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What number sedra is Vayeishev?
(answer with one B'chukotai word)



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A Mitzva's Messages - But first...

It's the old, "I'd like to say a few words before I speak" line. Bear with me...

I recently spent Shabbat with a daughter and grandchildren while my son-in-law the doctor was in miluim. My 8 year old grandson asked me to learn with him in shul after Mincha. Momentarily surprised, I found out that those who stay to learn get a snack of some sort. Sure enough, after a pleasant Pirkei Avot session, my chavruta received an ARTIK, [goto p. 4](#)

Jerusalem
in/out times for
Shabbat Parshat
B'chukotai



7:02PM

Earliest **6:10PM**



8:19PM

R'Tam **8:50PM**



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Word of the Month

This Shabbat is the 20th of Iyar.

That is a date in the Torah for the first traveling of the People after Matan Torah - as stated in Bamidbar 10:11 (B'haalot'cha) - **And it was in the second year (following the Exodus) in the second month (Iyar) on the 20th of the month that the Cloud lifted from the Mishkan.**

Having arrived at Sinai on the first of Sivan, a mere six weeks out of Egypt, the people stayed at Sinai for almost a full year. Although they were supposed to be heading for Eretz Yisrael, it was another 39 years until they actually entered the Promised Land.



CANDLE LIGHTING and Havdala times

Candles	Plag	B'chukotai	Havdala	Bamidbar
7:02	6:10	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	8:19	7:06 6:13 8:24
7:18	6:12	Aza area (Netivot, S'deirot, et al)	8:21	7:22 6:15 8:25
7:17	6:10	Gush Etzion	8:19	7:21 6:13 8:24
7:19	6:12	Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / Kfar Saba	8:22	7:23 6:15 8:26
7:17	6:11	Beit Shemesh / RBS	8:20	7:21 6:14 8:25
7:19	6:12	Netanya	8:23	7:23 6:16 8:27
7:18	6:11	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	8:21	7:22 6:14 8:25
7:18	6:12	Rehovot	8:21	7:22 6:15 8:26
7:15	6:11	Be'er Sheva / Otniel	8:20	7:19 6:14 8:24
7:02	6:12	Petach Tikva	8:22	7:06 6:15 8:26
7:18	6:11	Ginot Shomron	8:21	7:22 6:14 8:26
7:17	6:10	Gush Shiloh	8:20	7:21 6:13 8:24
7:10	6:13	Haifa / Zichron	8:23	7:14 6:16 8:28
7:17	6:10	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	8:19	7:20 6:13 8:24
7:17	6:10	Giv'at Ze'ev	8:20	7:21 6:14 8:24
7:19	6:12	Ashkelon	8:22	7:23 6:15 8:26
7:09	6:11	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	8:22	7:13 6:14 8:26
7:18	6:11	Yad Binyamin	8:21	7:22 6:15 8:25
7:19	6:12	Tel Aviv	8:22	7:23 6:15 8:26

Rabbeinu Tam (J'lem) - 8:50pm • next week - 8:54pm



OTHER Z'MANIM

Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are 11 days, Wed-Shab.
17-27 Iyar • May 25 - June 4

Earliest Talit & T'filin	4:39-4:35am
Sunrise	5:36½ -5:33½am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	9:06-9:05am (Magen Avraham: 8:24-8:22)
Sof Z'man T'fila	10:16-10:16am (Magen Avraham: 9:40-9:39)
Chatzot	12:36 -12:37½pm (halachic noon)
Mincha Gedola	1:12pm-1:13pm (earliest Mincha)
Plag Mincha	6:08½-6:13¼pm
Sunset	7:41-7:47pm (based on sea level: 7:36-7:41½pm)

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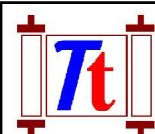
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an ice pop. Turned out that he didn't like its taste at all and dumped it in the nearest garbage pail, thereby making our learning more LISHMAH than expected.

MASHAL L'MA HADAVAR DOMEH?

To what can this be compared? IM B'CHUKOTAI TEILEICHU... If you will keep My Torah and Mitzvot... HaShem says to the Jewish People: If you will be faithful to Me and keep the Torah and Mitzvot, then I will give you all kinds of wonderful things... (just read the beginning of the sedra) including - and you will dwell securely in your Land.

One wouldn't expect people to say 'No thank you' to G-d for prosperity and peace. But how many Torah loving and observing Jews seem to say 'Thanks but No Thanks' for the opportunity to dwell in the Land?

For Naveh not to like the ices is one thing, but not jumping at the opportunity to live in Eretz Yisrael...

We could go on and on about this topic (and we often do), but for this week, we leave it to you to ponder...

MAASEIR B'HEIMA

Space in this TT is extremely tight - several items were omitted and this

Lead Tidbit about the Chinuch's mitzva #360 (Tithing of animals) has been greatly shortened.

The mitzva of Maaseir B'heima culminates with the offering of the animal as a Korban and the eating of its meat in a state of ritual purity (TAHARA).

It might surprise you that the mitzva exists TODAY, without a Beit HaMikdash or Mizbei'ach.

Because of this 'little' glitch in the complete fulfillment of Maaseir B'heima, the Shulchan Aruch instructs us NOT TO DO THIS MITZVA.

How unusual - and sad - that the source of our day-to-day Halacha should also tell us not to do a mitzva.

This is an easy mitzva not to do. One with enough newborn calves, kids, and/or lambs simply does not bring them together and count them out, etc. No negative results from not doing the mitzva - except not doing a mitzva. Food for thought.

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B'chukotai

33rd sedra of 54;
last of 10 in Vayikra



Written on 131 lines, ranks 47th

5 parshiyot; 3 open, 2 closed

78 p'sukim, rank: 46 (7th in Vayikra)

1013 words, rank: 47 (7th in Vayikra)

3992 letters, rank: 47 (7th in Vayikra)

Small sedra only 7 sedras are shorter

MITZVOT

12 mitzvot - 7 positive, 5 prohibitions

14 sedras have more; Va'etchanan
also has 12; 38 sedras have fewer.



[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate
start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y
is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the
parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in
the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the
Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND
Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI
(positive mitzva); L=LAV (prohibition).
X:Y is the perek and pasuk from which
the mitzva comes.

VAYIKRA: 10 sedras, 36.6 columns, 1537
lines, 859 p'sukim, 11950 words, 44790
letters, 247 mitzvot (95 + & 152 -)

Smallest Chumash in number of sedras,
columns, lines, p'sukim, words, & letters.
Its sedras (avg) have the fewest verses,
words, and letters. OTOH, it has more
mitzvot than any other Book

Please note:

Sunday, Yom Yerushalayim, the
Center will open at 1:15pm (see p.62)

Kohen First Aliya 3 p'sukim 26:3-5

[P> 26:3 (11)] If we keep the
Torah and mitzvot, then HaShem
will provide beneficent, timely
rainfall and bountiful crops. The
yield of the Land will be so great,
that each agricultural season will
blend into the next one. And we
will have plenty to eat on our own
Land.

"If you walk on the path of My
statutes..." Rashi comments that
this is not just another way of
saying "keep the mitzvot", but
rather it points to our task of
immersing ourselves in a Torah
and Mitzvot way of life. Another
commentator points to the word
"walk" and says that it is
insufficient to just "stand still"
within an environment of mitzvot,
one must take continual strides
towards greater spiritual heights.

SDT And the tree of the field will

We mourn the passing of our
husband, father, grandfather,
great-grandfather

George Roth ל"ו

*Love Susan, Elisheva Roth Meir,
Sarah Roth Mayerfeld and families,
Clifford, Donald & Molly*

give forth its fruit. Rashi says this refers to non-fruit-bearing trees that will bear fruit when G-d's full blessing will be given. One of the commentaries explains why Rashi departs from the simple meaning of the pasuk. Since if one says a Borei Pri HaAdama on a fruit, his bracha is valid, because fruits grow on trees which grow from the ground, then regular fruit are included in the previous phrase "and the ground will give forth its yield". The phrase referring to trees is superfluous, unless it is as Rashi says.

The Gemara says that IM B'CHUKOTAI TEILEICHU is more than just stating the facts: If this, then that; if not this, then something else. The Gemara says that HaShem is asking us, pleading with us, to keep the mitzvot and immerse ourselves in Torah. If He asks, how can we not do what He wants He created us, He put us into this world.

SDT The promises of prosperity from the opening p'sukim of the parsha are made for Jews who live in Eretz Yisrael. The same deal, apparently, does not apply to those who live in Chutz LaAretz. This, says Torat Kohanim, in analyzing the word B'ARTZ'CHEM.

This is truly amazing and provides much food for thought. If you will follow My laws and mitzvot, says G-d, then you will be blessed with many good things **IF** you live in Eretz Yisrael. If you live outside of Israel, G-d still expects compliance with Torah and Mitzvot, but does not promise prosperity and peace because of it.

IM B'CHUKOTAI TEILEICHU... If you will GO in My statutes... **LALECHET**, to go, implies movement, constant movement upward - no stagnation in serving G-d. - Chidushei HaRim

Levi Second Aliya

4 p'sukim 26:6-9

Further reward for (or results from) following the Torah and keeping mitzvot, will be peace and tranquility in the Land (of Israel). Both natural disasters (wild beasts) as well as human enemies (sword) will be kept at bay by HaShem. And when we do encounter our enemies, G-d will grant us the ability to vanquish them mightily. If we keep to our side of the deal (so to speak), we will be blessed with fertility and G-d will keep His covenant with us.

