



שמע קולנו

“יתגבר כארי לעמוד בבוקר לעבודת בוראו”



פרשת בהר-בחוקת' Parshas Behar-Bechukosai

Rest and Reflection

Avraham Friedenberg ('22)

In last week's *parsha*, *Parshas Emor*, the *Torah* instructs us to work for six days and rest on the seventh - *Shabbos*.

In *Parshas Behar*, we are informed of two similar cycles. Firstly, for six years we may work our fields, and let them rest on the seventh - known as the *shemittah* year; and secondly, after seven cycles of *shemittah*, we must let our fields lay fallow for an additional year - *yovel*.

The *Kli Yakar* offers several possible reasons for the *mitzvah* of *shemittah*. He mentions that multiple *meforshim* explain that *shemittah* allows the earth rest and opportunity to replenish its nutrients. According to this line of reasoning, the *Torah* is having all farmers in *Eretz Yisrael* adhere to these guidelines in order to remain continuously productive. The *Kli Yakar* notes that this explanation of *shemittah* seems to have a flaw. The *Torah* tells us in *Parshas Bechukosai* (*Vayikra* 26:34) that the punishment for not observing *shemittah* is *galus* (exile from *Eretz Yisrael*). How does this represent *midah kinaged midah*? If the purpose of *shemittah* is to grant the fields rest, *Hashem* should punish the *Bnei Yisrael* with poor crops as a punishment for not observing the laws of *shemittah*. Why would *galus* be a logical outcome? Additionally, he asks, *shemittah* is referred to as “*Shabbos laHashem*” (*Vayikra* 25:2) - a *Shabbos* [designated for] *Hashem*. If the purpose is merely an opportunity for the land to rest, it should be referred to as “*Shabbos la'aretz*” - a *Shabbos* for the earth?

The *Kli Yakar* offers his understanding of the *mitzvah* of *shemittah*; to ingrain in *Klal Yisrael* a meaningful and sincere *bitachon* in *Hashem*. He explains that it used to be common practice for farmers to plant their fields for two years, and allow other parts to remain fallow for the third. As *Bnei Yisrael* entered *Eretz Yisrael*, we were told to plant our fields for six years in a row, and *Hashem* assured us that the last of the six years would be as productive as the first. More surprisingly (and contrary to the laws

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of nature), was the guarantee that the land in the sixth and most depleted year would deliver enough food for three years. As *Bnei Yisrael* entered *Eretz Yisrael*, we were given the *mitzvah* of *shemittah* to remind us that we are just custodians of *Hashem's* earth. By living spiritual lives, we give meaning to creation and are worthy of *Hashem's berachos*.

In the event that we stray from our mission, *chas vishalom*, and begin to forget the lessons of *shemittah*, we give up our right to live in *Eretz Yisrael*, resulting in *galus*. Each week, *Shabbos* reminds us of *Hashem's* role in the creation of the world, and the necessity of living our lives in accordance to His *Torah*.

Once every seven years, we are reminded of a similar concept. We have worked hard for six years. We take pride in our accomplishments and watch our fields thrive. At that point, we must step back, thank *Hashem*, and publicly demonstrate that it was His *hashgachah* that afforded our success.

X2

Ezra Schechter ('22)

This *Dvar Torah* is dedicated in memory of an inspiring role model, Donny Morris. May this learning be an *aliyah* for his *neshamah*.

Parshas Behar starts off with *Hashem* telling Moshe to tell a list of rules and prohibitions to the Jews. Among that list is that "when [Jews] sell property to [their] neighbor, or buy any from the hand of [their] neighbor, [they] shall not wrong one another" (*Vayikra* 25:14). A few *pesukim* later, there is another warning that seems to be saying the exact same

thing. Jews should not "wrong one another, but [they should] fear [their] God, For [Hashem] is [their] God" (25:17). Why would *Hashem* tell Moshe the same thing two times?

