

SHABBAT PARSHAT BECHUKOTAI · 17 IYAR 5771 · MAY 21, 2011 · VOL. 18 NO. 33

PARSHA INSIGHTS

ISRAELI SECRET WEAPON UNMASKED!

“If you will follow My decrees you will dwell securely in your land. I will provide peace in the land, and you will lie down with none to frighten” (26:1-6)

Can you keep a secret? Every year nations spend billions of dollars on defense. Every country wants to have the latest secret weapon; a “smarter” bomb that can pin-point military headquarters and take it out without touching a hair on the heads of the babies in the maternity hospital that some beneficent dictator has built next door; an anti-missile missile that can discriminate one hundred percent between an enemy rocket and a planeload of tourists; a foolproof WMD detector, a super-snooper surveillance system that forewarns of global terrorist activity; the list goes on.

But there’s one weapon that beats all other secret weapons and (keep this to yourself and lean very close to the computer screen) *we have it!*

Shh! (I don’t want this article to be picked up by a web-crawler and find its way onto the *Enemynet* site, so you better delete it as soon as you have finished reading it, okay?)

What is it about this weapon that beats all other secret weapons?

This weapon prevents your enemy from ever launching an attack on you in the first place.

And I don’t mean a deterrent. I mean a device that stops your enemies either thinking about attacking you or if they think about attacking you, it ingeniously stops them from being able to carry out the attack. The weather stops them, or their billion dollar research

program turns up a dud, or their entire army gets the dysentery.

Not only does such a weapon exist, but also we have that weapon.

It’s called...

Lean a little closer to your monitor so not everyone sees this, okay

It’s called

Shh!

(The Torah!)

The Talmud teaches that learning Torah is greater than saving lives.

How can that be? How can anything be greater than saving a human life?

The answer is that there’s one thing better than saving a human life, and that’s preventing someone from getting into a life-threatening situation in the first place.

The power of Torah learning is that it is “*magen umatzil*”. It doesn’t just save us from our enemies, it protects us as from them as well.

That’s our secret weapon.

Shh! Keep it a secret!

You promised.

• Source: *Shir Ma’on*; thanks to Rabbi C. Z. Senter

LISTEN NOW TO RABBI SINCLAIR’S PARSHA PODCASTS

at <http://ohr.edu/podcast>

PARSHA OVERVIEW

The Torah promises prosperity for the Jewish People if they follow G-d's commandments. However, if they fail to live up to the responsibility of being the Chosen People, then chilling punishments will result. The Torah details the harsh historical process that will fall upon them when Divine protection is removed. These punishments, whose purpose is to

bring the Jewish People to repent, will be in seven stages, each more severe than the last. *Sefer Vayikra*, the Book of Leviticus, concludes with a detailed description of *Erachin* – the process by which someone can make a vow to give to the *Beit Hamikdash* the equivalent monetary value of a person, an animal, or property.

ISRAEL Forever

A SECOND CHANCE

There is a special day in the Jewish calendar which is hardly noticed. No *mitzvot* are performed and there is no ban on labor. The only thing that sets it apart from very other weekday is the omission of the *tachanun* prayer.

This week we experienced such a day on the fourteenth day of the month of Iyar. This was the day during the time of the *Beit Hamikdash* when those Jews who failed to offer the *Korban Pesach* on time a month earlier were given a second chance to do so.

There is a very important lesson to be learned from this. The Torah teaches us that those whose spiritual impurity prevented them from offering a *Korban Pesach* along with the

rest of the community on the fourteenth of the month of Nissan cried out "Why should we be left out?" Their passionate desire to offer their sacrifice was rewarded by Heaven with a second chance a month later.

We live in an era of search. Uninformed Jews of all ages and in all lands are searching for a connection with G-d and His chosen people. Those who truly cry out "Why should we be left out?" are finding that Heaven is giving them a second chance to make that connection.

Taking advantage of that second chance is what will secure Israel forever

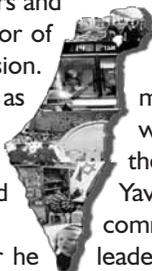
LOVE OF THE LAND - THE PEOPLE

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

RABBI YOCHANAN BEN ZAKKAI – SAVIOR OF THE SANHEDRIN

When this great Talmudic Sage managed to maneuver his way through the Zealot barriers and arrange a meeting with the Roman conqueror of Eretz Yisrael he was blessed with success in his mission. The general, who had been hailed by the Sage as emperor upon his arrival, saw the quick fulfillment of that prophecy when a messenger from Rome appeared to inform him that the emperor had died and that he had been elected as his successor.