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Notice how there is a promise of peace in the land and a promise for the might to vanquish the enemy. Peace in this context seems not to refer to our enemies; it means peace among Jews. Enemies from the outside might still exist, and we are promised the ability to defeat them.

The promises of blessings in this first part of the sedra come in two forms: not only agricultural and military, but natural and subtle on the one hand and open and obvious, on the other. Beneficial and timely rain much appreciated. Bumper crops much appreciated (one would hope). But rain and growth of produce is part of nature. On the other hand, the magnitude of promised military success is seemingly more miraculous. Yet (on the first hand), nature also consists of no rain and drought and failed crops. So unparalleled agricultural success is truly miraculous as well.

Shlishi Third Aliya 37 p'sukim 26:10-46

The longest Sh'lishi in the Torah

This Aliya begins with the last four p'sukim of the "good" part - the promises for our proper Torah behavior. G-d will be with us; He is the One Who took us out of Egypt, broke the yoke of our oppression, and led us out with heads held high.

[P> 26:14 (13)] But then we get to the "Tochacha", one of two portions of the Torah (there are actually several others, but these

לוח ספירת העומר

7 כ"ב ניסן	6 כ"א ניסן	5 כ' ניסן	4 י"ט ניסן	3 י"ח ניסן	2 י"ז ניסן	1 ט"ז ניסן
14 כ"ט ניסן	13 כ"ח ניסן	12 כ"ז ניסן	11 כ"ה ניסן	10 כ"ד ניסן	9 כ"ג ניסן	8 כ"ב ניסן
21 ו' אייר	20 ה' אייר	19 ד' אייר	18 ג' אייר	17 ב' אייר	16 א' אייר	15 כ"ט ניסן
28 י"ג אייר	27 י"ב אייר	26 י"א אייר	25 י' אייר	24 ט' אייר	23 ח' אייר	22 ז' אייר
35 כ"ג אייר	34 כ"ב אייר	33 כ"א אייר	32 כ' אייר	31 י"ט אייר	30 י"ח אייר	29 י"ז אייר
42 כ"ז אייר	41 כ"ז אייר	40 כ"ז אייר	39 כ"ז אייר	38 כ"ז אייר	37 כ"ז אייר	36 כ"ז אייר
49 ה' סיון	48 ד' סיון	47 ג' סיון	46 ב' סיון	45 א' סיון	44 כ"ט אייר	43 כ"ט אייר

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Mazal Tov to Naomi L
on the birth of a great-grandson

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are the big two) containing G-d's detailed admonition to the People, warning of the dire consequences that will result from disregard of Torah and mitzvot. Because it is so painful to hear these terrible words, especially realizing how often they have come true, the custom developed to read this portion in a low voice. We are ashamed that G-d needs to threaten us in so graphic a way. Today the minhag is to call the Rabbi, Gabbai, or the Baal Korei himself for this portion. (In many congregations, it is the one who gives out the Aliyot who gets the Tochacha, so that no one else can feel slighted by him.) The Tochacha is always contained within one Aliya which begins and ends on "cheerier" notes. This is the reason for the widely disparate distribution of p'sukim among the Aliyot of this sedra. (Almost half of which are in this one Aliya.)

On the other hand, there are those who frown on the custom of lowering the voice, because we are supposed to love reproach, since it helps us straighten ourselves out. On the other hand, most follow the custom to read the Tochacha in a lower voice. Torah readers should be careful though, not to read too low to be heard properly, and not too fast to be properly heard.

A significant theme of the Tochacha is the connection between the keeping of the laws of Sh'mita and our hold on the Land. We must always realize that we do not keep Eretz Yisrael without any strings attached. We have a clear commitment and responsibility to keep the Torah and fulfill the mitzvot as

individuals AND as a community. Sh'mita was commanded in the previous sedra. In this week's sedra, we are presented with the dire consequences of the disregard of this important mitzva.

[S> 26:27 (20)] Continual reference is made of both physical and spiritual benefits from observance of mitzvot, and the opposite, for disregard of the mitzvot. This combination of promise of good and threat of bad, together with the body of mitzvot of the Torah, constitutes the covenant between G-d and the People of Israel at Sinai via Moshe.

SDT Yaakov is spelled with a VAV 5 times in Tanach (Once in this week's sedra and four times in Yirmiyahu). Rashi points out that the name of Eliyahu is missing a VAV five times. It is as if Yaakov takes collateral from Eliyahu to guarantee that he will eventually come to announce the coming of the Moshiach.

V'ZACHARTI ET BRITI YAAKOV
V'AF ET BRITI YITZCHAK V'AF ET
BRITI AVRAHAM EZKOR V'HA-
ARTZ EZKOR: (Vayikra 26:42)

G-d will remember the covenant with Yaakov and the one with Yitzchak and the one with Avraham... Midrash Rabba says that the words ET with each of the AVOT come to include the IMAHOT.





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If so, asks the ADMOR of GUR zt"l, where is the fourth mother? He answers that the fourth one is Rachel, and the Torah has already told us of G-d's remembering her, as it says: VAYIZKOR ELOKIM ET RACHEL... (Breishit 30:22)

R'YMP points out several distinctions between the two Tochachot in the Torah. The first Tochacha is part of the Sinai covenant and therefore is contained in B'chukotai, which is read shortly before Shavuot. The second Tochacha is in Ki Tavo because it is part of the Arvot Mo'av experience. He also points out that the first Tochacha ends with a promise of redemption THAT IS PART OF the Tochacha. The second one does not. Only in the following sedra do you have the promise of Geula.



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The first is orderly if you don't listen, then such and such will happen. And if you still don't, then worse. And if... then even worse. The second Tochacha is a series of threats and punishments, one after the other. The first Tochacha relates to the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash and the exile that followed it; the second to that of the second Beit HaMikdash. The first Tochacha came from G-d via Moshe; the second, from Moshe.

R'vi'i Fourth Aliya 15 p'sukim 27:1-15

[P> 27:1 (8)] In pledging funds to the Mikdash, it is possible to offer the "value" of an individual **[350, A114 27:2]**. The Torah lists amounts for individuals depending on sex and age. In the event that the donor is poor, a kohen may reduce the amount.

[S> 27:9 (26)] If a person pledges an animal to the Mikdash which qualifies as a korban, he may not exchange or redeem that animal (even for one of greater value) **[351, L106 27:10]**. If he attempts to do so, then both the original animal and its attempted substitute (t'mura) are consecrated to the Mikdash **[352, A87 27:10]**. An animal not fit for the Altar is to be evaluated by a kohen **[353, A115 27:11]**, and can be redeemed by adding 1/5 of its valuation.

Actually, 1/4 of the amount is added, so that the amount added becomes 1/5 of the total amount paid. E.g. An animal was valued at 100 shekel. 1/4 of that is 25. Add

that to the first amount, and the person must pay 125. The 25 which he added is 1/5 of the 125. This is how CHOMESH works in all situations that call for it.

*Let x be the CHOMESH such that $x = 1/5 (1+x)$.
 $5x = 1 + x$. $4x = 1$. $x = 1/4$.*

A person can also offer the value of a house **[354, A116 27:14]**, in which case a kohen (expert in matters of real estate) determines its value, and the house is redeemable by adding 1/5.

Ponder this... If donating the value of a male child between 5 and 20 years of age, for example, is equivalent to a pledge of 20 shekel, then why not just donate 20 shekel? What is the significance of labeling certain amounts as the "value" of a person?

Part of the answer seems quite obvious. We psychologically relate much more strongly to our giving the value of person to the Beit HaMikdash than we would to a mere sum of money. This would be especially so if the person were ourselves or a loved one. Modern fundraising psychology borrows this idea. Compare the emotional connection of contributing, let's

**Mazal Tov to
Yehudit (Jessica) Singer
and Adam Lasky
on the occasion of
their marriage**

from their families
Malka & Avraham Shrybman
Hinda & Brian Lasky

say, \$100 to a charitable cause, compared with the same \$100 which is called "foster a child" or "feed a family" for a certain period of time. The money is the same. But the emotional response is quite different.

MitzvaWatch

Notice the unusual, almost unique nature of T'MURA (the attempted exchange of an animal for another sacred animal). Generally, when the Torah prohibits something, an individual is considered to violate that prohibition when he does that which was forbidden. One may not cook meat with milk. Doing so is a violation. One may not steal. Stealing is a violation. Etc. Etc. One may not exchange one animal for a consecrated one (that is fit for the Altar). But one cannot do so. The attempted exchange fails. The sacred animal is still sacred. So in this instance, that which is forbidden is not accomplished. It cannot be done. The attempt itself then is the violation. This is highly unusual. In addition to the attempted exchange failing, it also carries the additional penalty of the new animal also becoming sacred. And T'mura can be punishable by MAKOT (whipping), which makes it more unusual, since no act was done. A

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prohibition that involved no act is rarely punishable by human courts. Nor is a violation with a penalty additionally punished by MAKOT.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 6 p'sukim 27:16-21

If a person dedicates the value of his property to the Mikdash, it is to be evaluated by a kohen based on quality and number of years to the next Yovel **[355, A117 27:16]**. It then becomes redeemable by adding a fifth. If a person did not redeem the land, then Yovel does not release it to him, but rather to the Mikdash as consecrated property.

The same applies if the officials at the Mikdash sold the property before redemption. At Yovel, it reverts to the Mikdash.

Shishi Sixth Aliya 7 p'sukim 27:22-28

If the property in question is not hereditary, but rather purchased, then the rules differ. The land is evaluated in the same way, but at Yovel it reverts to its original owners, and not to the Mikdash.

