

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON PARSHAS KI SAVO - 5757

B'S'D'

I now have capability to send this formatted document via e-mail. So please send your e-mail addresses to crshulman@aol.com. For instructions and listing of Torah e-mail lists and web sites see <http://members.aol.com/crshulman/torah.html>

DRASHA -- PARSHAS KI SAVO -- SOUL OF APPROVAL 9/19/97

In this week's portion, Hashem asks us to follow in His ways and assures us that "He will confirm you as his holy people - if you uphold His laws and go in His ways. "Then all the people of the earth will see that the name of Hashem is proclaimed over you and they will revere you" (Deuteronomy 28:4-5). The Torah tells us that our association with Hashem's name will improve our approval rating. Is it the fact that His blessing will make us successful and the success will bring reverence? Or is it simply stating that if one is righteous then his presence will inspire awe? Or perhaps the promise is greater. Hashem assures us that His guidance and His name, will stand behind our every action. And they will be touched with awe, reverence and immortality.

In 1923, when Rabbi Meir Shapiro was but 37 years old, he had a revolutionary idea. If all Jews were to learn the same folio of the Talmud and follow a set calendar, not only would Jews complete the Talmud after seven years, but world Jewry would have one unifying thread to bind it together. Thus the concept of the Daf Yomi (the daily Talmud page) was formulated. Selling this idea was not easy. Many rabbinic leaders felt that a two-sided page a day was too quick a pace for complex Talmudic issues. It often took weeks to analyze even one side of a page! However, the idea was received warmly by the great sage and tzaddik, the Chafetz Chaim, who encouraged Rabbi Shapiro to present it at the first Knessiah (World Congress) of Agudath Israel held in Vienna, Austria in 1923. The Chafetz Chaim also understood that Rabbi Shapiro perhaps would be looked upon as too young to present such a revolutionary idea. He was worried that the relatively young iluy (genius) would not be able to garnish the respect from older, more conservative Rabbis, whose support was needed for his idea to be accepted. But the Chafetz Chaim had a plan. "I'd like you to introduce your idea at the Knessiah," he told him. "But walk in to the hall at least one hour late. I'd like you to arrive after the session is already in full swing." Rabbi Meir did not understand what the Chafetz Chaim had in mind, but agreed to follow his directive. On the day of the main session, the room was packed. The Chafetz Chaim, as one of the elders of the generation and one of the most revered sages of the century, sat on the dais which faced the huge crowd. As planned, about an hour after the opening remarks, Rabbi Shapiro entered at the back the back of the hall. Immediately, the Chafetz Chaim noticed him and leaped to his feet. "Rabbi Shapiro has arrived!" he exclaimed as he rose from his chair in respect. Shocked at the Chafetz Chaim's actions, the entire dais, too, arose. In a few moments, the entire assembly stood in honor of the man whom the Chafetz Chaim so honored. With an expression of disbelief, Rabbi Meir, his head bowed with humility and awe was led to the dais. The Chafetz Chaim turned to him in the presence of the entire assemblage and proclaimed. "Now the Rav will address us with a novel idea." History tells us the rest of the story. More than seventy years later, on September 28th, 1997, more than 100,000 Jews, world over, will attend the tenth siyum (completion) of the Daf Yomi. They will fill Madison Square Garden, Nassau Coliseum, and assembly halls and convention centers across the globe. Together they will not only celebrate the tenth completion of the entire Talmud by rabbi and layman alike, they will also celebrate the tremendous feat inspired by one man's idea and the almost-divine encouragement of a great sage that stood up to the challenge.

The Torah tells us this week that every idea needs a divine handler. Hashem's blessing assures that the world will appreciate that seemingly mortal ideas are actually His ideas - and they will become eternal. In

addition to the blessing of wisdom, Hashem gives the blessing that wise words and advice will be heard and revered. It is not only what you know, but Who you know. And when that someone is G-d Almighty, then the blessing is assured. As the Torah tells us that "the people of the earth will see that the name of Hashem is proclaimed over you - and they shall revere you." Because when G-d's name speaks - people listen.

Dedicated by Ira and Gisele Beer in memory of Gisa & Morris Mayers L'iloy Nishmas R' Moshe ben R' Eliezer of blessed memory Gittel bas R' Hersch Mordechai of blessed memory

The entire Drasha family is invited to join us in the dedication of The Yeshiva of South Shore's Early Childhood Center & the groundbreaking of Yeshiva Gedolah & Mesivta Ateres Yaakov 1170 William Street Hewlett, NY 11557 516-374-7363

Mordechai Kamenetzky - Yeshiva of South Shore <http://www.yoss.org> for drasha <http://www.torah.org/learning/drasha>

Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc.

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Rosh Mesivta at Mesivta Ateres Yaakov, the High School Division of Yeshiva of South Shore,

<http://www.yoss.org/>

Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org)  
3600 Crondall Lane, Ste. 106 <http://www.torah.org/> Owings Mills, MD 21117

"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Ki Savo

What's The Big Deal About the "First Fruits"? This week's Parsha contains the Mitzvah of Bikkurim - the Mitzvah of bringing the first produce from one's crops to Jerusalem. There was a tremendous fanfare associated with the process of bringing the First Fruits to Jerusalem. [Bikkurim Chapter 3] The Mishneh tells us that as Jews from the towns and farms made their journey to Jerusalem, carrying the Bikkurim, delegations of elders from the cities on the way would come out to greet them with praises and psalms to G-d. When they would reach the gates of Jerusalem, additional verses and praises were recited. It was an elaborate ceremony.

