

ENJOY ;)

Posted by NA18 - 19 Oct 2022 17:19

WEEKLY WISDOM

Introduction:

The camp that I was in decided to send my grade on a trip. While looking out the window and concentrating on Hashem's Beautiful world an idea dawned on me.

What was it that dawned on me you may ask? Well why not write a text every week on the Parasha and send it out?

So with Hashem's Help and Guidance, I choose around 40 random people that I had on my phone, thinking that they might enjoy a text on the Parasha.

That is when it came to me. This was the moment that The Shabbat Text was born.

My goal for these texts are to be inspirational, and I hope that you find them to be. From this hope, I wanted to compile these texts and try to make a book out of them.

I want to thank Hashem for making this project a reality. I would also like to thank my friends who were vital in the recent years in continuing to support these messages.

MAY HASHEM ALWAYS BLESS HIS NATION TO UNDERSTAND HIS TORAH TO LOVE HIS TORAH AND TO SEE THE BEAUTY IN IT. THAT WAY WE CAN DEFEAT THE YESER HARA AND MERIT TO SEE MASHIACH COME SPEEDILY IN OUR DAYS

AMEN!

THE PARASHIYOT

SEFER BERESHEIT

The Book of Genesis

PARASHAT BERESHEIT (BSIMNA TABA)

The Torah starts off with the words:

"Beresheit Barah Elokim Et Hashamayim Vaet Hares"

But I ask all of you a simple question. Why not start the Torah with the letter Aleph and not a Bet which is the first letter in the Torah?

Our Chachamim answer that since the word Beracha/???? (blessing) starts with a "Bet" and the word Aror/????(curse) starts with an "Aleph" therefore avoiding anything bad with the first letter of the Torah. However, we can find many words that mean bad things with the letter "Bet" , and many good things with the letter "Aleph".

We know that we have to be very careful of who is teaching us Torah- it has to come from our Tradition. You cannot just come up with an interpretation that seemingly "makes sense", rather it has to have a pure source from our great Rabbi's who give a good thousand years of tradition. There has to be something which comes BEFORE your Torah. Therefore, Hashem starts the Torah with the letter "Bet" which has a letter before it! However, there are no letters that come before an "Aleph". The Bet has Tradition and is therefore, in our Rabbi's words' a "blessing".

We see from here that every letter in the Torah has so much wisdom behind it!

(Rabbi Mansour Class "lessons on parashat Beresheit")

For more insights like this see

"Learntorah.com" and look for classes by Rabbi Mansour

PARASHAT NOACH

Noah, along with Abraham and Adam, held up the entire world.

How?

Without these individuals the world would have ceased to exist.

That should set up some level of greatness but;

What does it mean Noah was perfect in his generation?

As the first passuk in our parasha says:

“These are the offspring of Noah - Noah was a righteous man perfect in his generations Noah walked with Hashem-.”

(Beresheyit / Genesis 6:9)

There develops both a statement, and an answer; either he was perfect in his wicked generation or the question of how great could he have been in a great generation like that of Moshe? Or was it that he was great for a wicked generation but would be considered regular in a regular generation?

What do we learn from these very different views of Noah?

Noah is called a Sadik because he kept all of the Misvot Hashem commanded him, but our Hachamim criticize him slightly for not going beyond what was required of him. How much greater would Noah have been if he had put all of his effort into saving his generation instead?

We can learn a great message that goes beyond what is required of us in good deeds and hopefully be known as Sadikim in all generations; not just our own.

(Tractate Sanhedrin 69 ; Beresheit Rabbah 30:10 with Matanot Kehuna ; The Midrash Says Book 1 pages 86-87)

PARASHAT LECH LECHA

A bottle of perfume stood sealed and wrapped up in the far corner of the shelf. No one would ever enjoy its fragrant contents as long as it remained bottled up. Only if someone would come open it and shake it, those who wish could smell it.

This is one of the many ways that our Hachamim explain the command Hashem gave Abraham in the opening Passuk of the Parasha:

"Hashem said to Abram 'Go for yourself from your land from your relatives and from your father's house to the land I will show you' "

(Beresheyit/Genesis 12:1)

We can see that Abraham got to such a high level. If he had stayed in his father's house he would not have been known by everyone so Hashem told him to leave so his fame could spread.

We can learn that Hashem always does what is good for us. Whenever something happens to us just know Hashem has a reason; so always accept everything from Hashem with love.

(Midrash Rabbah Beresheit 39:2 ; The Midrash Says Book 1 page 127)

PARASHAT VAYERA

"The Rabbi's taught in a Berrita the four most beautiful women were; Sarah, Abigayil (David's wife), Rachab (Yehoshua ' wife), and Esther (Hamalkah)."

Even though Sarah was one of the most beautiful women in the world, she was also extremely modest. We learn this from the beginning of the Parasha that states:

"They (the malachim/three guests that came to visit) said to him (Abraham) 'where is Sarah, your wife?' He said 'here in the tent.'"

(Beresheyit / Genesis 18:9)

Sarah was hidden in plain sight, so to speak that is modesty.

In the Torah there are dots on top of the letters Alef, Yud, and Vav of the word Elav/to him (Abraham) this is the second word of our Passuk. Our Passuk is highlighting Sarah's character trait of modesty.

These dots only appear in a few places in the Tanach so they must mean a lot. This is an example that shows us how important modesty is.

May we all strive for modesty and merit while achieving the level that the Torah wishes us to be on in order to bring Mashiach Sidkenu, (the righteous Mashiach.) speedily in our days, Amen!

(Massechat Megillah 15a)

PARASHAT CHAYEI SARAH

In this week's Parasha, the Torah deals at length with the death of Sarah. Yaakob Abinu is the only other forefather that has a detailed explanation of his passing.

The question arises about why the deaths of these two Sadikim are discussed in great detail in the Torah?

The answer lies in the first Passuk of the Parasha which states:

"The Lifetime of Sarah consisted of one hundred years twenty years and seven years; these were the years of Sarah's life. "

(Beresheyit / Genesis 23:1)

The word the Torah uses is "Chayei/the life of." This word signifies life, (Similar to "Vayehi/And Yaakob lived") to teach us that when someone passes away in this world, their existence is incomplete because when the person leaves this world they still go to the next world to get rewarded for their Misvot.

(We benefit from Sadikim after they pass away more than when they are alive. How can this be!?

Because they intercede on our behalf to Hashem.)

May we all only merit to have reward in the next world and only do the will of Hashem!

(The Illuminated Torah Sefer Beresheyit page 178 ; Rabbi Mansour)

PARASHAT TOLEDOT

In this week's Parasha, we see the famous story of how Ribka devised a plan to disguise Yaakob as Esav so that Yaakob would get the beracha from Yishak.

At the beginning of the blessing Yishak tells Yaakob: "And may Hashem give you the dew of the heavens and (of) the fatness of the earth and an abundance of grain and wine."

(Beresheyit / Genesis 27:28)

The Midrash explains that the "abundance of grain and wine" refer to the Gemara and the Midrashim.

Like "grain", Gemara is a staple of learning and the Midrash captivates a person's heart like "wine" does.

Both the Gemara and Midrashim were compiled during our present day Galut/Exile.

When one learns Gemara or Midrash it brings them back at least 1500 years, which in turn, allows one to learn with all of the great Torah luminaries of the Gemara and Mishna who were on unimaginable spiritual levels that we cannot even imagine.