A firstling is automatically sanctified to the Altar; one may not consecrate it as another korban **[356, L107 27:26]**, because it is already Kodesh. This rule of not switching one sanctity for another, applies to other categories of korban as well.

A non-kosher animal offered to the Mikdash is sold off.



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If something itself is consecrated to the Mikdash (rather than its value), it cannot be redeemed; it remains holy.

Sh'VII Seventh Aliya 6 p'sukim 27:29-34

Consecrated property goes to the kohanim [357, 358, 359; A145, L110, L111 27:29]. A person under a death penalty has the status of "Cherem" (non-redeemable items). The land's tithe (here referring to Maaser Sheni), is sacred; it is (either to be eaten in Jerusalem or) to be redeemed.

The tithe of the animals (cows, goats, sheep) are to be separated by counting every tenth one regardless of the quality of the animal [360, A78 27:32]. These animals are sacred and must be eaten only in Jerusalem and under conditions of ritual purity. Maaser B'heima may not be redeemed [361, L109 27:33]. Violation of this rule results in both animals being considered holy.

"These are the mitzvot... at Sinai." This final pasuk of the sedra (and book of Vayikra), closes the section that was opened by the

first pasuk of B'har, the usual partner sedra to B'chukotai.

CHAZAK, CHAZAK...

It is customary for the congregation to stand for the concluding pasuk of each book of the Torah. This seems NOT to raise the strong objections that standing for the Aseret HaDibrot does. The Torah-reader reads the final words with a



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dramatic flair, signalling the congregation to respond with "Chazak, chazak, v'nitchazeik" (Strong, strong, and let us be strengthened).

The reader then repeats that phrase. Some say that the person who receives the Aliya should NOT say the phrase, as this might constitute an interruption between the Torah reading and his concluding bracha. Or possibly a different reason - that the congregation is saying Chazak... to him.

It is considered a special honor to receive this Book-completing Aliya.

Maftir is the last three p'sukim.

Haftara 17 p'sukim **Yirmiyahu 16:19-17:14**

The words of the prophet contain warnings and admonitions which echo the Tochacha contained in the sedra. The haftara ends with a prayer for G-d's help in keeping us faithful to Him and His Torah.

Rabbi Jacobs z"l mentions that this haftara is probably more matched to the other Tochacha sedra, Ki Tavo, but Ki Tavo needs one of the 7 Consolation haftarot, so this went with B'chukotai.

PROBING the PROPHETS

Like last week's haftara, we read the words of Yirmiyahu HaNavi this week as well. But unlike last week's comforting message, a message that focused upon assuring Israel that she would yet return to her land, today's

reading reflects the harsh words of the tochacha, the admonition that we read in the parsha itself, as the prophet rails against the wayward people who had turned to other gods. Eschewing any words of comfort, Yirmiyahu, instead, compares the fate of those who trust in G-d with those who have forsaken Him. One he likens to a lush tree planted by a brook whose roots spread, whose foliage and fruit are lush and who could, therefore, survive even a drought. The other he equates with a lone tree planted in a desert dwelling, in a parched wilderness where, he implies, he grows few roots and little fruit, and therefore, would not survive the difficult years of drought.

The prophecy, when seen in light of the Torah's tochacha, is certainly a logical choice for the haftara. Like the parsha, our haftara predicts the punishment of exile for the sins of Israel. Likewise, the warning that Israel will serve her enemies and the unique usage of the term "v'shamat'ta" to mean "withdraw from the land" brings us back to the Torah's condemnation of Israel for not observing the "shemita" - the sabbatical year, as Rashi points out.

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Marvin Hershkowitz and
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on the occasion of their
grand/son
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And there is yet another connection that makes this selection a fitting one for this parsha.

The haftara ends on a strange note. Yirmiyahu seems to have ended his words to the nation and then, uncharacteristically, turns to Hashem to speak of his own condition. "Refa'eini Hashem v'eirafei", he cries, "Heal me, Hashem, and I will be healed." Beyond trying to understand what the words themselves denote, we are puzzled regarding the prophet's plea and why it was even included in the haftara. Various commentaries suggest reasons for this phrase. Some believe that Yirmiyahu was referring to the "wounds" he received from the hateful words and curses he heard from the sinful nation. Others believe that the prophet was referring to his real physical pain he may have received from the blows and rough treatment he received from the nobles and officers, while still others feel that Yirmiyahu was praying for the nation itself, hoping that G-d would cure their "illness", that of lack of faith in G-d.

I would suggest that the prophet's words actually fit in well with the basic theme of his prophecy: the people's lack of emunah. Previously, he admonished those who relied upon false gods, those who trusted in wealth or those who were confident in their own power. Here, he ends these thoughts with the words "Refa'eini..." expressing the idea that ONLY if G-d heals me am I truly cured and ONLY if Hashem saves me will I have true salvation! Trust in anything else is false and useless. This is precisely what the Torah expresses as well, since the

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failure to observe shemita was due to the nation's lack of faith in G-d's promise that there would be enough for them during these Sabbatical years.

Yirmiyahu's words of faith were a powerful message to the ancients and they remain just as relevant for us today.

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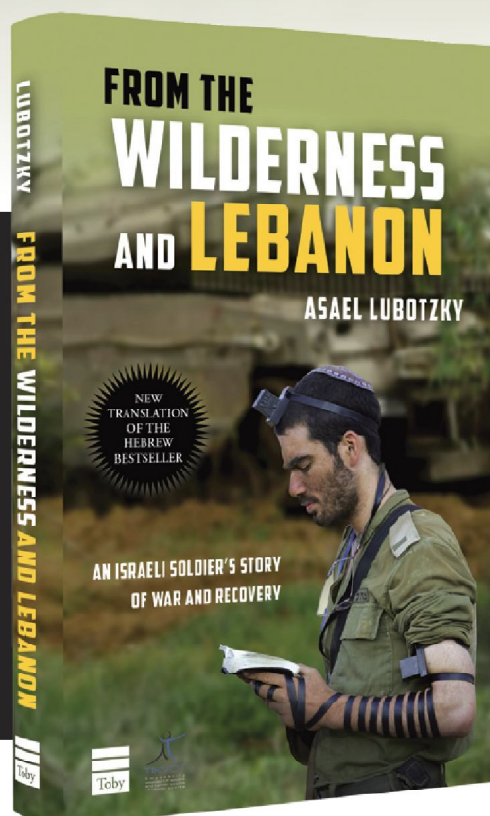
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According to Jewish tradition the Mitzvot can be described according to three categories, namely, (1) Mishpatim - laws that could be derived through the intellect, (2) Eidot - injunctions only understood in the context of the Torah narrative (such as those relating to the Chagim), and (3) Chukim - Mitzvot (statutes) that defy human comprehension (such as Shaatnez and the Red Heifer). So it is interesting to note that, of these three categories, the opening sentence of our Parsha commences with G-d's exhortation that material rewards will follow, "If you [first] go in the way of My Chukim..."

According to several commentators, the expression "Chukim" is here used as a generic term to encompass all the laws, whatever their designation. The implication is that just as Chukim are to be observed based on faith alone - by subjugating one's desires to the will of the Almighty - so should all the Mitzvot be so performed.

Indeed, following the Talmud (Avoda Zara 5a), the opening line of the Parsha is not conditional but rather a plea, as it were, to follow in G-d's path. Hashem is telling us that we should not rely (solely) on our intellect but rather we should serve Him willingly because that is His will. We are enjoined not to see this service as robotic obedience but rather as a primal source of fulfilment that brings joy to Hashem, a role that we might just as happily and unconditionally assume on behalf of a loved one or significant other.

It seems that the consequent material blessing from above of "rain in its season" is matched by no less than a spiritual reward consisting of "abounding light" (Shefa) from On High. And if we really think about it, even the material rain in its season is a spiritual reward.

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Kashering Frozen Liver

Question: *If a piece of liver was frozen for weeks, can it be cooked and roasted?*

Answer: Your question touches on several halachic issues, which we will mention only in passing as necessary background for the answer to your question.

As you know, meat must have its blood removed before it can be eaten. Not everyone is aware that the main halachic problem relates to blood that moved from its initial position (Kritot 21b; Beit Yosef, Yoreh Dei'a 67). Salting, following the regular process, which includes rinsing the meat, is usually sufficient to remove the blood (YD 69). However, due to the high concentration of blood in liver, salting is insufficient and the more powerful process of broiling is required, after slitting the meat to allow blood to flow out more easily (Shulchan Aruch, YD 73:1). (There are important halachot regarding this process that we assume you know or will learn).

One of the situations that makes it more difficult to remove blood from any meat is if it sat 72 hours in

between the sh'chita and the salting (Shulchan Aruch, YD 69:12). The situation can be remedied only by removing the blood through broiling (ibid.). The classical poskim were unsure to what extent broiling is fully effective in that case. The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) takes a middle approach. On the one hand, he is concerned that the broiling did not remove all the blood, so that if one cooked (or fried or sautéed) the meat afterward, some blood could come out and render the meat not kosher. Therefore, one should not cook such meat even after broiling. On the other hand, since it is not certain that further blood will be displaced in the process, if he did cook such meat after broiling, it is permissible to eat it.

Decades ago, there was a major halachic dispute regarding the aforementioned 72 hours. Important poskim (including Aruch HaShulchan, YD 69:79, Yabia Omer II, YD 4) reason that if one froze the meat solid (basar kafu), so that chemical processes are suspended, the "72-hour

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clock" stops. Others argue that freezing cannot change the halacha. (Nowadays the salting process is almost always done at the slaughtering facility soon after sh'chita.) If one takes the lenient approach there, then the liver as well, assuming (on technical grounds, a safe assumption) it was frozen well within 72 hours, the broiling should work as it normally does.