During the course of the year, other things were brought to Jerusalem (e.g. -- Ma'aser Sheni, the second tithe). There were also other gifts that were brought to Jerusalem to be given to the Kohanim. But we do not find anything akin to the fanfare that was made for those who brought up Bikkurim. The Holy Alschich asks, "What is the great tumult about a bit of fruit that may be worth less than half a dinar?" In other words, what's the big deal? To strengthen his question, the Alschich quotes a very famous Medrash from the beginning of Sefer Bereshis. "In the Beginning (B'Reishis) G-d created..." There are many Rabbinic opinions about the word "B'Reishis". One of the opinions is that G-d created the world for the sake of Israel, which is called "Reishis" (the First one). But another opinion is that G-d created the world for the sake of Bikkurim which are called "Reishis" (the first ones). The entire universe was created just so that the Mitzvah of the First Fruits could be fulfilled. Again the Alschich asks, "What's the big deal about Bikkurim?" Bikkurim does not usually make one's list of "The five most important Mitzvos in the Torah." And yet, the Medrash in Bereshis lists Bikkurim as the cause for the creation of the whole world! The Alschich explains that Bikkurim represents two fundamental principles that are essential to what Judaism is all about. A person plants his crops. Farming is one of the most difficult professions in the world. It is hard, backbreaking work. One plants in the spring and he does not know what is going to happen to his crop. There can be droughts, floods, and pests. Everything can go wrong and so often it does. Here we have a person who was successful and who has a bountiful crop in front of him. It is very easy for such a person to think, "MY strength and the power of MY hand, made me this great wealth" [Devorim 18:17]. I am smart. I toiled. Now I see the fruits of MY labor. Bikkurim comes to counter-act such thoughts. Bikkurim come to teach that it is G-d's land, it is G-d's sustenance, and it is G-d's Hand who has given us the power to gain wealth. A person must appreciate this and recognize the favor. Bikkurim is

about appreciating Who it really belongs to and about appreciating Who really gives us our sustenance. These concepts are foundations and fundamentals of the Torah. That is why this mitzvah of Bikkurim is so special. A person must realize that it is not his brains, talents, or cleverness that help him acquire wealth. Rather it is his "Siyata D'Shmaya" (help from Heaven). It is his "Mazal" (fortune) that G-d decides to be kind to him.

#### "Getting The Message" of the Blessings and the Curses

A series of Blessings are mentioned in the preface to the Tochacha. The Torah says, "And these Blessings will come upon you and they will reach you (v'hisigucha)" [Devorim 28:2]. Virtually all of the commentaries are bothered by the expression "v'hisigucha". Would it not have been sufficient to say, "All these Blessings will come upon you?" What does "v'hisigucha" (they will reach you) add to this verse? We have spoken about this question in past years. This year, I will present an answer from the 'Beis Av', Rav Schlessinger. The pasuk in Parsahs Bechukotai tells us, "And you will eat your bread and be satisfied" [Vayikra 26:5] Rash"i there cites a Toras Kohanim that explains the brocha "One will eat a little bit and it will be blessed in his intestines." That means the blessing is that one will be psychologically satisfied even though he has physically consumed a small amount. This is the ultimate blessing -- to be satisfied and to realize that one has been blessed is the Blessing of all Blessings. Sometimes G-d can shower us with all types of good and riches -- health, family, and wealth -- but if a person does not realize it, if he is never happy, if there always needs to be more, if there is a constant chase, then what good is the blessing? It is meaningless! A person can be impoverished. He can eat just a little bit (as the Toras Kohanim states) and if he is satisfied with it, then he has everything. On the other hand, a person can have fortunes and success, but if he doesn't realize that he has a bracha, then he is a poor man. The pasuk says "Open Your Hand, and satisfy all life, with will" [Tehillim 145:16]. We say this pasuk (in Ashrei) three times a day. We understand the words "Poseach es Yadecha, u'Masbia l'chol chai" (Open you hand and provide sustenance for all life). But what is the meaning of the word "Ratzon" (with will)? "Ratzon" is that the recipient will be happy with it, not only physically satisfied, but psychologically satisfied, as well. That too, is what the blessing referred to earlier is about. "And all these Blessings will come upon you...". Fine, but that is not sufficient. "...and they will reach their purpose (v'hisigucha)." -- the recipient will be happy with the Brocha, with the blessing. He will realize that it is a blessing. Without that realization, one has no Brocha. With this explanation, Rav Schlessinger, also explains the parallel usage of this word later in the parsha [Devorim 28:15] "... and all the curses will come upon you, and will reach you (v'hisigucha)." What does that mean? That "v'hisigucha" means the same thing. Sometimes a person can have misfortune and he doesn't even realize it. He doesn't realize what is happening to him. He doesn't realize how far he has gone. The curses don't even work! Because he doesn't "get it." He misses the message of the curse. That is the meaning of "v'hisigucha" in this context -- "the curse will reach you." Rav Noach Weinberg tells a story about a long-haired, "hippie" sort of fellow who walked into his Yeshiva with long hair and the typical accompanying mode of dress. He told Rav Noach, "I don't need a Yeshiva, because G-d and I are like this (as he showed his fingers twisted together to represent a 'twosome')." Rav Noach asked, "How do you know that you and G-d are like 'this'?" The student responded that he was riding his bike along a mountain road and a truck came along, veered toward him, forcing him off the cliff with his bike. He saw himself going down the tremendous embankment and visualized that the end was at hand. All of a sudden, he saw a branch hanging out of the mountain. He reached out and hung on, and was saved, walking away without a scratch. "That's how I know," he said, "that me and G-d are like 'this'!" Rav Noach then asked him, "Did you ever think about why the truck knocked you off the cliff? Maybe that is what G-d is trying to tell you." This was a person who unfortunately experienced a negative incident - he seemingly received a kelala - but the message did not reach him. There was no "v'hisigucha". He didn't "get it."

