain that the first ten to arrive receive a reward equivalent to all those who came afterwards. The Maharasha explains, that the Shechinah, Divine Presence, graces a place where people pray only after there is a minyan in attendance. Therefore, it is only the first ten who receive credit for "bringing" the Shechinah to their place of prayer. Those who come later certainly receive reward for praying in a place where the Shechinah's Presence is manifest, but it is the first ten who get the credit for availing them the opportunity. Chazal are telling us that the initial reward for those first ten is equal to what everyone else receives for praying in the presence of the Shechinah.

Rabbi Krohn tells an intriguing story that should inspire us. There was a young man who owned a furniture store in a small community. One morning he noticed smoke rising up between the slats of his parquet floor. He quickly ran to the basement to see what was wrong, and soon had his worst fears realized. A fierce fire was raging in the basement. He was unsuccessful in his attempt to extinguish the fire with a portable extinguisher. By the time he ran upstairs, the fire had already spread to the first floor. The furniture was all aflame. He ran to the phone to call the fire department and then returned to his store, to watch helplessly as it burned to the ground.

The fire department finally arrived, but, alas, all they could do was water down the adjacent store to make sure the fire did not spread. His business was gutted. It would be months before he could even dream of opening up again. A few days after the fire, this young man came to shul and remarked to a friend, "You know, a few days prior to the fire, a fellow came over to me and commented about my late arrival to Minyan. 'You come to shul everyday, he said, 'but why do you always come so late? You are never there at the beginning of davening.'"

I replied to him, "What difference does it make when I come? The main thing is that in the end I am there!" 'Now I realize that the fire department also came - in the end - when my store had already been turned to rubble. It was too late. Hashem showed me that coming in the end is not good enough. It is no different than the fire department. It was too late.'"

While this may address those who are not there at the beginning of davening, there is another group that is equally disdainful - those who leave early. There are Kaddeishim which are recited at the end of davening for a reason. Apparently, they must be important since it is a point when the yasom, orphan, or one who is reciting Kaddish for the deceased, says Kaddish. There are those of us who feel that this portion of davening is not pertinent to us. We leave at will, or we justify our absence with some form of contrived need. Regrettably, those who must stay for that part of davening are those who say Kaddish. Let us not act in a manner that Heaven has reason for criticizing our behavior. The alternative to leaving at will is being compelled to staying for reasons beyond our control.

Dedicated to all Rebbeim and teachers of our son, Yosef Moshe n"y on his becoming Bar Mitzvah. Shmuel and Joanie Feuer and family Peninim mailing list Peninim@shemayisrael.com http://mail.shemayisrael.com/mailman/listinfo/peninim_shemayisrael.com

From: MICHAEL HOENIG [mailto:MHoenig@herzfeld-rubin.com]
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Yechezkel's Tsunami

Long consigned to ignorance about its existence by many or to infrequent use even by the literati, the word "Tsunami" is now on everyone's lips. And for good reason. The vivid images we have seen in recent weeks of surging, restless, powerful waves of water sweeping away nearly anything in their path make an indelible impression. They are hard to forget. Shock and reverence and awe now punctuate our mere mouthing of the word: "Tsunami." It sounds so much more foreboding than its plainer counterpart, "tidal wave."

It seems as if no one is saying tidal wave. Tsunami seems the clearly preferred term now, in the media, in private conversations, on the talk shows. Perhaps the exotic, haunting, mysterious, swish-like sound of the word fits better with our impression regarding the supernatural, raw, unbridled power we saw unleashed in the Indian Ocean environs. The devastation, the loss of life, the erosion of island land masses - all in a narrow time frame - point ineluctably to some expression of divine power at work. Human resistance to the Tsunami's forces is puny, virtually irrelevant to the onrush of this expression of mightier powers.

Those who are Torah-observant share the sense of open-mouthed shock with the rest of the world's citizens. Yet, being awestruck by Hashem's exercise of invincible power is not new, even to those who have never witnessed it. We grow up with the tradition that, occasionally, the Almighty's unleashing of nature's giant and irresistible powers occurs. Whether it is earthquakes, floods, seas dividing, mountains trembling, land masses being reshaped or, yes, walls of water or Tsunamis deluging the over-confident, the Torah-observer knows that it sometimes happens - even if we haven't seen it ourselves.

Tanach and Chazal tell us of many such extraordinary events. Parshas Beshalach recounts the pursuit of Bnai Yisrael by Pharaoh's army and

the latter's destruction. The Yam Suf becomes the evil pursuers' swirling watery grave. The Haftorah recounts the Prophetess Devorah's masterminding of Barak in the defeat of Sisra's formidable army. (The Midrash says it numbered some 300,000 men). That enemy also was doomed through the intervention of a suddenly-unleashed body of water. Hashem confused the enemy camp. An intense heat made the soldiers swelter in their armor. They elected to cool off in the brook Kishon's waters. But, the shallow brook swelled suddenly and the Canaanite army was drowned. These accounts of mighty humans made puny and fatally vanquished by superior forces of unbound waters no longer seem so remote.

Now we have seen a smidgen of such power, at least as captured by modern video and photograph. Our revered biblical tradition is vividly reinforced and confirmed by what we have just observed. Those who perhaps subconsciously suspected Chazal of fostering pedagogical legends now know that there is rightful reason to be awestruck, to truly feel Yiras Hashem Romema - utter and outright reverence for Hashem's manifest power.

Several weeks ago we read the Haftorah for Parshas VA'AIRA. It was from Yechezkel, Perek 28-29, prophesying about the upcoming punishment of Mitzraim. The textual connection to the Parsha is directly proximate. VA'AIRA relates the plagues visited upon Mitzraim and wicked Pharaoh. The Prophet (Navi) Yechezkel predicts that soon, some 1,000 years after the Exodus, punishment likewise will come upon Egypt and its wicked Pharaoh, Chofra. Like the ancient Egyptian king, the later Pharaoh was arrogant, proclaiming himself as god and boasting that the land's fertility, attributable to the Nile River's abundant flow, was caused by him, rather than Almighty Hashem.

Additionally, Mitzraim was a faithless, disloyal ally to Yisrael, first inciting Bnai Yisrael to rebel against Egypt's rivals, Ashur (Assyria) and Bavel (Babylonia) by promising military aid and then betraying Yisrael by failing to appear when needed or withdrawing its military forces at critical times. This fickle disloyalty left Yisrael vulnerable to merciless retribution by huge armies of the northern superpowers. Even then, it seems, the world's superpowers toyed with regional domination and politics. Egypt's (and Chofra's) arrogance made it ripe for a prophetic declaration of doom. Catastrophic punishment was not far off. Mitzraim was to learn a clear lesson: "Bezos Tedu Ki Ani Hashem" (and they will know that I am Hashem) (Yechezkel 28:26; see also 29:6, 9, 16 and 21).

The instrument of this divine retribution was to be Nevuchadnetzar, the Warrior King of Bavel. His army would sweep south, invade, conquer, destroy, lay desolate and despoil Mitzraim. Its cities will be deserted for 40 years as the inhabitants will be scattered and dispersed elsewhere. After 40 years, captives will return but Mitzraim will be a most lowly kingdom (Min HaMamlochos Tihye Shefala) (Yechezkel, 29:14-15).

