

BS"D



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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON Behar Bechukosai - 5764

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From: Don't Forget [sefira@torah.org] To: Counting The Omer Reminder List

Subject: [Sefira/Omer] Day 39 / 5 weeks and 4 days Tonight, the evening of Friday, May 14, will be day 39, which is 5 weeks and 4 days of the omer. Your friends at Torah.org Sefira, Copyright © 2004 by Torah.org. The Counting The Omer Reminder Mailing List

From Michael Fiskus <fiskusdia@aol.com> Please say tehilim for Chaya Asna bas Rachel



From: covenant.conversation
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Subject: Covenant & Conversation
<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/>
Torah Thoughts by the Chief Rabbi
DR. JONATHAN SACKS
Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew
Congregations of the Commonwealth
Bechukotai [From 5763]

THE BOOK OF VAYIKRA REACHES A CLIMAX with an account of the blessings and curses attendant on Israel's obedience, or lack of it, to the terms of the covenant. The blessings are relatively brief. The curses (known as the *tochakhah*) are, by contrast, set out at length and with elemental power. They are terrifying. To this day we recite them in a low voice, barely above a whisper. From the perspective of the twenty-first century, secular time, they read like Holocaust literature (which is not to say - G-d forbid - that the Holocaust was a punishment for sin). This is the dark side of covenant. It may be (it is) a privilege to be chosen by G-d, but it is also an awesome responsibility. As the prophet Amos says, in a verse at once paradoxical yet definitive of the Jewish destiny: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (3:2). 1

One verse in the *tochakhah*, however, gave rise to one of the great doctrines of Judaism:

"They shall stumble over one another" - one because of another. This teaches that all Israel are responsible (literally "sureties") for one another. 2

The rule of Kol Yisrael Arevin Ze Bazeh - the Jewish people is collectively, not just individually, responsible before G-d - is one of the great principles of rabbinic Judaism, and in explaining it the sages gave a number of striking metaphors:

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught: It can be compared to people on a boat. One took out an awl and began boring a hole in the boat beneath his seat. The others said to him, "What are you doing?" He replied, "Is

that any concern of yours? [I am not boring a hole beneath your seat] but only under mine." They said: "But you will sink the whole ship, and we will all drown." 3

It is the way of the world that if a person takes a bundle [agudah] of reeds and tries to break them together he cannot. If, however, the sticks are taken one by one, even a child can break them. So too with Israel: they are redeemed only when they form one band [agudah achat]. 4

"A [holy] nation" - this teaches that they [the Jewish people] are like one body with one soul [the midrash identifies *goi*, a nation, with the word *geviyah*, a body], and thus it says, "Who is like your people Israel, a nation one on earth." When one sins, all are punished, as it says, "Did not Achan ben Zerach sin in the matter of devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel, and he did not perish alone for his iniquity" (Joshua 22:20). When one is injured, all feel the pain. 5

The idea of collective destiny and responsibility is more than a metaphor. It is constitutive of Jewish identity. The covenant at Mount Sinai was made not with individuals alone but with a people - an entire people, righteous and not yet righteous alike. This principle has many halakhic ramifications (among them, for example, the rule that one person can recite a commandment-blessing of behalf of another even though he has already fulfilled the mitzvah. As Ritva [Chiddushei ha-Ritva, Rosh Hashanah 29a] 6 explains, this is based on the idea that I am responsible for your fulfilment of the commands. Therefore even though I have already fulfilled my personal duty, I can make a blessing over yours and exempt you thereby, because your duty is in a sense mine as well).

To be a Jew is to be part of a people, sharing its joys, participating in its griefs, recalling its history, making its hopes my own. That is why our most basic prayers, even our confessions, are in the first person plural. The primary experience of Judaism is not that of "the lonely man of faith" but rather of being part of the community of faith. More significantly, Martin Buber misrepresented the spiritual encounter as "I-Thou." In Judaism it is fundamentally We-Thou.

ONE QUESTION, not widely raised by the commentators, is however of the essence. Let us remind ourselves of the proof-text the rabbis took for the principle of collective responsibility:

As for those of you who survive, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. The sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall though no one is pursuing them. They shall stumble over one another, as if to escape the sword, though no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand against your enemies. 7

This is an extraordinary place in which to locate the idea. First, it is not the plain sense of the verse. "Stumbling over one another" is not a description of a nation bound by a sense of shared duty. To the contrary, it is a description of panic, as people fall over one another in their efforts to escape. Second, the passage is not speaking of strength-in-unity but about weakness and fear. The third difficulty, though, is the most fundamental.

It should not be necessary to search for a proof-text for the idea that the Jewish people flourishes and suffers together. The whole of the Chumash is dedicated to this principle. It is basic to Moses' vision and to the people's experience. They suffered slavery together. They experienced liberation together. If a text were needed, the second paragraph of the Shema would do as well as any: "If you are careful to heed my commandments . . . I will give the rain for your land in its season . . . and you will eat and be satisfied . . . Be careful that your heart not be tempted to go astray . . . The land will not give forth its crops, and you will rapidly vanish from the good land that G-d is giving you." Why then search for so *recherché* a source when the whole Torah testifies to this idea?

THE ANSWER, I believe, is fundamental. It is not too much to say that the whole of Jewish history subsequent to the fall of the Second Temple depended on it. The idea that "all Israel are responsible for one another"

is not, in and of itself, unusual. It is part of the normal experience of any people living in the same land, under the same political system and sovereign power. When the rain falls, it falls on the righteous and wicked alike. When there is drought, all farmers suffer, whatever their virtue or lack of it. When a nation is at peace, and its economy strong, most people benefit. When government breaks down and anarchy takes its place, the suffering is general and widespread. Within a societal or national context, fate is shared. Though some are rich and some poor, some healthy and others stricken by disease, there is a sense in which the general conditions of life affect all. What made biblical Israel unique when it was a nation in its land were many things, but not this.

The concept of collective responsibility was not problematic in biblical times. It became so after the devastating tragedy of defeat at the hands of the Romans - first, when the Temple was destroyed, then, some sixty years later, with the suppression of the Bar Kochba revolt and the subsequent Hadrianic persecutions. The Jewish people lost its most basic institutions, its sovereignty (or autonomy) and its national life. There were no more kings or prophets. There was no Temple, no sacrifices, no central site of collective worship. Little by little, Israel ceased to be the home of most Jews. The intellectual centre moved to Babylon. There were significant Jewish communities elsewhere: in Egypt and many parts of Europe. Israel was no longer a nation in the conventional sense: a people living in a single territory under the same government. It was in exile, but a more profound, scattered exile than Jews had ever known before.

It was then that the question arose in all its force and potential tragedy: Is Israel still a nation? If so, how? In what respect? By virtue of what characteristic? Yes, to be sure, Jews shared memories, dreams, prayers. But within two or three generations, memories fade, dreams falter, and prayers, unanswered, slowly lapse into silence. It was the deepest crisis in Jewish history. And it was then that from the very heart of tragedy the sages rescued a vestige of hope. The covenant of Sinai was still in force. The Jewish people were still bound by its terms. They were therefore still a nation - constituted by the responsibility they had undertaken together, first at Sinai, then on the banks of the Jordan at the end of Moses' life, then again in the last days of Joshua, and subsequently during the period of Israel's kings and in the days of Ezra. Bound to G-d, they were bound to one another. That is what Saadia Gaon meant when he made his famous remark that "Our people is a people only in virtue of its Torah." No other nation ever constituted itself in such a way. Lacking all the normal prerequisites of nationhood - territory, proximity, sovereignty - Jews remained even in exile a people, the world's first global people, the first ever virtual community, a community not in space but in the mind, held together solely by the invisible filaments of collective belonging, shared fate and mutual responsibility.

It is now dazzlingly clear why the sages chose their proof-text from this most poignant of all biblical passages, the curses of Bechukotai. All other Mosaic texts refer to Israel's fate as a nation in, or journeying toward, its own land. This passage alone spoke of exile and the "hiding of the face" of G-d. "They shall stumble over one another - one because of another. This teaches that all Israel are responsible for one another." This strange and apparently unintelligible act of exegesis is one of the most majestic of all leaps of the rabbinic imagination in discerning the deep underlying meaning of Torah. Though they may be scattered across the world, divided by space, language, culture and outward fortune, Jews remain a people, inextricably bound to one another in and through their covenant with G-d. Though they are parted physically, they remain united spiritually, and that unity will one day give them the strength to return to G-d and to the land He gave their ancestors. And so it happened. For almost two thousand years Jews were sustained as a nation by faith alone. They preserved it, and it preserved them. Thus was a curse turned into a blessing, and a description of weakness turned into a source of indomitable strength.

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RABBI YONASAN SACKS

KEDUSHAS HAZMAN

Shabbos and Yom Tov reflect two distinct models of kedusha. Although we are obligated to recite Kiddush each Shabbos, the essence and kedusha of Shabbos is *kvia vkayma*, set and predetermined. This aspect of Shabbos is evident in the beracha of "mekadesh haShabbos".

