

B'S'D'

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON SHMOS - 5761

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Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by SHLOMO KATZ
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Shmot Today's Learning: Ketubot 2:7-8 Orach Chaim 363:34-36 Daf
Yomi (Bavli): Sotah 30

"And [the nation] built storage cities for Pharaoh [called] Pithom and Ra'amses." (1:11)

The gemara (Sotah 11a) interprets the names "Pithom" and "Ra'amses" to indicate that Bnei Yisrael were forced to build on quicksand, and that the buildings they built constantly sank into the ground and had to be rebuilt. R' Avraham Yaakov Pam shlita (rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Torah Voda'ath in Brooklyn) observes that this is an indication of Pharaoh's wickedness. He explains with a parable:

A prisoner in a jail was forced to turn a gigantic wheel for hours on end every day. The wheel was attached to a shaft which appeared to pass into the next room, but the prisoner could not see what was on the other side of the wall.

In response to the prisoner's inquiry, the jailer said that the wheel turned a large millstone which milled flour for many people. Knowing this fact made the prisoner's work somewhat bearable; in fact, over time, he came to imagine that he was helping to feed widows and orphans, and he began to look forward to getting up in the morning and beginning work.

After 40 years the prisoner was released, and he immediately asked to see the millstone which he had spent four decades operating. The guards laughed, "What millstone? That wheel that you turned for 40 years was not attached to any machine and all your work was for nothing."

Imagine that man's mental anguish at that moment. Very likely, his hurt and humiliation upon learning that he had accomplished nothing in 40 years of hard labor far exceeded the pain and suffering of being imprisoned. Similarly, this was how Pharaoh tried to break Bnei Yisrael's spirit. Being enslaved was harsh enough, but being forced to build structures knowing that they were destined to sink in quicksand magnified the harshness of the enslavement many times over.

In contrast, seeing the fruits of one's hard work can be its own greatest reward. We read (1:20), "G-d benefitted the midwives, and the people increased and became very strong." The Jewish midwives risked their lives to avoid killing the newborn boys, as Pharaoh had ordered. The most appropriate reward that Hashem could find to give these women was that the people increased and became very strong." (Atarah La'melech p. 54) ...

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From: Kollel Iyun Hadaf[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il]
RABBI MORDECHAI KORNFELD

Sotah 11b THE CHILDREN BORN IN MITZRAYIM
AGADAH: The Gemara says that "in the merit of the righteous women who lived in that generation, the Jewish people were redeemed from Mitzrayim." The Gemara then describes the righteous acts of the women and how they would endear themselves to their husbands, coming to the fields where their husbands labored (since their husbands were unable to leave their labor to come home to their wives) to be with their husbands. When the time came for the women to give birth, they would go out to the fields and give birth under the "Tapu'ach" trees, and they would give to their newborns cakes of oil and cakes of honey. When the Egyptians became aware that the women had given birth, they came to kill the babies, but a miracle happened to the babies -- they were swallowed up into the ground. The Egyptians brought oxen and plowed over the ground, but after they left, the babies emerged from the ground like the grass of the field. When Hashem appeared to the Jewish people at Yam Suf, these children were the first to recognize His presence.

Taken literally, the miracle related by this Gemara seems to dwarf all of the miracles on the Egyptian redemption, the ten plagues included. However, no mention of this miracle is made in any of the sources which express praise to Hashem for the miracles that He wrought for us in Mitzrayim. Perhaps we can view the account related by this Gemara as an allegorical lesson about the Mesiras Nefesh of the Jewish people in Mitzrayim.

When the Gemara says that the Jewish people were redeemed "in the merit of the righteous women," it is referring to the merit of their Bitachon, their unswerving trust in Hashem. The Gemara (12a) says that even Amram, the greatest leader of the Jewish people in Mitzrayim at the time, wanted to stop having children because of the terrible decrees that the Egyptians were making. The women, however, trusted in Hashem that He would send them the promised redeemer at the proper time, and they encouraged the men to continue to build families, just like the Gemara relates that Miriam encouraged her father Amram. (In addition, the Jewish women wanted to become pregnant from their husbands so that the Egyptians would not be enticed to violate them.)

The Gemara says that they give birth "under the Tapu'ach" tree. The Gemara in Shabbos (88a) says that the unquestioning faith that Bnei Yisrael expressed when they said, "Na'aseh v'Nishma," is represented by a Tapu'ach tree, which produces fruit even before it produces leaves to protect the fruit from the elements. In the same way, the Jewish women sought to produce offspring even before they knew how their offspring would be protected from the Egyptian decrees.

The oil and honey that Hashem prepared for the babies might allude to the fact that Hashem blessed these children with their spiritual and physical needs despite the limitations imposed on them by the Egyptian tyranny. They were blessed with an aptitude towards Chochmah (which allowed them to integrate the Torah so quickly at Har Sinai), which is compared to oil, and their physical needs, which are compared to honey (see Mishlei 25:16), were miraculously met.

When the Gemara says that when the Egyptians came to kill them a miracle happened and they were swallowed into the ground, it means that the Egyptians were not able to find them when their parents hid them (just like Moshe Rabeinu's mother hid him) because Hashem protected them.

The Egyptians came with oxen to plow over them. This it means that the Egyptians said that if their slaves were still having children, then they will make them toil even harder so that they will lose any desire to have more children. However, the children "sprouted forth like grass in the field," showing that the more the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more the Jews multiplied (as expressed in Shemos 1:20).

When the Gemara says that these children were the first to recognize Hashem when He appeared to the Jewish people at Yam Suf, it means that when Hashem showed himself to the Jewish nation as the "Ish Milchamah" (Shemos 15:3), who quashed the mighty Egyptian army, they exclaimed that all along they had full faith in the coming of His promised redemption. They felt Hashem protect them while growing up under the Egyptian oppression and they trusted that, in its proper time, He would redeem the entire Jewish nation from the Egyptian exile, as promised. (M. Kornfeld)

AGADAH: PHARAOH'S TACTIC OF INFANTICIDE QUESTION: The Torah relates that Pharaoh -- in his attempt to reduce the growth of the Jewish people and to eliminate the perceived threat of rebellion (Shemos 1:10) -- ordered the Jewish midwives (1:15) to kill every baby boy that was born (1:16). The Gemara relates that he taught them a way to discern when the expecting mothers were ready to give birth (so that they would not be able to give birth in secret and hide their babies, Rashi). Pharaoh also taught them how to discern whether the baby -- before emerging from the womb -- was a boy or a girl. The Torah relates that the midwives "feared G-d" (1:17) and they did not kill the babies, but, on the contrary, they helped keep them alive.

Why did Pharaoh find it necessary to teach the midwives a way to discern the gender of the baby before the baby was born? The midwives would know, obviously, the gender of the baby immediately after it was born! Why did they have to know its gender before it was born?

Similarly, when Pharaoh confronted the midwives and censured them for letting the babies live, the midwives responded that they had no chance to kill the babies because "before the midwife comes to them, they already have given birth." How did the midwives intend to defend their actions with this response? Pharaoh could have responded simply that the midwives should have killed the babies *after* they have given birth!

ANSWERS: It is clear from the Gemara that Pharaoh's intention was to have the Jewish midwives kill the babies *before* they emerged from the womb. However, what was Pharaoh's intention behind this? He could have commanded just as well that the midwives kill the babies *after* they were born!

(a) The VILNA GA'ON (Kol Eliyahu, #49) explains that Pharaoh did not have the power, at this point, to order that the babies be killed by the midwives after they were born. The laws of the land required that in order to kill someone or to administer capital punishment, the due process of law and judgment had to be rendered. Even though Pharaoh was a very cruel monarch, it would have been beyond the accepted practice of the kingship to issue such a barbarous order, and issuing such a cruel and irrational order would have certainly prompted a national uprising. Therefore, Pharaoh commanded the midwives that "when you see them on the birthing stool" -- that is, *before* the women have given birth -- "if it is a boy, you shall kill him" (1:16). In this manner the mothers would not be aware that their babies were being murdered, but they would assume that they were being born as stillborns. This is why Pharaoh taught the midwives how to discern whether the fetus was a boy or a girl before it emerged from the womb, and why Pharaoh had no response when the midwives informed him that the babies were being born before the midwives arrived.

