

CIRCLE TIME

AT YOUR Shabbos Table

...FOR A Meaningful and Entertaining SHABBOS WITH YOUR CHILDREN...

DVAR TORAH IN A STORY >>

PUTTING THE BRAKES ON THE MALACH HAMAVES

אַחֲרֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיכֶם תֵּלְכוּ

"After Hashem, your G-d, you shall go" (*Devarim* 13:5).

וכי אפשר לו לאדם להלך אחר שכינה? ... אלא להלך אחר מדותיו של הקב"ה. מה הוא מלביש ערומים... אף אתה הלבש ערומים. הקב"ה ביקר חולים... אף אתה בקר חולים. הקב"ה ניחם אבלים... אף אתה נחם אבלים. הקב"ה קבר מתים... אף אתה קבור מתים

"Is it possible to follow the *Shechinah*?... It means to follow [in His ways]. Just as He clothes those who are undressed...so shall you dress those who are undressed. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* visited the sick...so shall you visit the sick. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* comforted the mourning...so shall you comfort the mourning. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* buried the dead...so shall you bury the dead" (*Sotah* 14a).

The *gabbai tzedakah*, Reb Yechezkel, scratched his head in frustration. Where was he going to find another 2,000 dollars? If ever there was a good cause, this was *it*, but that wasn't helping him get the money together.

The *chassan* was a poor orphan with nothing to call his own, and the *kallah* was not much better off—she came from a family with many children, and her father had been sick in bed for years. How were they supposed to get married and start a family when they couldn't afford bread?

Reb Yechezkel had already visited his biggest and best donors. He had pulled in favors, called old friends. True, he had manage to scrape together a few dollars, but he was



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ראה

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PARSHAH RIDDLES

Answers to this week's riddles will appear in next week's issue.

1

In which two places in the Torah does the *parshah* of ענד ענד appear? In which two places in the Torah do the words ענד ענד appear (hint: only one of the above)?

2

Can you find three words in a row that begin with the same two letters? Can you find five out of six consecutive words that end with the same two letters?

3

The *parshah* tells us that it is forbidden to bring a *korban* anywhere outside the Beis Hamikdash. Which *navi* did offer a *Korban Olah* outside the Beis Hamikdash while it was standing? Why was he allowed to do so? (Extra credit: Can you find a hint to his action in the *pasuk*? See *Baal Haturim*.)

GEMATRIA

לֹא תִבְשֹׁל גְּדִי בְחֵלֶב אִמּוֹ

"Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk" (*Devarim* 14:21).

The Gemara tells us that this phrase is repeated three times in the Torah to teach us that it is forbidden to eat, cook, or derive any benefit from meat and milk (cooked together).

לֹא תִבְשֹׁל גְּדִי = 780

הִיא אִיסוּר אֲכִילָה וּבִישׁוּל וְהִנָּה = 780

(*Baal Haturim*)



SERIAL >> CHAPTER 9

CHOLENT STORY

A story told in parts, designed to get children to come back to the table for the main dish!

Recap: Rav Yonasan Eibschutz refuses to accept the money the kehillah has collected to free Reb Shimon, not wanting to sell the mitzvah he paid for with his full dowry. He travels out of town for a week in the hope that the story will blow over by the time he returns.

D

EEP in the bowels of St. Michael's Church, a storm was brewing. Doors slammed in long corridors and angry voices echoed down hallways. The Jewish prisoner was gone!

An air of suspicion filled the church. It was obvious that the escape was an inside job. Someone within the church was a traitor, and everyone pointed accusing fingers at everyone else.

Thomas the guard tried planting evidence against other people, but he saw that the monks, the leaders of the convent, were focusing their suspicions on *him*. Things were getting hot, and Thomas was sweating.

Late one night, a day or two after Rav Yonasan Eibschutz had left the city, Thomas was eavesdropping on a secret meeting of the top church officials. Thomas had been the church guard for many years—40 years in the old building and the entire time since this new building had been built. He knew every secret that went on in the place, and he had a few of his own. One of them was a hideout directly below the office in which the meeting was held, and he could hear every word.

"There's no doubt that he is guilty," one of the monks was saying. "We've researched every angle. No one else knew where the prisoner was held and had access to the key to free him. It was he!"

Below, Thomas held his breath. Were they talking about him?

Another voice joined. "Not only is he guilty of freeing the Jew," it said, "but I think he's been stealing from us. Remember the missing rings from several years ago? And the jewels that mysteriously disappeared from the statue near the altar? And the silver and gold cups that vanished from the treasury? We never found them. Who do you think took them?"