Yom tov, however, reflects a different foray into kedushas hazman. The onset of yom tov, which is generally linked to specific calendar dates, is dependent on the Sanhedrin and Keneses Yisroel who determine Rosh Chodesh. This unique element of yom tov is reflected in the beracha of "mekadesh Yisroel v'hazmanim".

The Meshech Chochma explains that a similar distinction can be made between Shemitah and Yovel. The Toras Kohanim comments, "kshem shene'emar b'Shabbos Bereishis 'Shabbos Lashem', kach ne'emar b'Shevi'is Shabbos Lashem". Shemitah, like Shabbos, possesses a fixed kedusha which is not dependent on kedushas beis din. The beginning of the Shemitah year automatically renders fields ownerless and prohibits the farmer from guarding and tending his field. Similarly, the Mordechai explains, that Shevi'is annuls loans, even if the lender fails to declare "meshamet ani boch". The very purpose of Shevi'is, which is to reaffirm "ki li kol ha'aretz", is an essential theme of Shabbos itself.

Yovel, however, parallels yom tov. Just as Rosh Chodesh and yom tov require kiddush beis din, so too the Torah emphasizes "v'kidashtem es shnas hachamishim shana." the very term "lochem" so essential to kiddush hachodesh - "hachodesh hazeh lochem" - is used to describe the essence of Yovel - "kadosh tihiye lochem". Just as yom tov serves as a *zecher l'yetsias Mitzrayim*, where we acknowledge our freedom, so too Yovel is a time when all Jewish slaves must be freed.

Both models of kedusha characterize kedushas Eretz Yisroel. On one level, Eretz Yisroel possesses an inherent and intrinsic kedusha, independent of Keneses Yisroel. Complete kedushas ha'aretz however, requires the active participation of Bnai Yisroel.

Shemitah and Yovel teach us to recognize, appreciate and create kedusha. May we be worthy of this lofty privilege.

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TorahWeb from last year

RABBI YAAKOV NEUBURGER

AMEILUS B'TORAH

Many an inspirational talk in Yeshiva halls (*sichas musar*) have invoked the opening Rashi of Bechukosai, making it part of the lexicon of expressions of the Jewish people. Typically, Rashi aims to resolve the seeming redundancy of the first Pasuk, "If you will follow my laws and observe my commandments and do them". Interpreting the first phrase to mean "Shetiheyu ameilim baTorah" - that you should toil and extend unmeasured efforts in the study of Torah - we are thus assured peace, prosperity and pride if we invest ourselves in the study of Torah with the purpose of maintaining and observing mitzvos. Once again, at the parallel text introducing the actual *tochecha*, where Hashem prepares us for some of the worst moments of our past, Rashi reminds us that all of that came to be, because our spiritual lives unraveled starting with the lack of "ameilus batorah".

These comments of Rashi pose several questions worth pondering. Is it possible that our national fortune depends on what we have come to see

as the experience of a stage of life or at most a small segment of our people? In other words, how can the total immersion in study become the test for people who due to circumstances may only be able to spend small parts of one's day in Torah study? Further, how does Rashi see in the phrase "If you will walk with my laws" a reference to being absorbed by Torah study?

A careful look shows us that Hashem chose the word "chok" rather than mishpat or mitzva to express "laws". Additionally, Hashem chose "if you will walk" rather than "observe" or "do" to express the required action. Why this choice of words? The term "chok" usually denotes laws whose reasons have been hidden from us, and thus our allegiance to them is a testament to our acceptance of a higher authority of infinitely greater wisdom. "Walking" connotes a consistent activity which will lay claim to some goal or destination. Thus the "ameilus", the investment referred to, is the unstinting dedication to a source of wisdom far beyond ourselves. Let's explain.

It seems to me that there are two forms or sources of ameilus which are indeed shared by all those who study, irrespective of station in life or whether one has eighteen hours a day or several hours a week.

The intense effort to understand a text or an idea is rooted in the unabiding trust we have in the depth of Torah ideas that emanate from Hashem. Because of this trust, we are sure that when we delve into Torah insights will emerge. In other words, the commitment to the observance of "chok" also pushes us to investigate Torah.

Additionally one can make great investment and effort through an ongoing, i.e. "walking", schedule of learning.

One can now well understand that pursuit of study is the ultimate test of our observance and hence the focus of our parsha.

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [ryfrand@torah.org] Sent: May 13, 2004 "RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Behar Bechukosai

Misery Loves Company

Parshas Behar contains both the mitzvah of the Shmitah [Sabbatical] year and the mitzvah of the Yovel [Jubilee] year. The Yovel year follows seven of the seven-year Shmitah cycles. This 50th year was basically an extra year of Shmitah, an extra year of "rest" for the land.

In addition to the standard agricultural restrictions of Shmitah, there is a positive command to blow a "Tekiah" blast from the Shofar on the Yom Kippur (10 Tishrei) of the Yovel year. This shofar blast announces: "You shall sanctify the fiftieth year and proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants; it is a yovel year for you, and you shall return, each man to his ancestral heritage and you shall return, each man to his family." [Vayikra 25:10].

The halachik import of this last pasuk [verse] (which happens to be inscribed on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia) is that all Hebrew indentured servants go free during the Yovel year. When the Shofar was sounded on Yom Kippur of the 50th year, it signaled the time for all the indentured servants to leave their masters and return to their homes.

The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 331) offers a psychological reason for the blowing of the shofar on this occasion. The Sefer HaChinuch writes that it was very hard for the owners to give up their long-time servants. Imagine a business owner who has a dedicated worker who has been with the company for many years or decades. All of a sudden, he must let the worker go. It is not so easy to do.

It is common for a close attachment to develop with a maid or nanny who is with a family for many years. Sometimes we go to a Bar Mitzvah or wedding and we see someone there who does not look like part of the crowd, for obvious reasons. It's the nanny! She knew the kid when he was born. Now, 20 years later, he's getting married. Of course she'll be invited to the wedding -- she's part of the family!

Picture the situation with the Hebrew servant. He might have been part of the family for forty-nine years -- since right after the last Yovel. Now he has to be let go. It is very difficult for the master to send him away. Therefore, writes the Chinuch, to arouse the owners concerning the importance of the matter and to give them strength of conviction to do what needs to be done, the Torah requires universal blowing of the shofar on that Yom Kippur. This will help the masters realize that their sacrifice is something that they are sharing with other masters throughout the land. The knowledge that everyone else is experiencing the same financial and emotional self-sacrifice is a powerful psychological aid in arousing a person to do what he is required to do.

If I recognize that everybody is in the same boat, that everyone has to give up their servants, their trusted employees, then it is much easier for me to handle my own need to give up my servant. Tzaras rabim, chatzi nechama. [The problems of the masses are half a measure of consolation.]

Perhaps we can better appreciate this idea if we think about the difficulties of "making Pesach". Preparing for Passover is one of the most difficult challenges of an observant Jewish household. The house has to be cleaned, things have to be koshered, the kitchen has to be changed over, and meals have to be prepared. It is tremendously stressful, tiring and bothersome.

As one stands there cleaning his oven, his nails are raw, his back is sore, and he thinks to himself "this is crazy!" But what does he then think to himself? "At least we are all crazy together! Everyone needs to do this!" [Of course, it's not that we are all crazy -- we are faithful Torah observant Jews!]

This is the meaning of the Chinuch. When one hears the shofar on Yovel, he realizes that everyone is in the same boat regarding freeing his servants, and that makes it easier.

Everyone faces challenges at different stages of life. Some people have money challenges. Some people have health problems. Some people have problems with their children. That is life. Life is unfortunately a series of challenges or problems, and how we deal with them and cope with them. Many times we think to ourselves, "Boy, do I have problems! No one else has challenges like mine!" We look around at others and see that they are happy. They look fine. They act fine. We think "only I have problems".

We have to remember the sound of the silent shofar that isn't sounded but should be sounded: Everybody is in the same boat. The next person may not be facing the same type of problems, but we should not fool ourselves into thinking that we are so unique. Life is full of a myriad of problems, but the universality of challenges and problems can be half the consolation.

G-d Provides Extra Attention To Those Who Need It

The Torah teaches: "The land will give its fruit and you will eat to satisfaction; and will dwell securely upon it. If you will say: What will we eat in the seventh year? -- behold! We will not sow and we will not gather our crop! I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year and it will yield a crop sufficient for the three years." [Vayikra 25: 19-21].

The Sforno infers that G-d only promises to bestow the blessing on the land following the question "What will we eat?" This implies that when this question is not asked, the blessing is not forthcoming.

The Sforno comments that there are two types of Jews. The first kind of Jew is the Jew who knows that Shmitah and yovel are approaching. He knows that he will not be planting any seed for two whole years, but he doesn't ask any questions. He does not fret "What's going to be? How will we survive?" The Sforno says that for such a Jew, the supernatural bountiful crop will not be provided on the year preceding Shmitah. Rather, a different type of miracle will occur -- he will not need more than is provided by the regular sixth year crop.

