

# Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Pekudei/Shekalim

29 Adar I, 5771/March 5, 2011

Vol.2 Num. 27

## Try, Try Again

R' Meir Lipschitz

*“And it was on the first day of the first month of the second year that the mishkan was erected.”*

This verse makes it seem as though the mishkan was easily erected and left standing after the first time. However, we know from a midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah) on the verse, “And it was on the day that Moshe **completed** erecting the mishkan,” that Moshe put it up and took it down every day for a full week, until finally on the eighth day he put it up but did not take it down. Why did Moshe need to struggle and toil to erect the mishkan if he was just going to dismantle it again at the end of the day? [Other opinions even suggest that Moshe actually erected and dismantled the mishkan multiple times each day of the first week!] Why would HaShem have commanded him to do this?

We can ask a similar question based on a gemara in Nedarim which tells us that originally Moshe learned Torah and forgot it, relearned it and forgot it, until it was eventually given to him as a gift from HaShem: “And He **gave** to Moshe...” Why did Moshe need to continually make the effort to learn the whole Torah, if he was merely going to forget once again? Why would he bother?

Perhaps we can explain that forgetting isn't an experience in which the information disappears from the person's

memory; the information remains in the person's brain, but is (temporarily) inaccessible. Therefore, each subsequent repetition, even if it will all be forgotten, makes an impression on the person. It is only through this effort to learn, relearn, and then do it all over again, that Torah can truly be acquired; only after a person puts in the effort will it be given as a gift.

We are familiar with the gemara which states: “Yagati u'matzati taamin- if one says he toiled and succeeded, he can be believed.” This gemara is not speaking of financial success or retention of Torah wisdom, but simply of our initial success in learning, because the end results of financial success and retaining our learning are both gifts from HaShem and are not the direct product of our effort. Only after repeated and sustained effort, despite numerous occurrences of failure and forgetfulness, can one truly be given Torah wisdom. This, then, would also be the source for the idea of chazarah [review] as in the gemara's declaration, “One who reviews his learning 100 times cannot be compared to one who reviews it 101 times.” If the person did not understand after the first 100 tries, presumably he should simply give up! And if he already understands then there would seem to be no value in another repetition! But the gemara's message is that there is value in that extra time, for several

reasons: 1) The mitzvah of Talmud Torah, even without any added understanding or knowledge, 2) Reinforcement of the information, and 3) Perhaps most importantly, this may be the time when he will be granted the gift of understanding and retention from HaShem, the same way Moshe was, for having put in all this effort.

Rav Menasheh Klein in his responsum, Mishnah Halachot 11:450, takes this same approach in explaining the gemara in Niddah (30b) which teaches that a fetus is taught the entire Torah while in its mother's womb but then forgets it all upon birth. R' Klein asks the obvious question: If the child will forget everything upon birth anyway, why bother teaching it in the womb? He first suggests that without the help of an angel as a teacher one would not understand a single word of Torah in this world, but he then continues to say that although the information may be forgotten, it leaves an indelible impression on the child, which will make it easier for him to learn and understand Torah again in the future.

This, then, is why Moshe needed to struggle with the construction and dismantling of the mishkan every day—possibly multiple times a day—for an entire week. The mishkan was meant as a home for the holy presence of HaShem, and as such He would not descend into this world until the proper effort and toil was put into the task. Much like with one's learning, where success will not be had until repeated attempts have been made, each day of construction left an impression on Moshe and the people, making each subsequent day and attempt that much more meaningful, until the eighth day when the mishkan was built and left standing and it finally began to serve as the House of G-d. May we soon merit the day once again when our efforts and devotion allow us to rebuild His house and experience the full presence of HaShem.

[mlipschitz@torontotorah.com](mailto:mlipschitz@torontotorah.com)

## Parshah Questions

Dovid Zirkind

Answers are provided on the back page.