The question is if one were to be stringent in regard to salting frozen meat. Based on our introductory words, we should understand the following Pitchei Teshuva (YD 69:26). He cites the Chamudei Daniel as saying that although one should not let meat sit for 72 hours before salting because he might improperly cook it instead of broiling (Rama, YD 69:12), he may let liver sit that long, because in any case one always has to broil liver. He raises the issue that the broiling of the liver is not a full solution for liver that sat 72 hours (which is no better than such meat) since one is not allowed to cook it after broiling. However, he answers that since we said that if he did cook after a delayed broiling, he may eat it, the issue is not so serious and one may therefore allow liver to sit 72 hours.

The same approach of relative leniency regarding liver that is to be broiled as compared to meat that is to be salted will help answer your question as well. It is quite a stringency to keep the 72 hour clock

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ticking when meat is frozen. Therefore, it is certainly halachically safe to use liver freely after broiling after it was frozen for 72 hours (see HaKashrut (Fuchs) 9:(263)). It is also permitted to l'chatchila allow this situation of freezing the liver with this intention, as Rav Ovadia Yosef (Yechaveh Da'at VI:46) explains cogently.

There is a difference of opinion among poskim whether one must wait for the liver to thaw before broiling (so that the beginning of the process not be considered cooking the liver in liquid as it thaws) or whether broiling is effective in any case (see HaKashrut 9:87).

Rav Daniel Mann, Eretz Hemdah Institute

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GUIDELINES FROM NEZIKIN: MASECHET AVOT [5:11]

by Dr. Meir Tamari

"There are 4 character types of people'; the mishna is considering, not isolated attributes but rather types of attributes and characteristics which are the complete personality of the person" (Netivot Shalom, Admor of Slonim). "Love the Lord with all your might'; this is with all your possessions as there are people to whom their possessions are more valuable than their lives" (Rashi, D'varim 6:5). It should be noted that throughout, the Mishna refers to 'one who says'; not to the actions of people but rather to the thoughts and values which are the fathers of the deeds.

"Mine is Mine and Yours is Yours." Such a person is neither a giver nor a taker. He recognizes the sanctity of private property, his and that of others, and so will not harm anyone or damage their property. However, neither will he use his property or wealth to help or to benefit others. At the outset this is considered to be an average or common characterization, one that has been seen as the basis of free market capitalism. However, our

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mishna sees the possibility of unlimited private property leading to the attribute of the people of S'dom, who are the Torah's epitome of social evil. "This is because, like the S'domites, he is not willing to help others even when he suffers no loss while benefiting them" (Bartenura).

A society can tolerate individual egoism and selfishness but S'dom made it the communal norm. The 5 cities were wealthy and assisting the poor and the strangers would have in

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no way diminished their wealth; this is extreme selfishness and when it becomes the acceptable standard of social behavior, the society had to be destroyed.

"Mine is yours and Yours is Mine, is the attribute of an ignoramus." He seeks to eradicate jealousy, envy and greed by abolishing private property thought to lead to injustice, oppression and social strife. Millions of people over the centuries have striven for various forms of this utopia only to discover that this ideal ultimately gives rise to evils equal to or often greater than what they came to rectify. Our Mishna does not deny their idealism yet considers their ignorance as being destructive since they make giving, dependent on receiving something in exchange (Rabeinu Yona, Tosafot Yom Tov).

The pursuit of wealth and the creation of material assets is part of mankind's yetzarim without which there would be no yishuv haOlam. Had he been learned, the Am Ha'aretz would have understood that the Divine Wisdom desires and enables Adam to elevate and educate the yetzarim implanted in him. His ignorance, however, leads him to justify attempts to destroy or eradicate them, as in asceticism, celibacy or monasticism but this only serves to pervert these yetzarim not to avoid their evil potential.

"Mine is Yours and Yours is Yours'; this saying is the mark of piety, the attribute of the Chasid." The Chasid acknowledges his property rights, the

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legitimacy of economic activity and the moral source of his assets. Nevertheless, he educates and sanctifies his possessions by foregoing some of his rights. He yields property to others without expecting anything in return.

This waiving by the Chasid of his legitimate and morally acquired property rights, is the main thrust of many of the mitzvot aimed at chesed and tzedaka. Pe'ah, leket, shichacha, the agricultural gifts to the poor, the weak and the stranger, sh'mita and yovel are all examples of the waiving of rights to the fruits [profits] of private property. Rabbi S. R. Hirsch explains the isur of ribit (interest) by this concept. "Hashem grants us wealth to be used to meet the needs of our families. However, part of that wealth is meant for helping others and therefore we waive our right to the interest which that money could earn."

"'What is Mine is Mine, and Yours is also Mine'; the mark of a Rasha." Immorality does not start with the abuse or exploitation of the property of others, rather it originates in coveting or desiring anything belonging to others. Modern merchandising is devoted primarily to achieving this and so bombards us constantly through the media and through peer pressure. Bearing in

mind the moral dangers involved, should make us aware of the religious challenges posed today by consumerism. As a spur to improve one's situation through legitimate efforts it may be positive. However, failing these, it leads to all immorality. "How does one transgress 'You shall not covet' (Sh'mot 20:14) and 'You shall not lust' (D'varim 5:18)? Coveting leads to lusting; he oppresses the owner to sell it to him and when that fails, he goes to take it. If he is opposed he will murder for it. We learn this from Achav (Melachim Bet 21) who wanted to buy the vineyard from Navot and became depressed when he was refused. Lusting after the vineyard led to the false trial and murder of Navot. Achav then went to possess it, only to be met by Eliyahu saying, 'have you murdered and also want to inherit?' " (Hilchot G'neiva 1:9-11). ★




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A new light on the Sabbath and Holidays
from the writings of
Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook by
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The Torah of Rashbi

*Adapted from Olat Re'iyah,
introduction to vol. I, pp. 21-22*

Amazingly enough, not everyone needs to pray:

Those whose full-time occupation is learning Torah, such as Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai and his colleagues, should interrupt their studies to recite the Sh'ma but not for the Amida prayer. (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 106:2, based on Shabbat 11a)

This statement is quite surprising. Does not prayer fulfill a basic spiritual need? True, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was a great scholar who completely immersed himself in Torah study - but why should he be exempt from prayer?

Rav Kook's explanation in Olat Re'iyah helps us understand the function of prayer and the mechanics of its role in our spiritual growth.

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Theoretical and Practical

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However, it is not enough just to learn the theory. The craftsman also needs practical training in order to perfect his art.

However, there are unusual individuals who are so talented that they fall under the category of one who "just sees an art and acquires the skill". Using only their mental powers, they are able to acquire the necessary practical skill.

One example of such a gifted artist was Betzalel. He was blessed with a unique Divine spirit that enabled him to create all of the beautiful and intricate Mishkan vessels solely on the basis of their theoretical specifications, without needing to resort to apprenticeship and experimentation.

The Art of Torah

The Torah may also be described as a theoretical wisdom that needs to be actualized on a practical level. It is not enough just to study about kindness and integrity and holiness. The basis for our good deeds and holy service is when we succeed in integrating the highest perceptions of Divine ideals into our lives.

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It is precisely in this transformation from theory to practice that prayer plays a crucial role. Prayer reaches out to our emotions and feelings. Because emotions have a stronger impact on actions than abstract thought, prayer enables us to realize our ethical principles in our day-to-day lives. Our prayers for enlightenment, forgiveness, redemption, and so on, awaken deep yearnings for these eternal values. Prayer softens the heart and prepares us to actualize those concepts of morality and holiness acquired in Torah study.

Earnest prayer prepares us to become skilled artists of kindness and integrity.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, however, was a special case. His absorption

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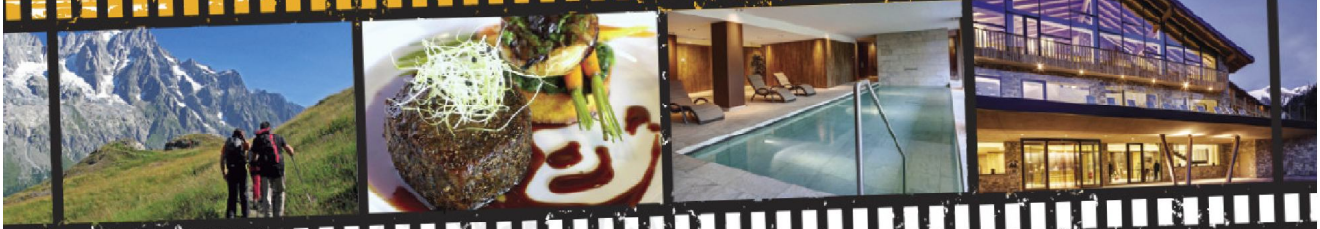
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of Torah was profound and all-encompassing. The impact of his Torah studies was so powerful, and he was so innately attuned to internalize every teaching of holiness and goodness, that he did not need prayer in order to refine his emotions. His Torah study alone was enough to stamp its spiritual images deeply on his heart and soul. He was like the gifted individual who "just sees an art and acquires the skill". Rabbi Shimon was gifted in his Torah study like Betzael was blessed in his craftsmanship.

For this reason, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and scholars like him are exempt from prayer. Their Torah study alone is enough to serve as the foundation for the practical application of their "craft". 📖✍️

Maharal on the Sedra **Yitzchak's Ashes**

Vayikra 26:42 - And I will remember My covenant with Yaakov and also My covenant with Yitzchak, and also My covenant with Avraham will I remember, and the Land I will remember.