Amidst the majestic anti-Mitzraim vision of Yechezkel in the Haftorah lies a small cluster of verses (see 29:18-20), easily read all-too quickly, which describes what appears to be a diversionary military vignette in which Nevuchadnetzar attacks Tzor (Tyre), a Phoenician power. What seems a textual distraction, however, is significant, indeed vital. And, unknown to most readers, a mighty Tsunami figures prominently, not only within that cluster of verses, but also in the shaping of Nevuchadnetzar's frame of mind and virtually compelling him to move south to attack Mitzraim. Yechezkel's Tsunami is not described explicitly in the verses referring to Bavel's campaign against Tyre. It is implied. The reader has to tweak it from Rashi, Radak or other Meforshim on the verses 29:18-20. But it is inescapable that a Tsunami indeed played a major role in molding a critical part of Yechezkel's prophetic vision. For those who don't readily go to Rashi, Radak and Midrashic sources, one will find a scant reference to a tidal wave in the footnote on p. 1150 of the Artscroll Chumash (Stone ed.) commenting on the Haftorah.

What happened in the case of Yechezkel's Tsunami? In Posuk 29:18, Yechezkel says that Nevuchadnetzar gave his army a difficult task: to besiege Tzor (Tyre). The effort was exhausting. Indeed, each soldier's head turned bald and every soldier's shoulder was blistered from having to carry stones and logs to build siege ramps and structures. Chazal tell us this was a siege that lasted for 13 years! Tzor had built formidable fortifications. It was incredibly wealthy, amassing abundant gold, silver, precious stones and many other valuables in its storehouses. The vast wealth was acquired via slick wisdom in trading with other nations. Such riches, however, bred arrogance by the King of Tyre. He claimed, "I am a god; I sit like a god in the heart of the sea." (See Yechezkel 28:2 and 6). Tyre "became arrogant in your wealth." (Id. at 29:4 and 16). This arrogance (and resulting lawlessness) was to be punished by Nevuchadnetzar's 13-year siege and catastrophic inundation from a Tsunami that overcame Tyre's fortifications and swept all of its vast wealth out to sea. Tzor was left destitute by the Tsunami and the siege. Yet, continues Yechezkel (29:18), Bavel's king and army "gained nothing from Tzor, after all the work he invested in it." The Meforshim explain that, because the ocean's tidal wave inundated the area and swept away all the booty the army had collected, Bavel's king and warriors were left empty-handed. Therefore, prophesies Yechezkel, Nevuchadnetzar will be given the land of Mitzraim instead and "will take its booty and plunder its spoil. This will be the reward for his army." (VeHaysa Sachar LeCheilo) (Yechezkel 29:19). And, continues Yechezkel in Posuk 20: "As a reward for the labor he did on Tzor, I (Hashem) will give him the land of Egypt" (Peuloso Asher Avad Bah Nosati Lo Es Eretz Mitzraim). That punishment of Mitzraim will be appropriate, says Yechezkel, "for what they did to me (Hashem), says Hashem Elokim" (29:20). The meaning of this is that Mitzraim wrongfully incited Yisrael to rebel against the northern superpower inviting later destruction of the holy land and Temple by Bavel. We see, therefore, from VA'AIRA's Haftorah, that Yechezkel describes a series of events in which the competing superpowers of that time interfaced and unknowingly executed Hashem's judgments. Mitzraim was ripe to be punished and despoiled. Tyre was ready to be shorn of its vast wealth and humbled by a 13-year siege. Both nations were arrogant and both had kings who proclaimed themselves god, over-confident in their wealth and status, and unmindful that their riches were attributable to Hashem's blessing. Nevuchadnetzar, too, was somewhat arrogant, and thus had to squander 13 precious years on a withering siege, only to be left unrewarded by yet another manifestation of Hashem's power – the mighty Tsunami. Yet, Yechezkel's Tsunami was not merely an instrument of wealth deprivation for Tzor and Bavel. It also was the divine mechanism by which the frustrated Nevuchadnetzar received inspiration and an irresistible inclination to head south and besiege Egypt. Because his army was unpaid and the siege long and arduous, Nevuchadnetzar had to act, thereby unwittingly becoming an instrument of retribution against a punishment-worthy Mitzraim. This highly intricate web of events, masterminded (KeVeyochol) by Hashem, directly affected the behavior of the world's superpowers and catalyzed their downfall or ascension. We see clearly that Yechezkel's Tsunami played a major role in effectuating Hashem's plan. We are able to recognize the big picture of these ancient, supernatural, Hashem-driven forces because we have the benefit of incisive insights from Tanach, the Navi, Chazal and Midrashic sources. The most recent Indian Ocean Tsunami, vividly fresh in our memory from only weeks ago, likewise seems to be a manifestation of Hashem's awesome power. Yet, we are bereft of the spiritual guides of old (the Navi and Chazal). They are not here to explain to us what this modern Tsunami means exactly or what role it will play in the events and forces that will shape the future. We lack proper insight to make sense of such human tragedy. How this powerful, fearsome, modern Tsunami might fit within past and

evolving history eludes us. However, we can discern from Yechezkel's Tsunami that such terrifying events are not wildly random. And, minimally, we should gain confidence that Tanach's reports of miraculous or horrifying circumstances involving nature's power and fury are not tall stories crafted to capture superstitious believers but, rather real-life occurrences teaching important lessons within biblical perspective. The events in Parshas Beshalach and the Haftorah of Devorah's victory are, accordingly, made more alive and the scriptural messages more compelling.

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Covenant & Conversation

Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from

RABBI DR. JONATHAN SACKS

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth

[from 2 years ago]

Beshalach Four Models of Leadership

"That day, G-d saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians . . . The Israelites saw the great power G-d had displayed against the Egyptians, and the people were in awe of G-d. They believed in G-d and in his servant Moses. Moses and the Israelites then sang this song, saying . . ." (Shemot 14:15)

The Song at the Sea was one of the great epiphanies of history. The sages said that even the humblest of Jews saw at that moment what even the greatest of prophets was not privileged to see. For the first time they broke into collective song - a song we recite every day. There is a fascinating discussion among the sages as to how exactly they sang. On this, there were four opinions. Three appear in the tractate of Sotah:

Our rabbis taught: On that day Rabbi Akiva expounded: When the Israelites came up from the Red Sea, they wanted to sing a song. How did they sing it? Like an adult who reads the Hallel [for the congregation] and they respond after him with the leading word. Moses said, I will sing to the Lord, and they responded, I will sing to the Lord. Moses said, For He has triumphed gloriously, and they responded, I will sing to the Lord.

R. Eliezer son of R. Jose the Galilean said: It was like a child who reads the Hallel [for a congregation] and they repeat after him all that he says. Moses said, I will sing to the Lord, and they responded, I will sing to the Lord. Moses said, For He has triumphed gloriously, and they responded, For He has triumphed gloriously.

R. Nehemiah said: It was like a schoolteacher who recites the Shema in the synagogue. He begins first and they respond after him. (Sotah 30b)

According to Rabbi Akiva, Moses sang the song phrase by phrase, and after each phrase the people responded, I will sing to the Lord - their way, as it were, of saying Amen to each line.