Some people can live on \$50,000 a year. Some people need \$100,000 a year to live. The amount that a person needs depends on his expenses. The Sforno says that the Jew who is the real believer and who does not ask the question "How will we ever be able to manage?" will not need the bountiful crop. To use the Sforno's own expression, that which he does receive "will be blessed within his bowels." He will not need the money. His landlord will come to him and say "Guess what? Don't bother paying me the rent this month -- you are such a nice guy!" The bank will suddenly lower his mortgage rate; instead of paying 8 percent, he will be paying 2 percent. It will happen like that. He will not receive any more income. The crops will not miraculously triple, but he will manage financially. The miracle will not be triple the income; it will be one-third the expenses!

However, says the Sforno, the second type of Jew does not have that level of trust in G-d. He is frightened by the idea that he will not be able to plant in the seventh year and in the Jubilee year. A miracle will occur for him in the sixth year to calm his anxiety. G-d will perform a miracle for him and hold his hand, so to speak, so that he will not be a nervous wreck for the next two years.

This scenario of the Sforno, however, does not seem fair. We would think that the bigger Tzaddik is the person who does not question. He should be the one deserving of the more open miracle up front. Why does the one who is lacking in faith receive the bumper crop in the sixth year? Why should only the questioner deserve G-d's special treatment?

I saw a very interesting insight on this question from Rabbi Zev Leff: just like we have different children, some of whom need a little more help and attention and soothing and encouragement than the others, so it is with G-d and His children.

G-d looks at His nation and He looks at his children and says "this kid needs a little more." The Jew who does not ask any questions will certainly be taken care of. But he is on a higher level. He does not need the "tender loving care" that is needed by the frightened Jew who does not understand how he will possibly survive if he keeps the Torah. "This is the child who always needs the 'arm around the shoulder.'" He needs a little extra attention. He has to sit on My lap a little longer than the other children. I will provide that attention for him, even though he is not on the level of the other child. Since he NEEDS it, I will provide it."

The lesson to derive from this is the following: G-d has an infinite amount of patience with us. Even though we are not on the level that we should be on, and even though we should be beyond this, G-d takes care of us. So too, we should emulate G-d in the way that we treat our spouses and our children and even ourselves (Mah Hu, af ata). Even if he or she or they or we should be "beyond this," we must have patience and provide whatever care and attention and endurance the situation might require.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, WA DavidATwersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion: Tape # 416, Supporting Jewish Merchants. Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. RavFrand, Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, Inc. learn@torah.org



From newsletterserver@aish.com
 May 12, 2004 Subject: Kol Yaakov - Behar-Bechukotai
 BY RABBI BARUCH LEFF
 Based on teachings by RAV YAAKOV WEINBERG ZT'L

Behar-Bechukotai (Leviticus 25:1-27:34) It's a Meaningful Life
 There's an old expression, "Time is Money." We all know as well that life is the sum total of all of our moments in time. Hence, "Time is Life." (It's not called the

Time/Life magazine and corporation for nothing.) Through the transitive property, we conclude that Life is Money. This may very well be true among certain segments of American society who live solely for the fulfillment of the American dream, that is materialism.

But we know better. We understand that in order to live lives with meaning, we need to engage in daily spiritual activities. But how can we avoid getting caught up in the 'rat race' of the accumulation of wealth and greater dollar amounts in our bank accounts? The opening Rashi in this week's Parsha, Bechukotai, tells us the key:

"If you will walk with My laws and observe My commandments and keep them, then I will provide your rains in their proper times, and the land will give its produce, and the trees of the fields will bear their fruit." (Vayikra 26:3-4)

Rashi explains the phrase, "walk with My laws": "This means 'amelut baTorah', that we must toil and labor in the Torah."

Why is toiling in Torah so important?

The Parsha describes all of the many rewards and benefits that we can receive if we follow G-d's Instructions for Living, His Torah. The very first phrase in the first verse is the initial step necessary in fulfilling the entirety of the Torah and receiving G-d's blessings. And that phrase instructs us to labor in Torah.

In addition, what happens if we do not toil in Torah? Rashi (26:14, loose translation) later explains: "If you do not toil and do not study, you will not observe the laws. Then, you will regress to despise others who perform the commandments, then you will hate Torah scholars, then you will prevent others from fulfilling, then you will deny that I commanded them, until you eventually reject belief in G-d."

This tragic downward spiral towards heresy begins innocently with a simple lack of toiling in Torah. Mind you, a person may be very dedicated to consistent Torah study, but may not be laboring in Torah. Labor and toil require one to care deeply about Torah study and to work hard at delving into its profundity.

If I really want to make money in the stock market, I won't settle for a basic and simple understanding of trading and investing techniques. I need to know everything there is to know about stocks. All the more so concerning Torah. Superficial study may be a beautiful beginning, but it does not suffice. One must try to understand Torah at the deepest levels according to one's abilities. If one studies without plumbing the depths, one shows a certain lack of concern for what the Torah really has to say. This is why we must not merely study but we must work hard and toil. We must have 'amelut baTorah.'

Are we getting depressed? How is it possible to really toil in Torah? It's one thing if you are a Yeshiva student and can spend 10 hours a day learning Torah. But what about all of us who need to work to support ourselves? Is there a way in which we can still toil in Torah, having limited time?

There is indeed. The truth is we only ask that question because we misunderstand what 'amelut', laboring in Torah, really means.

In Pirkei Avot, it says, "Minimize your work and involve yourself in Torah" (4:12) and "Make the study of Torah primary" (1:15). What do these words of our Sages mean? We can understand these statements in reference to Yeshiva students who can afford to study all day. They most certainly can and do make Torah primary and they are not involved with work. Surely though, the Sages were also directing their words to all Jews. But how can working people accomplish the task of minimizing their work?

It's all in the attitude. It is not a matter of length of time but of focus. A Yeshiva student could be learning Torah for 10 hours a day but still might not make Torah primary. If after a long day of study he comes home and watches a baseball game with great passion and excitement; with much more enthusiasm than the way in which he studies Torah, baseball is primary to him and not Torah. He is not 'amel' and does not toil in Torah. His real profound concerns do not involve Torah.

On the other hand, if a businessman works very hard all day and comes home and studies excitedly at night for 2-3 hours, and/or he gets up at 5 am to start his day with a passionate zest for learning Torah, he is a laborer for Torah. Even if a person were so involved in his business and literally only had five minutes a day in which to study, but he yearns the entire day for those five minutes because the Torah is so important to him, he is an 'amel' and a toiler.

The issue is one of quality study time and outlook rather than the amount of time spent.

With the proper attitude, one can even be 'amel baTorah' without actually studying. We see this fact in analyzing the first verse and Rashi in the Parsha, cited above.

The phrase, "If you will walk with My laws" refers to toiling in Torah. This is talking to the entire Jewish people. Whether you are a Yeshiva student or a Torah scholar, you must toil in Torah. Therefore, toiling must not be defined by a matter of the hours spent but rather the quality of time engaged in studying.

In addition, there is no indication that the verse is specifically talking to men but it seemingly directs itself to women as well. Yet we know that women are not

technically obligated to study Torah beyond what practically applies to them. (Of course women receive great reward if they choose to study Torah. A full discussion of women and Torah study is beyond the scope of this essay.) So how can they be expected to fulfill the commandment of toiling in Torah if they are not required to study? It is obvious then that what we have surmised is true. Toiling in Torah means to have the outlook that Torah is the most important aspect of your life. This includes those who study as well as those who support and encourage the ones who study.

Even if a woman is not studying herself, she toils in Torah by revolving her life around the Torah and helping those who do study Torah. This concept would apply as well to men who do not have time to study in great depth but financially support those who toil in Torah. The financially supporting businessmen are deemed to have labored in Torah also.

Toil in Torah. Get involved in serious Torah study. Don't learn superficially.

Support Torah students and scholars emotionally and financially.

By being a worker and laborer for Torah, leaving the 'rat race' behind, we live a meaningful life.

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PENINIM ON THE TORAH

BY RABBI A. LEIB SCHEINBAUM

PARSHAS BEHAR

If your brother becomes impoverished that his means falter in your proximity, you shall strengthen him. (25:35)

The mitzvah of Vehechezakto, "And you shall strengthen him," remains in force regardless of how many times one is called upon to help his fellow. Moreover, the obligation to lend financial assistance to a fellow Jew in need applies, no matter how the person uses the money - even if it is used inappropriately. That is precisely what the yetzer hora, evil inclination, tells us: "Do not help him, for he only squanders the money that you give him. Do not waste your valuable time from Torah study on charitable acts of loving-kindness. Leaving the house at night to help a Jew in need taxes your shalom bayis, marital harmony." The list goes on. The yetzer hora will always present you with an alternative to the chesed you are about to perform. In reality, some of these taanos, claims, have merit. How does one respond to the yetzer hora?