In gratitude he agreed to grant the Sage whatever he



wished before leaving to ascend the throne. Fearful of asking him to spare the *Beit Hamikdash* because an extreme request would result in a rejection of any other pleas, Rabbi Yochanan limited himself to three more moderate requests. "Spare me Yavneh and its Sages" was the most important of the three, and referred to the Sanhedrin whose court at that time was in the city of Yavneh. The granting of this request enabled the Jewish community to maintain its center of learning and spiritual leadership even in the dark period of destruction and exile.

OHRNET magazine is published by OHR SOMAYACH Tanenbaum College
POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel • Tel: +972-2-581-0315 • Email: info@ohr.edu • www.ohr.edu

Israel Forever, Love of the Land, TalmuDigest, What's the right thing to do?, The Human Side of the Story written by Rav Mendel Weinbach
Parsha Insights written by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair • General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman • Design: Rabbi Eliezer Shapiro
© 1992 - 2011 Ohr Somayach Institutions - All rights reserved • This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect.

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. To what do the words “*bechukosai telechu*” (walk in My statutes) refer?
2. When is rain “in its season”?
3. What is the blessing of “*v’achaltem lachmechem l’sova*” (and you shall eat your bread to satisfaction)?
4. What is meant by the verse “and a sword will not pass through your land”?
5. Mathematically, if five Jewish soldiers can defeat 100 enemy soldiers, how many enemy soldiers should 100 Jewish soldiers be able to defeat?
6. How much is ‘*revava*’?
7. Which “progression” of seven transgressions are taught in Chapter 26, and why in that particular order?
8. What is one benefit which the Jewish People derive from the Land of Israel’s state of ruin?
9. What was the duration of the Babylonian exile and why that particular number?
10. How many years did the Jewish People sin in Israel up till the time the northern tribes were exiled?
11. In verse 26:42, the name Yaakov is written with an extra “*vav*”. From whom did Yaakov receive this extra letter and why?
12. What positive element is implied by the words “and I will bring them into the land of their enemies”?
13. In verse 26:42, why is the word “remember” not used in connection with the name of Yitzchak?
14. Why does the Torah say in 26:46 “*Toros*” (plural) and not “*Torah*” (singular)?
15. What happens when a poor person dedicates the value of a man to the *Beit Hamikdash* and doesn’t have sufficient funds to fulfill his vow?
16. If a person says “The leg of this animal shall be an *olah* offering”, the animal is sold and sacrificed as an *olah* offering. What is the status of the money received for the animal?
17. If a person dedicates his ancestral field to the *Beit Hamikdash* and fails to redeem it before *Yovel* what happens to the field?
18. Where must “*Ma’aser Sheini*” be eaten?
19. When a person redeems “*Ma’aser Sheini*” what happens to the food? What happens to the redemption money?
20. How does a person tithe his animals?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week’s Questions!

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

1. 26:3 - Laboring in Torah learning.
2. 26:4 - At times when people are not outside (e.g., Shabbos nights).
3. 26:5 - You will only require a little bread to be completely satisfied.
4. 26:6 - No foreign army will travel through your land on their way to a different country.
5. 26:8 - Two thousand.
6. 26:8 - Ten thousand.
7. 26:14,15 - Not studying Torah, not observing *mitzvot*, rejecting those who observe *mitzvot*, hating Sages, preventing others from observing *mitzvot*, denying that G-d gave the *mitzvos*, denying the existence of G-d. They are listed in this order because each transgression leads to the next.
8. 26:32 - No enemy nation will be able to settle in the Land of Israel.
9. 26:35 - 70 years. Because the Jewish People violated 70 *Shemita* and *Yovel* years.
10. 26:35 - 390 years.
11. 26:42 - In five places in the Torah Yaakov’s name is written with an extra “*vav*” and in five places the name Eliyahu is missing a “*vav*.” Yaakov took these *vavs* as a pledge that Eliyahu will one day come and announce the redemption of Yaakov’s children.
12. 26:41 - G-d Himself, so to speak, will bring them into their enemies’ land. This means that even when the Jews are in exile, G-d will supply them with leaders who inspire them to keep the Torah. This guards the Jews from assimilating into the host culture.
13. 26:42 - Because the image of Yitzchak’s ashes (who was prepared to be brought as an offering) upon the altar is always before G-d.
14. 26:46 - To teach that both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah were given to Moshe on *Har Sinai*.
15. 27:8 - The person whose value was donated goes before the *kohen*, who sets the obligation according to the poor person’s ability to pay.
16. 27:9 - The money is ‘*chullin*,’ meaning it does not have ‘holy’ status, except for the value of the animal’s leg which does have ‘holy’ status.
17. 27:16 - It becomes the property of the *kohanim* who are on rotation at the beginning of *Yovel*.
18. 27:30 - In Jerusalem.
19. 27:31 - The food becomes permissible to him outside of Jerusalem. The redemption money must be brought to Jerusalem and used to purchase food to be eaten there.
20. 27:32 - He passes them through a door individually and every tenth animal he marks with a rod smeared with red dye.