- What does Avodat HaLeviyim, the work of the Levites, describe at the start of our parshah? (Rashi, Ohr HaChaim and Netziv to Shemot 38:21)
- How many chapters of Tehilim did Moshe author? (Rashi Shemot 39:43, Rashi Tehillim 90:1)
- Why does the Torah credit the entire people with building the Mishkan, if only a select group was involved in the process? (Ohr HaChaim, Sforno and Haamek Davar to Shemot 39:32)
- For children: Why was Moshe commanded to erect the Mishkan, if it was physically impossible for one man to do it on his own? (Rashi Shemot 39:43)

[dzirkind@torontotorah.com](mailto:dzirkind@torontotorah.com)

To sponsor a Toronto Torah in memory or in honour of a loved one for \$180, please email [sponsorship@torontotorah.com](mailto:sponsorship@torontotorah.com) or call 416-781-1777.

*This shiur was delivered as part of Rabbi Netanel Javasky's weekly "Landmark Halachic Responsa" series, Thursdays at 8:00 PM at Bnai Torah.*

*Men and women are welcome.*

As we have explained in previous *shiurim*, according to most *poskim* there remains a *mitzvah* today for every Jew to write a *Sefer Torah*. (See Sha'agat Aryeh #36 for a dissenting opinion.) This *mitzvah* is one which is very difficult to fulfill due to the great expenses involved in writing a *Sefer Torah*. In recent years, Rav Yitzchak Abadi, a great *Talmid Chacham*, has created a method to write *Sifrei Torah* for a fraction of the cost. In this shiur we analyzed some of the *Halachic* concerns with this new and modern method.

## The Process

This is taken from [kashrut.org](http://kashrut.org), the website of Rav Abadi's project.

The Sofer starts by purchasing some of the highest quality "Klaf" (parchment). The Klaf is checked, tested, and cut to size. The "Sirtut" (engraved lines) is scored to the exact depth, thickness, height, and length. Silk screens are created with the exact lettering. Computers are utilized to achieve a perfectly balanced page using proportionate letters. No need for elongated or squished letters to reach the end of the line. The screens are placed on top of the Klaf in an exact position to meet

the Sirtut. The Sofer then puts ink on the screen, and applies the ink by hand passing a squeegee across the Klaf. In a matter of seconds this Klaf has a full page written perfectly. The page is then dried. After the pages are all written, they are sewed properly and the new Torah scroll is ready to use.

In Rav Abadi's sefer *Or Yitzchak*, #53, he clarifies that the screen is not actually a stencil with the letters cut from it, but rather has tiny holes in the shape of letters which the ink is pushed through, forming a complete letter on the parchment.

## Potential Problems

Writing multiple letters at one time:

Some argued that this process requires writing more than one letter at a time, which is clearly not the typical manner of writing. Rav Abadi countered with a gemara in Yoma (38b) discussing the family of ben Kamtzar. The Talmud tells us that this family should be cursed for refusing to share their special unique trait with others. The Gemara explains that they were able to place four quills between their five fingers and write four letters simultaneously. Rav Abadi notes that the fact that this family was criticized for not sharing their secret seems to suggest that this mode of writing is one that is preferred. (See *Tosfot Yom Tov* and *Tiferet Yisrael* which seem to

suggest that there is something lofty in writing G-d's name in one shot.)

Vocalizing the writing:

The gemara in Menachot 30a describes the original *Sefer Torah* written by Moshe himself and says that G-d would dictate the Torah and Moshe would write it and repeat it. The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 32:31) learns from here that when someone is dictating the text to the scribe, he must repeat the word as he writes it. Obviously, due to the nature of this modern process, repeating the word as it is being written would be impossible. The question is: What is the reason for articulating the written word? Rav Abadi explains that the standard understanding is that this is merely to ensure that the scribe does not make any mistakes in the copying. If this is correct, then perhaps in a situation where a mistake was impossible, there would be no need to repeat the word. However, according to Rav Yoel Sirkis (*Bach* 32:16) the articulation is to sanctify the written word, and it is therefore relevant even when a mistake is impossible. Rav Abadi writes that this opinion is in fact incompatible with his process, but he thinks that this opinion is a minority opinion that need not be followed.

The manner of writing:

R' J. David Bleich (*Contemporary Halakhic Problems* Vol.5) writes that the most problematic of issues with this process is that it seems to contravene a passage in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Gittin* 2:3) which requires the writing be done in "the normal fashion". The Gemara says that we require, "Writing, not dripping. Writing, not pouring..." Both of these seem to present a major difficulty for R' Abadi's process.

