

O H R N E T

SHABBAT PARSHAT TERUMAH · 6 ADAR 5773 - FEB. 16, 2013 · VOL. 20 NO. 19

PARSHA INSIGHTS

THE LAIR OF THE LION

“They shall make a Sanctuary for Me.” (25:8)

A while ago, a well-know Israeli daily newspaper, not known for its sympathy to religion, published a cartoon. In the cartoon, a man was having a dream. Out of his head, came the statutory “think-bubbles”. The bubbles got larger and larger until the following scene unraveled. The man saw himself ‘Upstairs’ being questioned by angels with wings wearing what looked suspiciously like black hats: “But why didn’t you keep Shabbat?” they asked. “You knew there was a thing called Shabbat, didn’t you? What about Kashrut? You knew there was something called Kashrut?”

In the following bubble, the man wakes up in a cold sweat. Then a close-up on his face. “*Maybe they’re right!*” He says.

Some time ago, a baby-food company recalled tens of thousands of its products because some lunatic had put glass in some of them. Was there anyone who thought “Well, the chances of getting the one with the glass is so minuscule – thousands and thousands to one. I’ll just go right ahead and feed this apple puree to my little six-month old baby!?”

If there were five hundred bottles of cola on a table in front of you and you knew one of them was poisoned, would you drink any of them? Is there anyone in the world who would pause, way up the statistical probabilities, and say “Well, it’s such a small chance...”

When faced with even the smallest possibility of an enormous danger, not even the longest odds in the world encourage us to take a chance.

So why isn’t everyone religious?

Why don’t people think like this: “What if those religious fanatics are right? After all, even if they’re wrong, so at least I’ll have had a wonderfully rich and fulfilling life, a faithful wife and a lovely family, etc. etc. But what if they’re *right* and I’m wrong? I’m going to lose out on something *eternal*. I’m going to get to the next world and I won’t have the price of admission. I won’t be able to get even a cheap seat! I’ll be out in the middle of a cosmic ocean with no direction home. Maybe they’re right! Maybe it’s all true. Maybe there is a World-to-Come. Maybe I will have to give an account in front of the real ‘Supreme Court’. So you know what? I’ll be religious just in case! Better safe than sorry!”

Why don’t people think like this? What’s the difference

between a bottle of baby food and Judaism?

In this week’s Torah portion, the Torah starts a lengthy description of the Mishkan. The sheer volume of this account outweighs almost every subject in the Torah. What was the Mishkan and why was it so special that it merits such voluminous expanse in the Book where nothing is merely descriptive and there is no place for sheer literary embellishment?

The word Mishkan comes from the word ‘to dwell’. It was the place that G-d ‘dwelled’ in this lower world. But if G-d is the place of the world - the world is within Him - how can a mere building house He whose glory fills the universe? How can the Omnipresent have a ‘house’?

There is a difference between *existence* and *presence*. G-d exists equally everywhere. He is no more in one place than another, because there can be no place where He is not. He is the place of the world. Anywhere where He is not *cannot* exist, by definition. Rather, the Mishkan and the Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple) were places where the *presence* of G-d was palpable. You could see He was there.

Imagine sitting at a computer. You are typing away, lost in the great American/British/Israeli novel. Unbeknownst to you, a lion enters your room. It’s a very quiet, well-behaved lion, and you carry on typing in blissful ignorance.

The existence of the lion is unaltered by whether you carry on typing or you turn around and give yourself a bit of a surprise. However, the *presence* of the lion has everything to do with whether you turn around or not.

The Mishkan allowed one to see and *fear* the lion, as it were. G-d’s presence there was palpable.

The word for ‘sight’ in Hebrew is from the same root as ‘fear’ - *yirah*. What is the connection between seeing and fearing? A person only fears what he can see. Intellectual concepts don’t frighten us. The biggest proof is that we don’t fear G-d. Even if we’re religious and we know that there is a World-to-Come, a cosmic day of reckoning, even though we know these things clearly, we *can’t* see *them*, and so we *don’t really* fear. Fear comes only from seeing the Lion. Going into the Mishkan was like going into the lion’s lair.