There are different ways of understanding these *pesukim* and what they are talking about. *Rashi's* simple explanation is that the first *possuk* is talking about monetary wrongdoing or "ripping off", and the second *possuk* includes any wrongdoing to one's friend, specifically hurting a person's feelings with hurtful words and giving harmful advice, or doing something with negative ulterior motives. *Rashi* continues to explain that the *possuk* includes the reminder that *Hashem* is the God to serve as a warning; *Hashem* knows everything, and the excuse of denying your true intentions will not work, because *Hashem* knows everyone's thoughts and why they did what they did. *Ibn Ezra* states that both *pesukim* are actually talking about a purchasing deal of property. The difference is that the first *possuk* is a warning directed towards the buyer that the buyer should not wrong the seller, since it follows the words "or buy from your neighbor", while the second *possuk* is a warning to the seller that he should not take advantage of the buyer, since it follows the words "*mocher lecha*"

Ohr Hachayim has a different answer to the difference between these two *pesukim*. *Possuk* 14 says "or buy any from the hands of your neighbor" before saying not to wrong one another. This shows that it is talking about something that can be in hand and mobile, and not real estate, so this first *possuk* is talking about a transaction with moveable objects only. There is a *possuk* in *Bamidbar* that says that someone took "...all his land from his hand...". This *possuk* is about land and real estate, but it says the word "*miyado*", meaning *his hand*. Is it really true that if something uses the language of "in hands" that it means it is talking about something that can be held in the hand, as opposed to real estate?

The *Gemara* in *Bava Metzia* actually discusses what

A SHORT VORT

Akiva Kra ('21)

וְכִי־תִמְכְּרוּ מִמֶּכֶר לְעֵמִיתְכֶּם אוֹ קָנָה מִיַּד עֵמִיתְכֶּם אֶל־תֹּנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אֶחָיו:
 "When you make a sale to your fellow or make a purchase from the hand of your fellow, do not trouble one another."

This is referring to the *aveirah* of causing sorrow to a Jew in monetary matters. The strange thing is that three *pesukim* later, the *possuk* says almost the same thing:

"And you should not trouble your fellow man"

וְלֹא תֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת עֵמִיתוֹ"

Why are we repeating what we just said three *pesukim* earlier? What is the second *possuk* supposed to teach us? The *Gemara* (*Bava Metzia* 58b) answers that the second *possuk* isn't talking about troubling someone with monetary issues. Rather, it's talking about troubling a person with words that we speak. To explain how bad it is to trouble someone with words, Rabbi Shmuel Bar Nachmani said that in *Gehenom*, you will eventually be forgiven for causing someone a monetary loss, since money is something that one can get back. But, when it comes to humiliation, one can never truly recover and therefore is never forgiven.

This concept was true in the times of the *Gemara* and is even more true nowadays. If we post one negative comment about a person on social media, there is a real chance that they can lose a job or friends because of it. The lesson we are being taught by the *possuk* is a critical one that always applies to us: we can't talk badly about anybody. May we all be able to refrain from ever causing trouble to anyone, financially or verbally.

"biyad" really means. The *Gemara* concludes that only in that *possuk* in *Bamidbar* is it talking about property and not something that can fit in a hand, and in all the other places "biyad" only refers to things that can fit in hands. *Ohr Hachayim* says that this is repeated in the second *possuk* to teach us that this applies to property also, and not just on mobile items. The two *pesukim* teach us that we can't overcharge or wrong our neighbors in selling mobile items from the words "from his hand", and selling property and real estate from the second *possuk*.

With these different answers, we can understand why *Hashem* seemed to have repeated the same rule twice, because of the different scenarios they were for. In all the different answers, there is one common denominator: we should not wrong our friends.

Sensitivity Towards Each Other

Issac Cohen ('23)

In this week's *parshiyos*, *Bnei Yisrael* are commanded in more *halachos* regarding *Eretz Yisrael*. In *Parshas Behar*, the *Torah* specifically emphasises the importance of *shemittah* and the rewards and punishments of keeping this *halachah*, as seen in the *possuk*:

שש שנים תזרע שָׁדְךָ וּשְׁשׁ שָׁנִים תְּזַמְרֶךָ כְּרִמְךָ וְאַסְפֶּתָ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ:

"You may sow your field for six years, and for six years you may prune your vineyard, and gather in its produce," (Vayikra 25:3).