He missed the message. We must "get the message" from any punishment like he needed to "get the message" from the incident. The whole incident accomplished nothing. The blessing of "v'hisigucha" is that when the blessing comes, we should have the blessing of being satisfied and when the punishment sometimes, Heaven forbid, must come, let us not miss that message, either. Let us hear what the Ribbono shel Olam is trying to tell us!

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com  
Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Balt., MD dhoffman@clark.net  
RavFrand, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis  
Project Genesis 3600 Crondall Lane, Ste. 106 [http://www.torah.org/OwingsMills,MD21117\(410\)654-1799](http://www.torah.org/OwingsMills,MD21117(410)654-1799)

---

\* TORAH WEEKLY \* Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Ki Savo  
[http://www.ohr.org.il... Insights](http://www.ohr.org.il...Insights)

Rock Of Ages "And it will be on the day that you will cross over the Jordan to the Land which Hashem your G-d is giving you. And you will erect for yourselves large stones and cover them with plaster...and you will write upon the stones all the words of this Torah with a clear explanation. (27:2-8) "I met a traveler from an antique land Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone Stand in the desert... Near them, on the sand, Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown, And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command, Tell that it's sculptor well those passions read, Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things, The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed: And on the pedestal these words appear: "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look upon my works ye Mighty, and despair!" Nothing beside remains. Round the decay Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare The lone and level sands stretch far away." Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

If you drive down the A38 to Salisbury Plain in England, there will appear in the distance a strange forlorn group of enormous stones erected in a circular pattern. These stones are called Stonehenge. Somewhere between 300 and a thousand years after the Jewish People left Egypt, Stonehenge was erected. Its origin and purpose remain a mystery. Some say that Stonehenge was a Druid temple. Others say it was an astronomical observatory. Others say it marks the grave of King Arthur. When the nations of the world wish to immortalize their conquests, they erect large stones as memorials to their military prowess and their dominion. When the Jews set up large stones it is because they are commanded to write on them "all the words of this Torah." Ozymandias, the Druids and King Arthur are wraith-like memories, faded by time, while "Am Yisrael Chai!" -- The People of Israel and the Torah of Moshe live and endure.

Going Through The Motions "Because you did not serve Hashem, your G-d, amid gladness and goodness of heart..." (28:47) Reading this week's Parsha is like watching a film of two cars about to collide in slow-motion. We feel inexorably chilled when we read the dire warnings of the results of failing to keep the Torah and compare these all too accurate predictions with the grim reality of Jewish history. One of the strangest predictions that the Torah makes is that the Jewish People will be punished "Because you did not serve Hashem, your G-d, amid gladness and goodness of heart..." Why doesn't the Torah talk about idol worship, immorality, baseless hatred? Aren't those better reasons for exile and tragedy? What's so wrong about not serving G-d with "gladness and goodness of heart" that provokes such terrible consequences? "Manner reveals his matter." When you ask someone to help you to do the dishes, you can tell whether he really wants to help or not. If he says to you "Is there anything else I can do?" his help is sincere. But if he says "Can I go now?" then you know he had one foot out the door the whole time. Similarly, when the Jewish People fail to serve Hashem "amid gladness and goodness of heart," it is symptomatic of the fact that their whole reason for serving Hashem is selfish. People worshipped idols because they wanted to control their deities. They thought they could "buy off" the rain god with a sacrifice or two. Or they could get the sun god to behave by a few quick libations.

When the Jewish People serve Hashem without gladness and goodness of heart, they are revealing that they relate to G-d in the way of idol worship -- trying to "buy off" Hashem by merely going through the motions.

Sources: o Rock Of Ages - Don Isaac Abarbanel o Going Through The Motions - Rabbi Yochanan Zweig as heard from Rabbi Moshe Zauderer

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer  
(C) 1997 Ohr Somayach International

---

kitavo.97 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Ki Tavo  
(Shiur date: Yarchei Kallah, 1972)

In Parshas Ki Tavo, Moshe presents the people with the details of the Brachos and Kelalos that were to be proclaimed at Har Grizim and Har Ayvol. As Rashi explains, the Levites faced one mountain and proclaimed the Brachos, to which the nation answered Amen, and then they turned to face the other mountain and proclaimed the Klalos to which the people also responded Amen. The Rav posed two questions: The first question is why did the Torah single out these 11 (or 12, depending on how one counts) sins as the ones that were to be proclaimed? And is there a common denominator between them? The second question is why did the Torah record the format of Kelalah/Arur/Amen but omitted the mention of Amen for the Bracha/Baruch segment?