Rashi - Why is the order of the patriarchs reversed? The remembrance of any of them, even Yaakov the least, will be sufficient to bring

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redemption. And were it not sufficient, the addition of Yitzchak and Avraham will certainly be sufficient.

Gur Arye: It is Hashem who is remembering here, so the order does not matter. When Moshe prays for the children of Israel after the golden calf [Sh'mot 32:13], he says, "Remember for the sake of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov." In case he needed the righteousness and merit of all of them together, he mentioned all of them in order to connect all their merits, for Moshe is human and did not know what Hashem requires for their salvation. But here, Hashem knows, and says that any of them will be enough for Israel's redemption, which He informs us by mentioning them in reverse order.

But there is more. I say Yaakov is the one whose image is engraved on the Throne of Glory [Chulin 91b], and his name is specified in the praise, of the angels, "Blessed is Hashem, the God of Israel" [Divrei HaYamim Alef 16:36]. Man was created in the Image of God and the best of Yaakov was the best of Adam, the first man [Bava M'tzi'a 84a]. That is why [Yechezkeil 1:26] "on the Throne is the likeness of man above", exemplified by Yaakov, who is nivdal [separate, exalted] from physicality, the perfect Image

of God - his image is on the Throne of Glory. When Hashem "remembers" the patriarchs, He "remembers" Yaakov, who is closest to Him, first. But when Moshe pleads to Hashem to remember the patriarchs, he starts with Avraham in order to save the strongest case, Yaakov, for last.

The midrash [Torat Kohanin ad loc.] gives a different answer, that since any of them will be sufficient to bring the redemption, Moshe has no reason to change the chronologic order. This answer is the most clear and correct.

Rashi - Why is remembrance not mentioned with respect to Yitzchak as it is with the other patriarchs? The "ashes" of Yitzchak appear before Me piled and resting on the altar.

Gur Arye: Yitzchak sacrificed his soul, ready and willing to die on the altar for the sanctification of Hashem's Name at the Akeida to the Attribute of Strict Judgment. Hashem tested the righteous Yitzchak in order that his righteousness be found revealed in action. This is why it was Elokim [judgment] and not YKVK [mercy] who tested Avraham [B'reishit 22:1]. Rashi [ad loc.] notes that Avraham named the place of the Akeida Hashem YIREH for Hashem will see the Akeida for all time to forgive Israel from misfortune / As Yitzchak's "ashes" continually confront Hashem's awareness, no remembrance is necessary.

Column by Dr. Moshe Kuhr

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For the Sake of Reward

You cannot read the catalogue of calamity in B'chukotai without a shudder.

“I will decree upon you panic, disease and fever, making your eyes weaken and your souls suffer; you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it; your strength shall be spent in vain, and I will punish you seven times for your sins...” (Vayikra 26).

True, the rewards for obedience to God will be worth having, but why must all this be spelt out in such detail? We all know what to do and what not to do. We are grown up enough to be aware of our duty. Are rewards and punishments really necessary?

In general principle the answer has to be 'no'. The right thing should be done 'lishmah', for its own sake, not for the sake of a reward or to avoid punishment. The point is made in Pirkei Avot (ch. 1) by Antigonus of Socho who told his disciples not to be like servants who minister to their master on condition of receiving a reward.

Since not everyone is ready to serve God on the highest level, obedience is spurred on by the promise of reward or the threat of punishment.

Some are surprised that the rewards listed in the Torah are all material and this-worldly.

Ibn Ezra believes that spiritual rewards might not help the majority of people, who understand only physical things. Ramban argues (commentary on D'varim 11:13) that since it is axiomatic that God will give spiritual rewards, only the material aspects need to be stated.

Nonetheless, human experience is that material rewards do not always come. The wicked often prosper and the righteous suffer. Some say that it is in the here-and-now that things are not always fair but all will be put right in the World to Come.

Joseph Albo (Ikarim 4:39) offers the suggestion that it is the nation as a whole which receives the earthly reward or punishment, but not necessarily the individual.

Rabbi Apple served for 32 years as the chief minister of the Great Synagogue, Sydney, and was Australia's highest profile rabbi and leading spokesman for Jews and Judaism on the Australian continent. He is now retired and lives in Jerusalem. He blogs at www.oztorah.com

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☞ A farmer never says: "I've been all over that ground before", but he works it every year, and every year reaps a new harvest.

☞ To be G-d's servant, one must be his own master.

from "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein z"l
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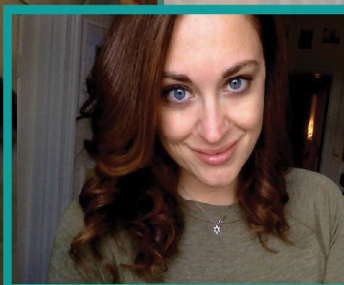
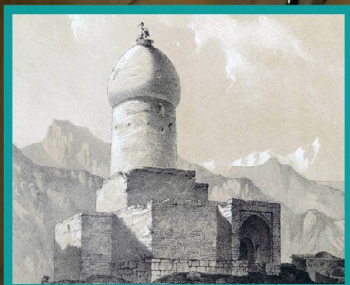
Jewish journey to IRAN

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TUESDAY MAY 31ST, 8:00 PM

Journalist and political advisor
Annika Hernroth Rothstein
recently came back from two trips
to Iran, where she visited with
the Jewish community as well as
reported on the 2016 parliamentary
elections.

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from and pictures of these trips
as well as give an insight into
Jewish life in Iran, inside a closed
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SCHEDULE NOTES	SUNDAY • יום א'	MONDAY • יום ב'
<div data-bbox="331 219 384 271"></div> <p>Shabbat shiur - 5:00pm Fixed time through Parshat Ki Tavo (Sep 24) Parshat B'CHUKOTAI May 28th • 20 Iyar see page 60</p> <hr/> <p>In the Ganchrow Beit Midrash...</p> <p>Sun/Tue/Thu 10:00am Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld Masechet Taanit is in tribute to Rabbi Fred Hollander z"l</p> <p>Sun thru Thu • 11:15am RCA DAF YOMI Rotating Magidei Shiur The Daf Yomi shiur is in tribute to Rabbi Yitzchak Botwinick z"l</p> <p>Su/M/W/Th 4:30pm Rabbi Hillel Ruvel Gemara Shiur Masechet Avoda Zara</p>	<p>10:00am - L'AYLA Mrs. Rivka Segal Living T'hilim</p> <p>11:10am - L'AYLA Mrs. Sylvie Schatz See page 30 - top</p> <p>12:00pm Rabbi Chaim Eisen KUZARI</p> <p>12:00 noon (10מ) Haya Graus Easy Hebrew Ulpan</p> <p>2:00pm Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher Topic for May 29th: Why is Shavuot the day BEFORE Matan Torah?</p> <p>7:00pm (no charge) Rabbi Joseph Klausner-Yedidياهو</p> <p>8:00pm (no charge) Rabbi Mordechai Machlis the Book of Shmuel</p> <p>8:00pm BOOK LAUNCH The Falconi Effect by Catriel Sugarman see page 60 for further details</p>	<p>9:15am Pearl Borow The Book of Yechezkeil</p> <p>9:30/10:30am Mommy & Me with Jackie 054-533-9305</p> <p>MON 10:00am (men & women) Rabbi Poupko's Parsha Perspective</p> <p>10:30am Rabbi Zev Leff on Pirkei Avot</p> <p>11:30am (women) Get Fit while You Sit Exercise with Sura Faecher 050-415-3239</p> <p>2:00pm Rebbitzen Pearl Borow Women in Tanach</p> <p>3:00pm Phil Chernofsky Mishna, Mitzvot & more</p> <p>3:00pm for CHILDREN Music with Jackie</p> <p>5:20pm (2 hrs) Pri-Hadash Writing Workshop</p> <p>Mondays, 6:30pm Emotions Anonymous Faigy 02-571-0632</p>
<p>Mondays, 8:00pm Rabbi Avrum Kowalsky Topics in the Book of Sh'muel</p>	<p>Note new topic Please bring a Tanach with you (or Sefer Sh'muel)</p>	<p>7:30pm (women) OU Intergenerational Choir Directed by Hadassah Jacob call Sara - 560 9104</p>

TUESDAY • יום ג'

9:00am

Rabbi Breitowitz
Minchat Chinuch
The Study of Mitzvot

9:15am - L'AYLA
Mrs. Shira Smiles
"Returning to Roots"

10:30am

Rabbi Sholom Gold
Parshat Hashavua

11:30am T'hilim Group (women)

11:30am (May 31st)
Rabbi Aharon Ziegler
Contemporary Halachic Issues
Revenge is Sweet;
when is it permitted?

12:15-1:15pm
Rabbi Nachman Winkler
Studying His Story

3:00-5:00pm
Knitting Club with Verna

**See
page 60
for more**

WEDNESDAY • יום ד'

9:00am

Rabbi Aharon Adler
The Rav on Sh'mot

9:45am (no charge)

Reuven Wolfeld
Sedra Treasures

10:15am

Rabbi Anthony Manning
Halachic and Hashkafic
Issues in
Contemporary Society

11:15am - L'AYLA
Rabbi Shmuel Herschler
In-depth Trei Asar

12:15pm - L'AYLA
Rabbi Shmuel Herschler
Hilchot Shabbat

2:00pm (2 hrs)

Rebbetzin Pearl Borow
The Book of Zecharia
Chumash with M'forshim

7:00pm (3 hrs)

Rabbi Yonatan Kolatch
Topics in Parshanut

7:30pm

Rabbi Chaim Eisen
A Different Kind of Parsha
Shi'ur: Learning Jewish
Philosophy through
Parshat HaShavua

THURSDAY • יום ה'

9:00am (not May 26)

Rabbi Ari Kahn
Parshat HaShavua

10:00am-noon (not May 26)

Dr. Hayim Abramson
Midrash Hashavua

10:10am

Rabbi Baruch Taub
"Thursday, the Rabbi
gave his Drasha"

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Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher
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Why Get "Fired Up" on Lag BaOmer?

by **Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher**
Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

The Doors had a hit song called, "Light My Fire" (late 60s). Were they singing about Lag BaOmer? Why does everyone in Israel get so "fired up" on Lag BaOmer?