Hagaon Rav Moshe Feinstein noted how it is difficult to understand the necessity of this *possuk*. In addition to this, Rav Moshe Feinstein quotes the *Ohr Hachayim*, stating that it can be inferred from the *possuk* that should one sow their field in the seventh year, he has transgressed a positive prohibition. Although this could be inferred from the previous *possuk*, the *Ohr Hachayim* goes on to say that this additional *possuk* emphasises the importance of this *halachah*, and that not only you transgress one positive commandment, but two. However, Rav Moshe Feinstein points out that this is difficult to say, and there is in fact a simpler implication of the *possuk*. The emphasis on "you may sow your field for six years" comes to teach us that in order to fulfill the positive commandment, one must work on their field for six years and rest during the seventh. Thus, if one didn't work on the field the previous years, he transgressed the commandment. In addition to this, *possuk* implies that the seventh year is a year of rest, because it is commanded by *Hashem*, and other years are considered to be abstained due to laziness if abstained.

Later in the *parsha*, the *Torah* mentions to us an important *halachah* regarding how we treat/respect each other, as seen in the *possuk*:

וְלֹא תוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־עַמִּיתוֹ וְיִרְאתָ מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיכֶם:

"And you shall not wrong, one man his fellow Jew, and you shall fear your God, for I am the Lord, your God." (25:17).

The sudden shift in topic brings up many questions among the *meforshim*, mainly the correlation between *shemittah* and respecting each other. In order to understand the explanation, it is important to note that Rashi states that this *possuk* implication of wronging implies wronging by word. Rav Moshe Feinstein states that many times people tell each other that if you sin, it will lead to a financial loss or an unfortunate/devastating event in general. The *Torah* is warning us that this type of reproval can bring more harm than good to a person, or the person could always retort by pointing out others who have sinned and were not punished. Thus, if one uses this method in teaching someone of the laws of *shemittah*, then he has transgressed the prohibition of wronging a fellow by words. In addition, it is important to understand

5 Minute Lomdus

Shimi Kaufman ('21)

וְלֹא תוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־עַמִּיתוֹ וְיִרְאתָ מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיכֶם:

"And no man should afflict his friend; and you should fear your God, for I am Hashem your God" (Vayikra 25:17)

Q. In general, there are two types of violations of the *issur* of *lifnei iver lo siten michshol* (lit. "do not place a stumbling block before the blind"). This *la'av* can be violated either by causing someone to do an *aveirah*, or by intentionally giving them bad advice on a certain topic in order to mislead them. The *Sefer Minchas Chinuch* (232) writes that the *Sefer Hachinuch* implies that there is no violation of *lifnei iver* by non-Jews as relates to giving bad advice. However, the *Gemara* (*Avodah Zara* 6b) explicitly states that causing a non-Jew to violate one of the *Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach* (the seven commandments given to non-Jews) would be a violation of *lifnei iver*. Thus, we are left with a question: why is there a violation of *lifnei iver* by non-Jews in causing them to sin, but not in giving them bad advice?

A. The distinction here emerges from a fundamental difference in the reasoning for *lifnei iver* regarding *issurim* and regarding bad advice. The *issur* of *lifnei iver* by *issurim* is meant to prevent losses in *bein adam liMakom* (between man and God); in other words, we are commanded not to cause others to sin, because sins are displeasing to *Hashem* and weaken mankind's connection to Him. Thus, it makes no difference if the sinner in question is Jewish or not, because the sins of a non-Jew are just as harmful as those of a Jew. However, the *din* of *lifnei iver* regarding bad advice is a matter of *nezikin*, of not damaging another person. In this regard, the *Torah* is almost always more stringent on damage caused to a Jew than damage caused to a non-Jew. Therefore, the *la'av* of *lifnei iver* would not apply. (Note that this does not mean that it is recommended or even permissible to give bad advice to a non-Jew; this only means that one who intentionally gives poor advice to a non-Jew is not in violation of the specific commandment of *lifnei iver*.)

Source: *Mishmeres Chaim Chelek I*, "Inyanim Shonim" 5

that even if a person has good motives, he must still be careful in his wording. Therefore, the latter part of the verse comes to teach us that even if one's actions are due to fearing *Hashem*, he must remember that "I am Hashem your God" who knows the mentality of all men, and to choose a different approach. It is important for us to understand the line between what we say is right and wrong, in order that we encourage others to do *mitzvos*, as opposed to berating them for sinning.

