

# Toronto Torah

## Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Devarim / Chazon

9 Menachem Av, 5775/July 25, 2015

Vol. 6 Num. 42

**This issue of Toronto Torah is sponsored by Esther and Craig Guttman and Family  
in honour of the yahrtzeit of Sheila Guttman ז"ל שרה טובה בת יהושע ז"ל  
and ז"ל in honour of the upcoming wedding of Leah Klapisch to Judah Guttman**

### From Remembering to Re-living and Back

**Rabbi Baruch Weintraub**

The start of our parshah presents a long description of the exact place in which Moshe spoke to the nation. The location is said to be, "Beside the Jordan, in the desert, on the plains, opposite the Red Sea, between Paran and Tofel, and Lavan and Chatzeirot and Di Zahav. Eleven days' journey from Horeb, on the way to Mount Seir, to Kadesh Barnea." (Devarim 1:1-2)

Our sages noted that it would be very difficult to take this description at face value; how, for example, can you describe the same place as being both "in the desert" and "on the plains"?

As cited in Rashi, our sages took a novel approach to address these questions. They suggested that these verses are to be read not as describing the place in which the Children of Israel were now camped, but as hints and encrypted messages referencing various stations and events experienced in the forty years' journey in the desert – and specifically, the locations of their sins. Thus, "the desert" stands for the nation's constant protestations that they had been taken out of Egypt just to die in the desert. "The plains" reminds us of the sin with the Moavites, on the plains of Moav. "The Red Sea" stands for the nation's complaints before the parting of the sea. And so on.

This explanation solves the problem with which we began this article, but it also gives rise to another. It was just last week that we read the full account of the Jews' journeys in the desert – a long list of places and of movement between them. (Bamidbar 33) Why do

we need another such list, and why is it embedded enigmatically in what seems to be a mere description of one place?

Before answering this question, let us note an interesting – and perhaps parallel – phenomenon in the Book of Eichah. My mentor and teacher, Rabbi Mosheh Lichtenstein shlita, has remarked that the first four chapters of Eichah give the impression of lamentations written soon after the events themselves. The horrors are detailed and vivid, and told as something that has happened, and continues to happen, to the writer himself. The fifth chapter, on the other hand, is of a different character – it gives the impression that the writer is looking back on the destruction from a later time. He needs to "remind" G-d of what has happened (5:1); he is an orphan with a widowed mother, hinting that he was a child at the time of the destruction (5:3), and the sins that caused it are blamed on the fathers' generation. (5:7) Even more, the end of the chapter speaks about a long period of suffering, and longing for distant good days. (5:20-21)

It seems that the Book of Eichah is trying to instill in us two distinct perspectives on the destruction:

- The major perspective is of re-living it; we are thrown, as it were, into the burning city of Jerusalem in the dreadful summer of 70 CE. We witness the sorrow and pain befalling our ancestors, its citizens, and we share the experience with them. We feel, in the words of our sages, that every generation in which the Beit haMikdash is not built is as though it

had been destroyed in their time. (Yerushalmi Yoma 1:1)

- The second perspective, added in the last chapter, is from the future – which is our present. Here, the main theme is not the immediate horror of the destruction, but its residue in our very being. Now that the events have been re-experienced, we are called to integrate them into our existence, so that every experience from now on will be filtered through them. In the words of our sages (Berachot 31a), "One should not fill his mouth with joy in this world" – for every joy is marked with the acute knowledge of that which we miss.

The same process, it seems, is at work in the connection between our parshah and last week's Parshat Masei. The long list of journeys in Bamidbar 33 was meant to enable to the people to remember what happened in each place; they retold the stories, and by that, re-lived them. But in the opening verses of Devarim, there is a different goal – to understand what the sojourn through the desert had left inside the people. Therefore, the different stations are again re-told – but not explicitly as something that happened in the past, but in an implicit way, as something which affects the people's (spiritual) location in the present.