(Midrash Rabbah Beresheit 65:16 with Matanot Kehuna ; Midrash Rabbah Beresheit 66:2 with Tiferet Sion ; The Midrash Says Book 1 pages 260-261 and 263-264)

PARASHAT VAYESE

In this week's Parasha, we see that when Yaakob fled from Laban Rachel stole Laban's Terafim.

As the Torah says:

"And Laban took back his sheep (from his sons) and Rahel stole the idols (terafim) that belonged to her father."

(Beresheyit / Genesis 31:19)

When Rachel hid these terafim she had two reasons.

The first reason was that she hid them Lshem Shamyim. She was afraid that after she left Laban would just worship these idols. She wanted to save him from this path so she took them.

The next reason was because since these Terafim are able to tell the future, she was afraid that they would reveal that she was fleeing from her father with Yaakob.

Although Rachel's reasons were praiseworthy, she was still punished for the anguish she caused her father. Therefore, Yaakob's curse of whoever took these idols should perish was fulfilled. She perished during Binyamin's birth and she was not privileged to raise her son.

(Midrash Rabbah Beresheit 74:4 ; Pirke Drebbe Eliezar 36 ; Zohar 1:164 ; The Midrash Says Book 1 page 300)

PARASHAT VAYYISHLAH

At the beginning of this week's parasha Yaakob sent angels or messengers to Esav.

Yaakob told these angels or messengers to tell Esav:

"And he (Yaakob) commanded them (angels or messengers) saying ; 'So shall you say to my master to Esav 'so said your servant Yaakob 'I have lived with Laban and I have lingered until now. '"

(Beresheyit / Genesis 32:5)

One can ask based on our Passuk:

Why did Esav need to know that Yaakob lived with Laban ?

One of the many answers to this question is that Yaakob was trying to show Esav that when he left Laban's house he came out with more wealth then when he entered. As we learnt in last week's parasha that Yaakob acquired oxen donkeys and servants.

This is quite some feat because Laban is a well known cheater. As we see with the story of how Laban told Yaakob to work for him for 7 years then he tricked Yaakob into working for him for another 7 years.

Yaakob therefore wanted to show Esav that he had protection from Hashem. How else can one gain wealth from such a trickster. This being the case Esav should be smart and not try to kill Yaakob.

(Sefer Yiskah Yisrael ; The Orot Humash Sefer Beresheyit insight on page 311)

PARASHAT VAYESHEB

At the beginning of this week's Parasha we encounter one of the most famous stories in TANACH is the story of Yosef's dreams. Which ultimately led to him being sold as a slave. He became a slave because he got his brothers to not like him and to get angry at him.

One of the reasons which lead to the selling of Yosef was that Yaakob loved Yosef more then all the other brothers as the Passuk says:

"Now Israel loved Yosef more than all his sons since he was a child of his old age and he made him a fine woolen tunic."

(Beresheyit / Genesis 37:3)

The Gemara tells us that from this we can learn that a father shouldn't love one child over the rest of his children.

From this Gemara a question arises:

"Why did Yaakob have favoritism towards Yosef ?"

An answer that the Zohar gives is that Yaakob loved Yosef above the rest of the brothers because Yosef was spiritually and intellectually superior to his brothers.

From this we see that Yaakob thought that Yosef was able to guard his heritage.

(Massechat Shabbat 10b ; Artscroll Humash page 199 note to passuk 3 ; Zohar)

PARASHAT MIKES

In this week's parasha we see the story of how Pharaoh dreamt about the 7 fat and skin cows. Pharaoh couldn't get a satisfactory interpretation of his dream till he heard about Yosef.

Yosef was brought out of jail to appear before the king (Pharaoh) to interpret the dream. At the beginning Yosef humbly refused to interpret the dream saying:

"Yosef answered Pharaoh saying : 'that is beyond me ; it is Hashem who will respond with Pharaoh's welfare.' "

(Beresheyit / Genesis 41:16)

Yosef in spite of the "Sakana" of getting sent back to jail told Pharaoh that he had nothing extraordinary to him (the reason he was released.)

Our Passuk uses the name of "Elokim" not "Amonay" to describe Hashem therefore we can learn a "hidden" lesson.

Yosef was saying; "Elokim -the Name in charge of every power that I have - will give Pharaoh's welfare not me."

(Rabbenu Bachya ; Artscroll Humash page 225 the note to our passuk)

PARASHAT VAYIGASH

Yosef the youngest of the 12 Shebatim (tribes) said to the other Shebatim:

"And Yosef said to his brothers 'I am Yosef, is my father (Yaakob) still alive ? ' but his brothers couldn't answer him because they were left unsettled before him ."

(Beresheyit / Genesis 45:3)

Through these words Hashem's master plan became clear to the Shebatim. Everything that had happened for the last 22 years fell into perspective.

The same will happen when Mashiach comes speedily in our days when Hashem will say "I am Hashem!" The veil will be lifted from our eyes and we will comprehend everything that transpired throughout history. We will see how everything that happens and has happened was divinely inspired.

We can also learn to always have faith in Hashem. With Hashem's Help Yosef became the second to the king in the most powerful country in the world, Egypt. Yosef had extreme faith in Hashem that everything was and is for the best and through this he became very

powerful.

Let's all work on ourselves to have more faith in Hashem. Nothing he does is bad, it is all for our ultimate good.

(Massechat Berachot 60b ; Massechat Taanit 21a ; Artsroll Tanach page 115 note 2)

PARASHAT VAYEHI

Yosef Hasaddik's (Joseph the righteous) , was full of tests till he became viceroy of Egypt. He passed the tests with flying colors! The tests culminated with the seduction by Potiphar's wife, which he passed, even though he had a strong desire for her.

When Yaakob Abinu (our forefather Jacob) blessed Yosef he said:

"A charming son is Yosef, a charming son to the eye; each of the daughters climbed heights to gaze."

(Beresheyit / Genesis 49:22)

When Yosef became the viceroy of Egypt the Egyptian women threw Jewelry at him from the rooftops. He did not even glance at them!

In response to this Hashem said: "I swear that in return, a special parasha in the Torah (part of Parashat Pinhas (Bamidbar 27:1-11)) will be in the merit of the daughters of Selofchad who will be from your tribe."

May Hashem bless us always to follow in the ways of His Torah, which as we say in Arbit: "they (the Misvot) are our lives and the length of our days and we toil in them day and night."

(Midrash Rabbah Beresheit 98:23 ; Ahavat Olam of Arbit (for Edut Hamizrach) ; The Midrash Says Book 1 page 466)

SEFER SHEMOT

The Book of Exodus

PARASHAT SHEMOT

This week's parasha tells us how Bnei yisrael became slaves in Egypt for 210 years.

The Passuk writes:

"Egypt enslaved Bnei Yisrael with crushing harshness."

(Shemot / Exodus 1:13)

Many Mefarshim raise an important question.

Why did Bnei Yisrael have to suffer at the hands of the Egyptians?

The Abarbanel (Spain, 1437-1508) gives a beautiful answer:

"The Egyptian exile and slavery was a punishment from Hashem for the tribes selling Yosef as a slave. Hashem calculated each act of the Egyptians as a Midda Kenaged Midda retribution for each action to Yosef.