A third voice chimed in. "Of course. We should have known. We have been having the fox guard the chickens all this time!"

Thomas gasped. They *were* talking about him!

Now he heard a fourth voice, harsh and grating. It was the archbishop of all of Hamburg! "I have received reports that the treason of your guard is much more serious than you realize," he said. "You haven't been having the *fox* guard the chickens...you've been having the *chicken* guard the chickens!" he pronounced.

"Chicken guarding the...what?"

"Your church guard is none other than a secret Jew himself!" the archbishop asserted. "One of our men saw him leaving the rabbi's house last week. He is a Jew, explicitly in violation of orders straight from the Vatican, and guilty of death himself! The fires of the stake shall have their Jew after all!"

Thomas would have laughed if he hadn't been so scared. It was true, he had freed Reb Shimon. And yes, he had been stealing from the church for nearly 40 years (he never could let a good "deal" slip by). But a Jew?! He was no Jew. That visit to the rabbi had been pure business...

Either way, he was in mortal danger, and he knew he had to run for it. The monks didn't know that he knew that they knew he was guilty, but they would be coming for him soon. Thomas ran to his room, tossed a few garments into a satchel, and headed for the door. Good riddance to this place and all its—

He froze. His treasure! Forty years of "collecting" church jewels and trinkets, plus the latest haul of 3,000 gold thaler... He couldn't leave it! The monks would search his room for clues to his whereabouts and would certainly find it. He couldn't let them have it back. But he couldn't drag all that with him and still flee the city. It was too heavy.

He needed a place to hide it. But where?

Thomas grabbed a large suitcase and began stuffing it with jewels, gold trinkets, and coins. He knew just the place.

TO BE CONTINUED....

2

DVAR TORAH >>

LITVAK, CHASSID, SEPHARDI

Three different angles on a dvar Torah, one each from Litvish, Chassidic, and Sephardic sources. Can be split between the three seudos.

עשר תעשר, "Take *maaser* you shall take *maaser*" (Devarim 14:22).

אשכנזיה ר' יוחנן לינוקא דריש לקיש אמר ליה אימא לי פסוקין א"ל עשר תעשר א"ל ומאי עשר תעשר א"ל עשר בשביל שתתעשר

"Rav Yochanan met Reish Lakish's child [and asked him what *pasuk* he had learned]. He said to him, "Asser te'asser." He said to him, "What does [it] mean (i.e., why is it doubled)?" He said to him, "Give *maaser* in order that you become rich (*tisasher*)" (Taanis 9).

Why does the Torah tells us that *maaser*, more than any other mitzvah, brings riches?

DUBNO MAGGID:

Every mitzvah brings riches! People are just afraid that giving *maaser* (including *tzedakah*) will make them poor. So the Torah points out that even a costly mitzvah makes you rich—and certainly all the other ones do as well!

IMREI SHEFER:

The mishnah (*Avos* 4:2) tells us that the reward for a mitzvah is another opportunity to do a (similar) mitzvah. So the reward for giving *tzedakah* is more opportunity to give *tzedakah*—meaning more riches.

CHACHAM YOSEF YAAVETZ (FROM THE SPANISH EXILES):

When a person is given more than they need, they are meant to act as a funnel, to channel the resources to the places in which they are needed. If you have a clean funnel, which allows things to flow through it, you will keep using it. But a clogged, sticky funnel that holds onto things that are poured into it is quickly discarded...

PERSONAL GROWTH AVODAH OF THE WEEK

This section views the procession of *parshiyos* and *Yamim Tovim* as a ladder for personal growth. It identifies a theme in the *parshah* and a related area that needs growth, and assigns a weekly mission based upon it.

PARSHAH SUMMARY

Parshas Re'eh focuses on the spiritual relationship we can have with Hashem or, *chalilah*, with a false substitute.

Moshe tells *Klal Yisrael* about the blessings they can receive by sticking with Hashem versus the curses they will receive if they ignore Him. He also instructs them about the blessings and curses that they will receive at Har Gerizim and Har Eival.

We are to destroy *avodah zarah* in its many forms: those of the seven nations occupying Canaan, the *navi sheker*, the *meisis*, the *ir hanidachas*, and customs of *avoda zarah*.

Instead, we have many ways to develop a close relationship with Hashem. He is waiting for us in Yerushalayim, in the Beis Hamikdash. We have a place for *korbanos* (as opposed to *bamos*). We can meet Him there, especially on *Yamim Tovim*, which the *parshah* lists at length. Hashem invites us to rejoice together with Him in Yerushalayim on *Yom Tov* and all other times.

