

# OHRNET

Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo • For the week ending 16 Elul 5756 • August 31, 1996 • Vol. 3 No. 41

## "I'M SORRY TO WAKE You Up, BUT..."

*"Then you shall call out with a loud voice..."*  
(26:5)

It's three o'clock in the morning. Your wife has just gone into labor. The doctor is looking concerned. You grab the phone and ring an *adam gadol* (great Torah scholar) and ask him to *daven* (pray) for your wife. He tells you not to worry. He gets up and davens for your wife.

After a difficult labor your wife presents you with a beautiful baby boy. Mother and baby are fine. It's now Tuesday morning.

On Friday night you see the *adam gadol* in *shul* and invite him to the *Shalom Zocher* (traditional welcoming of the baby boy). He says to you "When your wife went into labor, you called me at three in the morning to tell me. But when she gave birth you wait till the *Shalom Zocher*..."

A farmer understands that without rain and sun his crops will fail. Thus, he prays to Hashem for the success of his produce; he prays fervently and with great motivation.

When all is harvested, he brings the *Bikkurim* (first fruits) to the *Beis Hamikdash* in Jerusalem. He then makes a declaration — a brief sketch of Jewish history — outlining the unflinching kindness of Hashem to His people. Rashi, quoting the Talmud (*Sotah* 32b), writes that this declaration must be made in 'a loud voice.'

With that same fervor and intensity that we

## INSIGHTS

seek help and assistance, we must offer thanks and recognition. If we put a heart-felt three-in-the-morning call to the Master of the World for urgent help, let us thank Him with that same urgency and depth of feeling.

• *In the name of Rabbi Yosef Tzeinwort heard from Rabbi Yehoshua Bertram*

## HANDS UP!

*"And the Kohen shall take the basket from your hands..."* (26:4)

The hands are different from all the other limbs. All the other limbs of the body are fixed and static, whereas the hands may be lowered below the feet or raised higher than the head.

The same is true on an allegorical/ethical level. Man can lower his hands, he can perform all the greatest sins possible. He can murder, steal. Everything can be done with the hands. We talk of having 'blood on our hands' and 'dirty hands'.

On the other hand, the hands, when raised up, can perform the holiest acts. When the *Kohen* blesses the people he raises his hands. The hand gives *tzedaka* (charity). The hand puts on tefillin. We extend 'the hand' of friendship and assistance.

The handiwork of a person is symbolized by the acquisitions that the labor of his hands have brought him. For this reason, the first of his fruits must be made holy as *Bikkurim*.

Because the beginning always influences what follows it. Thus, every beginning needs to be made holy, because when the beginning is holy, everything that follows it will also be holy.

When the hands are raised above the head, when their direction is heavenwards, then the head and the body will inevitably follow after them.

• *Adapted from Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin*

## CURSES AND BLESSINGS

*"And it will be that if you will not listen..."*

There are 98 curses in the *Tochacha* (rebuke) in this week's parsha, which detail what will happen to the Jewish People if they stray from the Torah.

After a wedding, we make a week of *Sheva Berachos* (festive meals) for the newly-married couple. Why specifically a week?

During the week of *Sheva Berachos*, there are two meals a day, and at each meal seven blessings are recited. Seven multiplied by two, multiplied by seven is ... 98!

May it be through the *blessings* of the establishment of a new Jewish home that all the *curse*s and suffering of our long night of exile will come to an end! That again we will hear in the cities of Yehuda and the suburbs of Yerushalayim the voice of joy, the voice of happiness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride!

• *Based on Chidushei HaRim in the Gnizei HaChasidim in Iturei Torah*

**T**hen the *Bnei Yisrael* dwell in the Land of Israel, its first fruits are to be taken to the Temple and given to the *Kohen* in a ceremony which expresses recognition that it is Hashem who guides the history of the Jewish People throughout all the ages. This passage forms one of the central parts of the Haggadah that we read at the Seder. On the last day of Pesach of the fourth and the seventh years of the seven-year cycle of tithes, a person must recite a confession that he has indeed distributed the tithes to the appropriate people in the prescribed manner.

With this *mitzvah* Moshe concludes the commandments that Hashem has told him to give to The Jewish People. Moshe exhorts them to walk in Hashem's ways, because they are set

aside as a treasured people to Hashem. When the *Bnei Yisrael* cross the Jordan River they are to make a New Commitment to the Torah. Huge stones are to be erected and the Torah written on them in the seventy primary languages of the world, after which they are to be covered over with a thin layer of plaster.

