



CIRCLE TIME

AT YOUR
Shabbos Table

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

TELL ME A MASHAL >>

A dvar Torah with a story.

SAVED BY THE MIGHTY MOUSE

הַעֲשִׂיר לֹא יִרְבֶּה וְהַדֵּל לֹא יִמְעִיט מִמִּחְצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל
(שמות ל:טו)

The wealthy may not give more, and the poor may not give less, than half a shekel (Shemos 30:15)

Why did the Torah choose half a shekel? Isn't there a whole coin that we can give? And why can't the rich give more? What's wrong with adding a little?



bba, I'm tired."

"I know, Binyamin, so am I. But we still have a long way to go before we get home."

"Abba, can't we stop to rest? My feet hurt from walking so much."

"Mine too, zeeskeit. I also want to stop. But I don't want to get back to our city after the gates are locked. We may have to spend the whole night in the fields if that happens, and that could be really dangerous."

"What's so dangerous in the fields at night, Abba?"

"Well, there are lions and bears, and wolves and robbers... but never mind that, Binyamin. Let's just keep moving."

The man and his eight-year-old son continued walking in silence for a few minutes. It was nearly noontime, and the sun was climbing high in the sky. They still had time before the gates of the city locked for the evening, but the trip was long. They had many miles to go, many mountains to climb

and descend, before they would arrive at their hometown. There was time for only one rest, and they needed to use it carefully.

"Abba, I'm too tired. I can't walk anymore."

Wordlessly, the man stopped. He

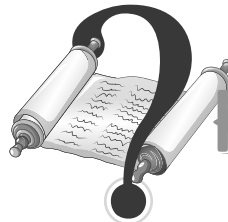


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פרשת כי תשא

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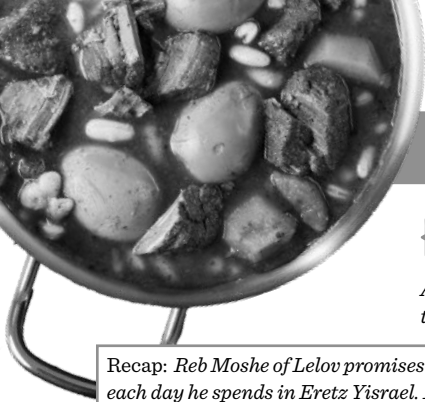
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PARSHAH RIDDLES

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

- 1 The Torah tells us that Moshe burned the *egel*. But gold is a metal and doesn't burn! How was that possible?
- 2 Can you find two Aramaic words in the *parshah*?
- 3 Who got a רוח אלקים? What does it mean? Where is it referred to as just "רוח"?
- 4 Which two times in history was the entire world silent?
- 5 Bnei Levi did not serve the *egel*. Who else did not serve it? (3 answers) What did Bnei Levi do that Bnei Yisrael did *not*?



CHOLENT STORY

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

Recap: Reb Moshe of Lelov promises a wealthy couple they will have a son who will live a year for each day he spends in Eretz Yisrael. He and a minyan set off on the trip.



he ship's horn blew loudly.

A flock of seagulls pecking on the dock flew off in alarm. The first mate aboard the big boat blew the horn again. It was time to set sail!

All the heavy ropes were untied from the dock and coiled on deck. The ship slowly drifted away from the port. Several small boats helped push it away from the wharf, and it began to turn toward the open sea. On board, the *gabbai* of the Lelover Rebbe leaned on the railing and looked toward the land. It was hard to believe the time had finally come—they were off, heading for Eretz Yisrael! Would the journey be easy and uneventful, or had the *yetzer hara* not given up yet? Did he have more tricks up his sleeve? Was there going to be a major storm or some other problem? Only Hashem knew.

Reb Moshe Lelover was taking no chances. He was not looking toward shore, or ahead to the port of Akko, where they would dock in a few weeks.

He was looking in a *sefer*.

The challenges would be many, and the *koach haTorah* would be needed to protect them. Quietly, Reb Moshe repeated his earlier promise: “*Yom l’shanah, yom l’shanah.*” A day for a year.