*bweintraub@torontotorah.com*

### OUR BEIT MIDRASH

#### ROSH BEIT MIDRASH

RABBI MORDECHAI TORCZYNER

**AVREICHIM** RABBI DAVID ELY GRUNDLAND, RABBI JOSH GUTENBERG, YISROEL MEIR ROSENZWEIG

**COMMUNITY MAGGIDEI SHIUR** RABBI ELAN MAZER, RABBI BARUCH WEINTRAUB

**CHAVERIM** DAR BARUCHIM, YEDIDYA FISCHMAN, SHMUEL GIBLON, YOSEF HERZIG, MICHAEL IHILCHIK, BJ KOROBKIN, RYAN JENAH, SHIMMY JESIN, CHEZKY MECKLER, ZACK MINCER, MITCHELL PERLMUTTER, JACOB POSLUNS, ARYEH ROSEN, ARIEL SHIELDS, EFRON STURMWIND, DAVID SUTTNER, DAVID TOBIS, EYTAN WEISZ



**YESHIVA UNIVERSITY  
TORAH MITZION  
BEIT MIDRASH**

**We are grateful to  
Continental Press 905-660-0311**

***The Emergence of Ethical Man*  
Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik  
Ktav, 2005**

**What is this book about?**

In a 1958 letter, Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik wrote, “[M]y interest, at present, lies in the field of religious anthropology, the doctrine of man, within the philosophical perspective of Judaism. It is virgin land. Nothing has been written about the most central problems of human existence, fate and destiny.” As Rabbi Michael Berger writes in his introduction to *The Emergence of Ethical Man*, this book is one of Rabbi Soloveitchik’s lifelong attempts “to articulate the concept of man as he saw it embedded in the Bible and the halakhic tradition.”

In other words, *The Emergence of Ethical Man* seeks to answer some of the most basic questions we can ask: *Why did G-d create us? What are we meant to accomplish in life? Why do human beings die?*

To begin to address these questions, Rabbi Soloveitchik develops a close read of the Torah’s account of G-d’s creation of the world. The author highlights the common language used to describe creation of plants, animals and human

beings, to show that human beings, as creatures, are part of nature rather than transcendent. Only when G-d addresses human beings with ethical instructions are we elevated. G-d instructed us not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, telling the first human beings to put ethical purpose before pleasure – and eating from the prohibited fruit was an act of treason against that ethical imperative.

*The Emergence of Ethical Man* continues to describe the goals of G-d for human beings, the consequences of sin, the nature of the covenant between G-d and human being, and the models of Avraham and Moshe. The missions of the human being, the Jew and the Jewish People are articulated, set in the context of Jewish thought and Jewish law.

The ideas presented in the book are thought-provoking, and inspiring. A sample passage: “While the background of man’s existence is his involvement in the natural biological occurrence, his vistas are almost endless. His origin is the earth, the mother of the wildflower and the insect; his destiny, destination and goal are placed in the sublime heights of a transcendental world. Man is a

simply creature ontically, but a very complicated one ethically.” (pg. 13)

**How to read this book**

*The Emergence of Ethical Man* addresses questions that are of interest to most people, but it will be most useful to the patient student. This reader needed to review repeatedly, pencil in hand to underline and make marginal notes, in order to digest the more philosophical passages. There isn’t a lot of technical jargon here, but the nature of the material is deep, and it does not make for easy reading.

**The editing of this book**

*The Emergence of Ethical Man* was produced from handwritten notebooks left behind by Rabbi Soloveitchik. The editor, Rabbi Michael Berger, was tasked with “dividing it into chapters and section headings, choosing chapter titles, locating citations and filling out references, determining what should be text and what should be footnotes.” (pg. xxi) Unfortunately, Rabbi Soloveitchik’s last notebook was left incomplete, right after beginning to address what the editor describes as, “man’s existential relationship to death.”

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

## 613 Mitzvot: #451: Shechitah

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Before entering the Land of Israel, the Jews were told that in their spacious new land, they would be allowed to eat meat even without the context of bringing a *korban* in the Beit haMikdash. However, this would require “*v’zavachta*”, a prescribed form of slaughter. (Devarim 12:21) This is the act that we call *shechitah*; *Sefer haChinuch* counts it as the Torah’s 451<sup>st</sup> mitzvah.

Birds and animals which die of anything other than *shechitah* are not kosher. (Mitzvah 73) The sole exception is a bird brought as a *korban*; this bird undergoes *melikah*, a different procedure. (Mitzvah 124)

*Sefer haChinuch* suggests two benefits which emerge from the act of *shechitah*. One benefit is the removal of blood, which one may not eat; as *Sefer haChinuch* writes regarding the mitzvah of covering blood after *shechitah*, we avoid consuming blood in order to forestall descent into carnivorous cruelty. (Mitzvah 187) A second benefit is that this method minimizes pain for the slaughtered creature.

