

# CIRCLE TIME

## AT YOUR Shabbos Table

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

# פרשת שמות

## CONTENTS

- # 1 DVAR TORAH IN A STORY
- # 1 PARSHAH RIDDLES
- # 2 CHOLENT STORY
- # 2 LITVAK, CHASSID, SEPHARDI
- # 3 PERSONAL GROWTH AVODAH
- # 3 ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S RIDDLES
- # 4 HAFTORAH FROM THE HEADLINES
- # 5 UP FOR DISCUSSION
- # 6 GEMATRIA
- # 7 THIS DATE IN JEWISH HISTORY
- # 7 HALACHAH
- # 7 THE LAST WORD

DVAR TORAH IN A STORY >>

## THE SPYING SISTER

וַתֵּצֵב אָחוֹתוֹ מֵרֶחֶק לִדְעָה מֶה יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ

"And his sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him" (*Shemos* 2:4).

כִּיֹּן שֶׁהִשְׁלִיכוּהוּ לִיאֹר עַמַּד אֲבִיהַ וְטַפְחָה עַל רֹאשָׁה  
וְאָמַר לָהּ בְּתִי הִינֵן נְבוֹאֲתֶיךָ הֵינּוּ דְכַתִּיב וְתֵצֵב  
אָחוֹתוֹ מֵרֶחֶק לִדְעָה לְדַעַת מֶה יֵהָא בְּסוֹף נְבוֹאָתָה

"When he [Moshe] was taken to the river, her father stood and rapped on her head, and said, 'My daughter, what happened to your prophecy?' That's what is meant by: 'And his sister stood at a distance to find out'—to see the end of her prophecy" (*Megillah* 14a).

**M**any wonderful stories occurred when Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, the Ponevezher Rav, traveled to collect funds for Yeshivas Ponevezh, which he founded in Bnei Brak. This is our third story regarding the Rav's wit, wisdom, and *siyata d'Shmaya*.

The Rav was welcomed warmly in many towns and cities around the globe, but in others, he was greeted with sour faces. Not everyone looked favorably upon the idea of collecting funds for a yeshivah. Some places considered themselves too high quality to have campaigns, appeals, and fundraisers going on in their main sanctuary.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>



## PARSHAH RIDDLES

Answers to this week's riddles appear on page 3.

- 1 About which two individuals in Chumash did people wonder, לֹמֶה יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ?
- 2 From the *haftorah* (*minhag Ashkenaz*):
  - A. Can you find two sets of triple-words in one *pasuk*?
  - B. Can you find two sets of quadruple words in one *pasuk* (repeated twice)?
  - C. Can you find sources for *Anim Zemiros*?
  - D. Can you find a source for one of the Rosh Hashanah *zemiros*?
  - E. Can you find the source of one of the names of a *chelek* of *Shulchan Aruch*?
- 3 Which eight people were born with a *bris milah*? Where is one of them hinted at in the *parshah*?
- 4 Which two kings are described in *pesukim* as having died, but Chazal say it means that they got *tzara'as*? What is unique about the way the *pasuk* phrases it, which may indicate they were not really dead? Which other king is called dead while he lived, and what really happened to him?
- 5 Whom does the Torah call a רֹשֶׁעַ? Whom did Moshe call a רֹשֶׁעַ? Who called himself a רֹשֶׁעַ? Who said a *tzaddik* was like a רֹשֶׁעַ? Whose name identified him as a רֹשֶׁעַ?





## SERIAL >> CHAPTER 3

# CHOLENT STORY

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

*Reb Ahron is granted a three-year extension on the rent of his field, but the crops fail for the next two years.*

**T**he third year of Reb Ahron's extension to pay the rent on his field began with a very heartrending Rosh Hashanah.

Reb Ahron and his wife *davened* with extra intensity, begging Hashem for the crop to succeed, to save them from the nobleman's horrible revenge. And as usual, as they had done for the past 20 years, they pleaded with *Shamayim* to be granted a child.