Soon, the shore had receded into the distance and they were surrounded by water. The ship was far out at sea. The ten *Yidden* were all in their staterooms, deep in the belly of the ship. All were making use of the time, learning and *davening* in preparation for the holy shores of Eretz Yisrael.

Several days went by peacefully. The wind blew strong, and the ship was far from any shore. Suddenly, the *Yidden* heard a commotion outside their rooms.

In the narrow hallway below deck, people were running, yelling and screaming. The *gabbai* poked his head out of his room to see what was going on. “Up on deck! Up on deck! Quick!” a man shouted as he ran by.

“What happened?”

No one answered. A huge crush of people was pushing at the bottom of the ladder to the deck. Everyone was trying to get upstairs at the same time. Men were fighting for the ladder, women were screaming, children were crying.

Another member of the *minyan* stuck his head out. “What’s going on?” he asked one of the men.

Wordlessly, the man pointed at the floor. About an inch of water was sloshing around their ankles.

“A leak!” he shouted. “The ship has sprung a leak! We’re taking on water! We’re going down!”

As he said it, the big ship lurched, shuddered, and tilted slightly to the side.

The *gabbai* and his friend hurried into the hall. “Where is it?” they asked the man. “Where’s the leak?” He pointed down the hallway.

“Last room on the left,” he shouted, over the sound of rushing water and people screaming. “But don’t go there! Get away! Save yourselves!”

Paying him no heed, the *gabbai* and the other Yid ran away from the escape route, toward the source of the leak. If they *were* to be saved, it would not be by fighting up the ladder. It would be in the *zechus* of the tzaddik on board with them.

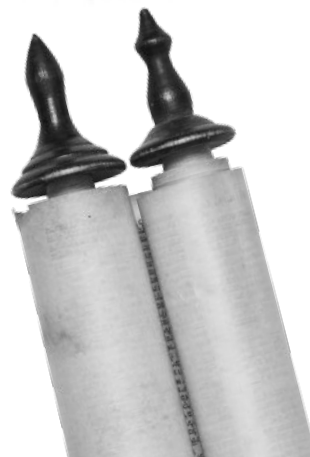
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MIDRASH

When Moshe Rabbeinu descended from Shamayim after receiving the *Luchos*, his face was shining with a special glow. Klal Yisrael were afraid to approach him until he covered his face with a mask, which he wore for the rest of his life—except when he was teaching Torah to the people.

The glow came from a drop of ink left over in the quill when he finished writing the Torah. Moshe put that drop on his head, and is caused his face to shine. Moshe did not know that would happen and didn’t realize he was shining. Why was there leftover ink? The first *aleph* in *Vayikra* was made small because of Moshe’s humility, causing less ink to be used.

When Moshe returned to the camp, the glow from his face struck the golden *Egel* and caused it to be burned to a crisp.

Other people in history were also given a glowing face. The Gemara (*Sanhedrin* 31b) relates that Mar Ukva’s face glowed. Other sources mention that the Levush and the Maharil experienced a similar phenomenon.



TO BE CONTINUED...

PARSHAH RHYME

Review the main points of the parshah with younger children, while challenging your family to complete the rhymes (use the “grammen” tune). Answers on the side!

- L
1. Lots of half-*shekel* coins used to make the *Ki-YOR*.
 2. Don't give less or more, whether you're rich or _____.
- L
3. Hashem gave us the recipe for the *Ketores* spice.
 4. Nothing in history ever smelled as _____.
- L
5. A special day between Hashem and us
 6. Always make sure to keep _____.
- H
7. Moshe took the *Luchos*, written by Hashem
 8. Down to Klal Yisrael, to give it to _____.

Chorus

- L
9. *Eirev Rav* said, “Moshe should be back by now.
 10. Maybe we should make a golden _____.”
- L
11. Aharon said, “Get jewelry from your ear.”
 12. He had no idea a calf would _____.
- H
13. Hashem said, “*Oy vey*, I'll destroy them today.”