HALACHA HASHAVUAH

Josef Weiner ('23)

On the fast approaching holiday of *Shavuos*, many have the practice to stay up all night learning *Torah*. Therefore, this week's column will discuss some of the various issues that arise regarding the morning following staying up all night.

There are two possible reasons why *birchos haTorah* must be recited in the morning. Either sleep is a *hefsek*, an interruption, and thus new *birchos haTorah* are required in the morning. Alternatively, a new *berachos* is required simply because it is a new day, just like the other *birchos hashachar*. The *Shulchan Aruch* paskens that if one did not fall asleep then they need not recite *birchos haTorah* in the morning (47:12). However, the *Magen Avraham* (47:12), *Elyah Rabbah* (47:9), and *Aruch Hashulchan* (47:23) are of the opinion that one must recite *birchos haTorah* in the morning regardless of whether or not they slept. While the *Mishnah Berurah* rules that due to the principle of *safek berachos lehakeil*, one should not recite the *berachos* himself, he advises that one hear *birchos haTorah* from one who slept. One should answer *amen* to the *berachos* and then recite some *pesukim* (47:28). The *Chazon Ish* based upon the wording of the *Mishnah Berurah*, who states that if it is possible he should hear someone who slept recite the *berachah*, writes that if one cannot find someone to recite the *berachah* then he may continue learning. This is also the opinion of Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach and Rav Elyashiv. However, Rav Tzvi Pezach Frank is of the opinion that one cannot continue learning without *birchos haTorah* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 47:29).

Another solution is for one to have intent for *ahavah rabbah* to serve as their *birchos haTorah* and learn a bit after davening. Additionally, the *Mishnah Berurah*, based upon Rav Akiva Eiger, writes that if one slept during the day, even if he did not sleep at night, they may recite *birchos haTorah* in the morning, as then all would agree that one is obligated in the recitation of *birchos haTorah* (47:28).

Regarding the recitation of *Elokai Neshamah* and *Hama'avir Sheinah* by one who did not sleep, the *Elyah Rabbah* writes that one should not recite them, because unlike the other *birchos hashachar*, which one may recite even if they did not personally experience the subject of the *berachah*, these *berachos* are specifically talking about oneself. The *Shaarei Teshuvah*, however, is of the opinion that one should hear the *berachos* recited by one who did sleep and have the intent to fulfill their obligation (M.B. 46:24). The *Aruch Hashulchan* is of the opinion that one who did not sleep may recite them (46:13).

The *Mechaber* is unsure whether or not one who stayed up all night must wash *netilas yadayim*. The Rama writes that one should wash without a *berachah* (4:13). However, the *Aruch Hashulchan* is of the opinion that one may recite a *berachah* (4:12). The *Mishnah Berurah* comments that one should use the bathroom as then he would be able to recite a *berachah* on *netilas yadayim* (4:30). Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach writes that simply touching a normally covered part of one's body does not help in making one able to recite a *berachah* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 494:6).

The *Shulchan Aruch Harav* states that one should wash immediately in the morning. However, the *Chazon Ish* and Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach write that one need not interrupt their learning in order to wash their hands, but rather they can wash prior to davening. Rav Chaim Kanievsky notes that the practice is to be lenient even if one is not learning as the *netilas yadayim* following staying up all night is only done out of doubt (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 494:5). One should not recite *Asher Yatzar* unless they slept or used the bathroom (M.B. 4:3).

WISDOM FROM THE HAFTORAH

Pinchas Rosenfeld (24)

In this week's *Haftorah*, Yirmiyahu Hanavi praises *Hashem*, then describes how the nation's history has involved much idolatry, and how their continuation to do so will lead to punishment. He curses one who puts faith in other men, and blesses one who puts faith in *Hashem*, reminding the nation that *Hashem* will act based on their actions towards Him. The *Navi* then ends by davening to *Hashem* that He will save the nation, and then tells of the punishment Yehudah will receive for their sins. He then goes on to curse those who put their trust in man, and bless those who trust *Hashem*.