PARSHA OVERVIEW

G-d commands Moshe to build a Mishkan (Sanctuary) and supplies him with detailed instructions. The Children of Israel are asked to contribute precious metals and stones, fabrics, skins, oil and spices. In the Mishkan's outer courtyard are an altar for the burnt offerings and a laver for washing. The Tent of Meeting is divided by a curtain into two chambers. The outer chamber is accessible only to the *kohanim*, the descendants of Aharon. This con-

tains the table of showbreads, the *menorah*, and the golden altar for incense. The innermost chamber, the Holy of Holies, may be entered only by the *kohen gadol*, and only once a year, on Yom Kippur. Here is the Ark that held the Ten Commandments inscribed on the two tablets of stone that G-d gave to the Jewish nation on Mount Sinai. All of the utensils and vessels, as well as the construction of the Mishkan, are described in great detail.

LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

UNRAVELING STRINGS ATTACHED

One of the greatest builders of Torah education in Eretz Yisrael in the previous generation was Rabbi Yosef Kahaneman, commonly known as the Rav of Ponovez. Arriving in the Holy Land after losing most of his family and community in the Holocaust, he not only founded the great yeshiva in Bnei Brak which bears the name of the community which he led back in Lithuania but also institutions to care for homeless children who had survived the war.

He was not only a brilliant Torah scholar and orator



but also an extremely effective fundraiser. One particular donor was enamored of this great man's personality but did not particularly care for the religious nature of his institutions. "I am prepared to give you the money you need to build another school, he told the rav, "but only if none of its students wear a *kipah* on his head!" Not missing a beat the rav agreed to this condition and received the gift.

What did he do? He built a school for girls in which not one student kept her head covered.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE STORY

LOST AND FOUND

"Where is Chaim?" was the anguished cry of the Jerusalem mother whose three-year old son was nowhere to be seen.

Neighbors were soon organized into search parties and there was talk of alerting the police and the ZAKA volunteers who specialize in locating lost people.

Then someone reminded the searchers, who had already spent a futile hour, that Jerusalem, with its large population of infants, had a "*Gemach* for Lost Children" in virtually every

religious neighborhood. An Orthodox Telephone Directory was consulted and a call was made to the nearest home that offered this unique service.

"Does your little boy answer to the name Chaim?" was the question coming from the end of the line. "Someone found him crying in the street and brought him here." Thus there was a happy ending to yet another story of a lost child thanks to a very special *Gemach*.

לענין
הרב חנא מנחם מנדל בן ר' יחזקאל שרגא זצ"ל
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PARSHA Q&A ?

1. How many types of items were the Jews to donate?
2. The donation of silver for the Mishkan differed from the donation of the other items. How?
3. What property do *techelet* and *argaman* share that *orot eilim m'adamim* do not share?
4. What property do the above three share that *shesh* and *orot techashim* do not share?
5. Onkelos translates "*tachash*" as "*sasgona*." Why?
6. What kind of trees did Yaakov plant in Egypt?
7. Describe two uses of: 1) oil, 2) spices, 3) jewels.
8. The *aron* was made with three boxes, one inside the other. Exactly how tall was the outer box?
9. Why is the Torah referred to as "testimony"?
10. What did the faces of the *keruvim* resemble?
11. On what day of the week was the *lechem hapanim* baked?
12. What does *miksha* mean?
13. What was the purpose of the *menorah's gevi'im* (cups)?
14. How did Moshe know the shape of the *menorah*?
15. What designs were embroidered into the tapestries of the Mishkan?
16. What is meant by "standing wood"?
17. How long was the Mishkan?
18. How wide was the interior of the Mishkan?
19. Why was the altar coated with *nechoshet*?
20. Which function did the copper *yeteidot* serve?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