1) The brothers sold Yosef and he became a slave (to the house of Potiphar) in return the Jews (who were the children of the brothers of Yosef) were slaves for the Egyptians.

2) since Yosef was thrown into a pit the Jewish males were thrown into the Nile River at birth.

3) just as Yosef went to Egypt based on the sale so too his brothers were forced to go to Egypt because of Yosef.

4) since the brothers made the decision to sell Yosef while they were tending the sheep so too the brothers went down to Egypt while tending to their flocks.

Yosef's sons were also included in the suffering of the Egyptian exile because Yosef had pride in himself (no matter how miniscule) about his dreams."

If you want pictures of the foreword to the second volume of the Midrash Says (among other places) where this is discussed at length let me know.

(Abarbanel to Parashat Lech Lecha ; The Midrash Says Book 2 first two pages of the Forward)

PARASHAT VAERA

In this week's parasha we find a repeated statement:

"Hashem said to Moshe 'Pharaoh's heart is stubborn he has refused to send the people (Bnei Yisrael).'"

(Shemot / Exodus 7:14)

Hashem hardening Pharaoh's heart is the reason the Torah gives for him not allowing Bnei Yisrael to go free.

This is a very low level for a person to lower themselves to. From the well known story of how Moshe turned a stick to a snake we can learn how Hashem even saves people on this level.

Moshe picked up the snake from its tail from this we can learn that even when we are on the lowest level, represented by the tail, Hashem can pull us out if we really want it. Then we can all go back to becoming a stick which stands proud!

We should never give up even on the lowest levels

(Rabbi Haber class called "is gambling a big deal" ; Rambam Hilchot Teshuba 6:3)

PARASHAT BO

In this week's parasha we learn about the last 3 Makkot (plagues) that Hashem brought down on Egypt. They were locusts, (grasshoppers) darkness, and the killing of the Egyptian first borns.

When the Torah describes the plague of Darkness it says:

"No man (among the Egyptians) could see his brother nor could anyone rise from his place for a 3 day period; but for all of Bnei Yisrael there was light in their dwellings."

(Shemot / Exodus 10:23)

Question:

Hashem is very exact in His "actions.", why did He have the Egyptians suffer through the plague of darkness?

Answer:

The Egyptians were being punished Midda Kenegad Midda (literally measure for measure) for what they did to the Jews. They used to order the Jews to hold a candle on top of their head. Further he was ordered not to move and if he did his head will be sliced! Now Hashem reversed their roles.

In addition, the darkness was symbolic of the fact that the Egyptians had chosen a life of spiritual darkness while Bnei Yisrael had accepted Hashem's Torah and Mivot which is comparable to light.

(The Midrash Says Book 2 page 87 ; Midrash Hagadol 10:21 and 23)

PARASHAT BESHALACH

During an entire trip a father was carrying his son on his shoulders. While his little boy enjoyed the ride he noticed an attractive object in a shop window. "I wish my father would buy this for me?" he exclaimed. His father bought it for him.

As they traveled on, the boy noticed other items which he desired and his father fulfilled his wishes. Later the little boy saw a friend of his father's walk by and asked him "have you seen my father? I don't know where he is!"

“You Silly Child!” exclaimed his father. “I am carrying you on my shoulders at this very moment; I fulfill all of your requests yet you claim to not know where I am?”

The father immediately threw his son off of his shoulders and a dog came and bit him.

This is a mashal (parable) for an event in this week’s Parasha. We see that Hashem surrounded Bnei Yisrael with his 7 Clouds of Glory and gave them the Mann. Yet they still complained by Mara (the first stop after Yam Suf) as the Passuk says:

“He (Moshe) called the place Massah U’meribah because of the fight of Bnei Yisrael and because of their test of Hashem saying ‘is Hashem among us or not?’”

(Shemot/Exodus 17:7)

The Bnei Yisrael asked in this Passuk “is Hashem among us or not?” Hashem was not happy with this question. Of course He was among them because He did miracles for them from Kri’at Yam Suf to giving them Mann etc.

Because of this question Hashem “threw Bnei Yisrael off his shoulder” and “a dog came and bit them” Amalek was allowed to attack us.

(The Midrash Says book 2 page 159 ; Pisktei Drav Kahana)

PARASHAT YITRO

A person who suffers from multiple medical conditions must be treated for each malady individually. While this might be true in the physical world there exists a unique medicine that is able to cure all spiritual ailments WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

What is this wondrous drug?

The Torah!

As this week's Parasha states:

"Yitro, the minister of Midian, the father in law of Moshe, heard everything that Hashem did to Moshe and to Israel, His people, that Hashem had taken them out of Egypt."

(Shemot/Exodus 18:1)

This Passuk tells us that Yitro heard of what Happened to Bnei Yisrael when they left Egypt.

Yitro "listened" and grasped the meaning of this momentous event. Realizing that it could only have been Hashem who could have freed Bnei Yisrael from the mighty Egyptians. He thereby concluded that it is his moral duty to serve Him.

Let's all learn from Yitro. We must realize that every second Hashem is doing an innumerable amount of wonders for us. From this realization we must serve Him.

(Zohar 1:67 ; The Midrash Says Book 2 pages 163-164)

PARASHAT MISHPATIM

When Hashem asked Bnei Yisrael if they wanted the Torah the Passuk says:

"(He (Hashem) took the Book of the treaty and read it in earshot of the people (the Jews) and they said) "everything that Hashem has we shall do and we will obey!"

(Shemot / Exodus 24:7)

The Midrash teaches: When Bnei Yisrael said "...Naaseh Vnishma (...We will do and we will listen)" it was considered before Hashem that we did all of the Mitzvot, just by committing to serve Hashem and keep His Mitzvot. That is why we became beloved by Hashem.

Another Midrash hints to the love that Hashem showed us after we said "Naaseh Venishma". It says that a Heavenly voice descended saying that "Na'aseh Ve'nishma" is the language of angels. Then six hundred thousand angels came down from Heaven and placed 2 crowns on each of the heads of Bnei Yisrael, one for Na'aseh and one for Nishma.

That is the extent of the Love that Hashem has for each and every one of Bnei Yisrael. One crown is not enough, we need two. We can also see the tremendous level of

holiness that Bnei Yisrael had after Maran Torah, a level that everyone is capable of attaining and that will return to all Jews when Mashiach comes Bimhera B'yamenu (speedily in our days) Amen!!

(Midrash Rabbah Shir Hashirim 1:13 and 2:1 ; The Midrash Says book 2 page 230 ; Massechat Shabbat 88a)

PARASHAT TERUMA

In describing the Aron Hakodesh (the Holy Ark that was concealed in the Kodesh HaKodashim) the Torah states:

“They (Bnei Israel) shall make an Ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits its length, a cubit and a half its width and a cubit and a half its height.”

(Shemot/Exodus 25:10)

From this Passuk we can learn that the total surface area of the Aron Hakodesh was 12 square Amot.

Question:

What is the significance of the number 12?

Answer:

There are 12 qualities that a true servant of Hashem must have these are them:

One must have perfect faith in Hashem

One must act justly

One must speak the truth in his heart

One doesn't say Lashon Hara

One doesn't do wrong to his fellow

One doesn't bring shame to his relative

A bad person is disgusting in your eyes

One who honors those who fear Hashem

One who promises against his or her Yeser Hara and he or she doesn't go against it

Nor does he or she take bribes against the innocent to judge the innocent as guilty

(Tehilim perek 15 ; the Midrash Says book 2 pages 247-251)

PARASHAT TISVA

This week's Parasha has many Pessukim that are confusing at first glance.