Rabbi Yaakov Yechezkel Greenwald (*Vayaged Yaakov*) saw lessons in personal growth in the five mistakes which disqualify *shechitah*:

- **Shehiyah (pausing)** - *Shechitah* is disqualified if the *shochet* (slaughterer) pauses during the act. So, too, we who would improve ourselves must act with alacrity, not pausing and not allowing ourselves to be distracted.
- **Derasah (pressing)** - The *shochet* must slice the trachea and esophagus in a sliding cutting motion; if he becomes impatient and presses down into the neck, the *shechitah* is disqualified. In the same vein, we must be on guard

against impatience with our own growth. We are expected to learn patiently. Further, one who sacrifices his ethical growth in pursuit of rapid intellectual growth is guilty of *derasah*, pressing and trampling upon important components of self-development.

- **Chaladah (tunneling)** - The *shechitah* knife must be visible to the *shochet* as he cuts; tunneling into the neck so that the knife is hidden from view disqualifies the *shechitah*. Similarly, we must not hide our self-improvement from the public; our commitment to Hashem and to Torah must include pride in our beliefs.
- **Hagramah (veering)** - *Shechitah* must be performed within a specific space along an animal’s neck, and veering out of that space invalidates the *shechitah*. The same applies to our development - a Jew must recognize that certain sites are better suited for growth than others.
- **Ikkur (uprooting)** - There is some debate regarding the proper definition of *ikkur*; Rabbi Greenwald explained it as *shechitah* with a flawed knife, such that the trachea or esophagus is pulled rather than sliced. Rabbi Greenwald adjured us to aspire to flawlessness in our actions, since each defect will affect our results.

As *Sefer haChinuch* notes, there is no obligation to perform *shechitah*; it is simply a way to permit meat. Indeed, according to some authorities, *shechitah* is not even to be viewed as a mitzvah; rather, it is simply a procedure to remove the “non-kosher” label from a bird or beast. (Tosafot Shevuot 24a *ha’ocheil*)

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

## Biography

### Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch

Rabbi Netanel Javasky

Born in London in 1926 and orphaned at a young age, Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch spent his formative years learning in yeshivot in both England and Eretz Yisrael. For many years, he was a rabbi in Johannesburg, South Africa, where he delivered acclaimed Torah lectures on business ethics. His renown grew while there, and he returned to Jerusalem to join the Beit Din of the Eidah haChareidit, where he served as the Av Beit Din.

A proud descendant of the Gr"a [the Vilna Gaon, Rabbi Eliyahu of Vilna], he compiled what is considered the authoritative book on his ancestor's practices and rulings, "Hilchot haGr"a uMinhagav." Additionally, he has written many other works; he is most renowned for *Moadim uZmanim*, a set of books discussing the Jewish holidays. His book of responsa, *Teshuvot uMinhagim*, is also widely quoted.

Though an anti-Zionist, Rav Sternbuch believes that there is a mitzvah of moving to the Land of Israel. He is known to quote his father that it is better to live in the Diaspora and dream of the Land than to live in the Land and dream of the Diaspora.

[taneljavasky@gmail.com](mailto:taneljavasky@gmail.com)

**This is  
the final issue of  
Toronto Torah  
for this year.**

**Thank you for  
learning with us!**

**Look for us again  
with  
Parshat Ki Tetze  
August 29.**

## Torah and Translation

### Fasting when Tishah b'Av is Deferred

Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch, *Teshuvot v'Hanhagot* 2:252

Translated by Rabbi Josh Gutenberg

בש"ע (תקנ"ט סעיף ט') איתא שבתשעה באב שנדחה, בעל ברית מתענה ואינו משלים תעניתו לפי שיו"ט שלו הוא, ומקורו בטור בשם רבינו יעבץ שהוכיח כן מהא דאמרו בגמרא בעירובין (מא א) דיו"ט דעצי כהנים [שהיה להם זמן קרבן עצים בזמן המקדש ויו"ט היה להם לעולם] שחל בתשעה באב נדחה התענו ולא השלימו "מפני שיו"ט שלהם היה" וה"ה ביו"ט דברית, ועיין בב"י ואחרונים דסנדק ומוהל דהם גם כן בכלל "בעל ברית", מתענין ולא משלימין...