רְפָאֵנִי יְהוָה וְאַרְפָּא הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי וְאִנְשָׁעָה כִּי תִהְלֹתִי אֶתָּה:

Heal me Hashem, and let me be healed; Save me, and let me be saved; For You are my glory.

Chazal learn that the *refuah* - healing, in this *possuk* is referring to *teshuvah*. The *Chasam Sofer* connects this *possuk* to the one said at the very end of *Ashrei* every day:

תִּהְלֹת יְהוָה יִדְבַּרְפִּי וַיְבָרֵךְ כָּל־בֶּשֶׁר שֶׁם קִדְּשׁוּ לַעֲוֹלָם וְעַד

However, in our davening, we then also add the extra *possuk* from *Tehillim* 115:

אֲנַחְנוּ נִבְרָךְ יְהוָה מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עֲוֹלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

The reason for this, according to the *Chasam Sofer*, is based on the *mishnah* in *Pirkei Avos*:

כָּל הַמְזַכֵּה אֶת הָרַבִּים, אֵין חָטָא בָּא עָלָיו.

Whoever causes many to be righteous, sin will not occur on his account;

One will praise *Hashem*, which will cause others to also praise *Hashem*. Therefore they will not sin and there will be praise for *Hashem* forever. This is the meaning of our *Haftorah's possuk* - " *teshuvah* will cause others to do *teshuvah*, which will in turn strengthen *Am Yisrael* forever.

The *Haftorah* is teaching us a powerful lesson about empowering others. One of the best ways to help empower others towards a goal is to do that very thing ourselves. If we do *teshuvah*, or an act of *chesed*, it will in turn lead to others doing the same action. This will be a great *kapparah* for us, which in turn will allow that action to continue to happen. By doing an action, one helps change others, which will benefit all forever.

GEDOLIM GLIMPSE: CHERNOBYLER MAGGID

Meir Morell (22)

Rabbi Mordechai Twersky (1770–1837), also known as the Maggid of Chernobyl, was born in Chernobyl to Sarah and Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, one of the main *talmidim* of the *Baal Shem Tov* and the *Maggid* of Mezeritch and author of the *sefer* "*Meor Einayim*".

The Maggid married Chaya Sara, the daughter of Rabbi Aharon of Karlin; after her death he married Faiga, the daughter of Rabbi Dovid Leykes, who was a student of the *Baal Shem Tov*. He had eight sons and one daughter. His sons became prominent rebbes and were a part of the effort in spreading *chassidus* throughout the Ukraine.

The *Maggid* had many *chassidim*, and many towns appointed him as their "*Magid Meisharim*". Among his students were Rabbi Yisrael Dov of Vilednik and Rabbi Avraham Dov of Avritsch.

According to Chasidic thought, he was in charge of sustaining all the *tzadikim nistarim* (hidden *tzaddikim*) in his generation. Throughout his life, he collected large amounts of charity, and before his death he regretted not collecting even more than he did.

His thoughts, sermons and discourses were published in his book *Likutei Torah*, which was praised by other famous Chassidic leaders. In 2001, the book was reprinted in a revised edition, with the addition of an index, called "*Likutei Torah Hashalem*".

Throughout his teachings, the *Maggid* stressed the importance of pure speech and pure thought as a condition for a proper prayer connection. He also spoke of including all Jewish souls in one's prayer, even evil people. By doing so, evil people will stand a better chance of doing *teshuvah*.

His nephew, Rabbi Yisrael of Rizhin named one of his sons Mordechai while the Maggid was still alive, apparently in contradiction to Ashkenazi Jewish tradition which does not name children after living relatives. Asked about this, Rabbi Yisrael replied: "Our uncle from Chernobyl is already a few years above this world, as if he is not in this world." The *Maggid* died a few years later on 20 Iyar 1837, exactly at the same date that his great nephew, Mordechai was born, on the 35th day of the *Sefiras Haomer*.

While still alive, the *Maggid* prepared his place of rest on the outskirts of the village of Hnativka (also known as Anatevka), near Kyiv. He selected such a place: "because there is no house of idol worship, and the sound of impure bells won't disturb my rest in the grave". Indeed, his gravesite overlooks pastoral hills and the river.