But we know every LETTER IN THE TORAH HAS A PURPOSE and CONTAINS VERY DEEP MEANINGS!!

One of these Pessukim:

Hashem tells Moshe:

"You shall slaughter the ram (the second ram that was brought as part of the inauguration of the Mishkan) and you shall take some of its blood and place it on the middle part of the ear of Aharon and on the middle part of the ear of his sons- the right one - and on the thumb of their right hand and the big toe of their right foot and you shall throw the blood upon the Altar all around."

(Shemot/Exodus 29:20)

QUESTION:

Why would Hashem want the blood of a Korban to be placed on certain parts of Aharon and his son's bodies'??

ANSWER:

Hashem wants to teach us that the Kohanim dedicated all of their body parts for the service of Hashem in the Mishkan(/Baté Hamikdashot)!

"...And place it on the middle part of the ear of Aharon..."-teaches us that through the ear the Kohanim heard and understood what Hashem wanted from them.

" ..And on the thumb of their right hand..."--teaches that the Kohanim used their hands to perform the actions that Hashem made them responsible for.

"...And the big toe of their right foot..."

the Kohanim used their feet to move around the Mishkan(/Batei Hamikdashot) in order to perform the various services that they were responsible for.

WE CAN LEARN FROM HERE THAT: Each of the body parts Hashem gave us has a specific function in performing Mitsvot Which is the ultimate purpose of our existence!

For example we can use our hands to give charity and we can use our hands to pat people on the back and our mouths to tell them they did a good job which would cheer them up.!!

(Rabbi Simshon Rapheal Hirsch ; Artscroll Humash/Tanach note to our passuk)

PARASHAT KI TISSA

In this week's parasha we see a famous story that happened to our people.

What is this story ?

It's the story of the Het Haegel (sin of the Golden Calf)

After Moshe saw that the Jews sinned he went back up to Hashem to ask for forgiveness.

Part of Moshe's plea was:

"And now if You (Hashem) would but forgive their sin but if not erase me now from Your book that You have written."

(Shemot / Exodus 32:32)

Even though Hashem ended up forgiving Bnei Yisrael for this terrible sin, Moshe's name isn't mentioned in Parashat Tesaveh (last week's Parashah).

In our Passuk there is a hint for this.

The Passuk says "... Mechoni Na Msifrecha..." (... Erase me (Moshe) now from Your (Hashem) book...)

M'sifrecha can mean from the 20th book (m'=from, sifre'= your book cha = kaf which is the 20th letter in Hebrew alphabet.)

So we see that Parashat Tesaveh is the 20th parasha (from Parashat Beresheit.)

(Od Yosef Hai (written by Hacham Ovadia Yosef) Parashat Ki Tissa)

PARASHAT VAYKHEL

Towards the beginning of this week's parasha we find a very interesting Passuk that needs explanation.

The Passuk says:

"Do not ignite a fire on the Shabbat in all of your dwellings."

(Shemot/Exodus 35:3)

Usually when SHABBAT is mentioned in the Torah it is defined as a day of rest from the Melacha of the week. But here the Torah is specifying only one of the 39 Melachot.

QUESTION:

Why is this Melacha (activity) of "lo tevaru esh..." "Do not ignite any fire..." Singled out by the Torah to be the only Melacha that is mentioned in the Torah straight out?

ANSWER:

Rabbi Haber explains beautifully that we shouldn't bring a fire into our own home's. Meaning to say don't bring any negative feelings out during our Friday night dinner table for example. On Shabbat we have to be careful not to get "fired up" about anything negative.

DON'T BRING ANY FIRE INTO YOUR HOUSES ON SHABBAT

May Hashem bless all of us to always have uplifting, peaceful Shabbatot and thereby feel the beauty of all the Mitzvot Amen!

(Shla (Shènè Lu'chot Haberit) Hakadosh ; Rabbi Haber from minute 21 and in his class called "making sense of the Midwood tragedy.")

PARASHAT PEKUDE

This week's Parasha is Pekude, the end of Sefer Shemot.

This Sefer teaches us how to go from subjugated slaves to human beings that serve the

Creator of the universe and everything that is in it.

Sefer Shemot begins with the descent into Egyptian Slavery. After crying out to Hashem we were redeemed from slavery, given the holy Torah, and in this week's Parasha, just one year after the Exodus, Hashem commands us to bring him into our lives constantly through the building of the Mishkan.

The Mishkan acts as a permanent connection between the Jews and Hashem.

QUESTION:

An obvious Question that many commentators address is why does the Torah spend nearly four Parashiot talking about the Mishkan? While the Torah spent only 31 Pesskuim talking about the creation of the world? What was more impressive, the creation of the world or the creation of the Mishkan?

ANSWER:

It is much harder for us to bring Hashem into your life because of the yeser hara (evil inclination), then it was for Hashem to create the world. Hashem created us with a Yeser Hara that tries to make us "fall" constantly. To beat this Yeser Hara is no small feat! We can learn this from the fact that the Torah dedicated 4 Parashiyot on the subject of getting the Shechina down to Earth and into our own lives.

(Shir Hashirim Rabbah 2:6; Yishayahu 6:3)

SEFER VAYIKRA

The Book of Leviticus

PARASHAT VAYIKRA

STORY:

The king had a friend that didn't have a lot of wealth but he still wanted to make a feast for the king. When the king saw the invitation he thought about the difficult financial

situation of his friend.

Knowing this the king said:

"Don't go to great expense to purchase a variety of foods. I suggest that you use basic foods which you presently have in your home. Then cook, fry or bake those items according to different recipes. This will please me just as much as an exotic meal that a king would usually be served."

This week's Parasha prescribes the Korban mincha which was brought by very poor people. It states:

"He (the one bringing the Korban) shall bring the Korban to the sons of Aharon, the Cohanim, one of whom shall scoop a Kemisa [fistful] from it. from its fine flour and from its oil as well as all its frankincense and the Cohen shall cause its memorial portion to go up in smoke upon the Altar, a fire offering a satisfying aroma to Hashem."

(Vayikra/Leviticus 2:2)

How does the story connect to the Parasha?

It is a parable. The King's friend describes the relationship that Hashem has with poor people. As it says in Tehillim Hashem "strengthens the poor". He uplifts them by still allowing them to serve Him in the way that they can and accepts their korbanot in the same manner as the King accepts a smaller feast for his poor friend.

(The Midrash Says book 3 pages 26 and 27, Tehillim 146)

PARASHAT SAV

In this week's Parasha we learn about the Minhath Havitin (The Kohen Gadol's daily Korban) as the Passuk says:

"The Kohen from among his [Aharon's] sons, who is anointed in his place shall perform this Minhath Haitian it is an eternal decree for Hashem it shall be caused to go up in smoke in its entirety."

(Vayikra/Leviticus 6:15)

From this Passuk we learn that the Kohen Gadol had to bring a korban everyday and that this Korban was burnt entirely and no one was allowed to eat any part of it.

The Abarbanel gives 10 reasons for this Korban. I would like to present one of his reasons.