14. But Moshe got up and began to _____.
- Chorus
- L
15. He said, “How will it seem to the nations of others?”
 16. Remember the *zechus* of our fathers and _____.”
- L
17. “A *chillul Hashem* is how it would look,
 18. Forgive them or else erase me from Your _____.”
- H
19. Moshe kept *davening* until he heard,
 20. “I've forgiven in accordance with your _____.”

Chorus

- L
21. “*Mi LaShem eilai!*” Moshe cried.
 22. All the *levi'im* came and stood at his _____.
- L
23. The sound of a battle got louder and louder.
 24. He burned the *egel* and ground it to _____.
- H
25. The *parshah* ends in a much happier way,
 26. Listing every Yom Tov _____.

Answers: 2. poor 4. nice 6. Shabbos 8. them 10. cow 12. appear 14. pray 16. mothers
18. book 20. word 22. side 24. powder 26. holiday

RIDDLE ANSWERS:

1. The *mefarshim* give several answers to this question:
 - A) Some say that Moshe used a special chemical or herb, that when added to a fire makes metal flammable (see *Ibn Ezra*).
 - B) Others say Moshe spoke to the gold and rebuked it, turning it to wood, and then he burned it (*Shach*).
 - C) See “Highlights from the Midrash” for another answer to this question.
2. According to Rashi, the words *הַשָּׂדֶה* and *מִסּוּדָה* are Aramaic.
3. Yosef (וַיֹּאמֶר פָּרְעֹה אֶל עֲבָדָיו הַנְּמַצָּא כָּהָ אִישׁ אִשׁוֹ רֹחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ), Betzalel (וַיִּצְמַלֵּא אֹתוֹ רֹחַ אֱלֹהִים), and Bilaam (וַיִּשָּׂא בָלְעָם אֶת עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל שֹׁכֵן לְשִׁבְטָיו וְתַהִי עָלָיו רֹחַ אֱלֹהִים) are described as having *רוח אלקים*. It refers to a spirit of *nevuah* or *ruach hakodesh*. Yaakov (וַיִּתְחַי רֹחַ יַעֲקֹב—see *Targum* there) and Yehoshua (וַיִּצְלַתְּ מִן הָרוּחַ אֶשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ) also got *nevuah*, with the term *רוח*.
4. When Hashem gave the Torah on Har Sinai, the entire world was silent and listening. Not a bird chirped, not a wave crashed. In this week's haftorah, when the prophets of the Baal said, “Baal, answer us!” not a sound was heard. Across the world, birds didn't chirp, etc. Even the echoes of their own voices were silenced, so that they could not claim that any sound was the answer from Baal. (*Abarbanel*)
5. Besides Shevet Levi, the *egel* was not served by Yehoshua, Chur (son of Kalev) and the women of all of Klal Yisrael. Shevet Levi paid for and brought the *Korban Tamid* in the *Midbar*, while the rest of Klal Yisrael did not (according to one opinion in *Chagigah* 6b).

You may be surprised to find something familiar in every haftorah.

HAFTORAH: YOU KNOW NAVI

The haftorah of Parshas Ki Sisa is the famous story of Eliyahu Hanavi on Har Hacarmel.

BACKGROUND

The wicked King Achav led almost all of *Malchus Yisrael* to *avodah zarah*. His wife, Izevel, persecuted and killed as many *nevi'im* as she could find. Achav mocked Eliyahu Hanavi, asking why there was still plenty of rain despite their idol worship. In response, Eliyahu decreed that it would not rain again until the people did *teshuvah*. Nearly three years of famine followed. Eliyahu went into hiding, while Achav put a life sentence on his head. Ovadiah, a tzaddik who worked for Achav, secretly supported 100 *nevi'im* in a cave.