שבמעוברת וכדו' לא תיקנו צום כלל בנדחה, וכמו דלא תקנו בג' צומות אפי' בזמנם, דחמיר טפי מתשעה באב שנדחה, דהרי ג' צומות בזמנם (שלא נדחה) בעלי ברית מתענין ומשלימים ומעוברות ומניקות אין מתענין, וא"כ בתשעה באב שנדחה שבעלי ברית מתענין ולא משלימין, וקיל טפי מג' צומות, א"כ מעוברת ומניקת דלא גזרו בג' צומות כל שכן שלא גזרו בהו תענית בתשעה באב שנדחה...

ומיהו הקולא רק במצטערות, ובארצות החמות כמו בארץ ישראל שהצום ארוך וחם, ותצטער הרבה, לא צריכה לצום. אבל כאן בדרום אפריקא שבתשעה באב אז חורף וקר והיום קצר, אמרתי גם להן לצום, די ש' לומר שרק במצטערות הרבה הקילו, וכאן לא מצטערות הרבה וצריכה להחמיר עד שתרגיש הצום וקשה לה, ואז תפסיק...

אמנם להלכה למעשה כיום המנהג גם בת"ב שנדחה שבעלי הברית הבריאים מתענין ומשלימין...

The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 559:9) says that when Tishah b'Av is deferred [from Shabbat to Sunday], one who is involved in a circumcision fasts but does not complete his fast, because it is his personal festival. The source is from the Tur (Orach Chaim 559) quoting Rabbi Yaakov bar Yitzchak haLevi, who proved this from the talmudic statement (Eruvin 41a) that when the festival of the wood offering (for they had [designated] times [when different families brought] the wood offering during the Temple period, and they always held a festival on that day) fell on Tishah B'av which was deferred, they fasted but did not complete [the fast] "for it was their personal festival". Such is the case regarding the festival of a circumcision, too. Examine Beit Yosef and later authorities [who say] that the *Sandak* and *Mohel* are also included as those involved in the circumcision, and they fast but do not complete it...

For regarding the pregnant woman and those similar to her, no fast was instituted when [Tishah b'Av] is deferred, the same way it was not instituted for [pregnant women] to fast on the three fasts [i.e. 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz, 3<sup>rd</sup> of Tishrei, 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet] even when they are observed on their regular dates, which are more stringent than a deferred Tishah b'Av. Behold, when the three fasts [are observed] on their regular dates, those involved in the circumcision fast and complete [the fast], but pregnant and nursing women do not fast. If so, when Tishah B'av is deferred and those involved in the circumcision fast but do not complete it, and it is more lenient than the three fasts, pregnant and nursing women who were not [included in the] decree to fast the three fasts certainly were not [included in the] decree to fast when Tishah b'Av is deferred...

However, this leniency only applies to a [woman in] pain, and in hotter climates like Israel where the fast is long and hot, and causes her much pain. [Then,] she is not obligated to fast. But here, in South Africa, where Tishah b'Av is in the winter, when it is cold and the day is short, I have said they too should fast. It could be claimed that the sages were only lenient for a woman in great pain, and here she is not in great pain and she should be strict until she feels the fast and it is difficult for her, and then she can stop [fasting]...

In truth, as far as practical law, today the practice is that even on a deferred Tishah b'Av the people involved in a circumcision, who are healthy, also fast and complete the fast...

**We are grateful to the many shuls who offer Toronto Torah to their membership, including:**

Aish Thornhill / Thornhill Community Shul ❧ Ayin l'Tzion ❧ Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation  
 Clanton Park Synagogue ❧ Congregation Bnai Torah ❧ Forest Hill Jewish Centre ❧ Kehilat Shaarei Torah  
 Magen David Congregation ❧ The Marlee Shul ❧ Mizrachi Bayit ❧ The Or Chaim Minyan ❧ Petah Tikva  
 Sephardic Kehilla Centre ❧ Shaarei Shomayim ❧ Shaarei Tefilah ❧ Shomrai Shabbos Chevra Mishnayos  
 The Village Shul ❧ Zichron Yisroel of the Associated Hebrew Schools