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

1. 25:2 - 13.
2. 25:3 - No fixed amount of the other items was required. The silver was given as a fixed amount: a half-shekel.
3. 25:4,5 - They are wool; *orot eilim* are not.
4. 25:4,5 - They are dyed; *shesh* and *orot techashim* are not.
5. 25:5 - The *tachash* delights (*sas*) in its multi-colors (*g'vanim*).
6. 25:5 - *Arazim* — cedars.
7. 25:6-7: 1) The oil was lit in the *menorah* and used for anointing. 2) The spices were used in the anointing oil and for the incense. 3) The precious stones were for the *ephod* and the *choshen*.
8. 25:11 - The outer box was one and a half *amot* plus a *tefach* plus a little bit, because it rose a little bit above the *kaporet*. (The *kaporet* was a *tefach* thick — see 25:17).
9. 25:16 - It testifies that G-d commanded us to keep the *mitzvot*.
10. 25:18 - The faces of children.
11. 25:29 - Friday.
12. 25:31 - Hammered.
13. 25:31 - Purely ornamental.
14. 25:40 - G-d showed Moshe a *menorah* of fire.
15. 26:1 - On one side a lion; on the other side an eagle.
16. 26:15 - The wooden beams were to be upright and not stacked one upon the other.
17. 26:16 - 30 *amot*.
18. 26:23 - 10 *amot*.
19. 27:2 - To atone for brazenness.
20. 27:19 - They secured the curtains against the wind.

@ OHR Profiles of Ohr Somayach Alumni and Students

written by Shimon O'Heron

Ari Baumwald
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Madison University – Physics Major

ROTC was a main part of Ari's life. Little did he know, he would be dropping it to learn in Yeshiva. It all began with a Maimonides Session and the following Shabbaton. He ate by the famed Twerski family and a hippy named Alex. No more did he think all religious Jews are boring carbon-copies of each other. He jumped at the next trip

to Israel he could and found himself longing to sing, dance and grow with the yeshiva guys he kept bumping into. He tried JLE and did not believe the experience. "For sure they are all faking happiness for one week," he thought, so he extended his stay to test out his theory. One year later, he's still at Ohr Somayach. He dropped ROTC for his year abroad. He encourages everyone to be open minded enough to listen, because the best (and the true) way of life awaits you.

SHABBAT 135 - 141

The *beraita* teaches to say the following two *berachot* for the mitzvah of *mila*:

The *mohel* says the *beracha*: “*Baruch Atah ... and has commanded us regarding mila.*”

The father says the *beracha*: “*Baruch Atah ... and has commanded us to enter him into the covenant of Avraham Avinu.*”

Although usually only one *beracha* is normally said for one mitzvah, it appears from the text on this Daf that there are in fact two *birkot hamitzvah* — two blessings said for performing the mitzvah of *mila*.

Tosefot address the issue of the correct order for saying these two *berachot*.

One would expect them to be recited in the order they appear in the *beraita*. Rabbeinu Shmuel argues, however, that the order should really be switched. One reason for this change is in order to comply with the rule that “*berachot* for performing *mitzvot* should be made *before* fulfilling the mitzvah.” Since the *mohel* would do his job of circumcising immediately after saying his *beracha*, the father’s *beracha* would be said only after the mitzvah if we stick to the order in our *gemara*, which would be contrary to this rule. According to Rabbeinu Shmuel the father’s *beracha* is first.

Rabbeinu Tam, however, upholds the text we have that the father’s *beracha* is not said first before that of the *mohel*. Rather it is said later, after the *mila*, despite it being a *beracha* on the mitzvah, which is normally said before the mitzvah. Rabbeinu Tam explains that the rule to recite a *beracha* for a mitzvah before the mitzvah applies only when the person saying the *beracha* is also the one who is to do the act of the mitzvah. This is not the case here where the *mohel* is performing the mitzvah. (Aruch Hashulchan, Yoreh Deah 265:11, cites the opinion of the Rosh who preserves the order of the *berachot* as stated in the *gemara*, and explains how the *beracha* of the father can still be considered as being said before the fulfillment of the mitzvah.)

• *Shabbat 137b*

“*In the merit of Aharon rejoicing in his heart when seeing Moshe return to Egypt, Aharon merited wearing the choshen mishpat on his heart.*”

This statement by Rabbi Malai teaches the extent of reward for suppressing the emotion of jealousy. Rashi on the Daf explains that not only was Aharon older than Moshe, but also the Divine Presence appeared to him first and the prophecy regarding Egypt was told to him first — he nevertheless rejoiced when Moshe returned. Rashi in Chumash adds that although the original plan was that Moshe would be the Kohen and Aharon the Levi, Aharon’s selflessness and love for his brother and his People merited that that the gift of *Kehuna* go to Aharon.