Half the tribes will stand on *Mount G'rizim*, and half on *Mount Eval* and the *Leviim* will stand in a valley between the two mountains and recite twelve commandments and all the people will answer "Amen" to

the blessings and the curses. Moshe then details the blessings that will be bestowed on the *Bnei Yisrael*. These blessings are both physical and spiritual. However if the Jewish People do not keep the Torah, Moshe details a chilling picture of destruction, resulting in exile and wandering among the nations.

## OVERVIEW



INSIGHTS INTO THE SHABBOS ZEMIRO'S

כל מקדש

“ALL WHO SANCTIFY...”

“His (the Shabbos observer) reward is great in accordance with his deed. Each man to his camp, each man to his banner.”

One who honors Shabbos through enjoying it, say our Sages (Shabbos 118a), will be rewarded with an inheritance without boundaries. This reward is measure for measure. Just as he did not set limits on his enjoyment of the holy day, and even defied the restriction of time by adding on time to the Shabbos, so will his “reward be great in accordance with his deed” and will be without limits.

Such a boundless reward will render it unnecessary for any Shabbos observer to in any way impose on the domain of another. Each will have all he requires and will be content to be “in his camp with his banner.”



THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

Published by

OHR SOMAYACH

TANENBAUM COLLEGE

POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel

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PRINTED IN ISRAEL AT OLD CITY PRESS 02-651-1529

## GRAVE ISSUE

Edward Karan from BA/FAS New York  
<ekarannn@colybrand.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I was reading an article in a magazine on archaeology commenting how the “fanatic” group, ATRA KAD-DISHA, hampers excavations when graves are unearthed in Israel. I’m interested why we can’t relocate graves. The article quoted a Talmudic source that in the times of the Mishna, cities that were expanding were allowed to relocate a grave site.

Another thing: I imagine that graves are considered ‘holy’ places, but at the same time they are “impure.” I am looking for a good explanation on how something can be both holy and impure at the same time? Shalom,

Dear Eddie,

Speaking of archeology, did you hear that they discovered a three thousand year old city in Israel with evidence that everyone in the city had cellular phones? That’s right. They searched the entire city and didn’t find a single telephone wire!

But back to your question. In general, it’s forbidden to move a body, even bones, from one grave to another. Besides the disrespect to the deceased, the departed soul experiences pain when his body is dug up.

In certain situations, however, moving graves is permitted. For example, when the move is for the good of the departed, such as moving him to his family plot. And as you wrote, one may move graves located in an area needed by the public — provided no alternate site exists.

However, the remains must be treated with respect and reburied in an assigned plot. Not just thrown away or put on display.

Based on photos and eye-witness accounts of construction sites and archeological digs

in Israel, bones are tossed around, piled into bags, and discarded in a most irreverent way. The members of

the Atra Kaddisha are simply trying to safeguard the sanctity of their ancestors’ graves. (Atra Kaddisha means ‘the holy place.’)

You asked, “how can graves be holy yet impure?” Man is made of two aspects: Body and soul. While the dead body is impure, the soul, which is still related to the body, is holy.

### Sources:

- Shulchan Aruch - Yoreh Deah 363:1
- Gesher Hachaim vol. I ch. 26,27; vol. II ch. 20-21
- Talmud Yerushalmi Moed Katan 2:4
- Ramban, Torat Ha-adam
- Ohr Zaruah 419
- Tshuvat HaRashba I:369
- Rabbeinu Yerucham I:229-230
- Rambam Hilchot Aivel 14:12-26

## Yiddle Riddle

Which Tractate’s name is the antonym of the name of the Order (seder) of which it is part?

Answer next week

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BIRD FOOD

After he had pronounced a drought upon the idol worshipping King Ahab of Israel, the Prophet Eliyahu was directed by Hashem to seek refuge in a remote location where food would miraculously be brought to him by ravens. The ravens did indeed bring him bread and meat each morning and evening.

But where did they bring the meat from and how did the prophet know it was kosher?

The meat, says the Talmud, was from the kitchens of Ahab. But Ahab was a committed idol worshipper, so how could meat from an animal slaughtered by him or one of his idol worshipping servants be considered kosher?