The Ibn Ezra (27:14) says that the common thread between these Kelalos is that they involve sinning surreptitiously. Indeed, the Torah uses the word Basayser very frequently in this section, to underscore the clandestine nature of these transgressions. See for example the Arur associated with Makleh Aviv Vimo, belittling and disrespecting ones parents and the set of Arur associated with idolatry. Others are of the opinion that these 11 or 12 items apply also to a Ben Noah, a non-Jew. (The Rav thought that this was the opinion of the Haamek Davar.) They all can be classified among the 7 Mitzvos that a Ben Noah is commanded to fulfill. [Note this does not apply to the final Arur for one who does not keep the laws of the Torah, which is a general admonition and does not refer to a Ben Noah.] It would appear that according to this opinion, the obligation to honor ones parents applies to a non-Jew as well. This obligation would be subsumed under the category of Deenim, that the non-Jew is obligated to live a moral and civilized life. In this context then, the prohibition against accepting bribes or giving misleading advice would fit under the category of Deenim, even though these sins are not subsumed under the category of stealing. According to the Ibn Ezra, the Torah was stressing through this covenant that hypocrisy was forbidden. It was not permitted to ostensibly behave according to Torah Law in public, but to violate the law in private, Basayser. This is the concept of Genevas Daas, misleading and deceiving someone else.

The Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim cites the lone scriptural reference to Genevas Daas, from Isaiah (66:17): "They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves to go unto the gardens, behind one in the midst, eating swine's flesh and the detestable things and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the L-rd". The prophet admonishes those who eat swine's flesh in private yet, in public, in the gardens, they appear sanctified and pure. They present themselves as Tzaddikim, righteous people. From these Divrei Kaballah we have the lone source that there is a separate prohibition of Genevas Daas that extends beyond the base prohibition of the initial sin itself, in this case the eating of the swine's flesh.

In summary, these 11 (or 12) items are singled out because: 1) they apply universally, to Jew and non-Jew alike; 2) they admonish the Jew from acting as a hypocrite; to be pious in public and a sinner in private against his fellow Jew and Hashem.

The second question was why did the Torah only record that Amen was part of the Kelalah/Arur sequences but not those for Beracha/Baruch? The Rav explained that in many places the Gemara uses the term "Mushba Vomed Mayhar Sinai" (our obligation stems from our original oath taken at Mount Sinai). In addition to our obligation to keep the Torah because it is the will of Hashem, we also obligated ourselves at Mount Sinai with an oath to keep the Torah. Where does the Torah mention this oath? The term

Naaseh Vnishma proclaimed by the people at Mount Sinai did not constitute an oath. Rather, the oath was accepted on the last day of Moshe's life, when he administered it to them as related in Parshas Nitzavim (29:9-14). The word Awlah is used in conjunction with the covenant that the people entered into. Awlah means an oath, as for example the Sotah must take an oath as to her fidelity to her husband. The oath that Moshe administered at the end of his life included those people that were alive at the time as well as all subsequent generations of Jews, as it says Es Asher Yeshno Po Ves Asher Aynenu Poh (29:13-14). The oath administered by Moshe on the last day of his life was imposed on the people. However Hashem also wanted the Jews to accept the covenant of their own accord. Why? The Rav explained that there are many oaths that can be imposed on a person. For example there is Shevuas Aydu and Shevuas Hapikadon, as well as (according to most Rishonim) Shevuas Hadayanim. These imposed oaths fall under the category of Mushba Mpi Achayrim, accepting an oath administered by others, even against ones own personal preference. With such oaths, the one obligated to take the oath does not even have to answer Amen, that he accepts the oath.

The people were forced to accept the oath administered by Moshe in Nitzavim, as the Torah says L'ovrecha B'vris Hashem Elokecha, you will pass through the covenant of Hashem and accept the oath to keep His Torah. We find a similar situation at Har Sinai, where Hashem suspended the mountain above the heads of Bnay Yisrael (Kafa Alayhem Har Kgis), pending their acceptance of the Torah. These acceptances fall under the category of Mushba Mpi Achayrim.

The proclamation of the Brachos and Kelalos at Har Grizim and Har Ayval, and the response of Amen by Bnay Yisrael, took place after Moshe's death. The people had to answer Amen to show their acceptance of the covenant of their own volition. The response of Amen to an oath is the epitome of an oath of the category of Mushba Mpi Atzmo, one who takes an oath of his own free will. The goal of the ceremony at Har Grizim and Har Ayval was for Bnay Yisrael to accept Mpi Atzman, of their own free will, that which they had previously accepted under coercion, either at Sinai or by Moshe prior to his death. This acceptance on their own could only happen after Moshe died. The Rav commented that this oath had to take place after their entry into Eretz Yisrael in order to include the land as a party to the oath.

In the context of Mushba Mpi Atzmo, the refrain Amen is critical. Also the term Arur does not mean curse in our context. It means that "I accept as an oath". In the jargon of Nedarim the term Arur is used in conjunction with accepting an oath to refrain from something, for example Arur introduces the self imposed restriction on eating something.

We now understand why the Torah emphasized the Arur aspect and not the Baruch aspect in Parshas Ki Tavo. Many times Hashem promised Bnay Yisrael that they would receive His blessings if they comply with the Torah. However the Arur aspect brings a new and very important dimension to the obligation. By answering Amen to the prohibitions of Arur, they were no longer only Mushba Mpi Achayrim (from Hashem and Moshe), but they were now in a new category and level of obligation as defined by Mushbin Mpi Atzman, accepting the Torah, and the consequences for not keeping its laws, of their own volition.

This summary is Copyright 1997 by Dr. Israel Rivkin and Josh Rapps, Edison, N.J. Permission to reprint and distribute, with this notice, is hereby granted. To subscribe to this service, send email to listproc@shamash.org with the following message: subscribe mj-ravtorah your\_first\_name your\_last\_name

---

\* PARSHA Q&A \* In-Depth Questions on the Parsha and Rashi's commentary. Parshas Ki Savo <http://www.ohr.org.il>

Parsha Questions 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?