The *choshen mishpat* of *Kehuna* was worn on Aharon’s heart, the same heart that rejoiced without an iota of jealousy.

• *Shabbat 139a*

Remembering Rav Weinbach

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THE CALL OF NATURE

From: Isaiah

Dear Rabbi,

I have found recently that I have been craving for a walk in nature and have found an overwhelming sense of inner peace when I meditate on a place from memory. My question is why do I always find a connection to G-d through nature?

Dear Isaiah,

In our age of high-tech and synthetic surroundings, it should not be surprising that a person feel a need to get back to basics from time to time and to connect to G-d through the natural world.

The world of nature is a wonderful setting in which to celebrate Creation. Breathing pure, clean air, smelling the scent of the trees, fields and flowers, hearing the chiming of birds, falling leaves and rushing streams, seeing the beautiful scenery and feeling the texture of the world all around us tantalizes the senses, sending a palpable surge of life through our being.

Connecting in this way to Creation naturally facilitates a connection to the Creator Himself. Recognizing that it is G-d behind all this beauty and splendor rejuvenates one's appreciation for the wonder and wisdom of the Creator and the

soul is thereby stirred to commune with G-d in this setting more than in our artificial, climate-controlled environments.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word for nature (טבע) has the same numerical value as the name for G-d (אלהים). It is in Nature, therefore, that we find G-d. The man-made settings that distance us from Nature actually insulate us from feeling G-d. Conversely, getting back to Nature can help us get back to G-d.

Kabbalistic and Chasidic teachings note that as Nature teems with life, each species resonates its own song of praise to G-d. In fact, Perek Shira, (literally "Chapter of Song" and often translated as "Song of Creation") which is attributed to King David, is an ancient collection of the praises recited by various parts of Creation. These songs are harmonized into what's described as a subliminal symphony of praise to G-d.

When a person merges his meditations, prayers, supplications and praises to G-d within this symphony of Nature, they are elevated tremendously while he is greatly inspired and G-d derives from them great delight. What's more, if this symphony is comprised of different sections - inanimate, vegetative and animate - he contributes the missing human element. In fact, he becomes the actual conductor of this grand symphonic orchestra of praise to G-d.

Given all the subliminal sub-currents resonating in Nature, it should now be clear why you find such a connection to G-d through Nature.

WHAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

REAL-LIFE QUESTIONS OF SOCIAL AND BUSINESS ETHICS

READING FOR EVERYONE

Question:

It recently came to my attention that in the old days every Jew called up to the Torah for an *aliya* read his portion by himself. I expressed an interest in doing so the next time I would receive an *aliya* but I was told that it is almost a universal practice in post-Talmudic times for a *ba'al koreh* (an official Reader) to read the Torah even if the one who received the *aliya* is capable of doing it himself. What is the right thing to do?

Answer:

Two reasons are given by our Talmudic commentaries for establishing the institution of a *ba'al koreh* who reads for everyone.

One approach is based on what happened in regard to the mitzvah of making a declaration when bringing *bikkurim* (first crops and fruits) to the *Beit Hamikdash*. Since some people were not sufficiently literate to make this declaration, they fulfilled their obligation by listening to a *kohen* making it on their behalf. This could lead to embarrassment for the unlearned

Jew and sometimes discouraged him from bringing the *bikkurim* in order to avoid this shame. It was therefore instituted that a *kohen* would make that declaration on behalf of everyone, even those capable of doing so themselves.

The same situation of potential embarrassment existed in regard to the public reading of the Torah on special days. A Jew who was not capable of doing the reading by himself and would suffer the embarrassment of someone reading for him, while other Jews did the reading themselves, might easily be tempted to absent himself for the Torah reading altogether. For this reason it was instituted that a *ba'al koreh* would read the Torah even for those who could do so themselves.

Another approach to understanding the reason for the institution of a *ba'al koreh* is that it was based on the fear that someone called up to the Torah might mistakenly consider himself capable of properly reading the Torah and would do an improper job. This fear was eliminated by having a *ba'al koreh* who had proven himself capable read for everyone.