ECHOES IN TANACH

Aryeh Klein (22) & Avidan Loike (22)

אֲךָ הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר יִזְדֹּךְ לְדַבֵּר דְּבַר בְּשִׁמִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר לֹא-צִוִּיתִי לְדַבֵּר וְאֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וּמֵת הַנְּבִיא הָהוּא:

But any prophet who presumes to speak in My name an oracle that I did not command him to utter, or who speaks in the name of other gods—that prophet shall die.”

וְכִי תֹאמַר בְּלִבְּךָ אִיכָּה נֵדַע אֶת-הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא-דִבְּרוּ ה':
And should you ask yourselves, “How can we know that the oracle was not spoken by *Hashem*?”—

אֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר הַנְּבִיא בְּשֵׁם ה' וְלֹא-יְהִי הַדְּבַר וְלֹא יָבוֹא הוּא הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא-דִבְּרוּ ה' בְּזִדּוֹן דִּבְּרוּ הַנְּבִיא לֹא תִגְדָּר מִמֶּנּוּ:

(o)
if the prophet speaks in the name of *Hashem* and the oracle does not come true, that oracle was not spoken by *Hashem*; the prophet has uttered it presumptuously: do not stand in dread of him.

(*Devarim* 18:20-22)

וְכִי-תֹאמַר אֵלַי אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹקֵינוּ בְּטַחְנוּ הֲלוֹא-הוּא אֲשֶׁר הִסִּיר חֲזָקָתָהּ אֶת-בְּמַתְּנוֹ וְאֶת-מִזְבְּחֹתָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְיְהוּדָה וּלְיִירוּשָׁלַם לִפְנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַזֶּה תִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ:

And if you tell me that you are relying on *Hashem* your God, He is the very one whose shrines and altars Hezekiah did away with, telling Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You must worship only at this altar (*Yeshayahu* 36:7)

וְכִי תֹאמְרוּ מִה-נֹאכַל בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית הֵן לֹא נִזְרַע וְלֹא נֶאֱסַף אֶת-תְּבוּאָתָנוּ: וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת-בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁשִׁית וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת-הַתְּבוּאָה לְשִׁלֹּשׁ הַשָּׁנִים: וְזָרַעְתֶּם אֶת הַשָּׂדֶה הַשְּׁמִינִי וְאָכַלְתֶּם מִן-הַתְּבוּאָה יָשֵׁן עַד אֲשֶׁר תִּבְּרָא תִּבְּרָא יָשֵׁן:

And if you ask, “What are we to eat in the seventh year, if we may neither sow nor gather in our crops. I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it shall yield a crop sufficient for three years. When you sow in the eighth year, you will still be eating old grain of that crop; you will be eating the old until the ninth year, until its crops come in. (*Vayikra* 25:20-22)

In this week’s *parsha*, *Parshas Behar-Bechukosai*, God commands the Jewish people in the laws of *shemittah*. Included in these laws, is the law of refraining from harvesting during the *shemittah* year. After explaining these *halachos*, *Hashem* then says “And if you ask...”. The introduction to this *possuk* is very similar to the introduction of two other *pesukim*, one in *Yeshayahu* and one in *Parshas Shoftim*. In *Yeshayahu*, Sancheirev, while laying siege to Yerushalayim, sends a messenger to ask the king of Yerushalayim, Chizkiyahu, to surrender. In part of this message, the messenger says: “And if you ask...”. This again has the same intro as the *pasuk* in this week’s *parsha* (just this week’s *parsha* is plural and there it is singular). Another time in Tanach that this intro is used is in *Parshas Shoftim*. Immediately before this *possuk*, the *Torah* says that you should not listen to a false *navi*, and then the *Torah* says “if you will ask how ...”.