These are just a few of the issues that confront this new process. R' Abadi's responsum on the topic can be accessed through [hebrewbooks.org](http://hebrewbooks.org) here: <http://goo.gl/ihBZO>

[njavasky@torontotorah.com](mailto:njavasky@torontotorah.com)

## 613 Mitzvot: Mitzvah 84, 326-329 Shemita for the Land of Israel

The Torah's instruction to allow the land of Israel to rest every seventh year – the *shemita* year - includes several components. Mitzvah 84 instructs us to abandon all produce which grows in the *shemita* year, while mitzvot 326 and 327 prohibit working the ground and trees. Mitzvot 328 and 329 forbid harvesting wild growth and tree fruit; as noted in mitzvah 84, these must be left for anyone who wishes to take them.

There is some debate as to the calculation of the *shemita* year, due to issues regarding calculating the *yovel* (50<sup>th</sup>) year, as well as regarding the period between the first and second Beit haMikdash. The Rambam (*Hilchot Shemita v'Yovel* 10:6) cited Gaonic tradition to establish the count we use to this day, saying, שהקבלה והמעשה עמודים גדולים בהוראה, "that received tradition and practical precedent are the great pillars of legislation."

[torczyner@torontotorah.com](mailto:torczyner@torontotorah.com)

# Ha'Am V'Ha'Aretz

**R' Mordechai Yaakov Breisch**

**R' Mordechai Torczyner**

**Givat haTachmoshet**

## Torah in Translation

### Saying Kaddish if one missed Aleinu

Chelkas Yaakov Orach Chaim 20

Regarding his question about a mourner who enters the synagogue after the other mourners have begun to recite the kaddish following Aleinu, and whether he may recite Kaddish as well, despite not having heard Aleinu.

In my humble opinion, one may learn this law from that of an 'orphaned Amen' [an Amen recited without hearing the associated blessing], the status of which is so serious that the sages cursed a person who said it, per Berachot 47a.

There is a conflict between that law [prohibiting the 'orphaned Amen'] and the talmudic passage (Succah 51) which states that in the synagogue in Alexandria they waved scarves to inform people that the leader had concluded the blessing and it was time to respond Amen. To resolve that conflict, Rashi, Tosafot and other early authorities explained that if one knows which blessing one is answering, he may answer without hearing the actual voice, and this is not called an 'orphaned Amen' [and this is what occurred in Alexandria]. Other early authorities say that a blessing which fulfills a person's obligation is different [and this is what occurred in Alexandria]. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 124) is strict, following both views... meaning that one may not recite 'Amen' [without hearing the blessing], for fear that one might recite an 'orphaned Amen.'...

Despite this stringent ruling, we say that one who hears a group of Jews responding Amen, and who knows that they would only respond Amen after hearing a proper blessing, need not be concerned for an 'orphaned Amen'. Therefore, one who hears them respond to Kedushah may respond with them, and so, too, for Kaddish and Barchu.... This seems to be the basis for the Rama's ruling (Orach Chaim 56) that one may respond "Yehei sh'meih rabbah" [without hearing kaddish]. Although Rama only mentions kaddish, it is clear regarding an 'orphaned Amen' that one may respond as well... If so, why would there not be permission to recite kaddish based on the assumption that the other mourners had heard Aleinu? This issue is more lenient, for we find no curse for this [for reciting kaddish without a preceding Aleinu]. This is especially true when kaddish is praise for G-d in its own right, as the Magen Avraham wrote.

Rabbi Mordechai Yaakov Breisch was born in Poland in 1896.

Rabbi Breisch served as the rabbi of several communities in Poland and Germany, before fleeing the Nazis in 1934 and settling in Zurich, where he was the head of the communal Beit Din until his death in 1977.

During the war, Rabbi Breisch addressed many painful halachic questions, such as how to calculate mourning periods for people cremated by the Nazis ym"s. Afterward, Rabbi Breisch authored responsa addressing many of the 20th – and 21st – century's most commonly raised questions, including: The potential permissibility of listening to kol isha and general music on the radio, the admission of guide dogs into synagogues, the cremation of bodies, the validity of conversion for the sake of marriage, the use of artificial insemination and cosmetic surgery, the status of doctor-patient confidentiality, and the harnessing of electricity on Shabbat. His tendency is to be conservative.

