

## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON YISRO - 5759

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### \* TORAH WEEKLY \* Yisro

<http://www.ohr.org.il/tw/5759/shmos/Yisro.htm>

**Insights** A Free Ride "You have seen what I did to Egypt, and that I have borne you on the wings of eagles and brought you to Me. And now, if you hearken well to Me and observe My covenant, you shall be to Me the most beloved treasure of all peoples..." (19:4) When a person first becomes religious, he gets tremendous help from Upstairs. He finds himself excited about every new religious experience: He leaps out of bed to put on tefillin (even when it's Shabbos). He can't wait to eat matza, shake the lulav, sit in the succah, and even fast on Yom Kippur. They say that every ba'al teshuva (newly observant person) eventually becomes an FFB (observant from birth). All of a sudden, he can't get up in the morning. He drags himself out of bed, shooting an angry glance at the alarm clock, and manages to make the last minyan in the synagogue. He finds himself mouthing blessings without thought. His mind wanders all over the place when he's praying. The luster seems to have worn off. When a baby starts to walk, its parents stand over it making sure that it doesn't fall. However, eventually, the parents withdraw their protection. If they didn't, the child would never learn to walk. The same is true in the spiritual world. G-d is our Father. He gives us help in our first stumblings toward Him, as a parent does to a child. And just as a parent withdraws his help so a child may achieve independence, so G-d eventually withdraws His special assistance so that we may make spirituality our own. On the surface, the above verse "You have seen what I did to Egypt, and that I have borne you on the wings of eagles and brought you to Me" doesn't seem to have a lot to do with "And now, if you hearken well to Me and observe My covenant, you shall be to Me the most beloved treasure of all peoples." What's the connection? When the Children of Israel first came out of Egypt they were on a spiritual free ride on the "wings of eagles." But in order for them to attain the exalted level that G-d wanted for them, G-d was ending that extra-special assistance. G-d was telling them "Now, if you will hearken well to Me and observe My covenant." Now, they would have to hearken well and observe the covenant. Now the real work was starting. The Children of Israel would have to become the owners of their spiritual maturity.

Chapel Of Love "In the third month from the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, on this day, they arrived at the wilderness of Sinai. And they journeyed from Refidim and they came to Sinai." (19:1) One of the characteristic features of our society is impulsiveness. Everything has to be

instant. Instant coffee. Instant success. Instant gratification. Instant spirituality. Marriage is also instant. In certain states in the United States, you can walk in (probably by now it's drive-thru) to a marriage chapel. You look up above the door and see: "If marriage is on your mind You've hit the spot Come right in and tie the knot!" How different than the preeminent wedding, the union of G-d and the Jewish People under the chupa (wedding canopy) of Sinai! "In the third month from the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, on this day, they arrived at the wilderness of Sinai. And they journeyed from Refidim and they came to Sinai." There's something unusual about these two verses. Why doesn't the Torah tell us where the Jewish People came from before it tells us where they arrived? The verse really should have said "In the third month from the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, they journeyed from Refidim and arrived at the wilderness of Sinai." When we long for something, all our focus is on where it will happen. We picture in our mind's eye what the place will look like, what the weather be like. Will there be trees? Will birds be singing? Things that lead up to the main event are subordinate in our minds.

All our yearning is to be at the place where it will all happen. The Torah is emphasizing here the yearning of the Jewish People to reach the appointed place for their union with G-d. Where they came from is almost irrelevant. Where they had arrived is essential. The Torah is inevitable. The Torah is the only thing in this world that has to be. Just as the Torah has to be, its giving has to be in a way which was also inevitable. It could have no aspect of happenstance or casualness. "In the third month from the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, on this day, they arrived at the wilderness of Sinai." The first verse doesn't mention where the Jewish People came from, so no one should say that Jewish People entered into a union with G-d by way of happenstance. No one should say that they were journeying from one place to another place and G-d just happened to put up the chupa and give them the Torah at Sinai; that Sinai was just another stop on the route. No. The exact time and place of the giving of the Torah are as immutable and inevitable as its very giving.

The Princess and the Mercedes "You shall not covet." (19:14) How is it possible to command people not to covet? Coveting is a knee-jerk reaction, isn't it? You see someone driving along in Mercedes 500LS and before you can even think twice, your envy-glands go into overdrive. Covetousness is a reflex, isn't it? It's not in the domain of intellectual control, is it? Once there was a peasant who stood in line all day to see the king pass by. At last, the royal procession drew close. He craned his neck to catch a glimpse of the royal countenance. Immediately behind the king stood the crown princess. The peasant was stunned. The princess was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. She had delicate pale features. All the women he knew had coarse sun-browned skin and bad teeth. A peasant's life is not conducive to physical beauty. However, despite the princess's exquisite appearance, not for one moment did the peasant desire or covet her. She was someone so above his station in life, that it never entered his mind that he was even in the same world as her. She remained an ethereal unreality in another cosmos. The root of all desire is the unconscious assumption we could have the object of our desire. If we feel that it's possible for us to have that thing, if we feel that it's within our orbit, the next step is to covet it. The mitzvah of not coveting tells us to look at someone else's Mercedes as a peasant looks at a princess.

Sources: \* A Free Ride -- Netziv, as heard from Rabbi Moshe Zauderer \* Chapel of Love - Gur Aryeh \* The Princess and the Mercedes - Ibn Ezra, as heard from Rabbi Moshe Zauderer Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon Prepared by the Jewish Learning Exchange of Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel Tel: 972-2-581-0315 Fax: 972-2-581-2890 E-Mail: info@ohr.org.il Home Page: <http://www.ohr.org.il> (C) 1999 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

From jr@novell.com Thu Feb 8 13:36:27 1996<mj-ravtorah@shamash.org>; To: mj-ravtorah@shamash.org, Subject: shiur harav on parshas yisro

The Rav raised the well known question on Parshas Yisro: why did Moshe require the advice of Yisro to implement the system of justice

described in the Parsha? He surely must have considered the problems inherent in his approach of acting as sole judge and recognized these potential optimizations to the process?

The Midrash Rabbah comments on Va'Yavidu Mitzrayim es Yisrael B'P'harech: the Egyptians would assign the younger (weaker) people the back breaking tasks that would have been best assigned to the stronger people, while the simpler tasks best suited for the weak were assigned to the strong. (Note: the Midrash Rabbah refers to men doing the work of women and women doing the work of men). The characterization of the former as Avodat P'rech is readily understood. However, why was the assignment of trivial tasks to the strong considered P'rech as well? The Rav answered that when a person has potential to accomplish great things and he is prevented from doing so, his will is broken and he falls into depression.

Yisro asked Moshe what his program was for dealing with the people. He understood that Moshe had great potential to fulfill his great mission. However he saw Moshe falling into the trap of the person with great potential who is demoralized when having to perform mundane tasks that are beneath his capabilities and best left to others of less potential. Moshe responded that he had 4 responsibilities: 1) Ki Yavo Aylay Ha'am Lidrosh Elokim. The Targum Yonasan Ben Uziel and the Ramban explain this as Moshe expressing his responsibility, indeed the responsibility of the leader or king (Moshe was considered a king, Vayhi B'yeshurun Melech), to pray for the needs and welfare of the people. Take the Mitzvah of Bikur Cholim as an example. The Rav quoted a Gemara in Berachos that praying for the sick helps a person focus and concentrate on his prayers for his own needs as well as those of the sick person. He also quoted a Gemara in Nedarim regarding Rabbi Akiva who entered the home of an individual who was close to death and nursed him back to health. Bikur Cholim consists of 2 parts: a) to pray for the sick person; b) to help the sick with his immediate comfort needs.

The Mishna in Taanis (2:1) says that when there is a Taanis Tzibbur in times of drought, they would place ashes on the forehead of the Nasi (leader of the generation). Why is the Nasi singled out and embarrassed in such a way? Why should he bear more responsibility for the drought than the rest of the people? Because the drought is linked to the lack of, or ineffectiveness of, the prayers of the leader. Had the Nasi shown more attention to the needs of the people and prayed more sincerely for them perhaps he might have averted the drought. Gedolei Yisrael have always shown their concern and prayed for the welfare of Klal Yisrael.

2) A leader of Israel must be capable of sharing in the pain felt by his people and to try to alleviate that pain. As Moshe said, Ki Yihey Lahem Davar Ba Aylay, when they have any pressing issue or need, personal or communal, they turn to me for advice and for comfort. If the problems of the people do not bother the leader then he is not a true leader. The Rav related how his grandfather, Reb Chaim, would constantly involve himself in the troubles of his people. He told how as a youth he recalled that Reb Chaim did not hesitate to leave an important gathering to help calm a distraught mother who dreamt that her son had become crazed. 3) V'shafat'i Bayn Ish Uvayn Rayayhu, to judge the people fairly and equitably.

4) Last and most important: V'Hodati Es Chukay Elokim Ves Torosav. The most critical task of a Manhig Yisrael is to be the Rebbe of Klal Yisrael, to teach the people the details behind the laws and ways of Hashem.

Yisro could not comprehend a leader that would be capable of all these tasks that Moshe described. He saw the roles of prayer, involvement in the pain of the people and day to day judging as to debilitating distractions for Moshe. He believed that Moshe needed to reset his priorities with regards to his involvement with the people.