A digest of the topics covered in the seven weekly pages of the Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle along with an insight from them

- When the preparation of the Omer conflicts with Shabbat
- When *kohanim* are entitled to eat the remains of a mincha after *kemitzah*
- Trading of mincha portions between *kohanim*
- The sacrifices and mincha offerings of a non-Jew
- The mincha sin offering of a *kohen*
- Which meal offerings are completely burned on the altar
- How the oil is added to the flour in a mincha
- Which mincha requires folding and crumbling
- The processing of mincha dough and the number of loaves
- The amount of flour in each type of communal mincha
- The loaves of the *Korban Todah*

INSIDE THE WALL

The loaves of bread and matzah that accompany the *Korban Todah* become sanctified with the slaughtering of the sacrifice, states the *mishna*, only if they are inside the wall at that time and not outside it.

Rabbi Yochana explains that outside the wall means outside the wall of Beit Pagi, which is the furthestmost point of Yerushalayim.

Beit Pagi is mentioned elsewhere as the extremity of Yerushalayim. In *Mesechta Pesachim* (91a) there is a discussion as to whether the *Korban Pesach* can be slaughtered if its only owner and potential consumer is in prison but has been promised a release for the holiday. Rabbi

Yochanan rules that only if he has been imprisoned by Jews can we rely on the fulfillment of their promise, and the sacrifice can be slaughtered on his behalf. This is not so if he has been imprisoned by non-Jews, because we cannot rely on their promise. A qualification is presented by Rabbi Chisda who states that if the prison is inside the wall of Beit Pagi, the prisoner is considered to be in Yerushalayim, where the meat of a *Korban Pesach* must be consumed, and the meat of his sacrifice can be brought to him in prison. Since this possibility exists, we can indeed slaughter the *Korban Pesach* on his behalf.

• *Menachot 78b*

What the SAGES Say

“Come and see how beloved is a mitzvah performed in its time. The burning of sacrificial parts on the altar could be done at night and yet those of the sacrifices offered on Shabbat were burned during the day.”

• *Rabbi Shimon - Menachot 72a*

AVAILABLE AT JEWISH BOOKSTORES & WWW.OHR.EDU

THE JEWISH LEARNING LIBRARY PRESENTS

THE WASSERMAN TALMUDIGEST SERIES

A tantalizing gateway to the incomparable wealth of intellect and guidance contained in the Talmud

NOW AVAILABLE !

VOLUME ONE - THE COGUT EDITION
VOLUME TWO - THE WINKLER EDITION

JEALOUSY

From: Moshe

*Dear Rabbi,
I find that I am very prone to jealousy. I am often jealous of what others have and I want it too. Could you share some thoughts that might help me control this tendency of mine? Thanks.*

Dear Moshe,

Jealousy is a very negative trait as far as Torah teachings are concerned so it's good that you are aware of this and want to control it.

The Sages taught that jealousy is one of the three attributes which "take one out of this world" – meaning it destroys a person's life. This is because a person can become so consumed with jealousy that it can actually cause him to commit the most heinous of crimes. And even short of transgressing in such extreme ways, the life of one embroiled in jealousy is bitter and unsatisfying. He literally becomes a no-life.

Our Sages also noted, "The eye beholds, the heart desires". This refers to the way in which people tend to look around to see what others have, and this causes them to want to have the same or more than what they see that others have. This then catalyzes a vicious cycle where others in turn want to outdo those who have outdone them, etc. Obviously, this detrimental cycle enslaves one to changing fashions and fads, wasting money, time and distracting one from what's truly important in life.

In addition, this tendency to look at "what's on others' plates" is tantamount to denying G-d because everyone's portion in life is determined by G-d for reasons known only to Him. Instead of enjoying one's own Divinely given portion, a jealous person will constantly be eying other people's portions wondering why they (seem to) have more than him, questioning G-d's ultimate justice.

What's interesting about this is that even what we think we do have is not really ours. It's a deposit of G-d in our possession. Today it's here; tomorrow it's gone. How can we allow ourselves to desire what others have under the delusion that it could remain ours when even what's currently in our possession is temporary and fleeting?