(b) The MAHARSHA (Sanhedrin 57b) and the PARASHAS DERACHIM (Derush 17; see also HE'OROS B'MASECHES SOTAH) asks an additional question. Why did Pharaoh specifically order the *Jewish* midwives -- "la'Meyaldos ha'Ivriyos" (Shemos 1:15) -- to kill the babies? He explains as follows:

The Torah forbids a Nochri to kill an unborn fetus, and a Nochri who transgresses this Isur is considered to have transgressed Retzichah and is Chayav Misah (Sanhedrin 57b). For a Jew, though, killing an unborn fetus is only prohibited with a Lav; there is no Chiyuv Misah for a Jew

who kills an unborn fetus.

Therefore, Pharaoh specifically ordered the Jewish midwives to kill the baby boys before they were born, because the Egyptian midwives would be Chayav Misah for doing so! He did not expect the Jewish midwives to kill the babies *after* they were born, because then they, too, would be Chayav Misah!

The Perashas Derachim adds that Pharaoh made an error in his calculation. Even though the Jewish midwives would not be Chayav Misah at the hands of Beis Din for following Pharaoh's orders and killing the unborn babies, they *would* be Chayav Misah *b'Yedei Shamayim*, and therefore they refused to follow his orders. They were righteous, G-d-fearing women, and they feared heavenly punishment. That is why the verse states that "the midwives *feared G-d* and they did not do as the king of Mitzrayim told to them" (Shemos 1:17) -- even if there was no Chiyuv Misah b'Yedei Adam, they still "feared G-d" and the Chiyuv Misah b'Yedei Shamayim

Sotah 12a WHEN WAS MOSHE CONCEIVED QUESTION: The Gemara quotes the verse that says that after Amram remarried Yocheved, she "became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son" (Shemos 2:2). The Gemara asks why does the verse say that she became pregnant after Amram remarried her? We know that she became pregnant three months earlier, before they separated! The Gemara answers that, indeed, she did not become pregnant at this time, but she became pregnant earlier. The reason why the verse mentions that she became pregnant is to compare her birth to her pregnancy: just like her pregnancy occurred painlessly, so, too, the birth of the child occurred painlessly. This teaches that righteous women, such as Yocheved, were not included in the decree of Chavah.

The Gemara proves that Yocheved was pregnant with Moshe three months before Amram remarried her from the fact that they hid the baby in their home for three months (ibid.). Why did they hide him for only three months? The Egyptians knew that Amram and Yocheved had become remarried, and thus they would be coming to check the home for newborn babies nine months after the remarriage. The fact that Amram and Yocheved hid Moshe for three months shows that at the end of those three months the Egyptians would be coming to search the house -- which would be nine months after their remarriage. Hence, it must be that Yocheved gave birth *six* months after remarrying Amram, which means that she became pregnant three months before that.

Why, then, does RASHI on the verse say that Yocheved gave birth prematurely, after only six months of pregnancy, and not nine? Rashi there seems to be contradicting our Gemara!

ANSWERS: (a) The simple answer is that the Midrash ("Midrash ha'Gadol") that Rashi is quoting argues with the Gemara here in Sotah.

(b) The MAHARSHA though, quoting the CHIZKUNI, suggests that both explanations are true. It is true that Yocheved gave birth after six months and not nine months. However, the Egyptians knew that it is possible for a woman to give birth after only six months. Therefore, they checked *six* months after she came back to Amram to see if she had given birth, assuming that she had only become pregnant upon her return home six months earlier.

In truth, though, she gave birth three months earlier, because she had become pregnant before she separated (three months earlier), and she gave birth after six months of pregnancy (three months after remarrying Amram)! When the verse says that they hid him for three months, it is referring to the months four to six after their remarriage (and not months seven to nine, as Rashi explains).

12b AGADAH: THE SHECHINAH THAT WAS SEEN WITH THE CHILD QUESTION: The Gemara quotes the verse, "va'Tir'ehu Es ha'Yeled" -- "... and she (Bas Pharaoh) saw him, the child (Moshe)" (Shemos 2:6), and asks that the verse should say, "*va'Terei* Es

ha'Yeled" ("and she saw the child"), like it says earlier (2:2 and 2:5). Rabbi Yosi bar'Rebbi Chanina answers that the verse is saying that she saw the Shechinah with him.

RASHI (DH she'Ra'ashah) says that the word "Es" in the verse is to be understood to mean "with" as we find in many places.

What indication is there in the verse, though, that she saw the *Shechinah* with the child? Moreover, the Gemara seems to be making this inference from the use of the word "va'Tir'ehu" instead of the word "va'Terei," and not from the word "Es." How does this imply that it was the Shechinah that she saw?

ANSWER: The VILNA GA'ON (Kol Eliyahu #225) answers that the letters "Heh Vav" together represent the name of Hashem, like the Gemara in Shabbos (104a) states, as well as the Gemara in Sukah (45a). Hence, the suffix "Hu" in the word "va'Tir'ehu" refers to Hashem! The verse, therefore, is saying clearly, "and she saw ('va'Tir'e-') Hashem ('-Hu') with ('Es') the child!" (See also MAHARSHA who gives a similar explanation.)

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"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Shmos Dedicated This
Year Le'eluy Nishmas Chaya Bracha Bas R. Yissocher Dov - In
memory of Mrs. Adele Frand

The Difference Between 'Melacha' and 'Avodah'

We are told that after Moshe Rabbeinu came to Pharaoh and asked him to free the Jews, Pharaoh reacted negatively. The King of Egypt commanded the taskmasters to withhold the straw necessary for making bricks, and insisted that the slaves obtain straw on their own.

If Pharaoh's goal was to make the slaves work twice as hard, his decree does not seem very wise. He should have simply doubled the quota of bricks that they were required to build each day. Then he would have achieved the same goal, that of forcing them to work twice as hard, and he would have benefited at the same time.

Pharaoh had a project in progress. He wanted store-cities built. Even if he wanted to torture his workers, he should have done so in a manner that would have had the greatest payback. By withholding the straw as a means of turning the screws, Pharaoh was effectively shooting himself in the foot.

The truth is that Pharaoh's true goal was to impose on the Jews "Avodas Perech" -- useless work. One of the Medrashic interpretations of the term "store-cities" (arei mis'kenos) is cities that were built on quicksand. No sooner were the cities built, than they would begin to crumble and they would have to be built all over again. Pharaoh's primary interest was not a construction project; he was primarily interested in breaking the spirit of the people. The way to break someone's spirit is to make sure that he feels absolutely no sense of accomplishment for all of his efforts. Nothing can be more depressing.

It is told that in one of the Soviet labor camps there was a prisoner whose job was to turn a wheel, which, he was told, manually operated a flour mill. Day after day, year after year, the prisoner turned this wheel, which he thought was at least grinding flour. One day they took him around and showed him that on the other side of the wall, attached to the wheel there was... nothing. The prisoner was totally devastated, because he saw that all of his work for the last several years had been totally in vain.

This is the meaning of "Avodas Perech". Work, work, work... for nothing.

There is a difference in Lashon HaKodesh [the holy tongue] between the word Avodah and the word Melacha. Melacha (which we find, for instance by the forbidden Sabbath labors) connotes constructive work. Avodah is merely toil, without necessarily accomplishing anything.

We as Jews need to concentrate on this distinction, and ensure that our work is Melacha, rather than Avodah. The Talmud [Beizah 16a] remarks "These foolish Babylonians eat bread with bread." The Baalei Mussar (Masters of Ethics) interpret this Gemara allegorically. It does not mean that they sat down at their meals and had a bread sandwich, with a slice of rye between two slices of whole wheat. It means that they worked for their bread, merely so that they could obtain more bread. Bread was both the means and the ends of their life. They worked for a living and they lived only to make a living.