Rabbi Breisch's responsa were published in a multi-volume series called Chelkas Yaakov, some during his lifetime and some in the years after his passing.

Further, the Taz opined that one may recite kaddish if ten are not present during the recitation of Aleinu or during Torah study, and they only arrived afterward, whereas the Magen Avraham wrote that ten must be present during the study or during Aleinu. Although most later authorities side with the Magen Avraham, it seems that the general custom is to be lenient like the Taz. If this is true, how much more so [should we be lenient] in a case in which ten were present for study or for Aleinu, and it is only that this mourner was not present – he should be able to depend upon the group that was present, since the Name of Heaven was sanctified there, as the Mishneh Berurah wrote.

This is also logical. It is obvious that even were he a complete ignoramus, and he did not know or comprehend what people were studying, he could recite kaddish if he was present during the study. If so, then we should naturally conclude that even if he was not there [during the study], he may join the community that is reciting kaddish.

So it appears, in my humble opinion.

Located in the northern part of East Jerusalem, Givat HaTachmoshet was a strategic site conquered by the Israelis in the Six Day War, critical to the eventual re-capture of the old city of Jerusalem.

The site was originally built by the British in the 1930s, primarily as an ammunition storage house for the police academy located across from the hill, which was separated therefrom by a series of fortified trenches. Following the War of Independence in 1948, Ammunition Hill was placed under the rule of the Jordanian Arab Legion. By controlling this spot, the Jordanians were able to block Israeli access to Hadassah Hospital and the Hebrew University located on Mount Scopus.

On June 6, 1967, the second day of the war, under General Uzi Narkis, the decision was made to send a battalion of Israeli paratroopers on a ground assault through the trenches to capture Ammunition Hill. Israeli Intelligence greatly underestimated the number of Jordanian forces protecting the hill and what ensued was one of the most heroic, yet tragic, battles in modern Israeli history. In total, 36 Israeli soldiers were killed in the battle for Ammunition Hill, many of them sacrificing themselves by jumping out of the trenches as a diversion, to allow their comrades to move forward. Ammunition Hill is still recognized as one of the most important battle sites in Israeli history. The battle for Ammunition Hill resulted in more citations for excellence than any other Israeli battle.

In 1975 a memorial site was inaugurated marking the battle on Ammunition Hill, and a museum was built commemorating the lives of the soldiers lost both on Ammunition Hill and in the battle for the capture of the Jerusalem. In 1987 the spot was declared a national memorial site. Today, aside from being visited by thousands of Israelis and people abroad, the site is used for many army ceremonies. These include the main ceremony on Yom Yerushalayim.

[dteller@torontotorah.com](mailto:dteller@torontotorah.com)

**What does *Avodat HaLeviyyim*, the work of the Levites, describe at the start of our Parsha?**

- **Rashi** explains that “the work of the Leviyyim” addressed in this verse is the responsibility to assemble and disassemble the Mishkan as the Jewish people moved from place to place.
- **Ohr HaChaim** suggests that the term ‘*Avodah*’ refers to the daily service in the Mishkan and ‘*Leviyyim*’ includes both Kohanim and Leviyyim. One may have thought that atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf would come with a reinstatement of the firstborn to their position in the Mishkan, and so the Torah emphasizes here that the work would be done by the Kohanim and Leviyyim, alone, from this point forward.
- **Netziv** writes that there were extra donations that had not been used in the building of the Mishkan, as well as the general fund of *bedek habayit*. These funds were entrusted to the Leviyyim, and Itamar specifically, for safeguarding.

**How many chapters of Tehillim did Moshe author?**

- The Torah tells us that when Moshe

saw the completion of the Mishkan and its contents, he blessed the people. **Rashi** explains that the blessing Moshe gave them was the words of Tehillim (90:17) “*Viyhi Noam Hashem...*” This was one of eleven chapters of Tehillim written by Moshe (Tehillim 90-101). Rashi adds an additional layer to this in his commentary to Tehillim (90:1), suggesting that the eleven chapters Moshe wrote are parallel to the eleven blessings he gave to the tribes before his passing.