In this week’s *parsha* the phrase is used with regard to the *shemittah* year. The *possuk* asks what one should eat if they cannot harvest during the *Shemittah* year. This *possuk* is teaching a message about faith. Similar to the idea of *maan*, the Jewish people had to have extra faith in *Hashem* that he would provide food for them. In *Yeshayahu*, the intro is used by the Assyrian King Sancheirev’s messenger. Sancheirev’s messenger tells Chizkiyahu that his faith in *Hashem* is flawed, he did what God told him and got rid of the idols and he now has no army. This was a test of Chizkiyahu’s faith, from a strategic perspective he should have surrendered, and it was just a matter of time before Yerushalayim was destroyed. In the end, Chizkiyahu wasn’t defeated, and Sancheirev and his army were all killed. Even though we cannot always see God or his plan, we must believe that *Hashem* is here for us. Finally, in *Devarim*, the *Torah* uses this intro for a false *navi*. A false *navi* is one who lies about the will of God. We see from these *pesukim*, that in order to be full servants of *Hashem*, one must not only have a great deal of *emunah* (belief) in *Hashem*, but one must also think logically and ensure that they are fulfilling God’s will. Let us all take a lesson from this and become better *ovdei Hashem*.

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: ANIMALS IN THE PARSHA

Yisroel David Rosenberg ('23)
Temurah and Akeidas Yitzchak

At the very end of *Parshas Bechukosai*, the *Torah* relates the *mitzvah* of *temurah* (*Vayikra* 27:10). *Temurah* is the prohibition of substituting one animal for another that has previously been designated as a *korban*. If one were to attempt to remove the *kedushah* from the *korban* and place it instead on a non-sanctified animal, both the original animal and the attempted replacement would be *kadosh*.

When *Hashem* gives Avraham the command to bring Yitzchak to the *akeidah* He tells him “*veha’aleihu sham le’olah*” (*Bereishis* 22:2). Yitzchak was to be brought as a *korban* on Har Hamoriah, the future place of the *Beis Hamikdash*, no less. Avraham was just about to slaughter Yitzchak when an angel told him not to. Avraham looked up and he saw a ram and swapped the ram for Yitzchak.

This, as we now know from *Parshas Bechukosai*, constitutes *temurah* (see *Seforno* and *Alshich* who comment on *Bereishis* 22:13). Yitzchak may not be the first offering in a case of *temurah* in the typical sense, but the parallel is prevalent in many sources. The *selichah* said on *Tzom Gedalya* refers to the swapping of Yitzchak and the ram as Yitzchak’s *temurah*. So, the matter is clearly worth some discussion.

Yitzchak as a *korban* that was simply swapped out would mean that Yitzchak is still, in fact, *kadosh*, and would therefore have certain restrictions upon him relating to his status. When there is a famine in *Eretz Yisrael* and Yitzchak’s initial instinct is to travel to Egypt, *Hashem* tells him that he may not (*Bereishis* 26:2). Rashi, based on the *Medrash*, explains that Yitzchak is not permitted to leave *Eretz Yisrael* because he is an “*olah temimah*”. A *korban olah* is burnt on the *mizbeiach*, given totally to *Hashem*, unlike other *korbanos* which have some parts that are burned on the *mizbeiach* and others that are eaten by the *kohanim* and the bringer. The *korban olah* is also not permitted to be removed from the *Azarah* of the *Beis Hamikdash*. In this view, Yitzchak is essentially a form of a *korban olah* and therefore may not leave his boundaries, the borders of *Eretz Yisrael*.

(For further discussion, I recommend Rabbi Yehuda Turetsky’s shiur on YUTorah entitled “The Basics of *Korbanos*: Did Yitzchak Have the Status of a *Korban*?”)

PARSHA PUZZLERS

Submit your answers to shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org along with your name and cell phone number to be entered into a raffle at the end of the sefer! 1 answer = 1 entry!

(Hint: Use the commentaries in the Mekraos Gedolos Chumashim, along with the Toldos Aharon on the side to find relevant Gemaras and Midrashim)

1. In *parshas Behar*, what number appears four times in one *possuk*?
2. Aside from Moshe, which three other people are mentioned explicitly by name in *parshas Bechukosai*?
3. In *parshas Bechukosai*, which two metals appear in the same *possuk*?

PARSHA SUMMARY

The *parsha* begins with the laws of *Shemittah* and *Yovel*, during which all lands are returned and servants need to be freed. Other laws about property and proper business practices are given. *Hashem* tells the Jews that if they follow his *Torah* they will experience *bracha* but if they don't they will fall to harsh punishments such as exile and persecution, but never the less *Hashem's* love for *Am Yisroel* will persevere. The *parsha* ends with the *Torah* laws on calculating the value of a promises made to *Hashem*.

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