If that is one's life cycle -- getting up in the morning to work so that he can eat so that the next morning he can work again, etc. -- that is debilitating. That is not Melacha (constructive labor), it is Avodas Perech (vain toil). Life's purpose must be greater than making a living.

A Jew can change that cycle. Yes, we all need to earn a living, but if one makes constructive endeavors part of that cycle -- "I am making a living so that I will be able to do Mitzvos, learn Torah and help others" -- then the cycle will have meaning. We elevate the process of making a living to something higher than a rat race.

Parenting can also appear to be a meaningless cycle. When one cleans the toys up in the morning only to find the same toys scattered in the afternoon, and then puts them away in the evening only to find them scattered again in the morning, when one changes the baby's diaper only to find the baby dirty again a couple of hours later, it can feel, G-d forbid, like Avodah rather than Melacha.

For children to develop and learn, and for spirituality to flourish in a home, the household first needs to function. When people appreciate that their efforts are vital to maintaining a functioning household, then all the efforts which seemed to be nothing more than meaningless and repetitive work have a much greater impact. Enabling a household to function is certainly a major accomplishment. It is not an Avodah (vain effort); it is a Melacha (constructive).

Rabbi Zev Leff offers the following insight based on the Gematria methodology of A"T BA"SH (whereby the numeric value of words is calculated from the relative position of each letter from the end of the alphabet, rather than the beginning. Instead of Aleph being 1 and Beis 2, Taf is 1 and Shin is 2, etc.). Using this methodology, the word Perach (in the phrase Avodas Perach) equals 39. The implication is that the converse (A"T BA"SH transformation) of the term which depicts meaningless labor is the number which represents constructive labor (39 corresponds to the number of categories of constructive activity prohibited on the Sabbath).

We can make our endeavors, our work and our labors constructive by giving them a constructive purpose, and by making proper use of our lives in the time that G-d has allotted us in this world.

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 # 266, The Laws of Chuppah Good Shabbos! 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

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Parshat Shemot

The War Inside and Outside

Rosh Hayeshiva RAV MORDECHAI GREENBERG, shlita

There are two ways that the nations of the world fight against Israel.

One way is through physical might, by attempting to destroy and annihilate them. The second is through religious and cultural conflict. The Rambam discusses this in his "Iggeret Teiman," and declares that the nations' attempts will not succeed! He interprets in this vein the pasuk in Yeshayahu (54:17), "Any WEAPON sharpened against you will not succeed, and any TONGUE that will rise against you in judgment, you will condemn," which mentions both the war of the weapon and the word of the tongue. The war of the sword may cause many casualties, but, at least, its intentions are clear and overt. However, the second type of war is fought with a hidden agenda, and since its insidious impact is not immediately noticeable, it can have a more devastating effect, much like the venom of a snake.

The exile began when Yosef was thrown into a pit that had no water in it, "but had snakes and scorpions in it." (Shabbat 22a) A snake bites with intention to damage, as opposed to a scorpion which stings with its tail, without intention. On the other hand, a snakebite is limited because the snake has less venom after it bites, and cannot immediately continue its attack, whereas a scorpion can continuously sting. These reflect the two dangers of exile. The scorpion's sting is much more dangerous, because it operates in an indirect and protracted manner and is harder to take precautions against. This corresponds to the poisonous cultural influences that affect us throughout our stay in galut.

Still, the worst affliction of exile is the "sinat chinam" (baseless hatred) among us, which is the cause for the continuation of our exile. This is what Moshe noted when he saw that there were informers among the Jews: "Indeed, the matter is known!" (Shemot 2:14) I now know the matter that I had wondered about. In what way did Yisrael sin more than other nations to be afflicted with such hard work? Now I see that they deserve it! (Rashi *ibid.*, quoting Midrash)

There are some that believe that in order to lessen the sting of external hatred of Yisrael, we should not express our differences, but should highlight our similarities with the nations. Already in Egypt Bnei Yisrael tried to remove the fence between themselves and the Egyptians by neglecting the mitzvah of Brit Mila, but the outcome was the opposite of their intention, as it says, "He turned their hearts to hate His nation." (Tehillim 105:25) The Netziv comments on the pasuk, "Behold, it is a nation that will dwell in solitude and not be reckoned among the nations" (Bamidbar 23:9), that the ideal situation for Am Yisrael is "to dwell in solitude," and through this separation, security will come. However, if Yisrael attempts to mingle with the nations, they will "not be reckoned among the nations" -- Hashem will cause them to be hated. The Gemara says in Sanhedrin (104a): G-d said, "Thus Israel shall dwell secure, solitary," that their solitude will lead to security. But now -- when Yisrael tries to mingle with the nations - "Alas -- she sits in solitude" (Eichah 1:1), against their will they will sit solitary in exile. Therefore, Yaakov and Yosef wanted to settle their family in the land of Goshen, apart from their neighbors, in order to remain free from outside influence.

In order to overcome the afflictions of galut, we must protect our distinct national character and counteract sinat chinam. Yisrael is compared in Tanach to fire, and the nations to water, as the pasuk in Shir Hashirim (8:7) says, "Much water can not extinguish the love [of G-d and Israel]." Water impacts on the fire and extinguishes it, but only when they come into direct contact. If there is a separation between them, however, such as a pot of water on the fire, the opposite occurs -- the fire impacts the water and warms it. Only direct contact between Israel and the nations causes us harm. To counteract the affliction of sinat chinam, we should increase ahavat chinam. The Netziv comments on the phrase, "he shepherded the STONE of Israel" (49:4), that Yisrael in exile is compared to dust, and the nations are compared to water which washes away the dust. However, when the individual pieces of dust consolidate to become stone, the water has no affect on it.

"In the merit of four things Bnei Yisrael were redeemed from Egypt:

they didn't change their names; they didn't change their language; they didn't speak "lashon hara"; and they did not commit acts of immorality." (Vayikra Rabbah 32:5) In these ways they were careful about loving their fellow Jews, by not speaking lashon hara, and they kept their national character, by not changing their names and language, so as to maintain their distance from the Egyptians.

The Nation of Israel is called, "Beit Yaakov," the House of Yaakov. There are two functions of a house-- to unite the family within it, and to protect the family from outside dangers. When Bnei Yisrael went down to Egypt, "Each man and his household came." (Shemot 1:1) The preparation for exile requires "building houses" -- that is, keeping out the influences of foreign nations, and uniting the family within. Ultimately, in the future, everyone will recognize the value of the house and will say, "Come, let us go up to the Mountain of Hashem, to the House of the G-d of Yaakov, and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths." (Yeshaya 2:3)

From: RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY [SMTP:rmk@torah.org]
Subject:Drasha - Parshas Shmos - Tough Love

Moshe, the humblest man who was ever on the face of this earth, the man who consistently pleaded with Hashem to spare the Jewish nation from his wrath, emerges this week for the very first time.

First impressions are almost always last impressions, so I wondered what are Moshe's first actions? Surely they would typify his future distinction.

Open a Chumash and explore the young lad who is found on the Nile, spends his youth in Pharaoh's palace, and finally "goes out amongst his brothers." He sees an Egyptian smiting a Jew and then, in a non-speaking role (at least without speaking to any human), he kills him. That is Moshe's foray in communal activism.

His first words seem diametrically opposed to his ensuing persona. The next day, Moshe "went out and behold, two Hebrew men were fighting." He immediately chastised the wicked one, "Why would you strike your fellow?" (Exodus 2:13). His admonition provokes an angry response from the quarrelers. "Who appointed you as a dignitary, a ruler, and a judge over us? Do you propose to murder me, as you murdered the Egyptian?" (*ibid.* v. 4). Moshe's hallmark compassion and concern seems to be overshadowed by his forceful admonition. Is that the first impression the Torah wants us to have of Moshe?