Hashem always listens to our *tefillos*. Sometimes the answer is yes, and sometimes it's no, and sometimes...it is a little of both.

The weather that year was uncooperative from the beginning. It snowed in Tishrei, and it was hot in Teves. There was a tornado in Shevat, and a blizzard on Purim. The wheat crop struggling in Reb Ahron's field never had a chance! By the time harvest season rolled around, it was a moldy heap of rotten stalks. There was nothing to sell, and there would be no money to pay rent at the end of this year, that was for sure. What would the nobleman do?

Surprisingly, Reb Ahron and his wife were filled with joy. They didn't seem worried at all! They were sure, with simple faith, that Hashem would take care of them. After all, he had sent them a great *brachah*! The couple were expecting their first child, due a few months after Sukkos.

"But what will we do about the rent?" the expectant mother asked her husband.

"I don't know," Reb Ahron replied. "Whatever Hashem decides, we shall accept. But would He grant us the *brachah* of a child, only to have us all be killed by the *poritz* (nobleman)?"

The final day of the three-year extension quickly drew to a close. In his sprawling mansion, the nobleman reviewed his calculations. Three years were up, no payment! His fury burned. How dare they! He had so generously given an extra three years, with only a 50 percent raise in the rent each year, and they'd paid him nothing! Second chances were over. It was time for the pits!

The nobleman of Lunchitz had a special method for dealing with people who didn't pay. Outside the village of Lunchitz, there

was a dry, rocky plain, filled with deep holes. Some were natural, and some had been widened and deepened by his men. He called it his field of pits. People who annoyed the nobleman were dumped into one of the many pits and left there to starve and rot.

The nobleman called his chief enforcer. "Go get that Jew on the wheat field. Drop him and his wife into a pit and tell the guard to make sure they never get out. No one has ever escaped my pits, but with Jews, you can never be too careful."

The enforcer gathered a few soldiers, weapons, and chains. They rode quickly to the home of Reb Ahron and were soon knocking at the door, ready to bash it down. No one ever opened it for them anyway.

But Reb Ahron did. "Do come in for tea!" he said, warmly. "You must be here from the *poritz*. We've been expecting you, and we are ready to go."

The enforcer was shocked. What was wrong with this guy? Everyone was terrified of the pits, but this man was almost thanking him for the ride!

"Yes. I'll have some tea." The soldiers sat and enjoyed a break, and then motioned that it was time to go. Reb Ahron and his wife had a small suitcase prepared.

"We are ready," they said, and seeming unworried, they stepped up to the prison wagon. Instead of being thrown inside, tied and gagged, they sat comfortably on the seats.

Now, suitcases were not allowed in the pits, but the enforcer didn't have the heart to tell that to these nice people. What did it matter anyway? Whatever food they had would be used up within a few days, and they would starve anyway.

When they arrived at the field of pits, instead of throwing the couple into a deep hole, as he usually did, the enforcer got a ladder from the guard. Reb Ahron and his wife gracefully descended into a pit, carefully and safely, uninjured—so far. After all, she was well along in her pregnancy.

The ladder was pulled up, out of the pit, and the couple and their unborn child were left in the bottom of the pit, alone—except for each other and Hashem.

TO BE CONTINUED...

## DVAR TORAH >>

# LITVAK, CHASSID, SEPHARDI

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

## יַעֲבֹדוּ מִצְרַיִם אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

"And Egypt enslaved the Jewish People..." (*Shemos* 1:13).

**מִפְנֵי מָה נֶעֱנַשׁ אֲבִירָם אֲבִינוּ וְנִשְׁתַּעֲבָדוּ בְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם אֲתָמָה וְעֹשֶׁר שָׁנִים? ... מִפְנֵי שֶׁהִפְרִיז עַל מְדוּתוֹ שֶׁל הַקֶּבֶ"ה שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר בָּמָה אֲדַע כִּי אֵירֶשְׁנָה**

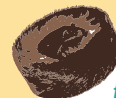
"Why was Avraham punished and had his children enslaved in Egypt for 210 years?...Shmuel said, because he pondered about Hashem's ways, as it says: 'By what will I know that I will inherit it?'" (*Nedarim* 32a).

