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VOLUME 39 | #51

DAF HASHAVUA

כִּי־תֵצֵא | KI TEITZEI

SHABBAT ENDS:

London: 9.00pm
Birmingham: 9.09pm
Bournemouth: 9.08pm
Cardiff: 9.15pm
Dublin: 9.30pm
Edinburgh: 9.31pm
Glasgow: 9.35pm
Hull: 9.14pm
Leeds: 9.13pm
Liverpool: 9.22pm
Manchester: 9.16pm
Nottingham: 9.13pm
Sheffield: 9.16pm
Southend: 8.56pm
Southport: 9.24pm
Jerusalem: 7.53pm

SIDRA
BREAKDOWN

כִּי תֵצֵא
KI TEITZEI

6th Sidra in:
דְּבָרִים
DEVARIM

By Numbers:
110 VERSES
1,582 WORDS
5,856 LETTERS

Headlines:
**MANY LAWS,
RELATING TO
BOTH GOD AND
TO HUMANS**

KI TEITZEI:
Artscroll p.1046
Hertz p.840
Koren Sacks p.1287
Soncino p.1098

HAFTARAH:
Artscroll p.1201
Hertz p.857
Koren Sacks p.1613
Soncino p.1115

SIDRA SUMMARY

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – DEVARIM 21:10-21
Ki Teitzei contains many mitzvot, a selection of which has been included here. It starts with the laws of the ‘female captive’ and her potential marriage to a soldier in battle. It then discusses the laws of a man who has two wives (this later became prohibited in normative rabbinic law). He has a firstborn son with the wife he does not love, and another son with his preferred spouse, but he must still give the firstborn rights to the son of the former, not to son of the latter. The laws of the ‘wayward and rebellious son’ are then detailed.

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 21:22-22:7
If one spots someone else’s animal wandering off the path, there is a mitzvah to look after it and return it to its owner; this applies to all lost objects. If one sees a fallen animal on the road, there is a mitzvah to help its owner pick it up. A man is not allowed to wear women’s clothing, nor is a woman allowed to wear men’s clothing. If one sees a bird’s nest with eggs in it, there is a mitzvah to send away the mother bird before taking the eggs (*shiluach haken*).

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 22:8-23:7
When building a new house, one must erect a fence on the roof to prevent someone falling off. One must not plant certain mixtures of seeds in one’s field or vineyard (*kilayim*), nor may one plough with an ox and donkey together, nor wear wool and linen together in the same garment (*sha’atnez*). If a man falsely accuses his wife of having had pre-marital relations, a heavy fine is levied against him. Whilst men from Ammon and Moab (extant in Biblical times) are allowed to convert to Judaism, they are only allowed to marry fellow converts.

4TH ALIYA (REVI’I) – 23:8-24
A man who becomes accidentally impure must immerse himself in a *mikveh*. There is a mitzvah to look after an escaped slave, rather than returning him to his idolatrous master (see Ramban). The laws prohibiting the charging of

interest on loans are mentioned. A vow made to bring an offering to the Temple must be kept within an allotted time.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 23:25-24:4
A labourer who is harvesting crops is allowed to eat from the crops whilst working, but cannot take any produce home. The laws of divorce are stated, including the prohibition of a man remarrying his ex-wife if she has had a relationship with another man in the meantime.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 24:5-13
For the first year of marriage, the couple should prioritise spending time together; the husband is not to serve in the army (other than in a case of pressing national need). When lending money to a pauper, it is forbidden to hold onto security for the loan if this will cause the borrower discomfort.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI’I) – 24:14-25:19
An employer should pay a hired labourer on the day that the work is done. One must not display bias for or against a widow or a convert. Paupers are entitled to certain leftover crops from the harvest in the field and the vineyard. The mitzvah of *yibum* (levirate marriage) is detailed – if a man dies childless, a surviving brother should marry the widow, in the hope that they will have children to continue the deceased’s name. If the brother does not wish to marry the widow, he performs a ceremony called *chalitzah*. All weights and measures need to be honest and accurate. The sidra ends with the verses that we also read before Purim, on Shabbat Zachor, entreating us to remember how Amalek attacked the Israelites after their departure from Egypt.

Point to Consider: *What type of vineyard produce must be left for paupers to take? (see Rashi to 24:21)*

HAFTARAH (YESHAYA 54:1-10)
Taken from the book of Yeshaya, this is the fifth of the seven ‘haftarat of consolation’ read after Tisha B’Av. Yeshaya calls out to Jerusalem to no longer be desolate and barren, but to break out into jubilant song, in celebration of God showing her eternal kindness and mercy.