**Bonus QUESTION:** Even though the Mitzva of bringing bikurim to Jerusalem is no longer applicable, there are two customs that we perform up to this very day, whose origins are found in the ceremony of bringing the bikkurim. What are they?

**I Did Not Know That!** The promise that the Jewish People would be exiled from the Land of Israel was fulfilled twice. Once with the destruction of the First Temple and again when the Second Temple was destroyed. However, the first exile was for seventy years whereas the second, current, exile has been for almost two thousand. Why is there such a huge difference? The three cardinal sins, murder, idolatry and immorality, were the cause of the destruction of the First Temple but it was baseless hatred that was the reason for the destruction of the Second Temple. The three cardinal sins are generally more obvious and therefore it is simpler to atone for them. Baseless hatred is something that is frequently kept hidden from view and is difficult to identify. Often a person is not even aware of the fact that such feelings are baseless hatred, making it that much more difficult to atone for. As long as such a state remains our exile will continue. Yoma 9a

**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

**Answers to this Week's Questions** All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

1. 26:1 - After the Land was conquered and divided. 2. 26:2 - The seven species for which Eretz Yisrael is praised. 3. 26:5 - Speak loudly. 4. 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. 5. 26:4 - The kohen places his hands under the hands of the one bringing it, and they wave the basket together. 6. 26:5 - Lavan. 7. 26:11 - Bikkurim are brought starting from Shavuot (until Channuka). The verses are recited only until Succos. 8. 26:13 - To bless Hashem. 9. 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. 10. 27:2 - Build an altar. 11. 27:12 - Kohanim, Levi'im and the Ark. 12. 27:18 - Any person who intentionally gives bad advice. 13. 27:24 - By slandering him. 14. 28:4 - Because they 'enrich' (m'ashiros) their owners. 15. 28:23 - In Bechukosai, the Torah speaks in the plural, whereas in this Parsha the curses are mentioned in the singular. 16. 28:37 - Whenever someone wants to express the idea of extraordinary suffering they will use the Jewish People as an example. 17. 28:64 - You will pay taxes to the idol worshipping priests. 18. 28:67 - Because the curse of each hour will be greater than that of the previous hour. 19. 29:3 - To the tribe of Levi. 20. 29:8 - 40 years.

**Bonus ANSWER:** We stand up in the presence of a brit milah and a funeral procession. When the owners of the bikkurim brought the produce up to Jerusalem all the inhabitants stopped what they were doing and stood up in their honor. Bartinura on Mishna Bikkurim

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Reuven Subar General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5757 COPYRIGHT 1996-7  
SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS KI-SAVO  
By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt BALL PLAYING ON SHABBOS

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav. If it will be that you will not listen to Hashem... all these curses will come upon you (28:15) This admonition relates to the destruction of the Second Temple (Ramban)

**BALL PLAYING ON SHABBOS**

Among the many transgressions which are enumerated throughout Talmudic literature as causes for the destruction of the Second Temple, we find one very puzzling. Our Sages report that the city of Tur Shimon, a large city in the Judean hills, was destroyed on account of ball playing(1)! According to many commentators, their sin was that they played ball on Shabbos(2). But could so "minor" an infraction have such disastrous consequences? Perhaps our Sages are alluding to an overall spiritual malaise in Tur Shimon. People who can while away the precious, sacred hours of Shabbos on a mundane sporting activity like ball-playing are surely wanting in their commitment to Torah and Mitzvos in general. Their choice of diversion is symptomatic of a dismal spiritual state; they lack entirely the concept of what is required from a Jew on Shabbos; how a Jew is to spend the Shabbos day. Thus, the decree of destruction, originally issued for many other, greater sins, was sealed. Indeed, all of the poskim frown on any type of ball playing on Shabbos, for it blemishes the aura of holiness that sets the Shabbos day apart from the other days of the week. In recent years, however, with the proliferation of eruvim in many communities, more and more children are seen playing ball on Shabbos. Since many of these children are of chinuch age, the question arises: May parents permit their children to play ball on Shabbos? If the children are already playing, must the parents stop the game?

**THE HALACHIC CONSIDERATIONS:** There are six halachic violations that may possibly result from playing ball on Shabbos and Yom Tov: 1.CARRYING: Obviously, playing ball can only be allowed where carrying is permitted (a kosher eruv, an enclosed courtyard(3), inside a house)(4). On Yom Tov, however, this restriction does not apply(5). = 2.MUKTZEH: Although some poskim are of the opinion that a ball is muktzeh since it serves no purpose [similar to a rock], the Rama clearly rules that balls are not muktzeh(6). This ruling is accepted by all of the poskim(7). [Ball-playing equipment, such as bats, gloves, rackets, etc., are not muktzeh either(8).] 3.EXERCISE: If the purpose of playing ball is for exercise, it may be prohibited as all exercise is prohibited on Shabbos(9). When the exercise is medically necessary, a rav should be consulted. 4.LEVELING OF THE GROUND: Games which require that a ball [or another item, e.g., nuts] be rolled on the ground, such as soccer or marbles, are Rabbinically prohibited to play, since playing those games can easily lead the player to level the playing field, which is a Biblically forbidden Shabbos Labor(10). Some poskim hold that a paved court is also included in the Rabbinical decree(11), while other poskim are lenient with a paved court or floored surface(12). Games played on a table [ping-pong(13)] or on a mat are permitted according to all views(14). Games which are played on the ground but do not require that the ball be rolled on the ground (e.g., baseball, basketball, football), are not included in this Rabbinical decree(15). [Obviously, though, it is clearly Biblically forbidden to actually level any playing area.] 5.TREES AND BUSHES - If the ball gets stuck in a tree or in a bush [which is over 10 inches high], it is forbidden to retrieve or remove the ball, even if the removal can be accomplished without shaking the bush or climbing up the tree(16). If the ball falls out of the tree or bush by itself, it may be picked up and played with(17). 6.INFLATING A BALL - Many poskim hold that it is forbidden to inflate a ball (e.g., a basketball, soccer ball) on Shabbos. Some forbid it because it is a week-day activity(18), while others hold that it is considered as fixing [or creating] an

object (tikkun mana) and may be Biblically prohibited(19).