The Abarbanel writes:

“The Kohen Gadol’s Korban served as an encouragement to sinners to come forward and bring the required Korban for their sin.

Upon observing that even the Kohen Gadol sought forgiveness by means of a Korban they would likewise admit their sins and not hesitate because of embarrassment.”

PRACTICAL LESSON FOR OUR OWN LIVES:

From this Korban we can learn that if one of us were to decide to do something good then we can encourage others to follow!

(Massechat Menahot 8a; Talmud Yerushalmi Massechat Yoma 1:1 ; Abarbanel ; The Midrash Says Book 3 pages 52 and 54)

PARASHAT SHEMINI

This week's parasha teaches one of the most famous narratives in the Torah. The story of the death of the great Sadikim, sons of Aharon,

Nadav and Avihu.

We can glean a very important message from the Passuk that comes after the description of their deaths.

The Passuk says:

"Moshe said to Aharon: 'of this did Hashem speak to me saying 'I will be sanctified through those who are nearest Me thus I will be honored before the entire people.' And Aharon was silent.'"

(Vayikra/ Leviticus 10:3)

Based on the words: ".... Of this did Hashem speak to me saying" There is a very nice perush (explanation.);

Moshe knew that the Mishkan needed to be sanctified through someone whom Hashem's glory rests. But he thought that it meant either him or Aharon.

Now Moshe realized that Nadav and Avihu were greater than him and Aharon, and they were still punished.

LESSON:

Rashi brings down an important message here. When Hashem punishes the righteous His name is sanctified and He becomes feared. Therefore Rashi tells us that if such great sadikim could deserve such a punishment imagine what wicked people deserve.

(Artscroll Humash page 593 second comment on our Passuk)

*******THERE ARE THREE SIFRE TORAH THIS WEEK (during the year of 2016)*******

An elderly man went to synagogue on a week that there were 3 Sifre Torot (Torah scrolls) to read from and he told his attendant that helped him stand up at various points in the Tefilla to help him stand up after the Torot were read from. The attendant wondered why ? And he said because seeing three Sifre Torot is a beautiful sight and he doesn't know how many more times he will see this.

PARASHAT TAZRIA

This week's parasha opens up with the laws of a woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl.

One of the Pessukim that talk about these halachot says:

"He (the Kohen) shall offer it (this women's Korban) before Hashem to atone for her and she becomes purified from the source of her blood; this is the law of one who gives birth to a male or to a female."

(Vayikra/ Leviticus 12:7)

Babies are so amazing!

The Midrash says about them:

"Although children are born surrounded by blood and continuously dirty themselves they nevertheless are liked by EVERYONE. The charm of babies and young children is that of the Shechina (divine presence) that rests upon them since they are free of sin. As soon as the Yeser Hara begins to take possession of a child's heart the difference is noticeable and even his parents become incensed at their child."

(The Midrash Says book 3 page 113 ; Midrash Aggadah 12)

PARASHAT MESORA

This week's Parasha begins with the purification of the Mesora (The one afflicted with leprosy for (among other reasons) speaking Lashon Hara.) Then we continue to learn about how Sara'at (leprosy) can afflict someone's home.

The second Passuk in the section about Sara'at on houses is:

"When you arrive in the land of Canaan (modern day Israel) that I (Hashem) give you, as a possession and, I will place Sara'at upon a house in the land of your possession."

(Vayikra/Leviticus 14:34)

QUESTION:

From this Passuk it seems that it is inevitable that Hashem will place Sara'at on someone's house because the Passuk says "... I WILL place Saarat...." as opposed to the Torah case of Sara'at on clothing as the Passuk says "IF there shall be a Sara'at..."

Why does the Passuk seem to say that Saarat has to appear in a person's house?

ANSWER:

All of Hashem's punishments are actually a blessing in disguise. This can be seen from the example of Sara'at on houses. When the Canaanites learned of our eventual entry into the land they went to great lengths to bury all of their treasures so that they shouldn't fall into the hands of the Jews. Hashem therefore caused Sara'at to break out on the walls of certain houses so that it had to be demolished. To the owner's despair its walls were torn down.

Suddenly glittering piles of gold and silver revealed themselves to the eye. The owner unexpectedly found himself in possession of wealth which he had never dreamt possible.

(The Midrash Says book 3 page 170; Vayikra Rabbah 17:6)

PARASHAT AHAREI MOT

This week's Parasha opens up with the Seder Havodah Shel Yom Hakippurim (the order of what was done on Yom Kippur (in the Beit Hamikdash.)) Towards the end of this section we have a Passuk that we repeat a lot of times over the course of Yom Kippur.

The Passuk says:

"Because on this day (of Yom Kippur) you shall be atoned on yourselves to purify yourselves from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified."

(Vayikra / Leviticus 16:30)

Yom Kippur is identified with the Misva of Teshuba (repentance) because for one whole day all we are doing is praying to Hashem in order that He in His Infinite Mercy forgives us for our wrongdoings.

The book called "Shaare Teshuba" begins with a powerful statement about the Misva of Teshuba:

"One of the great kindnesses that Hashem bestowed upon His creatures is that He made it possible to escape the trap built of their own misdeeds to save them from eternal destruction and to deflect His anger from them. He taught them that they can repent and return to Him even after sinning and He admonished them to do so because of His powerful influence on the people. Therefore even if they have committed numerous grievous sins and have betrayed Hashem in the worst manner He doesn't shut the doors of Teshuba on them."

(Yalkut Yosef Hilchot Yomim Noraim English edition beginning of the Preface to The Misvah of Repenting (page 259) ; Sefer Shaare Teshuba beginning of the first gate)

PARASHAT KEDOSHIM

This week's Parasha is packed with all different Misvot. 2 of them are to fear our parents and keep the Shabbatot.

Towards the beginning of the Parasha the Torah tells us:

"Every man shall fear his mother and his father, and you shall observe My Shabbats. I am the Hashem your God."

(Vayikra/Leviticus 19:3)

The Or Hachayim says on our Passuk based on the words "...you shall observe my Shabbats...":

"That the 7 days of the week were created because of 7 Sadikim. The day of Shabbats corresponds to Yosef Hasadik. He is the basis of peace (Shalom) and for this we say Shabbat Shalom."

(Or Hachayim 19:3 Dibor Hamatchil: "Veat Shabbatoti Tishmori" ; Zohar 2:277, 3:301 ; Zohar Hadash Parashat Toledot)

PARASHAT EMOR

In this week's Parasha we are taught the laws of Jewish holidays (Pesah, Shabout, Succot, Rosh Hashana and, Yom Kippur.)

During the holiday of Succot we have the Misva of taking a Lulav and Etrog on the first seven days of the holiday.

There is a beautiful Midrash that I would like to share it with all of you regarding the lulav and etrog;

"Similarly Moshe said to Bnei Yisrael: 'if you wish to be redeemed (from Egypt) you can be redeemed by performing a simple act, as it says in the Passuk (which talks about taking blood and putting it on the doorposts) 'you shall take a bundle of hyssop...' Bnei Yisrael then asked Moshe how much must the bundle cost? Moshe answered one Ma'ah and it will cause you to possess the booty of Egypt and the booty at the Yam Suf and that of Sihon and Og and all of the 31 kings who lived in Eretz Canaan (modern day Israel.) If this is the reward of one bundle how much more so is the reward of the Misva of Lulav which costs a person a lot of money and has many Misvot connected to it.