The Chafetz Chaim gave the following response. When he attended the Kenisiah Gedolah in Vienna in 1923, he was a guest in the home of Rav Akiva Schreiber. Many people came to the house to get an audience - or even a glimpse of the Chafetz Chaim. The answer to most people was - no. The Chafetz Chaim was not a young man, and his time was limited. A wealthy Torah askan, mover and shaker, from England came to Rav Schreiber and said that he must speak to the Chafetz Chaim for a few moments. Indeed, his entire future depended upon the result of his meeting with the Chafetz Chaim. Apparently, the man's toil and involvement on behalf of Klal Yisrael made a difference, and he was invited to the Chafetz Chaim's table.

The man waited for the Chafetz Chaim to bench, say the Bircas Hamazon, Grace after the meal, to present his dilemma. It did not take that long. During the meal, the Chafetz Chaim recited the twenty-third Psalm of Tehillim, Mizmor leDavid, Hashem ro'ie lo echzar, "Hashem is my Shepherd, I shall not lack." As he concluded the last pasuk, "May only goodness and kindness pursue me all the days of my life," he turned to the guest from England and asked, "What does David Hamelech mean when he requests that goodness and kindness be his pursuers? To be pursued is to be harassed. Why would David want to be badgered by tov and chesed?"

"The answer is," explained the Chafetz Chaim, "that there are times when one's involvement in many acts of loving-kindness can actually haunt him as they rob him of his every free moment. He has neither night

nor day. The acts of chesed get in the way of his business. They disrupt his home life. He literally becomes a prisoner to the many demands on his time and good nature. The yetzer hora sees this situation as an auspicious time for him to sneak in and use his wiles to put a halt to these wonderful activities. David Hamelech admonishes us, Do not worry if your pursuers are tov and chesed. On the contrary, pray to Hashem that they should be your only pursuers and nothing else. From such lofty pursuers as tov and chesed, one has nothing to worry about."

When the guest heard these words from the Chafetz Chaim, he picked himself up and thanked his host. To the bewilderment of his host, he was about to leave. "Why are you leaving?" he asked. "You came to seek the Chafetz Chaim's advice. Why are you leaving so soon?"

The visitor replied, "I came to ask the Chafetz Chaim a question which he has already answered for me. Let me explain. In my city, I have undertaken to support a school and also a gemillas chesed, charitable organization. These two endeavors are eminently successful, but they rob me of my time. I simply have no time whatsoever left for myself. My personal business ventures are suffering because I do not have the time to attend to them properly. My wife feels I should transfer the daily control of these organizations to someone else, so that I can return to my business. I personally would rather not defer control of these wonderful organizations to others. Thus, in the interest of shalom bayis, I came to the Chafetz Chaim to advise me. When I heard the saintly Chafetz Chaim explain the pasuk in Tehillim that David Hamelech asks that good and kindness should always be his pursuers, I realized that the sage was referring to my query. He had given me the answer before I even asked the question. I am returning home to my wife to relay to her the gadol hador's reply."

BECHUKOSAI

Any tithe of cattle or sheep, any that passes under the staff, the tenth one shall be holy to Hashem. (27:32)

Chazal describe the process of tithing animals as being a tedious process in which each group of ten animals are counted, with the tenth animal being marked as Maaser for Hashem. This procedure applies regardless of the number of animals one owns. One can have ten thousand head of cattle; he must count each one individually, with the tenth one being designated as Maaser. This seems quite inefficient. One would think that it is more efficacious to simply count all the animals and deduct ten percent.

Horav Eliezer Gordon, zl, was once on a fundraising trip for the Telshe Yeshiva in Lithuania, when he posed this question to a wealthy man who had balked at the Rosh Hayeshiva's request for a sizable contribution. Rav Leizer asked the businessman, "Why does the Torah demand such a roundabout, inefficient manner for counting one's assets?" The wealthy man was also at a loss for an answer.

"Let me explain," said Rav Leizer. "If the Torah would enjoin a wealthy man to give up ten percent of his possessions, he would be hard-pressed to comply. Ten percent can amount to a considerable sum of money. Therefore, the Torah prescribes the method of individual counting of one's flock. Over and over, the wealthy man counts his flock, realizing that for every nine animals that he keeps for himself, he gives only one to Hashem. He might even feel a bit of embarrassment at how much he possesses and how little he is giving to Hashem. This will motivate him to give generously and joyfully. When a person realizes with how much he has been blessed, he will gladly part with the Maaser."

"My friend," continued Rav Leizer, "look at how much you have and you will realize that, in proportion, I am not really asking for that much."

In citing the above, Horav Avraham Pam, zl, notes that people often refrain from being as charitable as they should be because they do not acknowledge all of Hashem's blessings to them. When a person takes the time to contemplate the many blessings that Hashem has granted him, he

moves readily to acquiesce to share some of it with those less fortunate than he.

Sponsored in memory of Mrs. Seliga Ahuva (Schur) Mandelbaum by her parents Rabbi Doniel & Shoshana Schur

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Parshat Vayetzi

**MILK AND MEAT: PART I
BY RABBI CHAIM JACHTER**

Introduction This week we shall begin a discussion of some of the laws of dairy and meat. We will begin with a discussion of Nat Bar Nat, the laws regarding Pareve items cooked in a meat or dairy pot.

Talmudic Background - Disagreement between Rav and Shmuel The Gemara (Chullin 111b) records a dispute between Rav and Shmuel regarding the following case: Hot fish was placed on a meat plate (a plate that had hot meat placed on it, thereby causing "meat taste particles" to be absorbed into the plate). These Amoraim debate whether it is permissible to subsequently eat the fish with dairy. Rav rules that it is forbidden to do so, but Shmuel rules that it is permissible. Rav believes that it is forbidden because the fish absorbed a meat taste. Shmuel believes it is permissible because the fish is two steps removed from the meat; first the meat is absorbed in the plate and then the meat in the plate is transferred to the fish. The connection between the fish and the meat is too remote to create a prohibited mixture of meat and dairy if dairy is subsequently introduced into this fish. This situation is referred to by the Talmud as Nat Bar Nat, a second generation transfer of taste particles. Nat Bar Nat is an acronym that stands for Notein Taam Bar Notein Taam, which literally means "the transfer of taste the son of the transfer of taste." After citing a number of incidents that support the view of Shmuel, the Gemara concludes that the Halacha follows the view of Shmuel (for an analysis of the reasoning of this rule, see Tosafot Zevachim 96a s.v. Veim). Incidentally, we should note that the Taz (Yoreh Deah 95:3) explains why this case does not violate the rule that one is forbidden to eat fish and meat mixed together. He states that the prohibition of eating a mixture of meat and fish applies only to eating actual meat and fish together. Meat "taste particles" that a pot or plate emits into fish does not render it as forbidden food and fish "taste particles" emitted into meat do not render the meat as forbidden. Indeed, this is why we may eat fish with clean meat utensils. Similarly, this is why it is sufficient to simply thoroughly wash a utensil that was used even with hot fish and subsequently use that utensil with meat.

Rishonim - 3 Opinions Rishonim debate the scope of the applicability of the rule of Nat Bar Nat. The Rivan (cited in Tosafot Chulin 111b s.v. Hilchata) cites the opinion of his great father-in-law, Rashi, who limits the applicability of the Nat Bar Nat leniency. He relates that Rashi believed that only fish placed on a meat plate is considered Nat Bar Nat, since only a small amount of meat taste is absorbed into the fish. However, if fish is cooked in a meat pot, then the fish is not Pareve even according to Shmuel. This is because the fish has absorbed a great deal of "meat taste" from the meat pot. Rivan relates that once someone asked Rashi if an egg that was cooked in a dairy pot can be cooked with meat, and Rashi replied in the negative. Tosafot, however, notes that a different impression is gleaned from Rashi's (s.v. Nat Bar Nat) commentary to the Gemara Chulin 111b. Rashi explains that the fish attains the status of being "meaty" only if it is cooked with actual meat. Rashi clearly implies that if the fish is only cooked in a meat pot, then the fish remains Pareve. Indeed, Rashi's grandson, Rabbeinu Tam, and his great-grandson, the Ri, both believe that the Nat Bar Nat rule applies even in a case of cooking, so that even if the Pareve item was cooked in a meat or dairy pot, the cooked item remains Pareve (see Haghaot Ashri, Chulin 8:29). The Rosh (Chulin 8:30) cites the Sefer HaTruma who adopts a middle position. He believes that a Pareve item roasted in a meat or dairy pot is no longer Pareve. However, if the Pareve item is cooked in a meat or dairy pot it is still considered Pareve. The cooking case is different because the Pareve is three steps removed from the meat. First, the meat was absorbed into the pot, subsequently the taste of the meat is imparted to the water the Pareve item is being cooked in, and only then to the Pareve item. Indeed, Tosafot (Avodah Zarah 76a s.v. Bat Yoma) asserts (and the Shach Y.D. 94:15 rules

in accordance with this assertion) that even Rashi agrees that a Pareve item cooked in a meat or dairy pot remains Pareve if it is three steps removed from either meat or milk.