In his youth, Reb Zorach Braverman, who later was known as a brilliant Jerusalem scholar, once travelled from Eishishok to Vilna, Lithuania. Sitting next to him was an elderly Jew with whom he began to converse. Reb Zorach commented to the old man that it was sad that in a city as large as Vilna there was no organized Torah youth group.

The old man became agitated. In a tear-stained voice he responded, "Whom do you expect to organize these groups, "he asked incredulously, " the communal leaders who are destroying Judaism in Vilna? They do nothing to promote Torah values!"

The man went on to condemn a group of parnasim who had assumed control of the community affairs and constantly overruled the Rabbinical authorities in every aspect of communal life as it related to observance of Jewish law. Reb Zorach became incensed. Who was this man to deride a group of community elders? He responded vociferously. "Excuse me," he interrupted, "but I think you should study the new sefer (book) that was just published. It is called Chofetz Chaim and deals specifically with the laws of slander and gossip. It details all the transgressions listed in the Torah for gossip as such! In fact, I have it here with me."

The old man asked to see the book. He took it and immediately opened it to a section which specified the rare instance it was a mitzvah to speak out against a group of people, in the case when they act defiantly against rabbinic authority.

Reb Zorach remained quiet and silently took back the book. The trip

ended and the old man and Reb Zorach went their ways in Vilna. It only took a day until Reb Zorach found out that he was seated next to none other than the Chofetz Chaim himself.

Of course, Moshe was the compassionate advocate for Klal Yisrael. But the Torah chooses to define his leadership in a clear and unambiguous manner in strong and controversial encounters. His first act was to kill an Egyptian who was smiting a Jew, and his second was to chastise two Jews who were fighting so strongly that they threatened to report his former act to the Egyptian authorities. After the Torah establishes an ability to reprove and even rebuke sin, only then does it tell us of Moshe's compassion in protecting the daughters of Yisro, in tending sheep by running after a tiny lamb who lost its way in the scorching desert.

Often I hear quotes, "if Rav Moshe were alive today," or "if the Chofetz Chaim were alive today," followed by a notion that these beloved, departed, sages, with their celebrated love and compassion for all Jews, would surely ascribe to unmitigated love and acceptance of anyone's notion of Judaism as an acceptable alternative.

It's just not true. Great leaders and Torah visionaries do have tremendous love for all Jews, but they do not compromise on Torah law or on Torah values. They are vociferous advocates of right versus wrong. Though one minute they may be chasing lost sheep, running after a small child who dropped a small coin, or translating a letter for an indigent immigrant, they would not hesitate to strike the Egyptian and chastise their fellow Jew who raised his hand against another, physically or spiritually. What truly makes a great man is not only knowing how and when to hold them, but also knowing how and when to scold them.

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<http://www.jpost.com/Editions/2001/01/18/Columns/Columns.19786.html>

Shabbat Shalom: WHAT A MAN'S BONES CAN TELL US BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

(January 18) "And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived and bore a son..." (Ex. 2:1-2)

Moses, the major personality throughout Exodus, and Joseph, the major personality at the conclusion of Genesis, interact in a fascinating way.

They seem, on the surface, to be mirror versions of each other, perhaps even antithetical personalities. Joseph came from within the Abrahamic family, and wandered outside of it; Moses came from the outside, and entered deeply within. Joseph brought the Israelites down into Egypt; Moses took the Israelites up into Israel.

However, through Moses' relationship with the bones of Joseph, the children of Israel learn an inspiring lesson in faith.

Joseph rose to greatness in Egypt, becoming second only to Pharaoh. The Egyptians claimed him as one of their own, fully expecting him to identify with Egyptian nationality and culture. Nevertheless, his last request to his family reveals his essential identity as an Israelite, his root connection with the land and destiny of Israel: "And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying 'G-d will surely remember you, and you shall bring out my bones from this [place].'" (Genesis 50:25)

Therefore, the Bible records in Exodus: "And Moses took the bones

of Joseph with him [when he left Egypt]; for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying 'G-d will surely remember you; and you shall bring out my bones from this [place] with you.'" (Exodus 13: 19)

In the midst of the tumult and turmoil of the night of the 15th of Nisan, Moses - who must first and foremost direct an orderly exodus of his people - is concerned with locating and exporting the remains of Joseph.

The Midrash records what transpired in the following way: "Who informed Moses as to where Joseph was buried? Serah, the daughter of Asher was from that [original] generation [which came to Egypt]. She came and said to Moses: 'Moses, my Master, Joseph is buried in the Nile River.'

"Moses went and stood by the Nile. He said: 'Joseph, Joseph, the time has come for the Holy One, Blessed be He, to redeem His children, but the Divine Presence is being held back because of you. If you shall reveal yourself, it will be well. If not, I shall then be considered innocent of the oath which I have sworn.' Immediately, the casket-ark of Joseph floated to the top.

"Thus it was that when the Israelites went out of Egypt two arks accompanied them in the desert: the Torah-ark of the Eternal Giver of Life and the casket-ark of the bones of Joseph. The nations of the world then said: 'What is the nature of these two arks? Is it then the manner of a casket-ark of the dead to go together with the Torah-ark of the eternal Giver of Life?' And the Israelites said to them: 'The corpse who is buried in this casket-ark fulfilled whatever is written in this Torah-ark.'"

How are we to understand the words of this midrash? After all, it is difficult to see how Joseph actually fulfilled the 613 commandments of the Bible while living under the pressures of a demanding and aristocratic position in Egypt.

Can we really say that the corpse in the casket-ark fulfilled the verses in the Torah-ark?

I WOULD suggest that Joseph did understand - and profoundly believe - the one Divinely guaranteed promise of the Bible, declared by G-d in His covenant with Abraham and reiterated throughout the Five Books of Moses: after enslavement in a strange land, the Israelites would eventually return to Israel and to world redemption.

The young Joseph was nourished by this faith commitment as a child sitting on his father Jacob's knee. An older Joseph was never vanquished - and his optimistic spirit was never extinguished - despite near death in a pit, despite having been sold into slavery, despite imprisonment for false charges - because his belief in ultimate restoration and return never flagged.

At the end of the day, Joseph does not punish or even blame his brothers for the cruel acts they perpetrated against him because he understood that it was all part of a Divine plan. So profound was Joseph's faith that he risked Egyptian displeasure, but made his brothers swear to take out his bones and bury him in Israel.

Is it any wonder, then, that Moses could not leave Egypt without taking Joseph's bones with him? Joseph's bones were the symbol of Jewish eternity, the proof of the Divine covenant, the expression of faith despite prestige and poverty, power and penury in a foreign country of exile.

No matter how good or how bad life in a country of exile may be for Jews, we must never think that the host country is our ultimate resting place.

Israel is our only true home. The Jew must never be too comfortable in the exile, nor may he despair from the suffering in the exile. This is the message of Joseph's bones.

Joseph instinctively understood the lesson at the burning bush: The children of Israel may be burned by the fires of persecution and programs, of slavery and genocide, but they will never be consumed or destroyed.

The bones will be returned to Israel, and the dry bones will live

again. We carry the bones of Joseph, seared in the autos da fe, Inquisition and Holocaust, when we walk the streets of Dizengoff and King George.

Yes, Joseph the child still lives, and our Father still lives.

Because our Father in Heaven still lives, our children on Earth shall live eternally.

Shabbat Shalom

From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@ohr.edu] To: weekly@ohr.edu
Subject: Torah Weekly - Shmot *TORAH WEEKLY* Highlights of
the Weekly Torah Portion Parshat Shmot For the week ending 25 Tevet
5761 / January 19 & 20, 2001

SOUL GIVING

"She named him 'Moshe,' saying, 'For I drew him from the water'." (2:10)

I was talking on the phone with an old friend. He's probably the oldest friend I have. We were English public schoolboys together nearly forty years ago. To say the least, we traveled very different roads. He married twice. The first time to a Jewish girl. They divorced without children. Now, he's married again. They have one child, a boy. His name is something like Sebastian.