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** As stated earlier, beside the possible halachic violations listed above, there is an additional consideration when it comes to playing ball on Shabbos. The poskim are almost unanimous in condemning ball-playing on Shabbos as being frivolous and inappropriate behavior(20), a waste of time(21), and a practice befitting shallow individuals(22). Accordingly, even when not expressly in violation of a Shabbos prohibition, adults over the age of bar/bas mitzvah are strongly discouraged from participating in any type of ball playing on Shabbos(23).

It is praiseworthy, therefore, for parents to instill in their children the proper understanding of the spirit of Shabbos. Even if it is not technically forbidden for children to play ball(24), they should be taught that it is not fitting and proper to do so. It would be ideal, of course, if the children were given some positive and constructive Shabbos activities to take the place of playing ball. Simply prohibiting children from playing ball and then allowing them to aimlessly roam the streets or to read material of dubious value, is not the way to imbue them with the holy spirit of Shabbos.

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 Yerushalmi Ta'anis 4:5, quoted by the Bais Yosef O.C. 308. 2 Rokeich 55, Pnei Moshe and Korban Eidah on Yerushalmi ibid. See also Medrash Eicha 2:4 where it specifically says that the ball playing took place on Shabbos. 3 Ball playing should not take place if the ball is liable to leave the enclosed area, since in one's eagerness to retrieve the ball, he can easily forget that he is carrying outside the eiruv. 4 Mishnah Berurah 308:158. 5 Rama O.C. 518:1. See Igros Moshe O.C. 3:94 who explains why carrying a ball is considered shaveh l'chal nefesh. 6 O.C. 308:45 and 518:1. 7 Although the Shulchan Aruch O.C. 308:45 rules stringently on this issue and Kaf ha-Chayim 308:257 notes that Sefaradim should follow his opinion. It is possible that his ruling referred to an item such as a rock, etc. which was later designated for play, not to a modern-day ball which is manufactured as a ball (Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, quoted in Shevus Yitzchak, pg. 89). Refer to Tosfos Shabbos 308:109 and Pri Megadim 308:72 for possible sources. 8 Harav M. Feinstein (Sefer Tiltulei Shabbos, pg. 26). 9 O.C. 328:42. When the exercise is enjoyable, it may be permitted (Harav S.Z. Auerbach, Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah, pg. 189). 10 Mishnah Berurah 308:158. Harav S.Z. Auerbach is quoted as suggesting that the Rabbinical decree does not apply to a standard playing field which is usually used as such, since playing fields are usually prepared in advance (Kovetz Beis Aharon v'Yisrael 3:39). 11 Shulchan Aruch Harav 338:6; Mishnah Berurah 338:20. 12 Pri Megadim 338:3; Aruch ha-Shulchan 338:12. In addition, nowadays when most of the ground in or near our homes is paved, all poskim may agree that paved courts are not included in this decree (Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, quoted in Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 91). 13 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Kovetz Beis Aharon v'Yisrael 3:39); Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 16:6. 14 Mishnah Berurah 338:20. 15 Teshuvos Salmas Chayim 1:71; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Kovetz Beis Aharon v'Yisrael 3:39). 16 Mishnah Berurah 336:3. For additional details, see The Weekly Halachah Discussion to Parashas Shelach, 5757. 17 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah, pg. 183). 18 Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 92). 19 Chelkas Yaakov 3:159; Minchas Yitzchak 6:30; Machazeh Eliyahu 69-2. Note, however, that Harav S.Z. Auerbach (see Minchas Shlomo 11-5, Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah, pg. 184 and pg. 477, Binyan Shabbos, pg. 137) holds that once a ball has been inflated, it is permitted to inflate it again, even with a pump, as long as no tying is involved. 20 Mishnah Berurah 518:9. 21 Kaf ha-Chayim 308:259. 22 Aruch ha-Shulchan 518:8. 23 See also Mishnah Berurah 338:21. 24 Note that Shulchan Aruch 301:2 allows children to jump and run for their enjoyment and pleasure. Accordingly, there would not seem to be any difference between playing ball and playing tag, hide and seek, jump rope, etc. Somehow, though, ball-playing is associated with Shabbos desecration more than these other activities.

Weekly-Halacha, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Project Genesis, Inc. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur

of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Hayeled Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsor-ships are available - please mail to jgross@torah.org . The series is distributed by the Harbotzas Torah Division of Congregation Shomre Shabbos, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118 HaRav Yisroel Grumer, Marah D'Asra  
Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org  
3600 Crondall Lane, Ste. 106 <http://www.torah.org/> Owings Mills, MD 21117

---

B"H The Chassidic Dimension Adaptation of Likutei Sichos by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

#### Spiritual Kinetics

In the Torah portion Savo, we are told to "walk in His paths." The Rambam regards this exhortation as a positive command, explaining it to mean that "we are to emulate the Almighty to the greatest extent possible; just as G-d is deemed gracious, compassionate and benevolent, so we are to be gracious, compassionate and benevolent." One of the Rambam's principles regarding the enumeration of commandments is that an all-encompassing command such as "You shall observe My statutes," or "You shall be holy," is not counted as one of the 613 mitzvos, inasmuch as they embrace the entire Torah. Accordingly, it would seem that to "walk in His paths" should not be counted as a positive command, for "emulating the Almighty to the greatest extent possible" is germane to all mitzvos. Why does the Rambam count this as one of the 613 commandments? We must conclude that "walking in His paths" involves something not found in any of the other commandments, for which reason it is counted as a distinct command. What is the unique aspect of this mitzvah?