THE COLORED WATER CAPER

BY RABBI YEHUDA SPITZ

RED ALERT

Several months ago, at the end of November 2012, pleasure seekers at Australia's famous Bondi (pronounced Bond-eye) Beach (located in the Sydney suburb of Bondi), were left high and dry when a Crimson Tide rolled in, effectively transforming its normally tranquil waters into the 'Red Sea'. This rare natural phenomenon, known as an algal bloom, occurs when there is a rapid increase or accumulation in the production of microscopic algae (dinoflagellates, usually toxic phytoplankton) in an aquatic system. This results in a visible coloration of the water, typically taking on a reddish hue. Apparently, all was not "fair dinkum" for the Aussies. Not that it's any consolation for those robbed of a pleasure swim, nonetheless, at least this gives us an inkling of what the plague of blood *Dam* might have seemed like, as well as helps us understand an interesting halacha.

COLORED WATER?

The Shulchan Aruch rules, as did the Tur before him, and based on a Mishna in Masechet Yadayim, that regarding *Netilat Yadayim* for eating bread, if the water's appearance has changed, whether by itself or due to something else falling inside it or due to its location, that water is *pasul*, disqualified for being used for washing purposes. This would mean that it would be prohibited to use water during "red tide" to wash for *Hamotzi*.

Yet, many authorities argue on part of the Shulchan Aruch's statement. They point out that the Mishna does not actually mention the water color being changed "by itself" with no outside stimulus, as making the water *assur*. The Mishna only mentions the other criteria, namely different types of inks and dyes falling in, for prohibiting colored water!

Additionally, regarding such 'dyed water' for use as a *mikveh* only when the color has changed due to something else falling in would such a *mikveh* be invalidated, and not when the color has changed by itself. It stands to reason that the rules of *Netilat Yadayim*, which is a Rabbinical decree cannot be any stricter than those regarding the Biblical *mikveh*!

A further proof cited is that the Rambam, when codifying this halacha, omitted any mention of water whose color has been changed by itself being prohibited. Therefore, many halachic authorities rule at water whose color has been changed by itself is perfectly permissible to be used for *Netilat Yadayim*. Accordingly, this would mean that 'red tide' water due to an algal bloom would in fact be permitted for *Netilat Yadayim*, as no one added anything and it is a natural phenomenon that actually occurs on a microscopic level.

COLOR CODED

However, other authorities disagree, concurring with the Tur and Shulchan Aruch's stringent ruling. They explain that there truly is no such thing as water changing color "by itself". It actually occurs when the water is sitting exposed to the elements, that it gets contaminated, possibly by (microscopic) organisms in

the air, which change its color. It is only referred to as changing by itself because nothing was purposely added to the water that might change its color. Proof is that if someone would place water in an airtight sealed clear container, its appearance would remain unchanged.

These authorities argue that the Rema, who does not comment on the Shulchan Aruch's ruling, and perhaps even the Rambam, would actually agree to this. Although the Rambam did not mention water whose appearance changed "by itself", nonetheless added that water whose color was changed "by the ground" is *passul* for use for *Netilat Yadayim*. These decisors opine that it is possible that this was his intent, referring to water sitting exposed on the ground that's appearance was changed naturally. Additionally, they point out that Chazal, and later the Shulchan Aruch, use extremely strong terms for the punishments awaiting those negligent with washing *Netilat Yadayim* properly. Therefore, they maintain that one may not compare it to a *mikveh*, which would not become invalidated with this type of water. In fact, many halachic authorities, rule that water that's color has been changed by itself is *prohibited* to be used for *Netilat Yadayim*. This would also seemingly include our 'Crimson Tide'.

BREAKING OUT THE BUBBLY?

This whole background will help us understand a more common case. Have you ever filled up your cup to wash for *Hamotzi* and found the water a bit whitish, cloudy, or bubbly? Usually, the water settles down and returns to its normal appearance after a few seconds. A quite common question is whether one needs to wait for the water to settle down in order to wash, as it would have the status of water that's appearance changed "by itself", or whether this is not the same issue.