Last Shabbat at seudah shlishit (the third Shabbat meal), I was watching my sons sitting at the table (well, jumping all over the table really). My elder son was repeating words of Torah heard from the mouth of his rebbe, his teacher. Words that his rebbe had heard from his rebbe. Words thousands of years old and full of holiness. And I thought of my friend and his son. I remembered our conversation. My friend told me that his son was very bright and ran rings around his (Christian) bible teacher. "Sebastian" had asked his bible teacher, "Who created G-d?" This left the bible teacher in a lather of half-muttered apologetics such as, "You can't ask such questions...You don't understand..." My friend was pleased that his son was showing no signs of incipient Christianity. In his eyes he had bequeathed to him the atheism that he was brought up to believe was true Judaism.

I said to him that I was surprised the bible teacher should have been stumped by such an easy question. "If someone had created god, then he wouldn't be G-d. By definition, G-d exists beyond creation. He created creation. Nothing can exist before Him or after Him. Time has no dominion over Him because He created time." For a moment, my friend wasn't quite sure whether I was preaching Christianity to him.

And here at the Shabbat table, I was looking at my son "darshening" his little heart out. And I thought about what it had cost to get to this table. Breaking your teeth on a language that was taught to you so badly as a child that you'd have been better off not learning it at all. Feeling like an imbecile in front of any five year old cheder child. Having to reply "Ich nisht red Yiddish" when someone mistakes you for an FFB. Feeling that you will never quite fit in -- that there will always be edges that will never be rubbed smooth; having to explain to your daughters why their grandmothers don't wear sheitels.

Was it worth it? Of course it was. How can you compare a Jewish life to any other? And that's just in this world...

Every ba'al teshuva knows what it means to be moser nefesh. Literally, to give over your soul. To sacrifice.

I looked out the window at the beautiful twilight of a Jerusalem Shabbat coming to an end. And I thought to myself -- we are living in times of mesirut nefesh. When an Arab tapes a bomb to his chest and blows himself up on a bus, it's not so simple that this is an act of mere lunacy. By his death, he has made the ultimate demonstration of mesirut nefesh for what he believes. Such sacrifice creates waves beyond this world.

If any Arab leader agreed to cede one square inch of Jerusalem, I doubt he would find himself alive after his afternoon siesta. Many of our

political leaders, on the other hand, see Jerusalem as highly negotiable. Important certainly -- culturally, historically, even religiously -- but ultimately, negotiable. Are we, as a nation, prepared to be moser nefesh for Jerusalem?

Judaism does not require a person to volunteer his own death except in one of three situations: If he is being forced to worship an idol, kill someone, or commit an act of gross immorality. However, every day Jews are being killed for no reason other than that they are Jewish. They are being moser nefesh.

"She named him Moshe, saying, 'For I drew him from the water'."

Moshe had ten names. Moshe, Yered, Chaver, Yekutiel, Avigdor, Avi Socho, Avi Zanuach, Tuvia, Shemaya, Halevi.

And, of all his names, the only one that G-d called him was Moshe, the name given to him by a gentile princess, Batya, Pharaoh's daughter. If G-d Himself used the name "Moshe" it must be that this name defines him more than any other.

The name Moshe comes from the Egyptian name Monios meaning "to be drawn," for Moshe was drawn from the water by Batya.

When Batya took Moshe out of the river, she was flouting her father's will. Pharaoh wanted to kill all Jewish baby boys. By saving Moshe she put her life on the line. She was being moser nefesh for Moshe.

Because Batya risked her life to save Moshe, that quality of self-sacrifice was embedded in Moshe's soul. It was this quality that was his essence. For this reason G-d called him only by that name.

If we don't know what we're prepared to die for, we don't really know what we're living for. If our lives are no more than survival, then we have already lost our sense of destiny. It's time to wake up. It's time to realize that life is more than standing in line to get our cellphone fixed.

Moshe, our teacher, was closer to G-d than any other human being who walked this planet. His essence, his name, was given in self-sacrifice, in mesirut nefesh.

"She [Batya] saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maidservant and she took it." (2:5)

The Midrash explains that the word "maidservant" can be translated as "arm." Batya reached out her arm to retrieve the basket in which Moshe was floating. The basket was an impossibly long way from her arm. Nevertheless, Batya reached for it. It didn't cross her mind that her hand could never reach the basket. She just knew what had to be done, and she did it. She didn't make calculations of success or failure. There was then a paranormal event. Her hand grew until it reached the basket.

This is a time to extend our hands, even if it seems that there is an impossible distance to travel. This is the time to reach out to our brothers and sisters, to become that true reflection of Shema Yisrael, to reflect the Oneness of He who is One in this world. This is the time to extend ourselves, to be moser nefesh for each other and for the Jewish People.

May G-d reach out His hand to us and spread the protection of His peace over us and over all Israel, and over all mankind.

Sources: * Ibn Ezra * Kotzker Rebbe * Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz (C) 2001 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

From: Torah and Science[SMTP:torahandscience@mail.jct.ac.il]
To:pr@mail.jct.ac.il Subject Dvar Torah Umada - Shmot

THE STUDY OF NATURE

By RABBI NACHUM DANZIG

As members of a scientifically educated society, we must ask ourselves the question: What theological basis should we use to relate to the natural world?< Can we derive truths about the Torah and G-d from scientific study of nature or is science at best irrelevant to our understanding of G-d or at worst is science misleading?

The central event of Sefer Shmot, it is safe to say, is the Exodus from

Egypt. For many rishonim the miraculous character of the Exodus demonstrates that G-d controls nature and is free to act as He wishes even in contradiction to nature. < From this we learn that G-d governs the world and has not abandoned it to chance as the non-believer claims, "G-d has forsaken the land." < Ezekiel 8:12. < For these rishonim the miracles of the Exodus prove G-d's existence and providence.

Such authorities as Yahudah Halevi in Sefer Hakuzari, (1) R"an in his drashot, (2) Hasdai Crescas and Ramban all derive this fundamental principle of hashgacha pratit, G-d's individual providence, from the Exodus. < For example Hasdai Crescas writes in his introduction to Ohr Hashem: < "I am the Lord your G-d. < Behold, the word "G-d" (power) [elohut] means that He is free to act on all existence. < And according to this 'Who took you out of Egypt.' < is a proof to this belief. < That is, that from here we derive that G-d is free to act as he pleases, and all of creation is in his hand as clay in the hand of the potter. (3) << By witnessing a miracle, we discover the true nature of G-d, and that is, that he is able to act with complete freedom and is bound by no rule, not even the rules of nature. < Ramban goes even further by extrapolating from the open miracles of Exodus that, in fact, all the minor events of life are also directly the result of G-d's will and do not merely follow laws of nature. << Thus, open miracles show G-d's constant hand in human existence and His presence in the Universe. Ramban does not hold that G-d set up the laws of nature to govern the world, but, in fact, every seemingly natural event in the world is a unique desire of G-d. < A blade of grass does not grow if G-d does not explicitly will it. < The true explanation for the seemingly natural events of the world is G-d's will, or what Ramban calls < 'hidden miracles'. < "And from the great and well-known miracles a man comes to admit to hidden miracles which are the foundation of the whole Torah. < A person has no portion in the Torah of Moshe Rabeinu unless he believes that all our matters and circumstances are miracles and they do not follow nature or the general custom of the world. < Brather, if one does mitzvot he will succeed due to the reward he merits." (4) If G-d sometimes wills to contravene nature's supposed laws, then there must also be a will not to contravene them when events follow natural law. < Thus, the Exodus is the proof that ultimately, all the events of man are directly under Divine providence and their appearance to follow natural laws is merely an illusion.