**We are grateful to the sponsors of this year's issues of Toronto Torah, including:**

Families of Irwin, Jim and David Diamond ❧ Mervyn and Joyce Fried and Family  
 The Family of Jeffrey Goldman z"l ❧ Esther and Craig Guttmann and Family ❧ Miriam and Moishe Kesten  
 Nathan Kirsh ❧ Steve and Leah Roth ❧ Allan and Malka Rutman and Family  
 Esther Salmon and Family ❧ Rabbi Dr. Moshe and Esty Yeres  
 And our generous anonymous sponsors

**We are grateful to the many shuls and organizations  
 who partner with us for our classes and programs throughout the year, including:**

Aish Thornhill (Thornhill Community Shul) ❧ Associated Hebrew Schools ❧ Ayin l'Tzion ❧ BAYT  
 Bnai Brith ❧ Bnai Torah ❧ Bnei Akiva Toronto ❧ Clanton Park Synagogue ❧ DANI ❧ Eitz Chaim Schools ❧ Emunah  
 Forest Hill Jewish Centre ❧ JLIC-Hillel ❧ Kehillat Shaarei Torah ❧ Magen David Congregation ❧ Marlee Shul  
 Mekorot Institute ❧ Mizrachi Bayit ❧ Mizrachi Canada ❧ Netivot haTorah ❧ Nishmat ❧ Or Chaim Minyan  
 Petah Tikva ❧ Sasson v'Simchah ❧ Shaarei Shomayim ❧ Shaarei Tefillah ❧ TanenbaumCHAT  
 Toronto Morasha ❧ Ulpanat Orot ❧ The Village Shul ❧ Yeshivat Or Chaim  
 Zichron Yisroel of the Associated Hebrew Schools

***Our Kayitz Zman semester concludes on Monday; watch for more in Elul!***

| Time                      | Speaker   | Topic   | Location                           | Special Notes   |
|---------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>שבת July 24-25</b>     |   |   |                                    |   |
| <b>After hashkamah</b>    | Yisroel Meir Rosenzweig                                       | Flavour in Kashrut  | Clanton Park                       |   |
| <b>Before musaf</b>       | R' Josh Gutenberg   | Derashah  | Zichron Yisroel                    |   |
| <b>5:15 PM</b>            | R' Mordechai Torczyner  | Daf Yomi  | BAYT                               |   |
| <b>After minchah</b>      | R' Mordechai Torczyner  | Gemara Avodah Zarah:<br>Egg-Worship?  | BAYT                               | <i>If Mashiach arrives<br/>in time</i>                    |
| <b>Sun. July 26</b>       | <b>Tishah b'Av</b>  |   |                                    |   |
| <b>8:30 PM</b>            | <b>R' Mordechai Torczyner</b><br><b>R' Mordechai Scheiner</b> | <b>Tishah b'Av v. Tzom Gedalyah</b><br><b>The Goal: Rambam &amp; Kuzari</b> | <b>Clanton Park</b>                |   |
| <b>After late minchah</b> | <b>R' David Ely Grundland</b>                                 | <b>Visions of the Beit haMikdash</b>  | <b>Shaarei Shomayim</b>            |   |
| <b>Mon. July 27</b>       |   |   |                                    |   |
| <b>10:30 AM</b>           | R' Mordechai Torczyner  | Prozbul Implementation  | Yeshivat Or Chaim                  | <b>Advanced</b>   |
| <b>Wed. July 29</b>       |   |   |                                    |   |
| <b>12:30 PM</b>           | <b>R' Mordechai Torczyner</b>                                 | <b>Copyright Infringement:</b><br><b>Kahlua vs. Kahfua</b>                  | <b>SLF</b><br><b>2300 Yonge St</b> | <b>Lunch served; RSVP</b><br><b>jonathan.hames@slf.ca</b> |

**Announcing: Our Annual Supporting Member Event!**

**Journalism and Judaism**

**The Ethics of a Free and Independent Press**

**Featuring: Rabbi Jonathan Ziring, Sgan and Yoni Goldstein, Editor, Canadian Jewish News**

**Moderator: Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

**Wednesday September 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**in our Beit Midrash at Yeshivat Or Chaim, 159 Almore Ave. Toronto**

**\$36 per family / Free for Supporting Members**

**Become a Supporting Member and Register for the Event at <http://www.torontotorah.com/members>**