SUMMARY

After two and a half years, Hashem told Eliyahu that the time had come for the famine to end. Eliyahu set out to appear before Achav. Meanwhile, Achav and Ovadiah had gone searching for water. Eliyahu presented himself to Ovadiah with a message for Achav, challenging him to gather all of Israel to observe a showdown between himself, 450 prophets of the Baal and 400 prophets of Asheirah on Har Hacarmel. (The Asheirah prophets, under the protection of Izevel, failed to show up.) Before all of Klal Yisrael, Eliyahu challenged the prophets of *avodah zarah* to bring a *korban*, after which he would bring one to Hashem. Whichever would be consumed by Divine fire would be proven truthful. The people forced the Baal prophets to agree.

Of course, the Baal prophets could not get fire to come down from Heaven. They had planted a man named Chiel inside the altar to light a fire, but Hashem sent a snake to kill him. The prophets called to Baal all day, and Eliyahu made fun of them—as is the halachah.

When it was Eliyahu's turn, he flooded his *mizbe'ach* with water and *davened* to Hashem. A fire descended from Shamayim and consumed the *korban*, *mizbe'ach*, rocks, dust, and water. All of Yisrael saw and declared, "Hashem is G-d!" and resolved to serve Him alone, committing to *teshuvah*.

CONNECTION TO THE PARSHAH

As in the *parshah*, the haftorah relates a time when most of Klal Yisrael engaged in idol worship, and a single leader stood up to the sinners. Moshe and Eliyahu both turned the people to *teshuvah* and challenged Hashem with their *tefillos*. Also, both contain Hashem's ultimate forgiveness, even for terrible sins. Each teach us an important *tefillah* formula to ask for *mechilah*.

YOU KNOW NAVI

The climax of our most powerful *tefillos* is the sevenfold repetition of the phrase, "*Hashem Hu HaElokim*." This concludes Yom Kippur and any *tefillah* gathering at which *kabbalas ol malchus Shamayim* is recited. These words were the ones uttered by Klal Yisrael at Har Hacarmel after they witnessed one of the greatest events of *kiddush Hashem* of all time.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

looked around at the sun-drenched, rocky landscape, shimmering in the heat. It was blazing and dry, but there was no choice. He wiped the sweat from his brow, scooped up the boy, and heaved him onto his shoulders. "Here, *zeeskeit*, you ride, and I'll walk."

The two continued on for a while. Slowly, riding on his father's shoulders, the boy recovered his good spirits and began to chatter. The father struggled on, now bearing the precious weight of his young son in addition to the strain of the walk.

"Abba, it isn't fair," Binyamin said. "Why do you have to work so hard, while I get to have a nice ride?"

"Don't worry, there will come a time when you will be able to help me with things I can't do," his father answered.

"What could I possibly help you with, Abba?"

"I don't know, we'll find out. Like the story with the mouse and the lion."

"What story?"

"A mouse once bothered a lion by running around too much. The lion caught him and was going to eat him, but the mouse begged to be let go. 'One day I'll pay you back!' he promised. The lion laughed—what could a little mouse do for a mighty lion?—but he let him go anyway. Some time later, the lion was caught by a hunter's net and the mouse saved him by chewing through the ropes."

The father fell silent, concentrating his energy on putting one foot in front of the other. His progress was slow, and time wore on. Finally, weary and exhausted, the two arrived at the gates to the city.

Dusk had just fallen. With sinking hearts, they approached the entrance. The gates were locked!

The man grabbed the tall, thick metal gates in his hands. He rattled them as hard as he could. It was no use! No one could hear them. A note pasted to the gates explained that they had been locked early, in honor of a holiday. Everyone was safe in their homes, except the father and son!

"Abba, what shall we do?"

With his son still on his shoulders, the father began to walk along the wall, carefully examining the wall, its stones, and the gates. Suddenly, he pointed. "Binyamin, see there! See that hole in the wall?"

"Yes?"

"There's a small gap between the gate and the wall. No man could fit in there, but I think you can! I'll hoist you up there and you'll slide through and come open the gate for me!"

Quickly, the two carried out the plan. The small boy was able to slip through the hole, and soon had the gates open from the inside. The father passed through and then locked the gates behind him before continuing home.