The uniqueness of this command lies in that we are told to "walk in His paths." It is possible for a person to perform a mitzvah and to remain stationary -- the person finds himself afterwards in the same state he was in before. "You shall walk..." implies that performing the mitzvah transforms the performer into an individual in motion, leaving his previous station and marching on to a higher spiritual rank. The Jew is able to accomplish this when he realizes that he is going in "His paths," i.e., that he performs mitzvos because they are G-d's path and he desires to emulate G-d to the greatest extent possible. When a person performs mitzvos in this manner, he can be assured that rather than remaining spiritually immobile, he will be constantly "on the move." While it is true that performing mitzvos in any manner elevates the performer, when they are not performed in a "walking" manner the effect on the person will remain concealed; "walking in His paths" reveals the spiritual refinement and elevation accomplished through the performance of mitzvos. Moreover, when one "walks in His paths," the elevation achieved is limitless: Chassidus explains the verse: "I shall cause you to be 'walkers' among those who are 'stationary'," as referring to the spiritual state of souls who perform Torah and mitzvos in this world, compared to souls and angels above. Although angels and souls above are constantly rising from level to level, they are considered "stationary," for all their degrees of refinement and elevation are of the same magnitude -- each spiritual elevation is in some way comparable to their previous level. They are thus considered spiritually immobile, compared to the true infinity of G-dliness. In contrast, the soul within a body, performing Torah and mitzvos with physical objects, is considered to be in motion, for performing mitzvos enables a Jew to rise in a way such that each new level is infinitely loftier than the previous one. Yet all created beings are inherently finite. How can their service emulate the truly limitless Creator, thereby achieving a limitless elevation? In order for mitzvos to possess this infinite capacity, it is necessary for the person performing them to be in touch with the essence of his soul at the time. For the soul, being "truly a part of G-d above," is infinite. When a person draws down the infinite level of his soul's essence and connects it with the particular mitzvah he is performing, thus enhancing that mitzvah with the pure faith and self-sacrifice which emanate from the

soul's essence, he will be able to draw down this infinite level within his finite service. Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. IV, pp. 1130-1134

---

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM) STUDENT SUMMARIES OF SICHOT DELIVERED BY THE ROSHEI YESHIVA PARASHAT KI TAVO SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

The Significance of the Covenant Summarized by Roni Kleinman  
THE ENTIRE VBM STAFF WISHES A WARM MAZAL TOV TO RABBI YA'AKOV AND MICHAL GENACK ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR DAUGHTER NOA SHOSHANA. MAY YOU RAISE HER TO TORAH, CHUPPA AND MA'ASIM TOVIM!

"These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moshe to make with Bnei Yisrael..." In Parashat Ki Tavo we read the "parashat ha-kelalot," including the respective rewards and punishments promised according to our conduct. On the one hand, the severe punishments with which we are threatened strike fear and terror in our hearts. However, there is another way of serving God - through awe of His grandeur. Today we are witness to the phenomenon of a society which fears no punishment, and in such an environment it sometimes appears as though parashat ha-kelalot, which is actually a covenant between God and the nation of Israel, has lost its significance. Moreover, fear of punishment leads us to Divine service which is performed "in order to receive reward," which is less than ideal. We are faced with the question: What is the significance of the covenant found in this week's parasha?

There is another aspect to this covenant, which comes to show us and inculcate in our consciousness the fact that every action which we perform causes a reaction, an effect. Nothing is static in this world - there is constant action and activity. There was once a group of Bundists (Yiddish Socialists) which held extreme anti-religious views. In order to demonstrate their protest against religion they decided to hold a "Kol Nidrei party" on Yom Kippur during the time that Kol Nidrei was to be recited, thereby exhibiting the very opposite of the seriousness of the occasion. One would think that if they were so strongly against religion then they would leave it alone and not pay it any attention! Their claim, after all, was that religion was not worthy of any attention. This phenomenon reveals a certain nervousness - the covenant which God made with Israel gave them no rest; they felt compelled to fight against it.

Once during a certain panel discussion, where the subject of secular Jews protesting against religious coercion was raised, someone commented that just as we once had a "Shabbos goy," now we have a "Shabbos Jew." When a Jew was faced with a certain problem on Shabbat, he called a gentile to help him. But now there are Jews who have a problem with Shabbat (or Judaism) as a whole, and they restrict themselves to a tiny corner of Judaism - they don't go to work on Shabbat, they recite Kiddush, or they go to the synagogue. Others express this in other areas: a Jewish wedding, a bar-mitzva, a brit mila. Years ago in Israel, when women gave birth they used to spend ten days in hospital following the delivery, and there was an agreement between the National Religious Party and the Histadrut such that every boy born would be circumcised. At a certain point, when the hospital stay was shortened, the NRP became afraid that some boys would not be circumcised, but the opposite proved true: every family makes sure that its boys are circumcised, and if they don't, they know that there will be problems later on. There have been periods in Israeli politics when the majority of the government has consisted of secular Jews. Why did they never do away with "religious coercion"? Because for Jews who are not observant it is convenient, in a certain sense, that religious coercion exists - so that the tiny corner of Judaism remains; so that they don't have to do anything willingly - they are forced to do certain things. In this way their conscience finds rest. They don't have to admit that they want to preserve some measure of Judaism in their lives and that they would have kept certain observances anyway; they can tell themselves that they are being coerced.