**Why were the Jewish People themselves deserving of the intense suffering of the Egyptian slavery?**



## MAHARAL:

Avraham Avinu was the seed from which the tree that is Klal Yisrael grew. Any miniscule defect in a seed leads to significant problems in the tree, branches, and fruit, and that had to be fixed. Avraham showed a slight flaw in *emunah*, and Klal Yisrael needed to fix it with an intense lesson in *emunah* before they could become the *am hanivchar*.



## ARI HAKADOSH:

When Adam Harishon sat in fasting, sackcloth, and *teshuvah* for 130 years, he emitted hordes of souls, *sheidim*, spirits, and demons. These were sinful spiritual sources that needed fixing. They became embodied in the people of the *Mabul*, *Dor Haflagah*, and Sodom, but were not fully fixed, and they came down again in Egypt. The almost-fixed ones became the *Yidden* in Mitzrayim, and the other ones were fixed by the *milah* imposed by Yosef or converted later.



## CHIDA:

Torah is a pure spiritual entity and cannot be given to people with any impurities. The nations of the world could never receive it, and even Klal Yisrael needed a special purification process to be ready for it. That is also the reason for the length of the current *galus*—we are being purified for the great Torah revelation to come with Mashiach!

# 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.

## Introduction to Shovavim:

This is the first week of the six-week period known as שׁוֹבָבִים. The word is an acronym for the names of the *parshiyos* read each of these six weeks, and has a meaning connoting wild or immoral behavior. This is a great time to fix, correct, or make improvements in the areas of self-control, morality, *kvishas hayetzer*, and marriage (each as appropriate for his age and stage).

## Parshah summary:

*Parshas Shemos* is about purification through fire. Nearly the entire 180 years of slavery are contained within this *parshah*. The Jewish People are being purified of whatever genetic impurities they may have and being readied for the great mission of receiving the Torah and representing Hashem in the world. Moshe is born, and although he is also blessed with a lofty soul and potential, he must go through his own purification and education, first as a child in Pharaoh's house and then as a shepherd in Midyan. The burning bush represents the ultimate lesson: the fire—the pain of the purification—does not destroy; it builds and brings blessing because it is all from Hashem.

## AVODAH OF THE WEEK:



1. It is time for self-purification. Identify the goal for this year's *Shovavim*—an area you know could be purer than it is now. This could refer to *tikkun hayesod*, *shemiras halashon*, *lashon nekiyah*, or any other area of *avodas Hashem*.
2. Choose three goals to accomplish for this *Shovavim* and set specific targets and subgoals.

## RIDDLE ANSWERS:

1. Moshe and the woodchopper.  
וַתִּתְצַב אֶחָתוֹ מִרְחֹק לְדַעַה מֶה יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ (*Shemos* 2:4)  
וַיִּנְיחוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמִשְׁמַר כִּי לֹא פָרַשׁ מֶה יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ (*Bamidbar* 15:34)
2. הָיָה בְּיוֹם הַהוּא, יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל, וְבָאוּ הָאֲבָדִים בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשׁוּר, וְהַנְּדָחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם; וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ, בִּירוּשָׁלַם (*Yeshayah* 27:13)  
וְהָיָה צִיצִת נָבֵל, צָבִי תִפְאֶרְתּוֹ, אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשׁ... הַהוּא, יִהְיֶה יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, לְעֹטֶרֶת צָבִי, וְלִצְפִּירֵת תִּפְאָרָה (*Yeshayah* 28: 4–5)  
צוֹ לְצוֹ צוֹ לְצוֹ, קוֹ לְקוֹ קוֹ לְקוֹ (*Yeshayah* 28: 10, 11)  
אֶת-מִי יוֹרֵה דָעָה, וְאֶת-מִי יִבִּין שְׁמוּעָה (*Yeshayah* 28:9)  
*Midrash Tanchuma (Parshas Noach* 5) lists seven people who were *nolad mahul* (born with a *bris milah*): Adam, Shes, Noach, Yaakov, Yosef, Moshe, and Iyov. *Midrash Rabbah* adds that Shem was as well. This phenomenon is rare, but still occurs today (I personally know at least one *nolad mahul*). Moshe's state is hinted with the words, וְתָא אֶרְתּוֹ, אֹהֶ בּוֹט.
4. Pharaoh and Uziyahu. All other kings are not called “*melech*” when they died because their rule ends at death. These two were called *melech*, because they just had *tzara'as* and still ruled. When Nevuchadnetzar became an animal in the forest, he was listed as dead.
5. The Torah calls Dasan and Aviram רָשָׁע for hitting each other. Moshe called Korach and his group רָשָׁעִים. Pharaoh said, וְהִיא-כְצַדִּיק כְּרָשָׁע, אֲנִי וְעַמִּי הַרְשָׁעִים. Avraham told Hashem at Sodom, וְהִיא-כְצַדִּיק כְּרָשָׁע. The name ברָשָׁע identifies him as a רָשָׁע.