Yisro understood that Moshe must function as the Navi (Mul Haelokim) to receive the laws from Hashem. However he told Moshe that he should teach the laws to the people once. Show them what's Mutar and Assur. Show them the ways of Hashem (V'izharta Eshem Es Hachukim Ves Hatoros V'hodata Lahem Es Haderech Yelchu Bah Ves Hamaaseh Asher Yaasun) but do not teach them each and every detail. Moshe should give up his practice of acting as a Rebbe with Talmidim working on each and every detail of the

shiur. Let them learn the details themselves. For example, Moshe should show the people how to put on Tefillin without teaching them every detail about the tefillin. Only show them how to perform the Mitzvah, Es Haderech Yelchu Bah. Yisro advised Moshe to give up his title of Rebbe, to no longer act as Moshe Rabbeinu, as it took away too much of his time. Moshe, of course, could not relinquish his title of Rebbe. Yisro recognized that Moshe was also required to be part of the justice system. However, he could not possibly act as judge for all the cases brought to him by B'nei Yisrael. He suggested that Moshe delegate the simple tasks that he handled in order that he not become demoralized with the constant interruptions. Since he felt that Moshe's time was too valuable to waste, he should no longer involve himself with praying for the people or sharing their pain to alleviate their suffering. Moshe who was the most humble of men, as well as Gedolei Yisrael through the ages, never felt that their time was too valuable to spend on Klal Yisrael.

Even though Moshe, as commanded by Hashem, implemented Yisro's suggestions, he still did not remove himself from any of these activities. He remained directly accessible to B'nei Yisrael. For example, in the cases of the people that were unclean because of Tumaas Mais and could not bring the Korban Pesach the second year, as well as the daughters of Tz'laphchad, no lower courts were involved prior to the cases being brought to Moshe. (Note: Perhaps the Rav mentioned these cases specifically because they deal not only with Halachic issues but with emotional suffering as well). Yisro also intended that Moshe should only judge cases that were significant in terms of the amounts they involved (Davar Gadol, Davar Katon). Moshe instead based his involvement on the intricacies of the halachic principles involved regardless of the value of the litigation at hand. (c) Dr. Israel Rivkin and Josh Rapps, Edison, N.J. Permission to reprint and distribute, with this notice, is hereby granted. These summaries are based on notes taken by Dr. Rivkin at the weekly Moriah Shiur given by Moraynu V'Rabbeinu Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveichik ZTL over many years.

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Peninim Ahl Hatorah: Parshas Yisro

by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

"I am Hashem your G-d Who has taken you out of the land of Egypt." (20:2) The Kuzari explains why Hashem identifies Himself as the one Who took us out of Egypt, rather than as the Creator of the universe. The Exodus was a phenomenon that was clear for all to see. Hundred of thousands of Jews witnessed this unprecedented break with the course of natural events. While everyone was aware that there had been a creation, no man had been present. It, therefore, makes sense to refer to an event that would have greater credibility in the eyes of man. Horav Yaakov Neiman, zl, offers an interesting response to this famous question. He claims that it simply is not necessary for the Torah to inform us that Hashem created the universe. After all, who else could have created it? Surely we did not create it! He cites the Chafetz Chaim who relates an analogy in the name of the Dubno Maggid. Two people were traveling together when one checked his wallet and discovered that his money was missing. Immediately, he grabbed hold of his companion and demanded that he return his money. "Why do you accuse me?" screamed the companion. "What proof do you have that I stole your money? Did you see me in the act of stealing?" The victim responded emphatically, "Why do I have to produce proof? Who else could it have been? Obviously I did not steal from myself. By default, it must have been you." The same concept applies to B'nei Ha'Olam, the creation of the world. Man did not do it, so it makes sense that Hashem was the Creator of the world. When we are addressing the areas of human endeavor, we are making ourselves vulnerable to problems. We might forget about the "Hashem factor" in the miracles which we perceive. People often overlook Hashem, forgetting that it was He Who wrought the miracles, He Who brought about the healing, He Who saved us from disaster. It was necessary for Hashem to declare to B'nei Yisrael, "It was I Who took you out of Egypt," in order to ensure that we do not err in believing that human intervention was responsible for Yetzias Mitzrayim.

"For in order to elevate you Hashem has come." (20:17). The word "nasos" is translated by Rashi as "to elevate." The fact that Hashem Himself

has revealed Himself to you will elevate your position in the eyes of the nations. The Rambam and Ramban translate the word "nasos" as "to test." Hashem has come to test Bnei Yisrael. They differ, however, in regard to the time of this trial. According to the Ramban, the emphasis is upon the present. Hashem is telling Bnei Yisrael, "At Har Sinai, you were thoroughly prepared to meet Hashem. You had no doubt concerning His sovereignty. Now we will see if you will pass the test. Will you observe His mitzvos? Will you love Him? Will you repay His kindness to you?" The Rambam, on the other hand, feels that the test will occur in the future. The unprecedented events which took place on Har Sinai, the unparalleled experience of which Bnei Yisrael were a part, should have galvanized their trust in Hashem, so that they will be able to overcome the challenges of the future. Nothing should be able to undermine Bnei Yisrael's faith in the Almighty. According to the Rambam, the experience has strengthened Bnei Yisrael, tempering their faith. They should have developed the fortitude to withstand all challenges to their faith. The Ramban posits a different idea. His statement, "Will you repay His kindness to you?" implies that we owe loyalty to Hashem. Without a sense of hakoras ha'tov, appreciation and gratitude, we have no relationship with Hashem. Horav Yitzchok Hutner, zl, derives a fascinating lesson from the Ramban. We have always placed hakoras ha'tov among the fundamental character traits that a decent human being must possess. A noted axiom of Chazal is that "derech erez kadmah la'Torah," character development, moral and ethical behavior, are pre-requisites to Torah study. Gratitude to Hashem is no different. Before one can properly study Torah, he must be refined in middos. Hakoras hatov to Hashem should be no different. We glean a more profound aspect to this expectation from the Ramban. Hashem arranged the revelation at Har Sinai as a test to see if Bnei Yisrael would repay His kindness to them. Hakoras ha'tov is not simply a character trait-it is the foundation for establishing avodas Hashem, it is a pre-requisite for serving Hashem. Indeed, Hashem brought about the entire spectacle of maamad Har Sinai as a test, to assess Bnei Yisrael's level of gratitude. If they are lacking in their sense of appreciation, then their relationship with Hashem will accordingly be inadequate.

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From: yated-usa@mailserver.ttec.com

Halacha Discussion by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt Remember the Shabbos day (20:8) The mitzvah of Tosefes Shabbos is derived from this verse (Mechilta)

Snow Removal Contracts: What About Shabbos?

Question: A snow removal contract is an agreement, either verbal or written, to plow a driveway, parking lot, etc., whenever a specified amount of snows accumulates. Is it permitted to enter into such a contract which, in effect, asks a non-Jew to perform a forbidden Labor on Shabbos? Answer: It is difficult to give a definitive answer to this question. Let us rather explain the pros and cons so that the reader will be able to present his individual case to a rav for a final ruling. The prohibition: Amirah l'akum It is Rabbinically(1) prohibited(2) to instruct a non-Jew to perform a forbidden-either Biblical or Rabbinic-Shabbos Labor. It makes no difference if the instructions are given on Shabbos or before Shabbos(3). This strict prohibition is known as amirah l'akum(4). Generally, a snow removal contract calls for snow to be removed whenever a specific amount accumulates. It follows, therefore, that if that specific amount has accumulated on Shabbos, then it is as if the non-Jew was "commanded" to remove it on Shabbos, which is amirah l'akum. We will now consider three possibilities for mitigating the restriction of amirah l'akum: No direct instructions: An argument may be made that a snow-removal contract does not constitute amira l'akum since there is no direct command to remove the snow on Shabbos. Since the contract calls for snow removal whenever a certain amount of snow falls, without explicitly mentioning that Shabbos is included, one may argue that amirah l'akum is only prohibited when there is a specific command to do work on Shabbos. Since, however, there is no clear source in the poskim which indicates that this type of "command" is not considered amirah l'akum(5), it is difficult to rely on this argument as

grounds for leniency(6). Permissible manner: Another possible argument for leniency may be based on a ruling of the Rama(7) who states that although holding a lit candle is strictly forbidden because of muktzeh, still it is permissible to instruct a non-Jew to hold a lit candle so that a Jew can see where he is going. Why does amirah l'akum not apply? The Rama explains that amirah l'akum is only prohibited if otherwise the act in question could not be accomplished. In this case, though, there are permissible methods for the Jew himself to hold the candle, e.g. indirect movement (tiltul min ha-tzad) or movement via body(8) (tiltul b'gufo). Thus the Rama establishes the principle that whenever an act could possibly be done by a Jew in a permissible manner, a non-Jew may be instructed to do that same act even in a prohibited manner. Snow removal can be accomplished in one of two ways: by plowing, clearly a forbidden Shabbos Labor, or by shoveling, which may be permitted on Shabbos. Based on the ruling of the Rama, it should follow that amirah l'akum does not apply and the non-Jew could be instructed to plow the driveway since the Jew can choose to shovel his own driveway. Of course, this leniency would only apply in an area which has a kosher eiruv; otherwise there would be no permissible way for the Jew to shovel his own driveway because of the forbidden Labor of Carrying. But this argument, too, is not strong enough to rely upon. First, Rama himself-discussing a similar case-does not recommend relying on this leniency(9). Secondly, it is unclear if it is permitted for a Jew to shovel his driveway even where an eiruv exists. One possible problem could be the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch(10) which prohibits removing bundles of wheat or pitchers of wine from one's yard or basement on Shabbos, as this is considered a weekday activity, uvda de'chol. Similarly, shoveling one's driveway may be considered a weekday activity(11). Another issue is the opinion of some poskim(12) who hold that snow which fell on Shabbos is severe muktzeh.