Even our food can be a means to enhance our relationship with Hashem. Proper *shechitah*, kosher species, *terumos* and *maasros*, and *shemittah* are detailed.

This week is also *Shabbos Mevarchim Elul*. It is the launch of the upcoming joyful period of closeness of *Elul* and *Tishrei*. The pain of *Av* is nearly over, and we are transitioning to a time of love and closeness which permeates *Elul* and the *Yamim Nora'im*.

AVODAH FOR THIS WEEK:

1. Throughout the week, take three moments a day to stop and check in with Hashem, besides for the formal *tefillos*. Ask; thank; have a conversation. Build the relationship from your end.
2. Look for at least one daily message from Hashem in your life. A small *hashgachah*, a Divine wink—these all are meaningful.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S RIDDLES:

1. Which of the six *mitzvos temidios* (*mitzvos* that apply to every Jew every second of their life) is in this week's *parshah*? **To fear Hashem.** Which is in last week's *parshah*? **To unify Hashem, and according to some, to love Hashem.** What are all six? 1. להאמין שיש אלוה-ה 2. לאהבנו 3. ליחדו 4. לאהבו 5. ליראה אותו 6. לתורו ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם
2. Which specific *mitzvah* is תעבד אתו (not *temidi*)? **According to the Rambam and Chinuch, it refers to a *mitzvah d'Oraysa* to daven (at least once per day, and in a time of distress).**
3. Can you find two *pesukim* in a row that have three consecutive *mems*?
והאבדת את שמם מתחת (ז:כד) and והמם מהומה גדלה (ז:כג)
Can you find a third and fourth such *pasuk*, also in this week's *parshah*?
ואמחה את שמם מתחת השמים (ט:יד) and גוים גדלים ועצמים ממך (ט:א)
4. Where in the words השנה מרשית ועד השנה אחרית ועד is there a hint that the year begins in *Tishrei*? **If you rearrange the letters of the word מרשית, you get מתשרי!**

Did you notice that the story of the haftorah, besides relating to the depth of the parshah or day, usually sounds like it is right out of current events?

HAFTORAH FROM THE HEADLINES

HAFTORAH SUMMARY

This week's haftorah is the third of the seven Haftaros of Consolation. The Navi reports to Hashem that *Klal Yisrael* is not consoled, and He responds with a fantastic description of the times of Mashiach. The haftorah describes the redemption and times of Mashiach in terms of glittering riches and wealth, but it also emphasizes that true riches are spiritual, not material. Hashem also makes the point that He grants men their ideas and weapons and therefore controls all resources.

The Navi reports to Hashem that *Klal Yisrael* is like a poor widow, and Hashem describes future Yerushalayim rebuilt out of fabulous gemstones and riches, with free delicacies and endless food for all. Greater than that, says Hashem, is the Torah learning and charity to which the people will be devoted. In fact, the free bread and food in their true form are Torah and mitzvos.

The merit of giving charity will earn the riches. And no one will attack or challenge *Klal Yisrael*, because Hashem is the One Who creates the smiths, materials, and ideas to make war. Everyone should fear only Hashem.

CONNECTION TO THE PARSHAH:

Both the *parshah* and haftorah refer to a blessing of riches based on charity (see "*Litvak, Chassid, Sephardi*"). Both emphasize that blessings are dependent on keeping mitzvos and being close to Hashem.

RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES:

The threat of international violence has reared again as China and Iran continue to threaten several of their neighbors. Israel's northern border has again become contentious, with mobilizations and attacks. Hashem reminds us that He controls the fates of wars and that security is a blessing dependent on a relationship with Him.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

still a couple thousand short.

Suddenly, an idea popped into his head. Mr. Reich might still be in town! Mr. Reich was a wealthy man, a *baal tzedakah* who owned several opulent homes, including one at the edge of Reb Yechezkel's city. He was rarely there, but a few weeks ago he had come for a visit. Perhaps he had stayed? Unlikely, because he hadn't been seen in a while, but possible!

Reb Yechezkel hurried to Mr. Reich's home. To his delight, he noticed that lights were on and sounds were coming from within! The Reichs were home! He raced to the front door and had just lifted his hand to knock when he identified the sounds coming from within as sobbing and gasping. Was this a bad time?

But desperate times call for desperate bravery. Reb Yechezkel knocked. After a few minutes, Mr. Reich himself opened the door. He looked haggard and upset, very unlike his usual cheerful self. He waved Reb Yechezkel to a chair, and the *gabbai* immediately launched into his fundraising speech. But it was obvious that the *baal tzedakah* was barely listening. His mind was clearly somewhere else.

Reb Yechezkel finished his speech and waited for Mr. Reich to notice that it was done.