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

Ashkenazim and Sephardim read two distinct haftorahs for Parshas Shemos.

## ASHKENAZ HAFTORAH SUMMARY:

Using very poetic, mystical language, the *navi* Yeshayah describes the descent of Klal Yisrael into Egypt. He commands the Ten Tribes to destroy their idols and castigates them for immorality and indulgence. He then describes the true glory of the ultimate redemption and return to Yaakov's ideals in the days of Mashiach.

## CONNECTION TO THE PARSHAH:

The *parshah* also discusses Klal Yisrael's growth in Egypt, their initial comfort and success there, and refers to their spiritual decline. Like the *haftorah*, it ends with the beginnings of redemption and return. The *navi's* demand to cleanse ourselves from immorality and indulgence relates to the *Shovavim* (which begins this week, see Personal Growth).

## SEPHARDIC HAFTORAH SUMMARY:

This *haftorah* is also read for *Parshas Mattos*. It is the beginning of *Sefer Yirmiyahu*, and relates Hashem's initial contact with Yirmiyahu, the *navi's* birth, his appointment as *navi*, his initial refusal, and his first messages to Klal Yisrael.

## CONNECTION TO THE PARASHAH:

There are many similarities in the *haftorah* between Moshe Rabbeinu's appointment and that of Yirmiyahu. Both initially refuse the mission, saying they are "not a man of words." Hashem promises to support both. The imminent birth of each is described as promising great potential. Both have an initial vision involving a staff. Both prophesied for 40 years. Both faced challengers from within their own *shevet*. Both were thrown into water and pulled out by a non-Jewish servant (one interpretation of the word "*amah*" of Basya).

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Rav Kahaneman encountered one such place during a fundraising tour around the United States. When he arrived in a certain town for *Shabbos Parshas Shemos*, the rabbi of the town told him in no uncertain terms that appeals were not acceptable in this locale.

"We do not allow collecting, begging, or any other kind of fundraising during *davening* in the shul," he explained. "We are an upscale kind of place, you know?"

Rabbi Kahaneman could not understand such an approach, but he nodded wisely. "What about a *dvar Torah*?" he asked. "Would that be acceptable in this upscale place?"

"Sure!" the rabbi enthused. "We love a good thought on the weekly Torah portion. We'd love to hear that from the Rosh Yeshivah. But no 'sneaking in' any fundraising requests!"

"Deal," said the Ponevezher Rav. "Only Torah, no push for money."

How was the Ponevezher Rav going to get funding out of this one? Simple. He relied on Hashem, as usual.

When he stood up to speak, Rav Kahaneman began with a question. When Moshe was placed in a floating basket, sailing the waters of the Nile, his sister hid in the reeds by the shore to see what would happen. Why? Childish curiosity? It is unlikely the Torah would record that. Why was she watching? Was she prepared to watch him die, and do nothing, like Hagar wanted to do with Yishmael? But Miriam was rewarded for this, and when she had *tzara'as*, Klal Yisrael waited for her.