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United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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WEIGHTY DECISIONS

BY: **RABBI YOSHI HAMBLING**

Rabbinical Coordinator, KLBD

How do you write your shopping lists? Some of us may be meticulously organised, grouping items together by where they belong in our kitchens, or where they can be found in the supermarket. For others, it may be more of a case of listing the items in the order we think of them, however random that might be. But at the end of the day, it doesn't really matter to us; so long as we buy everything we need, the order in which they were written down is largely immaterial.

When we approach a *parasha* like *Ki Teitzei*, it can seem like we are reading a shopping list of unconnected mitzvot that appear in no particular order. The topics covered are diverse, ranging from sending away the mother bird (*Devarim* 22:6-7) to wearing *tzitzit* (*ibid.* v.12) to fulfilling the terms of the vows you make (*ibid.* 23:22-24).

However, the Netziv (Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin, 1816-93), expanding on a passage in the *Midrash Sifrei*, suggests that there is a direct connection between the final two mitzvot in the *parasha*, those mitzvot being the prohibition of trading with inaccurate weights and measures (*ibid.* 25:14-16), and the obligation to remember how Amalek attacked us when we left Egypt (*ibid.* vv. 17-19).

The Netziv argues that one who chooses to take advantage of his customers by overcharging them based on inaccurate weights and

measures is exhibiting a distinct lack of *Emunah* (faith in God). However, when that person remembers what Amalek did to us, their *Emunah* will be restored.

He explains that someone with a strong sense of *Emunah* will still invest much effort in running a successful business, but they will worry less about the factors beyond their control. After all, even if they are beyond human control, they are certainly within the purview of God, Who cares deeply about us and our successes.

On the other hand, one lacking in *Emunah* may feel the need to take matters into his own hands, unethically extracting extra profit from his customers to counter unknown market forces that may be to his detriment.

However, when such a person recalls the Amalek episode, he will be reminded of the active, behind-the-scenes role God plays in our lives. Indeed, the *Midrash Tanchuma* (Yitro 3) understands that God sent Amalek to attack us in the first place in response to the Jewish people's outcry: "Is God really in our midst?" (*Shemot* 17:7). Once under attack, we naturally turned to God for help, thus acknowledging His Presence in and power over worldly affairs. And though we may have fought the subsequent war without overt miracles, our success was dependent on the Jewish fighters looking up at the raised hands of Moshe, thus reminding

“ Building an authentic sense of *Emunah* is an ongoing challenge; after all, we live in a world in which the Hand of God is largely hidden.

them of God's ultimate control of the situation. (See Talmud *Rosh Hashanah* 29a.)

Building an authentic sense of *Emunah* is an ongoing challenge; after all, we live in a world in which the Hand of God is largely hidden. However, if we invest in this area of our lives, not only will we emerge with a greater sense of serenity and security, but also with a greater ability to trust each other. It may take time, but no doubt the development of a society truly based on mutual trust and respect will be well worth the 'weight'.





ELUL REFLECTIONS

PART THREE

BY: **REBBETZEN VICKI BELOVSKI**

Formerly Rebbetzen at Golders Green United Synagogue

Our practice is to recite chapter 27 of Psalms (*Tehillim*) twice a day during *Elul*, after *Shacharit* and *Maariv* prayers, until Shemini Atzeret inclusive. This is generally thought to be based on the *Midrash Shocher Tov* (also known as the *Midrash Tehillim*) which explains that some of the expressions used in this chapter refer to Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Succot and even Elul.

As we know from the first word, *L'David*, this chapter is one of the many Psalms written by King David. In it, he describes a close relationship with God – beginning by affirming his faith in Him: “The Lord is my light and my salvation”, and continuing by describing how God will protect him in difficult times. In verse 13, King David says: “*Lulei he'emanti lirot b'tuv Hashem b'erez hachaim* – Had I not trusted that I would see God's goodness in the land of the living...”

There are several interesting points about this verse. First, once again we find the word *Elul* – here it is spelled backwards as *lulei* (לולא). Secondly, in traditional texts, *lulei* is written with dots above and below it, which is usually understood to show that there is an issue with the meaning of the word. Thirdly, the verse appears to be an incomplete sentence. One would expect the next verse to continue with what might have happened

had King David not trusted, but instead the chapter concludes “Hope in the Lord, be strong and of good courage, and hope in the Lord.”