Our sources discuss the self-damaging nature of jealousy and covetousness with the following analogy: Jealous and Covet were going on the way. They encountered a king who offered, "Whatever one of you requests I'll grant, and the other will get double that." Jealous refrained from making a request lest Covet get more. Covet refused to request since it wouldn't get all the king gave. Finally, Covet coerced Jealous to go first. Jealous requested, "Let the king blind only one of my eyes..."

We see from here that these attributes actually cause us to forgo or forfeit what we already have, preferring to have nothing or even to suffer, as long as others will not have more than us. Thus jealousy is a most irrational and degenerate of attributes.

There's one exception of "positive" jealousy that's discussed in Jewish sources called "*kinat sofrim*" or jealousy/competition among Torah scholars that is actually praised by the Sages because it results in increased Torah knowledge. This is not limited to Torah study though, but is rather understood to apply to all areas of spiritual improvement and refinement: One is allowed to be, and perhaps even encouraged (with the proper constructive spirit), to be aware of others' ethical and spiritual achievements for the purpose of emulating or even "outdoing" them. This type of jealousy leads individuals, and thereby society, to the elevation and perfection that G-d desires of us.

NOW AVAILABLE AT YOUR JEWISH BOOKSTORE OR WWW.OHR.EDU

FROM THE JEWISH LEARNING LIBRARY

QUESTION MARKET

VOLUME ONE - THE KLEIN EDITION

Relevant, informative, and thought-provoking answers to contemporary questions on Jewish law, customs, and ethics

FALLING ASLEEP ON THE SPEAKER

Question: I am frequently invited to attend fundraising dinners and other public affairs at which I find myself a captive audience to some speakers who literally put me to sleep, either because of the late hour or their uninteresting content. What is the right thing to do in such a situation?

Answer: Your question recalls an old joke about a Jew whom the cruel Romans had cast into the coliseum arena to be devoured by a hungry lion. As the bloodthirsty crowd looked on in wonder the condemned Jew whispered something into the lion's ear, and the ferocious beast surprisingly ran out of the arena. When the survivor was asked what charm he had used to frighten the lion, he replied: "I told him to remember that after the dinner come the speeches!"

Seriously speaking, speaking is a serious business. Some speeches are more interesting to hear than others, but all of them have a purpose, whether it is to introduce the audience to the fine work of the dinner organizers or to

honor the individuals who are generous supporters of it. By attending such an affair you are contributing more than just a donation to the cause. You are publicly expressing your identification with it. Just as you are prepared to do so with your time and money you must be prepared to make a strenuous effort to avoid the dozing off which is interpreted by those around you as an expression of apathy.

If this is true in regard to the dinner organizers, it is doubly true in regard to the speaker. Falling asleep sends a signal to the speaker looking at you that you have a very low regard for what he has to say and this is terribly discouraging. It also communicates to the people around you a low opinion of the speaker even though this was not your intention.

It may be a good idea to take a short nap before going to an affair in which you will hear speeches so that you can stay awake. Remember, insensitively dozing off may turn you into the "lion" who is unwittingly "devouring" the after-dinner speaker.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE STORY

CLEANING AWAY THE ILLNESS

The Torah scholars in the Kollel in the Israeli town of Hod Hasharon were interrupted in their studies late one day some years ago by the loud sobbing of a woman who had entered their Beit Midrash with her daughter. The doctors, she told them, had diagnosed her daughter as suffering from an incurable illness and she was searching for some special merit to gain Heavenly mercy.

"Please allow my daughter and myself to clean your Beit Midrash," she begged. "I remember from my childhood in Morocco that this is considered a very big mitzvah. Perhaps if I clean G-d's house He will clean away my daughter's condition."

The scholars were glad to accommodate her. They told her that they were leaving in another half hour and that she was welcome to do the cleaning she desired. When they returned the next day they were amazed to see how thorough a job she and her daughter had done in beautifying this sacred area.

A couple of days later mother and daughter returned to the Kollel, this time with broad smiles in place of tears. Another examination had determined that the illness had mysteriously vanished and the doctors were curious as to what miracle treatment the girl had undergone. For the mother, however, there was no mystery.

THE JEWISH LEARNING LIBRARY IS PROUD TO PRESENT

THE ESSENTIAL MALBIM

THE KOHN FAMILY EDITION

VOLUME ONE - FLASHES OF INSIGHT ON BEREISHET/GENESIS

VOLUME TWO - FLASHES OF INSIGHT ON SHEMOT/EXODUS



PUBLISHED BY ARTSCROLL / MESORAH

NOW AVAILABLE AT YOUR JEWISH BOOKSTORE OR WWW.OHR.EDU