There are two main historical events connected to Lag BaOmer. First, the Talmud Yevamot 62 states that during the time of Rabbi Akiva, 24,000 of his students died from a Divinely sent plague during the days of the counting of the Omer between Pesach and Shavuot. The Talmud goes on to say that this was a punishment because Rabbi Akiva's disciples did not show love and respect to each other. They were jealous and begrudged each other's spiritual levels and achievements.

We celebrate Lag BaOmer as the traditional day that this plague was over and Rabbi Akiva's students stopped dying.

The Zohar gives another reason for Lag BaOmer. It recounts that the great sage, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai died late in the day on Lag BaOmer, and the sun

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miraculously did not set until he died. Thus, there is the Kabbalistic tradition of lighting candles and bonfires on Lag BaOmer. Also, customs of mourning for Rabbi Akiva's disciples, held during the days from Pesach till Shavuot, are suspended and stopped on Lag BaOmer.

But what does Lag BaOmer mean today? What is the message for us in our daily lives?

Perhaps, these two ideas, the mourning for Rabbi Akiva's students and the lighting of bonfires for Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai's Yahrzeit are connected.

Think of a campfire or a bonfire. It provides a warm glow. You can roast marshmallows and hotdogs around the campfire, gather around and bond with other people. Everyone is attracted to a fire. Throughout the Torah, G-D always appears to human beings in a fire. For example, G-D appeared to Moshe as a flame in the burning bush and to the entire Jewish people as a Devouring Fire on top of Mount Sinai (Sh'mot 24). Thus, a fire brings people together.

The idea of Lag BaOmer and the lighting of fires is to bring us together. Rabbi Akiva's disciples grew apart, the bonfires of Lag BaOmer are supposed to bring us together.

It's strange, but in today's age, although we are more connected to each other

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than ever before thanks to technology, we seem to be more disconnected from the people around us. We see people sitting together but instead of talking to each other, each one is engrossed in texting someone else through their mobile phone and whatsapp.

So on Lag BaOmer, for one night a year, we should put away our smart phones and dumb phones and show respect and love for each other.

This can be the Tikun for Rabbi Akiva's disciples who had no respect and love for each other. 🕯️



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From the S'forno Jacob Solomon

The blessings G-d promises for those who observe the teachings of the Torah open with:

If you follow My statutes, and observe My commandments and perform them... (26:3).

"Following My statutes", according to Rashi, means putting dedicated and persistent effort into studying Torah. The purpose of constant commitment to learning is not for intellectual exercise, but to make "observing My commands and performing them" possible. Such genuinely motivated regular engagement in Torah learning leads to the observance and the fulfillment of the mitzvot, for which G-d promises the prosperity needed for success and accomplishment in Eretz Yisrael.

The S'forno additionally explains that "observing My commandments and performing them" are two very distinct parts of mitzva observance. "Observing My commandments" means letting the learning sink into the mind; your own mind as an individual. It does not just mean knowing the mitzvot, but thinking about the Torah learnt. It is that constant reflection that makes your learning become part of you, and fuses with your individuality and unique combination of previous experiences. Indeed, it also makes mitzva observance part of you, so that you naturally view G-d's requirements through a sense of being utterly at one with Him, leading to "Do His will as if it were your will" (Avot 2:4). In

other words, the act of fulfilling the mitzvot makes you feel completely at home with the Creator.

In contrast, mere Torah learning as part of impersonal rote and routine is of more limited value. As G-d exclaimed to Yeshayahu about the tribe of Yehuda: "These people have come to honor Me with their mouths and their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me. Their fear of Me is like the rote learning of human directives... Therefore the wisdom of its wise men will go to waste, and the understanding of its sages will go into hiding" (Yeshayahu 29:13-14).

Thus Rashi and S'forno give two complementary approaches to this fundamental danger of one's connection with our holy traditions losing their freshness and becoming routine. Both are based on the opening words of this Parsha. Rashi's interpretation focuses on Torah engagement, literally "toiling in Torah". The more effort one puts into it, the more it belongs to you, the more you are part of it. The S'forno's approach takes in the need for quiet reflection. The more you allow yourself to consider what you have learnt, the better it integrated into your understanding, and more it becomes part of you.

Perhaps this allegorically fits into Shir HaShirim: "I am to my bride, and my bride it to me" (6:3). "I am to my bride" by being part of the Torah, following Rashi. "My bride is to me" by letting the Torah be part of me, following the S'forno. ✨

Dedicated to the memory of Emmett Saxe ז"ל ציון ועלקא ז"ל

By his father Benjamin Saxe, West Hempstead, New York

Let's Treat each other with Respect and Honor - Dani Yemini, CEO

The opening paragraph of Parshat B'chukotai enumerates the blessings that Hashem will bestow on our people provided we observe the mitzvot properly. In connection with the pursuit of our enemies, the Torah tells us:

"And five of you will chase one hundred", i.e. the equivalent of one will pursue 20, and "one hundred will chase ten thousand", i.e. the equivalent of one will pursue 100. What lesson is the Torah teaching us with these equivalents?

Rashi interprets these verses as referring to those who are engaged in the study of Torah and explains that the power of the individual is far greater when he is part of a larger group. The larger the group the greater by far is his religious standing and influence.

During these days, between Pesach and Shavuot, some 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva were killed, as is described in Talmud Yevamot 62b: "Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousands pairs of students ... and all of them died during one period, because they did not treat each other with honor."

According to Rashi's interpretation, one would have thought that the study of Torah by a group of tens of thousands should have provided each of them with almost unlimited power and religious privileges. However, this large group of students of the Torah was destined to die.

We see, therefore, that in addition to being engaged in Torah study, a person is obligated in all the mitzvot including those which relate to treating his fellow man with honor and respect. Rabbi Akiva said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. This is a great principle of the Torah."

The Midrash goes on to tell us that after the death of his students, Rabbi Akiva started to teach again with seven students only who eventually "filled all Eretz Yisrael with Torah" (B'reishit Raba 65:3).

We can apply the lesson learned from Rashi and the story of Rabbi Akiva to the present. Following the destruction of the 'world of Torah' during the Holocaust, the Jewish community has been witness to the revival of Torah studies throughout the world, especially here in Israel. An integral part of the Torah curriculum in many yeshivot today is the importance of respecting one's neighbor.

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Exploring the Jewish State
through the lens of Jewish Law

By Rabbi Shimshon HaKohen Nadel

Is There a Mitzva of Aliya L'Regel Today?

Part 1 • The miraculous birth of the State of Israel, followed by the dramatic reclamation of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, raises many practical questions hitherto only dreamt about. Among them is whether the mitzva of aliya l'regel, ascending to Jerusalem for the Three Pilgrimage Festivals, still applies today, following the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash.

The historical record is rich with descriptions of pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem three times a year, centuries after the destruction of the Temple. But authorities debate the nature of these pilgrimages, whether they are observed in fulfillment of a mitzva or perhaps a custom, perpetuating the practice observed during Mikdash times.

Prima facie, the mitzva of re'iya, appearing before Hashem three times a year, requires bringing an offering as the Torah (D'varim 16:16-17) instructs:

"Three times a year all your males shall appear before Hashem, your God, in the place that He will choose: On the Festival of Matzot, the Festival of Shavuot, and the Festival of Sukkot; and he shall not appear before Hashem empty handed, each man according to what he can give, according to the blessing that Hashem, your God, gives you."

For the Rambam, in fact, the mitzva of re'iya is inextricably bound with the offering of korbanot, as olei regel are obligated to bring an olat re'iya, a korban chagiga, and shalmei simcha. Rambam defines the mitzva of re'iya as follows:

"One should be seen in the courtyard on the first day of the festival and bring with him a korban olah... One who comes to the courtyard on the first day and does not offer an olah - not only does he not fulfill a positive command - but he violates a negative command, as it says, 'he shall not appear before Me empty handed.' "(Hilchot Chagiga 1:1).

A similar approach is taken by Sefer haChinuch and S'mag. According to this view, aliya l'regel today, without the ability to offer a korban, would be in violation of a Torah prohibition.

But according to the Turei Even, the Talmud Yerushalmi allows for the fulfillment of the mitzva of aliya l'regel without offering a korban (Turei Even to Chagiga 2a). The Yerushalmi (Chagiga 1:1) requires even those exempt from bringing an olat re'iya, minors for example, to ascend to Jerusalem. This proves, Turei Even suggests, that the mitzva of aliya



l'regel and offering an olat re'iya are indeed two separate mitzvot. Violating the isur of failure to bring an olat re'iya, does not preclude one from fulfilling the mitzva of re'iya.

Minchat Chinuch (Mitzvot 489-490), however, suggests that notion of fulfilling the mitzva of re'iya without a korban would be a "mitzva habaa b'aveira." (See also Chidushei haGrach al haShas, p. 64, and Ridbaz and Tosfot haRid to Chagiga 1:1).