<Opposition to this opinion is found chiefly in Rambam's words. In Hilchot Yesodei Hatorah he writes that we do not believe in Moshe because of the miracles but only because the Jewish people experienced prophecy. (5) The miracles only occurred to help the Jewish people out of difficulties, but-except for the miraculous events of the Sinaitic revelation-Rambam does not seem to see in miracles any proof to G-d's existence or providence and does not derive any theological principles from them. < Rambam actually believes an important way to understanding G-d is through the scientific study of nature:

"I have already let you know that there exists nothing except G-d, may He be exalted, and this existent world and that there is no possible inference proving His existence, may He be exalted, except those deriving from this existent [the Universe] taken as a whole and from its details. < Accordingly, it necessarily behooves one to consider this existent as it is and to derive premises from what is perceived in nature. << For this reason it follows that you should know its perceptible form and nature, and then it will be possible to make an inference from it [the Universe] with regard to what is other than it [G-d]." (6)

Ramban not only considers natural laws as real, but as the basis for understanding the Universe and G-d. < Through the study of nature we come to a better understanding of G-d and come closer to Him. < Nature is an expression of G-d, thus natural science is the "Divine Science." < If anything is misleading, it is miracles for they seem to deny the "Divine" natural laws. < Miracles seem to show change and inconsistency in G-d. <

Therefore Rambam holds that miracles were pre-programmed into nature from the beginning of creation, and actually also follow rules.

Far from being a denial of G-d's providence, nature is the avenue for the expression of G-d's providence. < G-d directs nature by setting into motion a series of natural causes. < Thus, by saying G-d causes the snow to fall on Mount Hermon, we do not deny the natural character of this event, we only assert that ultimately G-d is the driving force behind nature. < This idea is central to Rambam's conception of providence:

As regards the immediate causes of things produced by the prophets omitted them and ascribed the production directly to G-d and use such phrases as G-d has done it. < B According to this hypothesis and theory accepted, it is G-d that gave natural properties to everything. < B it can consequently be said regarding everything which is produced by any of these causes, that G-d commanded that it should be made or said that it should be so. (7)

<Both Ramban and Rambam learn about G-d from the physical world. < Ramban learns from the exceptions to the rules of nature that there is no natural law and only G-d's volition. < Rambam learns from G-d's adherence to natural law that natural science is Divine. < Ramban sees the seemingly natural order of the world as an illusion which may mislead us about G-d. < In truth, he posits, all events are the result of the direct will of G-d. < Rambam sees the natural order as the direct expression of the Divine will. < Through scientific study of nature, we come to a deeper awareness of G-d. < Perhaps Rambam would look at the truly impressive events of everyday life, like the birth of a child and say, "Is there any better proof of G-d's existence and providence than this?" < Thus, Rambam has a deep appreciation for the world around him. < It is the expression of G-d.

According to Rambam what does the Exodus teach us? < In two places Rambam, quoting Sifra, (8) states that the Exodus obliges us to follow the Law of the Torah. < In Mishneh Torah, (9) and similarly in Sefer HaMitzvot, (10) Rambam writes: < "Any one who rejects the laws of 'fair weights' it is as if he rejects the Exodus from Egypt, for it is the origin of all mitzvot. Anyone who accepts the laws of 'fair weights' admits to the Exodus from Egypt for it is the source of all the commandments." < Rabbi Nachum Danzig is a JCT alumnus and teaches Judaism in the One-Year Program for English Speakers from Overseas.

Sources: 1. HaKuzari 1:83. 2. Derashot HaRan I s.v. Ukhemo Shehayah (p.19 in Feldman Ed.). 3. Ohr Hashem, Shlomo Fischer Ed., p. 11. 4. Ramban, End of Shemot 13:16. 5. Mishneh Torah Laws of the Foundations of the Torah 8. 6. The Guide of the Perplexed, 1:71, End, S. Pines Ed. 7. Ibid. 2:48, End. 8. Sifra, Kedoshim chap. 8:10. 9. Mishneh Torah, Laws of Stealing.. 7:12. 10. Sefer Hamitzvot, pos. 208.

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From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org]
weekly-halacha@torah.org Subject: Weekly Halacha Aliyah to the Torah
Weekly-halacha for 5761 Selected Halachos Relating to Parshas
Vayechi & Shmos

BY RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT

Rav of Young Israel of Cleveland Heights A discussion of
Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings,
consult your Rav.

RECEIVING AN ALIYAH TO THE TORAH

A minimum(1) of eight people - a kohen, a levi, five yisraelim and an
additional person for maftir(2) - are called to the Torah every Shabbos

morning. If a kohen is unavailable, either a levi or a yisrael is called instead of him, but if a yisrael is called instead of a kohen, then a levi can no longer be called after him.(3) If a levi is unavailable, then the same kohen who was called for kohen is called again.(4)

THE PROCEDURE

The person being called should take the shortest possible route to the bimah so that there is no unnecessary delay. If all of the routes are equal in distance, he should ascend from the right side(5).

Before reciting the blessing,(6) the oleh should look inside the Torah to see where the ba'al koreh will begin reading. He then rolls up the scroll and recites Borchu followed by the first blessing. Alternatively, he may leave the scroll unrolled but closes his eyes while reciting Borchu and the blessing.(7)

After the reading is over, the sefer should be rolled up and the final blessing recited. The final blessing should not be recited over an open sefer even if one keeps his eyes closed.

The blessings must be recited loud enough so that at least ten people are able to hear them. The poskim are extremely critical of those who recite the blessings in an undertone.(8)

WHO IS CALLED TO THE TORAH?

While it is appropriate and preferable to call to the Torah only those who are G-d fearing Jews who observe the mitzvos, when the need arises or for the sake of peace it is permitted to call even non-observant Jews.(9) But under no circumstances is it permitted to call non-believers to the Torah, for their blessings are not considered blessings at all. If absolutely necessary, it may be permitted to accord them honors that do not necessitate a blessing, e.g., hagbahah or gelilah.(10)

Most often the aliyos are allocated in rotating order or at the gabbai's discretion. But it is a long-standing tradition which has become universally accepted to mark milestone events by receiving an aliyah. People marking such events are called chiyuvim, since custom dictates that they are obligated to receive an aliyah. Sometimes, however, there are not enough aliyos for all of the people who are chiyuvim.(11) Based on the opinion of the majority of the poskim, the following, in order of priority, is a list of the chiyuvim who are entitled to an aliyah(12): A chasan(13) on the Shabbos before his wedding [or on the Shabbos before he leaves his hometown to travel to his wedding]. (14) A child(15) who becomes bar mitzvah on that Shabbos.(16) The father of a newborn(17) boy or girl, if the mother is in shul for the first time since giving birth.(18) A chasan on the Shabbos after his wedding, if the wedding took place on Wednesday or later in the week. A Shabbos yahrtzeit.(19) The father of baby boy(20) whose bris will be that Shabbos or during the coming week.(21) A chasan on the Shabbos after his wedding, if his wedding took place before Wednesday. A yahrtzeit during the upcoming week.(22) One who must recite the ha-Gomel blessing.(23) One who is embarking on or returning from a journey. An important guest.

FOOTNOTES:

1 Some congregations add aliyos while others do not. Since both practices have a basis in halachah, each congregations should follow its own custom. It is preferable not to call more than eleven people altogether; Be'eir Heitev 284:3 alluded to by Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 284:5. 2 Who can be either a kohen, levi or yisrael. Those congregations who add aliyos may also call a kohen or a levi for the last aliyah (called acharon), but should not call kohen or a levi for any of the other additional aliyos; Mishnah Berurah 135:36-37. 3 O.C. 135:6. 4 O.C. 135:8. 5 O.C. 141:7. 6 A bachelor should don a tallis when receiving an aliyah on Shabbos or Yom Tov mornings. But he need not put on a tallis when receiving an aliyah at other times (Monday and Thursday or Rosh Chodesh, etc); Halichos She'lomo 12, note 29. 7 Mishnah Berurah 139:19. The third choice, which is to leave the sefer open but turn one's head to the left, is not recommended by the poskim, including the Mishnah Berurah. 8 O.C. 139:6. See Chayei Adam 31:12. 9 Preferably, he should be called only after the first seven aliyos; Pe'er ha-Dor 3, pg. 36, oral ruling from Chazon Ish. 10 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:12,21,22. 11 A general rule is that members of a shul have priority over non-members, even if the non-member's chiyuv takes priority over the member's. 12 This list covers the Shabbos Kerias ha-Torah only. 13 Who has not been married before. 14 If both the aufruf and the bar mitzvah want the same aliyah, then the one who is a greater talmid chacham has priority. If that cannot be determined, then the two should draw lots. Lots should be drawn whenever two chiyuvim lay equal claim to an aliyah. 15 The father of the child, however, is not a chiyuv at all; Sha'ar Efrayim 2:10. 16 According to some opinions, the same chiyuv applies even if the child became bar mitzvah during the past week; Harav C. Kanivsky (Ishei Yisrael, pg. 409). 17 Even if the baby was