"You see, Binyamin! You were able to help me. If not for you, I would have been stuck outside all night."

The rich and poor must both realize that they cannot do everything alone. Both must be open to help from each other and must see themselves as just a half of the whole.



וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ מַלְאָךְ... כִּי לֹא אֶעֱלֶה בְּקִרְבְּךָ כִּי
 עִם קֶשֶׁה עָרַף אֶתְּה פֶּן אֶכְלָךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ
 (שמות לג:ב-ג)
 אֶל תִּמְר בּוֹ כִּי לֹא יִשָּׂא לְפָשְׁעֵכֶם כִּי שָׁמִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ
 (שמות כג:כא)

And I will send a malach before you...for I will not go among you, because you are a stubborn people, lest I destroy you on the way
 (Shemos 33:2-3)

Do not rebel against him, for he will not bear your sins, because My Name is in him.
 (Shemos 23:21)

Hashem sends a *malach* to be with us, instead of Himself. What is meant by “My Name is in him?”

- The *malach* sent to be with us is the famous מטטרון.

• מטטרון = ש-ד-י = 314

(Rashi)

TREATS FROM TARGUM

So much more than just translation – quick insights into Targum Onkelos!

וַיִּקְהַל הָעָם עַל אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּם עֲשֵׂה לָנוּ
 אֱלֹהִים (לב:א)

And the nation gathered against Aharon and said, “Arise, make us a god...” (32:1)

תַּרְגוּם אוֹנְקֵלוֹס: וַאֲתַכְנֹשׁ עִמָּא עַל אַהֲרֹן וְאָמְרוּ לֵה
 קוּם עֲבֵד לְנָא דְחֵלן

And the nation gathered against Aharon and said, “Arise, make us a fear...”

Onkelos usually translates the term אֱלֹהִים, used for *avodah zarah*, as אַטְוֵט, meaning “mistake” (see *Shemos* 12:12 and 23:24). Why does he use the word חֵלן, *fear*, instead here?

Two opposite answers are given to this question:

- The *Nesinah L'ger* understands that Onkelos is speaking respectfully of the *egel*, more so than run-of-the-mill *avodah zarah*, because he is defending Klal Yisrael. He is saying that their intent was to create a leader to help them serve Hashem, their true “fear,” and that they never intended to serve *avodah zarah*.
- An early *perush* on *Onkelos*, printed without a name, takes the opposite approach: Onkelos was speaking more disparagingly about this *avodah zarah*—because it was manmade! Why would people fear something they made with their own hands?! He shows other places Onkelos uses the term חֵלן specifically for manmade *avodah zarah*, such as Lavan’s *terafim*.

THIS DATE IN JEWISH HISTORY



The 18th of Adar is the day of the Purim of Sana’a, capital of Yemen. The legend of Purim Sana’a refers to an unknown time when the Jews were miraculously saved from a plot hatched against them by the counselors of the King of Yemen.

The king had many close Jewish advisors of whom his other counselors were jealous. The counselors murdered the king’s son, the crown prince, on Purim and framed the Jews for the murder. They had convinced the crown prince to visit the Jewish quarter of Sana’a and held his sword up as he dismounted from his horse, killing him. The prince had been surrounded by Jewish well-wishers at the time and the king was convinced that one of them had murdered the prince. He gave the Jews three days to deliver the murderer. If they failed to do so, the whole Jewish Quarter would be set on fire and all the Jews would perish in the flames!

The terrified Jews of Sana’a fasted and *davened* for three days. On the third day, a child asked to be taken to the king, saying he could identify the killer. He placed a paper with the word “*emes*” on the forehead of the dead prince, who was lying in state before the king, and asked him, “Who killed you?” The prince sat up and pointed to the counselors. He then lay still and the word on the paper lost its *aleph*, changing to “*meis*.”

The true murderers were executed and the Jews were saved.

HALACHAH

Drawing Pictures

The Torah tells us not to create depictions that represent Hashem, any “intermediaries,” or any of the things that people worship.

What kinds of images are forbidden? Why?