According to R. Eliezer son of R. Jose the Galilean, Moses recited the song phrase by phrase, and they repeated each phrase after he had said it. According to Rabbi Nehemiah, Moses and the people sang the whole song together. Rashi explains that all the people were seized by divine inspiration and miraculously, the same words came into their minds at the same time.

There is a fourth view, found in the Mekhilta:

R. Eliezer ben Taddai said, Moses began [each verse] and the Israelites repeated what he had said and then completed the verse. Moses began by saying, I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously, and the Israelites repeated what he had said, and then completed the verse with him, saying, I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously, the horse and its rider He hurled into the sea. Moses began [the next verse] saying, The Lord is my strength and my song, and the Israelites repeated and then completed the verse with him, saying, The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation. Moses began [the next verse]

saying, The Lord is a warrior, and the Israelites repeated and then completed the verse with him, saying, The Lord is a warrior, Lord is His name. (Mechilta Beshalach Parshah 1)

Technically, as the Talmud explains, the sages are debating the implication of the (apparently) superfluous words *vayomru lemor*, "they said, saying", which they understood to mean "repeating". What did the Israelites repeat? For R. Akiva it was the first words of the song only, which they repeated as a litany. For R. Eliezer son of R. Jose the Galilean they repeated the whole song, phrase by phrase. For R. Nehemiah they recited the entire song in unison. For R. Eliezer ben Taddai they repeated the opening phrase of each line, but then completed the whole verse without Moses having to teach it to them.

Read thus, we have before us a localised debate on the meaning of a biblical verse. There is, however, a deeper issue at stake. To understand this, we must look at another Talmudic passage, on the face of it unrelated to the passage in Sotah. It appears in the tractate of Kiddushin, and poses a fascinating question. There are various people we are commanded to honour: a parent, a teacher (i.e. a rabbi), the Nasi, (religious head of the Jewish community), and a king. Many any of these four types renounce the honour that is their due?

R. Isaac ben Shila said in the name of R. Mattana, in the name of R. Hisda: If a father renounces the honour due to him, it is renounced, but if a rabbi renounces the honour due to him it is not renounced. R. Joseph ruled: Even if a rabbi renounces his honour, it is renounced . . .

R. Ashi said: Even on the view that a rabbi may renounce his honour, if a Nasi renounces his honour, the renunciation is invalid . . . [An objection to this view is then brought by the Talmud].

Rather, if [the teaching of R. Ashi] was stated, it was stated thus: Even on the view that a Nasi may renounce his honour, yet a king may not renounce his honour, as it is said, You shall surely set a king over you, meaning, his authority [literally "fear"] should be over you. [See the passage in full. For space reasons I have only quoted a fragment.] (Kiddushin 32 a-b)

Each of these people exercises a leadership role: father to son, teacher to disciple, Nasi to the community and king to the nation. Analysed in depth, the passages makes it clear that these four roles occupy different places on the spectrum between authority predicated on the person and authority vested in the holder of an office. The more the relationship is personal, the more easily honour can be renounced. At one extreme is the role of a parent (intensely personal), at the other that of king (wholly official).

I suggest that this was the issue at stake in the argument over how Moses and the Israelites sang the Song at the Sea. For R. Akiva, Moses was like a king. He spoke, and the people merely answered Amen (in this case, the words "I will sing to the Lord"). For R. Eliezer son of R. Jose the Galilean, he was like a teacher. Moses spoke, and the Israelites repeated, phrase by phrase, what he had said. For R. Nehemiah, he was like a Nasi among his rabbinical colleagues (the passage in Kiddushin, which holds that a Nasi may renounce his honour, makes it clear that this is only among his fellow rabbis). The relationship was collegial: Moses began, but thereafter, they sung in unison. For R. Eliezer ben Taddai Moses was like a father. He began, but allowed the Israelites to complete each verse. This is the great truth about parenthood, made clear in the first glimpse we have of Abraham:

Terach took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there. (Bereishith 31:11)

Abraham completed the journey his father began. To be a parent is to want one's children to go further than you did. That too, for R. Eliezer ben Taddai, was Moses' relationship to the Israelites.

The prelude to the Song at the Sea states that the people "believed in G-d and in his servant Moses" - the first time they are described as believing

in Moses' leadership. On this, the sages asked: What is it to be a leader of the Jewish people? Is it to hold official authority, of which the supreme example is a king ("The rabbis are called kings")? Is it to have the kind of personal relationship with one's followers that rests not on honour and deference but on encouraging people to grow, accept responsibility and continue the journey you have begun? Or is it something in between?

There is no single answer. At times, Moses asserted his authority (during the Korach rebellion). At others, he expressed the wish that "all G-d's people were prophets". Judaism is a complex faith. There is no one Torah model of leadership. We are each called on to fill a number of leadership roles: as parents, teachers, friends, team-members and team-leaders. There is no doubt, however, that Judaism favours as an ideal the role of parent, encouraging those we lead to continue the journey we have begun, and go further than we did. A good leader creates followers. A great leader creates leaders. That was Moses' greatest achievement - that he left behind him a people willing, in each generation, to accept responsibility for taking further the great task he had begun.

From: Yeshivat Har Etzion Office [office@etzion.org.il] Sent: Jan. 19, 2005 5:55 AM To: yhe-parsha@etzion.org.il Subject: PARSHA65 -16: Parashat Beshalach By Rav Yaakov Medan

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THE WANDERINGS OF BENEI YISRAEL IN THE DESERT

BY RAV YAAKOV MEDAN

INTRODUCTION

A review of several biblical sources (Devarim chapter 8; Yirmiyahu 2:2; Hoshea 2:16-22, and others) indicates that the wanderings of Benei Yisrael in the wilderness had additional significance, aside from the need to circumvent the land of the Pelishtim (13:13-14) and apart from the punishment decreed on the nation as result of the sin of the spies (Bamidbar 14:28-35). These sources mainly point to another message: the wilderness is a place with no means of subsistence. It is there that Benei Yisrael learns that it is G-d Who feeds and sustains them - whether with manna, with quails, or with water. The precise significance of this message differs from one source to the next. Some emphasize that our food comes from G-d, and we must therefore not become arrogant and forget Him when we have plenty of everything, in Eretz Yisrael (Devarim 8:14-18); elsewhere the emphasis is that our hearts should not be tempted to believe that the foreign gods of the land are the source of our sustenance (Hoshea chapter 2); yet another source notes the loyalty of the nation that believed in G-d in an unown land with no food (Yirmiyahu 2:2).

Of all of these, we choose here to discuss the wandering in the desert as depicted in the prophecy of Amos (2:9-12; 5:25), who describes the trek entirely from a social perspective, in terms of justice and righteousness: "Let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream. Did you offer sacrifices and offerings to Me in the desert for forty years, O House of Israel?" (Amos 5:24-25)

Wandering in the desert, with the threat of starvation, served to transform the rag-tag group of slaves that left Egypt into a nation that bears the standard of righteousness, justice, and social equality, concerning which the nations of the world are destined to comment: "Which nation is so great that it has statutes and judgments so righteous as all of this Torah which I place before you today" (Devarim 4:8).