Shulchan Aruch Rav Yosef Karo, in his Beit Yosef (chapter 95 s.v. Dagim) cites many Rishonim (including Rashba, Ran, Ravva) who subscribe to the most lenient opinion, that Pareve food cooked or even roasted in a meat or dairy pot is still considered Pareve. Indeed, in the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 95:2), Rav Karo rules according to the most lenient opinion that the Nat Bar Nat leniency applies even to Pareve food roasted in a meat or dairy pot. The Rama thereupon notes that the Ashkenazic practice is to initially (Lechatchila) be concerned with the strict opinion. That means, for instance, that a Pareve item cooked (or roasted) in a meat pot should not be eaten with dairy foods. If, however, the Pareve food happened to have been mixed with dairy food (i.e. Bidieved), the Rama writes that the Ashkenazi practice is to follow the lenient view. It seems to me that it is possible that the Rama is entirely consistent with Rashi's opinions about this matter. It seems possible that Rashi essentially believes that a Pareve item cooked in a meat or milk pot remains Pareve. This position is reflected in Rashi's commentary on Gemara Chullin. However, Rashi's oral ruling may stem from a Minhag that Rashi developed to be strict about this matter, in order to avoid confusion. Since it is easy to confuse a case of a Pareve item cooked in a meat pot with a case of a meat item cooked in a meat pot, Rashi sought to avoid problems by forbidding one to initially mix Pareve items cooked in a meat pot with milk (and vice versa). However, once a mistake has been made perhaps Rashi would concede that the mixture is not forbidden to consume since the essential Halacha regards items cooked in a meat or milk pot as Pareve. The Rama seems to permit (Bidieved) even Pareve food, roasted in a meat pot and subsequently mixed with dairy, to be eaten. The Shach (95:4), however, cites the opinion of the Maharshal that if a Pareve item was roasted in a meat utensil and then mixed with dairy, it cannot be eaten. This opinion follows the aforementioned opinion of the Sefer HaTruma. However, the Aruch HaShulchan (95:12) and Chochmat Adam (48:1) adopt the ruling of Rama as normative, even though the Shach is regarded as extraordinarily authoritative. Perhaps they rule in accordance with the Rama's opinion since it is based on the accepted practice of Ashkenazic Jewry. Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei Hashulchan 95:25) rules that one who wishes to rely on the lenient opinion on this matter has a right to do so, but he commends one accommodates the strict opinion. The Sephardic practice regarding this issue is far more lenient than the Ashkenazic practice. In fact, Rav Ovadia Yosef (see Yalkut Yosef p. 844 in the 5760 edition) and the current Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, Rav Shlomo Amar (Teshuvot Shamah Shlomo 2:Y.D. 4 and 6), permit Sephardim to cook a Pareve item in a meat pot even if one intends to eat the Pareve item with milk and even if the meat pot had been used for meat within the previous twenty four hours (or vice versa regarding cooking a Pareve item in a milk pot for use with meat). Rav Shalom Messas (Teshuvot Shemesh U'Magen 1:8, 2:42-43, and 3:1), though, rules that even according to Rav Yosef Karo, one may not cook a Pareve item in a meat pot that has been used within twenty four hours if one intends to eat the Pareve item with milk. He believes that the Shulchan Aruch differs with the Rama only regarding a Pareve item that was cooked in a meat pot with the intention of using it with only meat or Pareve, that one may later decide to eat the Pareve item with milk.

Waiting Between Meat and Dairy in the Case of Nat Bar Nat Rama (89:3) rules that one is not required to wait (six/three hours) after consuming Pareve food cooked in a meat pot. This is permitted because (see Taz 89:1 and Igrot Moshe Y.D. 2:26) the reason we wait between meat and dairy is that either some meat remains in one's teeth or that the taste of meat remains in one's mouth after eating meat. Obviously, these two reasons do not apply to Pareve items cooked in a meat pot, and accordingly, there is no need to wait six or three hours before consuming dairy foods. The Darkei Teshuva (99:43) cites a responsum of Rav Shlomo Kluger where he permits one to eat Pareve items cooked in a dairy pot within six/three hours after consuming meat. Rav Kluger notes that common practice is to be lenient regarding this question.

Eino Ben Yomo - Pot Not Used for Twenty Four Hours Rama notes that Ashkenazic practice is to treat a Pareve item cooked in a meat or dairy pot that was unused during the previous twenty four hours (Eino Ben Yomo), as Pareve. For instance, if one cooked potato in a meat pot that had not been used in the previous twenty four hours, one may eat the potato with sour cream. The reason for this is that the Halacha (Shulchan Aruch Y.D. Chapter 103) rules (see Avodah Zarah, 75b) that "taste particles" that are absorbed in a utensil turn rancid after remaining in the pot for more than twenty four hours. Hence, the pot will subsequently emit rancid "taste particles" from the food it had previously absorbed (Notein Taam Lifgam). If the taste emitted is bad, it does not render the food it enters as forbidden. In our example, the meat taste particles expelled into the potato were

rancid and hence do not render the potato as "meaty," even according to the strict opinion. The Chochmat Adam (48:2) notes, however, that one should not initially cook a Pareve item in a meat or dairy pot, even if it has not been used in the past twenty four hours, even if one plans to eat with a food type opposite to the type of the pot it was cooked in. The Biur HaGra (Y.D. 95:10), however, is lenient about this matter. Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei Hashulchan 95:33 and Bi'urim ad. loc. s.v. Im) and Rav Mordechai Willig (1981 SOY Guide to Kashrut, p.69) rule in accordance with the Chochmat Adam. Indeed, common practice does appear to accord with the strict opinion on this matter. The Chochmat Adam, though, is lenient in case of great need. Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei Hashulchan Tziyunim 95:70) cites this point as normative Halacha. It seems, however, that if a Pareve item was cooked in an Eino Ben Yomo meat pot with the intention of eating it with meat, that one may later decide to eat the Pareve item with milk. Thus, for example, if one cooked noodles in an Eino Ben Yomo meat pot with the intention of eating it at a meat meal, one may eat the leftover noodles the next day with cottage cheese.

Conclusion We have presented the basic rules of Nat Bar Nat. However, since there are many more details and exceptions to these rules, one should consult his Rabbi if he is confronted with a situation of Nat Bar Nat. Next week, Im Yirtzeh Hashem and Bli Neder, we shall discuss the issue of Davar Charif.

Postscript As a student I wondered whether the "taste particles" (Bliot) that the Gemara and the Poskim refer to, are physical entities or metaphysical entities. I posed the question to two Gedolim. Rav Aharon Soloveitchik told me that Bliot are a physical entity whereas Rav J. David Bleich told me that he thought that they were a metaphysical entity.

<http://www.koltorah.org/ravj/13-14%20Milk%20and%20Meat%20-%20Part%202.htm> Parshat Vayishlach

MILK AND MEAT: PART II - DAVAR CHARIF BY RABBI CHAIM JACHTER

Introduction This week we will continue to explore some of the laws of milk and meat. We will focus on the laws of "Davar Charif," a sharp-tasting food item cut by a meat or milk knife.

Talmudic Statement The Gemara (Chullin 111b-112a) states that a radish that was cut by a meat knife may not be consumed with milk products. The Gemara explains that the reason for this law is that "Agav Churfei Bala" - because the radish is sharp, it absorbs the meat taste particles from the knife. Although normally absorption (Bliah) occurs only when a food or utensil is hot, even a cold radish absorbs taste because of its sharpness. The Rishonim debate the parameters of this Halacha, and we will focus on three issues that they debate. First, is a radish the only example of a sharp item (Davar Charif) that this rule applies to? Second, does this rule apply even if the knife was "Eino Ben Yomo" - not used with meat during the twenty-four hour period prior to cutting the Davar Charif? Third, why is the radish not considered Pareve despite the fact that sharpness of food is equivalent to heat, because the radish is Nat Bar Nat (two steps removed from the meat itself, as was discussed in last week's Kol Torah)? It should be noted at the outset that Rashi (Chullin 112a s.v. Kishot) asserts that a Davar Charif absorbs only in combination with Duchka Desakinah (pressure of a knife). The Rama (Yoreh Deah 95:2) rules that sharp items also have impact during cooking. Accordingly, the Taz (Y.D. 96:3) rules that a sharp item that is merely placed in a milk pot is permitted to be eaten with meat, since it has not absorbed any milk from the pot. Most authorities agree with this assertion of the Taz (see Shach Y.D. 96:2 and Aruch HaShulchan Y.D. 96:11). Similarly, the Aruch HaShulchan (ibid.) rules that if a Pareve item which is not sharp is cut by a clean meat or milk knife it remains Pareve (see Tosafot Chullin 8b s.v. Agav, rejecting the stringent opinion of the Rivam in this regard and Shach 96:6).