This is the covenant that God made with Israel - that we should constantly feel this agitation which causes us discomfort. No matter whether we observe the Torah or fight against it, we shall never be able to discard it

apathetically and leave it forgotten... (Originally delivered at Seuda Shelishit, Shabbat Parashat Ki Tavo 5745. Translated by Kaeren Fish.)  
[HTTP://WWW.VIRTUAL.CO.IL/EDUCATION/YHE](http://WWW.VIRTUAL.CO.IL/EDUCATION/YHE)  
Copyright (c) 1997 Yeshivat Har Etzion. All rights reserved.

---

Outlooks & Insights by HaRav Zev Leff

Parshas Ki Savo Reishis - First and Foremost

You shall take of every fruit of the ground produced by the land that Hashem your G-d is giving you. You must place it in a basket, and go to the site that G-d will choose (Devarim 26:2) The Torah commands us to take the first fruits and bring them to the Kohen as a thanksgiving offering to Hashem. Elsewhere we are enjoined to dedicate all our firsts to Hashem — the first shearings of the wool, the first of the dough, the firstborn of man and animal, etc. Why did the Torah not command us to offer the best of our produce and not the first? The importance of the first lies in the fact that it is the root and foundation of all that follows. The foundation of a building must be totally free of imperfections. A hairline crack in the foundation endangers the entire building, whereas that same crack in the fourth floor would not be significant. Similarly, with respect to everything having to do with kedushah, the beginning must be holy and pure if holiness and purity is to emanate from it. Any imperfection in the root will manifest itself a hundredfold in what grows out of it. Therefore, we dedicate all firsts to Hashem to firmly establish the foundation and root of all that follows.

The Yerushalmi in Chagigah blames Elisha ben Avuya's tragic departure from the path of Torah on an incident that occurred on the day of his bris. The great Sages of Jerusalem were discussing Torah at his bris with such intensity that a fire descended from the heavens and surrounded them. When Elisha's father saw this, he announced that he would devote his son to Torah so that he would also be able to work such wonders. His father's distorted motivation left its mark on his brilliant son, when later in life Elisha came to distorted conclusions on the basis of various incidents he witnessed. He saw a child fall to his death while fulfilling his father's command to send away the mother bird before taking her eggs. Since the Torah specifically promises length of days for honoring one's parents and sending away the mother bird, he conclude there is neither justice nor a judge. R' Yaakov, however, saw that reward for mitzvos is not in this world but rather in the next.

And so, too, from a good beginning comes good. The Gemara (Bava Metzia 85b) relates that when R' Chiya reintroduced Torah in a generation in which it had been forgotten, he began by planting flax. From the flax he made nets to capture deer. Upon the skins of those deer he wrote the Five Books of the Torah. He would then travel from town to town teaching Torah to five boys in each town. With each one learned one book of Chumash. To six older boys he taught one order of Mishnah each. Each then taught the others what he had learned, and in this way, Torah was once again established. Why was it necessary for R' Chyia to plant the flax and make the nets. Couldn't he have bought these? The answer is that very new beginning is the construction of a foundation. Only if every step is taken with holy and pure intentions will the result be holy and pure.

The same principle answers a question asked with respect to Chanukah: Why was a miracle necessary to insure that the menorah not be lit with impure oil? The halacha is that impure oil may be used for a mitzvah incumbent on the tzibbur (community). Chanukah was a rededication of the Beis Hamikdash and the Menorah. As such it was a new beginning, and only pure oil was fitting. Only when the kedushah has been firmly established can impure oil be used for its maintenance.

The special significance that Chazal attach to the education of young children lies in the fact that we are setting the foundations of their Torah. Similarly, the blessings and curses uttered upon our entrance into Eretz Yisrael at Mount Eival and Mount Grizim, emphasize the fact that our first encounter with Eretz Yisrael must set the foundation for our future settlement of the land. That required an intense awareness of our duties and responsibilities.

During the Ten Days of Repentance from Rosh Hashanah to Yom

Kippur, it is customary to be extra stringent in one's observance of mitzvos. Thus even one who is not usually strict about eating kosher bread baked by a non-Jew (pas palter) should nevertheless be strict during that period. At first glance this practice seems difficult to understand, for it applies even to a person who intends to eat pas palter the rest of the year. Are we trying to fool Hashem into thinking we are more pious than we actually are in order to secure a favorable judgment? The significance of this conduct lies in the fact that Rosh Hashanah is not just the beginning of the year, but reishis hashanah — the foundation and root of the year. Each of these ten days must be treated as firsts, dedicated to Hashem in purity and holiness. Hence the extra stringencies, the more intense davening and learning, are not merely for show. They are designed to lay the foundation for the entire year. Even if the building of the coming year is not constructed of such quality materials, the foundation will give it strength. Thus did the wisest of men say, "The end of the matter is greater than the beginning," but can be understood, "A good end emanates from the beginning."

Reprinted with permission from Artscroll Mesorah Publications, Ltd.

<http://www.shemayisrael.co.il> Jerusalem, Israel 972-2-532-4191

---