LAW AND JUDGEMENT
A review of the story of "Mei Meriva" (15:22-26) demonstrates that the water that Moshe sweetened was meant to do more than merely quench the thirst that had built up over three days: "He called out to G-d, and G-d showed him a tree; he cast it into the water and the water was sweetened. There He made for them "chok u-mishpat" (a statute and a judgment), and there He tested them" (Shemot 15:25).

The Torah gives no indication of what the "test" was, but from the context we may conclude that it was related to the "statute and the judgment" mentioned together with it. We must clarify, then, which "statute and judgment" were given at Mara. In the midrashim of Chazal we find different opinions on this question. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 56b) mentions laws (dinim), Shabbat, and honoring parents, and explains: "dinim" - "There He made for them chok u-mishpat"; Shabbat and honoring parents - because in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Devarim, both of these commandments mention the

words, "as the Lord your G-d commands you" (Devarim 5:11,15); hence we deduce that Benei Yisrael were given these commandments prior to the Revelation at Sinai.

But what is the "statute" that is referred to as having been given at Mara? To our understanding, the word "statute" (chok) is meant here as a specified measurement - particularly, a specified ration of food. When the waters of the well were sweetened, G-d established a "chok" - a ration, or measure - as to how much water each person was entitled to draw for himself, for his family, and for his cattle. If no ration were determined per person from the waters of the well, it is difficult to describe the chaos that would have ensued when 600,000 thirsty people, after three days of wandering in the desert, were to grab water for themselves, their families, and their cattle. The "chok" (= ration) required "mishpat" - i.e., an actual rule as to the ration of each family. At Mara, the group of slaves who had just been freed and who did not recognize each other and their rights, faced their first test of mutual respect, consideration for others, and - especially - discipline. All of these are fundamental, elementary concepts on the road to building a properly-run society and nation; they are elementary concepts on the road to freedom. The test of freedom is not whether a person is able to do whatever he wishes, but rather whether he is able to act in accordance with his will, out of free choice, but at the same time - to remain a human being, in the moral and cultural sense of the word. Therefore, this is also the test of a free society and of a free nation.

The "statute and judgment" concerning the water are themselves the test of "there He tested them," as the continuation of the story proves. When Benei Yisrael reach the wilderness of Sin, their bread runs out. In their hunger, they complain against Moshe and Aharon. And just as G-d sweetened the water for them at Mara, so too He rains down food for them from heaven - the manna. Again, the manna is given at the price of a test: "Behold, I rain down for you bread from the heavens, so that the people can go out and gather each day's rations, in order that I may test them as to whether they will follow My Torah or not" (16:4).

In the parasha dealing with the manna, an explicit commandment is given, and this itself turns out to be the test: "This is the thing that G-d commanded: Gather of it each person according to his eating, an omer per person according to your numbers; each person shall take for those who are in his tent" (16:16) Benei Yisrael succeed in this test: "They gathered; some more and some less. And when they measured the omer, he who had taken more had none left over, and he that had gathered less was not lacking; they gathered - each according to his eating." (16:17-18)

We do not know how much manna descended each day, but even if there was a great abundance - no one could know in advance what quantity would be needed to feed millions of hungry mouths with manna. Clearly, the manna had to suffice for everyone. People who took more than they needed would cause their neighbors to suffer a shortage. Again, this was a test of respect presented to free people who were not receiving their set rations from their masters, but rather were able to gather it themselves, and could - were it not for the commandment, and had they so wished - take more for themselves. We may add further: the test of gathering a set measure of manna was not an easy one. In two separate places the Torah praises the taste of the manna: "Its taste was like a wafer with honey" (16:31); "its taste was like an oil cake" (Bamidbar 31:8). At the same time, the Torah states: "He afflicted you and made you hungry, and fed you with the manna, which you had not known" (Devarim 8:3). A comparison of the sources leads us to conclude that although manna was good and tasty, it was provided in small measure, which was enough for survival but not enough to fill one's stomach; it did not give a feeling of satiety. If we add to the sense of hunger - which was experienced also by the elderly, the children, and the sick - the fact that it was forbidden to keep any of the manna aside even for emergencies, we may begin to understand the extent of the test involved in "gathering by measure."

The purpose of this measure was "statute and judgment": to enable everyone to gather and to eat in equal measure, not to allow a situation in which "may the best (strongest) man win." **B. SHABBAT**

As mentioned above, two additional commandments were given at Mara: Shabbat and honoring parents. Therefore, concerning the commandments - as they appear in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Devarim - we are told, "as the Lord your G-d commanded you." Let us devote some discussion to the commandment of Shabbat in this context.

Two main reasons are given for the commandment of Shabbat. Firstly, Shabbat is a testimony to the fact that G-d created the heavens and the earth within a given time (20:10); secondly, "in order that your manservant and maidservant shall rest like you, and you shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt" (Devarim 5:13; Shemot 23:12). These two reasons may be viewed as addressing the two focuses of our faith - the Creation of the world and the Exodus from Egypt. Here we shall emphasize the first reason: the Creation ex nihilo, and the continuation of the

world's existence by virtue of justice and righteousness. The Gemara mentioned above (Sanhedrin 56b), as well as Rashi on Devarim (5:11) assume that Shabbat, as commanded at Sinai, is a sign of the Creation, while Shabbat as commanded at Mara (and as mentioned in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Devarim) is a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, and "in order that your manservant and maidservant shall rest like you." This assumption fits what we said above - that the crux of the commandment at Mara concerned the "chok u-mishpat": the emphasis is on equality, on the "like you." "Like you" in resting on Shabbat, "like you" in the ration of water from the well, and - later on - "like you" in the omer measure of manna.

Let us explain further. The Gemara provides no details as to which of the laws of Shabbat were commanded to Benei Yisrael at Mara. It is difficult to imagine that all of the 39 categories of melakha were taught there, since these are derived from the melakhot performed in the Mishkan, while the stop at Mara preceded the commandment to build the Mishkan. Moreover, the logical deduction of the prohibited categories of melakha from the categories of work performed in the Mishkan arises from the juxtaposition of the parshiyot discussing the Mishkan and Shabbat respectively, in chapters 31 and 35. Since the connection is based on a juxtaposition that appears only later on, Benei Yisrael could not have received this commandment at Mara. It seems, therefore, that Benei Yisrael were commanded concerning the 39 categories of melakha as an explanation for the mitzva of Shabbat given at Sinai. The categories of creative melakha associated with the Mishkan are a remembrance of the creative melakha of Creation, and the cessation from such melakha on Shabbat is a remembrance of the Shabbat of Creation, as stated in the Ten Commandments as they appear in Sefer Shemot, and in the Shabbat command in the context of the Mishkan: "For in six days G-d made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He ceased and rested" (31:17).

The mitzva of Shabbat that was given at Mara consisted, to our view, in one single prohibition of melakha - a category of melakha whose connection with the work of the Mishkan is weak: the act of carrying from one sort of domain ("reshut") to another. This melakha is mentioned in the parasha of Shabbat in the wilderness of Sin, and from the rebuke over the breach in Shabbat observance it appears that this prohibition was not given there for the first time, but rather was already known to them. Apparently, then, Benei Yisrael were commanded in this regard at Mara.