The Gemara tells us that she was a *neviah*, and she'd had a prophecy that the savior of Yisrael would be born to her mother. The Gemara adds that her father asked her, "What happened to your prophecy?"

"She knew that Moshe would be saved," the Ponevezher Rav answered. "She wanted to be a witness to the great miracle! She wanted to learn from the great miracles of Hashem, and she knew there would be something special happening."

"Why do I travel the world, fundraising for Yeshivas Ponevezh?" Rav Kahaneman continued. "I know that Hashem will support the yeshivah. I know that Hashem wants the yeshivah world to recover, be strong, and rebuild. He doesn't need me or my travels. Ponevezh will have money. I just want to see the miracles! I want to be a witness to Hashem's miraculous ways!"

The Rav paused for effect. "I travel to see which people, which towns and cities, will win the opportunity to support the great work of Torah study. And I know, clearly, that this town is *not* one of them!" And with that, the Rav turned and swept off the *duchan*.

Needless to say, the Rav's words hit home. He left the city after Shabbos, well stocked with funds for the yeshivah.



# UP FOR DISCUSSION

See this week's *Circle* magazine for the full comic story and halachic dilemma.

## THE CHANGED CHANGE

Since it is assumed that the money was given to Avromi mistakenly, the money is considered lost, and technically, Avromi must hold onto the money until Eliyahu Hanavi arrives. Practically, he can record the details of what happened, where it happened, the date of the incident, and the amount of extra money he received, and once he does so, he may use the money with the understanding that if the collector ever appears and proves his identity, Avromi will have to repay him.



Rabbi Gershon Eliezer Schaffel is the Rov of Young Israel of Skokie, a writer and editor for the Business Halacha Institute (BHI) and has been studying Choshen Mishpat for 20 years in the Chicago Choshen Mishpat Kollel. The content of this column has been culled from questions received on the BHI Hotline and articles originally published in the popular weekly newsletter, *Business Weekly*, published by the Business Halacha Institute.

וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ מִצְרַיִם אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּפָרָךְ. וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת חַיֵּיהֶם בַּעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה בְּחֹמֶר וּבִלְבָּנִים  
וּבְכָל עֲבֹדָה בַּשָּׂדֶה אֶת כָּל עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ בָּהֶם בְּפָרָךְ

“And the Egyptians enslaved Bnei Yisrael with backbreaking labor” (*Shemos* 1:13–14).

*Midrash:* Each Jew had to make 600 bricks per day.

פָּרָךְ = 300

The word פָּרָךְ is used twice =  $300 \times 2 = 600$ .

# THIS DATE IN JEWISH HISTORY



Tripoli, Libya

The city of Tripoli, Libya, used to be home to a large Jewish community. In 1705, the entire city was surrounded and put under siege by the armies of Tunisia. Ibrahim Al-Sharif, the Bey (king) of Tunisia, was upset that Tripolitans had captured a ship sailing from Egypt to Tunisia. The ship had been carrying a lot of presents from Egypt for Al-Sharif. He attacked Tripoli and said he was going to kill everyone in it, including the Jews. Tripoli was protected by a wall and a series of fortresses, but the Tunisian armies knocked them all down, one by one. Things looked bad for the city, but with just the final fortress standing, a sudden epidemic spread among Al-Sharif's soldiers—on the 24th of Teves. Many died, and he was forced to withdraw the remains of his army. The Jews of Tripoli celebrated that day as Purim Al-Sharif.

Tripoli has another “Purim” on the 29th of Teves, called Purim Burghul. On that day, the city was freed from the reign of terror of Ali el-Jezairli, who was also known as Ali Burghul. Burghul took control of Tripoli when the Sultan of Istanbul asked him to do so, because the previous rulers, known as the Karamanli family, were fighting among themselves. Burghul was a terribly mean king, and he pressed heavy taxes on the people, especially the Jews. A Jew named Rahamin Barda negotiated a peace agreement among the Karamanlis, and they took control of the city back from Burghul. The *Mi Kamocha* commemorating these events was composed by Rabbi Avraham Khalfon, whose son had been burned at the stake by Burghul.