**Why does the Torah credit the entire people with building the Mishkan, if only a select group was involved in the process?**

- **Seforno** answers that the project, as a whole, was completed by the entire people. Some were builders, others were donors, but everyone had a role.
- The **Ohr HaChaim** first cites the rule of *shaliach shel adam kimoto*; those who physically built the Mishkan represented all of their Jewish brethren. Alternatively, Ohr haChaim suggests that the builders of the Mishkan can be seen as representatives of G-d alone, and yet the people are still credited because every action a Jew performs is

credited to the entire community. A Kohen can do something that a Yisrael can not, and it is still part of the people’s collective worship. The same is true for those who were chosen to build the Mishkan.

- **The Netziv** suggests that the great passion the Jewish people had for the *Mishkan* might have led them to go beyond Moshe’s instructions. As such, the Torah is telling us that each Jew did only what he was told to do, even if that meant some did nothing.

**For children: Why was Moshe commanded to erect the Mishkan, if it was physically impossible for one man to do it on his own?**

- **Rashi** explains that until this point Moshe had not been given any job in the building of the Mishkan. The people told Moshe that the beams were too heavy to lift; Hashem left this as an opportunity for Moshe to participate. Hashem told Moshe he should make the effort and the Mishkan would rise on its own. In this way, Moshe was given a chance to be involved.

## Schedule for the Week of March 5, 29 Adar I

### Tuesday, March 8

- 1:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Michah, at Shaarei Shomayim, with Mekorot: A Punning Navi
- 7:15PM R' Meir Lipschitz: The Thought of R' Shlomo Aviner: Purim, 3000 Bathurst, Apt 1201, Women
- 7:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Tools for Brisk: Nullification/Exemption, Thornhill Community Shul
- 8:00PM Dovid Zirkind: Interactive Parshah Discussion, Westmount Learning Centre
- 8:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Minchat Chinuch at Clanton Park, *does not meet this week*
- 8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Halachic Business Ethics: Responsibilities towards other people’s money, Thornhill Community Shul

### Wednesday, March 9

- 9:15AM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Hosheia, 239 Franklin Women, *Babysitting provided: Jews and Calves*
- 6:35PM R' Azarya Berzon, Highlights of the Week’s Shiurim, Clanton Park
- 8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Masechet Psachim: Laws of Seder Night, Shomrei Shabbos C.M.

### Thursday, March 10

- 8:00PM R' Netanel Javasky: Landmark Halachic Responsa, Bnai Torah
- 8:00PM Itamar Zolberg: Know your Megillah part 2/3, Thornhill Community Shul
- 8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Rav Soloveichik’s Yahrtzeit Shiur on Smichut Geulah LeTfillah, Clanton Park
- 10:00PM R' Azarya Berzon: Rambam Hilchot Talmud Torah - The Permissibility of establishing a School in a Residential Neighbourhood, Clanton Park

**Monday - Friday 6 AM** R' Mordechai Torczyner: Daf Yomi, BAYT

### Friday, March 4

8:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Where have all the angels gone?, 154 Rodeo Dr. *high school girls*

### Shabbat, March 5

7:45AM R' Azarya Berzon, Ramban: Parshat Pekudei, Or Chaim

10:15AM R' Azarya Berzon, Contemporary Issues in the Laws of Yichud, Clanton Park

**One Hour Before Mincha:** R' Azarya Berzon, Kiddushin 10b, Mizraichi Bayit

7:50PM Parent/Child Learning, Shaarei Shomayim

### Sunday, March 6

9:15AM Itamar Zolberg: Parshah & Issues b'Ivrit, Zichron Yisrael

### Monday, March 7

12:10PM Russell Levy, Masechet Pesachim (advanced), Wolfond Center *Lunch served*

8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon, Ramban and the Mitzvah of Remembering Amalek, Clanton Park

8:30PM R' Meir Lipschitz, All About Alcohol week 1/3: Wine, Shaarei Shomayim

9:20PM R' Azarya Berzon, Ramban: Insights into Parshat Pekudei, The Inauguration of the Mishkan, 12 Midvale Road