According to Rashi's understanding, the Shabbat commandment given at Mara is the Shabbat mentioned in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Devarim, whose essence is a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, social justice, equality between the master and slave in rest and in the rations of water and manna whose essential command concerns the melakha of carrying from one "domain" to another. The Shabbat commanded at Sinai, on the other hand, and mentioned in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Shemot, reminds us of the Creation of the world within a set time; this is the Shabbat mentioned in connection with the work of the Mishkan, and whose essence is the commandment concerning the 39 categories of melakha.

Let us now elaborate a little on our hypothesis that at Mara Benei Yisrael were commanded only concerning transfer from one domain to another, while at Sinai they were commanded concerning all 39 categories of melakha. It seems that this change is connected to another change that Benei Yisrael underwent at the foot of Mount Sinai: a transition from being a group of nomads, lacking any permanent home or place, a society entirely involved in journeying or preparing for journeying, into a nation dwelling in a permanent place, at the foot of Mount Sinai, its life revolving around creativity and building - the establishment of G-d's Mishkan. The establishment of the Mishkan required that the nation involve itself in all 39 categories of melakha - from agricultural activities required for Mishkan materials to textile work, hunting, leatherwork, metal refinement, construction, assembly, and dismantling. Even if not everyone in the nation was actively involved in these activities, there can be no doubt that the establishment of the Mishkan was the focus of national attention and the center of national life.

It was there, at Sinai - specifically because of the joy of creativity and the feeling that mortals were establishing a "home" for the G-d of the heavens - that Benei Yisrael were commanded to place limits on the sense of doing. There they were commanded to rest on Shabbat from all sorts of work in general, and from the work involved in the Mishkan in particular; to remember that G-d created the entire universe - man dwells in the domain of the Creator, not the opposite. At Mara and in the wilderness of Sin, until G-d revealed

His glory to them and until they were commanded with regard to the essence of faith, the problem was a different one: there, as we have said, Benei Yisrael were not engaged in action and creativity, and their food was available to them without their having to exert much effort. They found a desert oasis with streams and date palms (eilim), or they obtained food miraculously - in the form of the manna or the quails in the wilderness of Sin and at the wells of Mara and Refidim.

It appears, then, that the main occupation of those who left Egypt during this period was commerce. Basic nourishment was provided to all from on High, but when it came to other requirements - such as vessels and clothing - they must have traded amongst each other, or with foreign caravans that they encountered along the way. Many of them owned assets that they took from the Egyptians when they borrowed their vessels and from the booty seized at the Red Sea. The water and manna could have served as additional property for trade and an additional factor in the accumulation of capital, had it not been for the explicit prohibition against gathering more than the requirement for each individual. At Mara - and specifically there - the Torah comes to place limits on commercial activity and the efforts to accumulate capital. This is done in two ways. a) By placing a "chok u-mishpat," essentially a setting down of the ration of water for each family and each individual, as in the case of the manna later on. At the same time, the other rules of "chok u-mishpat" were set down: the concepts of uprightness, loyalty, and justice in national life in general; "there He gave them chok u-mishpat, and there He tested them." b) Through the mitzva of Shabbat, given at Mara, as stated, the creative melakha that was prohibited in this command concerned carrying from one domain to another - the only category of melakha whose connection with the creative work of the Mishkan is weak. The unique character of the category of melakha that involves carrying between domains, and its associated prohibitions, is emphasized not only in the parasha of Shabbat in the wilderness of Sin, and in the source for Shabbat at Mara (as explained above). Nechemia introduced Shabbat enactments specifically concerning carrying: "In those days I saw, in Yehuda, people treading the winepress on Shabbat, and bringing in sheaves of corn, and loading donkeys even with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, and bringing them to Jerusalem on Shabbat. I warned them on the day when they sold produce. There were people of Tzor who lived there, who brought fish and all sorts of wares, and sold them on Shabbat to the inhabitants of Yehuda and in Jerusalem... It happened, when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before Shabbat, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and I commanded that they should not be opened again until after Shabbat, and I posted some of my servants at the gates so that no burden should be brought in on the Shabbat day. So the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. I warned them and said to them: Why do you lodge around the wall? If you do this again I will lay hands on you. From that time onwards they did not come on Shabbat. I told the Levi'im that they should purify themselves as guards to the gates, to sanctify the Shabbat day..." (Nechemia 13:15-22) Nechemia also makes mention of the other sorts of melakha, but his principal objection concerns carrying (bringing produce into the city on Shabbat). Concerning these verses in Nechemia, the Gemara (Shabbat 123b) teaches that the strict enactment concerning vessels was reinforced at Nechemia's time; it was forbidden to carry anything other than cups, bowls, and the three household items mentioned in the beraita. Only in later periods did halakhic authorities gradually allow carrying certain vessels. This enactment was introduced as a strict protective fence around the melakha of carrying. The reason for the widespread violation of Shabbat specifically in the area of carrying is clear from Nechemia's testimony; it relates to commercial life in Jerusalem. Those who brought merchandise into Jerusalem were non-Jews. Merchants from Tzor and, apparently, also from Shomron, dictated the city's commerce; they chose business days that were convenient for them. The inhabitants of Jerusalem had very little possibility of engaging in agriculture and industry, and the pressures exerted by their non-Jewish environment made things no easier for them. The Jews were a minority living in cities, while most of the fields were in the hands of non-Jews who had settled there before the return of the exiles from Babylon. The Jews, then, were forced into adopting an urban lifestyle; they bought their agricultural produce from the non-Jews. Commerce occupied an important place in their lives, and when the business day was set by the non-Jewish merchants as Shabbat - the violation of Shabbat concerned mainly the melakha of carrying. Jerusalem, surrounded by a wall with gates that were locked at night (see Eruvin 6b), was "private domain," and any commercial activity that took place within the city involved importing from the "public domain" outside the walls into this "private domain" inside the walls. Nechemia took steps to halt the phenomenon: he chased the merchants away from the gates of the city and enacted the prohibitions of carrying from one sort of domain to another in order to reinforce this specific aspect of Shabbat observance. Since then, carrying from one domain to another is the Shabbat activity with the greatest number of protective enactments. The situation towards the end of the First Temple Period, in the days of Yehoyakim ben Yoshiyahu, when Yirmiyahu's prophecy (quoted above) was uttered, was no better: "The cities of the Negev will be shut up, with none to open them" (Yirmiyahu 13:19)