What is Davar Charif? One Rishon (Rabbeinu Yechiel cited by the Semak number 213) asserts that the rule of Davar Charif applies only to the sharp items specifically mentioned by the Talmud -- a radish and assa foetida (Chiltit, see Avodah Zarah 39a). Most Rishonim, though, follow the opinion of Tosafot (Chullin 112a s.v. Agav) and Rambam (Hilchot Maachalot Asurot 9:24) that this rule applies to any sharp item such as onion or garlic. The Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 96:21) rules in accordance with the majority opinion. However, the minority opinion is used as a Snif Lehakel, a consideration in a lenient ruling (see Shach 96:12 and Biur HaGra 96:9). Davar Charif applies not only to sharp items such as radishes, but also to any food item with a very strong taste. This is evident from the examples of Davar Charif that appear in the Shulchan Aruch - lemons, very salty fish, strongly pickled vegetables, and spices. Later authorities debate what precisely is included in the category of Davar Charif (see Taz Y.D. 96:9, Pitchei Teshuva Y.D. 96:3-4, Aruch HaShulchan Y.D. 96:13, and Darkei Teshuva 96:44).

Rav Binyamin Forst (Laws of Kashrut p. 323) cites the Yad Yehuda (96:2) as asserting that a fruit that is edible raw is not considered a Davar Charif. According to this approach, oranges and grapefruits are not categorized as Davar Charaf. One should consult his Rabbi in a case where it is not clear if an item is considered Davar Charif.

Eino Ben Yomo The Gemara (Avodah Zarah 39a) states that if assa foetida (Chiltit) was cut by a non-Kosher knife, it is rendered non-kosher. The Gemara states that this applies even if the knife was not used with non-kosher food within the past twenty four hours. Ordinarily, kosher food cut by such a knife is permitted because of the rule of Notein Ta'am Lifgam - the food taste that has been lodged in a utensil for more than twenty four hours becomes rancid and does not render kosher food as not kosher. However, the Gemara states that the sharpness of the assa foetida revitalizes the rancid taste and restores its good taste ("Agav Churfei, Machlaya Lei Lishvach"). Hence, the non-Kosher food taste absorbed in the knife has become revitalized and renders the assa foetida that it cuts as forbidden. Rishonim debate whether this rule applies to any Davar Charif or only to assa foetida due to its extremely sharp taste (see Tosafot Avodah Zarah 39a s.v. Agav and Tosafot Chullin 112a s.v. Agav for citations of the conflicting opinions). The Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 96:1) cites both opinions but Rama (Y.D. 95:2) and Shach (Y.D. 96:6) rule strictly. Our practice is to rule strictly that any Davar Charif revitalizes a rancid taste and thus an onion cut by an Eino Ben Yomo meat knife is considered meat. The lenient opinion is used as a consideration to rule leniently only in a case of considerable need (see Y.D. Aruch HaShulchan 96:4). Teshuvot Mishkenot Yaakov Y.D. 43 (cited in the Pitchei Teshuva Y.D. 96:1) rules in accordance with the lenient opinion. We noted, though, a few months ago, that the Mishkenot Yaakov sometimes issued rulings that run counter to the commonly accepted practices.

Nat Bar Nat The Gemara in Chullin (111b) presents the rule of a radish cut by a meat knife, immediately after the Gemara concluded that hot fish placed on a meat plate is considered to be Pareve (Nat Bar Nat). The obvious question is why the radish is not Pareve, despite its sharpness being equivalent to heat, just as the hot fish is considered Pareve. Rashi (s.v. Kishot) provides two alternative approaches to this problem. One approach is that the fish is Pareve because we can assume that the meat plate was clean because plates are kept clean. Knives, Rashi explains, are different. People are not careful to keep knives clean (I have heard Rav Mordechai Willig and numerous other authorities point out that this presumption is not applicable today; also see Badei Hashulchan 96:10) and the knives usually retain a thin residue from the food they have been used to cut. Hence, a knife that was used to cut meat and subsequently used to cut a radish, probably had meat residue on it when it was used to cut the radish. Accordingly, the radish becomes "meaty" because it has absorbed from the film of the meat on the knife. According to this approach of Rashi, if a clean meat knife cut a radish, the radish will be Pareve, similar to the hot fish placed on a meat plate. However, Rashi presents a second approach. He writes that "sharpness" causes more extraction of taste and absorption of taste than heat does. Therefore, the sharpness together with the pressure of the knife combine to extract the meat taste embedded in the meat knife, more effectively than heat does. According to this approach, a Davar Charif is an exception to the rule of Nat Bar Nat. Rav Yosef Karo (Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 96:1) and the Rama (Y.D. 95:2) rule in accordance with Rashi's second approach and therefore a Davar Charif cut by a clean meat or milk knife is not considered Pareve.

The lenient approach, however, is utilized by Poskim as a Snif Lihakel (see, for example, Badei Hashulchan 96:58).

Three Common Problems As a practicing Rabbi will attest, questions regarding Davar Charif arise very often (especially on late Friday afternoon before Shabbat). We will presently discuss three of these issues. The first is if an onion was cut by a clean "Eino Ben Yomo" milk knife and was subsequently cooked together with meat. Do we say that this food now constitutes a forbidden mixture of meat and milk? Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei HaShulchan 96:58) cites two opinions regarding this issue. Two great Acharonim, the Chochmat Adam and the Pri Megadim, rule that this food constitutes a forbidden mixture of milk and meat and must be discarded. However, the Beit Meir rules that three aforementioned lenient opinions of the Rishonim may be combined to rule that this food is permitted.

1) The opinion that only a radish is defined as a "Davar Charif." 2) That the rule of "Nat Bar Nat" applies even to a "Davar Charif." 3) That the rule of Davar Charif does not apply when the knife is Eino Ben Yomo. One should consult his Rabbi for a ruling should this situation arise. The second case is if an onion was cut by a meat or milk knife and subsequently placed in a Pareve blender. Is the blender no longer considered Pareve? This issue is vigorously debated by the Acharonim. The Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 451:31) argues that since the rule of Nat Bar Nat does not apply to a Davar Charif then a Pareve utensil that cut the onion (that was cut by a meat knife) becomes "meaty". The Even HaOzer (Y.D. 96:3)

disagrees. He asserts that the Pareve utensil that was used to cut an onion subsequent to its being cut with a meat knife, remains Pareve because it is Nat Bar Nat. The Davar Charif itself is an exception to the rule of Nat Bar Nat, but a utensil that is used to cut the affected Davar Charif is not an exception according to this approach. Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei HaShulchan 96:57) rules that in case of need one may rule leniently, in light of the fact that some Rishonim believe that the rule of Nat Bar Nat applies even to the Davar Charif itself. Acharonim debate whether the cutting board beneath a Davar Charif that was cut by a meat or milk knife becomes meat or milk (see Badei HaShulchan 96:7). They argue whether the cutting action of the knife and the sharpness of the food impact on the cutting board as well as the food. Contemporary authorities disagree concerning how to rule on this matter. Rav Feivel Cohen rules (ibid) strictly but Rav Hershel Schachter told this author that one may rule leniently. Saul Friedman (my Talmid at the Torah Academy of Bergen County, who was in my Shiur from 1995-1997) argues that the cutting board should be considered Pareve according to the aforementioned view of the Even HaOzer. He points out that the cutting board should be considered Nat Bar Nat and permitted in case of need as we mentioned earlier. This argument seems reasonable. One should consult his Rabbi for a ruling should this question arise.

A Few Final Thoughts Pitchei Teshuva (Y.D. 96:4) cites authorities who rule that cooked onions have lost their sharpness and are no longer considered "Davar Charif." Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei Hashulchan 96:46) points out that no general rule can be given regarding the question if a sharp item loses its "sharpness" when it is cooked. Rather, the question of whether cooking removes an item from the status of Davar Charif should be determined by a Rav on a case by case basis. Similarly, the Rama (Y.D. 95:2) asserts that a food item is not classified as "Charif" unless a majority of the food is "Charif." Rav Feivel Cohen (Badei Hashulchan 95:43) cites a number of Acharonim who question why the majority principle should be employed to determine if a food item is "Charif." They argue that sometimes a food is "Charif" if even just a small amount of spices has been added to the food. Accordingly, Rav Cohen concludes that no objective rule can be given to determine if a food is "Charif." Instead, a Rav must evaluate each situation individually. Finally, there is a comment that appears in the Pitchei Teshuva (95:4), which is very instructive. The Pitchei Teshuva cites a debate among the Acharonim regarding the rule that a Davar Charif can revitalize a rancid taste – whether this rule is rabbinic in nature or it has the status of a Torah law. He concludes his survey of this debate by citing the Teshuvot Shevat Tzion (no. 32). This authority asserts that the rabbis rule that a Davar Charif revitalizes a poor taste absorbed in a utensil based on actual experience. Hence, if empirical evidence demonstrates that the meat taste that is imparted into a Davar Charif is not rancid, then the Davar Charif is meaty on a biblical level. This approach clearly assumes that Bliot are physical in nature as assumed by Rav Aharon Soloveitchik, as we cited in last week's essay. The assertion that Chazal made many Halachic determinations regarding Kashrut based on experience and experimentation is supported by the Ramban in his commentary to the beginning of the third chapter in Chullin. Indeed, this argument seems to have clear evidence from the anecdote regarding Rav that appears on Chullin 111b. Next week, with G-d's help and B'li Neder, we will explore the issue of not eating milk products after consuming meat.