For the benefit of the non-Jew Yet another argument for leniency can be made based on the ruling of the Taz(13). The Taz rules that one may instruct a non-Jewish maid to wash the dishes on Friday night even if he knows that she will turn on the lights(14) in order to be able to wash the dishes. He explains that the Jew gains no benefit from the light, since the Jew's only concern is that the dishes be washed. The light is being turned on not for the Jew, but for the sake of the maid. This is not amirah l'akum, since a non-Jew may perform a Shabbos Labor for himself on Shabbos. Since the non-Jew could-if he wanted-remove the snow manually and not with a plow, it may be argued that the Jew's instructions to "clear the driveway" are not instructions to use the plow. All the Jew cares about is the clear driveway; how the job gets done is not his concern. Amirah l'akum may not apply so long as no explicit instructions to perform a prohibited Labor, e.g., "Plow my driveway," are given. But it is highly questionable if these two cases are indeed similar, since there are marked differences between them that outweigh the apparent similarity. In the Taz's case, washing dishes is clearly permissible on Shabbos. Indeed, when the maid is actually washing the dishes she is performing no forbidden Shabbos Labor. It is only when preparing to wash the dishes by turning on the kitchen light that a prohibited Labor is performed(15). We thus understand what the Taz means when he defines turning on the light as being of "no benefit to the Jew" and completely "for the sake of the maid". But concerning snow removal, the actual removal of the snow is accomplished by means of a forbidden Labor, driving a snow plow. The Jew is benefiting directly from the prohibited Labor performed by the non-Jew, and it is as if the Jew is instructing the non-Jew to use the plow for the snow removal. It is markedly different from the case of washing dishes(16). Conclusion While we are forced to conclude that it is not a simple matter to permit an unconditional seasonal snow contract(17), it is, however, permitted to sign such a contract as long as it is clearly stipulated that the homeowner does not want his driveway plowed on Shabbos. If this condition is made, then even if the non-Jew shows up on Shabbos, there is no violation of amirah l'akum(18). Some have suggested that signing even such a contract should be discouraged. Their objection is based on a ruling of the Rama(19) that prohibits a Jew to have his windmill-or any other noisy machine-operate on Shabbos because of

zilzul Shabbos, degradation of the Shabbos. The Rama is concerned(20) that running a noisy machine on Jewish owned premises on Shabbos casts a suspicion on the owner of the premises: Is he operating the machine? For this reason some poskim forbid a non-Jewish maid to operate a dish washer or a vacuum cleaner inside a Jew's home, since it may lead to suspicion of the Jewish owner if the noise is overheard(21). But when a truck is plowing a driveway, and it is clear as day that a non-Jew is driving the truck, we need not be concerned about zilzul Shabbos.

1 A minority view maintains that amirah l'akum is Biblically forbidden. While the poskim generally reject this approach, it is an indication of the severity of the prohibition; see Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 253:7. 2 There are several reasons given for this prohibition; see Rambam Hilchos Shabbos 6:1; Rashi, Avoda Zarah 15a and 22a. 3 O.C. 307:2. 4 To reinforce this prohibition, the Rabbis forbade one to derive direct benefit from a non-Jew on Shabbos even if the non-Jew performed the labor on his own without being told; O.C. 276:1-20. 5 See Melachim Omnaiych (Chapter 9) who discusses a somewhat similar case concerning a non-Jewish stockbroker who was instructed to sell a stock when it reaches a certain price, and that price was reached on Shabbos. This may be a violation of amirah l'akum. 6 See also Mishnah Berurah 244:30. 7 O.C. 276:3. See also Taz 307:4. 8 These concepts were explained at length in a previous column (Vayeyitze 5759). 9 See Rama 325:10 and Mishnah Berurah 57 and 62 who discourages relying on his leniency. See also Aruch ha-Shulchan 276:17 who opines that this leniency may only be relied upon in the privacy of one's home. See also Mishnah Berurah 276:29. 10 O.C. 333:1. See Mishnah Berurah 11 that this is prohibited even through the agency of a non-Jew. 11 Teshuvos Lev Avraham 49. See also Machazei Eliyahu 68. 12 Minchas Shabbos 88:20 quoting Pri Megadim; Igros Moshe O.C. 5:22-37; Harav S.Z. Auerbach, Sefer Tiltulei Shabbos, pg. 13. Many other poskim, though, maintain that snow is not muktzeh, see Har Tzvi, Soser; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 203; Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah, pg. 190. [See also Mishnah Berurah 310:32 and 338:30 concerning rain.] 13 Quoted by Mishnah Berurah 276:27. 14 Or use hot water - Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 30:23. 15 Turning on the lights is comparable to the non-Jewish maid driving from her home to her job, which is permitted since the driving has nothing to do with the job which is being done for the Jew. The driving is completely for the sake of the non-Jew. 16 See a similar idea in Minchas Yitzchak 4:25 concerning a different case. An additional argument against this leniency is the opinion of some poskim that amirah l'akum applies to an act which is forbidden merely because of u'vda de'chol. 17 When the question on a contract applies to a shul, etc., there is more room for leniency, since there are some authorities who permit amirah l'akum in order to avoid a public hazard. Since each case is different, a rav must be consulted. 18 Although it is prohibited to allow a non-Jew to do work on a Jew's premises even without instructing him to do so (Mishnah Berurah 252:17; 276:11), we have established elsewhere (see Hebrew Notes to The Weekly Halachah Discussion, vol. 1, pg. 244-248) that this prohibition applies only when the Jew has direct benefit from the non-Jew's work, such as putting on a light for the benefit of the Jew. Snow removal, however, is not a direct benefit; rather, it is removal of a potential hazard. It is similar to a non-Jew extinguishing a light for a Jew, which is permitted as long as no actual command to do so was made (see Mishnah Berurah 207:11 and 207:76.) 19 O.C. 252:5. See Pri Megadim 21 that this is only a chumrah. 20 As explained in Darkei Moshe and Shulchan Aruch Harav and as evident from the Rama himself who permits a clock to chime on the hour since everybody knows that it can be set before Shabbos. 21 See Igros Moshe O.C. 4:70-6 (concerning an alarm clock) and Minchas Shelomo, pg. 81 (concerning a washing machine). See also Kol ha-Torah # 42, pg. 255, about a dish washer.

Shabbat-B'Shabbato - Parshat Yitro No 738: 20 Shevat 5759 (6 February 1999) SHABBAT-ZOMET is an extract from SHABBAT-B'SHABBATO, a weekly bulletin distributed free of charge in hundreds of synagogues in Israel. It is published by the Zomet Institute of Alon Shevut, Israel, under the auspices of the National Religious Party. Translated by: Moshe Goldberg ...  
A MITZVA IN THE TORAH PORTION: Honoring Parents and In-Laws by Rabbi Binyamin Tabori

The sages explained that the reason a father precedes a mother in the commandment to honor parents is that if not for this command it could be assumed that "a son honors his mother more than his father, because she wins his favor with her kind words." However, the Talmud gives another reason why the father is listed first. According to this explanation, the verse implies that if there is a conflict between honoring the two parents, "set aside your mother's honor and honor your father, since both you and your mother are required to honor your father."

This week's Torah portion implies that it is also necessary to honor a father-in-law, as is written, "Moshe went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him. And each man greeted the other in peace." [Shemot 18:7]. "'Man' refers to Moshe, (as is written, 'And the man, Moshe' [Bamidbar 12:3])," implying that Moshe kissed Yitro. "This teaches us that a man should honor his father-in-law." [Mechilta]. The "Tur" learned the same principle from what David said to Shaul, "And my father did indeed see" [I

Shmuel 24:12]. How could he call someone who was not his father by that name? The answer is that David honored Shaul, who was his father-in-law, implying that "one is required to honor his father-in-law just like his father" [Midrash Shochar Tov].

The Chayei Adam asks a question. A woman is required to honor her father, who is also her husband's father-in-law. If there is a conflict between the desires of her own father and her husband's father, she is not required to honor her father, since "a woman is not free to act, because she is under someone else's control." However, as was quoted above, a father's honor takes precedence over that of a mother, because she herself is obligated to honor the father. Thus, since the husband is also required to honor his father-in-law, shouldn't the wife have to listen to the demands of her own father? A similar question can also be asked with respect to honoring a grandfather. How is it that a father takes precedence over a grandfather, if the father himself is also obligated to honor his own father?

The answer to the above dilemmas would seem to be that in principle the requirement to honor a father and a mother are at the same level. Therefore, if a conflict arises it is necessary to have some rule of precedence. The requirement to honor a father-in-law is, however, at a lower level, so that if there is a conflict it does not take precedence. Similarly, the requirement to honor a grandfather is at a lower level than the command to honor a father, so that the need to honor a father always takes precedence.