"...A leopard will lie in wait over their cities; anyone who goes out from them will be torn apart" (Yirmiyahu 5:6) "G-d set against him the bands of Kasdim and the bands of Aram and the bands of Moav and the bands of the children of Amon..." (Melakhim II 24:2) Most of all, the situation is summed up in the story of the children of Rekhev, tent-dwelling shepherds who tell Yirmiyahu, in the days of Yehoyakim: "It happened, when Nevukhadretzar, King of Babylon, came up to the land, we said: 'Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Kasdim and for fear of the army of Aram' - and so [now] we dwell in Jerusalem." (Yirmiyahu 35:11) This being the situation, it is no surprise that most of the produce was in non-Jewish hands, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem engaged mainly in buying the produce from non-Jews who dictated the business calendar. The main warning against this violation of Shabbat was applied specifically to carrying burdens of wares and produce through the city gates, as Yirmiyahu declares: "Thus said G-d to me: Go and stand at the gate of children of the nation, by which the kings of Yehuda enter and by which they leave, and at all the gates of Jerusalem. Say to them: 'Hear the word of G-d, O kings of Yehuda, and all of Yehuda and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter these gates: So says G-d: Guard yourselves lest you bear a burden on the Shabbat day and bring it into the gates of Jerusalem. Nor shall you carry a burden out of your houses on the Shabbat day, nor shall you do any melakha. You shall sanctify the Shabbat day as I commanded your ancestors... and it will be, if you listen to Me, promises G-d, and not bring a burden into the gates of this city on the Shabbat day, and you sanctify the Shabbat day and not perform any melakha on it, then through the gates of this will enter kings and princes who sit upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Yehuda and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city shall remain forever... But if you do not listen to Me, to sanctify the Shabbat day and not to carry burdens, and you come into the gates of Jerusalem on the Shabbat day, then I shall kindle a fire in its gates, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it will not be extinguished.'" (Yirmiyahu 17:19-27) From Yirmiyahu's prophecies we see a further development. The decline of artisan work and the conversion of the inhabitants of Jerusalem into a community of merchants brought in their wakes another obstacle: "So says G-d: Go down to the house of the king of Yehuda, and say there this word, and you shall say: Hear the word of G-d, O king of Yehuda, sitting upon the throne of David - you and your servants and your people who enter these gates: So says G-d: Perform judgment and righteousness, save the robbed from the hand of the oppressor; do not wrong or oppress the stranger, the orphan and the widow, and do not spill innocent blood in this place. For if you do this, then into the gates of this house will enter kings who sit upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses - he and his servants and his people. But if you do not hear these words, I swear by Myself, says G-d, that this house shall become a desolation." (Yirmiyahu 22:1-5) The structure of the prophecy and its style point to a connection between it and the prophecy concerning bearing burdens on Shabbat. The commands given to those who enter the gates - the gates of the city and the gates of the king's palace - are the prohibition against carrying on Shabbat, and guarding the rights of the robbed, the stranger, the orphan and the widow. Shabbat, as it relates to the place of business, does not come to testify to G-d's creation of the world in six days. The cessation of the melakha of carrying does not involve cessation from creative melakha, since it involves no creativity. The Shabbat of the workplace is not meant to stop productivity and development; it is meant to halt the unending pursuit of money which is related to commerce. The greatest danger in this pursuit of money is the overt and covert deceit, the villainy which may technically be permissible or may not. All of these involve the same result: injustice towards the weak and the innocent. For one day in the week G-d commands that a person halt his battle for survival, his desire for riches. For one day in the week a person must remember the waters of the well at Mara and the manna, by which Shabbat was sanctified and blessed (see Rashi, Bereishit 2:3). In this way he will recognize that his sustenance comes from G-d, and it is G-d Who determines how much he will receive. He will recognize that we borrow from Him and He gives - that all eyes are turned to Him, and He gives them food at the proper time. Throughout the forty years, beginning with the Shabbat at Mara and the Shabbat in the wilderness of Sin, all those who left Egypt, and their children ate the same food and in equal quantities. Together they quenched their thirst and together they suffered hunger. A merchant who thinks to himself, "When will the New Month be over, that we may sell corn, and Shabbat - that we may set forth wheat," making the 'efa' small and the shekel great, falsifying their deceitful balances" (Amos 8:5), will remember, when commerce is postponed on the seventh day, that all of G-d's children are equal in His eyes, and He opens His hand to feed all of them. No amount of effort on man's part will achieve anything unless his Father in heaven sets aside

sustenance for him. He Who redeemed him from the slavery of Egypt, and also from the fleshpot there, is the same One Who promises to provide food for him and for his family; He asks only one thing: "That your manservant and your maidservant shall rest like you" (Devarim 5:14).

Before we conclude our discussion of Shabbat, we must mention the parallel between the two Shabbats - the Shabbat of Mara and of the wilderness of Sin (mentioned in Sefer Devarim) and the Shabbat of Sinai (mentioned in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Shemot) and the commandment to let the land lie fallow in the seventh (shemitta) year. The subject of Shemitta is clearly divisible into two separate commandments:

One is: "For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather all of your produce. But in the seventh year there shall be a Shabbat of Shabbats for the land, a Shabbat to G-d. You shall not sow your field, nor shall you prune your vineyard. You shall not reap what grows by itself of your harvest, nor shall you gather the grapes of your undressed vine; a Shabbat of Shabbats shall there be for the land." (Vayikra 25:3-5)

The reason for this command is reflected in the explanation for the commandment concerning the 'yovel' (jubilee) year which follows immediately afterwards: "For the land is Mine; you are strangers and sojourners with Me" (verse 23). The nation that reaches its land and inherits it may be mistaken into thinking that they own it, believing that they till it by virtue of their ownership of it. In the seventh year, every supposed landowner is required to abandon work on his land and to commemorate a Shabbat for G-d, thereby declaring as the prophet Yirmiyahu did: "I [G-d] formed the land... By My great strength and by My outstretched arm I give it to whomever is upright in My eyes" (Yirmiyahu 27:5).

It is not the nation that hosts the Shekhina in their land, but rather the opposite - "You are strangers and sojourners with Me." That which is said of the Mishkan on the seventh day is said also of the entire land in the seventh year.

A second commandment in this parasha, with no direct connection to the prohibition of melakha in the seventh year, is:

"The produce of the land in the seventh year shall be food for you, for you and for your manservant and for your maidservant, for your hired servant and for the stranger that dwells with you, and for your cattle and for the beasts that are in your land shall all its produce be, for food." (Vayikra 25:6)

The Sages explain: "for food" - but not for merchandise" (Avoda Zara 62a). The Torah here is not prohibiting work, but rather commerce. The purpose of this prohibition is to achieve equality between the landowner and the stranger who has no land. For one out of every seven years, man halts his pursuit of money. Together with his neighboring stranger, he eats a sort of "manna," from the Table on high:

"If you will say: What shall we eat during the seventh year, for we shall not sow nor shall we gather our produce?" - I command My blessing to you in the sixth year, and its produce will suffice for three years" (Vayikra 25:20-21)

Again - the landowner's obligation concerning food for the stranger and for his servants is the Master of the Universe's own obligation concerning food for His children and His servants, food for His nation dwelling in His inheritance as "strangers and sojourners." The acceptance of His mastership and ownership of the land is the Shabbat described in the Ten Commandments in Sefer Shemot; it is the Shabbat of the land and its prohibition of agricultural melakha. The faith that the Master of the Universe and the G-d of the land will sustain us from His open hand, and that He alone determines our sustenance, rather than our unceasing efforts - that is the Shabbat of Mara, of the wilderness of Sin and of Sefer Devarim, and this is the Shemitta of the land for the stranger and for the sojourner: "for food - and not for commerce."