Therefore Moshe says to Bnei Yisrael (in this week's Parasha): 'you shall take for yourselves, on the first day, the fruit of a citron tree (the Etrog), the branches of date palms, twigs of a plaited tree, and brook willows and you shall rejoice before Hashem your G-d for 7 days.'"

(Vayikra/ Leviticus 23:40)

(Shir Hashirim Rabbah 2:10 ; Sefer Shemot 12:22)

PARASHAT BEHAR

When Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi traveled to Babylonia he once prayed there in a Bet Hakneset (Shul/Synagogue) on a fast day. The community was bowing down while reciting the Tahanunim prayers (commonly known as "Anah") but he refrained because he noticed that the floor was made of stone.

Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi didn't want to go against the Passuk in this week's Parasha that says:

"You shall not make idols for yourselves and you shall not erect for yourselves a statue or a pillar and in your land you shall not emplace a flooring stone upon which to bow down on for I am Hashem your God."

(Vayikra/Leviticus 26:1)

The people in that town avoided this prohibition by not fully bowing down but since Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi had the custom to bow down fully with his entire body he preferred not to bow down altogether.

(Interesting question to think about:

Why does the Torah put together the prohibition of bowing down on a stone floor with a warning to keep Shabbat ?)

(The Midrash Says book 3 page 367 ; Massechat Megillah 22b)

PARASHAT BEHUKOTI

Eliyahu Hanabi wandered in the streets of Yerushalayim at the time of the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash. The populace was moving about listlessly drained of strength because of the famine.

Eliyahu noticed a little boy rolling in the garbage heap his body completely swollen from lack of food.

From which family do you come from? Eliyahu asked him and the boy answered what the name of his family was.

Next Eliyahu asked if his relatives are still alive and the boy answered they are all dead no one but me is still alive.

Eliyahu told him:

"Listen to me I shall teach you a prayer which if you recite it daily will enable you to stay

alive. Do you want to hear it?"

They boy said he wants to hear it.

Eliyahu instructed him:

"Say 'Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeniu Hashem Echad.'"

The boy protested and said:

"No my parents would never mention the name of Hashem. I will not say that."

He pulled out his idol which he carried with him and embraced and kissed it. As he was doing so his belly burst open and he dropped dead upon his idol.

This story depicts that which the Torah says in our Parasha:

"I (Hashem) will destroy your lofty buildings and decimate your sun idols I (Hashem) will cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols and My (Hashem's) spirit will reject you."

(Vayikra/ Leviticus 26:30)

(The Midrash Says Book 3 pages 399-400; Massechat Sanhedrin 63b-64a)

SEFER BAMIDBAR

The Book of Numbers

PARASHAT BAMIDBAR

The children of Israel shall encamp each man by his banner according to the insignias of their father's' household at a distance surrounding the tent of meeting (Ohel Moad) shall they encamp.

(Bamidbar / Numbers 2:2)

This Passuk comes from the beginning of the section of this week's parasha that discusses how Bnei Yisrael needed to be situated in respect to the Mishkan which housed the Luchot. By Har Sinai we were also commanded to not come too close to the mountain when the Torah was being given.

So we see a connection between this week's parasha and the holiday (of Shabbat) that comes immediately after. The connection is that by the Mishkan there was a special layout for us to follow and by Matan Torah (the main theme of Shabbat) we couldn't pass a certain point on the mountain on which the Torah was given.

(Ramban Hakdama LeSefer Bamidbar)

PARASHAT NASSO

May Hashem bless you and safeguard you

(Bamidbar/Numbers 6:24)

This Passuk is part of the Birkat Kohanim (Priestly Blessings.) This Passuk is interpreted to mean that Hashem shall give us the many blessings that the Torah specifies. This Beracha goes to such lengths that it protects us even from bandits.

Birkat Kohanim is different than all the other blessings that Hashem Placed in the Torah because it still comes true even if we don't achieve perfection by studying Torah and fulfilling the Mitzvot. But is bestowed upon us unconditionally.

Hashem chose the Kohanim to bestow these blessings because they are especially holy since they are occupied with serving Hashem and learning Torah all day long. When they spread out their ten fingers and say the words of Birkat Kohanim they bring blessing down from the ten Sefirot. Therefore the blessing goes to all who hear it even to the undeserving. (Of course the worthier the recipient the more effective is the Beracha.)

(Rashi "Veyismiracha (and watch over you)" (Bamidbar / Numbers 6:24) ; Sifre ; Artscroll

Tanach page 340 first note ; Rokeach ; Bamidbar Rabbah 11:3 Tiferet Sion ; Malbim ; The Midrash Says Book 4 page 88 and 89)

PARASHAT BEHAALOTCHA

Now this man, Moshe, was exceedingly humble, more so than any person on the face of the earth.

(Bamidbar / Numbers 12:3)

Moshe Rabbeinu (our teacher) had great wealth from a sapphire diamond type of crystal that Hashem gave him. He was strong and an awesome general, because he killed Og (king of Bashan.) His face glowed with rays of Heavenly Glory and he had a beautiful appearance. He had way more knowledge than any human before and after him. He had 49 out of the 50 gates of wisdom. Whatever he said was instantly approved by Hashem to be true. Hashem performed open miracles for Moshe by making the sun stand still TWICE for him (when he fought Amalek and when he fought Sichon and Og.)

How did Moshe achieve such great heights in the character trait of humility ?

Moshe, more than anyone else, understood the meaning of the second Passuk of Vayivarech David that we say everyday.

The Passuk reads :

Your's, Hashem, is the greatness and the power and glory and victory and majesty for all that is in Heaven and on earth is Yours. Yours Hashem is the rulership and You are exalted as head above all."

(Divre Hayamim Aleph / Chronicles I 29:11.)

The more a person is aware of Hashem, the more clearly the person realizes that what he accomplishes is insignificant compared to what the person is granted from Hashem. The gifts given to the individual are seen as a source of debt to Hashem that he has to pay back by serving Him Who granted us the gift of life.

(Midrash Aggadah; Various Commentaries; Sefer Hovot Halavavot; The Midrash Says Book 4 pages 147-149)

PARASHAT SHELACH

In this desert your (Bnei Yisrael's) corpses shall fall your entire number all those from the age of 20 and up who were counted because you complained against Me

(Bamidbar / Numbers 14:29)

This Passuk comes from the beginning of the portion of this week's parasha of how Bnei Yisrael will be punished for their crying when the spies came back with their report of the land of Israel. This Passuk on the simple level explains that most of the generation will have to dig their own graves each year and will have to lie in it and see if they will survive for another year or not.

This decree actually had a couple of good benefits.

And they were:

- 1) Since the Jews were willing to dig their own graves and lie in them in order to see if they will survive Hashem lifted His decree that most of the generation will be forbidden from entering Olam Haba**
- 2) during these 40 years that the Jews had to wander in the desert the Canaanim rebuilt their country after destroying it because they didn't want the Jews to inherit the rich produce of the land of Israel**
- 3) so that the Jews can study Torah for 40 years before having to enter the land of Israel and having to worry about cultivating the land so they have food to eat as opposed to when Hashem gave them food each day from Shamyim in the wilderness**

A lesson that we can take out of this is that whenever it seems that Hashem is trying to punish us He is still being merciful to us. Always thank Him for the good and the seemingly bad and believe that He is only trying to help us.