The conclusion is that the rule that a father takes precedence over a mother cannot be used to explain why the father appears first in the command, since as stated in the previous paragraph the two are at the same level. Thus we return to the first reason given above, that the father appears first in an attempt to counterbalance the natural tendency to honor the mother.

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"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Yisro - These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frاند's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 180, The Mitzvah of Kiddush for Men and Women. Good Shabbos!

Accepting Torah As A Command Rather Than As A Choice The Torah teaches that Moshe's son was called Gershom "because he said, 'I was a stranger (Ger) in a foreign land'" [Shmos 18:3]. The other [son] was called Eliezer "for the G-d of my father has come to my aid (Ezer) and he has saved me from the sword of Pharaoh" [Shmos 18:4]. The Baal HaTurim is bothered by the change of wording between these two verses. Why does the reason for naming the first son Gershom contain the extra expression "because he said" (ki amar)? The Baal HaTurim relates a fascinating comment, based on a Medrash in Parshas Shmos. The Medrash says there that when Moshe asked Yisro for permission to marry his daughter Tziporah, Yisro agreed, on condition that their first-born son would be a priest to Avodah Zarah [Idolatry]. The Medrash says that Moshe Rabbeinu accepted this condition. The Baal HaTurim here in Yisro, and in Shmos, explains that when Gershom was born, Moshe Rabbeinu purposely did not circumcise him. An Angel came to kill Moshe for this negligence. At that point Tziporah released him from his condition and circumcised Gershom. The extra words "because he said" are Moshe's explanation. "Do you know why I had to wait before circumcising my son Gershom?" "Because he said, 'I was a stranger in a foreign land.'" In other words, the reason was why I had to delay circumcising Gershom was because I was a stranger in a foreign land, and therefore I was forced into Yisro's terrible condition before I could marry my wife. Perhaps we have heard of fathers-in-law demanding strange things from their prospective son-in-laws, but to make such a demand -- that his grandchild should be an idol worshipper -- and for Moshe to accept such a condition is hard to fathom. The Ba'al HaTurim explains Moshe's calculation. Moshe believed that this was the way to bring Yisro to Teshuva. He felt that as a result of marrying Tziporah, even though doing so meant agreeing to this terrible condition, ultimately Yisro would "come around". Nonetheless, Moshe Rabbeinu was punished for agreeing to such a condition and his own grandson became an idolater [Shoftim 18:30; see commentaries there].

There is another aspect of this Medrash that is hard to understand. The Medrash says that Yisro demanded that condition -- that his grandson be dedicated to Avodah Zara -- after Yisro himself had already given up on Avodah Zara. It is taught that Yisro was a great man of truth. He traveled throughout the world searching for the truth by experimenting with all types of Avodah Zara. Yisro finally determined that it was all nothing. He relinquished his priesthood and renounced Avodah Zara. Yet, according to this Medrash, even after this point in Yisro's life, he still demanded that his grandson should become an idolater. This is wondrous! If someone is a man of truth, who "tried it all out," and determined that it was false, then how can he come back and ask that his grandson should be an idolater? It does not make any sense!

The Mir Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l, says that Yisro was indeed a truth seeker, but he made a big mistake. Yisro believed that the proper method for arriving at the truth was through the process that he had used to arrive at the truth. Yisro reasoned "I did not discover the truth as a result of someone forcing it down my throat. I chose the truth. I traveled around and tasted everything and came to the conclusion through my own free will and my own convictions that Judaism is the true religion. Certainly I know that G-d is True, but I want my grandson to have that same beautiful experience of tasting things and seeing other possibilities. If in the end he too will choose Judaism, that will be wonderful. But I do not want him brought up in a house of Judaism, which would preclude him from CHOOSING Judaism -- since it would be forced upon him. G-d forbid we do not want him to be forced. We want him to pick it of his own free will." This means that Yisro was (l'havdil elef havdolos) a "sixties person". In the sixties we had these kind of people that refused to take anything for granted. Everyone had to experiment and do his or her own thing. So even though Yisro had personally found the truth, he wanted his grandson to find the truth by himself, just as he (Yisro) had done. This, says the Mir Rosh Yeshiva, goes against what Judaism is all about. A basic fact of Judaism is that we are servants of G-d. The highest level that a Jew can reach is not that he does Mitzvos out of his own free will, but that he does Mitzvos because he realizes that this is what G-d wills. He realizes that G-d is the Master and he is the servant. "I do Mitzvos, not necessarily because I WANT to do them, but because I HAVE to do them." Judaism is about being a metzurveh v'oseh (one who is commanded and therefore observes). We do not do Mitzvos because they SEEM right, they SEEM ethical, or they SEEM moral. We do Mitzvos because we KNOW and accept that they are G-d's commandments.

This concept can be further emphasized as follows: The verse states concerning the Ten Commandments "And G-d commanded ALL these things saying [Shmos 20:1]." Rash"i cites a Medrash on the meaning of the expression "ALL these things": At first G-d said all Ten Commandments simultaneously (something which is impossible for a human being to hear or to comprehend). After saying them all at once, G-d repeated each one individually. Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, Z"TL, asked about this sequence of events. What was the purpose of saying all Ten Commandments at once if no one could understand them in that fashion? Rav Soloveitchik answered that almost everyone realizes that "I am the L-rd Your G-d" and "Thou shall not take the Name of the L-rd in vain" must be Divine commandments. We accept them as Divine decrees. However, some people do not consider commandments such as "Thou shall not murder" to be Divine in origin. We think we understand the rational behind "Thou shall not commit adultery". Commandments such as "Thou shall not steal" seem self-explanatory and self-evident. Are they not obvious? What kind of society can we have if murder and adultery are allowed? Do we need a G-d to tell me that? Clearly, any society cannot survive without "Lo Signov". Rav Soloveitchik explained that it was necessary for G-d to say all Ten Commandments simultaneously, so that we would know that the G-d who tells us "Don't take My Name in vain" -- which might not seem logical to us -- is the same G-d who tells us "Do not murder" -- which might seem obvious. G-d is telling us that the reason why we must observe "Do not murder" is not because we do not think it is right and not because we do not think it is moral, but because I

(G-d) say that it is wrong. The differences between a Divine "Thou shall not murder" and a societal "Thou shall not murder" are the issues that we confront today. In a societal "Thou shall not murder" abortions can become permissible, euthanasia can become permissible, and children that are not born normally can be murdered. All of those things are permitted by our society's "Thou shall not murder". Therefore, G-d says, not only are the 5 commandments (relating to matters between man and G-d) from Me, but all 10 commandments are from Me. We must know we must listen to the Torah, not because we think so, not because we have tried other things and Torah seems to make the most sense and not because it is morally compelling. We must listen to the commandments of the Torah for one and only one reason: Because G-d instructed us to do so and we are his servants.

This was Yisro's mistake. Although this was the way that Yisro discovered Judaism, this was not the proper path to proscribe for his grandson. In the final analysis, we do not have to keep the Torah because we like; we have to keep because we are told to. To paraphrase Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Ours is not to question why, ours is just to do and die" [The Charge of the Light Brigade; 1854].

Sources and Personalities Ba'al HaTurim (1268-1340) Torah Commentary by Rav Yakov ben Asher, author of the Tur Code of Jewish Law. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz (1902-1978) Mir Yeshiva, Jerusalem. Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (1903-1993) Yeshivas Rabbenu Yitzchak Elchanan, NY; Boston. Rash"i (1040-1105) Rav Sh'lomo ben Yitzchak; Troyes and Worms France, "Father of all Torah Commentaries".

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim dhoffman@torah.org Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 for further information. Now Available: Mesorah / Artscroll has recently published a collection of Rabbi Frand's essays. The book is entitled: Rabbi Yisrocher Frand: In Print RavFrand, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. http://www.torah.org/Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800 FAX: 358-9801

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machon\_meir@vjlists.com Subject: PRAYER & MUSIC  
Prayer and Music Rabbi Shlomo Aviner

Question: Prayer is supposed to give us strength. It is the best "meditation" there is. Yet how can I become attached to prayer with all my being? Perhaps in order to stir up my emotions, it would be best to listen to some good music, which might open up the pathways to G-d? After all, before prayer we need preparation and proper intent. Answer: Certainly appropriate music arouses one heavenward. Thus the Prophet Elisha would request that a minstrel be summoned, and "when the minstrel played, the hand of the L-rd came upon him" (II Kings 3:15). From this our sages learned that "the Divine Presence rests... only where there is joy over mitzvah observance" (Shabbat 30:2). It is also well known that in the Temple, musicians, consisting of holy men -- Levites -- would play during the divine service. Yet we do not find that our medieval or later sages advised us to prepare for prayer through music, or to accompany prayer with music. When the Reform movement introduced the organ into the synagogue, a terrible outcry rose against them, for by using the organ, they were making themselves like the Christians. But really, why not accompany our prayers with music? Apparently the tunes used in the Temple, and those of the Prophet Elisha, have been lost to us. Apparently, those pathways leading to G-d through musical notes are not good for us. For the Christians, they are appropriate, for their prayers are meant as esthetic experiences. Moreover, their churches are constructed in such a manner as to make an impression upon those who see them. By contrast, for us, prayer means serving G-d. It certainly is not "meditation," which is addressed by the person to his inner self. That is self-worship. We are not opposed to a person's enjoying reputable esthetic pleasures and taking steps to achieve inner calm, but that does not constitute worship of G-d but self-worship. It is a case of "I set myself always before me," rather than "I set the L-rd always before me" (Psalms 16:8). The verse I quoted now is the one that opens the Shulchan Aruch, the code of Jewish law. It is the verse that is very often embroidered on the Cantor's prayer lectern, or inscribed on the first page of

the prayer book, and such is our preparation for prayer -- to "know before whom we are standing." We are supposed to stop for a short while, to think a little bit, to ponder a little bit, to ask "What are we and what is our life?" We must feel and understand that our whole life has value only through its encounter with the word of G-d. We are not to be preoccupied with ourselves, but to be liberated from ourselves. If we only merited it, we would fulfill what is written in the Shulchan Aruch as a preparation for prayer:

"The worshipper must concentrate on the meaning of the words that he emits from his lips, and he must think as though the Divine Presence were facing him. He should remove all thoughts that disturb him, until his thoughts and concentration are trained purely on his prayers. He should remember that if he were standing before a flesh-and-blood king, he would arrange his words and concentrate on them so as not to flounder. How much more so he must be careful before G-d, the Supreme King of Kings, who examines all our thoughts. This is what the saintly and righteous would do. They would engage in solitary reflection and would concentrate on their prayers until they had been so successful in divorcing themselves from the material and allowing their intellect to triumph that they would approach the level of prophecy." (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, 98:1). Yet we have not merited this, so we must strive to our utmost, even if we are not so successful. This striving and yearning themselves constitute worship of G-d.

G-d performed yet another great kindness for us: our external behavior influences and arouses our spiritual world within. As Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto said, "Our external movements arouse our spiritual interior, and the former is certainly more under our control than the latter." (Mesilat Yesharim, end of Ch. 7). Thus, if we move during prayer, if we pray with a sweet, pleasant voice and if we recite psalms, we will merit to be the living fulfillment of Psalm 42:2-3: "As the hart pants after the water brooks, so my soul pants after You, O G-d. My soul thirsts for G-d., for the living G-d."

Thirty-Six Sessions to Intellectual and Spiritual Clarity," Session Twenty-Five: Sinai and Anti-Semitism; www.thirtysix.org)

On the third day in the morning, there was thunder and lightning, and heavy cloud upon the mountain, and the voice of the shofar was very strong. The people in the camp trembled. Moshe directed the people out of the camp towards G-d, and they placed themselves at the foot of the mountain ... (Shemos 19:16-17) There is an interesting midrash on this posuk that enhances one's appreciation of yeshivos (and might make a good fund-raising pitch). The Midrash says: You should know that there is no yeshivah below that does not have a corresponding yeshivah Above, and every student has a corresponding "Potential" and "Shadow" Above ... And what they learn Below is what they learn Above, because there is only one Torah for all of them. All of the rabbis of the Tannaitic and Amoraitic Era, their students, and their students' students were all at Har Sinai when the entire nation stood there. Before the Torah was given, they were all Above and many times the entire Torah passed through their lips ... (Midrash Pliyah) This is one of the many remarkable midrashim that illuminate our eyes as to just supernatural the whole event of Mattan Torah--the Giving of Torah--was. It also enhances our appreciation of how important it is to remain attached to the Sinaitic Tradition of Torah, and to remain entranced by its holy words. We should learn from a baby something important. I am always amazed at how you can present a toy to a crying baby, who will stop crying when his amazement and curiosity overwhelm his sense of boredom. That's not the amazing part. What makes me smile is how he looks at this toy as if it is the first time he has seen it ... though he just played with it 15 minutes ago. Either a baby's memory is that short, or, his sense of fascination is that strong, or both. Our memories may not be so short, but why must our sense of fascination with Torah be? The first step to understanding Torah and its sea of commentaries is to be awed by Torah. As King David said, Secrets to those who fear Him ... (Tehillim 25:14) And fearing Him also means being awed by His Torah. Without this awe, Torah is just another book, Judai sm is just another religion, and we are just another people--not the "Nation of Priests" we were taken to Sinai to become. Have a great Shabbos, Pinchas Winston

Rabbi Winston has authored fourteen books on Jewish philosophy (hashkofa). If you enjoy Rabbi Winston's weekly Perceptions on the Parsha, you may enjoy many of his books. Visit the Project Genesis bookstore - Genesis Judaica - <http://books.torah.org/authors/winston/> for more details! Perceptions, Copyright (c) 1999 Rabbi Pinchas Winston and Project Genesis, Inc. Rabbi Winston teaches at both Neve Yerushalym (Jerusalem) - <http://www.torah.org/neve/> and Neveh Tzion (Telzstone) - <http://www.neveh.org/ProjectGenesis:TorahontheInformationSuperhighway> learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800 FAX: 358-9801

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### Drasha Parshas Yisro - Return to Sender

Yisro is the portion in which the Children of Israel arrive at their spiritual, intellectual, and moral destination. It is the portion in which the former Hebrew slaves choose to become the Chosen People, choosing the responsibilities of 613 mitzvos and all their accountability. This week the Jews accept the Torah at Mount Sinai. It does not come easy. Hashem prefaces the offering with an overpowering charge. He sends Moshe to speak to both the men and women. "You shall be to Me a kingdom of ministers and a holy nation" (Exodus19:6). Accepting the Torah included the responsibilities of a holy nation -- a new moral divining rod for a world fraught with immorality. But they were up to the challenge and they responded as such. They did not murmur their response nor did they mumble their acceptance. The Jews affirmed their agreement in unison with words that resound throughout history as the battle cry of Jewish faith. They shouted in unison, "All that Hashem has commanded, we shall do!" (Exodus 19:8). The response, declaring total submission to Torah dictates, was proudly noted by the Almighty, handing the Jews a most chosen nation status through all their ordeals. But Moshe did not look up to heaven with a content smile, as if he was a proud brother sharing nachas with a father who was watching from the bleachers. The Torah tells us, "and Moshe related the words of the people to Hashem" (Exodus19:9). He returned to the Master of the Universe and reported the good news. He repeated the response, verbatim, to Hashem. The question is obvious. Moshe knew, perhaps better than any mortal being, that every action, gesture, and thought of any inhabitant of this planet is duly recorded by the Almighty. Why, then, did he report back the response? Hashem was well aware of the enthusiasm and willing acceptance of the people. Furthermore, by telling us that Moshe went back to Hashem, isn't the Torah opening a Pandora's box? Could one possibly infer that Hashem, needed Moshe to find out the response? Obviously there is a deeper lesson to be learned!

In New York State when a baby is born, tests are administered to determine if the baby has any genetic diseases. Among them are tests for histidinemia. This condition causes excessive levels of the protein histidine to build up in the blood, which can damage the nervous system and cause retardation. The disease must be attended to immediately. A histidine level of 1 or 2 points is considered normal. Ten days after a baby was born to a

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### Perceptions - Yisro: Why 2 K and Yisro

In the third month after Israel left Egypt, they arrived in the Sinai desert. They had traveled from Refidim, had come to the Sinai desert, and camped there, opposite the mountain. (Shemos 19:1 -2) Rav Chisda and Rabbah the son of Rav Huna both said: Why is it called "Sinai"? Because it is the mountain from which hatred (Hebrew: sinah) came down to the Nations-of-the-World ... (Shabbos 89a) That is not what one would expect to read about Torah from Sinai. Torah was given to bring peace to the world, and if anything at all, elevate the Jewish people in the eyes of the nations of the world. The Talmud seems to imply that more peace would have resulted if Torah had not been given! Even Rashi's reason for this midrash, which seems to implicate the evil trait of jealousy, does not answer all the questions: "Because they didn't receive Torah on it." (Rashi) Would they have wanted to? The Midrash says no. In fact, the Midrash says that G-d even asked the nations if they wanted the Torah, and none wanted to commit themselves to the mitzvos, especially those that undermined their way of life (Sifri). If not, then to what is the Midrash referring? To answer this question, we need to understand the anti-Semite himself, and the quintessential anti-Semite is Amalek - ... a "punishing strap" for Israel, always ready for punishment. (Rashi, Bamidbar 21:1) Memuchan was Haman (who descended from Amalek); why was Haman called Memuchan (ifunn)? Because he was set aside for punishment (uhbgrupk ifun). (Megillah 12b)

Rashi and the Talmud are indicating what is at the core of anti-Semitism. Whatever the motivation of the anti-Semite, it doesn't make a difference ultimately. Anti-Semitism, and Amalek in specific, is the "effect" of a "cause" that we seem to create, as the Torah forewarns in Parashas Bechukosai first, and reiterates later in Parashas Ki Savo, and as the following indicates:

Rebi Yochanan ben Zakkai was once riding on a donkey outside of Jerusalem, and his disciples had followed him. He saw a young woman picking barley out of dung of an Arabian's cattle. As soon as she observed him, she covered herself with her hair, stood up and said to him, "Rabbi! Help me!" He answered, "Whose daughter are you?" She said, "I am the daughter of Nakdimon ben Guryon" (a previously wealthy man for whom miracles had occurred; see Ta'anis 19b). "My daughter!" he said, "What has become of your father's house?" "Is there not a saying in Jerusalem, 'The salt of wealth (i.e., that which preserves it) is its diminution (i.e., charitable deeds) and some say through benevolence?' was her answer. "And what about your father-in-law's house?" he continued. "Ah," she answered, "one destroyed the other." Then she asked him, "Rabbi, do you remember signing my marriage contract?" "I remember," he said, turning to his students, "When I signed her marriage contract, I read in it that her father gave her a dowry of one million golden denars besides that of her father-in-law's!" Rebi Yochanan ben Zakkai then burst into tears, and said, "Happy are you, Israel. As long as you perform the will of G-d, no nation or people can rule over you. But when you fail to perform the will of G-d, you are delivered into the hands of a humiliating nation; and not only the hands of a humiliating nation, but also into the hands of the beasts of the humiliating nation." (Kesuvos 66b)