THE LAWS OF MILK AND MEAT:

PART III - WAITING BETWEEN MEAT AND MILK

BY RABBI CHAIM JACHTER

Introduction In this issue we will conclude our series of discussions regarding the laws of meat and milk with a review of the issue of refraining from eating dairy products after consuming meat. We will particularly focus on the sources for the various traditions of how long one waits between meat and milk.

Talmudic Background The Gemara (Chullin 105a) cites Rav Chisda's assertion that "one who consumes meat may not eat dairy products and one who eats dairy products is permitted to eat meat." The Rishonim give two reasons for this prohibition. Rashi (s.v. Chasa) explains that meat has a strong taste that lingers in the mouth. Rambam (Hilchot Maachalot Asurot 9:28) explains that the concern is for meat that remains lodged between one's teeth. The Taz (Y.D. 89:1) writes that normative Halachah takes into consideration the rulings of both Rashi and the Ramban. The Gemara records an interesting but somewhat ambiguous statement of Mar Ukva. He called himself "vinegar the son of wine," because his father did not consume dairy products until twenty four hours (Me'it L'eit) had passed since he had eaten meat, yet he himself would consume milk products "at the next meal" (Liseudata Acharita) after he had eaten meat. The Rishonim disagree about how to interpret the phrase "at the next meal," which the Gemara indicates is the earliest time that one may eat milk after eating meat.

Rishonim The Rambam (Hilchot Maachalot Asurot 9:28) rules that Gemara means that one must wait the usual time one normally waits after eating a meal before consuming another meal. The Rambam holds that this time is approximately six hours (Kemo Sheish Shaot). Tosafot, on the other hand, (Chullin 105a sv. Liseudata and 104b sv. Of) believe that if one recites Birkat Hamazon (or the appropriate blessing after eating) and begins a new meal, that one is permitted to consume dairy products during the new meal, even if the new meal commenced immediately after the Birkat Hamazon of the meat meal. It is interesting that the Rosh (an Ashkenazic Rishon) follows the Rambam's approach and not the approach of Tosafot. This author heard from Rav Aharon Lichtenstein who heard from Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik that Rav Chaim Soloveitchik had inferred from the language of the Rambam that one need not wait a complete six hours. The Rambam states one must refrain from milk "approximately" six hours. Rav Chaim is said to have ruled that if one has waited five hours and a minute that this is sufficient waiting time, and milk products may be consumed. However, it should be noted that the Hagahot Ashri (Chullin 8:5) cites as the Rambam's view that one must wait six hours before consuming milk. This authority seems to believe that one must wait a full six hours before consuming dairy products. The Tur also writes that one must wait six hours, which would seem to indicate that the full six hour wait is required (see Darkei Teshuva 89:6)

Shulchan Aruch The Mechaber (Yoreh Deah 89:1) rules that one must wait six hours between meat and milk (it seems that he requires one to wait six full hours). The Rema (Y.D. 89:1) notes the dissenting opinion of Tosafot, and records the common practice of European Jews (in the sixteenth century) to wait only one hour between meat and milk. He concludes that it is proper (Nachon) to follow the Rambam's opinion that one must wait six hours between meat and milk. Both the Shach (89:8) and the Taz (89:2) cite the statement of the Maharshah urging every Jew fully dedicated to Torah observance to wait six hours.

The fact that the Rema, Maharshah, Taz, and Shach all urged that one should wait six full hours probably accounts for why most Jews of eastern European extraction have the practice of waiting six hours between meat and milk. In fact, by the early nineteenth century, the practice of all of eastern European Jewry was to wait six hours, as recorded in the Chochmat Adam 40:13. The Aruch Hashulchan (Y.D. 89:7), writing close to the turn of the twentieth century, also writes that the common practice is to wait six hours. Both of these major authorities bolster these practices with strong condemnations of those who fail to wait six hours. The Chochmat Adam writes that one who does wait six hours violates "Vial Titosh Torah Imecha," literally "do not forsake the teachings of your mother," which the Gemara (Pesachim 50b) cites as the source for our obligation to uphold established family practices. The Aruch HaShulchan similarly writes, "Chalilah Leshanot," Heaven forbid changing this practice. Presumably, these authorities use such strong language to emphasize that the practice of East European Jewry had changed since the time of the Rema. Dutch Jews, however, have maintained the practice to wait only one hour. The commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch offer two sources for this approach. The Vilna Gaon (Biur Hagra 89:6) writes that it is based on the Zohar in Parshat Mishpatim, which speaks of the prohibition to eat milk and meat within one hour of each other. It seems reasonable to assume that this approach essentially follows Tosafot, that one may consume milk following the recitation of Birkat Hamazon after a meat meal. The contribution of the Zohar is the idea of waiting an hour. The Taz (89:2) cites an entirely different explanation of the practice of some to wait one hour between meat and milk. He writes that it is a compromise between the opinion of Tosafot, who holds that Birkat Hamazon is the only boundary needed between the two meals, and the Rambam who believes that we must wait approximately six hours.

The commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch do not mention practice of German Jewry of waiting three hours. However, this practice has a source in a Rishon - Rabbeinu Yerucham (Issur V'heter no. 39) - and is alluded to in the Chayei Adam (127:10). Some of my students (including Yitzchak Haber and Steven Kluger) suggested two explanations for this practice. One possibility is that it is a compromise between the Rambam and Tosafot (similar to the Taz's explanation of the one hour opinion). Another possibility is that this approach believes that three hours is the normal time one waits between meals. Pitchei Teshuva (Y.D. 89:3) cites an interesting ruling of the Chatam Sofer. He rules that if someone is ill and must drink milk, he is permitted to drink milk even after just one hour. The Chatam Sofer writes that this applies even if the individual is not seriously ill. The consensus of authorities accepts this ruling. Chochmat Adam (40:13) and the Aruch HaShulchan (89:7) similarly rule that "someone who is not healthy who is instructed by his physicians to drink milk can rely on the opinion of Tosafot by waiting for one hour and cleaning out his mouth. Similarly, a young individual who is weak and requires milk is permitted to drink milk after waiting only one hour." This author heard Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik rule similarly for someone who had an ulcer and whose

physician advised him to drink milk. The basis for this ruling is that Ashkenazim essentially follow the opinion of Tosafot, but their Minhag (custom or practice) is to follow the Rambam. However, they did not undertake this practice in case of pain (Bemakom Tzaar Lo Nahagu). It should be noted that it is very possible that this lenient ruling may not apply to Sephardim, since Rav Yosef Karo unequivocally rules that one must wait six hours after eating meat before consuming milk. One should consult his Rabbi if such a problem arises.

Hard Cheese The Rema (Y.D. 89:2) codifies the practice to refrain from eating meat after consuming hard cheese. The Shach (89:15) and Taz (89:4) rule that if the cheese is six months old or "with holes" that it is considered hard. Both the Chochmat Adam (40:13) and the Aruch Hashulchan (89:11) codify this ruling of the Shach and Taz. Rav Soloveitchik explains that the time frame of six months refers to the aging process. If the cheese is aged that long, its taste is very strong, so the aforementioned reason of Rashi for refraining from milk after meat is relevant. Thus, we should not eat meat after eating such cheese. The Acharonim debate how long one must wait after eating hard cheese before partaking of meat. The Shach (89:16) is inclined to rule that one is required to wait only one hour, and the Aruch HaShulchan (89:11) seems to follow this ruling. The Pri Megadim (Siftei Daat 89:16) writes that the consensus opinion of Acharonim is that one must wait six hours after consuming hard cheese. The Yad Yehuda (a major commentary to the Yoreh Deah section of Shulchan Aruch) rules that one need not refrain from meat after consuming hard cheese that has been cooked. The reason for this is straightforward - the hard cheese loses its strong taste during the cooking process.

Case of Doubt- Safek Acharonim debate whether one may be lenient if he is uncertain whether the six hours after eating meat has elapsed (see Darkei Teshuva 89:5). On one hand, since the rule of waiting between meat and milk is a Rabbinic prohibition (meat and milk is biblically forbidden only when two are cooked together - Derech Bishul Asrah Torah [Chullin 108a]), the rule of Safek Derabanan Lekula (one rules leniently in a case of doubt where the prohibition is rabbinic in nature) should apply. On the other hand, perhaps this rule should not apply, since it is a Davar Sheyesh Lo Matirin -one can refrain from dairy products for an extra few minutes (the rule that one rules leniently in case of doubt of a Rabbinic prohibition does not apply if the prohibition will elapse after a reasonably short period of time, such as a doubt whether an egg was laid on Yom Tov; see Beitza 3b). On the other hand, perhaps Eastern European Jews did not accept the practice of waiting six hours in case of doubt. The Darchei Teshuva and the Badei HaShulchan (89:9) are inclined to rule leniently on this issue. However, Rabbi David Heber presents a cogent argument to rule strictly on this question (see the Torah journal of the Orthodox Union, Mesorah 6:92-94).