(Tractate Sanhedrin 110a ; Shemot Rabbah 20:15 ; Lekach Tob ; Mechilta ; The Midrash Says Book 4 pages 179-180)

PARASHAT KORACH

When he (Moshe) finished speaking all these words the ground that was under them (Korach and his followers) split open

(Bamidbar / Numbers 17:31)

This Passuk is from the beginning part of this week's parasha that talks about the punishment of Korach and his followers for mocking the Torah in front of all Bnei Yisrael.

Datan and Aviram who were the leaders of this whole event with Korach had their children killed with all of the followers of Korach. This shows us that the sin of causing strife makes someone younger than 13 get punished for their sin. Because even the young babies were punished in this tragic event.

(Bamidbar Rabbah 18:3 ; The Midrash Says Book 4 page 223)

PARASHAT HUKAT

This is the decree (Huk) of the Torah which Hashem has commanded saying "speak to Bnei Yisrael and they shall take to you (Moshe and Aharon) a completely red cow which is without blemish and upon which a yoke has not come.

(Bamidbar/Numbers 19:2)

This Passuk is the second one in the sidrah. It describes the qualifications for the Misvah of Para Adumah (The Red Cow) This special cow is able to make someone Tahor (pure) from the most severe type of Tumah (impurity.) This Tumah is called Tameh Met (impurity (by having contact with) a dead (body.))

The way in which it purifies someone is as follows:

1) The Kohan slaughters the cow outside the camp

2) He gathers some of the cow's blood in his left hand dips his right index finger into it and sprinkles it in the direction of the Hechal

3) a fire is lit and the Kohan supervises the cow's burning

4) with a red woolen string he ties together a cedar stick and some hyssop while the cow is burning this bundle is cast into its carcass

5) the cow's ashes are divided into 3 parts

6) whoever was involved in the preparation becomes Tamay (impure)

7) in a utensil the cow's ashes are mixed with fresh spring water

8) the waters of the cow are sprinkled by someone who is Tameh Met onto to the Jew and purifies him

Shlomo who was the most wisest man to ever live never fully understood this Misva. But Rashi and the midrash have a way to understand it in some sense.

Hashem "proclaimed":

Let the (mother) cow atone for the impurity created by the (Golden) calf.

(Massechat Yoma 42 ; Rambam Mishne Torah Hilchot Para Adumah ; The Midrash Says Book 4 pages 253-255)

PARASHAT BALAK

How goodly are your tents Yaakob your dwelling places Yisrael

(Bamidbar / Numbers 24:4)

This passuk is sung at every wedding (Ma Tov Ohlekeh Yaakob) listen for it the next time you're at a wedding !

It comes from the third set of blessings that Bilaam told Bene Yisrael.(He intended to curse us but we couldn't be because we are blessed (Bamidbar 22:12).)

One of the ways to interpret this Passuk is:

How good are the Houses of prayer and Torah study (Beta Kinnesiot and Bete Midrashiot) the miniature temples of the exile !

From this blessing it is evident which curse Bilaam wished to say that the Jews in exile should no longer possess houses of prayer and places of Torah study thus severing our connection with Hashem. However Hashem caused Bilaam to give us a blessing that our places of Torah study and prayer should be with us forever.

All of Bilaam's evil intentions bore fruit at a later time when the Jews sinned in exile. However Hashem never allowed the curse against our synagogues and places of learning to become a reality since they are vital for our survival.

(Rokeach ; Massechat Megillah 29a ; Massechat Sanhedrin 106b ; Gur Aryeh ; The Midrash Says Book 4 page 335)

PARASHAT PINCHAS

These are what you shall make for Hashem on your appointed festivals aside from your vows and your free will offerings for your burnt offerings your meal offerings your libations and your peace offering

(Bamidbar / Numbers 29:39)

The end of the parasha talks about all the different special Mussaf Korbanot (additional offerings) that are brought on all the different holidays as well as on Shabbat and Rosh Hodesh. This passuk comes from the very end of this section.

One may ask you there are no holidays during the summer. Because every other season has a holiday in it.

This midrash helps explain why no holidays are in the summer :

Hashem planned to give the Jews a holiday in every summer month but due to our sins we lost this privilege.

May we merit to see the time when Hashem will give us only happiness during the summer and no reason to have to fast.

(Piskta Drev Kehana 50 ; The Midrash Says Book 4 page 398)

PARASHAT MATTOT

Take vengeance for Bnei Yisrael from Midyan afterward you will be brought unto your people.

(Bamidbar/Numbers 31:2)

Why do we have to take revenge from Midyan and not from Moab? Weren't they both involved in the story of Bilaam who made us do sins which is the reason for us to take revenge against Midyan?

The answer to this is because Hashem had to bring two fine young doves- which is a term of affection used by Hashem- from Moab.

To whom do these young doves refer to?

They refer to:

- 1. Rut**
- 2. Naamah**

(Rashi "Meat Hamidyanim" (second explanation ; Arstscroll Rashi on Sefer Bamidbar page 378 note 3)

PARASHAT MASEI

These are the Misvot and the Mishpatim (ordinances) that Hashem commanded through Moshe to Bnei Yisrael in the plains of Moab at the Jordan by Yericho.

(Bamidbar/Numbers 36:13)

Why does the Passuk have to mention that Hashem commanded the Misvot through Moshe? If we already know that Moshe taught all these Misvot?

The answer to this is because Hashem wanted to comfort Moshe.

Why did Moshe need to get comforted?

He needed to get comforted because Hashem wouldn't allow him to enter the land. Hashem comforted Moshe by having all the laws that pertain to the land of Israel be taught in his name.

(Abarbanel in the name of the Ri; The Midrash Says part 4 page 433)

SEFER DEVARIM

The Book of Deuteronomy

PARASHAT DEVARIM

All of you approached me (Moshe) and said : "let us send men ahead of us and let them spy out the land and bring word back to us , the road on which we should ascend and the cities to which we should come."

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 1:22)

This Passuk comes fairly early in this week's parasha. It talks about how Moshe rebuked Bnei Yisrael about the sin of how the spies back in parashat Shelach said that the land of Israel was uninhabitable.

When the spies came back with a negative report of the land Bnei Yisrael cried that the land is bad .

Hashem said about this :

"You (Bnei Yisrael) cried for no reason (the fact that Erts Yisrael is bad ... which is totally false because Hashem blessed it) so I will make them have a reason to cry in the future."

This connects to Tisha Beav because Bnei Yisrael cried over the land on the night of Tisha Beav and then Hashem sent us tragedies like the destruction of the 2 Batei Hamikdash on these days in the future. From here we learn an important lesson that if Hashem says that something is good then there are no "ifs ands or buts!"

PARASHAT VAETCHANAN

Then Moshe set aside 3 cities on the bank of the Jordan toward the rising sun

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:41)

This Passuk explains to us that after Moshe's unsuccessful plea to Hashem to allow him to enter Erts Yisrael he set up 3 cities on the opposite side of the Yarden (Jordan River (in Israel.))

Moshe knew that he wouldn't live to see these cities in action but he still strived to establish them so he can do as many Misvot as possible. Similarly David tried to set up as much as he could for the Bet Hamikdash even though he knew he wouldn't be alive to see it be fully built and in service.