C. HONORING ONE'S FATHER AND MOTHER

At Mara, in addition to the mitzva of Shabbat, Benei Yisrael was also commanded as to honoring parents. So far we have explained the connection between Shabbat and the "chok u-mishpat" at Mara; we must now explain the mitzva of honoring parents and its connection to the "chok u-mishpat" of Mara. This mitzva is a multi-faceted one. We shall relate here only to that issue that appears to us to be related to our discussion. One of the parshiyot that is most obviously connected to the mitzva of honoring parents is the matter of the rebellious and wayward son:

"If a man shall have a wayward and rebellious son - he does not listen to his father and to his mother, and they punish him but he does not listen to them - then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, and to the gates of his place. They shall say to the elders of the city: This son of ours is wayward and rebellious, he does not listen to us; he is a glutton and a drunkard." (Devarim 21:18-20)

The only sin that is explicitly mentioned in connection with the rebellious son is that he is a "glutton and a drunkard." In halakha, too, only this issue is addressed in details:

"From what point is he deserving of death? When he eats a 'tartemar' [a certain measure] of meat and drinks a half a 'log' of Italian wine. R. Yossi says: a full measure of meat and a 'log' of wine." (Mishna Sanhedrin 70a)

But the Gemara itself expresses surprise at this sole halakha defining the law of the wayward and rebellious son:

"R. Yossi ha-Gelili says: Is it then because this boy ate a 'tartemar' of meat and drank a half-'log' of Italian wine that the Torah commands that he be taken out to the Beit Din to be stoned? [Surely not]; rather, the Torah understands the full depth of the rebellious son's mind: ultimately he will squander all of his father's assets, he will seek his habit (meat and wine) and not find it, and so he will go out to the crossroads and rob the passersby. So the Torah says: Let him rather die innocent, rather than waiting for him to die guilty." (Sanhedrin 72a)

The explanation that R. Yossi ha-Gelili provides removes the parasha of the rebellious son altogether from the issue of honoring parents, and moves it to the sphere of robbery and violence. It is somewhat difficult to reconcile his opinion with the literal text of the Torah. In fact, the connection between a rebellious son and a glutton and drunkard is interpreted in Sefer Mishlei, in the words of the leech:

"The leech has two daughters: "Give, give!" Three things are never satisfied; four never say it is enough: Sheol, and a barren womb, the earth that is never sated with water, and the fire that never says it is enough. The eye that mocks its father and scorns to obey its mother - the ravens of the wadi shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it." (Mishlei 30:15-17)

The leech (or "stockpiling") describes those who are never satisfied and never say "enough!" to their accumulation of wealth. Two of them are never satisfied in a positive moral sense: the barren womb, wishing to absorb seed in order to perpetuate life, and the dry earth that desires water in order to produce vegetation. The other two are negative moral phenomena: Sheol, which is never satisfied from swallowing the dead, and fire, which burns and destroys.

But worse of all is man, who never fulfills all of his desires: "Sheol and Avado will never be satisfied, nor will man's eyes ever be satisfied." (Mishlei 27:20)

In the metaphor of the leech, man is the son who knows no satisfaction for his desires. His parents are limited in their ability to satisfy the son's unbridled appetites, and he repays them with an attitude of scorn: "The eye that mocks its father and scorns to obey its mother." The glutton and drunkard who knows no satisfaction and never says "enough" - he will eventually scorn and mock his parents, who do not fulfill all of his wants. But this is not the full extent of his sin.

"There is a generation that curses its father and does not bless its mother. There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, but is not washed from its filth. There is a generation - how lofty are their eyes; their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are swords and their molars like knives, to devour the poor from off the land and the destitute from mankind." (Mishlei 30:11-14)

From scorn and mocking... to cursing. He scorns the elderly generation of his father, earning its meager bread honestly. He is pure in his own eyes, and his way of filling his belly is simple and easy. His sharp teeth and grinding molars, which lead his desires down to his stomach, are the swords that oppress the poor and the destitute. The Torah understands the full extent of the rebellious son's thinking: he does not find what he wants coming from his father, so he stands and robs passersby.

Let us now return to Mara and to the wilderness of Sin. The topic of our discussion here is "chok u-mishpat" the fair distribution of resources - food and water - during the desert wanderings. Let us note that so far the Torah has not insisted that every individual must take exactly the same amount as his fellow does. Thus far, the Torah has enforced equality only on the family level: "Gather of it each person according to his eating; an omer per person, according to the number of you; each person shall take for those who are in his tent" (16:16)

Every person took for the number of people in his household, and the Torah relies on the natural system of distribution within the family. Within the family there is certainly no reason for concern as to an unjust distribution, for it is impossible that when it comes to doling out food, the parents will favor one child over the others.

But when the family includes a son who is rebellious, a glutton and a drunkard - a son who appropriates all of the family's food for himself and has no consideration for his siblings, a son whose rations consist of a 'tartemar' of meat and a half-log of wine - then how can the rationing of an omer per person remain justified? And if the son has no concept of fair rationing even between himself and his siblings, how is he going to act towards his neighbors, towards everyone else? Will he really keep himself to taking an omer and no more? And how will he treat his parents, who provide him with only an omer instead of a "tartemar"; the same omer concerning which it is written, "He afflicted them and made them hungry" (Devarim 8:3)?

When those who left Egypt stood in line next to the well at Mara, when G-d gave them a "chok u-mishpat," the Torah also commanded the honoring of parents. This is honor which means - first and foremost - a son's respect for the parents' right to distribute food among their children according to their best judgment and in keeping with their sense of fairness.

D. REFIDIM

Refidim brought the first major crisis. There Benei Yisrael's sin was memorialized in the name of the place - Masa U-Meriva - and there they were punished for the first time, in the battle against Amalek.

In the simplest terms, their sin was a dual one: 'masa' and 'meriva': "For the quarrel (riv) of Benei Yisrael" - the quarrel against Moshe (as we read, "The nation quarreled with Moshe"; "why do you quarrel with me?"), and for their challenging (nasotam) G-d, saying: Is G-d in our midst or not?" (17:7) - a challenge to G-d (as Moshe says: "Why are you testing G-d?"). We tend to view them as a single sin, encapsulated in their words to Moshe, "Why then have you brought us up from Egypt" (17:3). This was a quarrel with Moshe who, they claimed, had brought them on his own initiative out of the land of the Nile to a wilderness with no water; it was a challenge to G-d in that they ignored the fact that He had brought them out of Egypt, and in their declaration which implied that G-d was not amongst them.

But if this was their whole sin - how could G-d accede to their complaint and provide water in a miraculous way and with a revelation at Chorev, even making the elders witness to the miracle and to the revelation? And why does G-d then immediately punish them, with no additional sin? The only comparable example that we have of such a chain of events - the story of the quails, at Kivrot Ha-ta'ava - actually serves to contradict our hypothesis: there, although G-d provided them with quails, and while the meat was still between their teeth He struck the nation with a plague (Bamidbar 11:33), prior to that He had provided the meat in anger and with rebuke. He tells them explicitly, "Because you despised G-d Who is in your midst..." (Bamidbar 11:20). Moreover, in the parasha that parallels the story of Refidim - the parasha of Mei Meriva at Kadesh (Bamidbar 20:1-13), the complaint of the nation was the same as that at Refidim, but we find no punishment meted out to them.