What is going on here? The Talmud in *Berachot* (4a) says that the dots suggest that King David had complete trust that God rewards the righteous in the World to Come, but was unsure whether he qualified as righteous.

The open-ended format of the verse, according to several rabbinic commentators including Rashi (1040-1105), looks back to the previous verse, which refers to false witnesses, who accused King David wrongly. In our verse he is saying, “if I hadn't had great faith in God, then these false witnesses would have destroyed me a long time ago.”

This idea is echoed by the Malbim (Rabbi Meir Leibush Wisser, 1809-1879) who says that the whole psalm explains that when a person has great faith in God and seeks to become close to Him, he merits that God will look after him individually and protect him from harm. Accordingly, King David begs God to be able to achieve this enhanced level of closeness, and asks that He continue to remove any obstacles to this, such as false witnesses. The Malbim says, “Therefore from the multitude of requests which

“ King David begs God to be able to achieve this enhanced level of closeness, and asks that He continue to remove any obstacles to this, such as false witnesses.

a man can make, it is fitting that he focus on the single request in which he will find all that he desires; that is [to request] that he cleaves to God constantly.”

During Elul we too are trying to develop a closer relationship with God, and so it is appropriate that we recite this psalm throughout the month to remind us what it is that we are trying to achieve and the rewards that it brings.



ISRAEL IN THE PARASHA

This series is an adaptation of short ideas written by former Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovits z"l in the 1960s, which were later reprinted in a compilation of his writings, 'Mishnat HaSar'.

KI TEITZEI: THE LAND GIVES FREEDOM

A striking example of the allusions to the Holy Land that our Sages identified in the Torah – here to the point of carrying legal significance to the Land's blessings – is their interpretation of the verse: "You shall not hand over a slave to his master when he seeks refuge with you" (*Devarim* 23:16). Although the Land of Israel is not mentioned explicitly in this verse, the Rabbis understood this to refer even to "a non-Jewish slave who has fled

from outside the Land to the Land of Israel" (Rashi).

The connection between this law and the Land is partly based on the surrounding verses. The preceding verse states, "Your camp shall be holy" (v.15), while the following verse adds: "He shall live with you in whichever place he chooses within your cities, whichever place is good for him; you must not oppress him" (v.17).

“ He shall live with you in whichever place he chooses within your cities, whichever place is good for him; you must not oppress him” (v.17)

PHRASE OF THE WEEK

BY: **RABBI ALEX CHAPPER** | Borehamwood & Elstree United Synagogue

Each week, working our way through the alphabet, we explore a Jewish word or phrase, bringing clarity and deeper understanding to its meaning.

Does **HEFSEK** mean:

1. Interruption? | 2. Ownership? | 3. Branch of Chassidut?

Hefsek means "interruption" and has halachic implications in relation to the performance of *mitzvot* or the saying of *berachot* (blessings).

For example, the *Shulchan Aruch* rules that it is forbidden to talk between making a *beracha* before a *mitzvah* and then doing the *mitzvah*. Similarly, when making a *beracha* before eating, one should begin eating before speaking. If someone did speak, it is considered a *hefsek* and another *beracha* would be

required. However, if one said something that is relevant and necessary for the food, then it is not considered an interruption.

If someone makes a *beracha*, begins the *mitzvah*, but then stops in the middle and waits the time it would take to complete the entire *mitzvah*, whether they were silently pausing, talking or doing a different activity, that does not constitute a *hefsek*, a significant interruption, and they can return to where they were up to in that *mitzvah*.

One of the most common applications of this principle is the requirement to minimise any possible *hefsek* between washing hands before a bread meal and making *Hamotzi*. As washing is a preparation for the meal, there should be the shortest gap between the two. In this situation, not only is talking considered to be a *hefsek*, but also unnecessary gesturing and other forms of non-verbal communication should be avoided.



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THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS



BY: **RUBY
WEISSBART**

Tribe gap year
student

Ki Teitzei contains more mitzvot than any other *parasha* in the Torah - 74! Here is one of them:

'When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you refrain from bringing blood upon your house if the faller falls from it' (Devarim 22:8).

It's interesting that the person who falls from the roof is labelled as the 'faller' before the action has even happened! Rabbi David Milston writes that since this

person is likely to fall if we do not set up the right precautions, they are labelled a 'faller' from the outset.

The Torah teaches that we are completely responsible for setting up safeguards on our own property. Although this person might be destined to fall, it would ultimately only be due to our carelessness if they do.