stillborn; Sha'arei Efrayim 2:5. 18 If the wife is not in shul, then the husband has an obligation to receive an aliyah when 40 days have elapsed from the birth of a male child, or 80 days from the birth of a female child. 19 A yahrtzeit chiyuv is only for a father or a mother. A yahrtzeit for a father has priority over a yahrtzeit for a mother; Kaf ha-Chayim 284:6. 20 A father of a baby girl who is naming her on Shabbos has priority over a father of a baby boy whose bris will take place during the week; Da'as Torah 282:7. 21 According to some opinions, if the bris will take place on Shabbos, then the father is a greater chiyuv than a yahrtzeit on that Shabbos; Ishei Yisrael, pg. 410. 22 If two people have yahrtzeit during the week, the one whose yahrtzeit is earlier in the week has priority; Kaf ha-Chayim 284:6. 23 Ha-Gomel can be recited without an aliyah.

From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org] Subject: Weekly Halacha - Parshas Shemos - Kerias HaTorah(Part 2)

HILCHOS KERIAS HaTORAH (PART 2)

CONSECUTIVE ALIYOS FOR RELATIVES

In order to avoid ayin harah, a "bad omen", the gabbai does not call a father and a son or two brothers [who share a father] for consecutive aliyos.(1) Even if the parties involved are not concerned with ayin harah and wish to be called consecutively, it is not permitted.(2) Moreover, even if the gabbai mistakenly did call the relative for a consecutive aliyah, the one who was called should remain in his seat and not accept the aliyah(3). If, however, the mistake was realized only after he ascended the bimah, then he is not instructed to descend.(4)

L'chatchillah, even brothers who share only a mother, or even a grandfather and his grandson, should not be called for consecutive aliyos. If, however, there is a need to do so, or if - b'diavad - the call to ascend to the bimah was already made, it is permitted for them to accept the aliyah.(5) All other relatives may be called consecutively even l'chatchillah.

The consecutive aliyos restriction does not apply: If the consecutive aliyah is the maftir on a day when a second sefer Torah is read for maftir, e.g., on Yom Tov or Rosh Chodesh or when the Four Parshios are read.(6) If the maftir is read by a minor (one who is not yet bar mitzvah).(7) When the names of the olim are not used when they are called for an aliyah. While most Ashkanazic shuls today do use names when calling the olim, in some congregations no names are used for the shevii or acharon aliyos.(8) To hagbahah and gelilah, provided that they are not called by name.(9) If another person was called for his aliyah between them and that person happened not to be in shul or was unavailable to receive his aliyah.(10)

DURING KERIAS HaTORAH: SITTING or STANDING?

Although the ba'al koreh and the person receiving the aliyah must stand while reading from the Torah, the congregation is not required to stand. Indeed, there are three views in the poskim as to what is preferred: Some hold that it is preferable to stand while the Torah is being read, since Kerias ha-Torah is compared to Matan Torah at Har Sinai where everyone stood.(11) Others maintain that there is no preference and one is free to sit or stand as he wishes.(12) A third view holds that it is preferable to sit while the Torah is being read.(13)

The basic halachah follows the middle view that there is no preference and one can choose his position. There are, however, some people who are stringent and insist on standing while the Torah is being read.

Most poskim agree with the following: A weak person who will find it difficult to concentrate should sit. Between aliyos there is no reason to stand. For Borchu and its response, everyone should stand,(14) but during the recital of the birchos ha-Torah themselves there is no obligation to stand. The practice in most congregations is that everyone stands while the Aseres ha-dibros and Shiras ha-yam are read.(15) As with all customs, one should not deviate from the custom of the shul where he is davening.

FOOTNOTES: 1 O.C. 141:6. 2 Mishnah Berurah 141:19. Aruch ha-Shulchan 141:8 maintains, however, that one who is unconcerned with ayin harah may do as he wishes. 3 Be'er Heitev 141:5; Sha'arei Efrayim 1:33. 4 Mishnah Berurah 141:18. 5 Sha'arei Efrayim 1:33. 6 Mishnah Berurah 141:20. Some poskim do not recommend relying on this leniency when no kaddish is recited between the aliyos, e.g., Chol ha-Moed Pesach (Sha'arei Efrayim 1:32), while others are not particular about that (Aruch ha-Shulchan 141:8). On Simchas Torah,

however, all poskim are lenient about this; see Yechaveh Da'as 3:50. 7 Mishnah Berurah 141:20. 8 Mishnah Berurah 141:21. 9 Teshuvos Avnei Cheftetz 16. 10 Sha'arei Efrayim 1:30. 11 Rama O.C. 146:4 as explained by Bach and Mishnah Berurah 19. 12 O.C. 146:6.

13 This is the view of the Arizal as understood by many of the latter authorities, see Chesed le-Alafim 135:14; S'dei Chemed (Beis, 29); Kaf ha-Chayim 146:20; Da'as Torah 146:4; Shulchan ha-Tahor 146:4. Note that this view has an early source, see Sefer ha-Machkim, pg. 15 and Teshuvos Rama mi-Pano 91. 14 See, however, Kaf ha-Chayim 146:20-21 and Halichos Shelomo 12, note 30, that the accepted practice is to remain seated even during Borchu. 15 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:22; Halichos Shelomo 12, note 30. See Yechaveh Da'as 6:8 for a dissenting opinion. Weekly-Halacha, Copyright © 2001 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Torah.org. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos.

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From: Kollel Iyun Hadaf[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il] Subject: Insights to the Daf: Sotah 21-23 INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>

SOTAH 21-25 - These Dafim have been dedicated by Mrs. Estanne Abraham-Fauer in honor of the first Yahrzeit (18 Teves 5761) of her father, Reb Mordechai ben Eliezer Zvi (Weiner). May the merit of supporting and advancing the study of the Talmud be l'Iluy Nishmaso. *** Please send your D.A.F. contributions to: *** D.A.F., 140-32 69 Ave., Flushing NY 11367, USA

Sotah 22

THE REWARD FOR WALKING TO SHUL QUESTION: The Gemara explains that a person receives "Sechar Pesios" for walking to a Beis ha'Kneses that is farther away, even if there is one that is nearby. RASHI explains that we see from here that if a person exerts himself more than necessary in order to do a Mitzvah, he acquires more reward for the Mitzvah (see Avos 5:23, "Ifum Tza'ara Agra").

Although we see from here the importance of exerting oneself for a Mitzvah, we only find the importance of exerting oneself by traveling a longer distance with regard to the Mitzvah of going to a Beis ha'Kneses. (We do not find that it is a greater Mitzvah, for example, to walk a longer distance to perform the Mitzvah of sitting in a Sukah.) Is there any reason why going to a Beis ha'Kneses should be unique in this respect?

ANSWERS: (a) Perhaps there is a special Mitzvah to travel to the Beis ha'Kneses since the Beis ha'Kneses is called a "Mikdash Me'at" (Megilah 29a; see also Bava Metzia 28b) and there is a Mitzvah in the Torah to travel to the Beis ha'Mikdash during the Regel. The same Mitzvah to travel to the Beis ha'Mikdash applies to traveling to the "Mikdash Me'at," the Beis ha'Kneses.