After a few moments, Mr. Reich broke his reverie. "I-I'm sorry, Reb Yechezkel, but this is not a good time for me. I'm very distracted. Please come back another time."

Reb Yechezkel was concerned. "Is something wrong, Mr. Reich? What's going on? You look so upset!"

Mr. Reich sagged against his chair. "It's my son. He has been running a terrible fever and gasping for breath for days, and the doctors can't do anything. They say there's no hope."

"Surely all is not lost, Mr. Reich! I'll get the *kehillah* to say Tehillim!"

"Thank you, Reb Yechezkel. But they have already told me to make plans for a funeral. My son has only minutes left."

A thought flashed through Reb Yechezkel's mind.

"Mr. Reich, have you ever wondered why in *Birchos Hashachar*, when we list the *middos* of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* which we strive to emulate, we list *bikur cholim* and *halvayas hames*, but we insert *hachnasas kallah* in between them? In contrast, the Gemara in *Sotah* goes straight from visiting the sick to burying the dead, since that is the natural progression!"

"Umm, no. I've never thought about that."

"I'll tell you why! It's because the mitzvah of *hachnasas kallah* blocks *bikur cholim* from turning into *halvayas hames*! It interferes! If you help a couple get married, maybe the sick will not die!"

Mr. Reich was electrified. He immediately contributed the full amount that the couple needed.

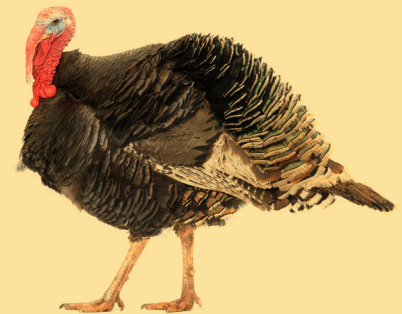
Several hours later, there was a pounding on Reb Yechezkel's own door. This time, it was Mr. Reich knocking.

"It's a miracle!" he cried. "From the moment you left my home, the situation has improved dramatically! My son is on the way to a full recovery!"

HALACHAH

כל צפור טהורה תאכלו

“Every pure bird you shall eat” (*Devarim* 14:11).



According to many Rishonim, this is a mitzvah to check for signs of a kosher bird. How do we identify kosher birds?

SIGNS

The Torah identifies 24 species of nonkosher birds; all others are kosher. The problem is, we aren't certain of the identities of the 24! Instead, we need signs of kashrus. The Torah does not give any identifying signs, but the Chachamim listed four: extra toe, crop, peelable gizzard, and not a *dores*. But we don't know what a *dores* is! We also don't know which of the four *simanim* are actually required. The Rama, and Ashkenazim, therefore holds that no fowl may be eaten unless there is a clear *mesorah*, testimony through generations, that it is a kosher bird. Shulchan Aruch, and some Sephardim, permits a bird with all four signs and webbed feet (which cannot be a *dores*) even without a *mesorah*.

MESORAH

To have a *mesorah* that a bird is kosher means that there is a visual *mesorah* from an expert that this specific species was eaten. *Mesorah* cannot be verbal, i.e., based on the bird's name; a *chacham* must recognize and certify the bird. Chickens, as well as certain types of geese and ducks, have a clear *mesorah* without being checked each time. Pheasant and quail have a *mesorah* in some communities and should only be eaten if a *chacham* can visually testify to the bird's kashrus.

TURKEY

Many wonder how turkey became accepted as a kosher bird. As an indigenous American bird, it could not possibly have had a *mesorah* prior to 1492.

The history of turkey is unclear; there are many conflicting reports. In both Yiddish and Hebrew, it is referred to as “Indian hen.” Some say this is because Columbus, who brought it to Europe, thought he had landed in India. Others claim the bird was long present in India and Europe, and its discovery in the New World just made it popular. Still others point out that the turkey is often confused with the nonkosher bobwhite and that bobwhite is actually the American bird, while turkey is European.

Many Acharonim and *poskim* discuss the kashrus of the turkey *without* a *mesorah*. Explanations range from the fact that the arrival of turkeys in Europe predates the Rama's establishment of the *minhag*, to referring to turkeys as a breed of chicken, or even relying on the fact that it has become widely accepted in the past 400 years as a sort of *mesorah*.

THE LAST WORD

A one-liner worth remembering

“THEY SAY THAT WHEN G-D CLOSES A DOOR, HE OPENS A WINDOW SOMEWHERE. BUT MOST PEOPLE ARE TOO BUSY STARING AT THE CLOSED DOOR TO NOTICE THE OPEN WINDOW.”

— Helen Keller

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