Conclusion We hope that our readers have enjoyed our review of some of the laws of milk and meat. We pray that just as we respect the various practices among observant Jews with regard to waiting between meat and milk, we should grow to respect the other differences in Halachic practices and Hashkafic orientation among ourselves.

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From: ohr@ohr.edu Sent: May 13, 2004 To: weekly@ohr.edu Subject: Torah Weekly - Parshat Behar - Bechukotai
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Written and compiled by RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR
-- Parshat Behar - Bechukotai

Hidden Miracles "If you walk in My laws..."

The purpose of this world is to be factory to produce a product called olam haba - the World-to-Come.

That is our only target, and the mitzvot our only passport.

However, you can read the Torah from cover to cover and you won't find one specific promise about the reward for keeping the mitzvot in the next world. Promises of reward in this world abound. We are promised the rains in their time; the land will give its produce and the trees will bear fruit; there will be an abundance of food that we will eat to satiety. We will dwell securely in our land. No one will walk down a dark street and be frightened. No one will worry about sending their children off on the bus in the morning. There will be abundance and peace.

Why is it the Torah makes no open promises about the reward for keeping the mitzvot in the next world, but is replete with details of their reward in this existence?

All reward and punishment in this world is through hidden miracles. When a person eats a bacon/cheeseburger and dies prematurely, nobody knows that he died because he ate a bacon/cheeseburger. People die at his age when even when they don't eat bacon/cheeseburgers. They die younger.

A person gives tzedaka and becomes rich. You don't see that he became rich because he gave tzedaka. There are plenty of rich people who don't give tzedaka - they inherited it or they won the sweepstake. The hidden miracle is that this person wasn't destined to become rich or wasn't supposed to die young, but because he gave tzedaka or because he ate the bacon/cheeseburger, G-d changed this person's destiny. It's miraculous, but it's hidden. It looks like nature, but if it were actually the work of nature, then nothing that a person did in this world could have any effect on himself. For a person is born under a certain mazal, a certain destiny and without the intervention of an outside force - the hidden miracle - nothing that a person did, whether for good or bad, would have any repercussions in this world.

That's why the Torah speaks at great length about the outcome of the performance (or non-performance) of the mitzvot in this world. For it is truly miraculous that our actions should affect anything in this world, a world that, aside from these hidden miracles, is run by a system of mazal and nature.

However, as far as the next world is concerned, it's obvious that our actions will have repercussions there. The Torah doesn't need to stress the reward and punishment in that existence because it's obvious that people who engage in spiritual pursuits and serve G-d faithfully should receive spiritual rewards. But it is certainly not natural that people who are immersed in the work of the spirit, the study of Torah and the performance of mitzvot should receive their reward in this world as well. Thus the Torah stresses the reward for keeping the mitzvot in this world because that is something that no one could surmise without being told of its existence.

- Source: Ramban on the Parsha and at the beginning of Parshat Va'era

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From: RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN'S Shabbat Shalom Parsha Column [parshat_hashavua@ohrtorahstone.org.il] Sent: May 12, 2004
Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Behar-Behukotai (Leviticus 25:1-27:34) By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - We are now in the midst of the days of sefirat haomer, the count of forty-nine days from the second day of the Passover Festival (Nissan 16), when the barley offering is to be brought to the Holy Temple (omer is a measure of grain) until the night of the Shavuot Festival (Sivan 6), when the two loaves of bread were to be offered (Leviticus 23:9-21). Most Biblical commentaries link the count - because we are actually commanded to count each day with a special blessing - to the excited anticipation of the Israelites to the Divine gift of the Torah, which was scheduled to be bestowed on the day of Shavuot, the fiftieth day following our exodus from Egypt. The assumption is that the Jews began to anxiously count each day leading up to the Divine Revelation at Sinai in the desert, as soon as they left Egypt; just as they counted then, so do we count each year the days between our freedom from slavery and our adoption of our "mission statement and constitution," expressing the responsibility and the goals which that freedom demands.

But why is the count for Torah revelation bound up with grain sacrifices (the omer)? Why do we count up (from the first day to the forty-ninth day) rather than count down, as is more usual when anticipating a special event? Why may we not recite the blessing any more if we forget to count only once, but thereafter we may only mention the weeks and the days without the blessing praising G-d who gave us this command to count? And why is the Festival towards which we are counting, the Festival of Shavuot, known by a name that means "weeks," which describes the period of the counting, rather than the goal of the counting, this particular holy day?

On first glance, the Torah portions in Leviticus seem to have very little to do with each other, appear to be dealing with totally disparate and disjointed issues. The third Book of the Bible opens with the sacrificial ritual, goes on to the tragic eighth day of the dedication of the Sanctuary – when Aaron lost his two beloved sons by a divinely-sent fire – highlights the impurity associated with reproductive emissions and bodily decay, catalogues the commandments which lead the individual to holiness, delineates the festivals of the Hebrew calendar, describes the limitations and blessings of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, and concludes with the chastisements of Jewish exile and persecution. The panoply of topics seem to have no logical unifying theme, no conceptual scheme which might serve as a connective thread weaving them into a single tapestry of edification.

I would suggest that the overarching topic of this entire Book is holiness: holy space and place – especially the Sanctuary – and holy Festival days and years – especially the Feast of Weeks and the Jubilee year. And the connective thread linking the various points of sanctity is the commandment to count – sefirah. In order for one who is ritually impure as the result of contact with death, bodily decay or an emission from an organ of reproduction to be deemed pure enough to bring an offering to the Sanctuary, it is necessary for such a person to count the days towards purity, and the count always has something to do with the number seven; for example, a woman who sees blood “shall count for herself seven days, after which she shall be purified” (Leviticus 15:28). The days between Passover and Shavuot are days which must be counted: “and you shall count... from the morrow of the festival seven whole weeks... You shall count fifty days” (Leviticus 23:15,16). And finally, every seventh year is to be a Sabbatical year in which the land is to lie fallow, debts are to be rescinded, and the Israelites are to dedicate themselves to acts of charity and the study of Torah: “And you shall count for yourself seven Sabbatical years (49 years, seven Sabbatical years)... And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year, declaring freedom for the land and all of its inhabitants, a Jubilee (Yovel) year shall it be for you, in which each individual shall return to his original land and homestead, everyone shall return to his family” (Leviticus 25:9,10,11).

That which is sacred, Kadosh, is apart from and higher than the mundane, limited world of materialism; it is identified with the Almighty G-d, who is also (as it were) apart from and higher than, a G-d of spirit, love, compassion and peace. The ultimate goal of Judaism is to infuse the world with sanctity, to bring the Divine Presence within this sphere and so “perfect the world in the Kingship of G-d”; hence, the commandment which preceded the Biblical Book of Leviticus, which indeed made the Torah of the Priest-Kohanim possible, was “they shall make for Me a Sanctuary so that I may dwell in their midst” (Exodus 25:8).

Until the Almighty is permanently in our midst, for as long as we are forced to live in a world with Divine Eclipse (hester panim) seeing G-d’s goodness only “through a glass darkly” there are still pockets of space and periods of time which are infused with rays of Divine Splendor, which are declared Kadosh, sacred. The Hebrew word mo’ed (usually translated ‘Festival’) means rendezvous, a day or week when G-d makes Himself available (as it were) to meet with the Israelites, to establish a relationship with us. Passover was the first such meeting-point in history, when we felt G-d’s loving concern and achieved political freedom from slavery. But that is only the beginning; we yearn for Torah, we long for a Sanctuary, - a nuptial home in which G-d and Israel can dwell together in a perfected world. That goal is held aloft on Shavuot, the festival of first fruits in the Holy Temple of Jerusalem, the anniversary of the Revelation at Sinai – and we know that there can be no redemption with the Torah of Divine Revelation.

How do we progress from the beginning of a relationship with G-d on Passover to the fullness of a complete union anticipated on Shavuot? By advancing from Passover’s Sippur (telling the story of the Exodus) to the command of Sefirah (counting); the Hebrew root sfr (saffire, blue-white) means to make whiter, holier, more exalted (S’fat Emet).

Just as those who are ritually pure count the days of their purification, so must we – Israel, G-d’s bride – purify ourselves during the seven times seven days leading to Shavuot.

Hence our count is linked to grain sacrifices to G-d, because there is no sanctity without sacrifice, without giving of self. We count up and not down because hopefully our personal religious growth is cumulative, we dare not miss a day of counting and growing or we may well descend to our former impurity, and since the goal can never be reached without preparation and improvement, the ultimate Festival of Redemption in the Sanctuary of Divine Union is named for the week’s of our counting and purification.

And since we yearn not only to dwell with the Almighty in a relationship expressed in time but also in a world of sanctified earth and sanctified activity, we count the seven Sabbatical Years affecting our land and hopefully will reach the fiftieth year, the Jubilee year, expressing universal redemption, freedom and peace.