Many contemporary *poskim* rule that there is no reason to wait for the water to settle. They explain that the reason the water looks this way at first is due to air pressure in the pipes. Therefore, they maintain that this is not the same case as '*shinui mareh machmat atzmo*' as the water's appearance did not truly change. They bring proof from the Shulchan Aruch himself, who rules that if the water's appearance changed due to rocks and dirt getting mixed in, then it is still kosher for *Netilat Yadayim*. Therefore, a temporary whitish tinge or bubbles in the water can not be considered any worse for *Netilat Yadayim*.

Yet, several other authorities still maintain that even though washing with such water would be permissible, it is nevertheless preferable to wait until the water clears before washing *l'chatchila*.

When one views the world through the lens of halacha, current events, Crimson Tides, and even simple tasks like hand-washing, take on a whole other dimension.

The author wishes to thank his friend and talmid, renowned business consultant and marketing specialist Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg, whose question was the impetus for this author's interest and research in this topic.

British Museum Finds Evidence of Israelite Slavery in Egypt

BY RABBI YISROEL ROLL

The table of archaeological finds below, presented to me by Dr. John H. Taylor, the curator of the Egypt Department of the British Museum in London, reveals a mud brick with straw which is stamped with a royal seal which says: "House of Ramses II".



The mud brick, seen on the left side of the photo below, is one of 20 held in the basement vaults of the museum, and not exhibited to the public. The brick has been carbon dated to the Israelite period of slavery in Egypt.

Dr. Taylor states that the Israelites did not build the pyramids as is commonly

thought. The pyramids were built 100 years after the Israelites left Egypt. What they did build were cities. The Bible states in Exodus 1:11-14, "So they appointed taskmasters over it (the Israelite nation) in order to afflict it with their burdens; it built storage cities for Pharaoh, Pithom and Ramses... They embittered their lives with hard work, with mortar and with bricks..." The Bible further states in Exodus 5:10, "The taskmasters of the people and its foremen went out and spoke to the people, saying, "So said Pharaoh, I am not giving you straw. Go yourselves and take yourselves straw from whatever you find, for nothing will be reduced from your work." In the close up photo of the brick below, one can see the straw and the seal which states "House of Ramses II".



Below is a mural of slaves building a structure in Egypt dated from the Israelite period showing a pile of mud bricks similar to the brick displayed on the table above. Dr. John H. Taylor holds curatorial responsibility for ancient Egyptian funerary antiquities, amulets and jewellery. He also provides curatorial supervision for the departmental loans program. These items are sometimes loaned to outside museums and organizations.



Dr. Taylor then showed me a 12 foot iron snake staff found in a pyramid tomb. Shown below, the staff has a cobra head and is wavy and is evidence of the Egyptian

magician's staves mentioned in the Bible in Exodus 7:11-12, "The magicians of Egypt did so with their incantations. Each one cast down his staff and they became snakes; and the staff of Aaron swallowed their staffs". The entire snake staff can be seen at the front of the table in the first photo above. The staff is wave-like and when



placed on the ground and manipulated by a magician can give the illusion of snake-like movement. Egyptian magicians were known to be illusionists.

The wicker basket below is dated to the Egyptian period of the Israelites and is evidence

of the use of wicker baskets as recorded in the Bible, Exodus 2: 3, "She could not hide him any longer, so she took a wicker basket and smeared it with clay and pitch; she placed the child (Moses) into it and placed it among the reeds at the bank of the River (Nile)."

The copper mirrors at the far right of the first photo above are evidence of the existence of copper mirrors used by Israelite women to beautify themselves and to entice their husbands to produce children despite the dangers of



bringing children into the world amidst a slave existence. These copper mirrors are referred to in the Bible in Exodus 38:8, "He (Moses) made the wash basin of copper and its base of copper, from the mirrors of the legions who massed at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting." The 11th century French Biblical commentator Rashi comments that the Jewish women used these mirrors to beautify themselves in order to entice their husbands to produce children despite the fear of bringing children into a life of slavery. This attests to the greater faith of the Israelite women than that exhibited by the Israelite men, which faith has continued to sustain Jewish continuity.

The organizer of this private tour to the British Museum is London educator and historian, Rabbi Aryeh Forta who organizes monthly private tours of the Jewish artifacts at the British Museum. Also seen on this tour was a 3500 year old matzah with finger imprints of the matzah maker and silver wine bowls from the palace of Achashverosh mentioned in Megillas Esther.

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