The list of images we may not *make* includes anything intending to represent Hashem, people, *malachim*, heavenly bodies such as the sun, moon, stars or planets, and the animals that are on the *Kisei Hakavod*. These are forbidden because we do not need an intermediary to Hashem, and because they are a lack of proper *kavod* to Hashem.

Chazal made an additional *issur* to even *own* such images, because it may seem as though one is worshipping them.

Are there any circumstances in which these are permitted?

There are several potential *heterim*, which may apply in certain circumstances:

No *chashad*: Some *poskim* rule that the *issur* to own forbidden images does not apply today, because no one really serves idols anymore. This would not apply to making or drawing these images.

Flat pictures: Many *poskim* rule that the *issur* to have images of people and animals only applies to 3D shapes, but not to flat images. This is the prevailing custom, although some are *machmir* not to have any pictures. This *heter* does not apply to stellar bodies.

Not representative: Images that are not made to actually represent anything, such as star-shaped candies, or that are made for educational purposes are also *muttar* according to some *poskim*.

Partial images: Part of an image may be permitted as well, according to some.

But so many homes have pictures of people on the walls!

Pictures of people may be permitted because they are not 3D. Also, pictures that do not show the entire person include another potential *heter*.

Are coins, trophies, or wig mannequins a problem?

Some *poskim* are lenient on partial images, including any image of a person that does not include the entire face and body. Others say that the *issur* applies to any image that one can tell is meant to be human. A snowman does not look human and is permissible. Trophies with a body image should be defaced or broken in some way.

What about dolls?

Many permit owning dolls because there is no real possibility that one is worshipping them. Additionally, since dolls are commercially manufactured, one does not have to worry that he will be suspected of making a doll himself. Many people are stringent and deface dolls by breaking off the nose or ear, or by making a cut in the doll's face. It is enough to break a piece of an ear, even if it is covered by hair.

Some *poskim* write there is no need to do anything to a doll, since dolls are thrown around on the floor by children. According to that, china dolls that are kept on display would be problematic. It would be an *issur d'Oraisa* to glue parts of a doll back together, because the image is being formed.

May one draw or take a picture of the sun, moon, stars, or planets?

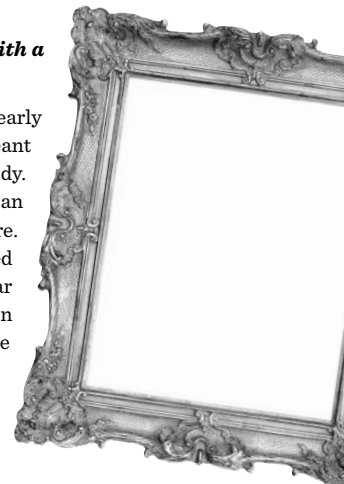
Even *poskim* who permit 2D images of people and animals mostly agree that such images of the heavenly bodies are *assur*, because we never experience them in 3D; the 2D form is an accurate representation of what we see. Rough sketches are also *assur*, as long as one can tell what they represent. For example, a circle with rays is clearly meant to be the sun. Stars with points, as they are commonly drawn, are definitely meant to represent stars—even though real stars are round.

Is it permitted to draw part of the sun or moon?

Partial moons are more *chamur* than suns, because we often see only part of the moon, while the sun is always “full.” Some permit a drawing of the sun partially obscured by clouds, while others forbid it—because we often see it that way. A piece of sun drawn in the corner of a paper is permitted by most *poskim*.

Is there a problem with a Magen David?

The *Magen David* is clearly a symbol and not meant to depict a stellar body. The same applies to an asterisk in literature. Both are permitted for that reason. Star stickers, awards, moon cookies, and the like are also permitted because they are not meant to depict an actual star or moon.



THE LAST WORD

A one-liner worth remembering

“ANYONE WHO HAS NOT EXPERIENCED THE HIDING OF HIS FACE, OR THE DEVOURING OF HIS ENEMIES, IS NOT ONE OF US.”

— Rav, Chagigah 5a

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