This is proposed as a support for the opinion expressed by Rabbi Anan in the name of the Sage Shmuel that the slaughtering done by a Jew who worships idols is kosher. But the Talmud rejects this proof because the meat may indeed not have been kosher, but was explicitly permitted in this extraordinary situation by Hashem when He informed the prophet that the ravens would feed him.

Tosefos raises an interesting problem. In the Talmud's initial assumption that the meal of an animal slaughtered by an idolater is indeed kosher there is still a problem as to how the prophet could eat meat which had disappeared from sight since there is a rabbinic injunction against eating such meat for fear that the birds

may have switched it with non-kosher meat from non-Jews. Tosefos' resolution is that Eliyahu relied upon the Divine promise to feed him meat that this meat would not come from non-Jews, but the Talmud initially hesitated to suggest that this promise also included a dispensation regarding the meat of an animal slaughtered by an idolater.

The distinction made by Tosefos is thus explained by Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Chayos: When the Torah wrote that "The Torah is not in heaven" it ruled that prophecy could not interfere in the halachic process delegated to human intellect. But a prophet may, through prophecy, clarify the facts of a case. The Talmud therefore

"Part your waters Ginai," requested the sage, "so that I may pass."

"You are going forward to do the will of your Master," replied the reluctant river, "and I flow on to do the will of my Master. There is no guarantee that you will succeed in your mission (since the captors may not consent to the ransoming – Rashi) while I will certainly succeed in mine (the Divine order for all rivers to flow to the sea – Rashi)."

Only after the sage threatened to dry up the river did it finally part its waters to allow him and his company to pass through.

The problem raised by this and other sections of the Talmud concerning speech by inanimate objects such as the river is resolved by Tosefos in two different approaches:

It was the angel in charge of seas and rivers who engaged the sage in this dialogue. Maharsha expands this idea to explain the statement made by the grasses at the time of Creation (*Chullin* 60a). Every blade of grass, say our Sages, has an angel in charge of it who commands it to grow from the earth. It was these angels, he concludes, that did the talking just as the Ginai River's angel did here.

No dialogue actually took place. The Talmud is describing Rabbi Pinchas' thought process as to why the river was initially reluctant to part its waters. While this approach may be somewhat difficult to apply to the statement of the grass, it provides a perfect explanation for the dialogue between Rabbi Eliezer ben Durai and the mountains, heaven, earth, sun, moon and stars (*Avodah Zarah* 17a).

• *Chullin* 7a



Insights, explanations and comments for the seven pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle.

assumed that Eliyahu relied on his prophecy to ascertain that the meat indeed came from a Jewish kitchen, but not to abrogate the halacha prohibiting idolater-slaughtered meat until the conclusion was reached that even the halacha was abrogated temporarily by Divine command.

• *Chullin* 5a

RIVER TALK

On his way to perform the great mitzvah of ransoming captives Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair found his journey blocked by the impassable Ginai River.

1. When did the obligation to bring *bikkurim* (first fruits) begin?
2. From which crops must one bring *bikkurim*?
3. What does 'v'anisa v'amarta' mean (verse 26:5)?
4. How does one designate *bikkurim*?
5. Who shakes the basket containing the *bikkurim*?
6. "An *Arami* tried to destroy my father...(26:5)" Who was that *Arami*?
7. Starting when in the year are *bikkurim* brought? Until when are the special verses recited?
8. Someone declaring that he separated *trumah* and *maaser* says "and I didn't forget (26:13)." What didn't he forget?
9. Eleven curses were spoken on Mt. Eval. What is the significance of this number?
10. What were the Jewish People to do with the 12 stones on Mount Eval?

11. Six tribes were to stand on Mount Eval, and six on Mount Grizim. Who and what were in the middle?
12. Who "causes the blind to go astray"?
13. How does one "strike another secretly"?

14. Why is the word "ashteros" used in reference to sheep?
15. How is the manner of expressing the curses in *Parshas Bechukosai* more severe than in this week's *Parsha*?
16. What is meant by "the Jewish People will become a proverb"?
17. "...And there you will serve other gods..." What does this



- mean?
18. "In the morning you shall say, 'If only it were (last) evening' and in the evening you will say, 'If only it were (this) morning' (28:67)." Why?
19. To which tribe did Moshe give the Torah first?
20. How long does it take to understand the depth of one's teacher's wisdom?