Moshe and David exemplified the saying:

"One who cherishes the Misvot constantly seeks more."

Interestingly to note this Passuk starts off with the words "Az Yavdil Moshe.." which is similar to the beginning of Az Yashir ("Az Yashir Moshe..") The Midrash wants to explain this similarity by saying that Moshe understood what it is like to be chased by someone who wants to kill you because in Egypt he killed an Egyptian and the government came after him and he had to flee from them. So too here with a city of refuge a person who accidentally murdered someone is fleeing to this city because a family member is allowed to come after this accidental murderer before he gets to the city of refuge.

(Devarim Rabbah 2:18 ; Midrash Shocher Tob 30:2 ; Devarim Rabbah 2:20 ; Tiferet Sion , Ets Yosef , Sifteh Kohen ; The Midrash Says Book 5 pages 70-71)

PARASHAT EKEB

You shall place these words of Mine upon your heart and upon your soul you shall bind them for a sign upon your arm and let them be a sign between your eyes.

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:18)

This Passuk comes from the end of the second paragraph of Shema. Which is in the end of the Parasha. This Passuk speaks simply about Tefillin. But a Gemara in Massechat (Tractate) Kiddushin beautifully explains how it can teach us about how to conquer the Yeser Hara (evil inclination.)

The Gemara :

"The Rabbis taught in a Berayta; (in reference to the Torah our Passuk says) "vsamtem" (you shall place.) (This word may be divided into) Sam Tam (a perfect elixir.) (thus these words hints to the idea that) Torah is compared to a life giving elixir. an analogy is given to a man that dealt his son a great blow and (then) placed a compress upon his wound saying to him: 'my son! So long as this compress (remains) upon your wound you may eat what you desire, drink what you desire, and bathe in either hot or cold water and you (need not fear) but if you remove (this compress) (your wound) will surely give rise to boils.'

So too Hashem said to Bene Yisrael; 'My son! I have created the Yeser Hara (evil inclination) and I have created Torah as it's antidote.' If you involve yourselves in Torah you will not be delivered into its hand.

(Massechat Kiddushin 30b with Artscroll's commentary)

PARASHAT RE'EH

Three times a year all your men should appear before Hashem your God in the place that He will choose on the festival of Masot the festival of Shabout and the festival of Succot

and he shall not appear before Hashem empty handed

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:16)

This Passuk explains to us how our nation had an obligation during the times of the Bet Hamikdash to go to Jerusalem for Pesah Shabout and Succot. During this time all the Jews would leave their houses and travel to Jerusalem and Hashem would watch over their possessions while they weren't home.

The Midrash has a story about how the Jew's possessions were guarded by Hashem.

The story goes as follows:

A man before traveling to Yerushayim forgot to lock the doors of his home. When he returned he found a snake coiled up in his doorway. As soon as he arrived it slid away. He realized that Hashem had sent it to guard the house in his absence.

(Shir Hashirim Rabbah 7:53 ; Tiferet Sion; The Midrash Says Book 5 page 198)

PARASHAT SHOFTIM

It shall be that when he (the king of Israel) sits on the throne of his kingdoms he shall write for himself 2 copies of this Torah in a book from before the Kohanim and Leviim.

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 17:18)

This Passuk explains that a Jewish king must always have a Sefer Torah handy. This is in order that he will be able to always study it and be able to make all his decisions according to the Torah.

One of the most famous kings in our history - King David - was always learning Torah as this Misvah / Passuk dictates.

King David longed to spend all his time learning and so he prayed to Hashem saying:

"Let me find time for Torah study and not let the affairs of war disturb me ! "

All of David's conversations revolved around the Torah as he proclaimed:

"How do I love Your Torah ! All day long it is my conversation."

He wouldn't change the topic even in front of gentle kings as the Passuk says:

"And I will speak of Your Misvot before kings and I won't be ashamed."

Said Hashem to David:

"Occupy yourself with Torah study and I will wage your wars!"

(Tractate Berachot 3b ; Midrash Shocher Tob 35:1 ; Tractate Sanhedrin 49 ; The Midrash Says Book 5 page 223)

PARASHAT KI TESA

If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the road on any tree or on the ground -young birds or eggs - and the mother is resting on the young birds or on the eggs you shall not take the mother on the young

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 22:6)

This Passuk explains to us how one can fulfill the Misvah of sending away the mother bird (known as "Kan Sippor" in hebrew.)

The Holy Zohar explains that this Misvah has a profound impact which is:

When the mother separates from its children it cries. The angel appointed over this bird appears before Hashem

And says:

"Why have You Hashem Who is compassionate in all Your ways commanded this in Your Torah."

Then Hashem turns to all the angels and says:

"Do you all see how the angel in charge of this bird speaks up for its children why don't any of you other angels speak up for My son's (Bnei Yisrael) and the Shechina who are in exile."

This cry then evokes heavenly mercy for us Jews. Then this shows you the depth to and the behind the scenes this seemingly small Misvah which in the end brings mercy to us Jews.

(Tikkune HaZohar 23, 104 ; The Midrash Says Book 5 page 258)

PARASHAT KI TABO

The Kohanim the Leviim spoke to all (Bnei) Yisrael saying; "be attentive and hear Bnei Yisrael: THIS DAY you have become a people to Hashem your g-d."

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 27:9)

This Passuk comes before the portion of this week's parasha that talks about how Bnei Yisrael must stand on Har Avel and Har Gerizim to pronounce blessings and curses and to everything the nation must answer "Amen" as a whole to each of the blessings and curses.

One can ask on our Passuk:

Since Sefer Devarim was said at the end of Moshe Rabbenu's life as a farewell address so to speak to Bnei Yisrael before he "passed on." This all occurred a good 38 somewhat years after the Torah was given.

Therefore Wasn't the Torah given forty years ago to Bnei Yisrael not today as the Passuk

says:

"... this day .. " ?

The Gemara at the end of Massechat Berachot answers:

"And Rebbi Yehuda answered Rather the verse is (meant) to teach you that on each and every day you should be excited for Torah as you were on the day you received it"

(Tractate Berachot 63b)

PARASHAT NESABIM

It will be that when all these things come upon you - the blessing and the curse that I (Hashem) have presented before you - then you will take it to your heart (and you will return to Hashem) among all the nations where Hashem your God has dispersed you

(Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:1)

This Passuk starts off the section in this week's Parasha that talks about Teshuba. Teshuba is extremely important it is so important that the Midrash says that it was one of the seven things that were created before the world. Teshuba literally means "to return" to Hashem because that is what we must think that we want to return to Hashem after we have sinned which separates us from the Kadosh Baruch Hu. Once he has become a new person and he even gets to be on a higher level then one who never sinned!

What a wild statement - if one does Teshuba he gets to be on a higher level then one who never sinned before ??

This is true because it is harder for one to taste sin and all its worldly pleasures and then repent then one to stay on the path of never sinning.

Since this month is Elul and Rosh Hashana is right around the corner may we all merit to do full Teshuba and in this way see the arrival of the Mashiach in our times and merit to be redeemed to see the Third Bet Hamikdash Amen!

(Rambam Hilchot Teshuba 7:4)

PARASHAT VAYELECH

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[b]Hashem your God , He will cros

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