Hence, anti-Semitism is not a natural phenomenon, but the chaos that results when the "light" of the Jewish people ceases to illuminate the minds of the nations, when the Jewish people stop acting as a "light unto nations," as Rashi indicates elsewhere: "I have separated you from the peoples that you should be Mine." (Vayikra 20:26) If you follow yourselves apart from them, then you will be Mine, but if not, you will become subject to Nebuchadnetzar and others like him ... (Rashi) Anti-Semitism is tohu at its worse, and it is all-consuming. (Excerpted from "The Big Picture:

young couple, the hospital frantically tracked down the parents to tell them that their child had a histadine level -- of 12! The hospital told the young couple to rush back with the baby. The father instantaneously called his Rebbe, Reb Yaakov Kamenetzky who was the sandek at the baby's bris just a few days ago. Reb Yaakov said he would pray for the child who appeared fine at the bris. Then he told them to insist that the histadine test be repeated before any treatment is administered. The parents rushed back to Bellevue Hospital where they were greeted by an assortment of doctors, nurses, nutritionists, and therapists. The staff wanted to admit the newborn into the hospital immediately. They warned that if the baby was not admitted, permanent brain damage could result. The parents insisted that the test be re-administered to which the doctors grudgingly replied, "we will re-do the test, but understand," they grumbled, "that these tests are extremely accurate. We never get a false reading." They re-administered the procedure and came out with a totally different figure than the first time. The histadine level was a bit over one! After further review, they realized that the first test was not off -- the technician was! He put the decimal in the wrong place. The original reading should not have been 12, but rather 1.2! The couple, quite upset about the unnecessary scare and trauma, drove with the baby straight to the home of Rabbi Kamenetzky to inform him that the whole ordeal was a mistake. Reb Yaakov, who was elated at the news, held the young father and kissed him. "Thank you for coming and telling me the news," said the Torah sage. "So many people just tell me their tzorus (problems), they ask me for advice, even prayers, but when things get better, I never find out. I am left bearing the burden of their worries."

Moshe knew that Hashem heard the answer of the Jewish nation as loud, if not louder, than he did. But he was sent on a mission and he had a responsibility to convey the good news. But he wanted to send the Jewish people a message as well. He taught his people that before one can receive the Torah he must be a good messenger. Everything that we study - everything we do on this earth is but a message that must be accounted to for Hashem. Even if Hashem knows what we are doing, we must return with a report of accomplishment. And Moshe taught us that Derech Eretz must not only precede the learning of the Torah, it must precede the giving of it as well.

#### Good Shabbos Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Dedicated by Michael & Rikki Charnowitz in memory of Ephraim Spinner In memory of Reb Ephraim Yitzchak ben Reb Avraham I would like to personally appeal to each of the 9,000 subscribers and all the readers of Drasha to please pray for the speedy recovery of Eliyahu Shlomo ben Chaya Bina, a young boy who was injured in an accident. With your tefilos, (prayers) I hope and pray, like the young man in the story, to be able to return good news to all of you. Drasha, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. Drasha is the e-mail edition of FaxHomily, a Project of the Henry and Myrtle Hirsch Foundation. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore, <http://www.yoss.org/>. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) 6810 Park Heights Ave <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800 FAX: 358-9801

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FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY Wow, Avi, what's that? It's a gift that I just received from my parents, Chaim. It looks really neat. What is it? An electronic, battery powered, cordless, 1000x magnification microscope. With it, we can see all kinds of microscopic objects, invisible to the naked eye. It's so new, it's still in the box. Let's open it up, Avi. Sure, Chaim. But what's this on the outside of the box? Caution. This is a very delicate instrument. Do not attempt to open or operate this microscope before reading the instructions carefully. We had better read the instructions first, Chaim, before we open the box. I sure wouldn't want to damage this beautiful new microscope in any way. I've wanted one for a long time. My parents just bought it for me. Until now, they said that I wasn't old enough to have such a delicate instrument. Of course, Avi, but what's the big deal? We open it up, put the batteries in, and turn it on. Then we can see all kinds of neat things like blades of grass, insects, microbes. . . . But Chaim, what if we press the wrong button, or drip water in the wrong place? We could ruin the whole thing. I guess you're right Avi. Anytime you are dealing with something complicated, you have to follow the instruction manual to operate it properly. You know, Avi, the Jewish people received the instruction manual in this week's Parsha. What do you mean, Chaim? This week is Parshas Yisro. It includes the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai. Great, Chaim. But what does that have to do with an instruction manual? Avi, you may think that a microscope is complicated and delicate. But it is just a crude instrument compared to a human being. After all, how many parts does that microscope have? 20? 50? 100? Even if it has a thousand parts, the human body has billions and billions of cells, which make up complicated tissues, nerves, muscles, and organs. Scientists and doctors are just beginning to fathom the complexity of the human body. There are a million and one things that can go wrong with the

human being. We need to know how to take proper care of ourselves physically. How to eat, sleep exercise, and dress properly, among other things. We surely wouldn't want to damage the wonderful body that we have by not following the instruction manual. However, that is just the physical aspect. There is also the soul, which is a very delicate thing indeed. It has the potential for greatness. We have to know how to nurture it so that we can grow and use all of our skills to their fullest. We all have talents in different areas, and to waste them is really damaging our wonderful gifts. We've got to follow the instruction manual. Chaim, that's very scary. How can we possibly know what to do? Who can understand the human being well enough to give the proper instructions? Well, let's see, Avi. Who wrote the instruction manual for this microscope? That's easy, Chaim. The people who made it. They know how it works. Who made the human being, Avi? Who knows how it works? G-d did. Guess what? He also wrote the instruction manual. It's called the Torah. The Torah is a book written by G-d about man, giving us the instructions we need to live our lives properly. If we follow the instructions written in the Torah, we won't damage the delicate instrument that G-d has given us. Chaim, you've magnified my view of life 1000 times without even opening the box of this microscope!

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[dafyomi@vjlists.com](http://www.ohr.org.il/yomi/yomi260.htm) The Weekly Daf #260 Yoma 30 - 36 <http://www.ohr.org.il/yomi/yomi260.htm>

The Mysterious Guard One of the most famous stories of the Talmudic Sages is the one in our gemara about Hillel. This great sage used to work each day to earn a bit of money, half of which he spent to support his family, and with the other half he paid the guard at the beis midrash to allow him to enter and learn from the great teachers inside. One Friday he failed to earn the money necessary for this admission fee and he was barred from entering. Undaunted, Hillel climbed up to the roof of the beis midrash just before Shabbos and listened through the skylight to the Torah lectures given inside by the great Sages Shemaya and Avtalyon. It was an extremely cold winter night and snow fell on him throughout the night. In the morning he was discovered virtually frozen beneath three cubits of snow, and the people in the beis midrash put aside the laws of Shabbos to save his life. Hillel's perseverance in Torah study despite abject poverty is cited by the Heavenly Court as a refutation to any poor man who claims that his failure to study Torah was due to his preoccupation with eking out a livelihood. The story speaks for itself but one detail remains a mystery. Why was it necessary to have a guard at the door of a house of Torah study?

Maharsha offers two possible solutions to this mystery. One is that the houses of worship and study in those days were located in unpopulated areas and therefore required the hiring of guards to prevent theft and vandalism. Another possibility is based on the policy, in effect at one stage of Jewish history, of restricting admission to the house of study. Rabbi Gamliel (Mesechta Berachos 28a) made it a rule that only a student "whose interior was like his exterior" -- who has been certified as a sincere student of Torah -- could be admitted to the beis midrash. It was therefore necessary to hire a guard to prevent the less sincere ones from entering, and his services were financed by people like Hillel who had this qualification. \* Yoma 35b

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Production Design: Eli Ballon Prepared by the Jewish Learning Exchange of Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel Tel: 972-2-581-0315 Fax: 972-2-581-2890 E-Mail: [info@ohr.org.il](mailto:info@ohr.org.il) Home Page: <http://www.ohr.org.il> (C) 1999 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

#### Insights to the Daf: Yoma 26-30

INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld [daf@shemayisrael.co.il](mailto:daf@shemayisrael.co.il) YOMA 26 - by Reb Wolfe Rosengarten of Zurich, in honor of Rav Moshe Soloveitchik, Zatzal, and the Yeshiva he established in Moscow. YOMA 27, 28, 29 (16 Shevat), 30 - have been dedicated by Gitle Bekelnitzky for the 38th Yahrzeit of Leah bas Mordechai Dovid and Chasya (Bikelnitzky), mother of her late husband, Simcha Bekelnitzky. Kollel Iyun Hadaf employs a full-time staff; your support is urgently needed. Write to [donations@dafyomi.co.il](mailto:donations@dafyomi.co.il) for contribution information.