The principal difference hinted to in the verses between Benei Yisrael's behavior at Refidim and their behavior at Mei Meriva Kadesh concerns the words they spoke at Refidim: "Why then have you brought us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle [all written in the singular: me and my children and my cattle] with thirst" (17:3). This style is somewhat unusual, hinting at the fact that the nation was concerned not for the collective, but rather each man for himself, his own family and his own cattle.

We assume that when Moshe was commanded to pass before the nation and to go with the seventy elders to the rock at Chorev, which was located at some distance (Benei Yisrael undertook a whole journey from Refidim to Mount Sinai), the battle broke out over the water, which was not being distributed according to the order of "chok u-mishpat" which Moshe had established at Mara. Let us explain this picture more clearly: G-d's revelation was, as we have said, at the rock at Chorev, the place where the Ten Commandments would eventually be given. Moshe cast the ashes of the golden calf into the "stream that came down from the mountain" (Devarim 9:21), sprinkling it over the water in the middle of summer - on the seventeenth of Tammuz (see Shemot 32:20). It is impossible for there to have been a running stream on that date in the middle of the wilderness of Sinai. We must therefore conclude that the stream was created miraculously - meaning that the rock at Chorev, where the water emerged, was at Mount Sinai rather than at Refidim.

No elaboration is needed for the reason why the place of the revelation concerning the water was at the place of the Shekhina - the place where the Torah was to be given. The same pattern had played itself out at Mara - with the "chok u-mishpat" being given over water, and likewise also the rock of Chorev. Still, we must ask why the miraculous emergence of the water from the rock was not performed before the entire nation, but rather only in the presence of the elders:

"G-d said to Moshe: Pass over before the nation, and take with you some of the elders of Israel" (17:5)

This was a contrast to what had happened at Mara, at Mei Merivat Kadesh. The miraculous flow of water at Chorev was similar, in this respect, to the plague bringing death to the firstborn in Egypt, where Benei Yisrael were commanded, "You shall not come out, any one of you, from the entrance to your houses until the morning. And G-d passed over to strike Egypt with the plague..." (12:22-23). It does not resemble the parting of the Red Sea, where we read: "Stand and you will see G-d's salvation" (14:13); "Israel saw the Egyptians dying at the sea shore" (14:30); leading to "The nation feared G-d and believed in G-d and in Moshe, His servant" (14:31). The fact that the miracle of the water was performed in this way, such that Benei Yisrael did not witness the splitting of the rock, but rather only the water which flowed to them at a great distance from the rock - must certainly have been a result of their sin; they were not worthy of the miracle. The result - water flowing through the camp while the Shekhina was not in the camp and Moshe and the elders of Israel were also absent - can only be imagined. Two facts are known to us: a) no song of praise was sung there, in contrast to the song of the well during the fortieth year; and b) no "chok u-mishpat" were given from the moment that the water emerged until Benei Yisrael arrived, in complete teshuva

(see Mekhilta, "in the third month," parasha 1; Rashi 19:2), at Mount Sinai.

We shall leave the description of the scramble over the water, the shouts of "Me!", "My children," and "my cattle," to the reader's imagination, and meanwhile turn our attention to the war with Amalek. E. AMALEK

The subject of the war against Amalek, the commandment to wipe them out, and the conflict between Benei Yisrael and them for all generations, is of immense scope; with G-d's help we shall address it at a different opportunity (see Y. Medan, "Amalek," in "Al Derekh ha-Avot," the 50th anniversary publication of Herzog College). In this chapter we shall address only a few details of that war that are pertinent to our discussion here.

According to the literal account, it would appear that Amalek arrived at Refidim when they heard about the water flowing there (although the generally accepted understanding follows the opinion of the Ramban, that Amalek "came pursuing a quarrel that was not theirs"). We must keep in mind that this battle took place towards the end of Iyar (they were in the wilderness of Sin on the 15th of Iyar [16:1], and moved to Mount Sinai on the 1st of Sivan [19:1]; between the wilderness of Sin and Refidim the passed two more stops [Bamidbar 33:12]), at the beginning of the summer. As desert dwellers, Amalek claimed ownership of the water, and it was over this that the war broke out. Perhaps their daring in storming the camp arose from the disorderly allocation of water that was happening there, with the fighting on all sides in the absence of the leadership and with the people's short temper. The mighty blow that Amalek delivered to the nation - despite the fact that Benei Yisrael were undoubtedly more numerous, and even though Aharon and Hur held Moshe's arms up - is explained, to our view, by the fact that on the day when Amalek struck, the nation's entire leadership - Moshe, his disciple Yehoshua (as we may deduce) and the seventy elders - was at the rock in Chorev. Amalek had no difficulty attacking a nation divided against itself with no leaders.

As soon as Moshe found out what was going on, he immediately sent Yehoshua to the camp, to Refidim, to select soldiers. Moshe remained at Chorev (according to Ibn Ezra, the "rock" which he had struck was Sinai), where he raised his arms and his staff of G-d. Therefore Benei Yisrael's counter-attack was delayed by a day, as we read: "Tomorrow I shall stand..." (17:9), and this is what allowed the catastrophe to happen.

To our understanding, the selection of the soldiers might also have had something to do with the situation: "Moshe said to Yehoshua: Select men for us and go out to fight against Amalek" (17:9)

Who were the soldiers selected for this battle? Let us compare this battle against Amalek and their neighbors, Midyan (see Shoftim 6:33), with the battle waged by Gidon against Midyan and Amalek many generations later. There, too, Gidon was commanded to select men:

"G-d said to Gidon: Those who lap with their tongue from the water, as a dog laps, shall you set apart, and likewise those who bend down on their knees to drink" (Shoftim 7:5).

The uncontrolled scramble for water, in which Gidon's potential soldiers throw their weapons upon the ground, is the same drive that leads Benei Yisrael in Refidim to drink with no thought of quantity, with no consideration for others, with no fair allocation, and this is what brings Amalek to the camp. The minority who did not behave in this manner are the soldiers who defeated them. When Chazal discuss the sin that brought in its wake the war against Amalek, they note the juxtaposition of parshiyot in Sefer Devarim:

"You shall not have in your bag diverse weights, great and small. You shall not have in your house diverse measures - great and small. [Rather,] you shall have one perfect and just weight, one perfect and just measure, in order that your days may be lengthened upon the land which the Lord your G-d gives you. For all those who do this, all those who perform injustice, are an abomination to the Lord your G-d. Remember what Amalek did to you on the way, when you came out of Egypt" (Devarim 25:13-17).

Chazal comment: "If you are dishonest with measures and weights, then beware of enemy attacks. For it is written, "Deceitful weights are an abomination to G-d," and it is also written "Where there is malice, there will also be disgrace" (Rashi Devarim 25:17) (Tanchuma Ki Tetzte 8, and Pesikta de-Rav Kahana, Zakhor).

The fair allocation of resources and the entire parasha of measures and weights are founded on the "chok u-mishpat" of Mara. Benei Yisrael passed the test of the water at Mara and the manna in the wilderness of Sin, but failed at the water of Refidim - and it was then that Amalek attacked.

We shall, with G-d's help, elaborate on this matter next week. Translated by Kaeren Fish This shiur is abridged from the Hebrew original. The full shiur can be accessed in Hebrew at: <http://www.etzion.org.il/vbm/parsha.php>.

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