I Didn't Know That!

The parsha of *bikkurim* contains the name of Hashem 13 times, corresponding to the 13 attributes of Hashem's Kindness. Similarly, the 13 Attributes and the mitzva of *bikkurim* are listed in the same paragraph in *Parshas Ki Sisa* (*Shmos* 34). This hints that the mitzva of *bikkurim* arouses Divine Mercy.

• *Meshech Chochma*

Bonus Question ?

'*Vidui*' is a word usually used in reference to confession of sin. Why, then, is the declaration that one has properly given tithes to the Levi'im called '*Vidui Ma'aser*'?

Answers on back page

## Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated.

- 26:1 - After the Land was conquered and divided.
- 26:2 - The seven species for which *Eretz Yisrael* is praised.
- 26:5 - Speak loudly.
- 26:2 - When he sees the first fruit ripen on a tree, he binds a piece of straw around it to mark it as *bikkurim*.
- 26:4 - The *kohen* places his hands under the hands of the one bringing it, and they wave the basket together.
- 26:5 - Lavan.
- 26:11 - *Bikkurim* are brought starting from Shavuot (until Chanuka). The verses are recited only until Succot.
- 26:13 - To bless Hashem.
- 27:24 - Each curse corresponds with one

of the tribes, except for the tribe of Shimon. Since Moshe didn't intend to bless the tribe of Shimon before his death, he did not want to curse them either.



- 27:2 - Build an altar.
- 27:12 - Kohanim, Levi'im and the Ark.
- 27:18 - Any person who intentionally gives bad advice.
- 27:24 - By slandering him.

- Because they 'enrich' (*m'ashiros*) their owners.
- 28:23 - In *Bechukosai*, the Torah speaks in the plural, whereas, in this *Parsha*, the curses are mentioned in the singular.
- 28:37 - Whenever someone wants to express the idea of extraordinary suffering they will use the Jewish People as an example.
- 28:64 - You will pay taxes to the idol worshipping priests.
- 28:67 - Because the curse of each hour will be greater than that of the previous hour.
- 29:3 - To the tribe of Levi.
- 29:8 - 40 years.

### Recommended Reading List

*Sefer Hachinuch*  
606-7 Power of Speech  
611 Emulating Hashem  
*Sforno*  
26:17 Exalting Hashem  
26:18 The Exalted Jewish People  
27:15 The Curses

28:2 The Blessings  
28:14 Punishment  
*Ramban*  
26:3 The *Kohen* of Your Day  
27:3 The Stones  
27:26 Upholding the Torah  
28:42 The Fourth Exile

*Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh*  
226:11 Rejoicing with Hashem and the Torah

### Bonus Answer!

Due to the sin of the Golden Calf, the first-born of every family lost the right to perform the temple service, and thereby receive *Trumah* and *Maaser*. Thus, "I removed the holiness from my house, and I gave it to the Levi..." is a confession to the sin of the Golden Calf.

• *Sforno*

## HAFTORAH: Yeshayahu 60:1-22

In this, the last of the seven Haftoros of Consolation, the prophet Isaiah calls on Jerusalem to arise from the pain of darkness and shadow, and to shine to the world in her full glory. The light of redemption, both physical and spiritual, is being radiated on her. Her long-banished children are returning, and in their wake are the nations of the world who have acknowledged Hashem, and that the Jewish People are his emissaries. This redemption, unlike those that have preceded it, will be the final and complete one. "Never again will your sun set, nor your moon be withdrawn, for Hashem shall be unto you an eternal light, and ended will be your days of mourning."

### WALLS OF PROTECTION

"The sons of strangers will build your city walls..." (60:10)

As far as the Jewish People are concerned, they really didn't need city walls at all. For no man would dare to wage war on them, and thus they did not need

fortresses and strongholds.

However, the 'sons of strangers' — non-Jews who had accepted upon themselves the seven Noachide laws — they certainly needed the walls. For according to the Rambam, the law of the *ger toshav* (non-Jew who has accepted the seven Noachide laws) is only applicable during that time when the custom

was to have city walls.

Therefore "the sons of strangers" built the city-walls so that they would have the status of *gerim toshavim*. For once they achieved this status, the Jewish People have a mitzva to provide for their sustenance and welfare.

A wall can be more than just a protection against enemies...

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