R. Eliezer of Metz, in his Sefer Yere'im (No. 425. 403 in some editions), offers a novel approach. He writes that one who ascends to Jerusalem, "must bring tzedaka or a korban, as is written 'he shall not appear before Me empty handed', and as it taught in the Sifrei, 'empty of tzedaka.'" Accordingly, the

possibility of aliya l'regel today would not be prevented by the inability to bring a korban, as one can simply give charity.

It would seem that according to Turei Even and Sefer Yere'im, the mitzva of aliya l'regel is still in effect today. Without the requisite korbanot, one would be considered an oness, unable to offer them due to circumstance (beyond one's control), but would still fulfill the mitzva of re'iya.

Next week we will explore historical accounts of aliya l'regel following the destruction of the Second Mikdash. 🚩

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Malki & Moshe Chaim

Echoes of Eden

BY RABBI ARI D. KAHN

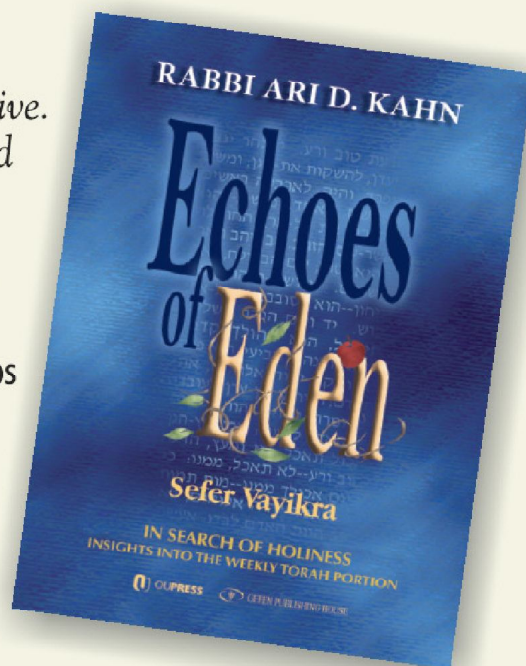
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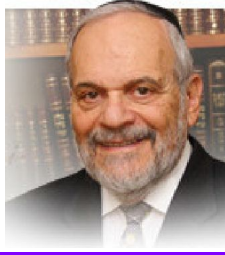
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WEEKLY
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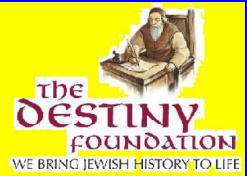
From a cursory review of this week's Torah reading, one can easily come to the conclusion that God's method for dealing with us is with earthly rewards and punishments. The blessings that appear in the reading are all physical, emotional and sometimes psychological. There is no mention of eternal life, the survival of the soul, and/or of the rewards in the World to Come.

And the same is true relative to the punishments and disasters, which are predicted to happen to the Jewish people when they stray from the path of God and righteousness. All of those punishments and tragedies, described in great and graphic detail, are events of this world and of its physical nature. Again, there is no mention of an afterlife judgment or of the concept of the punishment of the soul in a different sphere of existence.

All of this creates a great philosophical and theological conundrum of why good people oftentimes suffer greatly in their lifetime and why, in the reverse, evil people many times seem to prosper and are never held accountable for their nefarious

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deeds. Though there is a biblical book - Iyov - that deals almost exclusively with this issue, in its conclusion it really affords no answer to the great question that it has raised.

It is only in the development of the Oral Law in Jewish tradition that the concept of the afterlife and of heavenly judgment of the soul is introduced. At the very least, this basic idea of Jewish faith is presented as a partial answer to the nagging question of why the righteous suffer in this world. Yet, it must be admitted that the literal written Torah speaks of reward and punishment as a purely physical matter that takes place in our actual physical world.

All of the great scholars of Israel throughout the ages have grappled with this issue and followed varied paths in attempting to deal with the matter. There are many factors, known and unknown, which

determine the fate of an individual and of the nation. In effect, that is really the answer that the Lord, so to speak, addresses to Iyov regarding his complaints pertaining to the unfairness of life.

Heaven operates in this world on so many different levels that it is impossible for human beings to comprehend them all. The Torah presents reward and punishment in its simplest form and with the lowest common denominator possible. But it does not limit itself to our understanding of righteousness and evil. It simply sets forth that in this world, just as in the world of the afterlife and the spirit, the concept of reward and punishment governs.

We pray thrice daily to the kingdom of judgment. We live our lives based on the fact that we know that we are constantly being assessed and judged. Our ignorance of the details as to how this system functions, does not in any way belie our knowledge that it exists. It must be taken into account continually during our lives. 🙏

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Previous (B'HAR) TTriddles:

[1] The former Beit HaAm


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[2] Its frequent partner outdoes B'har 2 to 1

B'har's frequent partner is this week's sedra of B'chukotai. We find the phrase B'HAR SINAI, which gives B'har its name, occurring twice in B'chukotai.

[3] Final connection between B'har and Shoftim - B'reishit belongs there too. T'tzaveh was close, but just missed.

This TTriddle was presented in the hard copy as two TTriddles - but they belong combined. Final connection refers to the final word in each sedra. You can check and see that B'reishit, B'har, and Shoftim are the three sedras that end with the word HASHEM (YKVK). Parshat T'tzaveh ends with LASHEM, close but no cigar (as the expression goes).



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[4] Appropriate month, if not day, for Yovel's shofar

Aside from the number 50, which is - of course - associated with Yovel, the other number that predominates is SHEVA, seven. We (as a nation, represented by the Sanhedrin) are commanded to count SHEVA SHAB'TOT SHANIM, SHEVA SHANIM SHEVA P'AMIM... SHEVA SHAB'TOT HASHANIM - the number SHEVA predominates the mitzva of counting to Yovel. Hence, the Shofar being blown in HACHODESH HASH'VII, in the seventh month (Tishrei) is certainly appropriate, even if the tenth of the month does not fit the preponderance of sevens.

[5] FPTL: CIV's penultimate

CIV is 104 in Roman numerals. It refers

to T'hilim 104 - BORCHI NAFSHI. Penultimate means the next-to-the-last, pasuk, in this case. That whole pasuk - YE'ERAV ALAV SICH... has a gimatriya of 1184.

[6] Unexplaineds in the ParshaPix

To the left of the Heinz ketchup bottle - which stood for the 57 p'sukim in B'har, there is a picture of Williw Mays making "The Catch" in the first game of the '54 World Series. His number, 24 is the same as the number of B'har's mitzvot.

And there is the small Torah Tidbits logo - TT - which stands for the word TITI, found in the haftara of B'har (and only two other places in Tanach). The word means 'that I am giving' (or something like that), the equivalent of SHE'ANI NOTEIN.

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These mistakes do not happen every day but they do occur. A paper presented at the recent Annual Meeting of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine in Baltimore looked at whether there is a pattern in when mistakes happen.

They found an interesting piece of data; more mistakes were reported during major fertility conferences. When the societies hold their annual conferences, which are attended by thousands of medical professionals, doctors and embryologists, is the very same time when more mistakes occur in the labs.

The reason for this is that the lab directors and the experts usually attend the conferences to present their work and to share ideas with other professionals. The labs are then

run by less experienced embryologists. Of course, even at these times the labs run professionally and at a high level but still they reported more mistakes.

Experience can prevent mistakes. The more we follow protocol and are focus on our work the less likely it is that there will be a mistake. However the authors of the paper did not claim that mistakes do not occur in the labs at any other time. Even the most expert and highly trained professional with the most experience can still make a mistake. Human beings make mistakes; that is the reality.

In order to prevent such mistakes affecting the outcome of the fertility treatments and the fear of the possibility of mistakes preventing couples from utilizing this technology and having children, Puah developed a system of supervision.

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Rabbi Gideon Weitzman

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CHIZUK AND IDUD

*Divrei Torah from the weekly sedra
with a focus on living in Eretz Yisrael -
Chizuk for Olim & Idud for not-yet-Olim*

When Mark Twain visited Eretz Yisrael in 1867, he vividly described a pitiful and forlorn land: "Palestine is desolate and unlovely... The hills are barren, they are dull of color, unpicturesque in shape... Palestine sits in sack cloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies... Where prosperity had reigned and fallen; where glory had flamed and gone out; where beauty had dwelt and passed away; where gladness was and sorrow is... We never saw a human being on the whole route... There was hardly a tree or a shrub anywhere. Even the olive and the cactus, those fast friends of the worthless soil, had almost deserted the country..." What a contrast to the Eretz Yisrael of today!

Twain's description is reminiscent of the Tochacha we read in our Parsha: "And I will make your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries into desolation... And I will bring the Land into desolation and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it" (Vayikra 26:31-32). In truth, the similarities are not by chance, for as Mark Twain contemplated the sad scene which met his eyes, he was reminded of these very verses, noting that: "No man can stand here [in this deserted area] and say the prophecy has not been fulfilled."

What, though, is the point if this divine prophecy?

Although the verses can be read as punishment for our sins, Rashi points to the positive results of the land being



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barren and inhospitable: this will deter our enemies from inhabiting the land in our absence. The Ramban similarly states that this verse contains a good tiding: The Land will not accommodate our enemies, it will not accept another nation, and it will only bloom for Am Yisrael.

The accuracy of these words is striking. None of the various conquerors of Eretz Yisrael have succeeded to bring it into prosperity. After coming on Aliya in the year 1267, the Ramban wrote to his son, writing as follows: "What shall I tell you concerning the condition of the Land... She is greatly forsaken and her desolation is great... The more sacred the place, the greater the devastation it has suffered. Yerushalyim is most desolate and devastated". Those who pray in the Ramban Shul in the old city today, built upon the land bought back in 1267, cannot even begin to imagine what things were like back then.