(b) The point of Tefilah is to bring oneself closer to Hashem and to lessen, as it were, the distance between oneself and Hashem (see earlier, 5a). Traveling a distance towards the synagogue symbolizes that one is exerting himself to lessen the distance between him and Hashem. Therefore, it is a proper preface to prayer. (This might also be the theme of Aliyah l'Regel.) (MAHARAL in NESIVOS OLAM, Nesiv ha'Avodah 5)

WRONGFUL ACTS OF TALMIDEI CHACHAMIM AGADAH: The Gemara says that a Talmid Chacham could become Chayav Misah for either passing Halachic rulings when he is not yet of age, or for not passing Halachic rulings when he is of age. Based on this Gemara, the VILNA GA'ON (Kol Eliyahu #64) offers a sharp explanation for the different pronunciations of the words "Lo Sirtzach" in the Aseres ha'Dibros (Shemos 20:13).

When the Torah is read with the Ta'am ha'Tachton, the sub-lineal cantillation notes, the word "Sirtzach" is in the middle of a verse, and it is pronounced with the vowelization of a "Patach" underneath the letter Tzadi. When the Torah is read with the Ta'am ha'Elyon, the super-lineal cantillation notes, the word is pronounced with the vowelization of a "Kamatz," since it is read as the end of the verse, and thus it is pronounced "Sirtzoch."

The Vilna Ga'on explains that the verse is hinting to the two sins for which a Talmid Chacham is punished with death. By transgressing one of these two sins, a Talmid Chacham also commits "murder" ("Sirtzach") because he brings about his own death (or because he brings about the death of the people of his generation, as RASHI in Avodah Zarah 19b writes). The first sin is that the Talmid Chacham opens ("Patach") his mouth and renders Halachic rulings when he is not supposed to, and the other sin is that he closes ("Kamatz," as in "Kamtzan") his mouth when he is supposed to open it and render Halachic rulings!

22b DOING MITZVOS "SHE'LO LISHMAH" QUESTION: The Gemara says that there are seven derogatory types of Perushim: "Parush Shichmi... Parush me'Ahavah, and Parush me'Yir'ah." RASHI explains that "Parush Shichmi" refers to a person who does Mitzvos like the people of Shechem, who circumcised themselves for personal gain, to gain honor, and not l'Shem Shamayim. (The Yerushalmi explains that "Parush Shichmi" refers to a person who carries his Mitzvos on his "shoulder" ("Shechem") in order to flaunt them publicly). "Parush me'Ahavah" and "Parush me'Yir'ah" refer to people who act devoutly out of their desire for reward for performing the Mitzvos, or out of their desire to avoid punishment for transgressing the Mitzvos, and they do not do the Mitzvos out of love for Hashem.

Abaye and Rava state that the Tana should omit the last two Perushim, because they are not derogatory types of Perushim. Rav teaches that a person *should* learn Torah and do Mitzvos even she'Lo Lishmah, because it will bring him to do them Lishmah. The Gemara in Nazir (23b) continues and says that Rav cites support for this from the fact that Balak

sacrificed 42 Korbanos only in order to appease Hashem to destroy the Jewish people, and yet he merited to have Ruth as a granddaughter who did Mitzvos Lishmah.

Why does Abaye not tell the Tana to leave out "Parush Shichmi" as well? A "Parush Shichmi," too, is simply doing Mitzvos she'Lo Lishmah, and he, too, will merit to do them eventually Lishmah!

ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA explains that when the people of Shechem performed Milah, everyone who saw them knew that they were doing it for their own personal gain and not Lishmah. Therefore, their act was not on the same level as one who does a Mitzvah in a way that only he knows that he is doing it for personal gain and not Lishmah. The she'Lo Lishmah of Shechem is indeed a derogatory form of Lo Lishmah.

However, this does not seem to be consistent with the proof that Rav cites from Balak. It was certainly clear to all that Balak was bringing his Korbanos only out of his desire for personal gain, and yet Rav says that Balak's act is the source that one who does a Mitzvah she'Lo Lishmah will eventually come to do it Lishmah!

(b) The HE'OROS B'MASECHES SOTAH, in the name of Rav Elyashiv, explains that although a person might perform Mitzvos that he is obligated to do and do them she'Lo Lishmah, if a person is not obligated to do a certain Mitzvah and he chooses to do it for personal gain, then his act is not a positive one. It would be better for him to refrain from doing the Mitzvah altogether. The people in Shechem were not obligated to perform Milah, and therefore when they performed it she'Lo Lishmah, it was an inappropriate act. Similarly, if a person wears Tefilin all day long only in order to gain the respect and honor of others, his act is not acceptable to Hashem.

This might explain why Rashi (DH Ma'aseh Shechem) writes that this Parush performs "his acts" -- "Ma'asav" -- for his own benefit, instead of writing that this Parush performs "Mitzvos" for his own benefit.

However, this also does not seem to be consistent with the proof from Balak who brought Korbanos, which he was not obligated to bring, and yet Rav proves from Balak's act that "Mitoch she'Lo Lishmah, Ba Lishmah!"

(c) Rav states that a person should do Mitzvos even she'Lo Lishmah, because doing Mitzvos she'Lo Lishmah brings a person to do them Lishmah. Whom is Rav addressing? Is he addressing a person who does not want to do Mitzvos at all, or a person who wants to do them Lishmah? Obviously, he is not addressing a person who wants to do Mitzvos Lishmah and telling him not to do them Lishmah. Rather, Rav is addressing a person who is ready to refrain from doing a Mitzvah because he knows that he cannot do it Lishmah. Rav tells him that it is worthwhile to do the Mitzvah in any case, because by doing it she'Lo Lishmah he will merit to do it Lishmah. Obviously, the person Rav is addressing does not want to do the Mitzvah she'Lo Lishmah because of personal gain, for then he would not have considered refraining from doing the Mitzvah in the first place out of his lack of ability to do it Lishmah! He has his own reason to do the Mitzvah (i.e. his personal gain).

Rather, Rav is addressing a person who wants to do Mitzvos Lishmah, but he cannot bring himself to recognize the loftiness of Hashem and to arouse in himself a love for Hashem. The person does not want to arouse the wrath of Hashem and therefore he is willing to do the Mitzvah, but he is considering refraining from doing the Mitzvah because he reasons that even if he does the Mitzvah, he will not be doing it in the proper manner and Hashem will still be displeased with him. Rav tells such a person that even if his only reason to do the Mitzvah is to avoid the wrath of Hashem, it is better than not doing the Mitzvah at all, and through such performance of the Mitzvah he will merit to perform Mitzvos out of love for Hashem. Rav proves that a person can merit to do Mitzvos Lishmah from doing them she'Lo Lishmah from Balak.

According to this, we may suggest that Rav would advise a person to perform a Mitzvah she'Lo Lishmah only in the circumstances mentioned above, because a person who is not on the proper level is unable to arouse in himself the love of Hashem until he performs Mitzvos, and through the performance of Mitzvos he comes to do them Lishmah. However, if a person wants to do Mitzvos for personal gain, Rav would certainly tell him to refrain from doing Mitzvos in that manner, since the person could do the Mitzvah simply in order because he is obligated by the Torah and he will be punished otherwise, and he does not have to do it in a way that brings him personal gain. If he is not bound by the Torah, then he could avoid doing it entirely.

The proof that Rav cites from Balak is that any she'Lo Lishmah performance of a Mitzvah can lead to Lishmah, even the worst she'Lo Lishmah (for personal gain). However, there is no need to advise a person to do Mitzvos in such a manner, in order to be honored and to gain monetary gain in this world, since he could just as well do the Mitzvah for the reward in the World to Come. Nothing is stopping him from doing the Mitzvah for reward in the World to Come.

That is why Abaye says that the last two Perushim should be omitted; it is because Rav teaches that it is *not* advisable to serve Hashem in such a Lo Lishmah manner. However, doing Mitzvos in the manner of the "Parush Shichmi" is never an advisable manner in which to serve Hashem even if it, too, does lead one to do Mitzvos Lishmah.

This explanation also supports the explanation of the Maharsha and of Rav Elyashiv in He'oros b'Maseches Sotah. (M. Kornfeld)

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