More broadly speaking, I believe that here we are taught that we should be aware of the repercussions of our actions, in order to prevent hurting others.

However, the classic Torah commentators, Kli Yakar and Abarbanel, say that the person who falls to their death was going to die anyway, which is why they

are labelled the 'faller'. The owner of the property isn't responsible for their death; rather, he or she is responsible for the fact they died on **their** property as a result of **their** negligence.

One approach proposes that it is totally our fault if someone falls off our property, whereas the other proposes that they were predestined to die, and it is only through our negligence that they died falling off our roof (or some other negligence) and not someone else's. However, both approaches stress the importance of taking responsibility and ensuring our behaviour helps others, rather than putting them at risk of harm.

Questions to ponder:

1. Have you ever been hurt, either physically or emotionally, by someone's carelessness?
2. Why do you think the Torah uses such an extreme example of someone falling off a roof?
3. Do you think it's the 'faller' or the owner of the property that is more responsible for the consequence in the verse quoted above?





THE TRIBE SCRIBE

KI TEITZEI: PICTURE THIS!

DEBBS! WE'RE GETTING BUSY FOR SARA'S **BAT MITZVAH**. DO YOU KNOW A GOOD PHOTOGRAPHER?

MR FLASH? I'VE HEARD OF HIM... BUT I'VE ALSO HEARD HE'S UNRELIABLE.

UNRELIABLE? WHAT HAPPENED?

HMM. MAYBE THERE'S MORE TO THE STORY?

YES, MR FLASH IS BRILLIANT! AND HIS PRICES WON'T HURT YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE.

SUZI SAID HE CAME HALFWAY THROUGH A **BAR MITZVAH** SHE WAS AT LAST WEEK. THE DJ CONFIRMED IT TOO. TRUE STORY!

MORE TO THE STORY? DEBBS, A PHOTOGRAPHER CAN'T MISS HALF THE **SIMCHA** (CELEBRATION)! THAT'S LIKE THE CATERER COMING AFTER **BENSCHING** (GRACE AFTER MEALS)!

HMM, I DON'T WANT TO RECOMMEND SOMEONE UNRELIABLE... BUT I ALSO DON'T WANT TO REPEAT SOMETHING THAT MIGHT NOT BE FAIR. TIME TO FACT CHECK!

MR FLASH! LOVELY TO SEE YOU. WE'RE STILL ENJOYING THE LOVELY PHOTOS YOU TOOK AT OUR **SIMCHA**. TELL ME, I HEARD YOU ARRIVED HALFWAY THROUGH A **BAR MITZVAH** LAST WEEK.

OH! PEOPLE ARE SAYING THAT WAS VERY LATE.

LATE? I WASN'T BOOKED FOR THAT **SIMCHA**! THE REAL PHOTOGRAPHER DIDN'T TURN UP. THEY CALLED ME IN AN EMERGENCY, SO I DROPPED EVERYTHING AND RACED OVER AS A FAVOUR! I SAVED THE SECOND HALF!

YUP, GOT THERE IN TIME FOR THE SPEECHES.

IN THIS WEEK'S **PARASHA** THE **TORAH** WARNS US TO REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED TO **MIRIAM** WHO WAS PUNISHED FOR THE WAY SHE SPOKE. OUR WORDS HAVE MASSIVE POWER - BOTH FOR THE GOOD AND BAD. THEY CAN COST SOMEONE THEIR JOB OR MAKE THEIR DAY!

BEFORE WE REPEAT SOMETHING, WE NEED TO ASK: DO I KNOW THE WHOLE STORY? IS IT FAIR? IS IT HELPFUL?

WE ARE NOW IN THE MONTH OF **ELUL** WHERE WE PREPARE FOR **ROSH HASHANAH** (JEWISH NEW YEAR). IT'S A GREAT TIME TO PRACTISE CAREFUL SPEECH, AND JUDGING OTHERS FAVOURABLY.

STOP! IS THIS FAIR & HELPFUL?

ESPECIALLY TODAY. ONE LITTLE COMMENT CAN TRAVEL ACROSS THE WORLD IN SECONDS! IMAGINE IF SOCIAL MEDIA ONLY ALLOWED POSITIVE SPEECH - HOW AWESOME WOULD THAT BE?

SO, BEFORE YOU SNAP TO JUDGEMENT, CHECK - YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE THE WHOLE PICTURE!

Page Editor: Rabbi Nicky Goldweiser Writer: Shira Chalk Cartoonist: Paul Solomon

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