What a sacrifice it must have been to have made Aliya to such desolation!

Having come here alone, we can feel the Ramban's pain describing what he left behind: "I left my family, I forsook my house. There, with my sons and daughters, the sweet, dear children I brought up at my knees, I left also my soul. My heart and my eyes will dwell with them forever". Ramban who believed that Yishuv HaAretz was a central part of the Torah was willing to pay this price in order to fulfill this Mitzva.

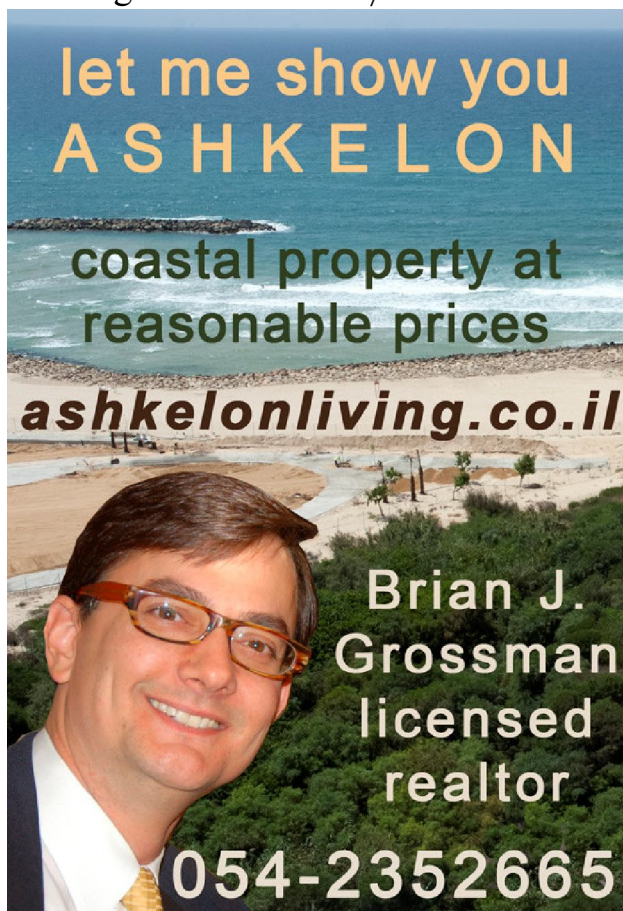
How easy Aliya is today when compared to the times of Ramban. Those making Aliya don't experience the kind of pain and longing he describes, and they are treated to a convivial welcome as their

plane touches down in Eretz Yisrael, a few hours after having taken off abroad.

Yet, despite it being relatively so easy to come today, many still keep away. In order to find some Idud, or positive encouragement, I would return to the beginning of the parsha, before we arrive at the lengthy Tochecha.

The divine promise we are treated to there, is short and sweet: "And I will walk among you and I will be your G-d and you shall be My People" (26:12).

The Sforno explains this blessing saying that: "Wherever you walk I shall be with you. My presence is not restricted to one specific place. Rather, my Shefa is directed towards you wherever you, the righteous, are to be found." What must one do in order to merit having the divine presence leave M'kom HaSh'china and come reside in their home? Is this blessing relevant only to Messianic



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times, when the divine Shefa will be spread out over the entire universe - visiting the righteous wherever they may be found?

It would seem that this is not necessarily so. In order to arrive at this blessing today, we must simply heed the words of Hillel who presents a very simple equation: "He Hillel, would say "If you come to my home I will come to your home" - this applies to Jews who would leave their gold and silver and come to Jerusalem for the pilgrim festivals (Regalim). The Sh'china would coddle and bless them saying: "And I will walk among you and I will be your G-d and you shall be My People" (Avot d'Rabbi Natan 27).

If you come here choosing to make G-d's home your own, He will respond by residing, and walking with you!

Rabbi Yerachmiel Roness, Ramat Shiloh, Beit Shemesh

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Be'ohalei Ha'avos

by Rabbi Y. Dov Krakowski

Ben Bag-Bag would say: turn it and turn it again, for all is in it; see through it; grow old and worn in it; do not budge from it, for there is nothing that works better than it. (Avos 5, 22)

While the actual words of the mishna are cryptic, it is clear that Ben Bag-Bag is discussing the sublimity of the Torah. He seems to be advising us to delve in Torah study because everything is contained within the Torah. He is telling us to use the Torah as a looking glass of sorts so as to give us a unique perspective, and that since the Torah is so marvelous we should never budge from it because it is the most effective device there is.

The Torah is certainly paramount. It is God-given and therefore unparalleled by anything contrived by Man. Nonetheless the Gemara is replete with references to other wisdoms, be it Greek philosophy of yore or any other sort. It therefore leaves us to wonder what Ben Bag-Bag means. Does he mean that all other knowledge is contained within the Torah, or merely that Torah knowledge is far superior to any other knowledge, and therefore that there is no reason in the world to study anything else when one could study Torah instead? If he means that the Torah contains all available knowledge within it, then why would Chazal ever feel it necessary to quote any other source?

Bartenura seems to allude to the later explanation. He quotes a Tosefta in Avoda Zara that states: "They asked Rabbi Yehoshua: May one teach his son Greek? To which he replied: one may teach his son Greek at a time that is not

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day nor night as it is stated in scripture "And you shall muse over it day and night." Bartenura explains this to mean not that one should never learn other studies. He explains it to mean that one shouldn't learn other studies at a time when one could study Torah. He says that one should study other subjects only in instances that one cannot study Torah, like when someone is making use of a restroom.

There are differing opinions and approaches to various issues in many mishnayos and medrashim. Nonetheless, these various opinions and approaches are always presented in an objective scholarly fashion. Pirkei Avos is an exception to this rule. Throughout Pirkei Avos various Rabbis are mentioned as the preceptors of various axioms but we never bring conflicting opinions with regards to the ethos set out by the

differing Torah giants. It would seem that this is because only the non-arguable precepts were chosen from each individual Rabbi to be taught in Avos.

There are many gemaras and medrashim that discuss whether one should or shouldn't learn secular studies. This has been an ongoing argument with various fundamental issues at its core to the present day.

Just like all other mishnayos in Pirkei Avos this mishna is tenable and is held as an objective truth of Torah Judaism. Ben Bag-Bag is telling us something that could be consonant with all approaches to secular studies.

If we analyze the mishna carefully we will notice that aside from providing us with a crucial piece of advice, Ben Bag-Bag is instructing us rhetorically. He tells us to review Torah constantly in the literal sense of viewing the Torah from all angles possible. He tells us that we should view the world through the looking glass of Torah and that we should grow old with it. Then he closes with explaining that there is nothing more productive than Torah.

There are many concepts that we are cognizant of in our daily lives that we take for granted. We consider them to be

innate. However a young child is unaware of these notions until he experiences them. In life, every experience and sensation is one of ontological value. We are constantly learning. These learning experiences are seemingly mundane. It is thus that passively we all attain some general knowledge.

Torah is Hashem's Divine will. Hashem created the world and Hashem gave us the Torah as a manual to living in His world. It is thus that the Torah must inherently subsume all knowledge. This doesn't mean that one who studies Torah will know how to operate on someone just from Torah study. Nor does it mean that someone can have a command of the sciences because they have studied Torah. What it does mean is that someone who has a command of Torah will have a different perspective on all knowledge that he acquires. Torah provides an accurate vantage point to everything in life. What Ben Bag-Bag is clearly saying is that one needs to excogitate over the Torah so as that one can transform one's Torah study into a living Torah; to a Torah that can serve as a looking glass into everything else in life. Since one is supposed to live Torah it is incumbent upon us to grow old with and through the Torah.

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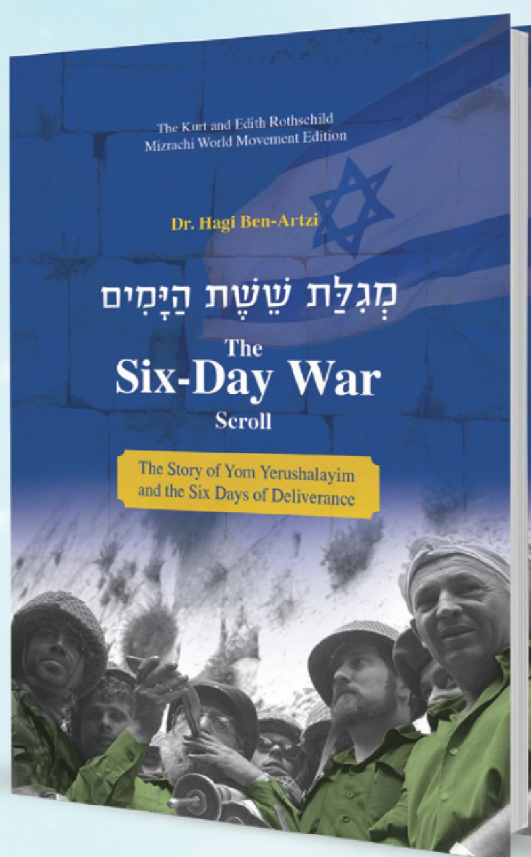
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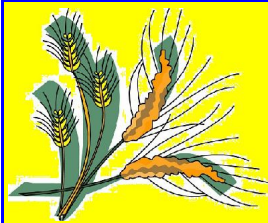
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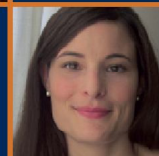
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