Yoma 26 WHO SHALL RENDER HALACHIC DECISIONS QUESTION: Rava derives from verses in the Torah that only from the tribes of Levi and Yissachar will there come Halachic authorities. The Gemara explains that certainly there will be Halachic authorities from other tribes who will teach Halachah; however, only from Levi and Yissachar will there be authorities with the ability to correctly reach their own conclusions when addressing Halachic questions ("Asukei Shmaita Aliba d'Hilchesa"). The MAHARSHA and others ask that we find that David ha'Melech, who was not from Levi or Yissachar but from Yehudah, was able to render correct Halachic decisions, as the Gemara in Sanhedrin (93b) says, "Halachah Kemoso b'Chof Makom." Similarly, the Gemara in Eruvin (54a) says that David ha'Melech was "Gali Masechta" which means that he came to a true and clear conclusion when rendering Halachic rulings. How, then, can the Gemara here say that only people from the tribes of Levi and Yissachar can come to proper Halachic conclusions? ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA answers that David was different because he was a king, and as a king he merited special Divine assistance. (b) REBBY YAKOV EMDEN says that people from Levi and Yissachar are "Asukei Shmaita Aliba d'Hilchesa" even by themselves, without conferring with a Beis Din. David ha'Melech, though, did not come to Halachic conclusions on his own; rather, he received them from his Rebbe, as the Gemara in Berachah (4a) says that David ha'Melech consulted with Mefiboshes on all matters. (c) The GEVURAS ARI explains that although David came from the tribe of Yehudah, he was also descended from Levi through his matrilineal ancestry. RASHI (Shemos 1:21) mentions this and says that David was descended from Miriam who merited to have the "House of Kingship" come from her in return for her Mesiras Nefesh in saving the lives of the Jewish babies born in Mitzrayim. (d) The GEVURAS ARI suggests another

answer. He says that the Gemara here means that among other tribes, only \*some\* of the Halachic authorities are able to reach correct conclusions on their own. However, \*most\* of the Halachic authorities from Levi and Yissachar are able to reach correct conclusions on their own \*most\* of the time. David ha'Melech merited to be part of that minority of Halachic authorities from other tribes who were able to reach correct Halachic conclusions.

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Yoma 28b WHO INSTITUTED THE TEFILAH OF MINCHAH? QUESTION: The Gemara here refers to Minchah as the "Tefilah of Avraham." The Gemara in Berachos (26b), though, says that Yitzchak instituted the Tefilah of Minchah. Why, then, does the Gemara here attribute Minchah to Avraham? ANSWERS: (a) TOSFOS YESHANIM here answers that Avraham himself was the first to pray Minchah and Ma'ariv. He prayed three times a day just like he observed all the other Mitzvos of the Torah and the Rabanan. However, Yitzchak was the first to institute Minchah (and Yakov the first to institute Ma'ariv) as a Tefilah for \*all\* the members of his household to recite. If Avraham was the first to Daven Minchah, then how does the Gemara in Berachos know from the verse, "Yitzchak went out to converse in the field" (Bereishis 24:63), that Yitzchak \*instituted\* the Tefilah of Minchah? Perhaps, like his father, he merely was Davening Minchah for himself (since Yitzchak too kept \*all\* of the Mitzvos of the future Torah), but he did not institute it for others to pray? Secondly, if Avraham did not find it necessary to institute it for his entire household, why did Yitzchak do so? It could be that the Gemara there is bothered by the following question. Why does the Torah record that Yitzchak prayed Minchah on that particular occasion, if he prayed Minchah every day? It must be that the intention of the verse is to say more than that Yitzchak himself prayed; it must be offering an explanation for why Yitzchak \*instituted\* the Tefilah of Minchah for his entire household to say. It was at the time that he was praying Minchah that Hashem showed Yitzchak a great kindness, for it was at that moment that his bride, Rivkah, arrived, showing that Eliezer succeeded, with Divine help, in his difficult mission of delivering her to Yitzchak. Out of gratitude to Hashem, he instituted the Tefilah of Minchah as an obligatory prayer for his entire household, because he understood this to be an omen that it was in merit of his Tefilas ha'Minchah that Eliezer succeeded in finding him a wife. The same approach applies to the institution of Tefilas Ma'ariv by Yakov. The Torah records that Yakov prayed Ma'ariv at Beis Kel (Bereishis 28:11). The Torah is not simply teaching that Yakov followed the footsteps of his father and grandfather and prayed Ma'ariv. Rather, the Torah is teaching that because of what occurred at that particular occasion, Yakov decided to institute the Tefilah of Ma'ariv for his entire household. It was at that time that he received Hashem's promise to protect him as he sojourned outside of the land of Israel, and Yakov understood that to be a sign that his Tefilah of Ma'ariv was instrumental in winning the favor of Hashem in this regard. For this reason he instituted that his entire family should always Daven Ma'ariv. (M. Kornfeld) (b) TOSFOS (Berachos 27b) and the TOSFOS YESHANIM here (in his alternate answer) explain that the first one to Daven Minchah was indeed Yitzchak. It is called the Tefilah of Avraham, though, because Avraham too Davened Minchah after Yitzchak instituted it. Why, though, should the Gemara refer to Minchah as "the prayer of Avraham," if he was just following his \*son's\* example? It should still be called "the prayer of \*Yitzchak\*, after its creator! Perhaps the Gemara mentions Avraham only because it is discussing Yitzchak's \*Zerizus\* in Davening Minchah at the earliest moment possible. Since Avraham is known for his exceptional Zerizus (as the Gemara here describes), he certainly taught that attribute to his son, and Yitzchak's \*timing\* for Minchah may be attributed to his father. In this sense, it is correct to refer to Minchah \*immediately\* after Chatzos\* as "the prayer of Avraham." (M. Kornfeld) (c) RABEINU CHANANEL and, following his example, the ARUCH (Erech "Shachar"), explain simply that although the Torah chose to mention Minchah explicitly only with regard to Yitzchak, all of the Avos Davened Minchah. The TOSFOS RID explains that what Rabeinu Chananel means is that our Sugya argues with the Sugya in Berachos which says that Yitzchak instituted Minchah. Our Sugya holds like the other opinion in Berachos that says that the Tefilos were instituted not by the Avos but by the Anshei Keneses ha'Gedolah, and that they correspond to the Korbenos Tamid which were brought each day (and whose fats were burned each night).

AVRAHAM AVINU OBSERVED ALL OF THE MITZVOS QUESTION: The Gemara says that Avraham Avinu observed all of the Mitzvos of the Torah, even though the Torah had not yet been given. To emphasize the point, the Gemara says that he even observed the rabbinical enactment of Eruv Tavshilin. Why does the Gemara choose to emphasize Eruv Tavshilin of all Mitzvos? (TOSFOS YESHANIM) ANSWERS: (a) The RITVA explains that Eruv Tavshilin differs from other rabbinical enactments insofar as that it is not a matter of a prohibition (that is, it was not enacted in order to prevent a similar act, which is an Isur d'Oraisa, from occurring). An Eruv Tavshilin was an enactment which the Rabanan made in order to enhance a person's Shabbos enjoyment by encouraging him to put away some food for Shabbos and not to eat everything on Yom Tov (Beitzah 15b). The Gemara, therefore, is teaching that Avraham Avinu was careful to observe even this type of enactment. The SEFER YUCHASIN (Erech "Avraham Avinu") explains that Eruv Tavshilin was instituted in order to fulfill "Zachor Es Yom ha'Shabbos," "remember the Shabbos; do not forget that Shabbos is coming" by eating all of his good food on Yom Tov, which is Erev Shabbos (Beitzah 15b). In a similar manner, Avraham "reminded" the people of the world that which they had previously forgotten, that the world has a Creator (who created the world in six days and rested on Shabbos). The GEVURAS ARI adds further insight to why Eruv Tavshilin exemplifies Avraham's observation of Mitzvos. He explains that according to one opinion in the Gemara (Pesachim 46b), one is permitted to cook on Yom Tov for Shabbos with an Eruv Tavshilin only because of the principle of "Ho'il." When one cooks on Yom Tov for Shabbos, it is permitted only because he is really cooking on Yom Tov for Yom Tov, since perhaps a guest will come to eat the extra food on Yom Tov. However, the allowance of "Ho'il" to permit one to cook on Yom Tov on the assumption that he is cooking for guests who might come on Yom Tov only applies to when those guests are Jewish. One is not allowed to prepare food for a non-Jewish guest on Yom Tov (even if the non-Jew is going to eat it on Yom Tov). In the times of Avraham Avinu, there were no other Jews and therefore Avraham could not rely on the principle of "Ho'il" to permit cooking on Yom Tov for a possible guest who might come and eat it on Yom Tov, because even if a guest came, he would not be Jewish and one is not permitted to prepare food for a non-Jew on Yom Tov!