# HALACHAH

## Shnayim Mikra

*Levush*: the words **שמות ואלה** are an acronym for **שנים מקרה ואחד תרגום** חייב אדם לקרות את הפרשה

### WHEN IS THE PROPER TIME FOR LEARNING SHNAYIM MIKRA?

The Gemara says one must do *shnayim mikra* with the congregation. The earliest time for any *parshah* is the earliest it is read from the Torah—after Minchah on Shabbos of the preceding week. The best time for *shnayim mikra* (*al pi kabbalah*) is to conclude by Friday morning after *davening*. The Gra would do one *aliyah* after Shacharis each day and two on Friday. As long as it is done before the Shabbos day *seudah*, it qualifies as *mitzvah min hamuvchar* (but one should not delay the *seudah* past *chatzos*). If one did not finish before the *seudah*, he should be sure to finish before the next *parshah* is *leined* at Minchah; if he missed that, he

can still do it until the end of Tuesday. If he missed that, he can make it up as late as Simchas Torah. Some say the *parshiyos* should be done in order (but don't let that stop you from doing *anything* if you fell far behind!) but the Maharshal rules that the current week should be done before making up for last week. Some allow reading along with the *ba'al korei* to count; some do not; and some say one should always read along with the *ba'al korei*, even if he finished *shnayim mikra* already.

### WHAT SHOULD BE READ?

The entire *parshah* should be read twice, as well as a helpful translation. *Targum Onkelos* has an advantage as it was written with *ruach hakodesh*, translates every word, and was given at Har Sinai, but *peirush Rashi* is more helpful to most people's understanding. It is best to read both. When that is not possible, do whichever you understand.

An English translation is acceptable, but less preferred than either.

### DO PROPER NOUNS, WHICH HAVE NO TARGUM, HAVE TO BE READ A THIRD TIME?

*Machlokes Rishonim*. The Rama writes that one should read the *haftarah* as well, to prepare it in case he is called to *lein* it in shul.

### WHAT IS THE CORRECT PATTERN?

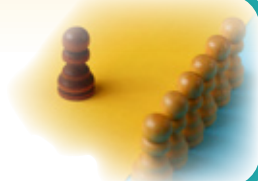
Some *Acharonim* recommend learning it *pasuk by pasuk*; others prefer *parshah* (i.e., paragraph, between the ׀ or ׆) by *parshah*. The *Aruch Hashulchan* says the entire *sedrah* can be done and repeated; and that one is *yotzei* any which way. One may vary how he does it and does not have to stick to one *minhag*. Some recommend doing *Targum* between the *kriahs*, some afterward, but it should not be done first.

## THE LAST WORD

A one-liner worth remembering

"CONFIDENCE IS THAT FEELING YOU HAVE BEFORE YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM."

—Rabbi Berel Wein



To sign up for a weekly email of *Circle Time: At Your Shabbos Table* visit [www.circmag.com/shabbos](http://www.circmag.com/shabbos)  
To dedicate or sponsor an issue, contact [circletime@circmag.com](mailto:circletime@circmag.com)

AT YOUR SHABBOS TABLE IS COMPILED BY RABBI YITZCHOK LANDA. COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS: [CIRCLETIME@CIRCMAG.COM](mailto:CIRCLETIME@CIRCMAG.COM)

No part of *Circle Time: At the Shabbos Table* may be reproduced without permission and credit.



CALL . TEXT . 732-592-5437 • EMAIL [SUBSCRIPTIONS@CIRCMAG.COM](mailto:SUBSCRIPTIONS@CIRCMAG.COM) • [WWW.CIRCMAG.COM](http://WWW.CIRCMAG.COM)