We might have thought that if Avraham made an Eruv Tavshilin, then he was not keeping the Mitzvah. Therefore, the Gemara teaches us that he was indeed fulfilling the Mitzvah of Eruv Tavshilin. How? It must be that the Gemara is of the opinion that Shabbos and Yom Tov are one Kedushah, and the Torah permits cooking on Yom Tov for Shabbos (as one opinion in Pesachim holds), and therefore he did not have to rely on the principle of "Ho'il." (b) The Girsas in the MIDRASH (Bereishis Rabah 64:6) is that Avraham Avinu observed all of the Mitzvos, even Eruvei \*Chatzeros\*. The SEFER YUCHASIN (Erech "Avraham Avinu") explains that Eruvei Chatzeros was instituted to prevent people from taking what is in a Reshus ha'Yachid (literally, the land of a single party) and bringing it into a Reshus ha'Rabim (literally, the public domain), on Shabbos. In a similar manner, Avraham taught the people of the world not to attribute the world and its contents to multiple entities, but to properly attribute it to Hashem, Who is One. (c) The Girsas of the RASHBA (Teshuvos 1:94) is that Avraham observed even Eruvei \*Techumin\*. The VILNA GA'ON (Kol Eliyahu, #26) explains that this is the most accurate Girsas, because it is implied in the verse which says, "Ekev Asher Shama..." (Bereishis 26:5), implying that with his Ekev, his heels, Avraham observed the Mitzvos and did not walk farther than permitted. According to this Girsas, too, the Gemara is perhaps hinting at the fact that Avraham taught people that Hashem does not simply remain in His heavens without taking note of what happens on earth. Rather, Hashem supervises both this world and the heavens, the two "Techumin" of heaven and earth are combined under the rule of Hashem. (M. Kornfeld)

Yoma 29 PURIM -- THE END OF THE NIGHT AGADAH: The verse in Tehilim (22:1) says, "La'Menatze'ach Al Ayeles ha'Shachar." David ha'Melech said this psalm as a prayer for Esther. Rav Asi asks why David ha'Melech compares Esther to the Shachar, the break of dawn. He answers that just like daybreak is the end of the night, so, too, Esther was the end of the occurrence of miracles. Why does the Gemara compare the end of miracles to the beginning of \*day\*? It is through the occurrence of miracles that we have a glimpse of Hashem's hand running the world. It would seem to be much more accurate to compare the end of miracles to the beginning of the \*night\*, when darkness descends upon the world and we no longer have a clear view of Hashem's direct involvement! ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA says that the Gemara means that Purim is the end of the "miracles that occur in Galus." Such miracles are like flashes of light in the dark of night which encourage us that Hashem has not forsaken us. The Gemara is not saying that the miracles themselves are like the nighttime; rather, it is referring to "miracles \*of\* the nighttime," that is, miracles that occur during Galus. Purim was the time when the darkness of the night of Galus began to wane and give way to daybreak, making flashes of light -- or open miracles -- unnecessary. The Maharsha bases this on the Midrash which says that all of the miracles in this world occur at night, but when the final Ge'ulah comes, the miracles will occur during the day. Purim is the last of the miracles to occur during the night of Galus. The idea that Esther was the "end of miracles" means that after the miracle of Purim, no more miracles were necessary to remind us that Hashem is still with us. No such flashes of light were necessary after the miracle of Purim, because it became clear at that time that Hashem was with the Jewish people and protected them under \*any\* situation. The previous miracles showed only that Hashem was with the Jewish people when they were still living in Eretz Yisrael and merited unquestionable, clear miracles. When they were sent into Galus, though, they feared that Hashem might no longer be with them, since they could not merit open miracles when outside of Eretz Yisrael. The miracle of Purim showed that Hashem is with His people even when they are in Galus. When Hashem does not send an open miracle like the type that occurred when the Beis ha'Mikdash was standing, He sends miracles clothed in natural occurrences, giving the Jewish people the confidence that He will protect them through whatever they might endure until the final Ge'ulah. This makes the Gemara's conclusion clear. Purim was the last of the miracles that was "given over to being recorded in writing." There were other miracles after Purim (such as Chanukah), but those miracles did not have to be written down. Only miracles that pertain to all future generations are written down (Megillah 14a). It was not necessary to record the others because once we had the encouragement from the miracle of Purim that Hashem would be with us until the Ge'ulah, no more miracles were necessary for that purpose. (b) The MESHECH CHOCHMAH (beginning of Parshas Bechukosai) explains that the entire process of nature itself is a miracle. However, a person gets used to it and fails to give adequate praise to Hashem. The open miracles that Hashem performs serve to \*remind a person\* about the miracles inherent in the natural order of the world. However, the ideal state is to see the hand of Hashem in the day-to-day world, without open miracles. At the time of the final Ge'ulah, the world will reach a state in which the knowledge and awareness of Hashem will be clearly evident to everyone in the natural course of the world, without open miracles. Purim initiated this state of awareness of the hand of Hashem in the natural course of the world. It is appropriate, then, for today's scarcity of open miracles to be compared to day, as opposed to night. (Heard from RAV KALMAN WEINREB, shlit'a.)

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From: Jonathan Schwartz[SMTP:jschwartz@ymail.yu.edu]  
Subject: Internet Chabura-- Parshas Yisro  
Prologue: Childbearing. Is it a blessing or a huge burden. Often our American society seems to present both sides of the coin. On the one hand, we talk about unwanted pregnancies and the "right to choose." At the same time, custody battles in severe divorce cases often center around rights to the children. What is the power of that parent-child relationship? The Baalei Tosfos note that Moshe's reference to his son as Gershom "Ger Hayiti B'erez Nachriah" seems difficult. On the one hand, Moshe was still a stranger in Midyan EVEN AFTER he had a son. Why does he use the word Hayiti? The Baalei Tosfos answer that when someone has children in a particular neighborhood, he is no longer a stranger in that neighborhood. Maran Hagadol Harav Hershel Schachter shlita (Shiurei Chumash, 5759) explain their comments as pertaining to the sense of community that one feels when his children are born in a certain



neighborhood. Even if one were to move out of the neighborhood, his roots are still based in that community and he will always feel close to it. In that sense, children are both the pleasure and the burden. True it is expensive to raise them. True we derive tremendous nachas from them. However, we are constantly identifying our own involvement as part of a greater Jewish community through the growth of our children.

Relationships and care to children often can shift foot from the caretakers to the caregivers, especially in old age. Hence this week's chabura entitled:

A bit off: Kibbud Av when parents ARE Crazy

The Gemara in Kiddushin (31b) mentions several cases when unusual parental behavior were accepted by children. Rav Dimi's mother would tear at his clothes and hurt him. Did Rav Dimi have an obligation to honor his parent then? If not, was she deserving of tochacha for embarrassing a Gadol HaDor of Rav Dimi's stature?

The Yam Shel Shlomo (kiddushin 32b) notes that his mother must not have been of sound mind and hence was not subject to the rebuke of Chazal. There are similar stories that exist in the halachic literature including the case of Rav Ashi's mother who told him to go look for a husband for her who was as good looking as he. At that point, Rav Ashi left her and moved to Eretz Yisroel. The Rambam (Mamrim 6:10) adopts the position that his mother was mentally incompetent and that his response--satisfying the parent in the parent's mental state and where that is not possible to be able to depart having left the parent in the good care of others. The Raavad argues noting that there is no one whom he could have to take care of the parent.

Each shitta needs explanation: According to the Rambam, how could one know that Rav Ashi's situation was correct l'halacha? And who says that a trip to Eretz Yisroel is equal to taking leave of the parents--perhaps engaging in Yishuv Ha'aretz alone is mutar (see last year's chabura for expansion there) ? Also, the gemara does not tell us that Rav Ashi actually entrusted his mother's care to anyone so where does the rambam derive his psak from? (See Drisha and Taz to Yoreh Deah 240) And although she sounded a bit off, who says his mother was insane?

Alternatively, the Ra'avad is not without problems too: How would he explain the gemara which seems to allow for the placing of care in the hands of a stranger (like a nursing home perhaps?-- See Kesef Misneh and Migdal Oz to Rambam 6:10).

Some explain the Ra'avad to mean that if a parent can be cared for by a stranger, he can certainly be in as good care from a child. (Taz Drisha ibid.) this assumes the correct reading of the Ra'avad to mean a question of if the child can't take care of the father so who can. Rambam might answer that there are times when another person, lacking emotional frustration might provide BETTER care or that the stranger is better trained or has better financial reserves to facilitate better conditions so that the proper care could be offered. (the Aruch Hashulchan <Y.D. 240:32> notes that in some cases it is halachically incorrect to allow a daughter to care for an ailing parent when a stranger would be more appropriate). the issue seems to depend upon the circumstances. While the taz, Drisha and Migdal Oz seem to hold like the ra'avad, the psak seems to be like the Rambam. Accordingly, children should care for ailing parents as long as they can but should relinquish this obligation when they are clearly no longer the best care providers.

What if there is parental disturbance but not such to warrant constant care. Is the child obligated then? The Marharshal seems to have imagined Rav Ashi's mother to be of that category. Based upon his opinion, he permitted others to leave a situation and to allow children to live their own lives. However, it seems that this too, would depend upon the machlokes between the Rambam and the Ra'avad. If Kibbud Av is a mitzva in the sense of giving them service, there is no service given to them in this mentally incapacitated state. However, if there is a halachic requirement to accede to all prental wishes, then, despite the criticism, the child could have no better caregiver than himself.

BATTALA NEWS Mazal Tov to Maran Hagadol Hagaon Harav Hershel Schachter shlita and family upon the bar mitzva of Aaron Yeshaya (Shai) This coming Shabbos. Special mazal tov to Hagaon Harav Melech Schachter shlita as well.